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*Configuration of the Self: A Psychoanalytical Study of Anne Frank The Diary of a Young Girl*

**Abstract:**

The Diary of Anne Frank is known the world over as the diary of an adolescent Jewish girl writing about her experiences in hiding, with her family and some other unfortunate Jews, during the Second World War. She went into concealment in Holland for over two years, with the help of some sympathetic Christians, who were the employees of the same firm as her father's, in order to escape the inevitable fate of the persecuted Jewish community of being deported to Nazi concentration camps. The present paper proposes to subject the above mentioned diary to a psychoanalytical study in order to better understand this traumatic experience. The Freudian concepts of sublimation, intellectualization, oedipal complex, reaction formation and displacement and condensation through the medium of dreams, have been dealt with therein.

**Key-Words:** Diary of Anne Frank, victim of holocaust, life in concealment, psychoanalytical study, Freudian concepts

Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939), an Austrian citizen born in a Jewish family, is generally regarded as the initiator of the process of psychoanalysis. Though the realm of the unconscious was not unexplored, yet the courage and conviction to delve deep into it for the first time is ascribed to Freud alone. He firmly believed and asserted that the unconscious is largely responsible for the habits, beliefs, mindset and thus the destiny of each man. His precise observations, experiments and analysis firmly established psychoanalysis as a science which could cure various mental disorders which appeared obscure to regular practitioners of

medicine. He came forward with a three-fold classification of the human psyche into the ego (consciousness), super ego (conscience) and id (unconscious). Thus Freud's contribution in the study of psychoanalytical studies can be said "to open up the entire realm of the unconscious to systematic study and to provide a language and terminology in which the operations of the unconscious could be expressed" (Habib 571).

The present paper wishes to subject *Anne Frank The Diary of a Young Girl* to a psychoanalytical scrutiny in order to evolve a better understanding of the secret workings of the unconscious of a teenage Jewish girl living in unnatural circumstances during the period of the Second World War. Anne Frank, born on 12 June 1929, in Germany, was born to Jewish parents Otto and Edith Frank, who migrated to Holland in search of a secure future, but were unable to escape the Nazi persecution during the Second World War even in Holland. Apart from having their freedom to live a normal life curtailed, they were eventually forced to go into hiding when a call up was issued for their elder daughter Margot, who was barely sixteen at that time, by the Gestapo to go to a labour camp. Though preparations had been going on for the Frank family to secretly take refuge in the closed section of the office building owned by Otto Frank's employers, with the aid of some of his office staff for some time, yet they were mentally unprepared to give up the illusion of still leading a normal life.

Along with the Franks, the Van Daan family consisting of the couple and their sixteen year old son Peter Van Daan, and a dentist Mr Dussel, also became the inmates of this 'Secret Annexe', at Prinsengracht 263 in Amsterdam, for more than two years, after which they were betrayed to the Nazis and all of them were deported to concentration camps, where later all succumbed to painful deaths with the exception of Otto Frank, Anne's father, who was the sole survivor amongst all these unfortunate people. When he came back to Amsterdam after his concentration camp was liberated by the British forces, he was handed over a diary kept by his daughter Anne dating from 12<sup>th</sup> June 1942 to 1<sup>st</sup> August 1944, by one of their helpers who had carefully stowed it away after their arrests. This is a record of the traumatic events encountered by them of going into hiding, seen through the eyes of a thirteen year old girl, but surprisingly they reveal pictures not only of the despair and suffering but also carry touches of humour, optimism, perseverance, faith and a wealth of understanding, from this victim of the irrational, abominable antisemitism of Hitler, which eventually catastrophed into about five to six million Jews losing their lives in the Holocaust.

We can detect many of the Freudian concepts of psychoanalysis operating at various levels in studying the character of Anne Frank as revealed through her diary. The first concept that we come across is that of sublimation, “whereby the repressed material is ‘promoted’ into something grander or is disguised as something ‘noble’” (Barry 93). Ryan describes sublimation as acting out, “unacceptable impulses in an acceptable way or we direct libidinal energy into non-libidinal outlets” (96).

“I hope I will be able to confide everything to you, as I have never been able to confide in anyone, and I hope you will be a great source of comfort and support” (Frank). These are the dedicatory words that appeared on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1942, in a diary received by Anne Frank as a birthday present, and which became the sole remnant of the very existence of Anne Frank, and acted as a means of bringing her alive long after she ceased to exist, being subjugated to the unreasoning Jewish persecution of one despotic man.

What began as a mere hobby soon materialized into a resilient means of keeping her sanity intact amidst the daunting circumstances she was forced to live in during her last years, in hiding as a criminal, her only offence- being born into a Jewish family. In fact, her diary was the first thing Anne packed with her when they had to go into hiding and she never once regretted that hasty decision.

She tentatively tries to make friends with her diary, going as far as personifying it by naming her ‘Kitty’, and confesses in the very beginning that “Writing in a diary is a really strange experience for someone like me...it seems to me that later on neither I nor anyone else will be interested in the musings of a thirteen year old school girl” (Frank). Ironically, she was fully unaware of the strange turn of events that her life was soon going to take, and it was inconceivable to her at that initial stage, that this diary would one day achieve global significance in terms of offering real life glimpses of the ground realities of Hitler’s antisemitism by giving a human perspective, very much different from the statistical and numerical consequences, of the Second World War.

Not being prophetic, Anne started writing the diary when she was living a normal life of a Jewish girl by the standards of those war torn days, which incorporated certain irksome restrictions like wearing a yellow star to proclaim their Jewish identity, going to a Jewish

school, and sometimes going out with friends to Jewish shops only, not being outdoors after eight in the evening, not being allowed to enter certain public places, not riding a bike or going on a tram, to name a few.

The real reason for putting her thoughts onto paper was “I don’t have a friend” (Frank). Despite being pretty and popular, among both girls and boys of her own age, she is still able to feel the lack of that “one true friend” (Frank). She realizes that she has a very superficial relation with her friends and even with her family and so she wants “the diary to be my friend” as she believes that “paper has more patience than people....I feel like writing, and I have an even greater need to get all kinds of things off my chest” (Frank).

Why writing a diary can be regarded as a form of sublimation for Anne is because writing now becomes an outlet for her inner conflicts and helps her in not only coping up but also putting up a brave face and gathering the courage and hope to envisage a better future for herself where she wants to become a journalist. Living in hiding, with not only all sorts of restrictions and boundations for their safety, cooped up together with seven difficult people without the chance of ever being able to go outdoors, trying to accommodate and adjust with the scarcity of essential commodities and the ever present threat of being discovered and deported to Nazi concentration camps, and thus becoming a victim of many kinds of repressions, the diary becomes her sole source of comfort. “That’s why I always come back to my diary- I start there and end there because Kitty’s always patient. I promise her that, despite everything, I’ll keep going, that I’ll find my own way and choke back my tears....My writing has raised me somewhat from the depths of despair” (Frank). In the midst of all turmoil she finds a haven in her diary. “The nicest part is being able to write down all my thoughts and feelings, otherwise I’d absolutely suffocate” (Frank).

She thanks God for giving her this ability to express herself which can help her live even after death. “When I write I can shake off all my cares. My sorrow disappear, my spirits are revived....with renewed spirits. It’ll all work out, because I’m determined to write” (Frank) and dreams of becoming a journalist. “...my greatest wish is to be a journalist, and later on, a famous writer....In any case, after the war I’d like to publish a book called *The Secret Annexe*” (Frank).

Anne's attraction towards Peter Van Daan can also be viewed as sublimation when she tries to justify her physical need as an attempt to consciously decide to come close to Peter on a platonic basis, to overcome her desolation and loneliness, and also help Peter in emerging out of his isolated shell at the same time. She revels in his appraising glances and warm compliments, longs for him to comfort her, looks forward eagerly to their time together, and feels "Now that I have something to look forward to, my life here has improved greatly" (Frank). On the other hand she clarifies, to her diary Kitty, "Don't think I'm in love, because I'm not, but I do have the feeling that something beautiful is going to develop between Peter and me, a kind of friendship and a feeling of trust" (Frank).

She starts identifying herself with Peter, drawing a parallel between their sense of uncertainty, vulnerability and sensitivity, though accepting that the way of reacting of each is entirely different. While Peter withdrew into himself, saying little and daydreaming most of the time, Anne's defensive attitude made her more noisy and boisterous. Despite these attempts at establishing a common bond between them, there is more to it than what she initially proclaims. "But how and when will we finally reach each other? I don't know how much longer I can continue to keep this yearning under control" (Frank).

Her revolutionary ideas on love, contrary to the prevalent beliefs of her contemporary conservative European society, state that physical love is very much a part of love and it is not marriage that is a prerequisite for it. "Losing your virtue doesn't matter, as long as you know that for as long as you live you'll have someone at your side who understands you..." (Frank).

She discusses everything with Peter – their parents, themselves, the differences in male and female anatomy and even the taboo topic of sex, and both of them are completely at ease in doing so. She claims that she feels responsible for him and is satisfied to be able to pierce through his defensive armour. "He clings to his masculinity, his solitude and his feigned indifference so he can maintain his role, so he'll never ever have to show his feelings....Oh Peter, if only I could help you, if only you would let me! Together we could banish our loneliness, yours and mine!" (Frank).

But just like normal lovers she goes through agonizing periods of self doubt, uncertainty and mistrust, questioning the strength of Peter's feelings for her. She comes to appreciate his looks, his strength, his playfulness, his bashfulness, his shyness, his clumsiness, his awkwardness, and wants him to be always superior to her. She soon starts getting impatient for his physical intimacy. "I long so much for him to kiss me, but that kiss is taking its own sweet time. Does he still think of me as a friend? Don't I mean anything more?" (Frank).

On 16 April, 1944 Anne marks the happenings of the previous day as 'a red-letter day' in her diary, when she was kissed for the first time by a boy. She finds peace and contentment in this physical proximity even though she has pangs of guilt about being so young - not even fifteen. But, as usual, she is quick to justify this relation. "We're cooped up here, cut off from the world, anxious and fearful, especially lately. Why should we stay apart when we love each other? Why shouldn't we kiss each other in times like these?....Why shouldn't I do what my heart tells me and makes both of us happy?" (Frank).

It is quite clear that Anne tries to camouflage her physical yearning for Peter by stressing on the platonic overtones of their relationship even though this does not prevent her from moving ahead on the physical plane too, and thus her so called friendship with Peter and the various reasons she advances for it, can be seen as an act of sublimation.

Oedipal overtones are very prominent in *Anne Frank The Dairy of a Young Girl*. Freud has advanced the notion of the Oedipal complex whereby, "The male infant conceives the desire to eliminate the father and become the sexual partner of the mother" (Barry 93). Akin to this is the concept of Electra complex forwarded by Carl Jung, "where a triangle of mother - father - daughter plays out" ("Oedipus Complex") and it deals with a daughter's attraction towards her father and hostility towards the mother. "The primitive desire for the one parent may also awaken in the child a jealous motivation to exclude the other parent....Transferring of affections may also occur as the child seeks to become independent and escape a perceived 'engulfing mother'" ("Oedipus Complex"). Throughout the diary what we see is Anne's attachment to her father whom she describes as "My father, the most adorable father I've seen" (Frank) while she always feels that her mother cannot and does not

make any attempt at understanding her. “It’s obvious that I’m a stranger to her, she doesn’t even know what I think about the most ordinary things” (Frank).

Anne, in one of her rebellious moods, even confesses to her father that she bears him a much greater love than she has for her mother. Her antagonism towards her mother can be gauged in these sentiments, “I simply can’t stand Mother, and I have to force myself not to snap at her all the time, and to stay calm, when I’d rather slap her across her face. I don’t know why I’ve taken such a terrible dislike to her” (Frank). She goes one step further in envisaging the future where she candidly confesses, “I can imagine Mother dying someday, but Daddy’s death seems inconceivable, It’s very mean of me, but that’s how I feel” (Frank).

The culmination of the strained relations between Anne and her mother manifest themselves in an unforeseeable event when once late at night, instead of her father, her mother turns up for the nightly ritual of tucking Anne into bed and listening to her prayers, and is outwardly and brutally rejected by Anne. Anne senses her mother’s hurt and rejection but justifies herself by thinking that if she had responded in any other way, it would be pure hypocrisy on her part, and it was only her mother who had herself to blame for this. “I felt sorry for Mother - very, very sorry - because for the first time in my life I noticed she wasn’t indifferent to my coldness.... Just as my heart sinks every time I hear her harsh words, that’s how her heart sank when she realized there was no more love between us” (Frank).

Anne assesses her parents’ marriage as a sort of compromise because she knows that her father’s first experience with love turned out to be bitter and she claims that their marriage is “hardly an ideal marriage. Father respects Mother, and loves her, but not with the kind of love I envision for a marriage” (Frank). She supplements this argument by asserting that her mother is not an exemplary partner for her father as she is an “insensitive person, this mocking creature” and in this way she validates the truth behind electra complex, considering her father to be a far superior being to her less deserving mother, unconsciously treating her mother as a rival for her father’s love.

She reiterates her feelings again and again, “It’s just that I’d like to feel that father really loves me, not because I’m his child, but because I’m me Anne. I cling to father because my contempt of Mother is growing daily and its only through him that I’m able to retain the

last ounce of family feeling I have left” (Frank). Her unspelled feelings are clearly visible in her lament, “I long for something from father that he’s incapable of giving” (Frank).

The Oedipal stage also involves, “loosening of the ties to the mother of vulnerability, dependence and intimacy” (“Oedipal Complex”). Anne’s frank assessment of her mother bears out this truth. “She’s not a mother to me - I have to mother myself I’ve cut myself adrift from them I’m charting my own course, and we’ll see where it leads me. I have no choice, because I can picture what a mother and a wife should be and can’t seem to find anything of the sort in the woman I’m supposed to call ‘Mother’” (Frank).

The interpretation of dreams forms an important aspect of psychoanalytical theory. Through the medium of Anne’s dreams we can get glimpses of a couple of psychoanalytic processes in action.

Anne dreams of her friend Hanneli Goslar, or Lies as she is called, wherein she sees her friend dressed in old worn out clothes, all lean and thin, with an extremely sad expression and eyes full of reproach, seeming to beg help from Anne. Here, Hanneli comes to represent to Anne the suffering of all the Jews who had perhaps fallen into the clutches of the Gestapo, with their life now reduced to going through the motions of bare survival from one day to the next, bereft of friends, family, home, comforts and hope, being brutally subjected to all kinds of tortures and perhaps by now wishing for a peaceful close to this painful existence. Earlier diary entries, show Anne to be not very fond of Hanneli though she does pity the latter for living in a chaotic household and thus not being able to do well in studies. This dream can be interpreted as a form of condensation, “whereby a number of people, events, or meanings are combined and represented by a single image in the dream” (Barry 94).

Anne’s latent sense of guilt on feeling thankless and ungrateful, cooped up in the Secret Annexe for over a year with people she doesn’t particularly get along with, while her fellow Jews were suffering a far terrible fate, is very evident. She cannot fathom out why she had been fortunate enough to be thus singled out from Hanneli and from the other Jews. “But then why have I been chosen to live, while she’s probably going to die? What’s the difference between us? Why are we now so far apart?” (Frank).

Another dream comprises of a vision of Grandma and Hanneli. Anne, made wiser by sorrow, is able to perceive the suffering of her grandmother who was terminally ill, now in a newer light and feels that in her end days she must have been very lonely because “You can be lonely even when you’re loved by many people, since you’re still not anybody’s ‘one and only’” (Frank). This is again the process of condensation wherein Hanneli and Grandma both represent different facets of suffering and are a reminder for Anne to be thankful for her refuge and to pray for those less fortunate than herself. “Thinking about the suffering of those you hold dear can reduce you to tears; In fact, you could spend the whole day crying. The most you can do is pray for God to perform a miracle and save at least some of them” (Frank). As Anne herself concludes, “Hanneli, who still symbolizes to me the suffering of my friends as well that of Jews in general, so that when I’m praying for her, I’m also praying for all the Jews and all those in need” (Frank).

The process of displacement is also clearly discernible in the dream sequence of Anne. Barry describes displacement as a process, “whereby one person or event is represented by another which is in some way linked or associated with it, perhaps because of a similar – sounding word, or by some form of symbolic substitution” (94). On 6<sup>th</sup> January 1944, there is a diary entry stating explicitly that Anne has fixed upon Peter Van Daan as the one companion to allay her loneliness and thereafter embarks upon the mission of befriending him. The same diary also carries a mention of her dream of Peter Schiff and her realization that she “knew with certainty that Peter is still the only one for me”. The co-incidence of initiating the relation with Peter Van Daan and the assertion of her undying love for Peter Schiff can easily be viewed as the displacement of the latter by the former in Anne’s life, perhaps unconsciously in the beginning, also marked by the fact that both boys bear the same first name of ‘Peter’. A later diary entry of 28 April 1944, after Anne’s relation with Peter Van Daan had blossomed into an intimate relationship, she recalls her first dream of Peter Schiff and what she felt with him and says that “Once in a while I’d had that same feeling with this Peter, but never so intensely.....until last night” (Frank) when she kissed him as woman to man and embraced him and experienced complete passion for which her justification was, “I’m longing so much.....and have for such a long time. I’m so lonely and now I’ve found comfort” (Frank).

Displacement comes into play effectively when she acknowledges, “Peter Schiff and Peter Van Daan have melted into one Peter, who’s good and kind and whom I long for desperately....Am I ever going to feel his cheek against mine, the way I felt Petel’s (Peter Schiff) cheek in my dream? Oh Peter and Petel, you’re one and the same!” (Frank).

The process of intellectualization is also operative in certain circumstances in the Diary. In intellectualization “we avoid potentially overwhelming feelings by focusing our attention on things that allow us to exercise that part of our mind devoted to reasoning rather than emotion” (Ryan 95). Right in the beginning, leaving the familiar haven of home when Anne’s family is forced to seek shelter within the confines of the Secret Annexe, is by itself a very traumatic experience for a teenage girl yet we see Anne’s bouyant spirits rise up to the surface. She does everything she can to start feeling at home and even plasters the bare walls to put up her ‘film star collection’. She looks upon it as an adventure. “It’s more like being on holiday in some strange pension. Kind of an odd way to look at life in hiding, but that’s how things are” (Frank).

Throughout the period of hiding, we see glimpses of this intellectual, rational, optimistic Anne peeping in from time to time to dispel the gloom and darkness around her. She has given many humorous descriptions not only of the characters living in the Annexe (whom she found tiresome and unbearable at times), but also of the events and circumstances in which she felt trapped. She confesses how difficult it was for ‘quick silver Anne’ and the ‘chatterbox’ of the class, to be absolutely silent throughout the working hours of the office downstairs to escape detection. The ban on the use of the washroom, the scarcity of clothes and food, the eventual quarrels and disagreements, the perpetual criticisms, the fear, the anxiety and tension, all have been treated sometimes in a lighter vein to make the period of hiding appear bearable to the already strained nerves. “Just imagine what would happen if all eight of us were to feel sorry for ourselves or walk around with the discontent clearly visible on our faces. Where would that get us?” (Frank).

She has already planned out a future for herself where she wants to write, to become a journalist. She wants more than a husband and children and decides to make a career in writing so as not to have lived her life in vain. “I want to go on living even after my death! And that’s why I’m so grateful to God for having given me this gift, which I can use to

develop myself and to express all that's inside me!" She tries to be factual in her approach towards life and decides to "let matters take their course and concentrate on studying and hope that everything will be all right in the end" (Frank).

Anne is aware of her sexuality from quite a tender age. Her sexual inclinations are visible not as a form of heterosexuality but as shades of lesbianism too. As Freud asserts, "The sexual function began in childhood....Sexuality as operative from the beginning of a person's life....at first the sexual function is autoerotic, finding its objects of pleasure in the subject's own body" (Habib 575). We first see her taking pleasure in the possibility of her forthcoming periods, which she labels as "a momentous event". She herself analyses her longing for her cat Moortje as a yearning "unconsciously – and at times consciously – for trust, love and physical affection" (Frank). She is enraptured when she reads an article written by Sis Heyster and feels as if the author is addressing her directly because she is able to identify herself with all description giving therein of the changes that take place in a girl, mentally and physically, on reaching puberty:

I think that what's happening to me is so wonderful, and I don't just mean the changes taking place on the outside of my body, but also those on the inside...I have the feeling that in spite of all the pain, discomfort and mess, I'm carrying around a sweet secret....Sometimes when I lie in bed at night I feel a terrible urge to touch my breasts and listen to the quiet, steady beating of my heart. (Frank)

Freud maintains that "Firstly, sexuality was now divorced from its exclusive connection with the genitals and occupied a broader bodily function, having pleasure as its goal and only subsequently serving a reproductive function. Secondly, sexuality now encompassed all of the emotions of affection and friendliness traditionally subsumed under the word "love"" (Habib 575). Freud also viewed homosexuality not as "a perversion; rather it could be traced back to the constitutional bisexuality of all human beings" (Habib 576).

Anne also bears out this truth when she is candid enough to acknowledge that the above mentioned feelings are not just the result of puberty. She had unconsciously indulged in such fantasies earlier also, as she recalls one incident when she spent the night at her friend

Jacque's place and challenged her, "as proof of our friendship, we could touch each other's breasts...I also had a terrible desire to kiss her, which I did" (Frank).

Her lesbian leaning is not just personal but her admiration of the female body is a universalized sentiment. "Every time I see a female nude, such as the Venus in my art history book, I go into ecstasy. Sometimes I find them so exquisite I have to struggle to hold back my tears. If only I had a girlfriend!" (Frank).

Reaction Formation, enunciated by Freud, has been explained as moving from, "one extreme to another as a way of dealing with strong emotions that either threaten to overwhelm the balance the ego seems to maintain in the mind or are unacceptable in the culture in which we live" (Ryan 96).

Throughout the period of her concealment, we see Anne suspended between the two extremes of positivity and negativity. She is the perpetual target of the criticism of not only her parents but also of her sister and the other inmates of the Secret Annexe, like Mrs Van Daan and Mr Dussel. "They criticize everything, and I mean everything, about me: my behaviour, my personality, my manners; every inch of me....Harsh words and sounds are constantly being flung at my head" (Frank).

In such circumstances, we see Anne's defiant stance when she questions herself, "Am I really as bad mannered, headstrong, stubborn, pushy, stupid, lazy, etc., etc....?" but immediately takes recourse in her own answer, "No, of course not. I know I have my faults and shortcomings, but they blow them all out of proportion!...It won't take long before I explode with pent up rage" (Frank).

But sometimes we see her plunged into the depths of depression too:

The minute I was alone I knew I was going to cry my eyes out. I slid to the floor in my nightie and began by saying my prayers, very fervently. Then I drew my knees to my chest, laid my head on my arms and cried, all huddled up on my arms and cried, all huddled up on the floor. A lous sob brought me back down to earth, and I choked back my tears, since I didn't want anyone next door to hear

me. Then I tried to pull myself together, saying over and over, ‘I must, I must, I must...’ (Frank)

Then again re-emerges the positive side of her. “But am I supposed to spend the whole day crying? No, I can’t do that. This gloom will pass” (Frank). She confesses that lately she had even started taking anti-depressants to keep up her health and spirits in such strained circumstances but at the same time realizes that the cure for this melancholy lies elsewhere. “A good hearty laugh would help more than ten valerian drops, but we’ve almost forgotten how to laugh. Sometimes I’m afraid my face is going to sag with all this sorrow and that my mouth is going to permanently droop at the corners” (Frank).

Yet in the midst of all these suffering and this emotional see-sawing, she still resolutely clings to her ideals as she believes that “In spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can’t build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death” (Frank).

So she turns towards nature to find the solace she sees lacking in people. “Whenever you’re feeling lonely or sad, try going to the loft on a beautiful day and looking outside....As long as you can look fearlessly at the sky, you’ll know that you’re pure within and will find happiness once more” (Frank).

All these arguments bring out clearly the struggle undergone by Anne in bringing some kind of a semblance into her volatile existential circumstances.

Not only does Anne battle with the outward influences but also tries to explore other behavioural avenues that would help her get along better with the others. She deems it safer to keep her opinions confined to the pages of her diary. But on other occasions, she decides that it is wiser to be open and honest about what you think of the other person in order to have a conscientious relationship. Sometimes she arrives at the inference that a little hypocrisy can go a long way towards appeasing the other person in gaining your own ends. These different reaction formations help her to deal with her traumatic phase of adolescent existence.

Not only limited to these reactions, we see a split personality emerging in Anne when she herself analyses the two different aspects of her own self, labelling herself “a bundle of contradictions”. To the outside world, she comes across as “exuberant cheerfulness, my flippancy, my joy in life and, above all, my ability to appreciate the lighter side of things” (Frank). This side almost overrules the serious Anne, the sensitive Anne, who feels things greatly, and so as a defence mechanism “the nice Anne is never seen in company. She’s never made a single appearance, though she almost always takes the stage when I’m alone.....” (Frank). This can be interpreted in the light of the extremity of reaction formation as Anne tries to hide her vulnerability from others, in order not to let them see her suffering and pain, because she feared to become an object of ridicule, more prone to get hurt.

The cornerstone of Freud’s psychoanalysis rests upon the belief that, “the conscious mind often performed significant transformations on unconscious material that meant that its final expressed form little resembled the unconscious urge or conflict that inspired it. He called these the ‘defenses’ the ego mobilizes against unacceptable libidinal or unconscious material” (Ryan 95). Thus we see an altogether different picture of Anne Frank emerge out of this psychoanalytical study than the one generally accepted. Living in such traumatic conditions was bound to have repercussions in the form of various repressions, urges and defenses all of which are clearly manifested in the case of Anne Frank as has been shown above. Even though Anne did not live long enough to become a journalist, this diary – the storehouse of all her feelings, emotions, desires, hopes, despairs, dejections and longings – continues to keep alive the spirit of this idealistic, optimistic and courageous war victim instilling hope and vigour in our jaded spirits in this apathetic era.

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