

Pierre Bayard's Idea of "Applied Literature" and Shoshana Felman's Notion of "Implication": A Lacanian Perspective

Natasha Moharramzadeh^{1*}
Masoud Olia²

Received: 21/01/2020

Accepted: 25/04/2021

Abstract

Employing a descriptive-analytical method, this article, first of all, deals with some of the criticisms on the methodology of "applied psychoanalysis". Then, discussing Pierre Bayard's idea of "applied literature" and, at the same time, referring to the 17th seminar of Jacques Lacan, *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis*, the paper points out that the terms "applied psychoanalysis" and "applied literature" seem to presuppose an external relationship between literature and psychoanalysis. On the contrary, Felman's notion of "implication" is based on a simultaneously internal and external relationship between the two domains. In this way, the article highlights the weaknesses of Bayard's idea and the stronger foundation of Felman's arguments. Finally, in the context deliberately created for the conflict between these positions and points of view, the paper returns to some other aspects of Lacanian ideas such as the description of the term *extimité* and his subtle use of the English word "without", asking whether it can be said that psychoanalysis is not "without" literature.

Keywords: Applied Psychoanalysis, Applied Literature, Theory of Implication, Jacques Lacan

* 1. PhD candidate in Art Research, Tehran University of Art, Tehran, Iran.

E-mail: natasha.moharramzadeh@yahoo.com

2. Assistant Professor of Art Research, Tehran University of Art, Tehran, Iran.

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

The present paper aims to identify a special form of relationship between psychoanalysis and literature. It adopts the ideas of Pierre Bayard and Jacques Lacan to examine some of the weakness of applied psychoanalysis. Bayard believes that the literary critic should primarily focus on literature, while the prevalence of different theories, including psychoanalysis, has turned literature into a field for psychoanalysts' desired harvest. Felman's idea of implication suggests that Bayard's applied literature ultimately leads to turning attention from psychoanalysis to literature. In the present paper, we will highlight the weaknesses of Bayard's ideas and the main principles of Felman's view.

2. Theoretical Framework

The ideas of Bayard and Lacan about literature and psychoanalysis have been examined and compared here. Felman's notion of implication also helped us gain a better understanding of Bayard's idea of applied literature.

3. Methodology

The present study adopts the descriptive-analytical method. It applies the ideas of Lacan and Shoshana Felman's idea of implication to examine the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis.

4. Discussion and Analysis

The conjunction 'and', in discussions on 'literature and psychoanalysis', indicates a kind of subjugation rather than relationship. Literature seems to be subjugated to psychoanalysis in writings about the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis. After examining the Lacanian roots of Felman's discussion, we clarified why his idea of implication is based on stronger foundations compared to Bayard's idea of applied literature.

5. Conclusion

The relationship between literature and psychoanalysis cannot be reduced to a relationship between two separate fields. Psychoanalysts

have explicitly or implicitly named their writings literary texts. It is worth noting that Sigmund Freud received Goethe Prize, rather than a scientific prize, for his contribution to the literary culture and Lacan considered his *Écrits* a literary text. Based on Felman's idea of implication we tried to show that a change in our attitude toward both fields of literature and psychoanalysis is needed.

Bibliography

- Bayard, P. 1999. "Is It Possible to Apply Literature to Psychoanalysis?". *American Imago* 56/3: 207-219.
- Felman, Sh. 1985. *Literature and Psychoanalysis: The Question of Reading: Otherwise*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Felman, Sh. 2003. *Writing and Madness: Literature, Philosophy, Psychoanalysis*. M. Noel Evans et al. (trans.). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Lacan, J. 1966. *Écrits*. Paris: Seuil.
- Lacan, J. 1991. *L'Envers de la Psychanalyse*. Paris: Seuil.
- Lacan, J. 1992. *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*. J. A. Miller (ed.). D. Porter (trans.). New York/London: W. W. Norton and Company.
- Lacan, J. 2007. *The Other Side of Psychoanalysis*. J. A. Miller (ed.). R. Grigg (trans.). New York/London: W. W. Norton and Company.
- Movalleli, M. 1391 [2002]. *Mabani-ye Ravankavi-e Freud-Lacan*. Tehran: Nay.
- Rabaté, J. M. 2012. "Psychoanalysis Applicable or Inapplicable: The Case of Literature." *The Literary Lacan: From Literature to Literature and Beyond*. Santanu Biswas (ed). Salt Lake City: Seagull Books.
- Rabaté, J. M. 2014. *The Cambridge Introduction to Literature and Psychoanalysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.