

Unmasking the Unconscious: Fictional Reworkings of the Oedipus Complex

By

Samia Rahman

ID: 21303021

**A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English**

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing a degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Samia Rahman

21303021

Approval

The thesis “Unmasking the Unconscious: Fictional Reworkings of the Oedipus Complex” submitted by Samia Rahman (21303021) of Summer, 2025 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English on 21 October, 2025.

Examining Committee:

Supervisor:

(Member)

Rukhsana Rahim Chowdhury

Senior Lecturer, Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

External Examiner:

(Member)

Dr. Mahruba Mowtushi

Associate Professor, Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

Departmental Head:

(Chair)

Dr. Firdous Azim

Professor and Chairperson, Department of English and Humanities

BRAC University

Abstract

The Oedipal Complex is a Freudian theory where he talks about rivalry with same-sex parent and unconscious desire towards opposite-sex parent. In case of males, it is known as Oedipal Complex. The thesis examines the Oedipal Complex via three primary fictions: *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles (429 BC), *Kafka on the Shore* by Haruki Murakami (2002) and *My Oedipus Complex* by Frank O'Connor (1963). These texts show how forbidden desires influence humans through tragedy, surrealism and humour in the protagonists of the fictions as it shows how their unconscious desire shaped their identities. This study will focus on the protagonists' relationships and struggles with their parents. Overall, the thesis will also show how the Oedipal complex is addressed and subverted in fiction, and what perspectives this provides into changing ideas regarding family, sexuality, and identity through the texts.

Key Words: Oedipal complex, Freud, the unconscious, Oedipus, Kafka, Larry, address, subvert, id, ego, superego

Dedication

To the people who believed in me and always inspired me.

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I have always loved reading books since my childhood, which made me study literature. I am indebted to my ENH Department for helping me engage more critically with literature, which made me realize that choosing English Literature was a good decision.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1,1 Background

Psychoanalytic concepts are common in literature as each piece of literature has the use of different psychoanalytic theories. Sigmund Freud is known as the founder of psychoanalysis. He is famous for his theories. One of his theories is the Oedipal complex. Sigmund Freud proposed the idea of the theory in his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899). The Oedipus complex is a psychoanalytical theory given by Sigmund Freud. It is a notion in which the urge for sexual contact with the opposite-sex parent is seen. It also includes competition with a parent of the same gender. This is a vital time in human existence. The phrase is derived from the Greek narrative about the Theban hero Oedipus. He murdered his father and unintentionally married his mother. The hypothesis for females is known as the Electra complex.

This Oedipal complex is usually seen among children who are aged between three and five. It is seen in the phallic stage. This feeling towards the opposite sex parent is often repressed. It happens due to the fear of punishment by the parent who is the same sex as the child. This stage passes if both parents are loving and he gets a non-traumatic life. But if the child does not get that, he faces the Oedipal complex, as it will rule the conscious or unconscious adult mind. Throughout life, this Oedipus complex remains as an unconscious organizer in the human mind. When a person conquers the Oedipus complex, it helps to raise their superego, which is the moral censor inside

the human mind, according to Freud. The theory shows the unconscious desire of the human mind. The terms 'id', 'ego' and 'superego' are also used for the explanation of the Freudian theory of Oedipal Complex.

This Oedipus complex is seen in the three primary texts that are selected for the paper. The primary texts are *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles, *Kafka on The Shore* by Haruki Murakami and *My Oedipus Complex* by Frank O'Connor. All three books have protagonists who face the Oedipus complex, which impacts their actions and identity. These texts show that the Freudian Oedipal Complex is rooted in early psychoanalytic thoughts and continues to inspire literature from ancient to contemporary times. It is relevant regardless of time and culture. The paper will show how through these three texts the Oedipal complex can be seen, questioned or ridiculed as well as how the ideas related to family and identity have changed over time.

Three stories examine the Oedipus complex in different ways: *My Oedipus Complex* blends comedy and truth about growing up, *Kafka on the Shore* turns it into a dream about identity and memory, and *Oedipus Rex* presents it as a fate. These tales demonstrate the intricacy of family and identity and the ways in which fiction clarifies these difficult ideas. They illustrate the ability of narrative to promote comprehension by showing how it might assist us in comprehending and navigating the Oedipus complex.

Oedipus Rex was written in the 5th century. It is a Greek tragedy by Sophocles. The play revolves around the character Oedipus, who is the king of Thebes. He was asked to save people from the plague. To do that, he has to solve the death of the late King Laius. While doing that, he discovers

the truth about himself. He realises that the prophecy given by the Oracle has come true. At the end, he punishes himself. He meets a tragic end. The Greek play holds literary significance as it explores themes like the tragic mechanism of fate and the consequences of free will. It also talks about human relationships, which are full of complexities. The tragic end of Oedipus shows the role of fate and ignorance. From this play, the theory of Freud was inspired.

The novel *Kafka on the Shore*, written by Haruki Murakami, is a novel which is about a boy named Kafka Tamura who is 15 years old. He runs away from his home and goes to Takamatsu. He runs away from the Oedipal curse, which was given by his father, who is a destructive person who feels close to myths. The novel also has another character called Nakata. He is an old, disabled man who has the ability to talk to cats. The novel has various themes within it. It talks about subconsciousness and uses surrealism in it. In the book the surrealism is used to mix dream with reality. It makes the story feel strange and magical. Things like talking cats, raining fish, characters that are ghostly shows the readers the hidden thoughts, desires and struggles in a dream like way and it also shows what happens inside the characters' minds. As the book uses surrealism, Murakami allowed questions related to the novel, and he responded to some of those questions as well. In the novel, the protagonist, Kafka, has an inner voice, the boy named Crow, which translates into Kafka. The novel shows that although it has the elements of the Oedipus Complex, as the story of the novel progresses, the protagonist, Kafka, moves on from the Oedipus Complex, as it raises his superego, and the novel subverts the Oedipal theme also.

The short story by Frank O'Connor, named *My Oedipus Complex* is a story which shows a humorous take on the Freudian theory. Here, the protagonist is Larry. Larry is a 5-year-old boy.

In the story, at the beginning, he gets all the love and attention from his mother, and when his father returns, the division of the love and attention makes him feel jealous towards his father. He makes his father his rival. But as time passes, he becomes more mature. He tries to understand the family roles and dynamics. As he becomes more mature, the subversion of the Oedipus Complex happens. It leads to more mature family bonds at the end.

As Freudian theory is a powerful lens to analyse literature, it gives a new perspective on the activity of the character, which shows why a character does something. The selected text will show how the evolution of the Oedipal Complex happened over time through various fictions, which include ancient fiction, modern fiction and humorous fiction.

1.2 Methodology

This thesis uses a qualitative analysis methodology, which includes a close reading of the three primary texts. The Freudian theories of the Oedipal and Electra Complexes and the unconscious will be used to analyze how the selected works address and subvert the theme of the Oedipal complex. The theory will be used to explore the unconscious mind and the desires that shape and affect a human. The study compares older works with modern ones to see the changes over time and yet how they are related to Oedipal themes through the primary and secondary texts.

1.3 Research Question

For this thesis, it is focused on three research questions. The first questions show how the fiction address the theme of the Oedipal complex. The second question explores how the Oedipal Complex gets subverted by the fiction analyzing how authors challenged the theory in their writing. Finally, the last question identifies the critical insights into the subjects that fiction offers.

1.4 Thesis Statement

This paper argues how fiction addresses and subverts the Oedipal complex, offering critical insights into evolving conceptions of family, sexuality and identity

Overall, the thesis focuses on how the Freudian theory gets addressed and subverted showing the evolution of the theory over time. It will show how the theory is addressed, questioned or even mocked through various fictions and genre of various times.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Literature Review

Sofe Ahmed, in her research paper, states that the Oedipus complex is a controversial psychoanalytic theory that posits that young boys develop enviousness, leading to unconsciously wishing for their fathers' deaths. This theory has influenced modern thought, particularly in literature, but has been criticized by empirical scientific research. Despite its influence, the Oedipus complex remains a contentious issue that demands a solution to address its potential threat to humankind. Nancy Chodorow interprets the feminine Oedipus complex as fundamentally a mother-daughter issue concerning the genesis of a feminine sense of self-in-relationship. This means a girl's turn to her father results in including him in her object world while retaining her deep emotional attachment to her mother. Fanon utilises the Oedipus complex to describe the psychological origins of the subject's organisation around the ego-ideal/phobogenic object structure. When the Antillean child discovers they are Black, this structure reverses, turning the superego's aggression inward and causing an endemic feeling of inferiority. Julia Kristeva challenges the traditional Oedipus complex, suggesting it is too focused on the stern Father of the Law and castration threats. Instead of fear or lack, she argues that the child is motivated to enter the symbolic realm (language) by excess and pleasure. This transition is supported by a loving imaginary father who is part of a prefigured Oedipal structure centred on the maternal function.

Sigmund Freud based this notion on Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex*. The Oedipal complex idea is one of the most well-known of the twentieth century. In a letter to Wilhelm Fliess, Freud speaks

about how his path to understanding came to understand the presence and significance of the Oedipus complex. He tells him which is mentioned in *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887-1904* that Freud too felt the Oedipus Complex within him. According to him the oedipal Complex is universal. *Oedipus Rex* deeply affects people as it reflects their hidden desires. Foucault, a theorist, also talked about the theory. He strategically departs from the unconscious concept of Freud as a tool for the play, observing the following:

It is not so much Oedipus's "ignorance" or "unconscious" that appears in the forefront of Sophocles' tragedy. It is rather the multiplicity of forms of knowledge, the diversity of the procedures which produce it, and the struggle between the powers which is played out through their confrontation. (Foucault)

According to Harold Bloom, Freud's Oedipus Complex is driven by Oedipus's need for ignorance to avoid being destroyed by reality. When Oedipus realized the truth, he punished himself. As Oedipus becomes the biological father of his own mother's offspring, the son inherits the same woman as his father. It represents another instance of metonymic substitution in a chain of parental signifiers. At the end of the play, Oedipus punishes himself and gives parental duties to Creon. According to Chattopadhyay, it is the altar of parental nominations. Overall, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* is a key myth in psychoanalysis, providing insight into the core theme of desire in tragic theatre, including its complexities and ambiguities. Vernant (Vernant & Vidal-Naquet, 1972), a renowned French Hellenist, challenges Freud and Anzieu (1966) for claiming to have discovered evidence of the Oedipus Complex in Sophocles' masterwork. Vernant's piece is titled "Oedipus without a complex." Vernant, in his article, stated the Oedipus complex as a tragedy of fate. According to the French researcher (p. 92), this incident serves both artistic and religious purposes, but is not related to "depth psychology" (this epithet for psychoanalysis is repeated on

p. 94). According to Patrick Lee Miller's article, Oedipus has the Oedipal complex, although his sorrow originates more from a narcissistic wrath over his parents' mutilation and abandonment of him. According to Chandran, Oedipus is portrayed in the play as a godlike figure. He serves as a humanistic and philosophical ethos for Thebes' supplicants. They regard him as a deity who can alleviate their misery and pain. To Chandran, Freud viewed the story of Oedipus as a way to explore his deep childhood feelings from which he created the idea of the Oedipal complex, which plays an important part in his theory.

Murakami's *Kafka on The Shore* explores the Oedipal complex, focusing on a 15-year-old boy named Kafka Tamura who escapes his family and faces the consequences of his father's Oedipal prophecy, blurring the lines between dream and reality. He has his inner voice named Crow. Ounissi, in his research paper, wrote that Crow tells Kafka not to reject his Oedipal destiny, but rather to navigate his way to his new self via the Oedipal curse. The novel contains an Oedipal curse, which Kafka's father imposed. The curse said that Kafka would sleep with his mother and sister after killing his father. This prophecy is another reason why Kafka ran away from his home. According to Byrne's arguments, Murakami's exploration of the Oedipus complex may have a solution in the opposing plots of *Oedipus Rex* and *Kafka on the Shore*. Studying the conditions that contribute to perversion and psychosis is essential to applying these results to Kafka on the Shore, emphasizing the parallels between Oedipus from *Oedipus Rex* and Kafka.

“The contrasting stories of Oedipus Rex and Kafka on the Shore have already been mentioned above so it comes as no surprise to learn that an answer to the direction taken by the dissolution of the Oedipus complex in Murakami’s may be found elsewhere. At this juncture it would be wise to understand the events that provide for the formation of

perversion and psychosis before applying them to the study of *Kafka on the Shore*.” (Byrne 22)

The novel also shows no yearning for Kafka’s mother. Kafka has a longing for Miss Saeki. Byrne wonders if he would have had the same deep attraction to her if he hadn’t suspected she might be his mother. Maria Flutsch states that *Kafka on the Shore* is, “a psychoanalytical interrogation of the mind of a young, deeply disturbed patricide whose oedipal crisis culminates in a descent to the pre-oedipal, Kristeva’s ‘semiotic’ level of the unconscious in order to begin the healing process.” (Hmar 3) In her Master’s thesis, Pabiha P views Kafka’s journey as a symbolic examination of Oedipal themes such as yearning, need, and craving for the maternal figure. Kafka’s search for his mother may be interpreted as an instinctive attempt to cope with his emotions of abandonment and desertion. P. in her research paper, also stated dreams as an important factor, as through dreams, Murakami inserts magic realism through the subconscious as Kafka’s dream resembles his desires.

My Oedipus Complex is a short story by Frank O’Connor. Vinay Rajoria, in his research paper, claims that this narrative is about a father-son relationship viewed from a Freudian perspective. It is a complex and sympathetic reflection on the expression of Freud’s Oedipal Complex Theory in the life of Larry, a five-year-old kid who competes with his father for his mother’s love, affection, and attention. In the beginning, it is seen that Larry does not have much connection with his father. He does not remember him like how he remembers his mother. “Larry barely knows anything real about him except for fleeting memories like his ‘musty smell’, his ‘clatter of nailed boots on the cobbles of the lane’, and that he is the ‘big figure in khaki’ who he occasionally finds peering down

at him. His place in the life of his son, in short, is equivalent to that of ‘Santa Claus’.” (3) It shows how absent his father was from his life as his father was a soldier and he had his duties.

The Swiss developmental psychologist -Jean Piaget wrote about this in his pathbreaking book - *The Child's Conception of the World*. Piaget contemplated that the personality traits of a child are nurtured in the initial seven-eight years of his or her life and so this is a crucial time in a child's life. Moreover, this stage in the father-son relationship is also a poignant observation on the unsaid scars the wars leave on the psyche of the children of the soldiers back at home. (4)

Pasopati et al., in their journal, wrote about how confusion of tongue could happen. In "My Oedipus Complex," Frank O'Connor explores the pain of a boy named Larry, who loses his mother's affection due to his father's disorder. The boy's bond with his mother is disrupted, and he becomes a nemesis for his father. Larry's purity shifts from love to hatred, and his relationship with his father changes from companionship to loneliness.

“This study explains problematic relations between adults and children. Any different perception of love is always possible to happen. Besides, there is no monolithic concept of certainty since any difference is always probable to be realized in usual life. Larry thinks that his mother’s love is only for him, but then there is the father who demands that love too. The child misinterprets the mother’s love, and that situation brings in such trauma to him. In other words, love could also shape violence if it is not totally fulfilled. Desire keeps asking to be paid attention, but certainty may not always come to every side in total balance” (Ferrero-Madignier, 2020; Middleton & Dorahy, 2024; Newman, 2020).

Due to its originality, this study may not only advance psychoanalytic literary analysis but also provide more insights into understanding children in general. Additionally, it has to do with trauma that occurs in daily life and is represented in literature as well.

Overall, Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of the Oedipal complex may be found in plays, tales, and novels, among other literary works. It illustrates how wants and familial ties impact individuals, leading to King Oedipus's guilt and punishment. The complex also affects the father-son struggle in Kafka Tamura's story, as well as with his thoughts and deeds. Characters' unconscious wants, identity, and desires are impacted by the Oedipal complex, which also has an impact on protagonists' identities and familial connections. In contemporary writing, the complex is still significant.

2.2 Research Gap

Although there has been a vast amount of research on the Oedipal complex, there is not many research on how different genre like tragedy, surreal fiction and humour reinterpret and challenge Freud's theory together. Scholars in their research papers wrote about how the Oedipal Complex is addressed in the fictions. It does not include much about how the fiction subverted the Oedipal Complex.

Overall, this research will fill the gaps by showing how fictions (ancient, modern, humorous) both reflect and challenge Freud's theory.

Chapter 3: Oedipus Complex and Oedipus Rex

Oedipus Rex is an ancient tragedy. The theory of the Oedipal complex is named after the play, but in reality, the play not only reflects the Oedipal pattern, but at the same time, it complicates it, as it contains the plot that refers to the Oedipal Complex. The play may have been the source of Sigmund Freud's inspiration, but it seems to pose a challenge to the theory

3.1 Synopsis of *Oedipus Rex*-

The play, *Oedipus Rex*, begins in Thebes. The Thebans are suffering from the plague. They go to Oedipus and request him to save them from the plague. Oedipus sends Creon, who is his brother-in-law, to the Oracle of Delphi to find a solution to the problem. The Oracle reveals that the plague will end if the murderer of the former king is found and punished for his sin. Oedipus determines to uncover the truth of the death of King Laius. The blind prophet tells him that he is the killer, but Oedipus refuses to believe that. He hears from Jocasta that Laius was killed at the crossroads. This made Oedipus feel uneasy as he had also killed a man in a similar place. Jocasta then tries to calm him down, but then a messenger comes with the news that Polybus has died. Here, Oedipus heaves a sigh of relief, in the belief that the prophecy was not true, but soon he finds out to his dismay that he was, in fact, adopted by Polybus. He was not the biological son of Polybus. A shepherd confirms that Oedipus is the son of Jocasta and Laius. The prophecy has thus come true. Horrified by the news, Jocasta kills herself. Oedipus punishes himself by gouging out his eyes and exiling himself from Thebes. The play ends with Oedipus accepting his tragic fate.

3.2 Id, Ego and Superego -

Freud has made a structural model of the psyche where there are three distinct and interacting components, which are the Id, Ego, and Superego. Freud also used the terms 'conscious', 'preconscious' and 'unconscious' to describe different levels of mental awareness.

The id represents the unconscious and the repressed side of the human mind. It includes unconscious needs, impulses and desires. The id in a person acts as a pleasure factor, as it is related to aggression and sexual desires. According to Freud, it is the dark part of human personality. The id consists of basic instinctual factors that a person has since birth. As one grows up, they also inherit some of their id as they are governed by their pleasure principles. Id is related to libido as well. Even life instincts are also considered a part of the id.

The ego is an important part of the human psyche as it plays the role of mediator. It acts as an organizing principle where the thoughts and interpretations are based on reality. According to Freud, "the ego is that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world ... The ego represents what may be called reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains passions. It is like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse, with this difference, that the rider tries to do so with his own strength while the ego uses borrowed forces." It balances the id with the real world.

The superego is mainly the moral conscience, which includes the social rules and the moral standards. It plays the role of a moral compass as it judges the actions, whether they are right or

wrong. It can be harsh and critical, as it can cause feelings like guilt and shame within a person when one is unable to meet the standards. The superego can be influenced by society and the people around a person. It develops during the early childhood of a person.

The Id, Ego and Superego are connected with the Oedipal theory because through these the actions of the protagonists can be understood. The id helps to express itself through the unconscious desire of a child which has envy for the same-sex parent and desire for the opposite-sex parent. On the other hand the ego helps to navigate the forbidden desires. It helps a person to adjust to reality in case of an Oedipal Complex. Finally, the superego helps to produce guilt and moral judgement whenever the forbidden desires of the Oedipal complex take place. The id, ego, and superego play an important role in analyzing human psyche. It plays an important role in analyzing the Oedipal Complex as well as helping it explain the psyche of a human being.

3.3 Id, Ego and Superego in *Oedipus Rex*-

In the play *Oedipus Rex*, the role of the protagonist Oedipus can be interpreted through the Freudian lenses of Id, Ego and Superego to understand his actions and fate. Oedipus here seems to be unknowingly driven by his Id. He not only kills his father but also marries his mother. It is not that Oedipus fulfils his id intentionally or willingly. He does it unintentionally because of his blind, instinctive actions.

His id causes him to do impulsive things. When Oedipus was confronted by Laius's presence, he reacted with sudden rage. Oedipus even kills a man at the crossroads without knowing that he was

his actual father. This is pure, uncontrolled Id. His aggression, triggered by frustration and acting impulsively without reason, shows his Id. These actions of Oedipus show the core instincts of his aggression and ambition. When he hears about the prophecy, his immediate reaction is self-preservation as he flees Corinth away from the people whom he thinks of as his parents. It also shows how he is affected by his id.

The Ego of Oedipus is shown when Oedipus tries to solve the death of the former king of Thebes, King Laius which was a mystery which was not solved. He tries to solve the murder of King Laius and the source of the plague that Thebes is facing. Here, Oedipus plays the role of detective. He uses logic, reason and evidence. He does all that to uncover the truth. His ego is rational. It wants to preserve order in Thebes to maintain its kingship. But uncovering his truth leads to his downfall. Him solving the riddle of the Sphinx shows the action of his ego. It shows the use of logic and intellect to overcome a threat. It shows him how he is as a ruler. He also tries to refute the prophecy by using logic. For example, after he flees from Corinth, Polybus dies naturally. It makes him believe that the prophecy is not correct. It is done because of his ego trying to reconcile events with his conscious self and reality. Here, his ego maintains control between Id, where the desire for power is shown and the Superego, where the unconscious guilt is seen.

When Oedipus takes an oath to find the murderer of King Laius regardless of the consequences, his Superego comes out, as it shows justice. The Superego is also shown after the truth comes out. When Oedipus realizes that he has committed incest and patricide, it relates to his Superego. It makes him full of guilt. His overwhelming guilt makes him self-punish by blinding himself. This reflects the harsh judgement of his Superego. According to Oedipus, when he learns the truth, he

says that he is unable to look at the world after what he has done. This is moral and symbolic punishment. His pushing himself through self-blinding and going into exile is not something that is demanded by others. Rather, it is the decision of Oedipus himself. It shows the strength of the Superego of Oedipus Rex. He fulfills the moral punishment by himself, even before society judges him.

Oedipus's tragedy is mainly a psychological conflict between these three elements. Oedipus's Id makes him do the forbidden actions. Actions such as killing his father, marrying Jocasta and his moments of angry outbursts show his desires, instincts and unconscious wishes. His ego helps him to maintain order and truth as he tries to solve the mystery of the past. Here, he uses reason and logic to rationalize his actions. He also uses controls. He tries to maintain a balance between the Id and the Superego here. Oedipus's Superego overwhelms him with guilt. He self-punishes. He feels shame, blinds himself, and sends himself into exile. Here, factors like guilt, morality and punishment worked as his Superego. It shows that Oedipus's downfall is not just because of the prophecy but also because of the battle that he has in his own mind.

3.4 Addressing and Subverting Oedipus Complex in the play *Oedipus Rex* -

The Oedipus complex is named directly after Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*. Here, Freud used the ancient myth of Oedipus as the archetype to illustrate his psychoanalytical theories. The Oedipus complex is seen during the phallic stage, which occurs around the ages of 3-6 for a child. Through the play, Freud saw it not as a story related to fate but a dramatization of repressed childhood wishes. The plot of the play is that Oedipus unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother

shows how he fulfills the prophecy given by the Oracle. Oedipus himself also knew about the prophecy about him.

“Of horror and misery: how I must marry my mother,
And become the parent of a misbegotten brood,
An offence to all mankind - and kill my father.” (Sophocles 47)

Freud here says that the play's power lies in its resonance, as every man has the repressed Oedipal wishes within themselves. He talks about Parricide and incest, which are seen in the play. Patricide is the son's unconscious wish to kill the father, who is his rival. Oedipus kills his father, King Laius, which symbolizes patricide. Marrying Jocasta is the result of incest. It shows the unconscious desire to possess a mother figure. Oedipus does both things in the play unknowingly. According to Freud, it is how unknowingly these desires operate in human minds. The role of prophecy is important. Jocasta tries to dismiss the prophecy.

“...And I have proof. An oracle
was given to Laius- From
Phoebus, no; but from his
ministers -
That he should die by the hands
of his own child, His child and
mine. What came of it? Laius,
It is common knowledge, was killed
by outland robbers At a place where
three roads meet. As for the child,
It was not yet three days old, when he cast it out...” (45)

Even the late King Laius tries to avoid the prophecy given by the Oracle. He tries to kill baby Oedipus but fails as the shepherd hands over the child to another shepherd from Corinth. Oedipus also tries to avoid the prophecy as he thinks Polybus is his father and flees to Thebes. But fate cannot be avoided.

According to Freud, the Oedipal complex is about unconscious desire. By this theory, Oedipus wants his mother and hates his father. But in the play, it is different. Oedipus here does not have any desire to want his mother and has a rivalry with his father. He does not want to kill his father. When he learns the truth about himself, he feels horrified. He is full of guilt and shame. He punishes himself by blinding himself and self-exiling. It shows that Oedipus feels guilty which reflects his superego. Here, there is no satisfaction as Oedipus acted before without knowledge. He didn't know that Jocasta was his mother or that Laius was his father. He married Jocasta not because he had forbidden desires for her, but rather because he married her because he was able to solve the riddle of the Sphinx and save Thebes. This makes Oedipus's action and fate tragic rather than immoral, as fate drives him to do these things. His desires are not involved here. The Oedipal complex is based on the unconscious desire of a person, but in the play Oedipus Rex, things like prophecy and fate played a stronger role than sexual desires. The play supports Freud's theory as the events matched the unconscious desire of a child, which involves desiring the mother and having rivalry and wanting to replace the father. But in reality, the play subverts the Oedipal Complex. Oedipus's acts are not based on known or unknown desire. Here, Oedipus is a target of his own misfortune. He is not driven by inner wishes. Here, the play is more about fate, identity and knowledge. It is not about the protagonist's unconscious sexual desire. The play Oedipus

relates to the theory of Freud, which involves murdering or replacing the same-sex parent while marrying or acquiring the opposite-sex parent. Oedipus here is a victim of his fate, in that although he tried very hard, he could not avoid the prophecy which eventually came true. However, Oedipus achieves this by mistake, not on purpose, turning the play into a tragedy rather than a psychological play.

3.5 Conclusion-

Overall, Oedipus in the play does what the Freudian theory says - killing or replacing the same sex parent and marrying or having possession of the opposite-sex parent. But here, Oedipus does it by accident. He does not do it just because he wants to do it. This makes the play a tragedy, not a psychological play. Although Freud got the idea for his theory from the play, the play challenges the idea that comes from the mind of a person.

Chapter 4: Oedipus Complex and Kafka Tamura

Kafka on The Shore is a novel that was published in 2002 by Haruki Murakami. Its English translation was published later, and in 2006 it received the World Fantasy Award. The novel has the Oedipus complex in it. In the play, Oedipus tries to prevent the prophecy, but in the end, he is unable to prevent it. In the novel, *Kafka on The Shore*, Kafka's father utters the prophecy that haunts Kafka. Kafka Tamura is aware of Oedipus's story. He is haunted by the thought of the prophecy that, like Oedipus, he will also be unable to prevent the prophecy that was said by his father.

4.1 Synopsis of the Novel-

Kafka on The Shore by Haruki Murakami is a novel written in the early twenty-first century. It is a surreal and philosophical novel where two parallels are shown. Through these two parallels, things like exploring identity, fate, memory and the subconscious of the characters are seen. Here there are the presences of two protagonists in this novel. They are Kafka Tamura and Satoru Nakata. Although they are two different characters, they are shown as each other parallel. Kafka Tamura is a teen who is 15 years old. Kafka, the 15-year-old boy, runs away from his home, which is in Tokyo, due to his relation with his father. He feels distant from his father, which is the reason for his escape. He travels to a place called Takamatsu. He finds a place in a library there which is managed by Miss Saeki and Oshima. In the novel, it is seen that as Kafka travels to new places and navigates his new surroundings, he starts to look for his identity. Another character, Nakata,

faced a mysterious incident in his childhood which made him mentally impaired. In the novel, he encounters a violent incident that leads him on a journey which is parallel to Kafka Tamura's. The two narratives of the two characters mirror each other in various ways.

4.2 Id, Ego and Superego in *Kafka on The Shore*-

Id, ego and superego are the terms given by Sigmund Freud. These are used to explain the human psyche. Through these terms of psyche, Kafka's mind can be understood.

Id is the state which is completely unconscious. It seeks immediate pleasure or satisfaction. It includes the basic instincts and desires of a human being and their needs. The Id basically operates the pleasure-related things in the unconscious human mind. It does not need consequences, reality or morality. The prophecy is an essential aspect of the novel *Kafka on The Shore*. The prediction states that Kafka will murder his father followed by sleeping with his mother and sister. This shows the novel's Id impulse. It also represents the unconscious desire of the protagonist, Kafka Tamura, which is pierced through his conscious awareness, turning this prophecy into a terrifying fate in Kafka's life. Kafka also has violent impulses, as through the novel it is seen that he possesses a deep rage. He also has a confusing attraction toward Miss Saeki, who is a potential mother figure to Kafka and Sakura, who is a potential sister figure to Kafka. It is directly driven by the Id factor of the human psyche. He sleeps with Miss Saeki and in his dream, he witnesses unconscious fantasies of violating Sakura. This shows that Kafka's sexual desires are intense, and it is related to longing for connection. Here social taboos are not important. In the novel, we see the inner voice of Kafka Tamura. It is called "Boy Named Crow". In the novel, Crow is Kafka's inner self. It acts

ruthlessly. It is the survivalist inner voice of Kafka. In the novel it is always seen that Crow is always pushing Kafka to become strong and cold. He tells Kafka to be tough. “You are the toughest fifteen-year-old in the world” (Murakami). Here, Crow also represents the Id. It shows the raw will to survive and dominate. He plays the role of protector by giving various pieces of advice, but it happens based on the primary human instinct.

Ego is the conscious self, which acts as the mediator. The ego is the reality. It makes a connection between the primal demands of the Id and the Superego, which is the moral factor in the human mind. It helps one to navigate daily life by making rational decisions, and it helps to maintain stability between the Id and the Superego. In the case of the novel, Kafka runs away from his home. It is his conscious decision. He does that to escape from the curse of his father, the Oedipal prophecy. He plans his escape and goes to Takamatsu. He tries to build a stable life there as he finds a library there and works there diligently. It is seen that Kafka also tries to think rationally. He tries to understand his situation, his feelings, and the things happening around him. Although he is a teen, he still tries to think like an adult. He uses logic and meaning. For example, he has a discussion with Oshima. Kafka has rage. Throughout the novel, he tries to suppress that which is his Id. He also tries to suppress his overwhelming feelings, guilt and fear, which are his Superego. Overall, the Id and Superego of Kafka make his Ego fall under great pressure. His mind is always fighting with the thoughts of the curse, which is the Id, and he also feels heavy guilt and pressure from society, which is the Superego. It shows that the Ego is overwhelmed and sometimes collapses under the pressure.

In the case of the Superego, it represents the internalized ideals and rules of society. Kafka Tamura feels guilty. He feels overwhelming guilt for his mother abandoning him. His mother left him when he was a kid. There is no reason mentioned for why his mother left him. But Kafka blames himself. He also blames himself for the pain he causes to others, and mainly for the prophecy given by his father. All these things make him guilty. He feels cursed. The journey of Kafka, the journey after running away from home, is a punishment for himself. He endures the hardships and isolation as if he deserves them, as if he is cursed or for the fate that he carries with him. He tortures himself psychologically. All these happened as he was horrified by the prophecy and his violent thoughts. His attraction towards Miss Saeki and Sakura creates a deep shame within himself, which is caused by his Superego. His father's curse triggers his sense of morality. Oshima's influence also has an effect on Kafka, which also affects his Superego. Oshima, in the novel, acts as a rational and ethical character. He is calm and has wisdom. Discussion with Oshima makes Kafka moderate his internal Superego.

In the novel, the Id provokes Kafka towards being violent and expressing raw aggression. His hidden desires and violent impulses show his id. The Superego showers Kafka with guilt and shame. It also reflects his moral struggle that he faced inside his mind. And the Ego tries to navigate things like running away from prophecy or building a stable life at the library.

4.3 Addressing and Subverting Oedipus Complex in the novel *Kafka on The Shore*-

The novel *Kafka on the Shore* has the Oedipal Complex in it. Kafka Tamura runs away from his home due to the distance from his father. Kafka's father, Kochi Tamura, was an abusive person.

He was also self-centred and a narcissist. According to Kafka, his father destroyed everything he touched and believed in ancient myths. "[...] My father polluted everything he touched and damaged everyone around him. I don't know if he did it because he wanted to. Maybe he had to. Maybe it's just part of his make-up." (Murakami 218) Kafka's relationship with his father was not normal. He abused Kafka in many ways. Him giving prophecy is a way to abuse Kafka. Kochi Tamura always reminded Kafka about the prophecy that Kafka would kill his father, Kochi Tamura and would sleep with his mother and sister. "My father told me there was nothing I could do to escape this fate. That prophecy is like a timing device buried inside my genes, and nothing can ever change it. 'I will kill my father and be with my mother and sister.'" (Murakami 217) This made Kafka break down and become fragile. It affected Kafka's Id. It made Kafka full of fear that is hidden in his unconscious desire. His ego tried to control his urges. These developed his inner tensions. So, he searched for control as he felt trapped. Kafka's father does not have a good relationship with him. He does not even try to maintain a good relationship with his son. This prophecy made Kafka feel horror which is why he always tried to escape from it. Kafka's father does not leave any trace of his mother and sister. His behavior makes Kafka hate his father more. Even when Kafka runs away from home his father doesn't even look for him. It shows how distant Kafka's relationship with his father is and how unusual his father is.

Kafka's psychology was damaged as it had a great impact on Kafka. One of the reasons for this was the absence of Kafka's mother. When Kafka was only four years old, he was abandoned by his mother. She only took Kafka's sister with her, who was adopted when she was a kid. This had an impact on Kafka. Kafka blames himself for this. Kafka thinks that his features are too much like his father, which is the reason he abandoned him. This impacted Kafka mentally so much that

he decided not to show any emotion on his face just because it has a resemblance to his father and he cannot do anything about it. So, Kafka grew up without his mother's affection. This also made him always look for his mother. Whenever he sees a woman or a girl, he thinks that she could be his mother or sister. The prophecy of his father made him think that what if that woman is his mother or sister? whenever he has an unconscious desire towards any woman. It makes him feel guilty. He is a teenager. Whenever he feels attracted to anyone, he thinks about the prophecy given by his father and feels horrified, ashamed and guilt. In the bus, when he meets Sakura, he thinks of her as a potential sister figure. The same goes for Miss Saeki. He thinks of her as a potential mother figure.

In the novel, it is seen that Kafka tries to go far away from his father. He wants to remove everything related to him. As he cannot destroy his father's genes in him, he decides not to show any emotions. Kafka wanted his father to be dead. The prophecy given by his father is similar to the prophecy in the play *Oedipus Rex*. There is also mention of the prophecy which the fate could not be avoided. If the prophecy comes true then Kafka would do both patricide and incest which Freud mentioned in his Oedipus complex theory. But in the novel, it is different from the play *Oedipus Rex*. Here, the prophecy is given by a normal human being who has a twisted mind not from the Oracle. Kafka runs away from home to escape from the prophecy just like Oedipus. In the novel, Kafka's father was killed by Nakata, not by Kafka. Kafka was distant when the death of Kochi Tamura happened. Here the death of Kafka's father fulfills the first part of the Oedipal prophecy but the prophecy does not come out exactly as it was pronounced. When Nakata killed Kafka's father, the news of Kafka's father's death made no change in the emotions of Kafka. Here, the Id is dominating the Ego as his unconscious desire gets fulfilled. Kafka starts to question

himself whether he is the one behind the murder, as he doesn't remember anything, so the prophecy becomes uncertain. But when his father died, Kafka was in a different region. In the novel, it is seen that Kafka hoped that Miss Saeki would be his mother. Here, Miss Saeki is fit for the mother role not only because of her age but also because she faced something traumatic. Although that was different from Kafka. He feels a weird attraction towards her. He tries to control himself as he feels guilt that Miss Saeki can be his mother which indicates his superego. Kafka remembers that his father was once hit by lightning. This made Kafka think that Miss Saeki probably met his father by coincidence. But he lacks evidence, which remains a mystery. This shows that Kafka is suffering from the Oedipal complex. The important factor of the novel that made the character Kafka have an Oedipal complex is the Oedipal prophecy and his rivalry with his father. His father is not a loving rival in the novel, rather he is a cold and monstrous figure. Kafka runs away from his home so that the prophecy does not come true.

“But your father’s prophecy didn’t come true, did it? You didn’t murder him. You were here in Takamatsu when it happened. Somebody else killed him in Tokyo.” Silently I spread my hands out in front of me and stare at them. Those hands that, in the darkness of night, had been covered with blood. “I’m not so sure of that,” I tell him. And I proceed to tell him everything. About how that night, on my way back to the hotel, I’d lost consciousness for a few hours.” (Murakami 214)

In the novel, the prophecy does not come true. Another character, Nakata, who played an important role in the novel, kills Kafka's father. Nakata does that not out of rivalry. Nakata does that to save cats. Nakata represents the Id, especially he represents the part of Kafka that contains violent impulses and the primal Oedipal wish which does not have any guilt. So, the death of Kafka's

father does not have any relation to Kafka. Kafka's father's death is completely different from the feeling of Kafka, as Nakata does not know Kafka and only kills to stop the cruelty to the cats. The prophecy of the novel that played an important role is an irony, as it is between true and false, as Kochi Tamura dies by Nakata, not Kafka. Kafka runs away from home. Kafka also has no mother or sister. He thinks of Miss Saeki as his mother and Sakura as his sister, but there is no evidence that indicates that they are related to Kafka. Kafka's desire to be intimate with Miss Saeki, whom he hopes to be his mother, and with Sakura, who is like a sister to him. But it all happens without Kafka wanting or knowing. Kafka does not want all these things to happen. It makes the prophecy happen in a strange way that subverts the Oedipal complex, as Kafka does not feel the results that Oedipus felt. His resolution involves acceptance and moving forward. In Freudian theory the mother plays the role of sexual object but Murakami subverts this in *Kafka on the Shore* as he uses the mother figure as a source of healing as the mother figure of the novel, Miss Saeki helps Kafka to process his loneliness and grief. She also understands him in her own way which also helped Kafka to find his identity. She also helped him to process his emotions. The mother figure is not there only for desire. He feels his unconscious desires and guilts which made him rediscover himself and have freedom. In this novel, the prophecy is used as an element to explore deeper, stranger and more existential territory. At the end of the novel, it is seen that Kafka does not meet tragic downfall like Oedipus. Rather he accepts the uncertainty of the prophecy as well as he embraces his emotions and pains. This helps him achieve ultimate self-discovery and freedom.

4.4 Conclusion-

Overall, the character Kafka Tamura suffers from the Oedipal Complex as the elements of the Oedipal complex are present in him, but the whole plot and the story also show the subversion of the Oedipus complex while Kafka struggles to find his identity. His running away from home, running away from prophecy, coming to Takamatsu, working in a library, his surroundings make him find his identity and make him move forward from the Oedipal complex, the curse he was stuck in before.

Chapter 5: Oedipus Complex and Larry

My Oedipus Complex by Frank O'Connor was written in the late twentieth century. The short story mocked the Freudian theory. The story is about a little boy and his feelings towards his father and their family dynamic in a humorous way.

5.1 Summary of *My Oedipus Complex*-

My Oedipus Complex is a narrative about Larry, a five-year-old boy who goes through a sequence of incidents during his childhood. His father, a World War I veteran, is rarely home, making him unfamiliar to his kid. Larry establishes a regular habit of rising with the light, chatting to his feet, and getting into his mother's bed. They spend their days together, conducting errands and attending mass while hoping for Larry's father's safe return. Larry awakens one day to find his father has returned, but he finds him less alluring now that he is not in uniform. The next day, Larry's father takes him on a trip across town, but Larry throws silent tantrums when he doesn't see rails and horses. Larry asks his mother if God would answer his plea to return his father to the fight, but she responds that God will not. Larry awakens the next morning on his parents' bed, dissatisfied with the amount of room his father occupies. His mother cuts him off in an attempt not to wake him, and he concludes that he and his father cannot live together. Larry's mother asks Larry to stop waking his father in the early morning, and Larry grudgingly complies. Larry tells his parents that he intends to marry his mother and have numerous children with her. He appreciates the actuality of the baby considerably less than he anticipated. Larry, frustrated by infant Sonny's

incessant wailing and desire for attention, silently expresses his anger to his father by pretending to talk to himself. Larry feels sympathy for his father and understands his plight because he has been through it himself. Larry discovers his father sleeping next to him in bed, trying to avoid Sonny's cries. Larry consoles his father and gets him a model train for Christmas.

5.2 Id, Ego and Superego in *My Oedipus Complex*-

In *My Oedipus Complex* by Frank O'Connor, the impact of Id, Ego, and Superego can be seen in Larry, who is the protagonist of the short story. Larry has an overwhelming desire for his mother's love, attention and affection. He shows his possessiveness throughout the story. This shows the Id in him. Before his father's return, he gets his mother's attention as he sleeps in the "warm center" of his mother's bed. This shows the Id's satisfaction of Larry. When his father returns, Larry thinks of him as a threat to his love and the attention that he gets from his mother. He feels hatred towards his father as he feels jealous. "Mummy, shouldn't we tell Daddy...he can have my room?" (O'Connor) Larry's tantrums about butter, the insistence that routines be interrupted just for him, and his loud prayers aimed to irritate his father show the demand for immediate satisfaction of his desires that is part of his Id. Larry also has his fantasies that show his unconscious desires that represent his Id, as he wants his father to go back to the war. It shows the Id wish that shows the elimination of his rival, who is his father.

The Ego is the reality principle as Larry tries to cope with his harsh reality, which is his father's presence and his mother's attention being divided. The Ego tries to satisfy the Id's demand within the limitations of the real world, through rationalization and imagination. Larry tries to regain his

mother's attention as before by waking up early to claim his mother, trying to insert himself between his parents physically. He constructs a justification that he made himself and is quite childish for why he deserves his mother more than his father. "Daddy was quite selfish... Mummy belonged to me" (O'Connor). He thinks that his father left the bed because he was there. To adapt to the situation, Larry starts to observe his father's routine and eventually communicates with him.

The Superego is the morality that develops a sense of guilt and understanding inside Larry. After Larry's mother scolds him for his disrespect, Larry feels guilty. His Superego made him realize that his behaviour may have been bad.

After the arrival of the new baby, Larry's rival changes. He becomes an ally with his father. This made his ego have a new reality. The Superego now has less conflict as his primary rival has changed. Larry's Id finds a new target for his possessiveness towards his mother. Overall, through the story, the change in Larry's Id, Ego and Superego has changed according to the circumstances that he faced.

5.3 Addressing and Subverting Oedipus Complex in *My Oedipus Complex*-

The short story is about Larry, who is a five-year-old child. Larry is in his phallic stage as he is five years old. The Oedipal Complex can be seen in a child when he is in his phallic stage according to Freud. The stage ranges from three years to six years old for a child. The short story shows the Oedipal complex in a humorous way. Larry has a good relationship with his mother. His father is a soldier. Larry's father was away at war at the beginning of the novel. During that time, Larry

became close to his mother. He gets all the attention and love from his mother. From the story, it is seen that Larry has a loving relationship with his mother, which is almost monopolized in the case of love, attention and affection that he got from his mother. Larry gets into the habit of getting up with the sun, talking to his feet, and going to his mom's bed. They spend their days together running errands and attending church, waiting for Larry's father's safe return. He spends almost all his time with his mother. He becomes the centre of attention of his mother. He has a good relationship with her. Before the return of Larry's father, it is the happiest time in Larry's life. This period, before the arrival of his father, represents the initial bond of Larry with his mother which forms the foundation for the Oedipal Complex. If one analyses the relationship of Larry with his father, a sense of rivalry comes in. After Larry's father returns from war, the situation in the house changes. The arrival of Larry's father is not joyous to Larry as Larry makes him his rival. Because the attention and love Larry also gets changed. Now the attention is divided as his dad has returned. This has a great impact on Larry. Larry starts to think of his father as his rival. He starts to do things that disrespect him. He also tries to do things that can be labelled as getting his mother back. Larry starts to wake up early and go to his parents' room. Tries to lie between his parents so that they can be separated physically. He also prays loudly that his father will go away. These actions of Larry reflect his Id as here his unconscious desires and aggressions are seen. As Larry is a kid who is just five, he has not had many encounters with his father, as he is a soldier. Due to World War I, Larry's father had to leave for a long time, which resulted in a gap in the father-son bonding. This gap created the rivalry in Larry's mind towards his father as he wants his mother to only give all her love and attention to Larry. Because Larry only got to see his mother and only got her attention when his father was at war. He does not have any loving bond with his father. This made Larry's relationship with his father awkward and he felt jealous when his father got all his mother's

attention when he returned. The character has the Oedipal Complex as he loves his mother. He feels jealous when his father comes back. He wants his father to be away and wants his mother's full love and attention, which makes Larry align with the Oedipal complex. If Larry's father did not have to leave for war, there may have been no gap in their father-son relationship and the Oedipal complex could have been avoided.

The story undermines the Oedipal complex as well. Larry's rivalry with his father is not sexual in a mature sense like Freud describes. It is a childish possessiveness which is exaggerated for humour. Here the mother is not an object for desire. Here the mother plays the role of balance. After the arrival of Larry's father, his mother tries to explain to him the family roles and family dynamics. It makes Larry grow a soft corner towards his father. This reflects his ego trying to create a balance between the reality. His father is a powerless character in the story who plays an awkward role. In the story, it is seen that Larry's hatred for his father does not last long. Larry starts to observe his father's daily routine. Larry also realizes that he does not always get what he wants, which also reflects his ego. After the birth of the baby, Larry realizes that neither he nor his father is the main centre of the attention of his mother. He is also displaced. Rather, it is the baby who is getting all the love and attention. Larry also notices that his dad sometimes gets bothered by the baby. So, Larry makes an ally with his father. This diverts the focus of the Oedipal Complex. Larry also becomes more mature as the story progresses. He starts to realize the human relationship complexes. Larry thinks of his mother as a perfect human. But he sees that his mother also argues with his father and sometimes bosses him around. She is not always as gentle as Larry thinks she is. This makes Larry rethink his mother as she is not perfect to him anymore. So, Larry's obsession starts to fade away slowly as his view on adult dynamics changes. It shows the effect of his

superego which helps him become more aware than his past childish self. It also helps to grow balance inside him. It also has its effect on Larry's Oedipus Complex which shifts as the story ends.

5.4 Conclusion-

Overall, the story is from Larry's perspective, who is just a child. Here, his way of saying things is meant to be full of humour. His way of saying he wants his dad to go away does not make the readers worry; rather, it is a child's way to convey jealousy. Larry does not have a deep-rooted, serious Oedipal Complex. His feelings are here innocent. So, it subverts the seriousness of the Oedipal Complex by the representation of the Freudian theory in a mocking way.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The theory given by Sigmund Freud exists in the three literary texts that are selected in this paper. The play *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles is an ancient text from which the term was derived. In the play, a conflict between the id, ego and superego can be seen. Oedipus's violent and impulsive actions are the reflection of his id. The way he solves the riddle and finds out the murderer of King Laius shows his ego. When Oedipus self-punishes himself, it shows that he does that driven by his guilt which indicates his superego. Moreover, Oedipus in the play kills his father and marries his mother. It indicates a clear Oedipal Complex. But the play subverts the theory of the Oedipal Complex given by Freud as Oedipus's crime happens due to his ignorance and his fate not because of unconscious desire. This makes the play more about fate, identity and human limitations and less of forbidden desires. The Oedipal Complex is present in contemporary writings as well which can be seen through *Kafka on The Shore* where the Oedipal prophecy can be seen. But here the prophecy is not used to confirm Freud's theory, rather it helps to subvert the theory. The Oedipal prophecy here is given by Kafka's father about Kafka where he predicts that Kafka will commit patricide and incest. But none of these happen directly or consciously. Kafka's father was killed by Nakata. In the novel, there is not any mention of who Kafka's mother or sister is. Kafka's connection with Sakura and Miss Saeki happened and is full of uncertainty as it happened without his awareness. The incidents of the novel play the role of surreal and symbolic experience that lead Kafka to his self-understanding rather than a fulfillment of repressed desires. The prophecy here is not about fate coming true like *Oedipus Rex* instead it is about the expiration of identity, memory and reality. It shows the thin line between destiny and coincidence as well. In the short story *My Oedipus Complex*, the protagonist Larry shows his feelings towards his parents in a humorous

way. His id, ego, and superego play an important role here to show how the Oedipal Complex in a child can be seen and how it shifts. His id dominates him when he wants all his mother's affection and attention. This makes his father his rival. After his father's return, as time passes, he tries to adjust to his reality. It shows his ego. His superego starts to show after he was scolded. In the story, the presence of the Oedipal Complex is seen as Larry has a rivalry with his father and wants all the love and attention from his mother. But it is a phase here; as the time passes by in the story Larry starts to understand and eventually the rivalry shifts. He then starts to see his parents as imperfect adults as his view changes. Here, the transformation that occurred in the story complicates the Oedipus Complex as the story shows the replacement of jealousy with a more understanding family bond. These three literary texts show how the Oedipus complex can go beyond the traditional framework as these contain the theory and at the same time challenge them. If the three texts are compared the Oedipal complex can be seen through their family relationships, sexual dynamics and identity. The play *Oedipus Rex* the role of fate is more prominent, the novel *Kafka on The Shore* is more of self-discovery and the short story *My Oedipus Complex* tells of a funny family complex which shows that the texts subvert the Freudian Complex. The three texts show how the theory is addressed and subverted at the same time in the fiction from ancient play to contemporary novel.

Overall, the fictions that are used not only depict the Oedipus Complex but also reshape it as they reveals the family roles, sexual dynamics and personal identity of the protagonists. The subversion of the theory opens the space for diverse interpretation that goes beyond the traditional Oedipal framework given by Sigmund Freud.

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