

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology  
of Egypt / Egyptology

THE PSYCHOSOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF JEAN MICHEL BASQUIAT'S  
DRAWINGS IN VIEW OF THE PSYCHOANALYSIS (SIGMUND FREUD)

*Hawraa Ali Abd Muhammad<sup>1</sup>, Ali Shnawa Wadi<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1,2</sup>College of fine Arts, University of Babylon / Iraq

Corresponding Author's Email: [Hawr1795@gmail.com](mailto:Hawr1795@gmail.com)

Email: [fine.aliswal.hassnay@uobabylon.iq](mailto:fine.aliswal.hassnay@uobabylon.iq)

**Hawraa Ali Abd Muhammad, Ali Shnawa Wadi. The Psychosocial Dimensions Of Jean Michel Basquiat's Drawings In View Of The Psychoanalysis (Sigmund Freud)-- Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 17(9), 10157-10167. ISSN 1567-214x**

**Key Words: Psychosocial Dimensions, Jean Michel Basquiat.**

**ABSTRACT**

The modernity output is a real content which represents the psychological and internal needs. The huge turn in the economic, social, political and the liberty changes which have been obtained by the artist in his own operation and the selection of subjects, which explicitly reveals by his freedom, needs, liberty, concern and fear, without any other past soiled subjects. Graffiti reflects this research, which represents a nowadays trend, Jean Michel Basquiat, who passed away for two decades ago. At this moment, his works have been bidding. Also, his works are the biggest inquiry and questioning side. This research consists a methodological part, which considers this research by revealing the problem, the significance, aims and limits. The theoretical part includes the procedures, results and conclusion .

**THE PROBLEM**

That the permanent connection between psychology and art, mainly in the public and private arts. The soul and its disorders are the primary artist's results in the art relation. So, Art is psychological outputs that present as a contribution to the creation of art which inserts it into the human experience through its history, with its joy and sorrow within the social experience and the era's variables. The artist proceeds according to the psychological needs which secretly controlled him in the connecting elements and his arts components, which may achieved according to direct knowledge of the psychological situations product, to link the components.

An artist differs in posits his creative experience, when he giving shape with an artistic symbol that undertakes a mission of disclosure and expression. Art, in one of his aesthetic theories, is an expression which makes the artist moving in an intermediate side in order to convey through it his aesthetic emotions, whether its nature or imagination intellect in order to convey it to others. This study investigates the psychological dimensions and sheds light on one of the biggest representatives of Graffiti art, "Jean-Michel Basquiat", the artist was distinguished by a special social condition that affected and influenced his artistic productions, according to postmodern ideas. The problem of the current research is summarized by a problem that imposes itself through questions represented as follows: did psychological dimensions pose a phenomenon through the analysis of the implicit, formal, stylistic and technical treatments in the drawings of "Jean-Michel Basquiat" in light of the school of psychoanalysis.

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE**

The significance of this research boil down to help the researchers in the In the artistic, aesthetic fields, education and psychology sciences. Also in art and critical figurative.

### **THE AIMS**

This research aims to recognize the psychosocial dimensions of Jean Michel Basquiat's drawings in view of the psychoanalysis

### **LIMITS**

The limits of this research represents by the of Jean Michel Basquiat's drawings in United States of America (1975-1988 BC)

### **THE DEFINITIONS**

#### ***Dimensions***

Semantically (extent, length, width) (Al-Bustani, Fuad Afram: 37). Dimension as a term is an actual amount, set out by its own or other amounts. (Andre, 2001: 285)

#### ***Psychosocial dimensions***

Pragmatically, a researcher defined the psychosocial dimensions as subject that artist's reflects needs, emotions, feeling and suffering, which accompanied with artistic expression operations of Jean Michel Basquiat through the style, technique, content and procedures artistic formation.

#### ***Psychoanalysis***

A school of psychology by the Austrian doctor "Freud" who described the unconscious and the unconscious dynamics those are stored in the form of repressed thoughts, fears and desires that a person is not aware of them, which are the most powerful of his behavior. Freud set out a plan that contains the elements which make the personality, the Id, Ego and Super-Ego, Its owners

agree with the school, that basic instincts are the motives of human behavior, and they differ with them in the number of these two basic instincts: the life instinct or the sexual instinct, and the instinct of death or enmity .

***Psychological theories in psychoanalysis definitions and applications (sigmund freud)***

An attempt to understand human behavior, Sigmund Freud presents psychoanalysis. Also, he divides the human soul into three parts:

***(Id)***

The first personal system and the structure which the Ego and Super-Ego have differ. Id consists of any existing inherited psychological contents and instincts (Abd Al-khaleq, 1983: 402)

***(Ego)***

The administrative system of the personality, which is in control of the of behavior. chooses the aspects to which it responds from the surrounding environment, the instincts that are saturated and the manner, besides following the (Ego) principle of objective reality and works according to secondary processes to prevent the emptying of tension until the revealing the suitable is subject to satisfy the need. (Freud, 1979 : 5)

***(Super-Ego)***

A social system that seeks to refine the personality according to the cultural pattern prevailing in his environment and society. According to the ideal reality and the Supre Ego (Freud, 1979: 5). Freud's point of view, the Super-Ego is the moral shield of the personality, it represents what is ideal and not what is realistic, this moral shield tends to perfection rather than pleasure. The role of the Super-Ego is in the stopping of all desires such as Id, sex, aggression ,instant gratification inclination according to the principle of pleasure and the moralization of Ego is closer to the ideal. (Abd Al-khaleq, 1983: 402)

***Freud's personal structure***

Freud's original concept divided the personality into three levels of consciousness: the feeling, the unconscious, and the pre-feeling. Feeling, as Freud's defined it as representing all the feelings and experiences that we perceive consciously at any moment, Like my writing of words, and perceptive of my pen touch, the view of the page, as well as the idea that we are trying to express.

Freud considered feeling a small limited domain of a person's personality, because only a small part of his thoughts, feelings and memories presented in the perceived feeling at a moment. Freud resembles the mind as iceberg, the feeling represents the part floating above the water's surface the summit of the

mountain, while the mass below the surface represents the unconscious (Duane, 1983:33).

What is the unconscious? Freud's discovery of its great importance in a person's life to the time of his study Hysteria disease since 1888 AD in association with (Joseph Breuer) (1841-1925 AD) and it became clear to them as a result of this study that the hysterical symptoms arise from repressed memories in the unconscious and these symptoms disappear as long as the patient is able to vent and express these memories during treatment (Freud, 1982: 13)

Freud's considers Pre-feeling as phenomena that are not actually perceived and controlled by the individual when he wants to recover some memories in case of need. Also, as the natural storage of knowledge that includes sensual, subjective and objective experiences which easily enabling the person to transfer them into feeling. (Dunsell, 1986: 226).

As structural constructivism, the Ego becomes more differentiated and dynamic. Ego insures the increase in the control over instinctive energy sources, this leads to the filtering of behavior patterns. The diversity of the subject of the driving forces in the form of tendencies as trends and growth of psychological processes (sensual perception, remembering, and recall) making the personality as integrated structure, this means that the energy is exchanged between the mentioned three aspects, and it is more interaction with external science (Calvin, 1988, p. 82).

The driving forces and deterrent forces become more stable, the more of person's age, the more personality's functions proved and became more regular and established a pattern. In addition, the person is improving a high experience through learning in order to interact with frustration, anxiety and any other changes happened to the person, such as:

1. Maturity - mental and physical maturity and language development
2. Painful outside discomfort due to hunger and deprivation (external frustration)
3. Painful discomfort that appears due to internal conflict (driving power against the deterrent power)
4. Insufficiency.
5. Anxiety. (Calvin, 1988, pp. 82\_85)

The way in which individual confronts all of the above and tries to overcome through it in order to adapt those obstacles by these mechanisms, Inertia, Revelation, Distillation, Projection, Stabilization and Justification.

Freud emphasizes the connection between creativity and sacrifice. He believes that ascending the top of genius requires the individual sacrifice (the principle of pleasure) and the sexual deprivation in order to reach that high level in the field of creativity (Abdel-Khaleq, 1983: 52).

The civilized artists and creators are people who have been able to devote themselves towards creativity bypassing the satisfaction of their instinctive. As

Freud told, Huras realized before the psychoanalytic theory came into being, he said: "When a person wants to reach the top of poetry, there is no escape from suffering, trembling, sweating and depriving himself of love and alcohol ..." (Muslim Hassab, 1987: 51).

Freud's theses that presented on mental disorders were able to explain human behavior and refer it to subconscious factors, in contrast to the materialistic-physiological faith, who see that psychological states are effects of brain and nervous system changes (Hussein Yassin, 1990: 62). The behavior of the person is associated with a set of emotions, feelings and mood associated with that behavior.

Later, Freud modified his theory of instincts after finding a tendency for the individual to destroy and aggression, which prompted him to assume only two basic instincts, namely Ego and the instinct to destroy. As well as the conflict between love for Ego. The goal of the these basic instincts is to work on forming larger units and to work on their survival. The goal is to synthesize things into another, the goal of the second instinct is to dismantle ties (Freud, 1988: 51). It can be assumed that the ultimate goal of the instinct of destruction is to return living organisms to an inorganic state, for this reason it is also called (the instinct of death), It tends to return to a previous life, but this saying is not true of Ero (the instincts of love), this means that living matter was composed and its parts dispersed and it tends to unite (Freud, 1988: 51).

Freud links sexual perversion with tension, as he believes that tension is the current moral and physical in satisfaction, it does not necessarily have causes in childhood. The actual cause is the lack of a normal relationship with the other gender, which leads to violent relationships and the killing love among the manifestations of perversion (sadism, masochism, idolatry, visionary. According to Freud's view, estrangement occurs as a result of a split of emotional and subconscious power within the human psyche when he says: "Self-estrangement occurs as a result of the disconnect between the forces of feeling and the subconscious, the person becomes far from himself, that unconscious is the greatest power in personality, as it contains repressed desires that move his behavior "(Freud, 152).

### *(Jean-Michel Basquiat 1960-1988)*

The influential American artist, who achieved the fame in the late 1970s and early 1980s was credited with employing graffiti in the world of fine arts. (Keith Haring), whose work emerged from early on in downtown New York with his friend (Al Diaz) under the pseudonym (Samoo), Jean worked on many collaborations with pop art icon (Andy Warhol), which is part of the abstract expressionism movement, through his paintings, he mixed African images and symbolic images with distinctive gestural signs in addition to bright spots. An exhibition by Michael was held in the Whitney museum of American Art between 1992-1993, he worked in New York until his death due to drugs overdose (adam brown, 2009: 94-97).

Basquiat focused on revealing divisions such as wealth versus poverty, integration versus isolation, internal experience versus external experience,

and social commentary was used in panels as a "starting point for deeper truths about the individual. He came to power structures and racial organizations while his companions were political and direct in their criticism of colonialism and class struggle support (Hoffman, Fred, 2005, 129-139).

### *Procedures of research*

1. The original community: The present society was specifically determined by the artist's works during the period from 1975-1988.
2. The research sample: The sample was selected using the intentional method from the paintings according to the expert opinion in this field, (3) samples were chosen in accordance with the artist's style.
3. Research Tool: The researcher prepared a form containing the indicators were developed in spot of stated theoretical framework for when analyzing the sample.
4. The validity and reliability of the tool: After identifying the paragraphs and placing them in a special form, it was presented to a group of experts and using the Cooper formula, an agreement ratio adopted by (84) 0/0, which is a new agreement percentage that can be relied in calculating the validity of the tool in such cases, until it became as a final form. Also, The researcher adopted the interpretation analyzing method in the sample according to the following:

A- Consistency among analysts, which means that analysts working individually to reach the same results when analyzing the same content which using the same classification.

B- Consistency over time, which means that the researcher receives the same findings after re-analyzing over a certain amount of time. Using the same techniques of study, the analysts used both methods simultaneously, as the researchers randomly picked two paintings from the initial sample of (10) paintings, and the analysts were asked to examine both paintings separately. The researchers also analyzed twice in a row the same sample with an interval of eighteen days of the analyzing. The first and second analysis are to find the researcher's consistency over time, after calculating the agreement coefficient by using Scott's equation, that the agreement percentage was (87).

### **METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH**

The researcher adopted the descriptive method in analyzing the current research.

### *Analyzing the samples*



***Work Subject: Masculinity******Completion Date: 1982***

Basquiat's wonderful masterpiece, shaped as group of separate and scattered elements on a tall cloth, which stirred controversy as usual by recipients of his artistic productions, it contains a potential animal element based in the product which shape appears closer to the metamorphosis near the right of the work, a long sharp knife stained with blood. It is a symbol of authority, bones and various lines distributed over the artwork. The main character in the artwork is isolated from the public, representing its main object. The objects in the artwork are scattered with various lines and dark colors that carry an imaginary trait in communicating the idea with a diversity of shapes, lines, proportions and colors. The characteristic of is predominant feature in this draw through the presence of aggression tools such as the knife stained with blood, border colors such as black, red and brown as well as the distortion occurring the shape with labels for movement, it calmed down in the moment of implementation. The idea of the high and inflated Ego of the artist is very clear, especially through the crown of the king of Basquiat used in his paintings, his attempt here, to prove his marginalized existence in reality. The artist has also closed the space around him with an intuitive without intending to express his isolation and isolation of his things by excluding external elements and uninvolved in the close subject with the constant attempt to complicate the general idea and to add ambiguity to his vocabulary with a clear dominance of a pessimism sense in the work atmosphere. In this work, the artist proposes his sexual issue in a pornographic manner declared through the title of the work and the warm and sad colors that are evident by invading the bone here and the lines in the male and female genital organs, with the two arrows in the lower right of the work with a hostile tone that raises the issue of his society by accepting sex, in revenge for the permanent marginalization and racism accompanying their lives in order to reach power, control and rule and marking the red star above the head of the expected avenger animal. Michel has formulated his subject in an unfamiliar template, by embodying the human body in a form subject to the artist's imagination, the human body with well-known Michel's features into a monster in a flat and brutal side, which gave it a limit to the mass where finding the head elongation, prey horns and the awaited irregular eyes. As well as the details of the body have been dealt with an absurd way that reduced to the endings by agitation the structure of this work.



**Work Subject: Michel and dog****Completion Date: 1980**

This work contains a human figure in the middle, which is the same as the figure of the artist. The black color and his curly hair is standing to the right of a dog, dominated by the two characters the spirit of imagination, with an absurd background like an explosion made up of several colors that may appear at first glance colors of joy and relaxation, but in reality they are colors as bloody character shattered from within with her pains, begging for love through those colors. The lines in this work are broken, varied, disconnected, as well as the colors are dispersed and distorted, varied and numerous for the remarkable diversity in the entirety of the lines, colors and proportions and the intense movement represented by the dog's legs speeding in his brutal and ready intent. All this indicates the personality of the artist who suffers anxiety and instability. The artist tries to cover this through rebellion and proving by exaggerating the figures of his work and its aggressive path of highlighting the human personality as well as highlighting the teeth of the dog. We find the artist has replaced the human skin and blood with strong iron wires suggesting strength, violence, pain and control in order to spread aggression and caution in the soul, he borrowed his pictures of the miserable dog as his friend, who trying to show a difference of what they are, except that the artist and his characters suffer from poverty, impotence and introversion by closing the space on himself and his permanent inability to engage the recipient in an atmosphere and to involve the characters and their lack of distribution within the work, the permanent constriction in his presenting ideas showed as strong and frank colors, the atmosphere of pessimistic business. The artist is trying to highlight by emphasizing and exaggerating the genitals and exaggerating. Michel's work is strongly represented in the system of contemporary intellectual, psychological, social and artistic relationships that tend to dismantle the foundations of centers, curricula, references and their implications that have combined, marginalized, profane, absurd, temporary and what topples the elites and comply with the aspirations of the marginalized. The art that strongly attracted with this system was the most inconsistent with what is traditional, prevalent and methods. So, it worked in a verified and great way to oppose the culture and to overthrow the standards of beautiful art, to permissible distortion and ugliness by adopting formal, subtext, technical and stylistic treatments that were strange and repulsive. Therefore, the embodiment of violence in all its manifestations was largely justified within psychological contexts, until the cause of his death and last moments.





***Work Subject: The king***

***Completion Date: 1982***

The work appears a basic character who has gained great mastery over the length of the work with a primitive sense, the right hand carrying an arrow moving it quickly and emotionally, in the left hand we find carrying a sword. The character is completely isolated from the external environment, but works to adapt to avoid the danger it senses in their entirety vary between broken and sharp, thick, converging and diverging, bearing the border characteristic and giving a sense to the recipient of the feeling of the state of experienced anxiety by the artist. The intersections of the face and sharp teeth with the painful lines and the prejudicial signs express the violence by the artist and the rebellion against his changing social, racial and industrial reality with a negative rebellion. He showed the space, posed his characters and positioned them with somewhat mysterious foot, reluctance to share her usual life interaction, merely enticing her with remarkable sexual contact with exuberance, highlighting affirmation of his masculine side. Michel was keen to ensure that his experience in the field of his use of this technology at the stylistic and technical level bear his individual features in proposing his personal concept by making a unique in his fields of vision of the postmodern human form as the idea was presented with its details. He focuses on uniqueness with stylistic and formal treatments that went overboard with distortion, in pictures that he was pulling from the bottom of the unconscious and formed in a primitive or childish way of regressing, in which the forms flowed in chaotic and spontaneous which dissipate every system, method, descriptions and intentions.

## **RESULTS**

In spot the analysis of the research sample, achieving the goal of the research. The researcher reached a number of results, which are as follows:

1. The erotica was associated with the axis of aggression, where it appeared in the entirety of the sample (1), (2) and (3). The male penis has to prove itself and compensate for the deficiency that it touches from society and compensate for that by broadcasting permissibility with a sadistic whiff.
2. The form of aggression and rebellion is a second essential feature in the overall research sample, as it appeared in the sample (1), (2) and (3), as this was shown by the pictorial vocabulary that the artist dealt with in terms of blood colors, sharp machines, terrifying facial contours and highlighting sharp teeth with high employment For the abuse of ugliness, distortion of the human body and its provocative appearance, and to present a person who is constantly prepared for any external symptom.
3. The artist suffered from introversion and isolation throughout his short-term life, so isolation was evident in every research sample (1), (2) and (3). The artist was keen to isolate his characters, especially since most of the characters in his works used to draw himself and call them names related to the self

without another, for most of the products are discontinuous with society and with little interaction is limited to one or two characters, the other character is often an animal or an imagined form that supports his aggression or another male character who exposed him to the homosexual aspect of erotica.

## CONCLUSIONS

The researcher reached the following conclusions:

1. Post-war concepts such as nihilism, cynicism, aggression, freedom to put forward and the clarity of permissibility presented as ranges that took the applications in the works of (Jean-Michel Basquiat), who was dominated by dealing the violence, destruction and aggression as a source of incitement, opposition and resistance rejecting reality, and sacred items, or a system. This was strongly evident in the mentioned sample.
2. The artist also suffered from constant anxiety in the American life and the society as a whole. He was suffering from severe racism like his black-skinned, and he lived and died by feeling of self-isolating.
3. The artist, Michel, tried to compensate his recidivism and the feeling of inferiority towards society by highlighting sexual permissibility and broadcasting it in a semi-vengeful and sadistic manner, we find that he is keep with intersexuality and bisexuality in a homosexual manner, it became clear in the aftermath of his illegal and homosexual relationship with the artists Andy and Rahul. He became over the course of his short journey, then his mental and health condition deteriorated after the death of Andy, after which his life ended with an overdose of drugs.
4. Michel shows a contradiction of what he has in mind, as he always tries to compensate for his society's view through strength and excessive aggression embodied in his strong lines, exaggeration of the size of his provocative and demotivating personalities, exaggeration in legacy and the large size of the hands with imagined and hurtful ends to generate a sense of strength in the other. The images of violence and aggression which he possessed his manifestations in paintings were dominated by the tendency towards formal and contingent treatments of primitive, innate and brutal character in exchange for civil life and the repercussions of the tendency towards distortion and the breach of order, harmony and the aggression.
5. Michel's method of executing his characters in an anatomical way with sloughed skin highlights the entirety of his internal organs, but as compensation of by the need of the integrity of his parts and the integrity of his body, especially after he exposed to a violent accident in which he lost his parts of his organs, so the primitive slice lines is strong.

## REFERENCES

- Andre: Laland's Philosophical Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, ed. 2, Awaidat Publications, Beirut, 2001.
- Al-Bustani, Fouad Afram: Munjid Al-Talib, 3rd floor, Dar Al-Mashriq, Beirut, Dr.

- Abd Al-Khaleq, Ahmad Muhammad: The Basic Dimensions of Personality, 2nd Edition, (Beirut: University House for Printing and Publishing, 1983).
- Gibran, Masoud: Pioneer of Students, House of Science for the Millions, Beirut, Dr.
- Hussein, Muslim Hasab: Poetic Creativity from a Psychological Point of View, Afaq Arabia Magazine, No. 6, June, Baghdad, 1987.
- Duane, Schlitz: Theories of Personality, T., Hammoudi Al-Karbouli, and Abdul-Rahman Al-Qaisi, Baghdad University Press, 1983.
- Dunsell, J.F .: Philosophical Psychology, General Cultural Affairs House, Baghdad, 1986.
- Taha, Hussain Yassin and Umayma Yahya Ali Khan: General Psychology, (Mosul: Higher Education Press, 1990).
- Freud: Psychoanalysis and Art, T.: Samir Karam, (Beirut: Dar Al Taleea for Printing and Publishing, D.T).
- Hall, Calvin-S: Principles of Freudian Psychology, T., Dam 11. al-Kayyal, 1st Edition, Al-Mutanabi Library, Baghdad, 1988.
- Street art,the graffiti revolution,adam brown at 01.02 printed and bound,2009, Cedar lewisohn
12. Hoffman,fred.2005 the defining year;notes on five works from the book basquiat