

A SCHIZOANALYTIC STUDY OF EUGENE O'NEILL, *STRANGE INTERLUDE*

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Abstract

This study involves the process of schizoanalysis, the production of desire, and desiring machine in the play of Eugene O'Neill, Strange Interlude. Emancipation of desire from the shackles of society and capitalism is shown in it. The rhizomatic study of desire, love, and past memories is also the focus of this study with special reference to the rhizome theory of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Keywords: *schizoanalysis, desire, desiring machine, rhizomatic, rhizome theory, past memories*

Introduction

Eugene O'Neill is a postmodernist play writer. He is famous for his autobiographical plays. *Desire under Elms, Long Day's Journey into Night, and Strange Interlude* are his famous plays. O'Neill has been elaborated in different ways by the critics. Dreams, myths and art have intimate relation to each other and only a best artist can elaborate them in his work skillfully. O'Neill has used these images in his plays in the form of primordial scenes. Greek myths and themes like Oedipus complex, a resentful and unforgiving father, a struggling hero who is also a loving son and a caring mother who is

always seeking a revenge for wrong deeds done to her by others, are frequently used in his plays. O'Neill also takes the reader to the realm of unconscious and sub consciousness by using Freud's notion of repression. Autobiographical elements can also be traced in his plays. Christian dogmas and beliefs have also been dominant themes in most of his plays.

Labyrinth, the most dominating images in postmodern literature has been quite ensnaring for both authors and the readers and we can easily portray his play *Strange Interlude* in the light of labyrinth. Rhizome also works like a labyrinth without a beginning or an

end. It does not follow any fixed direction rather it moves everywhere. The use of this rhizomatic labyrinth in literary work is called philosophical labyrinth.

A rhizome in a story helps its readers to comprehend it in multiple ways and move forward with the twisted ways of the inner conflicts of the characters. Rhizome in *Strange Interlude* is a way to experience the world with the help of its characters and becomes a tool to follow the map of an individual's experiences, people and their mutual interactions. It also encourages the readers to see the matters from different angles.

In postmodern literature, it is not only the world, the events or experiences that are Rhizomatic but also the human individual. The way he connects with the society multiplies, gets broken and takes a new start.

Deleuze and Guattari gave their concept of schizoanalysis in their book, "*Anti - Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*", to liberate desire. According to this concept desire always creates the real. It is not fixed in identity and nature. Their aim was to deconstruct a consciousness (Cooper 03). Schizoanalysis is actually the production of desire.

Deleuze and Guattari, in their second volume "*A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*", reveal rhizome through the narratives of novels and short stories in literature. They exhibit it to be the attribute of being human to find escape ways from nullity and worthlessness of "unending growth and decay of life" (4), while getting more lost in this rhizomatic labyrinth of time and space. This rhizomatic thinking suggests that human being can not only be transformed by feelings, emotions and cultural experiences but also by chaos, disorder, and fluid expressions.

We can see rhizomatic labyrinth in the play *Strange Interlude* through presenting the theme of love, desire and memories of the past. O'Neill also seems to emphasize the prevailing condition of the society which dominates a man and urges him/her to act against the will. Eugene O'Neill has always tried to question the position of man in this universe. He presents the man entangled in the labyrinth of power in *Emperor Jones*, of desire in *Desire under Elms* and of love and the past in *Strange Interlude*. The central theme of O'Neill's plays is the difficult and unending plight in which a man is entangled and cannot come out of this problem in his life. Eugene O'Neil has

dived into the conscious and unconscious mind of human beings and presented a new vision of looking at things. He is a true representative of inner recesses of mind.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

To prove:

- Desires of human beings are multifarious and fickle.
- Human desires are not fixed in identities, they are connected to other desires and emotions while completing themselves.

Methodology of the Study

The nature of the research is qualitative based on the schizoanalytical theory of desire and rhizome model of Deleuze and Guattari. During the course of critical analysis, the researcher picked out the relevant textual examples from the selected texts of the writer and critical material available on the writer and the books of the writer. The selected play *Strange Interlude* is used as primary source for critical analysis.

Research Questions

1. How can we understand the process of coding, decoding and

recoding of desire in the play *Strange Interlude*?

2. How does Nina's desire become rhizomatic?

Significance of the Research

The aim of this research work is to find out how Eugene O'Neill has presented the plight of human beings, who have become the victim of capitalist system, psychological doctrines and society at large, in his work *Strange Interlude*.

Literature Review

Deleuze and Guattari have presented their theory of unconsciousness and they named it schizoanalysis. Mansfield has suggested that Deleuze and Guattari see self as always in flux (138). It cannot be understood in terms of disciplined things. The relation of the self to the world and with the things in it is very complex and ambiguous; it has multiple involvements and infinite relations, as in the "assemblages" which creates 'connections between certain multiplicities' (140). The subject is always in the process of 'becoming' (145). It is not revealed directly through actions or expressions, its relation with itself, with the world and with others is always meaningless, futile and false (Laing 80).

Deleuze talks about self in these words:

“Self-present in the vertical dimension, overseeing themselves without taking any distance, these are neither objects that can explain perception, nor subjects capable of grasping a perceived object; rather, they are absolute interiorities that take hold of themselves and everything that fills them, in a process of “self-enjoyment” (The Fold 102).

The disintegration between ego and the body and the awareness of the body causes splitting in personality. The subject finds it hard to cope with the world (179). Ego in itself is not the hub of the splitting as Lustman has described:

“The splits themselves occur not in the ego, but rather in the realm of the mental context which the ego acquires, shapes, and regards. In the first view, the ego is split, while in the second, the ego engineers the split” (123).

The persons suffering from different ruptures in personality can be categorized in schizophrenic patients. As Estroff has very beautifully talked

about this in the book, *Schizophrenia, Culture and Subjectivity*. He says that, ‘Disagreement and constation about meaning, reality and identity may represent the quintessence of schizophrenia’ (284). Fragmentation has also been a part of schizophrenia. The persons having fragmented personalities are considered to be schizophrenic in our society. The concerns of a schizophrenic are elsewhere, ‘among the more de-territorialized fluxes’ (Guattari 54). The self or the ‘I’ must be coherent in ‘the here and now’. It must have a strong bond between its past and present. The self, felt now and the self which was in the past, must be coherent and ‘the cord which holds them together must not be fractured’ (77). Michael’s comment (qtd. in Geekie) conveys the true meaning of this disintegration,

“I haven’t got a personality or anything. I’m in sync with my personality and myself or anything” (78).

This loss of self is further explained by Michael. He says that in remembering his present self he lost the continuity of the past self. Time can also be a factor in the disintegration of the self.

Michael says, "I cannot remember anything about what life was like before" (78).

Teresa Brennan in her book *History after Lacan*, talks at length about Lacan's concept of ego as a historical concept. She says that modern world furor and disorder has created disintegration in the ego. Ego is also related to the culture of a country (31). Social changes also had an impact on the personality of the person. Modernism has also given birth to split lives. One is buying and selling oneself in the market according to one's means (Holland 277). Modern capitalist societies are the major causes of disintegrated self. The unfulfilled promises by the so called democratic modern societies and the capitalist recording over surplus value are the major causes of shattered ego (276).

Lacan has further explained the outcome of this situation:

"if the subject did not rediscover in a regression, often pushed right back to the 'mirror stage' the enclosure of a stage in which his ego contains its imaginary exploits, there would hardly be any assignable limits to the credulity to which he must succumb in that

situation" (*The Function and Field of Speech....* 70).

The ego, if shattered, finds it hard to walk on normal ways. The influence of our environment and the social and capital exiomatization has been one of the causes to create split in personality. The persons have to modify their lives according to the inflation in the market. The uproar of becoming rich overnight and the anxiety of not being able to find one time meal, in the poor and middle classes, have given rise to the disintegrated self. Political modeling in a society or country has also a major role to play in personality formation. This is what Deleuze and Guattari have stressed in their two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. As it is mentioned earlier that a schizophrenic person finds it hard to be in good relation with the objects around him, so he cannot manage properly in his life and sometimes loses everything in the end. The image of a father as a capitalist or dictator is very important in the disintegration of the personality.

The schizoid person is having split experience in two ways: first he thinks that the world around him is not in cooperation with him, and second he assumes that his relation to himself is also disintegrated. Such a person

cannot feel himself at ease with the world or himself and develops the habit of being alone. He cannot consider himself alone rather he feels that he is having multiple selves in himself (Laing 18).

“The Process of schizophrenia advocated by schizoanalysis is thus not about going mad or taking merely individual lines of flight from institution of social repression; it is about realizing freedom in difference and through differentiation, the principle of permanent revolution made possible in the universal history inaugurated by capitalism.” (Holland, Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus* 121).

Labyrinth has always been such a theme that has fascinated human being from the early ages. It has always enticed man to search for something exceptional, other than physical existence like human soul and life. Labyrinth has always been a very dominating and powerful theme that has always been implemented and presented by literary persons in their writings. We find the symbol of labyrinth quite prominent in almost every domain of society. From theology to cosmology, and from

psychology to philosophy and literature; labyrinths are the ultimate metaphor of human struggle, the eternal conflict between heart and brain, our fears and hopes, as well as the unfathomable paradox of mankind’s fate (Canivell 71). Labyrinths are a “connecting networks” (Bloom xviii) of intricate trails which have been a cause of attraction for the writers, philosophers and people. Labyrinth is a paradoxical term which means order and chaos at the same time (Fergus-Jean).

Many writers have always used the theme of labyrinth for the understanding of human nature. They have tried to explore the hidden secrets of the soul. Religious fiction is also based on labyrinth as salvation. Many books have been written on this theme as a source of getting knowledge. One such example is “The Labyrinth of the world and the Paradise of Heart” by Polish writer Comenius, who is acknowledged for his educational developments taking the same theme of labyrinth too. But he opines another way of gaining knowledge in a labyrinthine manner. He says that knowledge should not be arborescent rather it should be rhizomatic. He says that a rhizome has no starting point, no beginning and no

end. Same is the case with labyrinth and he named it as “Rhizome” (275). . It is “a symbol of human consciousness, a metaphor of the mind coping with experience” (Privateer 92).

This rhizome is very much similar to Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic net that resembles (as a labyrinth) to river Meander that is a labyrinth in its flow. These traits of rhizome attracted the postmodern writers who find such labyrinth more near to their postmodern bend of mind. They used these themes with reference of Minotaur and Theseus as a textual labyrinth and plot construction where reader turns into Theseus to find out the Minotaur (sometimes knowledge) and moves in the trails of the text; they also used rhizome labyrinth in their themes to make situation challenging for the reader.

Harold Bloom has defined Labyrinth from four different perspective in the introduction of his book. He explains it as a psychological labyrinth, philosophical labyrinth, structural labyrinth and cosmological labyrinth (XVI). Further Miller has also discussed these labyrinth types with reference to classical labyrinth where he suggests reader as Theseus. He observes that the reader in the labyrinth of book and Theseus in his actual labyrinth are not

much different from each other. Miller Further creates resemblance between Thread and labyrinth:

“Thread intricately crinkled to and fro as the retracing of the labyrinth, which defeats the labyrinth but makes another intricate web at the same time” (62).

It works rhizomatically, it never ends. He further refers towards the dance of Theseus as ‘ritual copy of labyrinth’ (65). The other way of analyzing the labyrinth is to find it in the plot and structure of the novel. The textual labyrinth as Miller explains, is hidden in the structure of the plot (76). There are possibilities of many plots within one plot and repetition of them, these plots are similar to the main plot but every time they are repeated they come up from a different perspective and return to the same story from a different angle. Miller (qtd. in Muhlstock) states about the plot and structure of the story’s labyrinthine nature that:

“The need for a permutation of the somewhat mysterious elements of the story is intrinsic to the story itself. It is as if no one telling of it could express clearly its meaning. It has to be

traced and retraced, thread over thread in the labyrinth, without ever becoming wholly perspicuous. Each telling both displays the labyrinthine pattern of relations again and again and at the same time leaves its “true” meaning veiled” (182).

The plot of such labyrinthine texts offer the same structure that Wilson has suggested for them: Wilson’s structure focuses on the form of the labyrinthine arrangement of plot. There may be the option A or B, but they both cannot be selected at the same time or none of them; either A or B or C but only one of them (12). We find this scheme followed in Borges’ short stories where the main idea cant not be revealed without obtaining any one of the options and many times the reader chooses option A that stops being A and becomes B leaving the reader in another labyrinth; an imprecise space where our reader has two viewpoints. As in *The Garden of Forking Paths* the reader is presented with many sub plots or options that he has to choose one, there he finds another plot that is in Tsui Pen’s novel. To get a coherent understanding of the story reader trails in all the plots to find out the main crux of it. ‘This

repetition of figures, plots, and objects that are at the same time one thing and another, are a fundamental element of the labyrinth drawn by Escher, and of Borges’ Stories (Wilson 186).

Along with Borges, Franz Kafka also stands prominent in using labyrinthine plots and structures in his novels. His novel *The Trial* has the story and plot that has rhizomatic labyrinth amalgamated with psychological and structural labyrinth. In modern days’ novels like *The Trial*, Theseus (the reader) finds so many people as labyrinth along with the building’s labyrinth. K finds all these people sitting in the corridors of that narrow court building making this labyrinth different from the Cretan labyrinth that is supposed to isolate the Minotaur from the other world and here in *The Trial*, the labyrinth is shown with all the people who make unending rhizome.

Borges and Kafka have truly been the trend setters in using labyrinth as a rhizomatic growth of story and plot construction. Their novels introduced detective fiction with a new dimension of reaching to the conclusion. Apart from detective fiction, the theme of labyrinth has turned into a fabulous adaptation by today’s writers who innovated new ways to entangle their

reader into the story. Mark Z. Danielewski is one such example who makes his reader to wind and twist into the labyrinthine text of his novels and has introduced very interesting labyrinths in his texts. Truant, in the introduction of the novel, *House of Leaves*, comments Danielewski's labyrinth as

“Endless snarls of words, sometimes twisting into meaning, sometimes into nothing at all, frequently breaking apart, always branching off into other pieces... each fragment completely covered with the creep of years and years of ink pronouncements; layered, crossed out, amended; handwritten, typed; ...impenetrable, lucid, torn, stained, scotch taped; some bits crisp and clean, others faded. . . .” (XV).

Kafka's novel *The Trial* is analyzed as a rhizomatic labyrinth. The plot and structure of the novel is rhizome in so many ways. The world shown in the novel is continually changing in its events and happenings with the characters and the narrative is rhizomatic too in both its figurative and literal sense. The reader's

following of K when he navigates through the stairs and passages to the court building just because he is the only “evident message” that reader finds continuously changing during the trial and the absurd law of court and K's desires. The atmosphere of *The Trial* is always self-defining and hence takes the quality of rhizome and the beginning of the novel offers the entrance to the labyrinth of its text when Kafka says, “Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K, for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning. His landlady's cook, who always brought him breakfast at eight o'clock, failed to appear on this occasion. That had never happened before” (1).

Eugene O'Neil's play *Strange Interlude* has been selected to be analyzed under the Framework of Schizoanalytic self which is dispersed and always in flux and a Rhizomatic model will also be applied in order to evaluate it. The characters in *Strange Interlude* are having split personalities. They have different desires of love, of career, of having a child. In order to fulfill their desires they have to undergo from different situations. Their personalities are dispersed and their desires give birth to many other desires.

Theoretical Framework

Schizoanalysis and Desire:

Schizoanalysis in the traditional or clinical sense, is described as a disease or it is attributed as a 'loss of reality' (Anti-Oedipus 123), but Deleuze and Guattari suggest that schizophrenic does not lose any contact with reality rather he/she is closer to reality, 'identical to the production of the real' (Anti-Oedipus 87). They say that when encounter any schizophrenic in a hospital or psychological clinic, we find them as 'autistic' (5) and 'rag' (19-20). They are also treated as patients who do not have any contact with reality but they are made so by the cruel psychological treatment (20), like electric shocks and chained with beds. A best example of such treatment can be quoted from a Bollywood movie, A Beautiful Mind. The movie is based on the life of John Nash, the founder of Game Theory. He was treated with electric shocks and his hands were chained (Howard). However in Anti-Oedipus, Deleuze and Guattari take both of the things parallel and make distinction between 'schizophrenia as process', the process of production or reality and 'schizophrenia as an entity', like we confront in hospitals (379). They repeatedly ask this question, why a schizophrenic is limited to his/her

autism, cut off from reality and hospitalized. Is it the process or the interruption of the process? (88). their general answer is that if the process of production is interrupted then the schizo arises as an entity (136). Psychological process, 'biunivocalizes' the process of productive unconscious by its diagnostic and therapeutic interventions (54). Psychoanalysis can be described as an 'interpretative machine' which transfigures each and every word of the patient into oedipal complex (88-90).

Deleuze and Guattari are of the view that the productive unconscious 'rejects the very form of interpretation', in so far as the material that the interpreter encounters is reduced to merely representing that which a repressive apparatus permits the material to represent (Anti-Oedipus 339).

Schizoanalysis, actually, breaks all forms of representation to accelerate the process of desiring-production. Representative process territorializes the subject while the task of schizoanalysis is to reterritorialize the subject. There are many 'planes of resistance that come from within or are imposed from without' (Anti-Oedipus 318). Schizoanalysis not only demands the removal of the objective

representation by calling them myth, unconscious beliefs and illusions but also the removal of the subjective representation that we may keep unconsciously (299). Deleuze further stretches these representative territorialities or lines which work within societies or groups (Deleuze and Parnet 124) and mostly depend on binary machines of societies, ages, races, sexes and sectors (128).

For Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism is constant in its repression of desire; it does not give any importance to its members rather it reduces them to mere quantities and declares that, "we will find a place for you within the expanded limits of the system, even if an axiom has to be created just for you" (Anti-Oedipus 251). Deleuze defines the history of philosophy from Socrates to Hegelians, as the history of man's submission and the reasons he gives himself for legitimizing them (Pure Immanence 72). Schizoanalysis concentrates on the destruction of territorialization, undoing any conviction of a fixed identity, characteristic or authentic being to conform the productive process of becoming (Holland 11). However, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the process of territorialization cannot be undone completely by anyone, rather

territorialization is obligatory for the 'positive' or 'affirmative' task of schizoanalysis (315). However in order to understand this process, one should go for Deleuze's passive synthesis of time and Nietzsche's work on 'the unhistorical and the historical'. For Nietzsche, the culture and any individual can be healthy only in that condition when the balance between remembering and forgetting the past is achieved: to forget it because it does not obstruct the present, and to remember it as a horizon to create new prospects in future. Schizoanalysis can also be understood as an endeavor to repel past, but concurrent territorializations, from impeding the present by employing those territorializations as preconditions to make something new, 'an untimely becoming'(63).

Schizoanalysis is not, therefore, about making and directing desire to some already existing goal, and neither is it about creating a 'majoritarian model' (Deleuze 173). Rather it pursues to undo the territorialization that suppress desire in order to facilitate the utmost degree of movement in assimilation with the desire's ceaseless propensity of deterritorialization; to achieve this end, schizoanalysis corresponds with the desiring-

production process and completes it, which is already complete (Anti-Oedipus 382). Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that any political program will not be particularized within the structure of schizoanalysis (380).

Thus it does not demand for the overthrow of capitalism to set new social order, as this new order will set its own limits and majoritarian model, another suppressive territorialization (Anti-Oedipus 258). Desiring machines and desiring productions are the center of everything. Schizoanalysis is not identical with revolution neither 'it raises the problem of the socius to come out of the revolution' rather it asks the question that what place is given to desiring production (380). Deleuze suggests that every minority has the right to set its goals, establish models etc, and in doing so it wants to become majority and has to persist or prosper (173). Schizophrenic revolutionary escape from capitalist demands courage, while courage is in agreeing to flee rather than to live tranquilly and hypocritically in false refuges, as Deleuz and Guatatri say in Anti-Oedipus,

“..... to relinquish the territorialities that our vanity and our smugness bestow upon

us, and which have as many deceptive sojourns as the world arranges for them who think that they are standing most straight among the stable things (341).”

Desiring machines exists within the social machines. Society and desire are inter connected in fact they create a cosmos in which everything is connected but this connection should not be taken mistakenly as binary in nature rather it multiplies. The binary connection can limit the approach but the multiplicity is limitless in nature. It can create numerous connections that society and desiring machines can have.

Rhizome:

Rhizome is initiated from botany. It is defined in Oxford English Dictionary as “a prostrate or subterranean root like stem emitting roots and usually producing leaves at its apex; a rootstock”. This rhizome was introduced in philosophical world through Carl Jung’s psychoanalysis. Jung alludes to rhizome with the introduction and explanation of Memories, Dreams, Reflections:

Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Its true life is invisible, hidden in the rhizome.

The part that appears above the ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away-an ephemeral apparition. When we think of the unending growth and decay of life and civilizations, we cannot escape the impression of absolute nullity. Yet I have never lost the sense of something that lives and endures beneath the eternal flux. What we see is blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains (4).



Figure 1

This figure shows the rhyzomatic process of roots. They always find their way and never end growing. They always keep on multiplying.

Deleuze and Guattari used this botanical term as a concept. They used it because it does not work in binary

position. The tree and its branches always grow in a predictable direction while the roots grow in abundance having no definite shape and dimension. The process of thinking is also having rhyzomatic characteristics. We can never think on a straight line. Our thinking is always dispersed. But every thought is connected to the other. According to Deleuze and Guattari, one process of thinking reminds us of any other thought. Everything around us links us to any other thing or incident. For example, if someone sees a crow, it may remind him of any other bird of the same color that bird will link him to his home where he kept that bird, home will link him to his mother at home, and his mother would remind him of something else. This thinking process is limitless, having no end. Similarly, the rhizome is a heterogeneous model. It connects the different impulses and forces that belong to distant and completely different order (Mansfield 143).

Brian Massumi, who is the translator of the book *A Thousand Plateaus*, has explained the working of concept as rhizome in the foreword saying the notion work like a brick that can be used in any way rather every way to build a courthouse of reason (XIII) and

though these rhizomes are nomadic in their nature yet they are cyclical and tend to cycle back; Deleuze and Guattari name this cyclic feature as refrain (XV). This refrain is vast in its nature and this quality of enormity allows them to experiment with thought. The thinking procedure is rhizomatic and nomadic having innumerable plateaus. These plateaus are always in the middle having no starting point and absolutely no ending point as well. The rhizome is a heterogenous model. It connects the different impulses and forces that belong to distant and completely different order (Mansfield 143).

A rhizome has no beginning or end, it always works in the middle. Deleuze and Guattari give the example of a stream that has no 'beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle' (A Thousand Plateaus 25). The thought process also works like rhizome with no fixed beginning. Desire is also associated with rhizome in its characteristic of ever changing shapes. Desire always creates connections and it multiplies. Rhizome is used in philosophy to create assemblages and connections. Deleuze and Guattari have presented two levels of assemblages: organization and consistency. The

connection of things is in vertical manner on organizational level. They are organized in such a specific shape and structure that if any part of structure misses, the whole structure loses its shape. While on other level of connection, that is consistency, rhizome is dynamic and in action. Things are connected horizontally and are spread in every direction on this level. Connections are made on a leveled surface with every other thing. All the rhizomatic connections work in a certain models explained by D & G in their book A Thousand Plateaus. These models are explained as principles for rhizome theory.

Deleuze and Guattari have used these six principles to define the line of thought. Different philosophers have tried to define it in different way. Deleuze and Guattari have named it as 'schizoanalysis' while Foucault called it as 'outside thought'. These six principles are applied to this Play *Strange Interlude*.

Data Analysis

The central theme of the play *Strange Interlude* is desire and love. Love keeps the lives of the characters rhythmic and vigorous. Love makes their desires and directs them but these desires also change with the passage of time. Love

redefines everything. This movement of love sets fit within the principles of rhizome which are connectivity, multiplicity, heterogeneity and a signifying rupture.

Connectivity

Nina's love for Gordon is prevailed throughout the play. Gordon's love connects Nina with all the other characters. This love provides enough ground for the play to move on. Our life also moves on like a rhizome which spreads by making connections. For a "rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power and circumstances..... and social struggles" (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateau* 07). Love is working as a connection in the play. The principle of connectivity works well in the form of love. In *Strange Interlude*, we see that Nina is connected to Gordon by love. Sam and Ned are also connected to Nina just because of love. Nina works as an epitome of love for these men. She never let them go far away from her.

In a rhizome, one point is connected to any other point and they make a chain of connections. Nina is connected to Gordon. She loves him madly but due to the war and her father, she remains

unable to make love with him. But she sees him in every man. She marries Sam but still she remains connected to Gordon. Marsden, who is many years older than Nina, is a very good example of connectivity. He knows Nina since her childhood. He used to come to her house to meet her father. But inwardly he only came for Nina as he was in deep love with her. He always remains around her and never let her alone. His love is so pure and intense that he never thought of marrying to anyone else except Nina. He sees her growing in life and marrying to Sam. He comes to know the secret of her illegal child, even she herself confesses about her misdeeds before Marsden. But still he loves her and remains connected to her. He waits for her till his old age.

Multiplicity

Love has been the motivating force in the play throughout the end. Love is behind every action and characters seemed to be shackled by love with one another. We as human being are always inclined towards love and we also cannot avoid the multiple connections of love as its roots are always deep down in the soul. It is not superficial rather it triggers the inner recesses of mind and soul. The conscious and unconscious mind of a

person is controlled by the power of love.

“All multiplicities are flat in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions....even though the dimensions of this plane increase with the number of connections that are made on it.” (A Thousand Plateau 09).

The connections of love are always maintained by flat consistency. The whole process of love is the multiplication of these connections. One of the prominent features of rhizomatic connection is that it always multiplies even though the situation is unfavorable. It is always in the process. The more it spreads, the more it lives and survives.

According to Deleuze and Guattari the difference between multiplicity and connectivity is that of capacity to enlarge the connection between two points. As multiplicity, being flat, spreads in all direction and fills the gaps. These multiplicities have nothing to do with internal connections rather they always fill the outer space to make a labyrinth.

Nina is deeply in love with Gordon. Her connection with Gordon is so strong that internally she is affirmed to give her life and love to Gordon. When she

exposes the reality to her father that she is leaving the house and going to the hospital to look after the “crippled soldiers”, then her father and Marsden, who is also present there, are shocked and try their best to stop her. But she does not listen to them and leaves the house. She is so much obsessed with the memories of Gordon that she even thinks,

“Gordon darling, I must go away where I can think of you in silence...” (Act I).

Her father gives her the reason to complete her degree and also to recover from “nervous breakdown” but instead of obeying she opposes him and argues with him about everything. She thinks that staying away from her home can bring relief to her. This was also a way for her to come out of her past in which she was stuck. For that purpose she had to make new multiplicities in the form of connections.

This step proves a turning point in her story because in the sanatorium she starts to develop connections with other soldiers. She sleeps with them in order to give comfort and ease to Gordon’s soul.

During her stay in the hospital she fulfills the principle of multiplicity as she is not bound to one man now. She

tries to love and “give happiness to various war victims” (Act II). But her ideas do not work out and she remains unable to convince the men about her love. And each such experience leaves her battered and “a prey to a guilty conscious than before and more determined to punish herself!” (Act II). Nina tries to find comfort and solace in other people’s heart for her pain but she fails terribly.

One year later her father dies and she comes back to her home, along with her is Ned Darrell and Sam Evans. Darrell finds a chance and tells whole story to Marsden about her activities in the hospital. He urges Marsden to stop her from going there and suggest her to marry Evans. In this way she will be saved from corrupt life. Nina herself confesses before Marsden about her filthy past. During her one year stay at the hospital she makes her connections and multiplies them by sharing her bed with other men. Sobbingly, she confesses everything to Marsden who at first considers her a whore but regains his faith in Nina as a little girl, “my little girl”. Marsden considers that Ned had been her partner but she says that it was not Ned Darrell,

“But I did with others.... Oh, four or five or six or seven men, Charlie, I forget... and it doesn’t

matter. They were all the same. Count them all as one, and that one a ghost of nothing...” (Act II).

She herself comes to know that love multiplicities with other men did not work rather they worsen the situation. Her conscious was also distorted. She did all this in order to prove her love for her deceased lover, Gordon. But she tells to Marsden that she, “was the blindest of all” (Act II). She comes to know that she was behaving like animals. She also blames war for her misery that it had blown her out and tortured her badly. She became an object to be played and mocked at then she saw a dream about Gordon who was in a state of anger and torture. He was looking at her,

“With sad burning eyes, and all my poor maimed men, too, seemed staring out of his eyes with a burning pain.” (Act II)

Her first multiplicity with other men ends here and a new phase of her life starts. With the efforts of Marsden and Darrell, she marries Sam Evans and starts living happy life but still keeping Gordon in her heart. Although she makes new multiplicities in the form of new connections with other men but

her love for Gordon never ends and also her miseries live on.

A signifying Rupture

Deleuze and Guattari explain that a rhizome can be broken at any point or it may be shattered but it will start its journey on any one of its old lines or on new lines (A Thousand Plateau 11). This principle implies that rupture in a story is not fatal rather it is the cause of making new lines. But sometimes new connections are deliberately shut down or death becomes the cause of this disconnectivity.

The principle of a signifying rupture promotes the view that if there is any rupture within the given lines then it will start again in a new direction or it will resume its journey from the old lines. Nina's connection with Ned Darrell is ruptured by Ned himself and it is resumed again when Ned comes back to her.

There is a rupture in Gordon's relation towards his mother. Nina cannot tolerate this estrangement and chooses Ned's relation to be ruptured rather than her son. But ten years later when Gordon has grown young and Darrell has become a successful scientist, we see them together again. But Darrell

has become so mechanical in his work that he does not love Nina anymore.

But she still wants to start from the old lines. She wants Darrell to love her "... enough to make him tell Sam!" (Act VIII). She actually wants Gordon back from his fiancé. She also wants to get rid of her husband.

The connection between Nina and Sam is broken in the form of Sam's death. Death is the only mean that can bring a halt to any relation. This is the principle of a signifying rupture. Sam's death gives rise to many other connections. Darrell asks Nina for marriage but she refuses him and selects Marsden as her life partner. Her relation with Ned is ended here due to her own willingness. And to start again from the rupture she marries Marsden. Gordon's connection with his real father and mother, Nina, is ruptured again and he establishes his connection with his wife. Nina establishes her connection with Marsden to get peace and comfort.

Heterogeneity

This principle of rhizome indicates that two nodes are connected with each other but they grow and flourish in their own domain. This is the "parallel evolution of two beings that have nothing to do with each other"

(Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateau 10). Ned Darrell and Nina Leeds are the leading figure in the play. Their connection is sometimes ruptured, reterritorialized and becomes heterogeneous at times. They are connected with each other from many years but they are not married. In spite of their being connected they follow their own path. Nina is at the start territorialized with Gordon. She does not see anyone in his place. She loves him madly. But after his death, Nina is deterritorialized when she confines herself within the four walls of the house. She does not allow anyone to meet her. She is actually cut off from the outer world and is unable to find new connection in order to grow. But when she decides to work as a nurse in a hospital and serve the war injured soldiers, she is actually planning to make new connections and reterritorializes herself.

But these connections are proved temporary and malicious because everyone there just desired for her body and they did not care for her youth and life. In this stream of connections she finds Sam as her life partner. They are married and wish to have peace in their lives. At this point it seems that Nina is again reterritorialized by a new relation but

there is again a rupture in their relation. They are unable to walk smoothly within their lives. They both are connected but they have their own domains to follow.

Cartography

The principle of cartography explains that rhizome does not follow or trace path rather it makes the map. The connections between two nodes are not tracing. They make map between them in a rhizome. This map leads towards the real connection. The main characteristic of cartography principle is that it “is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual group or social formation” (A Thousand Plateau 12).

The ultimate reality of Nina is to get Gordon back in her life. She loves him so dearly that she does not accept his death and tries to find ways to solace herself by illusions. She makes line or maps in order to reach to her goal. The lines which she makes are actually the connections which she makes with other people. After Gordon’s death she makes connections with the soldiers in order to reach to her goal. There in the

hospital she meets Ned Darrell and Sam. They both are aware of her wrong doings and physical relations. Cartographical relation of Nina are best displayed in the hospital.

Another glaring example of cartographical relation is seen in the form of Nina's connections with the soldiers which she makes during her stay in the hospital. She makes new connections but Sam and Darrell wants her to be detached from these men and lead a happy married life. Her new connection is made with Sam in the form of marriage. This connection is also about to collapse when she comes to know about their family's disease and as a result has to abort her child. But according to the principle of cartography the connection can be reversed on the same lines. So Nina reverses her connection with Sam but for this revival she has to make another connection which is also the glaring quality of cartography. She makes new connection in order to be a mother which is also the form of another connection but in the form of a son.

The principles of Rhizome model are very suitable for the analysis of the play. They are used very skillfully to describe the relations of the characters. The connections are

working in different directions. The relations are sometimes broken but they are connected on new lines after some time. A person cannot remain alone in the society. He has to make connections in order to live a happy and contented life. The characters of *Strange Interlude* are all making new connections or starting from the old lines. They find new directions and ways to complete their desires. They are actually enslaved by their desires. Sam is enslaved by his desire of marrying Nina. Nina is enslaved by her desire of Gordon and then of being a mother. Darrell and Marsden are enslaved by Nina's love. Their desires take different shapes and forms. They are broken, reestablished, start from old lines, make new lines, reversed, created and are in flux. These desires give shape to their lives and personality. Rhizome model has helped the researcher to explain all these points in a best possible way.

Conclusion

The life and environment of the play *Strange Interlude*, is rhizomatic and the characters are complicated to understand and split in their thinking. A very complicated and twisted plot is presented in this play. Although man tries his utmost effort to be coherent and integrated in his life yet the

external forces drive him towards destruction and sometimes towards insanity. Internal and external factors are responsible for the dispersed self of the man. This split self also takes us towards rhizomatic labyrinth. The self

in itself becomes rhizomatic. It is an infinite process which never ends.

(Acknowledgement: This publication was supported by Deanship of Scientific Research, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University).

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To cite this article

Muhammad Nawaz. (2020). A Schizoanalytic Study of Eugene O'Neill, Strange Interlude. John Foundation Journal of EduSpark, 2(4), 1-27.

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