



## **PSYCHO ANALYTICAL STUDY OF EURIPIDES' PLAY ELECTRA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The present study sought to analyze Electra as psychological drama by Euripides. It also explores its relation with modern concept of Electra-complex used by Carl Jung. Through the fictional character of Electra; it discusses the psycho sexual rivalry in the practical and realistic world. Though the play is written in the ancient period it creates avenue for the study of personality by applying Freudian theory of psycho-dynamics & psychoanalysis. It also explores relationship between psychology and its revelation in literature. It focuses on the personality types from literature and its role in the psychology. Electra a play by Euripides has established the theoretical relationship with Carl Jung and Freud's theory of psycho dynamics. Though the play is ancient, It is best expression and depiction of psycho analytical study which was interpreted by critics psycho analysts.*

**Keywords -** *Electra, Psychoanalysis, Psychodynamics etc.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Electra is classical tragedy by Euripides (480-406 B.C.). It deals with psycho sexual rivalry. It is psychological study about daughter's rivalry with mother for the possession of her father. The plot of the play is woven round the theme of woman's all consuming hatred for her mother and stepfather and her love for murdered father and exiled brother.

Electra was daughter of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. When Agamemnon was returning from the Trojan war, he was killed by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus. Electra's brother Orestes escapes from the kingdom and Electra who has been forced to many

**DR. UMAJI ANANDA PATIL**

1Page



a poor farmer so that she will have no power to support her brother Orestes on to take revenge of her enemies. In this play dilemma has created due to the psychosexual conflict between mother and daughter. The whole plot of the play revolves around the character of Electra who makes conspiracy of matricidal revenge with Orestes her brother against Clytemnestra their mother & Aegisthus.

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF ELECTRA BY EURIPIDES:**

As the psychologists thinkers discuss about the concept of Electra complex; its history goes back to the Greek Mythology. Sigmund Freud introduced theory of sexual development which deals with psycho dynamics of girls sexual rivalry with her mother for sexual possession of the father. Carl Jung employed the term Electra complex in 1913. This term was employed after the use of Euripides' character of Electra. In nut shell; Electra complex was defined as when a girl's initial sexual attachment to her mother ends upon discovering that she has no peruse, she then transfer her libidinal desire sexual attachment to her father and increases sexual attachment to her father and increases sexual competition with her mother (en. m.wikipedia.org). Electra complex helps to improve infantile super-ego. It helps to follow the social norms, taboos because fear of a punishment. Each treatment given by Euripides to act of revenge of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus is unique, showing the distinct temper of mind. Electra complex occurs at it phallic stage.

Classical references and allusions are from literature has created dimensions for the psychoanalytic writing. Freud's interpretation on the various master pieces and the personality types through his texts revealed the literature and psychoanalysis are always bound together. According to Andrew slade 'Freud's application of literary examples suit psychoanalysis because so much of literature circulates around the problems and human struggles (Slade Andrew. Page 59). Literature is an expression of the conflicts of human life and the solutions that humans seek to mitigate those tussles in their Psyche Freud had gone through the history of literature as manifestation for models of human living. In his psycho dynamics theory Freud has employed the model of Electra complex from Euripides' Electra play to establish the psychological framework of the problems with mothers and fathers, fights with brothers and sisters, friends and lovers, husbands and wives. He supposes them as stuff of literature.

Electra becomes the model story in the psychodynamic account of human development because it is story of intergenerational conflict. The daughter lives between two parents as rival of the mother and pursuer of the father. Electra is mythical play of intergenerational conflict driven by jealousy, love and ambition. This play not only focuses on the theoretical discussion but it implies major dimensions of human psyche. According to Freud, "women



represent the interests of the family and of sexual life. The work of civilization has become the business of men; it confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimations of which women are little capable (Wolferys Julian, Page 67). The Euripides' play can be put into this frame work through which tolerance power of the women can be justified. An understanding of Freud's texts are foundational to interpret the representation of Electra complex in the Euripides' play Electra.

## CONCLUSION:

As we analyze this play in the frame work of psycho-analytic study, it establishes very close relationship between personality types from literature and psychology. Though, Electra is myths from ancient Greek literature, it establishes the everlasting theory of Electra complex. It represents the universal personality types in the practical world. To interpret the personalities in the world, Freud has taken references from the literary masterpieces of the world and laid down the theory of the psychoanalysis. Freud's exploration into literary texts for his study; further helped to critics to develop the avenues of this study's. Though the term was first used by Carl Jung, it stands opposite to the phenomenon of Oedipus complex established by Freud. Psychoanalysis developed with literary personality types helps to establish everlasting relationship. Literature and psychology are reciprocal to each other. It is hard to think about psycho analysis without Literature.

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