

A Psychoanalytical Approach in Studying The Phenomenon of Rebellion in Divergent Novel by Veronica Roth

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to show the rebellion of Tris, the protagonist of the novel *Divergent* by Veronica Roth. The object of the study is to analyze the novel based on the psychoanalytic approach, which considers the id, ego and superego of Tris. The results of the study lead to the following conclusions. First, the structural analysis shows that the character and characterization, setting, plot, style, and theme of the novel are connected as a whole. Secondly, based on the psychoanalytical analysis, the novel shows that the main character Tris has psychological problems. The main character's psychological problem causes a conflict of her mental state. It then develops into her ambition and turns into a rebellion against the Erudite faction. Her ambition is directed against the Erudite opinion that "Divergent" is dangerous.

KEYWORDS: Divergent, faction, Id, Ego, Superego, Erudite, Dauntless, Abnegation.

INTRODUCTION. Society encompasses diverse cultures, religions, and regulations, each designed to establish a system of control since individuals cannot thrive in isolation. Governments or organizations are chosen to administer this control, formulating rules to ensure compliance. The creation of numerous regulations aims to enhance people's lives, although not everyone embraces these rules; some individuals prefer to defy them, seeking to alter the regulations according to their own preferences. Acts of rebellion are commonly undertaken to challenge established norms.

Rebellion, as defined by Jeremy M. Weinstein "refers to a violent action organized by a group aiming to transform the political system in their country" [7, 14]. In the novel *Divergent*, rebellion unfolds as Tris and Four oppose the Erudite faction and Dauntless leadership, who attack the Abnegation sector. The duo endeavors to infiltrate Dauntless headquarters to disable the computer system controlling Dauntless members manipulated by Erudite's serum. Jeanine, the leader of Erudite, manipulates Dauntless members to help her seize control of the government governed by the Abnegation faction. *Divergent* individuals, resistant to manipulation, become targets for Jeanine, who deems them dangerous and seeks their elimination to assume leadership. With most *Divergent* found in Abnegation, Jeanine focuses her attacks on that sector. Tris and Four attempt to disable the computer system amid the assault on Abnegation but face challenges. Tris loses her parents in the process, and although she manages to deactivate the system, she seeks refuge in Amity as Dauntless leaders and Jeanine label her and Four as rebels [14, 708].

The analysis of the rebellion in the primary character of the play will be conducted using a Psychoanalytic approach, applying psychology in literature to examine the creative process, explore the author's life, and interpret characters. This study will specifically focus on the third application.

In light of the study's background, the research poses the problem statement: "What is the nature of the rebellion in Veronica Roth's novel 'Divergent'?" Addressing this issue, the study aims to analyze the structural elements of "Divergent" and apply a psychoanalytic approach to further dissect the novel.

RESEARCH METHOD. This study adopts a qualitative research design, wherein statistical methods are not employed for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The data sources are categorized into two main types: primary and secondary. The primary data source is the novel "Divergent" by Veronica Roth, published by Harper Collins Children's Books in 2011. Secondary data are drawn from various references, including the author's biography, internet sources related to the novel, and additional resources supporting the analysis.

The focal point of this study is Veronica Roth's novel "Divergent". The data collection method employed is library research. Initially, the researcher thoroughly reads and comprehends both primary and secondary data sources. Subsequently, relevant information is documented, and the selection process involves accepting data pertinent to the research problem while discarding irrelevant information. Internet sources are also utilized to gather information about the novel and the literary theory (Psychoanalytic Approach) employed in the study.

The research methodology involves the application of the Psychoanalytic Approach through descriptive analysis. Additionally, the study incorporates the examination of structural elements within the novel. This aspect pertains to an exploration of the novel's organizational components alongside the application of the Psychoanalytic Approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION. "Divergent" marks the debut novel of American author Veronica Roth, released by Harper Collins Children's Books in 2011. Positioned within the young adult dystopian genre, the narrative unfolds in a post-apocalyptic rendition of Chicago. Following a devastating war, society is structured into five distinct factions, each serving a specific purpose to uphold order.

The Erudite faction caters to the intellect and logical thinkers, distinguished by their attire in a dark shade of blue. Amity, on the other hand, is designated for the kind and peaceful, focusing on agriculture to sustain other factions, with members dressing in orange and yellow. Candor values honesty and adopts black and white clothing, while the Dauntless faction is comprised of the most fearless individuals, recognized for their bravery and unconventional behavior, adorned in black uniforms. However, a faction termed "Divergent" poses a unique challenge. Divergence implies a deviation from the established norms, particularly in terms of mindset and thought processes prescribed by the factions. Being Divergent is viewed as perilous since it implies a mind that cannot be easily controlled or directed towards a specific faction, instilling fear in faction leaders regarding the capabilities of Divergent individuals.

Veronica Roth employs a conventional plot structure to organize the narrative. The relationships between characters introduce conflicts that propel the plot forward. The chronological unfolding begins with the exposition, outlining the setting, time, and introducing major and minor characters along with the central problem. The complication ensues, incorporating conflicts that heighten tension, leading to the climax, the pinnacle of tension resulting from these conflicts. The resolution follows, providing a solution to the heightened tension. The storyline exhibits a cause-and-effect relationship, where events connect and influence each other. The transformation of the main character, Tris, as she evolves into a member of Dauntless, is portrayed as a plausible outcome within this narrative framework.

The narrative adopts a first-person point of view, evident in Tris's perspective as she narrates the story. This choice enables Veronica Roth to swiftly convey characters' motivations and describe events not directly observed by the main characters.

The central theme of the novel revolves around “rebellion as a means to achieve goals through effective management of one’s capabilities and a steadfast focus on the plan” [7, 23]. Tris recognizes the impending attack by the Erudite on the Abnegation sector, aiming to eradicate all Divergent individuals so that the Erudite leader can assume control of the government. In response, Tris must strategize and identify allies to thwart the Erudite’s objectives.

Another prominent theme is that “one’s choices can define one more than any other factor”. Faced with the option of remaining in her family’s faction, Abnegation, or transferring to a new faction, Tris opts for Dauntless despite an inconclusive aptitude test that suggests compatibility with Abnegation, Erudite, or Dauntless. Her choice is motivated by a desire to discover her true self.

The novel also explores the theme that “the lust for power can erode one’s personality”. Illustrated through Jeanine Matthews, the leader of Erudite, who seeks to control Dauntless and annihilate Abnegation, resorting to deceit in the process. The pursuit of power transforms her into a cruel and ruthless figure. This theme extends subtly but strongly, as evident in the Dauntless initiates’ struggle for top rankings, bringing out the worst in many, leading to instances of abuse, violence, and even suicide. Ultimately, the narrative suggests that true power lies in exerting control over others.

Veronica Roth employs her unique storytelling style to reinforce the main idea of the novel. She narrates the story in simple yet figurative language, ensuring that readers easily comprehend the narrative. Roth introduces words uncommonly used by other writers, adding a touch of beauty to the sentences and making the story more engaging. The novel’s parts are systematically arranged, each contributing to and supporting the main theme of human personality through the major character. This coherence stems from the well-constructed ideas of the writer, with each part complementing and reinforcing the others.

Structurally, the novel’s elements, including character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, theme, and style, are interrelated, forming a solid unity. Through this structural analysis, it becomes evident that Veronica Roth has created a well-integrated narrative where each component harmonizes with the others.

The major character, Tris, grapples with numerous psychological challenges reflective of the id, ego, and superego. Tris’s first encounter with her id occurs as she observes Dauntless members, captivated by their actions. Her fascination with their free-spirited behavior, including jumping from trains and getting tattoos, signifies a departure from her Abnegation upbringing. The second appearance of her id is evident when she selfishly and bravely chooses Dauntless over her family faction, Abnegation, during the Choosing Ceremony.

The third manifestation of her id emerges as she finds Dauntless intriguing and forms friendships. Tris faces physical challenges due to her lack of exercise in Abnegation and a fear of violence. To overcome this weakness, she diligently practices physical strength, demonstrating her determination to avoid becoming factionless. Tris’s heroic moment during the capture the flag test further illustrates her alignment with the Dauntless values, as she provides a winning strategy and embraces the freedom to engage in “crazy” activities without the constraints of Abnegation. Overall, Tris’s substantial id is evident in her decision to join Dauntless, acknowledging her selfish and brave nature.

The ego, as defined in psychological terms, serves as the mediator between the id and the super-ego. Functioning on the reality principle, it allows the expression of desires, drives, and morals in realistic and socially acceptable ways. The ego is often associated with reason and caution, developing with age.

Tris’s first display of ego occurs when she chooses Dauntless as her faction during the Choosing Ceremony, a decision influenced by her aptitude test results, which categorize her as Divergent. This unique status is considered dangerous by Erudite, as Divergent individuals can potentially disrupt the faction system. Tris,

following her instructor Tori's advice, conceals her Divergent status, highlighting the ego's role in navigating social complexities.

Another instance of Tris's ego is evident when she continues with the Dauntless initiation tests despite Eric's assertion that she has been expelled. Motivated by a desire to avoid returning to her family faction, Abnegation, and be labeled a coward, Tris perseveres in the tests, showcasing her determination to belong to Dauntless.

Tris's third display of ego is observed during the capture the flag initiation. Although Christina suggests letting her grab the flag to prove her heroism, Tris's competitive spirit pushes her to pursue the flag, demonstrating her desire for personal achievement within the Dauntless system.

The fourth manifestation of Tris's ego emerges in her response to antagonism from fellow initiates such as Peter, Molly, and Andrew, who belittle her based on her Abnegation background. Tris seeks revenge and aims to prove her capabilities, emphasizing the ego's role in defending one's self-image.

The fifth instance of Tris's ego is witnessed when she resorts to physically hurting other initiates to gain points. This action contradicts the values instilled in her during her upbringing in Abnegation, where violence and demeaning behavior were discouraged. However, in Dauntless, she adapts to the necessity of such actions to survive and advance.

Superego is a morality element branch of justice from personality system. Gardner Lindzey states "Superego is the internal representative of the traditional values and evaluative norms. Superego represents the ideal world rather than pleasure or the real world it tries to reach perfection rather than pleasure" [9, 52].

Tris's superego is evident when she allows Christina to grab the flag in the capture the flag initiation, prioritizing teamwork and fairness over personal achievement. This decision aligns with the superego's pursuit of an ideal world and perfection rather than immediate pleasure or reality.

In the capture the flag initiation, Tris, being the first to find the enemy flag, faces a moral dilemma. Four instructs Tris and Christina to go upstairs while he safeguards them from potential enemy attacks. However, when Tris attempts to grab the flag, Christina urges her not to be greedy, highlighting Tris's heroism in discovering the flag's location. Tris, aware of her friendship with Christina, controls her superego, understanding the importance of sharing and selflessness. Tris's ability to balance her desires with moral considerations reflects her Divergent nature, possessing traits from all factions and drawing on her Abnegation background.

Tris's second display of superego occurs when Eric subjects Al to bullying during the initiation. Al is challenged to stand in front of a board while Four throws a knife, and Tris intervenes, opposing Eric's order. Despite the potential consequences, Tris bravely steps forward and offers to take Al's place, demonstrating her commitment to justice and her willingness to stand up against unfair treatment.

These instances illustrate that psychological aspects play a crucial role in shaping people's behavior and personalities as they strive to achieve their goals. Tris's rebellious actions, breaking rules in both Dauntless and Abnegation factions, showcase her progressive mindset and determination to pursue her objectives. Her willingness to challenge authority, such as debating with Jeanine about the position of Divergents, demonstrates her inner rebellion. Tris's decision to join Dauntless, despite the internal conflict it causes, further emphasizes her independent and non-conformist nature. Throughout the novel, Tris consistently exhibits a rebellious spirit, challenging rules and choosing her own path.

CONCLUSION. "Divergent" serves as the debut novel from American novelist Veronica Roth, published by Harper Collins Children's Books in 2011. Positioned within the young adult dystopian genre, the narrative unfolds in a post-apocalyptic iteration of Chicago, divided into five factions after a great war.

However, the presence of a faction termed “divergent” poses unique challenges and dangers to the established order.

The focus of this analysis centers on the rebellion exhibited by the major character, Tris. The chosen analytical approach is the Psychoanalytic approach, which involves applying psychological principles to literature. This method allows for an exploration of the creative process, understanding the author’s life, and explaining the characters. The specific focus in this study involves the third application of the Psychoanalytic approach, which incorporates the principles of id, ego, and superego.

Tris’s id is prominently displayed as she observes Dauntless members jumping from the train. This primal aspect of her psyche is driven by curiosity and an admiration for the free-spirited actions of the dauntless members. The ego comes into play when Tris makes the crucial choice to join Dauntless, a decision that reflects her personal desires and aspirations, particularly in contrast to her family faction.

Tris’s superego becomes apparent during the Capture the Flag initiation when she allows her best friend, Christina, to grab the flag instead of being selfish and prioritizing personal achievement. This decision aligns with the moral and ethical considerations ingrained in Tris’s character, demonstrating the influence of her superego.

In summary, the Psychoanalytic approach provides a lens through which to understand Tris’s rebellion in “Divergent”, with her id, ego, and superego manifesting in distinct ways. This analysis enhances our comprehension of the character’s motivations and actions within the novel’s dystopian setting.

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