



PSYCHOLOGICAL PLANE: SIGMUND FREUD'S SUBCONSCIOUS MIND IN SIMON STEPHENS'S "BLUEBIRD"

PSİKOLOJİK DÜZLEM: SIMON STEPHENSİN "BLUEBIRD" OYUNUNDA
SIGMUND FREUD VE BİLİNÇALTI

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Abstract

Doğüstü varlıkları temsil etmek için maskeler ve doğadan ilhamını almış kostümlerle sergilenen ritüellerden, Erken Orta Çağ'da kiliseye dayalı bir dramatikleştirilmeye dönerek Paskalya yortusunda İsa'nın teatral bir seremoni ile anılmasına ya da Elizabeth dönemi kaba kuvvetin yerini entrikalara bıraktığı bir dönemde, kılık değiştiren karakterlerin sahneyi doldurduğu Shakespeare'e kadar tiyatro her zaman ilerleyişini sürdüren insanın sahneye düşen bir gölgesi olmuştur. Bu süreçte değişen tiyatro anlayışı değil; insana ulaşma tarzıdır. Bu anlamda bünyesinde toplumun derinine nüfus edebilmeyi başarmış bir yapılanma gücüne sahip olan tiyatro, gelişen toplumun dinamiklerine paralel şekilde varlığını sürdürmüştür. Tiyatro için değişim, insan kendi devamlılığını sürdürdüğü sürece kaçınılmazdır. Sürekli bir devinim halinde olan tiyatro izleyici ve oyuncu arasında etkileşime olanak tanır. Bu etkileşimin boyutu çok yönlü olmakla beraber, en yaygın olarak bilinenlerden biri hiç şüphesiz Freud'un insan bilincinde ve bilhassa bilinçaltında yer edinen birtakım durumların, onların gündelik yaşamlarında büyük role sahip olduğu görüşüne dayanan psikanaliz kavramının oyun karakterlerine yansımalarıdır. Bu değişim ve etkileşimi en belirgin şekilde geleneksel tiyatro anlayışından öteye geçerek, müzik ve bol görsellik ağırlıklı post-dramatik unsurları ele alarak eserlerine yansıtan Simon Stephens çağdaş İngiliz tiyatrosunun son yıllarda yetiştirdiği önemli oyun yazarlarından biri olarak göze çarpar. Sinema sahnesini andıran düzlemde kaleme aldığı Bluebird (1998) oyunu, Stephens'in kendisinin de kişisel olarak deneyimlediği ve gözlemlediği, gelişen ve küreselleşen dünyanın kısacasında yaşama tutunmaya çabalayan postmodern bireylerin yaşamlarından kesitler sunar. Yazar, Bluebird oyunu ile günümüz bireylerinin psikolojik bozukluklarını Freud'un bilinçaltı kavramı çerçevesinde izleyiciye yansıtmaya çalışır. Bu çalışma Stephens'in Bluebird oyunundaki karakterleri Sigmund Freud'un kişilik kuramları bağlamında ele almaktır.

Öz

From the rituals demonstrated with masks and nature-inspired costumes to epitomise supernatural beings to a church-based dramatization in the Early Middle Ages focusing solely on commemoration of Christ with a theatrical rite on Easter, or even to Shakespeare, where characters in disguise fill the scene at a time when Elizabethan notion of visceral force was replaced by intrigue, theatre has always been the shadow of a changing society. What, in fact, goes under a change is not the notion of theatre per se, but the idea of relating to people from all walks of life. In this sense, theatre, which has a structuring power that has managed to infiltrate deeply within the society, has sustained its existence in parallel with the developing and shifting social dynamics. For theatre, change is bound to happen if one retains his/her permanency. Theatre, which is in a continuous motion, allows interaction between the audience and the actor. Though the dimension of this interaction is multifaceted, one of the most broadly known is indubitably the reflection of Freud's concept of psychoanalysis on the characters of the play, which is based on the view that certain situations that take place in human consciousness and especially in the subconscious have a great role in their daily lives. Simon Stephens, who reflects this change and interaction to his works by going beyond the traditional understanding of theatre and by including the post-dramatic elements with music and abundant visuality, stands out as one of the important playwrights of contemporary British theatre in recent years. The play Bluebird (1998), which he wrote on a level reminiscent of the cinema scene, presents sections from the lives of postmodern individuals who are struggling to hold on to life in the grip of the developing and globalizing world, which Stephens himself personally experienced and observed. The author tries to reflect the psychological disorders of today's individuals and Freud's subconscious concept to the audience with his play Bluebird. This study deals with the characters in Stephens' Bluebird within the context of Sigmund Freud's personality theories.

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1. Freud and Psychoanalysis

Sigmund Freud, scientifically regarded as one of the 20th century geniuses, was the first person to introduce the term psychoanalysis to the medical world by citing the unconscious of the individual as the cause of many mood triggers, such as “*painful experiences and emotions, wounds, fears, guilty desires and unresolved conflicts*” (Tyson 12). Freud's first impressions of subconscious were made possible by the free association technique:

Although he did not discover the ‘free association’, Freud’s invention of psychoanalytical session gave this ordinary way of thinking a highly privileged and utilitarian space. Most importantly, by asking the person to think out loud, he referred the monologic nature of solitary inner speech to the dialogic structure of a two-person relation, a partnership, we might term the *Freudian Pair*. (Bollas 7).

In this way, Freud realizes that certain events that people have experienced in their past and which they cannot get rid of, direct their thoughts and behaviours when they are unaware. Freud shares the reflections of this situation with Jean Market Charkot, with whom he worked for a while in Paris. Although Charkot tries to bring out the subconscious of the person using techniques such as the hypnosis method, Freud focuses entirely on examining the behaviour and reactions of the person, thinking that the scope of hypnosis is narrow. One of the first points that catches his attention is the slips of the tongue that people often experience in daily life. In keeping with Freud, using a different word instead of the one you want to say is the first trace of the subconscious. Later, with patients telling their dreams to Freud, he reasons that these dreams are a way of symbolically expressing. Freud, in his first book *The Interpretation of Dreams*, concludes that “*the dream is the liberation of the spirit from the pressure of external nature, a detachment of the soul from the fetters of matter*” (2). In addition to these, the concept that had a terrific influence on Freud's becoming a distinguished psychoanalyst is sexuality. Freud “*felt society forbids the free expression of sexuality and aggression*” (Cohen 20). According to Freud, people feel the effect of two concepts deeply in the subconscious: Sexuality and fear of death. Freud, who uses the concept of libido to explain the effect of sexuality directing these behaviours, prefers Thanatos concept for death drive. For Freud, the concept of sexuality, which has been considered immoral even to mention for centuries, is an instinct of every human being, and has a significant impact on personality. Freud thus directs his research on personality and is later famed as “*the first acknowledged personality theorist*” (Burger 40). Freud “*originally divided*

personality into the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious. This division is known as the topographic model” (Burger 43) but, in time, considering that this definition was insufficient, he suggests that personality, known as a structural model, consists of id, ego and superego, so “*according to Freud, the id is the most primitive part of the personality and the part from which the ego and the superego later develop”* (Nolen-Hoeksema et al. 467). In a sense, id is the primitive drive we have as soon as we are born. In this drive, the focus of the person is the pleasure received from what is desired. Aggression and sexual drives appear to be dominant in id. Ego, on the other hand, is the part that highlights the realistic aspect of personality. In a sense it acts as an intermediary between id and superego and decides which action is right or wrong. Furthermore, “*the whole process of decision occurs with the full knowledge of the ego”* (Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* 259). Superego, then, can be said to be “*the internalized representation of the values and morals of society. It is the individual’s conscience, as well as his or her image of the morally ideal person”* (Nolen-Hoeksema et al. 468). By arguing that the drives inherent in humanity are one of the major factors that make up someone’s personality, Freud sees *ego* and *superego* as subconscious concepts. Freud's theory is in constant motion and has been interpreted under different subheadings over the years. These ideas, which are scientifically ground-breaking, also find a wide place in literature since the characters created in literary works are characters that we may encounter in daily life, created according to the idea of reflection theory from primitive times to the present. At this point, two ideas come to the fore: The life of the author, which cannot be considered apart from his/her work and the indicator elements such as suppression, aggression, and sexuality that can be considered as the expression of the subconscious in the play. It is no wonder that the pain and suffering the characters mainly go through is mostly related to their surroundings and their physical spaces and is dependent on others’ views of them in such a skirmish as man versus man. Regarding this, Freud explains the function of pain and suffering and how we humans experience it:

We are threatened with suffering from three directions: from our own body; which is doomed to decay and dissolution and which cannot “even do without pain and anxiety as warning signals; from the external world, which may rage against us with overwhelming and merciless forces of destruction; and finally, from our relations to other men. The suffering which comes from this last source is perhaps more painful to us than any other. (Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* 9).

2. Simon Stephens

Simon Stephens, a contemporary playwright who masterfully applies the elements of Lehmann that make up the Post-dramatic theatre in his plays, which symbolises the transition beyond Dramatic theatre, was born on 6 February 1971 in Stockport / Manchester. His interest in writing begins at a very young age: *“I’ve always written. Ever since I was about six, I’ve often felt happier writing than doing almost anything else”* (Stephens, *Plays 1* vii). The writer's habit of continuous writing, which he acquired in his childhood, as well as his interest in theatre and playwriting, became more pronounced during his studies in history at York University: *“it was at York University that I found my way to the theatre”* (Stephens, *Plays 1* ix-x). Although the author did not have any formal or academic education regarding dramaturgy during his years studying history at the university, he tries to write plays with his own style, which is *“a series of terrible plays”* (Stephens, *Plays 1* viii). He also does not hesitate to state clearly that he did not find himself well enough for authorship at that time. Having the opportunity to work with many master directors to improve his playwriting and staging most of his plays, especially in Germany, are the experiences that Stephens had in his path towards playwriting that cannot be ignored. In this sense, although the basic action of his plays and the characters he creates are the experiences of the author from his personal experience and life, *“the reality in Simon’s plays is pure construction”* which is *“defined by two antagonistic terms: despair and hope”* (Stephens, *Plays 4* x).

The characters of Stephens, who uses separate structures in his plays and writes plays with a different setting each time, are composed of the types he encounters in his personal life. Stephens’ plays are of this new genre of nineties and primarily centered around the communal as well as realistic genre and the characters in his plays are generally made up of people who were heavily addicted to alcohol and cigarettes, whom Stephens met while working as a waiter in pubs in his youth. In a sense, Stephens’ plays are *“drenched in alcohol”* (Stephens, *Plays 3* xvi). Parallel to this, Stephens' father's excessive alcohol addiction and the loss of his father in his sixties due to alcohol-related cancer also stand out as the main factors affecting the writer's life and plays. As Stephens points out, *“these plays are populated by people sneaking off for a crafty fag. They drink and smoke in the face of death. Death and illness sit over all of these plays”* (*Plays 3* xvii). Bolton argues that *“Stephens’ construction of character and narrative invites audiences into a process of observation, selection and comparison in order to interpret a story from the individuals, events,*

dialogue and images presented to them" (105). The authors who most influenced Stephens artistically were the masters such as Anton Chekhov, William Shakespeare, John Osborne, Edward Bond, and Caryl Churchill. Beyond these, regarding playwriting, he believes that:

The necessary subject of all plays is humanity. Playwrights explore, artistically, what it is to be a human being, with more rigour and detail than the practitioners of any other art. In that sense I learned more about my subject from managing a bar or from working in cafés and travelling on night buses and working for a mobile disco company and as a Betterware Homecare Catalogue delivery man than I ever would have done on any playwriting course. (*Plays 1 viii*).

Stephens chooses Manchester and Stockport as the venue for his plays, where he and his family live, and where he has been an observer since childhood. As he says, the plays he wrote are full of today's individuals who are far from rural life and village life, and who try to hold on to life in the city in general. Besides, he says that he "*realised, though, that these are all city plays. Specifically, they are plays driven by the relationship between Manchester and London. They are plays more about drinkers than about drug users, and more about the drunk than the sober*" (*Plays 1 xi-xii*).

Although Stephens wrote many plays during his youth, *Port* (2002), which he describes as his first play, draws attention mainly due to the position of the city of Stockport in the play as well as a female character given a central importance. Stephens explains why London, the capital of England, is so important for him and his plays:

London dominates the landscape of these plays, even those that play out their action away from its centre. London is my home. It's where I've lived now for fifteen years. My children were all born in its East End. I can think of nowhere else I'd rather live. I miss it when I leave it. I love coming home. But I can think of nowhere else where that atomisation and that fracturing is more palpable." (*Plays 2 xxi-xxii*).

Contrary to popular belief, Stephens' *Bluebird*, one of the plays in which London takes a central position, was his "*ninth play, not the first one*" (*Plays 1 viii*). However, it is the author's first staged play, which was performed in 1998 at the Royal Court. It has the feature of being a play that was produced based on a situation stemming from Stephens's own thoughts. Stephens does not hesitate to explain in his own words how he came up with the setting of *Bluebird*:

I wrote *Bluebird* in 1997. I was living in north London with Polly, the woman who was to become my wife. After the decision to have a baby, I decided to write about the worst possible thing that I could imagine ever happening to a father. I wrote about a taxi driver who has failed as a father in the most appalling way; about a taxi driver and about London at night, because as a barman I'd come to meet a lot of taxi drivers and travel a lot through London at night. The characters that populate the play are nearly all based on people I've served drinks to at one time or another. (*Plays 1* viii-ix).

Although different types of people from separate settings that appear in urban life constitute the basic theme of his plays, Stephens underlines the importance of a bold theatre that ventures into perceptual territories with the spectator (Angelaki 146). Stephens, with his play *Bluebird*, attempts to show the function of the metropolitan city, which continues even at night, with Jimmy's taxicab that provides transition from one place to another and to emphasize the psychological problems of people who try to hold on to life in a difficult urban setting and live under challenging conditions. Through the different characters in the play, Stephens presents impressions of the dilemmas that lie in the subconscious of the individuals. What Stephens tries to reveal with *Bluebird* is to bring to light the psychological dilemmas of the characters in daily life blended with his own personal impressions and to force the viewer to understand the systematic hidden in the subconscious of these individuals who struggle to exist in the postmodern society.

3. *Bluebird*

Bluebird, in which the musical harmony comes to the forefront in almost every scene and integrates with the visuals, along with the stage design created by Simon Stephens using the specific tones of colours, draws attention as a play written in cinematographic style, which is one of the most important literary principles of postdramatic theatre. The understanding of dramatic theatre is completely avoided by the lighting of the beginning and end of each scene with the light of the car headlight and the reflection of the music rising from the car to the audience to the extent that it covers the stage. The aim of the play, which is fictionalized in this system, is to push the limits of the perceptual mind of the viewer who is exposed to intense signs. Lehmann's comment on this situation is interesting:

The consistent tendency towards a musicalization (not only of language) is an important chapter of the sign usage in post-dramatic theatre. An independent auditory semiotics emerges; directors also

apply their sense of music and rhythm, which is influenced by pop music. (Lehmann 91).

Another element that attracts as much attention as the signs on the stage is the way the characters are presented to the audience. As Bolton points out “*Stephens’s construction of character and narrative invites audiences into a process of observation, selection and comparison in order to interpret a story from the individuals, events, dialogue and images presented to them*” (Bolton 105). In the play, the characters are generally not connected to each other. All elements, especially London streets, the telephone booth, and the taxi, which are used as places in the play in terms of content, provide Jimmy's connection with the other characters. In the play where the scenes are presented to the audience from a “cinematic gaze”, the taxi turns into a psychiatrist's room, where the events that people have experienced in daily life or had to experience in their past are brought to light, rather than simply being the vehicle people use to get somewhere (Woycicki 15). Thus, Stephens tries to reflect the psychological dilemmas and troubles of characters to the audience by presenting sections from the life of the postmodern individual, who tries to hold on to life in the grip of the developing and globalizing world.

Throughout the play, all the characters in the taxi have the opportunity to review their own spiritual processes, while also contributing to Jimmy's spiritual development. Some of the events that the characters try to express about themselves during their interaction with Jimmy in a spiritual and psychological sense contain the first impressions of the need to examine the subconscious concept proposed by Freud in depth.

The subconscious plays a significant role in shaping the life of a person in both emotional and spiritual dimensions, taking firm steps towards becoming a concept that has deep secrets that are still waiting to be discovered. The subconscious depth of every character in *Bluebird* is not equivalent. At this point, it is one of the most general points that can be deduced from Stephens's play that spiritual analyses and experiences that take place in the subconscious of the person are a factor that motivates them unconsciously. Défense mechanisms triggered by motives such as fear, aggression, hatred, longing and regret, which play a major role in the formation of the daily behaviours of the characters in the play, allow them to be analysed psychoanalytically.

At the beginning of the scene, Jimmy calls his ex-wife Clare Macneil in a phone booth, but as understood by the frustrated expression on his face, he is unable to reach her. After the rising lights are illuminated to cover the stage, Jimmy is in the taxi with Guvnor, who we understand is his first customer. Although Guvnor makes some efforts to get Jimmy to talk, his words do not catch Jimmy's attention. The music rising with the lighted headlights of the car covers the stage for a while, and then a drunk customer named Robert gets into the taxi. Robert's drunkenness is the first step in uncovering the bitter truth he subconsciously struggles to suppress. Robert's deep regrets about the past and the impression that he is a prisoner of experiences he cannot change causes Jimmy to identify himself with Robert because Robert's daughter was brutally murdered. In addition to losing his daughter too early, Robert blames himself for not being able to prevent her death, and for allowing her to live on her own. The speech here is mainly about regret. Robert, who is in great spiritual depression talks about the night his daughter was killed, making Jimmy face his reality:

Robert: He stabs her in the tit. Eight times. Leaves her. And this is punchline. He leaves the bloody video. Leaves all her cash. Leaves everything. Just leaves. She's bleeding to death on her own kitchen floor and he just leaves. I mean, Christ. What can you say? Eh? Answer me that.

Jimmy: I'm sorry.

Robert: Sorry? You're sorry? My friend, you can have no possible idea.

Jimmy: I know that. (*Plays 1 7*).

Especially in cases such as the first-degree relative of the killed or deceased person, the feeling of being late caused by the psychological stress of the person and sudden discharges that develop in parallel with this emotional tension are common situations encountered in psychiatry. In the subconscious, it is difficult for many people to accept common value judgments that cannot be shared with the deceased and expected social norms such as mourning. Robert's feeling of regret is just one of the difficult phases a person goes through to get through this process. Therefore, regret generally is associated with someone who is emotionally lost while having a wide target board for people to experience. As Janet Landman points out:

Regret is an emotion is also evident in the definitional allusions to distress of mind and to being keenly sorry for one's mistakes, as well as in the mention of sorrow, grief, pain, disappointment,

dissatisfaction, longing, remorse, and “comparable emotion.” The emotional sense of regret is highlighted in statements describing grief over the loss of a loved one. (Landman 140-141).

Robert's intense emotional turmoil after his daughter was killed as a result of being attacked by a thief who broke into her house pushed him to the psychology of retribution. However, while waiting in front of the prison where his daughter's killer is imprisoned in order to put all his plans into action, he decides not to kill the murderer despite his strong sense of revenge. At this point, the approach that should be known is that regret is a normal motive that occurs in difficult situations in the person and can in fact be “*viewed as a normal, inevitable, and direct consequence of rationality*” (Landman 139). Robert demonstrates behaviour that a reasonable person can do, and his courage to express his feelings without censorship is an indication of his strong perceptions. Jimmy, on the other hand, deliberately prefers to ignore and suppress them, although he offers the audience some understandable clues about himself. The most appropriate term for Jimmy's behaviour in psychology is motivated forgetting, one of the most used defence mechanisms. defence mechanisms is a psychology term that can be studied by considering the circumstances of everyone. A defence mechanism “*is the corner-stone on which the whole structure of psycho-analysis rests*” (Freud, “On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement” 16). Another defence mechanism Jimmy seems to utilise is repression. The main reason for repression is the fact that its “*essence lies simply in turning something away, and keeping it at a distance, from the conscious*” (Freud, “Repression” 147). Even if Jimmy is not ready to face his own facts yet, he begins to take steps towards it.

Young Man gets in the car after Robert, but he is one of the young people in the grip of capitalism and affected by the psychology of consumption, which is frequently encountered in postmodern societies. The first question he asks when he gets into the car is where Jimmy bought his shirt because he finds it beautiful, and soon leaves the vehicle. This time Jimmy is back in the phone booth. On the other end of the phone is Clara's sister, Sarah, whose anger is very violent as she hangs up on Jimmy.

The scene begins with Jimmy calling out to Angela. Stephens uses clear definitions of Angela's appearance: “*a prostitute of indistinguishable age. Haunted, hollow beauty chewed away by years of self-hatred, self-abuse, cold, etc.*” (Stephens, *Plays 1* 10). Accompanied by Jungle music and standing still, the duo sip their coffee in the taxi. Angela turns her questions to Jimmy, quite boldly. She starts the

conversation by asking where Jimmy is from. After the response she receives, she goes on to say that "*Mancunians are very sensitive*" (Stephens, *Plays 1* 13), also telling Jimmy in a melancholic manner that her ex-boyfriend hailed from there and that he jumped off a bridge. Her melancholic state is one of her most noticeable emotional reactions during her dialogue with Jimmy. The interpretation of melancholy according to Freud is interesting:

If one listens patiently to the melancholic's many and various self-accusations, one cannot in the end avoid the impression that often the most violent of them are hardly at all applicable to the patient himself, but that with insignificant modifications they do fit someone else, someone whom the patient loves or has loved or should love. Every time one examines the facts this conjecture is confirmed. (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 248.)

Melancholia was a term suggested to be found mainly in women, but Freud suggested that melancholia can affect all individuals regardless of gender. Psychoanalytically, he suggests that the traumatic events experienced by melancholic people in their past experiences are the result of the linear effects of these people's character. And melancholic people "have lost [their] self-respect and [they] must have good reasons for this" (Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 247). Angela, who is in the position of a dominant character, says that when she was 14, she left Sunderland and moved to her uncle and that her uncle raped her:

Angela (*matter-of-fact*): He raped me and beat my face to shit.

Jimmy (*unfazed*): You were obviously very close. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 14).

The factors that forced a 14-year-old young girl to leave home were the beginning of the chain of disasters that will continue in her life. Jimmy, who has an incriminating attitude towards Angela in response to his uncle's rape of her, is portrayed as an ordinary man that can be encountered in a patriarchal society and ignores the hard-to-repair psychological situations created in Angela's soul. But Angela continues to subconsciously give impressions of her traumatic life that has disturbed her, acting as if she was familiar with Jimmy's point of view towards her. Freud underlines that certain events, "specifically early experiences of sexual 'seduction' or 'assault'" that can be categorised under trauma cause undeniable damage to the development of individuals (Leys 20). The society's perspective on the traumatic individual, in addition to the trauma experienced in childhood, is also vital

at this point. The patriarchal societies' aim to establish a male-dominated perspective on women's psychology, the accusatory statements imposed on women, and the unquestioned criminalization of women are the most obvious examples of the degeneration of the moral values of the society. Angela is an individual who tries to hold on despite the corrupt values of society and it can be understood even from her external image that she is fighting for it. When Jimmy guesses her age to be 29, Angela's response is quite surprising: "*I am nineteen*" (Stephens, *Plays 1* 14). From the moment she left Sunderland, it is clear that being on the target of the moral judgments of the society she is in, both spiritually and emotionally, pushed her into a combative attitude. By choosing to use the name she wants, her acts of rebellion seem to fight the tragic realities she is in. Noticing that she was relieved by expressing her painful realities within her, Angela states that she does not like Hammersmith, taking advantage of this situation to talk about things fuelled by her hatred. The reason for this is that Hammersmith has an Irish population, and her uncle is an Irishman:

Angela: Full of Irish. I hate the Irish.

Jimmy: What do you hate the Irish for?

Angela: Tight-arsed smelly-faced bastard drunks. My uncle was Irish.

Jimmy: That's fairly unequivocal. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 15).

Parallel to Freud's opinion, who believes that most of the actions that affect human life are experienced during childhood, Angela's rape by her uncle is one of the biggest traumas she had to experience as she stepped into adult life because "*an early trauma can persist into adulthood in linear fashion*" (Gaensbauer and Jordan 949). Freud's comment on the suppression of any sexual experience on a traumatic scale is notable, saying that "*'Repression' of the memory of a distressing sexual experience which occurs in maturer years is only possible for those in whom that experience can activate the memory-trace of a trauma in childhood*" (Freud, "Further Remarks on the Neuropsychoses of Defence" 166).

Based on Angela's statements, the reason behind her being a prostitute is this time more of an obligation than sexual motives. One of the first sensations aroused in human psychology by the painful experiences they had to experience is the feeling of moving away from the place where the events happened. Thus, the person thinks that s/he will escape from the repressed reality that s/he often witnesses, and that s/he will escape the reality s/he feels in her/his mind. The psychoanalytic approach

to the sexual experience that Angela has experienced is directed towards the system that is subconsciously suppressed in cases such as rape:

As a result of the experience, an instinctual demand arises which calls for satisfaction. The ego refuses that satisfaction, either because it is paralyzed by the magnitude of the demand or because it recognizes it as a danger... The ego fends off the danger by the process of repression. The instinctual impulse is in some way inhibited, its precipitating cause, with its attendant perceptions and ideas, is forgotten. (Freud, "Moses and monotheism: Three essays" 128).

This situation, which can also be considered as the conflict of the subconscious, not only causes Angela to want to flee from England after her experiences but also is deep enough to reflect on her face. Despite being young, Angela has a very old look. The place she chooses to live is America, where she only had the opportunity to see on television. The mind of Angela, who tries to move on to a different topic without dwelling on every subject she tells, is probably trying to seize this opportunity. Angela is so immersed in what she cannot do in her life that she is not interested in the answers she gets in response to the questions she poses. While expressing in disappointment that she had once had a dream of being a singer, the fact that she put forward the scars on her face are the permanent marks that life offers her in response to the way she struggles for her dreams. Angela says, "*I walked into a wall*" (Stephens, *Plays 1* 16). A person's conscious struggle against a situation that harms him / herself is the first trace of a person's mental health not being right. The fact that Jimmy says "*I'll bear that in mind. Are you going to be all right?*" (Stephens, *Plays 1* 19) as soon as Angela tells him this very fact, which is obviously difficult for her to admit, means the re-closure of her released unconscious, and she changes the subject. Jimmy tries to mend the wall with her this time, expressing his thoughts that she is beautiful and impressive. This time Angela admits to him that she is very tired. Angela is unhappy with being a prostitute; even knowing this has penetrated her subconscious, wounding her mind:

Jimmy: What is this meeting?

Angela: (*not fazed, challenging him back*) What do you think it is?

Jimmy: I wouldn't like to guess.

Angela: That's probably very wise. You really don't want to know.
(Stephens, *Plays 1* 18).

Despite all her experiences, Angela tries to show the audience that she still has hope by never letting go of her combative demeanour and by continuing to dream. Angela, in a sense, represents a notion of survival through understanding:

Even though we do not ‘recover’ from our traumatic past, nor can we ‘cure’ it, ‘overcome’ it, or even fully understand it, we can, and we must listen to it and survive it by listening to its effects as they are transmitted to us through the voices of its witnesses and survivors. (Marder 4).

Afterwards, a 15-year-old girl, whom Stephens identifies only as Girl, gets on the taxi. Too pensive to think of looking back at Jimmy, this girl soon gets out of the taxi thinking how she will forget her past. The past is one of the key words in psychoanalytic approaches. The person tries to build all the beliefs she/he believes to be based on her/his past experiences. Sometimes this linear process progresses in a single level. Sometimes the person aims to go in a different direction by turning their back on the past they want to escape. Jimmy is back in the phone booth. This time, his wife Clare is on the other side of the phone, but Jimmy hangs up, not knowing what to do when he hears her voice. At this point, the two do not yet have the courage to face their own realities.

When the lights go out, a Scottish man named Richard is seen in the car. Richard complains that the city is full of music sounds and does not hesitate to express that he is in search of silence. As Ronningstam states, Richard’s search of silence or “*silence is the strategy to manage emotionally difficult and tense situations*” (1278). Richard's desire for silence is parallel to the idea of id's requests to be met instantly.

Richard: One time. Long ago. There must have been a silence here.

Jimmy: What are you talking about?

Richard: This place is never totally quiet. Even when you think it is it’s only because you’re so accustomed to the noise that you’ve stopped noticing any more.

Jimmy: You never stop noticing.

Richard: That’s what I yearn for sometimes. That’s what I could kill for. For there to be no noise. No noise at all. How’s business, Jimmy? (Stephens, *Plays 1* 20).

The search for calmness is closely related to the anxiety in one's environment: “*silence helps control strong feelings, settle disputes, and allow more passive expression of discontent*” (Ronningstam 1278). This man, who says he is an engineer, is disturbed by noise enough to consider committing murder, which shows the dark traces of his aggression, one of the main drives in his Id:

Richard: I don't blame you, pal. Scares the fuck out of me sometimes.
Jimmy: I cacth myself staring at them. Just end up wanting to fucking shake them. Kick them. I recognize myself in them too much. Y'know what I mean. (Stephens, *Plays 1 22*).

The fact that Richard is the most familiar thing he sees in the place he looks at also points to his inner anger. Anger must be interpreted in a thin line at this point because Freud believed that aggression was also a basic biological drive. In fact, he believed that the sexual and aggressive drives were the most important instinctual determinants of personality throughout life (Nolen-Hoeksema et al. 467-468). Richard's open statements cause Jimmy to slowly unearth some facts about himself:

Richard: How long have you been married?

Jimmy: Eleven years.

Richard: That's good. Your wife. Does she not mind you driving at night?

Jimmy: I wouldn't know. I never asked her. I haven't seen my wife in five years. (Stephens, *Plays 1 23*).

Jimmy's remark that he has not seen his wife in a long time is among his first serious confessions. His telling of this confession to Richard stems from the concept of family that Richard frequently emphasizes. In the rest of the speech, Jimmy, who does not neglect to add that he was a writer in the past, claims that the reason he stopped writing is because he did not “*have anything left to say*” (Stephens, *Plays 1 23*), which is the first impression of past events that Jimmy subconsciously suppresses:

Richard: Do you not regret it?

Jimmy: I regret many things, big man. But that isn't one of them. (Stephens, *Plays 1 23*).

This time it is up to Richard to ask questions like a psychoanalyst. He asks Jimmy about his deepest fears. Stating that he does not care about the fears of everyday life, Jimmy wonders the fear behind this man's over-aggressive nature.

Richard says the worst thing that happened to him was when an old friend jumped on the train tracks to commit suicide. As Freud emphasizes, death has an important place in people's lives, consciously or unconsciously. "*Instinctual life as a whole serves to bring about death, apart from the sexual instincts*" (Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" 311). On top of this traumatic event, the fact that Richard was obliged to cut the electrical wires in order to extract the corpse was very difficult for him to endure. This man, who does not enjoy his work, metaphorically says he has been offered to work as a paid courier. Directing people not as they want but according to the conditions determined by the environment is also very difficult for Richard, who is trying to gain a place in this society. This is a situation that pushes him to violence. After telling all his negative thoughts, the question he asks Jimmy is important:

Richard: Do you believe in the intranscience of love?

Jimmy: You what?

Richard: What about the communicability of the human spirit?

Jimmy: Those are very odd questions

Richard: They're about the most important questions in the whole fucking World, Jimmy. Give me an answer

Jimmy: Yes, I do. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 26-27).

The sentences he utters about the questions answers of which he is curious about belong to the value judgments in which Richard is about to lose his faith and as Richard asks these questions, he wonders what someone in the same situation would think, and the lights go out.

Through the glowing lights, a couple appears in the taxi. That they say, "*I love you*" (Stephens, *Plays 1* 27) to one other brings a smile to Jimmy's face. Jimmy, then, gets back in the phone booth. This time, unlike his other calls, he tells Clare that he wants to see her, and they are scheduled to meet that night.

The person who appears in the taxi under the lights is Andy Green, who works as a security guard at a bar. Andy, who is evident from all his nervousness from the first moment he was in the car, is in disagreement with his profession. Jimmy, like a psychiatrist, calmly tries to find out if what lies behind all of Andy's anger is simply because of his job or if there are other things that motivate his wrath. Anger is a form of emotion that can be seen, by its nature, as a reflection of the id. However, it is anger which cannot be controlled that harms the person. Andy is just one of those

people exposed daily to the dark faces of the society. In psychoanalysis, “*the occurrence of aggressive behaviour*” is defined as one that “*always presupposes the existence of frustration*” (Miller 339). It is clear that Andy's perspective towards his children is affected due to the bad events he witnessed in his surroundings. Andy thus feels anxiety because this situation arises when Andy sees himself whenever he looks at his children, identifying the childhood events that lie in his subconscious with those who have experienced the same case:

Andy: Some of the kids we have down there. I can see my lot in them. And the girls are wearing nothing. Not a fucking stitch half of them. You feel like stopping them. Feel like saying to them, do you know what you are doing? Have you thought about what you are doing? About where you are going? Have you even thought about it? It was hot in there tonight? Leaves you breathless. These past few weeks it's been fucking crazy. You get so thirsty you end up drinking yourself to the ground. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 32).

Andy seems to be one of those people who suffer from existential difficulties and who are frequently exposed to the disturbing dimension of the conditions of the society. This man, who is too sensitive to be insensitive to the realities experienced in society, apologizes to Jimmy for his initial reaction. The reason for Andy's extreme sensitivity towards society is closely related to his family. What Andy sees in his environment increases his anxiety and drives him to have a more prudential perspective towards his family. His social status does not allow him to change things and does not offer him the opportunity to apply his own truths. Andy's truths overlap with his social status and push him into anger that is based on guilt. “*Freud also claimed that feelings of anger and hostility result in conflict and unconscious guilt*” (Bjerkly 29). As his dialogues with Jimmy intensify, Andy, telling him the traces of the event he could not erase, admits that he beat his child very badly when he was 14 years old. The reason why he remembers this as a bad memory that saddens him is that he does not like any form of violence, while the fact that he is a staff member who must, from time to time, use violence in a bar and cannot find another job to work makes him quite uneasy. Even though Andy does not like to pretend and lie, it is clear that he is not very happy with the situation, especially when he confesses to Jimmy that he had to pretend and lie for his boss. As he talks about it, Andy asks Jimmy if he has ever seen anyone killed. Jimmy makes his most painful confession ever that his daughter died by being run over by a car. The underlying reality of Andy's worries emerges as he describes seeing a young man killed and the chilling

effect this had on him. Andy, who is apparently very worried about this issue as he also has children, feels a great concern for his family's future:

Andy: I'm trying. So hard. Trying to raise the boys. Trying to look after the daughter. Trying to make the wife happy. Trying to save a bit of money. Trying to get us out of this shithole. This place. It isn't anywhere to raise a family. The things that go on here. They break your heart.

Jimmy: I wish you luck, my friend. (Stephens. *Plays 1* 35).

On the stage now is a man named Billy Lee, with his wrist in bandages and complaining about the cast on his arm. This man who complains about a lot of things wants to tell a story. With the story about pigeons, saying that pigeons dismiss their babies to adapt to the changing weather conditions and temperature, it is apparent that Billy identifies himself with the state of the bird in the story, but he is not yet ready to accept it. Billy's thoughts are left open-ended as an exercise for the reader as the mind systematics in the subconscious of every human being do not work equally.

Janine William, Jimmy's last customer, is a former teacher. Janine paints a portrait of a modern individual who can easily express her feelings. By saying, "*I sometimes think that there is so much confusion and sadness and hatred and everything. Just everything. Broken. Horrible. I would just be better. It could just be simpler. If people said things*" Janine expresses her feelings without any justification (Stephens, *Plays 1* 38). From the following sentences, it is possible to infer that Janine is a rationalist person. For Janine, it is conceivable to obtain some information about people's lives based on the music that they listen to, the TV programs they watch, and the books they read. The fact that the book Janine chooses to read, when she wants to read one, is a pornographic magazine, and thinks that she can establish a closer relationship with women by this means is related to her instinct of femininity. Janine displays the profile of a woman who rebels against society by not accepting the role of woman that society imposes on her. She does not feel the constant need to depend on a man to have children. However, things do not proceed as planned:

Janine: Men I met on the trains. In Cafes. In pubs. I'd go to pubs to meet men there. I wanted children so badly. I let them do anything to me.

Jimmy: I see.

Janine: One man hurt me. He really humiliated me. Some of the things he said. I was very drunk. But I remember. The things he said. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 41).

The strong woman profile she created about herself at the beginning of her conversation with Jimmy suddenly changes when it comes to the point that Janine is sensitive about. Janine has a self-humiliating attitude. It is a difficult situation for her to be unable to live as she wishes and that the problems caused by others take a large part in her life. Freud says “*life, as we find it, is too hard for us; it brings us too many pains, disappointments and impossible tasks*”, revealing the painful aspects of life years ago (Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents* 8). Thus, she conveys all the emotions she feels inside without censorship: the person who is judged in her discourse is always her. She says that she does not even like her name and that she has no money for a taxi fare in her pocket. Jimmy asks her if she would like to sleep with him. Janine is under heavy burden of irreparable wounds inflicted on her body with her permission. What does this to her is a male-dominated society that sees women as nothing but a commodity. Therefore, Janine wants to be closer to women and understand them. Jimmy, after Janine’s confession, tells her then that it was him who ran over her daughter, saying that “*tonight, five years ago, was the night our daughter was killed*” (Stephens. *Plays 1* 44).

This time the lights are on Clare Macneill and Jimmy, and the two are alone. Although Clare comes to see Jimmy, it is obvious that she could not overcome the hesitations that surrounded her. That Clare calls Jimmy as James and wishes to visit where their old house is indicates that Clare is also under the influence of a wound that has not yet cooled over the years. She asks Jimmy if he has ever been to their old house before, to which Jimmy replies, “*Every night. Right in the middle of the night I come back. Just drive past*” (Stephens, *Plays 1* 47). The death of his daughter did not leave Jimmy's conscience during this time. Freud links conscience with the superego:

The superego is sub-dividable into two parts: conscience and ego ideal. Conscience tells what is right and wrong and forces the ego to inhibit the id in pursuit of morally acceptable, not pleasurable, or even realistic, goals. The ego ideal aims the individual's path of life toward the ideal, perfect goals instilled by society. (Stevenson).

Since conscience is seen as a concept found in the superego of individuals, it has the effect of guiding the person. Jimmy is now alone with his conscience after the death of his daughter. While Jimmy's visit to the neighbourhood where the old house is located is an indication of this, Clare does not dare go back to their old house. In his ongoing speech, a deep sore spot of that house is evident in Jimmy:

Jimmy: I have been back here so many times now that it's like it's become part of my body. It's as though this place is a physical extension of myself. I come back here. Try to make sense of things. I can sit here for hours sometimes. I know every crack and pebble and cut in every paving stone and every strip of paint down this whole street. I never thought I'd actually develop a physical relationship with a street before. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 48).

While Jimmy talks freely, Clare asks Jimmy why he has not come in all these years past. Jimmy, with no explanation to show for it, just says sorry. Unable to find anything to say suitable for the situation, Jimmy tries to explain to Clare what customers have asked or told him in his taxi before and put it on the subject. This is the temporary period he gains in his remorse and conscience as "*the superego is the 'conscience' of the personality, and it can retaliate against the imperfections of the ego by inducing guilt*" (Lapsley and Stey 6). Clare asks Jimmy where he lived for all these years, wishing to hear much more realistic things in their meeting after such a long time rather than Jimmy and his sense of guilt. Shocked by Jimmy admitting that he has been living in his taxi for so many years, Clare is left speechless. When Jimmy talks about the book *Lord Jim* that his daughter bought for him on his birthday, it is obvious that he is in great pain. However, instead of reflecting this situation, he prefers to repress it and quickly changes the subject. He tries to convince Clare that he is happy to live in the car, but Clare is not pleased with the situation and the smell inside the car.

Clare: I don't like the smell of these cars.

Jimmy: The smell?

Clare: They smell of dead people.

Jimmy: Fucking hell

Clare: Well, not actually dead people. More the dead smell of people still alive. (Stephens, *Plays 1* 53).

Clare's metaphor is for people who are stumbled by everyday life to lead their lives in a way that is no different from the dead. Clare wants to find out why Jimmy lives inside a Nissan Bluebird. It is, in fact, not surprising why Jimmy chose this car. He feels like an immigrant who is dragged from place to place where he does not belong. Stating that he did not sleep with anyone during the time after he left Clare, Jimmy tries to relieve his conscience a little bit, as he did not fill the heavy burden of leaving with the ongoing mistakes that could have followed him. When Clare says she has married a heart doctor named Andrew, Jimmy ponders about the new man's traits. In this conversation, he is shocked by Clare saying she is pregnant. Meanwhile, Clare wonders how Jimmy was feeling, despite all that happened during this time. Jimmy honestly admits that he is sorry for this. It is apparent that Jimmy had a guilty conscience. Clare, who had to take all the responsibilities alone after her daughter's death, is angry with Jimmy's leaving all this behind, but is also curious about Jimmy's justification, saying, "*I'll hear you out and forgive you so that you can carry on with a clear fucking conscience. Well, you are wrong, Jimmy. You are so bloody wrong you couldn't even believe it.*" (Stephens, *Plays 1* 64). Clare's desire to forgive Jimmy for all his mistakes is related to her feeling of alleviating some of his pain.

Jimmy offers to go to the cemetery. The cemetery scene is the scene where Jimmy begins to relieve his conscience. Jimmy brings a bag of money from the car and wants to give it to Clare. Unable to show the determination to come to his daughter's funeral, Jimmy could not get rid of the voice of conscience. Using his car as a house and saying that he has not slept with anyone is a silence he puts on his conscience, the effect this has on Clare's conscience is much more. The moment he hands Clare the 100,000 pounds he had saved over five years, Jimmy is freed from the bondage of his conscience, and Clare, albeit hesitantly, accepts the bag full of money.

4. Conclusion

Freud, who discovered that the subconscious has an undeniably great effect on personality, is the first person who founds many concepts such as sexuality, dream interpretation and psychoanalysis and sheds light on the world of science in this sense. Freud, who discusses the factors involved in the formation of personality under three headings as id, ego and superego, examines all the situations that lie behind the behaviours of people in daily life by associating them with these three concepts. These ground-breaking studies in Freud's lifetime gain an important place in the world of literature as well. Since it is possible to associate the characters created in literary works with daily life, the concept of psychoanalysis makes it

possible to examine the characters in the works. For the art of theatre, psychoanalysis is one of the areas with the highest intelligibility and acceptability in terms of examining the characters in depth. Stephens' *Bluebird*, a post-dramatic play, has at its centre a former writer turned taxi driver, Jimmy, whose painful memory and the reason for the current choice of employment includes his killing of his own daughter while drunk-driving, and who cannot help but to engage in conversation with the customers from all walks of life and psychotic states in his taxi, making the play possible to be analysed within the framework of psychoanalysis. The fact that each of the characters in the play has a different psychological depth and the only person they relate to is Jimmy allows the play to be examined according to Freud's definitions of id ego and superego. In this sense, in *Bluebird*, in which concepts such as aggression, sexuality and conscience come to the fore through characters, Stephens gives the audience an impression of how the subconscious directs / affects human life. While Richard, who wants silence enough to risk resorting to violence if necessary, and Andy, who has to use violence as a tool in a job that he does not want, can be associated with id's idea of aggression, Angela and Janine, who have undergone traumatic experiences in sexual matters, become characters that can only continue living as well as this trauma allows them to. Jimmy's daughter, the death of whom he tragically caused, and the guilt he could not shake off never leave his conscience in peace for a period of 5 years. In this sense, the superego, also known as conscience, is revealed through Jimmy. As a result, in Stephens' *Bluebird*, the psychological depths and fragmented personalities of the individuals in everyday life and the unpleasant experiences these personalities imprison in their subconscious are revealed through the character of Jimmy and the other characters he speaks to in the taxi. At the same time, a wide panorama of the realities in the subconscious as well as the emotions that individuals living in today's world suppress in their inner worlds are drawn.

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Summary

Sigmund Freud, one of the leading figures of the 20th century, was the first personality theorist to try to base the concept of psychoanalysis. Within the personality framework Freud called the "Structural Model", id is the active layer in which the primitive motives of human beings are included and pleasure-oriented behaviors such as aggression and sexuality that we are most likely to encounter in daily life take place. Ego, on the other hand, emphasizes the realistic side of the personality by playing a factor in people's decisions. Superego is the section where the memories that are desired to be kept away from the mind and unpleasant to remember are suppressed. Superego is of great importance in the formation of personality because this part, which we can also call the dark part of the personality, is the area that has the greatest effect in personality formation. According to Freud, it is possible to obtain some information about personality by following the superego, that is, the reflections of the subconscious. Considering that dreams and slips of the tongue are traces of the subconscious, Freud suggests that it is possible for the individual to reveal what s/he subconsciously represses in a situation where s/he feels comfortable. Freud thinks that to explain the formation of personality, it is appropriate to examine the characters created in literary works because we are likely to encounter these characters in everyday life. Parallel to this idea, the play *Bluebird* written by Simon Stephens contains traces of the personality theory put forward by Sigmund Freud in terms of psychoanalytic analysis. The character Jimmy resembles a psychoanalyst with the intimate conversation environment he creates in the car and the experiences that his customers confessed to him within the essence of the conversations. Jimmy is the only character that connects the events of the other characters in the play as each character's incident deeply shakes him and he faces his own truth and his haunted conscience every single time. The play characters, who do not hesitate to admit sincerely to Jimmy their situations or the factors that led them to said situations, reveal the validity level of many principles Freud stated in his personality theories. Robert, who gets on the taxi of Jimmy, the main character of the play and is understood to be of an older age, opposes his daughter, who is only seventeen years old and wishes to live in a separate house in order to live freely in today's world surrounded by uncertainty and risks, has doubts that she will be able to continue her life alone, as her daughter is still at a very young age. The first key point in making Jimmy realize his situation is when Robert says that a thief who broke into his daughter's house, stabbed her daughter eight times in the chest and left without caring about her while she was dying, confessing to Jimmy his feelings

of regret for his murdered daughter. This is because Jimmy was fired from his job while continuing his life as a writer in the past and unconsciously caused the death of his own daughter with his car due to the effect of alcohol he took on the way home. Jimmy and Robert meet on a common ground in the taxi. The stories of both fathers exemplify Freud's subconscious findings, and the pain of both Robert's and Jimmy's terrible loss of their daughters is revealed in the very first scene. Another character, Angela, who gets into the car in a melancholic manner and tells Jimmy the most painful trauma she had hidden in her consciousness, and who is clearly not yet over this trauma, goes to her uncle who lived in another city with a dream of a new life when she was only fifteen years old. Angela's life, contrary to her dream of a beautiful life, shapes in a way she does not expect, and her future proceeds in a darker direction, turning her into a woman prostitute on the streets, after her trauma of rape at the age of fourteen by her uncle. Although Jimmy thinks Angela is twenty-nine years old in terms of her looks, Angela is nineteen years old and her experiences are reflected in her face. It is possible to discuss the rape victim Angela and the society's view of her with Freud's expressions about the trauma that sticks to the individual like a stain on their future life as a result of sexual harassment and assaults at an early age. Another client of Jimmy, Richard, is a character who seeks silence to get rid of his aggression. Richard, an engineer and overwhelmed by the noise of his environment, hates this noisy work environment. Moreover, a friend of his once jumped on the train tracks to commit suicide, and Richard was given the job of scraping the meat pieces of the shattered corpse off the train tracks. Richard contains the behavioural dimensions explained by Freud in his id concept. Andy, who works as a bar security guard, is another customer of Jimmy. Though Andy, who frequently intervened violently in bar fights as he worked as a security guard, does not like his profession and violence, his living conditions force him to do so. Andy, whose personality structure is diametrically opposed to his work, is a character who worries about his family and children. Andy, who dreams of a comfortable life for his family in difficult living conditions and who has great concerns about their future, is in a conflict when considered in the context of Freud. Janine, Jimmy's last client, is a woman with strange dreams and obsessions. Although she is a former teacher, her biggest desire in this life is to have children. For this sake, she has been with men she does not know in bars, cafes and restaurants and has an obsessive mood that allows men to even harm her sexually. Jimmy, who finds a piece of himself in what all these characters tell about their lives, manages to reach his ex-wife Clara after long efforts at the end of the play. While Jimmy is a character who lives in the car

and works at night after the accident he caused, his wife Clara chooses a new one for herself, marrying a doctor and pregnant with a new baby. While it is obvious that Clara is making changes in her life to get rid of what she went through, she is angry with Jimmy. The feeling Jimmy gets about his daughter, the death of whom he caused 5 years ago, and his ex-wife Clara is nothing but the voice of conscience, or, in Freudian terms, superego. Freud sees the superego as equal to conscience. All these characters created by Stephens seem to be in Jimmy's car in a random fiction to awaken his conscience in many ways.