

Cultural and Historical Progression: The Psychology of Literary Allusions in Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* (Trilogy of Desire)

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Vol. V, No. II (Spring 2020)

Pages: 169 – 175

p-ISSN: 2616-955X

e-ISSN: 2663-7030

ISSN-L: 2616-955X



Abstract

The psychology of allusion is often multi-faceted as a reference to an artefact, which could be a character from a literary piece, the quoted words of a character, a place in the country or an event from history. The reference item should be familiar to the readers. The current research identifies literary allusion in The Financier (1912) and the characters referred to Ouida's Tricotrin (1869), Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre (1847), Amelia Edith Huddleston Barr's A Bow of Orange Ribbon (1886), Edward Bulwer Lytton's Kenelm Chillingly (1874), and William Shakespeare's Macbeth (1603) which is explained with reference to the plot of Theodore Dreiser's Trilogy of Desire: The Financier (1912), The Titan (1914) and The Stoic (1947). The available literature review testified that a thorough evaluation of the allusions within the novel had not been accomplished to date, although these allusions link the literary pieces of the greatest minds in literature.

Key Words: Allusion, Multi-Facet, Culture, History, Intended Meaning

Introduction

Theodore Dreiser teases the readers by using literary allusion in his novels. Michel de Montaigne highlights the use of allusion and says, "I quote others in order to better express myself" (34). Theodore Dreiser wrote about weak but determined character, Frank Cowperwood, in *The Financier* (1912) "the mediocre and the inefficient attain to a classic stature when dignified by pain" (Dreiser, 480). To explore and highlight the academic gap, William Irwin tries to explain the literary term, allusion, in *The Aesthetics of Allusion* (2002) for the purpose to understand the function of this term. He claims that "An allusion may be said to be a reference which is indirect in the sense that it calls for associations that go beyond mere substitution of a referent" (521).

Allusions convey connected stuff, interfacing the present to a past idea or thought. Critically, these associations are not unequivocal. The implications of references are taken cover behind a signifier and expect undertones to be made by the watcher and just suggested by the content. Accordingly, the planned data intended to be imparted through implication is rarely clear, requiring an educated presumption on the part regarding the crowd.

A famous critic, Carmela Perri (1978), explores the various aspects of the term allusion "In allusion, although the aspects of connotation are unexpressed in the allusion; these are tacitly specified" (290). Despite the fact that the idea of inferences makes for the vague correspondence of thoughts, a deferral of implication, the proposed importance is generally obvious inside the suggestion of a particular setting. In this manner, there might be an abundance of implications that could be conjured; however, it is reliant on the setting of the circumstance to which perspectives are intended to be referred to.

Mention can hence go about as shorthand for significance, a stacked and conservative device to convey data. They don't have to account for themselves and are regularly decreases of the thing being insinuated, a bit of the first to speak to the entirety. Susan Stewart(1980) highlights "the devices of allusion and the devices of nostalgia

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work by the display and not by explanation" (1128). Allusion provides certain references for the readers to understand the quality of literary pieces in British literature or American literature. Like a language, not every person talks about, and many can feel lost or confused on the off chance that they don't perceive the source material the inference is referring to. William Irwin(2002) enhances the same idea in *The Aesthetics of Allusion* by exploring that allusion is "typically draw on information not readily available to every member of a cultural and linguistic community" (521).

The Financier (1912) centres around well-known sources of allusions; however, the potential outcomes of things to be intimated are perpetual. The purposes behind the suggestion are close to as endless as the sources. Inspirations of the old to explain the new through quotations, characters, historical events, religious tales and social ethics. The size of allusion is limitless in literary pieces, but the user should be appropriate for the purpose that the original text never loses its quality. Recommendations can, thus, work for all intents and purposes at any level. As arranged with a point to establish a relationship between the two texts. Allusion testifies the new with a deliberate attempt. The literary allusions in Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* (1912) are mentioned as the characters referred to Ouida's *Tricorin* (1869), Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Amelia Edith Huddleston Barr's *A Bow of Orange Ribbon* (1886), Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Kenelm Chillingly* (1874), and William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1603) which is explained with reference to the plot of Theodore Dreiser's *Trilogy of Desire* (1972). William Irwin (2001) points out in *What is an Allusion?* that the purpose behind allusion is to transport and predicate the resemblance; "An author must intend this indirect reference, and it must be in principle possible that the intended audience could detect it" (293).

Note that these are essential, instead of adequate conditions, for a mention to happen. Incidental implications are in no way, shape or form uncommon. Some of them happen on the grounds that specific chronicled or social items are so omnipresent inside a society that many don't have the foggiest idea about the inception of the mention. William Irwin takes note of the trouble for the crowd of both finding and incidentally concocting references; "Detecting allusions sometimes demands the precision of a science, while making fruitful accidental associations sometimes demands the creation of an art" (296). It is not a matter of interest that the writer uses allusions intentionally or unintentionally, nor how far or wide these implications are intended to work. That is left to singular examination inside every extraordinary setting to be held up to the investigation of academic perfectionism.

My concern is the further investigation of the idea of the reference when distinguished, paying little mind to their causes. Consequently, if the creator means it, in the event that a literary allusion is referenced in a piece of literature, it is important to analyze the reason behind it. Roland Barthes(2001) features the same as "a text's unity lies not in its origins, but in its destination" (3).

All things considered, implications planned by the creator are doubtlessly a piece clearer in their motivation as a type of correspondence, in spite of the fact that this doesn't make them any less tricky. Since correspondence is a vague method for passing on importance, and inferences worsen this circumstance, things do get lost in route.

Allusions are not the necessary part of a literary piece. It can exclude from the text, keeping in view its nature. It is based on specific knowledge and may or may not be in the minds of readers. To conclude, allusions can either create familiarity or detachment. The authors of *The Oxford Dictionary of Allusion* compiled more than four hundred pages based on characters from the literary pieces, people from the history, stories and different locations for the purpose to "identify and explain many such allusions used in English and to illustrate their use by quotations from a variety of literary works and other texts" (Delahunty et al. vii). This is for all intents and purposes a social authentic, intense training, made with the consciousness of both the wide utilization of inference, just as the sentiment of offence that can come on the off chance that one can't appropriately comprehend a reference, offering a road to moderate the probability of this occurrence.

Summary of *The Financier* (1912) (*Trilogy of Desire*)

Theodore Dreiser's *Trilogy of Desire* (1972) consists of three novels; *The Financier* (1912), *The Titan* (1914) and *The Stoic* (1947). Apparently, a very simple story in a very simple language, the novels involve the reader in difficult moral questions such as a desire for money, desire for the upper class, violation of the law and sexual satisfaction. Frank Cowperwood, the child of a financier, tries to collect more money. In Philadelphia,

Cowperwood makes his first transaction, to begin with, cash in a sell-off deal of Castile cleanser, on which he gains huge benefit. Afterwards, Cowperwood gets work in Henry Waterman & Company and clears it out for Tighe & Company. He, moreover, weds a princely dowager in show aloofness toward his young age. From that point onwards, it's a series of monetary heightening. The character examines his "quest for power and lust" and "morality has no relevance in Cowperwood's understanding" (Rollyson, 2000, 315). He is bolted in jail by violating the laws in his interest: securing of riches, at the conclusion of the novel, *The Financier* (1912). *The Titan* (1914) is the spin-off to *The Stoic* (1947). It starts with Cowperwood's discharge from jail. He once more examines his want of ladies and cash since of his approach towards life. He does not alter and proceeds to celebrate the physical and monetary picks up. *The Stoic* (1947) is the conclusion of Theodore Dreiser's *Trilogy of Desire* (1972). Frank Cowperwood, at long last, passes away through Bright's disease. His legacy is wasted in claims. Berenice Fleming, his final sweetheart, is the girl of a procuress. She is taught in an elegant boarding school to memorize how to outlive among individuals like Cowperwood. Berenice oversees to figure out the reason of life and chooses to set up a healing centre for the destitute at the conclusion of *Trilogy of Desire* (1972), utilizing the money earned by Cowperwood.

The Psychology of Allusion

The psychology of allusion is to pay homage to another text and to show one's knowledge about the other literary piece. A literary person uses allusion when three things occur; when an allusion is used: the original text as the first set is lost and treated as unessential, the original text as the first setting is deliberately changed or misjudged, or the original text as the first set is supported through reference. Allusions, similar to language, are inaccurate and require a specific proficiency to be perceived. This prevention through the information may estrange a crowd of people in the event that they need attention to the thing implied, yet it can likewise raise commonality inside a knowledge gathering. William Irwin (2001) portrays that allusion is the key part of literature through which the memory is refresh by occurring by time and again in literary pieces; "offer something for aesthetic consideration, cultivating intimacy and forging a community, actively involving the audience in a way that straightforward statement does not" (522). It is an inaccurate type of correspondence that concedes importance to meaning and can make one's work distant to many. Differed and liquid, the implication probably won't be distinguished, not to mention comprehended. In this way, they are accepting that it was expected.

A famous linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), claims the same in *Course in General Linguistics* that "Time changes all things; there is no reason why language should escape this universal law" (Saussure 77). In other words, it is not possible to escape allusion from this universal law that time change all things. An allusion is a form of communication performed for the purpose to invoke some external idea through texts or objects to extend the understanding beyond the literary piece at hand. This research is not deal with the different kinds of allusion; historical allusion, religious allusion, cultural allusion, etc., but deals only with the allusions of British literature in Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* (1912) (*Trilogy of Desire*). These allusions give insight into characterization and show various themes of the novels. Allusions are a multi-faceted way of expressing the complexities of human existence. These require to focus on particular literary pieces mentioned by the American novelist. Due to the linked quality of the novels, an analysis of literary allusions would be meaningful with a brief discussion on the theme of the novels.

Allusions require the dynamic support of the crowd, evoking a delight not found in different procedures. References, in this manner, involve the crowd in the inventive cycle. They force the crowd to nail down the significance covered in the inference, denying uninvolved viewership. This focuses on the liveliness of the gadget, requesting that the crowd "decode" the suggestion. William Irwin (2001) explores in *The Aesthetics of Allusion* that "We also like allusions because of their game-like, ludic, quality. There is something playful in making an allusion, and we are, in a sense, being invited to play in considering an allusion." (524).

Excerpt 1

"Alas for Mamie Calligan! The mode of the time compelled her to wear one, but she had neither the arms nor the chest development, which made this garment admirable. Her hat, by choice, was usually a pancake affair with a long, single feather, which somehow never seemed to be in exactly the right position, either to her hair or her

face. At most times, she looked a little weary, but she was not physically weary so much as she was bored. Her life held so little of real charm, and Aileen Butler was unquestionably the most significant element of romance in it. Mamie's mother's very pleasant social disposition, the fact that they had a very cleanly, if poor little home, that she could entertain them by playing on their piano, and that Mrs Calligan took an adoring interest in the work she did for her, made up the sum and substance of the attraction of the Calligan home for Aileen. She went there occasionally as a relief from other things and because Mamie Calligan had a compatible and very understanding interest in literature. Curiously, the books Aileen liked she liked--Jane Eyre, Kenelm Chillingly, Tricotrín, and A Bow of Orange Ribbon. Mamie occasionally recommended to Aileen some latest effusion of this character, and Aileen, finding her judgment good, was constrained to admire her."

Analysis of Excerpt 1

Aileen Butler likes to read literary books such as Jane Eyre, Kenelm Chillingly, Tricotrín and A Bow of Orange Ribbon. All these readings have psychological effects on her character. Jane Eyre discovers the function of social class issues, mistreating girls and sexual orientation to maintain her financial power. The women needed to achieve their selfhood by any means to fulfill their desires of independence and conquer the misogynist cultural values in the society as Jane Eyre suffered in the early stage of life. Aileen Butler considers herself just like Jane Eyre. There are certain similarities between the two characters. Both are suffered in their lives. Both are involved in love with persons who are already married. Both are strongly imaginative characters. There is a feeling of genuine sympathy and affection for the characters. The central characters in both cases are deceptively shown as beautiful, but when faced with difficulties, they display a strong sense of self-esteem and self-destiny. It shows strong psychological effects on Aileen Butler's character.

Amelia Edith Huddleston Barr (1886), a British author, whose aim in the profession is a representation of the limit of a female under the pressure of distress to overcome the world and be effective in *A Bow of Orange Ribbon*. Most of her plots are based on her girlhood memory and the effects of environmental factors. Aileen Butler likes her ideas as it is lifelike.

Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer-Lytton (1873) is a novelist, dramatist, poet, and famous politician. He introduced famous phrases such as "the great unwashed", "pursuit of the almighty dollar", "the pen is mightier than the sword", and "It was a dark and stormy night." *Kenelm Chillingly, His Adventures and Opinions* are based on the beneficiary of an old family, who creates side effects of wonderful development, to the nervousness of his folks and instructors. It highlights the period of unwonted advancement, of unsettlement of convictions, and disappointment with the current situation. It shares the life experiences of a man to introduce the day to day existence; a prelude of dreams, of frustrations, of bafflements, before the real factors

The Victorian writer Ouida (Maria Louisa Ramé) with regards to ladies' creation in the nineteenth century. After moving to London at about the hour of her dad's vanishing, Ouida started writing to help her mom and grandma. The books that follow *Tricotrín* (1870) are generally creative and aesthetically unsure, and they investigate a scope of new subjects and styles.

Tricotrín is a critical view as compare to her previous works. The luxurious distinguished characters of Chandos and Strathmore are restrained; it is the first of her books to take care of laborer life, and, in particular, it was her first novel about a craftsman. *Tricotrín* can, along these lines, be perused as a reaction to the specific challenges confronting a well-known lady author who sought to be paid attention to.

The association between novelistic artist hood and polished skill, nonetheless, surfaces altogether without precedent for the 1840s and 1850s as the novel battled to shake off its unsavoury relationship in the eighteenth century with ladies, sex and commercialization and become perceived as genuine craftsmanship. At last, *Tricotrín's* craving for Viva devastates him. Where *Tricotrín* is demolished, be that as it may, Viva, as it were, has his spot as a high craftsman. To sum up, the mentioned allusions in *The Financier* (1912) show that Aileen Butler's reading has psychological effects on her character. All most all allusions are based on financial gains and the sufferings of females. The environmental effects are stronger than the social values, and each struggle for selfhood beyond the boundaries.

Excerpt 2

"If you had been a mystic or a soothsayer or a member of that mysterious world which divines by incantations, dreams, the mystic bowl, or the crystal sphere, you might have looked into their mysterious depths at this time and foreseen a world of happenings which concerned these two, who were now apparently so fortunately placed. In the fumes of the witches' pot, or the depths of the radiant crystal, might have been revealed cities, cities, cities; a world of mansions, carriages, jewels, beauty; a vast metropolis outraged by the power of one man; a great state seething with indignation over a force it could not control; vast halls of priceless pictures; a palace unrivalled for its magnificence; a whole world reading with wonder, at times, of a given name. And sorrow, sorrow, sorrow. The three witches that hailed Macbeth upon the blasted heath might intone have called to Cowperwood, Hail to you, Frank Cowperwood, master of a great railway system! Hail to you, Frank Cowperwood, builder of a priceless mansion! Hail to you, Frank Cowperwood, patron of arts and possessor of endless riches! You shall be famed hereafter. But like the Weird Sisters, they would have lied, for in the glory was also the ashes of Dead Sea fruit--an understanding that could neither be inflamed by desire nor satisfied by luxury; a heart that was long since wearied by experience; a soul that was as bereft of illusion as a windless moon. And to Aileen, as to Macduff, they might have spoken a more pathetic promise, one that concerned hope and failure. To have and not to have! All the seeming, and yet the sorrow of not having! A brilliant society that shone in a mirage yet locked its doors; love that eluded as a will-o'-the-wisp and died in the dark. Hail to you, Frank Cowperwood, master and no master, prince of a world of dreams whose reality was disillusion! So might the witches have called, the bowl has danced with figures, the fumes with vision, and it would have been true. What wise man might not read from such a beginning, such an end?"

Analysis of Excerpt 2

William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1603) is a famous tragedy in British literature. The three witches predicted that Macbeth will take responsibility as head of the state in near future and will be the king of Scotland. Keeping in view the foreseen, his wife encouraged him to take certain actions for a better future. The ambitious and motivated Macbeth kills the king of the state to fulfil the prediction of the witches. He kills so many other people also to maintain his status, but the civil war erupts to overthrow Macbeth. The desires of Frank Cowperwood and the supporting environment are comparatively discussed in *The Financier* (1912). The three witches (stargazer) counsel who said that he needs to be a lord later, and to arrive at his desire, he should murder his ruler and his dear companion, Banquo. It implies that he should utilize all approaches to arrive at his objectives, just like Frank Cowperwood in *Trilogy of Desire* (1972). Yet, eventually, he got executed because his deed in going after his objectives experiences in an incorrect way.

Three witches are considering as experts in the future telling who told the Scottish general, Macbeth, that in the future, he will achieve the status of the king in Scotland. He struggles for, and the others supported in this regard also. Macbeth killed the king of Scotland and became the new king of the state by killing more people for the purpose; in the play, Macbeth is a Scottish general under the standard of King Duncan. Three witches reveal to Macbeth that he will become the lord of Scotland. Macbeth is prodded by his desire and his significant other, killing Duncan and agreeing to the seat. His rule is ridiculous and domineering and is finished by the consolidated powers of Scotland and England. Candid Cowperwood is likewise caught by the words and sees himself as prevalent and can play out anything on earth. He accomplished one objective after another and kept track of progress.

The witches in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* are prophets who hailed the protagonist right off the bat in the play and foresaw his climb to sovereignty. After executing the lord and picking up the seat of Scotland, Macbeth hears them vaguely foresee his inevitable destruction. The witches and their "squalid" features and heavenly exercises established a dismal place for the play.

They are having examined the desire for the intensity of the fundamental characters in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The author can reach a few determinations. Initially, an individual who has an incredible desire to satisfy yet utilizing insidious intends to arrive at it will demolish their own life finally. This happens to Macbeth and his better half, Lady Macbeth. Macbeth has an incredible desire to be a ruler as the witches' predictions and upheld by his normal occasion (his ascent to control as an officer).

From this end, we can realize that Macbeth needs to pick up the force without taking any kind of action to satisfy his aspiration, simply relying upon destiny, for, if destiny says he is to be a ruler, he surely will be, if he makes any move as far as possible. Third, an individual who has done insidious courses in satisfying their aspiration can't disguise them always, and he/she will get into an incredible enduring as the outcome. Macbeth and his significant other have done malicious courses in satisfying their desire, and they can't hide their underhanded deeds any more and meet their demise as finally.

To sum up the entire discussion, Macbeth and Frank Cowperwood struggled to achieve their desires and objectives, and accordingly, they achieve but remain isolated at the end of their lives.

Conclusion

A literary piece of one nation may possess allusions of another nation. An allusion is a literary device that directs or “an indirect reference to a person, event, statement, or theme found in literature, the other arts, history, mythology, religion, or popular culture” (Bedford Glossary 9). These allusions give insight into characterization and show pervasive themes of the novel.

This research covers the allusions from British literature such as Ouida's *Trictrin* (1869), Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Amelia Edith Huddleston Barr's *A Bow of Orange Ribbon* (1886), Edward Bulwer Lytton's *Kenelm Chillingly* (1874), and William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1603) in Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* (1912) (*Trilogy of Desire*). It is universally acknowledged that a new idea must be supported through the ancient period. New is not capable enough to explain itself for the purpose of understanding. New must be understood through old, which is a practice in the history as well as culture. The psychology of Aileen Butler and Frank Cowperwood's characters are totally based on the reading materials. Frank Cowperwood sacrifices all his personal, social and professional relationships for a single motto, i.e. financial success and a member of the upper class. He psychologically struts in these issues due to the environmental effects.

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