

**Reading the Adolescent Novel, *This Blog Will Be Ceded*, Based on
the Principles of Lacanian Criticism**

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Introduction

Lacanian criticism is a branch of contemporary literary criticism that examines the process of subjectivity in the individual. The ideas of this branch of criticism come from the thoughts of Jacques Lacan, the renowned French psychologist. Lacan considers the process of individuality to be a passage from the imaginary to the symbolic order. In the imaginary stage, the child cannot distinguish between objective and subjective and does not differentiate himself or herself from the other. After the transition from infancy and oedipal stage, the imaginary union of the child and the mother disappears upon the arrival of the father and the child enters the symbolic order. In the symbolic order, the father and his law dominate. By acquiring language and internalizing many social rules, the child gains living conditions in the symbolic stage. But, he/she can never be safe from the rush of sweet memories of the imaginary order.

In *This Blog Will Be Ceded*, Farhad Hassanzadeh, a well-known author of children's and adolescents' literature in Iran, tells the story of a teenage boy named Zal whose absence of parents has had a profound psychological effect on his life. The two factors of the mother's absence

in childhood and the father's departure in early adolescence play important roles in shaping Zal's psychological structure. Influenced by these two events, Zal has problems that have led him to a certain type of life. The presence of symptoms such as a strong desire to return to the imaginary union with the mother, turning to the substitute objects of maternal desire, and also wandering among the various objects of desire, shows that Lacan's approach is the best model through which the psychological characteristics of this character can be analyzed.

Method

This research uses descriptive content analysis method and attempts to analyze Hassanzadeh's *This Blog Will Be Ceded* according to Jacques Lacan's ideas in the fields of individuality process, imaginary realm, symbolic realm and father's name. In the method of content analysis, the main emphasis is on finding and presenting hidden messages in the text, and since the present study is undertaken to validate and expand the framework of Jacques Lacan's theory, it is of the directional content analysis method.

Discussion

According to Lacan, in the Oedipal period, the child, realizing the mother's desire for the father, tries to maintain a bond of solidarity with his mother, which he experienced in the pre-Oedipal period, by imitating what the mother likes. According to Lacan, the mother, who is the center of the child's demands in infancy, becomes the central nucleus in the child's psyche, whose presence or absence can disrupt the

child's psyche. In this novel, the main character does not have a mother and has nothing in mind except fading memories of her.

With the transition of the child from the imaginary realm to the symbolic realm, the imaginary bond between the child and the mother breaks and this issue eliminates the mother in the symbolic system; therefore, the subject tries to replace the lack of objects. In the symbolic realm, Zal replaces Ms. Touran with her mother. In different parts of the story, the reader can feel this. Whenever Zal talks about Touran, the desire to return to the feeling of wholeness and oneness of the imaginary realm comes to mind. Zal's constant and unwanted attractions towards Touran's house, where the possibility of experiencing pre-Oedipal relaxation is represented, is repeated in the story in different situations. However, as Jacques Lacan says, after the subject enters the symbolic realm, it is impossible to return to the imaginary realm. The lack of this impossibility is only filled by some objects, which Lacan calls *objet petit a*. The most important object for Zal that covers the feeling of absence in him is Fariba, Touran's daughter and Zal's lover.

Both Fariba and Touran and even the character of Reza the tailor are motherly symbols for Zal, who remind him of the tranquility of the imaginary realm. That is why in Zal's mind, Fariba joins Touran khanum. According to the characteristics we see of her, Fariba fits into Lacan's proposed system of *objet petit a*, but in Zal's fantasies, when there is no more step left than death and the rupture of the symbolic realm, Fariba reminds him the main symbol of her mother's desire, Touran khanum. Zal cannot return to the realm of imaginary union with the mother, but can restore that lost alliance with mother replacements.

In addition to maternal symbols, Lacan also considers *objet petit a* to be one of the main refuge of subjects in the symbolic realm. According to the evidence in the text, Zal cannot remain in the symbolic realm and is constantly seeking to escape from this realm. He cannot tolerate the homelessness of the symbolic realm and on the other hand, he cannot escape it. Paying attention to various objects of desire (*objet petit a*), such as Fariba, Tuba (Fariba's parrot) and, most importantly, the keys, each of which is a symbol of longing for the mother, are some of his attempts to escape the symbolic realm, but none of them work.

In addition, in Lacan's model, the symbolic order is where multiple signifiers without any signified are dominant. The subject in this space cannot reach the signified and is only engaged in signifiers. Only the name of the father as the regulator of social law can free the subject from confusion between signs. Just as the subject first acquired a unified image in the mirror stage, it is possible to achieve wholeness and unity in the symbolic realm by seeing oneself in the mirror of society. The name of the father symbolically regulates social law. A child who survives the oedipal period symbolically imitates the father, and social rules and conscience are the result of the internalization of the father's character. It goes without saying that if this period of assimilation with the father is not done properly, the person will not have a stable personality and the constant hesitation resulting from this shortcoming will delay the process of identification in him. Since the father's name is a node that ends the permanent suspension of meaningless signifiers, his existence is considered a basic condition for stabilizing the character. Therefore, the faltering identity of Zal can be attributed to the absence of a father in his life.

Result

Zal, the protagonist of the story, is a child who is deprived of his parents. His mother was lost when he was a child, and his father left him to another person and suffered a vague fate. The loss of the mother, whose vague memories are in the corner of his mind, causes him to repeatedly throw himself from the symbolic to the imaginary tranquility of the imaginary realm with the aim of repeating sweet experiences. Zal also covers the absence of the mother in the symbolic realm by substituting maternal objects. Ms. Touran is the main maternal object for him; but besides this character, there are other characters such as Fariba and Reza the tailor who mix in Zal's mind with the character of Touran from the perspective of representing the peace of the lost mother. The consequence of the absence of the father is also the permanent suspension of Zal among multiple signifiers in the symbolic realm.

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