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Self-awareness as a Pilgrim to Realness in Doris Lessing's "Through the Tunnel & A Sunrise on the Veld."

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ABSTRACT:

Doris Lessing fictionalizes self-awareness as an inevitable path to one's wholeness and his realness of the self and as psychological salvation from several psychotic shackles. The study traces Lessing's adolescents' journeys towards self-awareness in the light of analytical studies undertaken on awareness and its kinds. The research also applies Karnes Horney's concept of the self and her investigation of the neurotic trends that may hinder self-awareness actualization. Finally, the study focuses on how Doris Lessing's short fiction narratively structures the experience of self-awareness in the form of an experiential self-journey.

Key words:

Self-awareness; Realness; Idealized self, Neurotic trends; Real-self; Actual self; Existential moment

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The research:

Doris Lessing showed special interest in developing human consciousness in general and particularly in adolescents. A large part of her short fiction depicts the world of adolescence with its inner conflicts, struggles, pain, suffering, and chaos. One of Lessing's primary concerns is to empower adolescents to free themselves from any societal restrictions, parental authority, and psychotic shackles in a long and uncomfortable self-awareness journey, in which the characters always become conscious, fragile, distracted, and isolated.

Reading some of Lessing's stories reveals that the question of awareness is almost persistent, and we can discover several kinds and levels of awareness, specially self-awareness, which is one of the most prominent issues in both psychology and philosophy. The dictionary definition of self-awareness implies an understanding of one's character. "Self-awareness is the ability to focus on yourself and how your actions, thoughts, and emotions do or do not align with your internal standards", which means that "if you are highly self-aware, you can 'objectively' evaluate yourself, manage your emotions, align your behaviors with your values, and understand correctly how others perceive you." (Forsey, n.p.)

In the tradition of multiculturalism, which her fiction partakes of, Lessing deals with man regardless of his milieu. Her

protagonists are more psychological figures than merely fictional ones. She sheds light on the inner self and its experiences to depict its insecurities, conflict, and contradictions. Central among these concerns is the question of the free choice of the individual as her protagonists are almost in some problems; find the solution lies within them. Once they choose, in a moment of reshaping reality, to listen to their selves, their individuality crystallizes, and their free being emerges. Therefore, most of Lessing's stories, which tackle the period of adolescence, focus on the strong will of adolescents in achieving whatever they want, as most of her stories start with the protagonist looking at a difficult goal, and by the end of the story, readers found that many protagonists have managed to achieve that difficult task and solve the problem.

Also, Lessing believed that no one-size solution fits all, and everyone should voice his own perspective, find the meaning of his/her life, and shape his/her desirable reality and purpose. Therefore, adolescents are the subject in most of Lessing's short stories and are meant to be awakened and enlightened as they are the hope for a more liberating world. Even in her masterpiece, "The Golden Notebook", Lessing expresses her concerns about the educational system that she described as 'indoctrinating' because children are not given room to choose, but they are only to unquestionably inherit the cultural, political, and social norms from their predecessors. So, those who are strong and courageous enough to consider other norms, Lessing labeled them as 'robust' while others who obviously inherit life are 'molded'.

Lessing addressed different issues in the period of adolescence, such as education, sexual awakening, the psychotic dilemmas adolescents may experience, and most importantly, the parental shackles and the standardized social image experienced by adolescents. Lessing believed that adolescence is very important in shaping one's awareness, which is a focal assumption in R. D. Laing's book "The Divided Self": "The heightening or intensifying of the awareness of one's own being, both as an object of one's own

awareness and the awareness of others, is practically universal in adolescents." (106).

One key term in Lessing's narrative structuring of awareness is that of 'realness'. In most of Lessing's fiction, we can find what can be called the 'real self', and this is almost explored through a journey of self-discovery. The quest for the 'true self' is what matters in Lessing's fiction.

Therefore, Lessing, in most of her short stories that tackle the theme of adolescence, presented stress and anxiety as common traits among her protagonists. Accordingly, there is a belief that her fiction that tackles the adolescents' issues reflected, in many ways, her own anxious and unstable childhood. Lessing explicitly describes the vital role anxiety can play in shaping one's awareness at a young age as follows:

"The writers I know, or whose lives I have read about, have one thing in common: a stressed childhood. I don't mean, necessarily, an unhappy one, but children who have been forced into self-awareness early, have had to learn how to watch the grown-ups, assess them, know what they really mean, as distinct from what they say, children who are continually observing everyone - they have had the best of apprenticeships." (literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/doris-lessing.)

The study of self-awareness can be first traced back to "OSA original theory", the first modern theory by two social psychologists, Shelley Duval and Robert Wicklund, in 1972. The theory differentiates between two kinds of self-awareness: objective self-awareness (OSA) and subjective self-awareness (SSA). OSA refers to the state in which "one's attention is directed inward and his consciousness is focused on himself, he is the object of his own consciousness" (2). While SSA results when attention is directed away from the self and the person experiences himself as the source of perception and action (3).

Philosophically, self-awareness is equivalent to self-consciousness according to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy “self-conscious, (or, equivalently, self-aware). Self-consciousness can be understood as an awareness of oneself.” Psychologically, Laing, the Scottish psychiatrist, defined self-awareness as a kind of self-consciousness and stating that “self-consciousness implies two things: an awareness of oneself by oneself, and an awareness of oneself as an object of someone else’s observation”, in other words, to recognize yourself in the eyes of yourself and the eyes of others. (Laing, *The Divided Self*, 106).

True self-awareness begins with self-reflection. Self-reflection is “a thinking style that uses introspective analysis of experiences to obtain greater self-awareness (Daudelin, 1996; Seibert & Daudelin, 1999)” (qtd in Nesbit, Paul L, *Self-Awareness, Self-Reflection and Self-Regulation*, 4). Accordingly, there is an unavoidable relation between self-awareness and self-reflection. SRA, self-reflective awareness, “refers to a “meta-cognitive” ability, meaning that it involves thinking about and reflecting on one’s own mental processes”. OSA theory also tackles the same idea of self-reflective awareness but with another name. The theory refers to the ability of one’s consciousness to reflect on what he is perceiving using the term “self-reflexive” (Duval & Wicklund, *OSA*, 2).

Moreover, OSA theory assumed that the objective self-aware state will lead to two behavioral routes. Either people will regulate their behaviors and attitudes to fit their standards (behavioral modification), or they will ignore the self-aware stimuli (avoidance), refusing to dig deep into their internal realm, and by this act of ignorance, the self-evaluation journey will go no further and will be terminated, “People could actively change their actions, attitudes, ... to be more congruent with the representations of the standard; or could avoid the self-focusing stimuli” (Silvia & Duval, 231). In both cases, a negative emotional reaction will emerge.

Lessing’s fiction, especially her short fiction, assumes that self-awareness journey is initiated at a given moment- that can be

referred to as "existential moment"- when her characters feel that there is something wrong with their lives and they start experiencing and perceiving life in a different way, "These existential moments wrench us into a new way of perceiving" (Mount, *Existential Moment*, 93).

Moreover, the self has been scrutinized and analyzed by a huge number of psychiatrists, existentialists, and psychoanalysts. Among all of these studies, Karen Horney is the ideal psychological approach through which one can understand Lessing's characters' selves. According to Karen Horney (1885-1952), the German psychoanalyst, one's 'basic anxiety' is the main factor in developing one's conflicts. Horney referred to 'basic anxiety' in her book "Neurosis and Human Growth" as "a child's feeling of being helpless in a potentially hostile world." Besides, Horney attributed one's 'basic anxiety' to one's 'unfavorable environment'.

Horney continued to clarify in the same book those direct or indirect 'unfavorable' conditions that can be existed in one's environment as follows: "dominating, overprotective, erratic, hypocritical, indifferent, lack of respect for the child's needs, lack of real guidance, lack of reliable warmth, having to take sides in parental disagreements, isolation." (18) Consequently, for Horney, the child will unconsciously develop some ways to be able to cope with those unfavorable conditions, and here, one's 'basic anxiety' will turn into neurotic conflicts, and by so, neurotic trends will emerge.

The neurotic or basic conflict trends, as stated by Horney, are 'moving toward people' when one clings to others, 'against them' when one rebels against them, and 'away from them' when one isolates himself from them. (19) So, until one can get rid of those unfavorable factors, one's growth is postponed. Moreover, Horney believed that the self is divided into three forms: "the actual self", "the real self", and "the idealized self", and if one failed to achieve the third self, a fourth self, which is "the despised self" will emerge.

In Lessing's short fiction, most of her characters' selves are trying to find their real/authentic selves because its absence leaves them distracted and "without a center of meaning, direction, and value". As a result, "they are governed instead by the conflicting demands of their neurotic solutions" (Paris,1). In addition, Lessing's characters' main problem is the absence of their real selves, and Lessing, likewise Horney, attributed the cause of that problem and their conflicts to their toxic environment and its conditions. Therefore, the bond between parents and children is an issue in most of Lessing's short stories and is at the heart of our understanding of some protagonists' conflicts.

"Through the Tunnel" (1995): Shedding a Self that is not one's Own.

The story describes the struggles that the adolescent Jerry goes through and how that young boy has turned into an adult after experiencing a long journey of pain and awareness, in which he has managed to combat his fears.

Lessing's demonstration of self-awareness is obvious in the transitional and experiential tunnel of awareness that Jerry goes through. Jerry's personality is not a true expression of himself as he used to live in his mother's shade and with a self not of his own. In that experiential tunnel, Jerry's pilgrim to self-awareness has been initiated. That tunnel also witnesses Jerry's initial step towards autonomy which has paved the way for his authenticity. In other words, the tunnel that Jerry goes through depicts his path to realness, and his journey from obliviousness to awareness.

Jerry enters that tunnel, 'the wild bay', as a boy who used to play on the safe beach under his mother's supervision. A boy who has no say in what he becomes, a boy whom 'actual self' is impoverished. Throughout the story, Jerry is seeking people's acceptance and all he wanted was to be accepted by his mother and "the English boys". While, at the end of the story, he is no longer looking for external acceptance, rather he is longing to find himself and actualizing his 'real self', which means that he has changed,

grown up, and acquired a kind of self-perception that has helped him to get rid of his ready compliance.

Lessing's words are simple and clear, but they take the form of an iceberg from the external part. "Through the Tunnel" is simple to understand as it recounts Jerry's vacation on the usual beach with his mother and his sudden and life-threatening decision to go and swim alone in the most dangerous part of the bay; the tunnel. The story uses the key expression "a turning of the path" (1) that described the road to the wild bay, in which the boy's life has turned upside down.

From the beginning, Lessing portrays Jerry's conflict, stress, and insecurity by describing his gestures on the usual beach and by highlighting how he feels and looks at his mother, who has shaped his inner conflicts and reinforced his insecurities. Besides, the maternal shackles are symbolized by Lessing as a "stripped bag" (1) to be presented as the main reason behind Jerry's anxiety and conflict. That does not necessarily indicate that Jerry had an unhappy childhood, but he had a stressed and restricted one. Besides, the conflict between pleasing his mother (parental shackles) and doing what he likes and wants (realness) has been demonstrated as follows: "... towards the bay and back again to his mother" (1), that conflict and his worries about satisfying his mother distracted him from focusing on himself and his soul. As a result, Jerry was conscious but not aware. Accordingly, Jerry was in the 'SSA' state as, in the beginning, he was only perceiving from his mother and the English boys but never reflecting.

Moreover, the conflict between what he wants and what he does to please his mother forces Jerry to adopt a fake identity and 'live up' to his mother's expectations. In other words, the maternal shackles are introduced by Lessing as an overprotective prison in which Jerry's realness is imprisoned. Jerry's fake identity was a "false-self system", which is for Laing, "consists in becoming what the other person wants or expects to become while only being one's self in imagination or games" (98)

Lessing's protagonists' feelings and struggles are more suggested or hinted at the use of simple objects; the interplay of safe and wild is one way of such suggestion. For example, Lessing used the safe beach that Jerry used to play on to demonstrate Jerry's oblivious childhood and the 'unfavorable environment' where he grew up. Jerry's unhealthy environment lacks adventure, pain, and suffering that are essential to awaken the real self. Also, his mother's harmful protection was symbolized by Lessing as the main unfavorable factor in Jerry's environment and as a barrier between Jerry, the oblivious boy, and Jerry, the adult and aware one.

A primary concern of Lessing's fiction is individual awareness. The path to self-awareness, she suggested, cannot be chosen but it will be offered at any moment. At that moment, one has to decide whether to catch it and make use of it or to ignore it because one is afraid of facing and unearthing something painful. What is more, Lessing has a deep belief that humans can do almost anything, and what they are looking for lies within and is between their hands. Again, Lessing introduces self-awareness as an offer that was in front of Jerry for years and on every vacation, indicating that the turning point in Jerry's life was not only what happened in the tunnel but also his decision to go to the wild bay alone.

Self-awareness was offered to Jerry by his mother's question 'would you like to go somewhere else' (1), his quick response 'no' indicates to what extent he is governed and shackled by over-protection as he is thinking too much how to obey his mother. While his later 'yes' shows his unconscious desire to be free and his willingness to make use of the offered chance, therefore, something within "blurted out, 'I'd like to go and have a look at those rocks down there.'" (1).

Lessing's fictionalized definition of human growth is similar to that found by Horney. Karen Horney, the German psychologist, emphasized in her book, *Neurosis and Human Growth*, that one can learn some social skills and how to interact with others, but no one can teach another person how to be his/her own, how to develop

his/her self, or how to interact with the outer world in accordance to his/her own nature as proven in the following quote: "Only the individual himself can develop his given potentials." (18). Horney also said that growth can be offered anytime and at that time, one will develop his/her 'real self' and express him/herself spontaneously.

For Horney, the 'real self' needs a favorable environment to develop and grow in, "the human individual needs favorable conditions for his growth ... an atmosphere of warmth to give him both a feeling of inner security and the inner freedom enabling him to ... express himself." (18) Such 'unfavorable conditions', according to Horney, are people in a child's environment as "they may be dominating, overprotective, in-imitating" (18) and the list goes on. So, these unfavorable circumstances that a child can be surrounded with will not only prevent one's self-realization and awareness but also will cause a feeling of insecurity, lack of belonging, isolation, and 'basic anxiety' (18).

Similarly, Lessing paid much attention to fictionalize and exemplify these 'unfavorable conditions' in her works such as Jerry's overprotective mother. "he was in the real sea- a warm sea" (2) the previous quote from the story shows how Lessing described Jerry's new environment- his favorable environment where he can sink deep into his real world, focus on his self, understand himself, and find his real self away from the restrictions and the crowd.

In the wild bay, Lessing gives a closer look at Jerry's conflict by projecting the conflict between his self (the actual one) and his standards (to be like the English boys). Previous studies by Duval and Wicklund have examined and referred to that conflict as 'self-standard comparison' which is the result of assessing the self. So, the moment Jerry decided to focus on himself, he initiated that comparison. Lessing tends to project her characters' inner struggles and conflicts to help us identify them, examine and evaluate their values, and know where they stand in the world, as Horney said "Since conflicts often have to do with convictions, beliefs, or moral

values, their recognition would presuppose that we have developed our own set of values” (*Our Inner Conflict*, 23).

Throughout his eleven years, Jerry was only perceiving life through his mother’s eyes and he was not reflecting on his perception. He is focusing on his surroundings, not himself (SSA), and seeking validation and acceptance from others because he is uncertain about himself. Jerry, a child who is not internally developed, suffers from ‘basic anxiety’ as he does not have his sense of aliveness within. Consequently, when he saw the English boys, his first independent deal with the outer world, he was trying to seek their approval. Jerry’s role, at that moment, was only to perceive (SSA). He wanted to perceive the world through them and to lean on them, as he used to do.

In Jerry’s clinging to the English boys, Lessing fictionalizes Horney’s neurotic trend which is a ‘moving toward people’ state developed by “the compliant type”. “Moving toward people”, as Horney stated in her constructive theory, are ‘compliant people’ who “show their need for affection and approval, ..., a friend, lover, husband or wife who to fulfill all expectations of life and take responsibility for good and evil” (*Our Inner Conflict*, 24). Horney also referred to the compliant child as a child who “tends to subordinate himself to others and to lean on them,” (*Neurosis and Human Growth*, 19). Similarly, Jerry’s inauthentic/not real self was clinging and asking validations from the English boys to fill his emptiness “to be with them, of them, was a craving that filled his whole” (2)

Jerry’s ‘existential moment’ is the first actual step towards his self-focusing state or (OSA). Suffice it to say that after being exposed to a harsh disappointment by the English boys, Jerry made his first free choice, he decided, nagged, rebelled, and for the first time, the world was exposed to him differently “Now he could see. It was as if he had eyes of a different kind” (4)

Jerry also has decided not to ignore and avoid his self-aware state and to modify and change his self- ‘behavioral modification’.

As Lessing referred to that devastating change and fictionalized Jerry's belonging in the flowing extract: The safe beach where he used to play becomes a strange place "now seemed a place for small children" "it was not his beach" (5)

Lessing demonstrates Jerry's self-focusing, individual choice, and his trying to actualize his 'real self' in the day when Jerry did not ask his mother for permission or think of what she will say. He just went to the wild bay with free will, as if he had a mission that must be finished. Also, Lessing fictionalized Jerry's real self as follows: "..., most unchildlike persistence, a controlled patience ..." (5). By this, he is not just perceiving, but he is evaluating and reflecting on what he perceives.

A significant aspect of Jerry's 'realness' has been shown when Jerry saw the English boys again as he did not even look at them because he did not need them anymore as he is now whole. Another significant aspect is his ignorance of the English boys when he saw them again did not only prove his riddance of the neurotic trend, compliance as he can exist alone and in no need for anyone's approval to validate his existence.

"A Sunrise on the Veld" (1975): A Pilgrim to Maturity.

Another example of Lessing's interest in the assumptions underlying people's basic life choices has been shown in "A Sunrise on the Veld". The protagonist is an adolescent of fifteen. Lessing introduced him as a symbolic figure with no name to generalize the opposing forces that anyone can face and to demonstrate the adolescents' transition from immaturity and arrogant phase to a mature and aware one.

Lessing demonstrated the protagonist's hubris from the first line. From the beginning of the story, readers can notice the immature adolescent projecting his abilities; thinking that he is beyond natural laws and he can control everything even time, "Triumphantly pressing down the alarm-knob of the clock But he played with it for the fun of knowing that it was a weakness he

could defeat without effort;” (1) Another aspect of the boy’s arrogance is depicted in personifying the boy’s arms and legs as soldiers who obey his commands as the boy muses: “I am fifteen! Fifteen!... I contain the world. I can make of it what I want. If I choose, I can change everything that is going to happen: it depends on me” (2,3)

Although the protagonist, in the beginning, was focusing on himself and dealing with himself as the center of the world, the researcher does not presume that he is in the OSA state because he is not focusing on himself objectively and is not considering any facts or natural laws. Besides, there is a big difference between self-confidence and arrogance. Several attempts have been made to define arrogance, but the following definition is the most relatable one to the boy’s state: “Arrogance is not accessing the self-awareness to really understand deep-down strengths and honest weaknesses.” (Jones, *Confidence versus Arrogance*, n.p) Accordingly, not any focus on the self could lead to awareness. Also, the protagonist is not self-aware or objectively self-focused but rather arrogant and glorify himself with no illogical-based reason.

The boy is falsifying the truth and developing a fake self-confidence or, in psychological terms, an ‘idealized self’. Accordingly, he is abandoning his ‘real self’, having no direct access to his inner self, and losing his realness. That was found similar to what Horney referred to (in *Neurosis and Human Growth*) as ‘self idealization’- which is “a general self-glorification, and thereby gives the individual the much-needed feeling of significance and superiority over others. But it is by no means a blind self-aggrandizement.” (22) Accordingly, the protagonist is such a demonstration of Horney’s ‘idealized state’.

What is more, arrogant people are not truly confident, but they are pretending to be to cover their insecurities. Also, some arrogant people are glorifying and falsifying their arrogance with strength and independence. Likewise, the protagonist seems to try to

compensate for his inner insecurities by living in a fake equilibrium state and displaying his artificial power in a desperate attempt to actualize that fake self that satisfies his insecurities instead of actualizing who he really is. Besides, the protagonist adapts this state as a neurotic solution to his neurotic conflict and his lack of autonomy. That was found similar with what Horney wrote that: "the energies driving toward self-realization are shifted to the aim of actualizing the idealized self" (24) and that "he would not attain a feeling of identity and unity. He idealized, . . . , his particular solution of his basic conflict" (22) by this, Horney means that one will bring his idealized self into presence to prove it exists, and instead of searching for his real self and actualizing it, one will actualize his false one.

It is understood that one develops and actualizes his 'self-idealized' state as a result of his looseness of identity and his 'basic conflict' and in that process, he becomes completely detached from his real/authentic self. Moreover, one becomes his idealized self and starts evaluating and looking at himself from its insight as Horney wrote: "it becomes the perspective from which he looks at himself" (23). Therefore, in "A Sunrise on the Veld", the protagonist suffers from basic conflict, and develops the previously mentioned state as a neurotic solution to satisfy his inner needs that he cannot achieve in real life. In brief, one escapes from his inner needs and insecurities by living through his idealized state, glorifying his/her weaknesses, and turning them into virtues. Accordingly, coward becomes kindness, alienation becomes wisdom, and cruelty becomes power.

Horney observes that there are three needs the person in the self-glorification state is driven by. The three compulsive drives are "the need for perfection, neurotic ambition, and the need for a vindictive triumph" (24). The compulsive needs have been demonstrated by Lessing with some differences in degree. In the boy's "tendency towards excelling in everything" (25), readers notice the boy's neurotic ambition and his need to succeed in

everything. The neurotic ambition has been also exemplified by Lessing in the boy's thought of superiority over nature, his fake belief in controlling his mind, and his mad running in the: "I could walk all day, and never tire!" "the grass stood to his shoulders;" "yelling mad with the joy of living and of superfluity of youth" (2)

Horney also refers to a neurotic need for perfection as when he/she "tries to achieve his goals by a complicated system of shoulds". So, Horney gave this neurotic trend another name which is "the tyranny of the should". This neurotic need refers to one who has a sense of uniqueness that entitles him to do whatever he wants, also someone who never takes responsibility for any failures in his life. Besides, it refers to one who "feels entitled to be above necessities and laws ... to live in a world of fiction as if he were indeed above them" (64). It is also depicted when the boy denied his responsibility to protect the buck from the ants as he could not shoulder that heavy responsibility and whispered that: "if I hadn't come it would have died like this: so why should I interfere?" (4)

Lessing fictionalized the neurotic need for triumph in the boy's feeling of superiority over his parents as Horney stated that this need may drive one to be attached to actual achievements and "to put others to shame or defeat them ..." (27) The neurotic need for triumph has been also shown when the boy described his parents while they were sleeping as ignorant as if he is distinct from them. Also, the usage of the words 'dangerous' 'blackness' in the following quote indicates that his parents are not his safe zone and shows how the boy sees and feels towards them as "he crept past the dangerous window ... looking in at the stuffy blackness of the room where his parents lay." (1) Besides, when the protagonist smiled scornfully because he could deceive his parents and they thought that the sound was caused by the dogs.

It is likely the protagonist and his parents are not on good terms and that the boy is trying to prove something internally and socially, to prove that he is stronger than what his parents think. Accordingly, he becomes driven by his neurotic necessity to prove his 'idealized

image' instead of trying to truly understand himself to find the real self, as Horney stated: "the idealized image means taking a step away from the actual self, ... creates new conflicts, ... that between the self and the outside world" (*Our Inner Conflict*, 12)

Therefore, the protagonist's unfavorable environment, where he has an unhealthy relationship with his parents, caused him his basic anxiety and conflict as it is obvious that there is no good fit between him and his parents. Lessing used other examples to demonstrate that poor fit, such as the way the boy looks at and treats his parents as he deceives them, and this is evident in the following quote "who never came to know how early he rose." (1) as if they do not communicate with each other and know nothing about their son's adventures in the forest, although a child in his age would love to share and brag of this to his parents. The effect of social relationships was found to be very effective and has a big impact on one's mental health, and as demonstrated by Lessing, can shape one's neurotic conflicts. Besides, Horney stated in her book (*Our Inner Conflict*) the vital role families and social relationships have in shaping one's psyche as follows: "neuroses are generated by disturbances in human relationships." (11) Accordingly, the boy gives birth to an idealized self that is not real to cope with his unfavorable environment.

Moreover, the protagonist's adoption of the idealized state makes him glorifies his loneliness and aloofness in the bush to independence, power, and self-sufficiency. Also, Lessing introduced the theme of loneliness. Alone in the bush, the boy has acquired awareness of himself and life. What is more, the boy's loneliness indicates that he is in the 'moving away from' state as Horney stated in the introduction to her book (*Our Inner Conflict*) that "instead of moving from people, the neurotic moved away from himself. His whole actual self became unreal to him, and he created in its place an idealized image of himself ..." (12). Likewise, the protagonist detached himself from the outer world to be able to actualize his fake self freely, and by so, the protagonist was not only

detaching himself from others but also from himself as he was abandoning his realness till he completely lost it.

Accordingly, he is also a 'detached type'. As for Horney, the need for detachment is the third face of the basic conflict. By this, Horney does not refer to the 'constructive solitude' which is demonstrated by Lessing as a means of restoring equilibrium and in which people get to know their real selves in loneliness. On the contrary, the reference here is for that kind of detachment equivalent to escaping, and as stated by Horney: "becomes primarily a means of avoiding, ... be alone as indication of neurotic detachment." (73)

'Moving away from' is divided into two types: 'estrangement from people' that refers to disturbance in human relationships, and 'estrangement from the self' that refers to 'a numbness to emotional experience, an uncertainty as to what one is, what he loves, hates, desires, hopes, fears, resents, believes ... so bound to lose touch with himself.' (73). The two forms of state are symbolized by Lessing in the story. The protagonist is estranged from people as there is a clear lack of intimate communication between the boy and his parents, and he is also estranged from his 'real self' as he lost his realness, and in the beginning, he rejected to get deeply involved in his sadness over the buck, which means that there was no relatedness to his inner self.

When the boy saw the buck, he tried to ignore his feelings and he was in the state of stoicism; refusing to get involved in emotions and to admit that he was in a conflict, as Horney stated to describe the detached person: "there is a general tendency to suppress all feeling, even to deny its existence." (75). Likewise, the boy was in front of contradictions, kept persuading himself that "things like this happen; they happen all the time; this is how life goes on," (4)

Throughout the story, the boy is projecting his fake uniqueness and superiority over the natural laws, but when he saw the buck all of sudden he felt lonely and needed protection, and this was clarified by Horney as follows "When the detached person's feeling of superiority is temporarily shattered, whether by a concrete failure or

an increase of inner conflicts, he will be unable to stand solitude and may reach out frantically for affection and protection." (74)

The moment of seeing the buck struggling was the moment of recognizing the truth and the moment in which the boy became in the 'SSA' state. Also, that moment gave birth to the boy's existential moment. As was previously mentioned, one of the transformative factors that will lead to inner awakening is confronting death. For the first time, the boy saw life from a different insight, accepted that there is something bigger than him and that he has no command over nature, so he kept whispering in pain: "I can't stop it. I can't stop it. There's nothing I can do" (4)

Also, at that moment, the boy was simply an adolescent terrified at the scene. His idealized self disappeared, and his actual self appeared when realizing his finitude. More and above, the boy saw himself in the buck, and how "perhaps an hour ago, this small creature had been stepping proudly. Walking like kings and conquerors." (4), and now its dead body is lying on the ground after being eaten by small creatures like ants! The boy could not do anything to end its pain except standing in front of its skeleton. That pain and fear opened another door, which enabled the boy to face his finitude and vulnerability. He finally admitted his own morality and kept whispering to the ants: "I am not for you ... Go away"

By the end, the boy accepts the reality, however, that does not mean that he will just accept everything submissively, but rather he will live his life in a challenging manner. Also, The boy's 'realness' has been initiated as proved in the inner transformation that the boy is going through, and his SRA which proved his awareness.

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