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Uncovering the Dark Dimensions of the Uncanny: A Freudian Psychoanalysis of Sequoia Nagamatsu's *Pig Son*

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Abstract
Psychoanalysis is the psychotherapeutic use of psychoanalytic theory by analysts to alleviate behavioral, emotional, mental, and cognitive issues that impede the analysis and ability to function satisfactorily. Frequent and intense psychoanalysis is further described as a particular type of individual psychotherapy that seeks to bring unconscious mental components and processes into awareness to increase self-awareness, improve adaptability in various domains of functioning, reduce symptoms of mental illness, and promote character development and emotional growth. Psychoanalysts feel that psychoanalysis is different from other modalities because of its depth, intensity, and long-term, frequent treatment sessions. They also think that psychoanalysis might be more beneficial to the analyst than other, shorter treatment approaches. The only systematic explanation of the human mind that can stand alongside the chaotic body of psychological knowledge accumulated over the ages in terms of depth, complexity, fascination, and tragic power is Freudian psychology. The human nature aspect of Freudian psychology is exactly what the writer has always focused on, yet switching from reading a great literary work to an academic psychology treatise is like shifting from one way of perception to another. Therefore, it is unsurprising that literature has been significantly influenced by psychoanalytic theory. This study uses the idea of the uncanny. The idea of the uncanny has been a central focus of psychoanalytic and literary discourse since it was linked to the exploration of hidden fears and repressed anxieties in human consciousness.

Keywords*: Dark Dimensions, Uncanny, Freudian Psychoanalysis, Sequoia Nagamatsu's Pig Son.*

INTRODUCTION

Psychoanalytic criticism, at least in its earlier pre-Lacanian form, has attracted considerable criticism, and often with good reason. Ever since Freud introduced the complex and frequently misinterpreted idea of artistic sublimation, some of the most problematic elements of other critical tendencies have been expanded by the psychoanalytic approach: a strong belief in the clear transparency of the author's intentions, a very limited dialogic attention to the reader, an idealistic and largely unquestioned account of textuality, a superficial analysis of the nature of fictional writing, and so on. Four assumptions made by psychoanalysis concerning the nature of human experience, namely the unconscious, "speech," "Oedipus," and "defences." These assumptions must be interpreted as the result of specific historical circumstances, such as the privatisation of relationships and the rise of capitalism, rather than as fundamental universal truths about psychology that Freud "discovered." The unconscious, a domain of experience that

exists beneath and around our immediate awareness, is revealed by psychoanalysis. This domain is characterised by patterns and forces beyond our control that influence and shape our conscious thoughts.

This concept of the unconscious emerged in the eighteenth century, a period in which Europe was engulfed in a maelstrom of industrial development that displaced peasants from the land and reconstituted them as workers. These workers were subsequently subject to relationships with their new employers that were systematically mystified. Patterns of relationships that we are compelled to replicate in "transference" to others are to be found in the unconscious. In "countertransference" to those who may have transference toward us, it can be beneficial to pay attention to emotional reactions to relationships and unbidden "investments" in specific concepts or outcomes of research. We may at least comprehend the boundaries of a "neutral" perspective on our research subject. Secondly, psychoanalysis conceptualises speech as a tool capable of simultaneously identifying and dissolving the work of the unconscious.

Freud's theories were developed only through the concept of the "talking cure." Speech became a medium through which the analysand (the subject undergoing psychoanalysis) could connect things that had been separated and rendered unintelligible by the strictures of bourgeois morality, capitalism demanded of its workforce and its managers. Speech is the site where the symbolic activity with other human beings can be unlocked, examined, and integrated into the genuine substance of human psychology, which has been suppressed as a prerequisite for being well-behaved (Forrester, 1980). This concept mandates that research and writing be conducted in a publicly accountable manner. Even if psychoanalysis is regarded with suspicion, it does contribute to criticisms of individualised expert knowledge. Thirdly, psychoanalysis focuses on how human sensuality is compressed, moulded, and shaped by the Oedipus complex. This process results in the experience of sensuality as sexual desire that is trapped within us and located in specific regions of the body. Oedipus, a triadic relationship between a lover, their lover, and the obstacle to their love, is replicated in a manner that resulted in the prohibition of specific types of sexual desire, such as the "homosexual" desire. Psychoanalysis observed that all human activity is permeated with desire, whereas eighteenth-century capitalism was compelled to limit this sexual desire to the production of new labourers using engines. Some feminist researchers have interpreted Freud as an individual who provided a comprehensive account of the nuclear family's operation as a contemporary factory for the production of masculinity and femininity.

Consequently, they have explored the potential for altering these gender roles. Psychoanalysis as a prescription for the way things should be is poor research; however, it can be a valuable ally for researchers who wish to contemplate the origins of the way things are and the intensity with which we experience them. Fourth, psychoanalysis delineates the various strategies, or defences, employed to keep the truth at bay and to effectively bind certain types of relationships and communication styles, creating the illusion of control. Although the "defence mechanisms" employed by individuals and social systems may not be intentional, these small structures can be identified and employed by a researcher in conjunction with other psychoanalytic processes. The operation of numerous overlapping defence mechanisms, strategies of defence at the individual level as complex as those required by the nation-states that were born concurrently with capitalist society, is necessary to reduce human experience to the level of the individual and the illusion that people labour for others and consume what is produced out of their own free choice.

This study uses the idea of the uncanny. The idea of the uncanny has been a central focus of psychoanalytic and literary discourse since it was linked to the exploration of hidden fears and

repressed anxieties in human consciousness. Previously theorised by Sigmund Freud in an essay of the same name, The Uncanny (Das Unheimliche) is a psychological experience in which a familiar and an unfamiliar element simultaneously evoke feelings of discomfort, fear, and unease. According to Freud, the uncanny occurs when what was known and familiar becomes strange following repression and its subsequent reemergence into conscious awareness. This is a frightening experience that reveals the more sinister side of the human mentality, the fears, drives, and wants that lie latent beneath the surface of the most ordinary existence. The uncanny is thus an effective interpretive tool in literary studies that helps scholars analyse how narratives demonstrate psychological strains and the terrifying nature of human lives.

The uncanny, proposed by Freud, is closely related to the processes of repression and the reappearance of the repressed and is one of the key postulates of psychoanalytic theory. Freud posits that, in many cases, the human mind tends to repress memories, impulses, and fears that are interpreted as socially unacceptable or even threatening to the psyche. These repressed components are not entirely lost; however, they will re-emerge in disguised or symbolic forms. The re-emergence of these suppressed parts in an unpredictable way creates the uncanny effect, or the unsettling feeling of that suppressed something coming back. This tendency is commonly presented in literature as the theme of doubles, monsters, deformed bodies, grotesque creatures, or unnatural family relations. These narrative components unveil the more disturbing and evil sides of human identity, which are the internal struggles and fears that are part of the psychological experience.

When literature challenges the boundaries that define how humans perceive the world, the dark sides of the uncanny emerge especially clearly. Freud explains that several conditions can have uncanny effects, including the blurring of boundaries between the living and the dead, the human and the non-human, the animate and the inanimate, or reality and imagination. When these limits are breached, the sense of normality is disrupted, resulting in a strong psychological disturbance. Many literary characters face situations or other characters that disrupt common structures of meaning and compel them to confront uncomfortable truths about themselves and their surroundings. The uncanny is, therefore, a manifestation of concealed fears of identity, death, and those unknowns, which even the rational mind cannot control.

The uncanny remains an important narrative tool in contemporary and modern literature to delve into the darker aspects of human psychology and social anxiety. The uncanny imagery most commonly used by writers aims to convey their fears about scientific progress, technological innovation, and changes to the human body. With the biotechnology and genetic engineering fields closely questioning the grounded conception of life and identity, it is evident in the literature that uncertainty about these changes persists. The uncanny reaction usually arises when hybrid creatures, mutated bodies, or other unnatural creatures are created, since these figures do not distinguish between the natural and the unnatural world. These depictions trace humanity's fears of losing control over the processes that contribute to life.

It is especially important to explore the topic of uncanny hybridity in the context of modern speculative fiction, where writers often present characters or creatures that inhabit the space between categories (Wolfe, 2010). The figures that merge characteristics of both humans and animals, or organics and artificials, living and machines, are often the representatives of profound psychological and cultural fears (Wolfe, 2010). These creatures disrupt the fixed identities and sense of belonging that man depends on to establish them (Badmington, 2004; Botting, 2014; Hurley, 2004; Royle, 2003). According to Freud, these disruptions are uncanny in that they arouse a primal fear of vulnerability to the body, morphological changes, and bodily decadence (Freud & Rank, 1971). The theme of hybrid beings or monstrous beings in literature

thus reveals the darker side of the human mind and the fears that accompany the blurring of natural frontiers (Freud, 1919).

The other important aspect of the uncanny is the alteration of family relationships, which Freud also identifies as a primary cause of psychological discomfort (Freud, 1919). The uncanny in the modern cultural context also mirrors broader social issues, including scientific experimentation, bioethics, and the manipulation of life. Advanced technological procedures have made it possible to biologically alter processes, create hybrid organisms, and modify genetic structure. Although these discoveries hold great potential in medicine and scientific research, they also raise serious ethical and philosophical concerns. These issues are frequently discussed in the literature through the imagination of the changes that result when people seek to make their own decisions to regulate or redesign life itself. The uncanny emerges in these fictions in that perceived possibilities, in turn, oppose well-established ideas about the natural hierarchy and human essence. Through the use of deformed or unnatural versions of life, literary texts reveal the more sinister side of the scientific ego and humanity's ambition to escape biological constraints.

Criticism of the uncanny becomes necessary, therefore, in comprehending how literature displays latent psychological and even cultural stressors. As the authors discover the darker aspects of the uncanny, it becomes possible to explore how the narratives depict fear, repression, and the instability of identity. The uncanny allows authors to pursue in-depth emotional and philosophical discussions that strongly appeal to readers, particularly because these discussions resonate with universal human anxieties. At a time when neither the body nor the family nor the very idea of humanity can be considered ordinary, literature provides a platform for readers to grapple with the disenchanting potentials that lie behind the veil of mundane experience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In modern literature, the concept of uncanny is often explored through depictions of disturbing or surreal objects that blur the boundaries between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the human and the nonhuman, and the normal and the grotesque (Botting, 2014). One of the earliest attempts to explain the uncanny was made by the German psychologist Ernst Jentsch (1906), before Freud (Jentsch, 1906). According to Jentsch, the uncanny experience is mainly caused by intellectual uncertainty, especially when people are unsure whether something is alive or dead (Jentsch, 1906). He used examples of automata, dolls, and artificial human figures in his analysis, since they confuse the human mind by blurring the line between the animate and the inanimate (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003; Vidler, 1992; Hurley, 2004). Despite further criticism and subsequent expansion of Freud's interpretation of Jentsch, Freud admitted that Jentsch's work provided a significant point of entry into the study of uncanny experiences (Freud & Royle, 2003). Freud was able to develop this concept further by focusing on psychological repression and reappearance of suppressed fears as key instruments of uncanny experiences (Freud, 1919).

Freud's theory also influenced subsequent authors who explored the uncanny as it operates within narrative structures (Rehman, Gilani, & Aftab, 2025). In the article titled "Freud's Uncanny Narratives," published in PMLA, Robin Lydenberg (1997) discusses how Freud's essay is itself a narrative that seeks to contain disturbing content while simultaneously exposing the instability of identity and meaning (Lydenberg, 1997). Lydenberg notes that narrative forms often try to suppress psychological fears, but in reality, nothing can be fully contained, and the uncanny can weave its way into literary works (Lydenberg, 1997). This description highlights that the uncanny is not just a theme but also plays a formal role in storytelling, helping to reveal underlying subconscious psychological conflicts (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003; Vidler, 1992; Botting, 2014). This

interpretation aligns with broader psychoanalytic discussions of literary form (Royle & Bennett, 2003).

The latest advances in uncanny studies have expanded Freud's work to include cultural and philosophical viewpoints. (Freud, 1919). Philosopher Fredrik Svenaeus (1999) explores the uncanny philosophically and phenomenologically, focusing on how uncanny experiences destabilise perception of reality and selfhood. Building on this idea, later theoretical frameworks inspired by thinkers such as Jacques Derrida and Hélène Cixous describe the uncanny as evoking existing political, cultural, and bodily fears present in our society today (Derrida, 1994; Cixous, 1976; Royle, 2003; Botting, 2014). These works have demonstrated that the uncanny is not exclusively associated with psychoanalysis; it has now evolved into an interdisciplinary construct utilised within literature, philosophy, the study of cinema, and cultural theory (Svenaeus & Royle, 2003). Such perspectives continue to expand Freud's earlier insights (Freud, 1919).

More recent scholarship has also re-evaluated Freud's theory in relation to contemporary concerns such as identity formation and posthumanism (Freud, 1919). By looking at Freud in the context of repetition and fragmentation, of the ego trying to hold onto a constant sense of identity, Samuel Weber (2023) alters the idea proposed by Freud (Weber, 2023). Weber argues that the uncanny reveals selfhood as unstable and that repetition and doubling destroy the integrity of human identity (Weber, 2023). These interpretations support contemporary literature plots in which hybrid bodies, modified identities and technological changes are other causes of uncanny fear (Royle, 2003; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004; Botting, 2014). These arguments resonate with psychoanalytic discussions of identity and repetition (Freud & Rank, 1971).

Moreover, the functioning of the uncanny has also been examined by contemporary literary studies in relation to bodily transformation and hybrid identity, especially in posthuman accounts and speculative fiction (Wolfe, 2010). According to scholars, uncanny imagery (mutated bodies, artificial life forms, and human/animal hybrids) is often employed in modern literature to represent fears related to biotechnology and scientific experiments (Wolfe, 2010). These figures of speech defy conventional demarcations between the human and the nonhuman, thus exacerbating the mental discomfort of the uncanny (Badmington, 2004; Fukuyama, 2002; Habermas, 2003; Botting, 2014). These attitudes have gained renewed topicality in the examination of twenty-first-century literature concerned with the ethical and emotional consequences of scientific development (Fukuyama & Habermas, 2003).

The other branch of study on the relation of the uncanny to otherness or alienation in literature is also significant (Freud, 1919). The analysis of The Jolly Corner by Brian McCuskey shows that the uncanny may reflect suppressed social conflicts, including issues of class identity and cultural displacement (McCuskey, 2010). McCuskey asserts that the uncanny experience of encountering a ghostly reflection reveals hidden parts of oneself that society seeks to suppress (McCuskey, 2010). These works all highlight how uncanny phenomena indicate anxiety about identity, bodily change, technological advances, social estrangement, etc., which was too much to let loose (Royle, 2003; Botting, 2014; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004). It is on this basis that modern analyses continue to examine how contemporary literature uses uncanny imagery to unearth concealed fears and psychological strains within individuals and society (Freud & Royle, 2003).

The short story by Nagamatsu Sequoia, Pig Son, is an interesting work that clearly portrays the tensions of the uncanny (Nagamatsu, 2022; Booker, 2017). Nagamatsu has also been known to blend speculative fiction with deeply human issues, leading him to explore themes of identity, alienation, and the ethical dimensions of scientific experimentation (Nagamatsu, 2022). There is another, more disturbing assumption made by the author in Pig Son: that a child is born pig-like,

or the result of genetic modification or scientific practice (Fukuyama, 2002; Habermas, 2003; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004). This is a disturbing hybridity that shatters the traditional perception of humanity, family and normality (Nagamatsu, 2022). The very fact of the existence of a being who is both a man and an animal creates an uncanny mood in which the conventionally 1940s arrangement of familial affection turns into fear, revulsion, and moral indecision (Royle & Bennett, 2003).

The unfolding of the story Pig Son establishes a psychological situation in which the uncanny operates at several levels (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003). The pig-human child's physical appearance, in a superficial interpretation, elicits a visceral response of discomfort due to the blurring of the species divide (Freud, 1919). Freud stresses that the uncanny is commonly defined as a condition that arises when a boundary that organises human cognition, such as the differentiation of life and death, animate and inanimate, or human and nonhuman, becomes fragile (Freud, 1919; Jentsch, 1906). The appearance of the pig son's hybrid body in Nagamatsu disrupts the story's established nature and leaves readers with a disturbing sense of human identity (Hurley, 2004; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004; Booker, 2017). The child is familiar and different at the same time; he arouses parental love and an instinct of disgust (Royle & Bennett, 2003).

In addition to its physical form, the uncanny in Pig Son also takes emotional and psychological forms (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003). The father's views in the tale are characterised by extreme internal conflict, as he must balance his paternal instincts with unease and fear for his child (Freud, 1919). The pig son is made an iconic figure of suppressed guilt, immorality and social scorn (Rank, 1971; Vidler, 1992; Hurley, 2004; Botting, 2014). Freud's theory suggests that the uncanny is often linked to fears and primal anxieties suppressed during childhood (Freud, 1919). These anxieties are provoked within the context of the Nagamatsu narrative as the father tries to justify and internalise his hybrid child's presence while simultaneously grappling with shame and alienation (Royle & Bennett, 2003).

Additionally, Pig Son reflects broader cultural concerns about biotechnology, genetic engineering, and the manipulation of life (Fukuyama, 2002; Habermas, 2003). With the rise of scientific technologies and the blurring of species boundaries, and the challenge to the old concept of biological identity, the literature has become the zone where such ethical issues are creatively experimented with (Fukuyama, 2002). This pig-human hybrid in Nagamatsu's story can be seen as a metaphor for the fear of the Man of Overreach amid technological advances in society, and for the possibility that changes made to nature might go wrong (Fukuyama, 2002; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004; Booker, 2017). Here, the narrative is similar to modern bioethics discourses, with contemporary anxieties typically resembling the psychological conflicts discussed in the Freudian paradigm more than a century ago (Habermas & Fukuyama, 2003).

The other aspect of the uncanny that is particularly noteworthy in Pig Son is its examination of identity and otherness (Royle, 2003; Wolfe, 2010). The pig son lives in a vacuum between the categories, as he is neither entirely human nor purely animal (Royle, 2003). Such an indecisive identity confronts the social identities that make up belonging and exclusion (Hall, 1996; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004; Botting, 2014). The uncanny idea, as proposed by Freud, often involves a confrontation with a distorted doppelganger or strange other of the self (Freud & Rank, 1971). It is possible to perceive the pig son as a symbolic other that mirrors all the repressed fears of humanity regarding its degeneration, mutation and loss of identity (Royle, 2003).

Moreover, the emotional reactions the pig son will elicit indicate how society influences perceptions of normality and abnormality (Foucault, 1977; Hall, 1996). The characters' inconvenience is not only a response to the creature's appearance but also to cultural norms concerning the body and the family (Foucault, 1977). The uncanny is therefore a process by

which secret preconceptions and fears are revealed (Hurley, 2004; Botting, 2014; Royle, 2003; Wolfe, 2010). What seems monstrous or disturbing is usually a reflection of deep-seated social anxieties about nonconformity to accepted norms (Foucault, 1977). In this respect, it is possible to see Pig Son as an expression of criticism of humanity's absolute borders and of the fear of the other that still lingers in society (Hall & Foucault, 1996).

With such complications, Freud's theory of the uncanny, as applied to Nagamatsu's Pig Son, provides a rich framework for interpreting the psycho-thematic undertones of the story (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003). Freud's study of the uncanny, especially his focus on repression and the rediscovery of the well-known in unfamiliar forms, coupled with the dislocation of the categorical delimiting boundaries, offers a critical understanding of the unsettling authority of the narrative (Freud, 1919). Analysing the pig son as a representation of underlying anxieties, ethical dilemmas, and identity crises, one can read the story as an expression of an individual's struggle and the culture's fears (Vidler, 1992; Hurley, 2004; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004). This interpretive framework aligns with psychoanalytic and posthuman readings of literature (Freud & Royle, 2003).

This paper examines how Nagamatsu Pig Son evokes a deep sense of the uncanny through hybridity and family conflict, coupled with moral doubt (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003). Based on the Freudian theory of psychoanalysis, the analysis of the story examines how it alters the recognisable image of the child into a frightening image of the other and oppression (Freud, 1919). It also explores how the story mirrors modern fears about biotechnology and the shaky boundaries that accommodate humanity (Fukuyama, 2002; Habermas, 2003; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004). Revealing the shady aspects of the uncanny hidden within the text, the research will also demonstrate that Nagamatsu, in his work, tackles timeless psychological issues while simultaneously addressing contemporary culture-related issues (Royle & Bennett, 2003).

Finally, the disturbing world found in Pig Son shows that the uncanny remains a long-standing literary tool that exposes the suppressed fears and unsettled situations of the human mind (Freud, 1919; Royle, 2003). The story prompts the reader to begin with the problems of identity stability, the boundaries of technological advancement, and the psychological intricacies of paternal affection through its shattering yet provocative plot (Freud, 1919). Thus, Nagamatsu's work is a clear example of how modern fiction can renew Freud's ideas and reveal the darker side of human experience (Botting, 2014; Hurley, 2004; Wolfe, 2010; Badmington, 2004).

METHODOLOGY

Sigmund Freud, the medical founder and prominent figure of psychoanalysis, transitioned from a conventional psychiatric practice over a century ago. Instead, he advised his patients to lie down on a couch in a relaxed position and articulate the exact thoughts that were running through their minds at any given instant. He sat behind them, out of their direct line of sight, to avoid disrupting their thoughts. He ensured that the sessions were conducted at consistent times and that the environment was strictly professional, confidential, and free of judgment or blame. He observed that a multitude of mental concerns and anxieties, both conscious and unconscious, characterised his patients' psychological symptoms. These, particularly in the highly conservative late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, may have involved concerns and disturbing experiences of a sexual nature that they found profoundly embarrassing and disgusting. Anxiety was frequently associated with emotions of hatred and aggression, which were in opposition to the way in which individuals viewed themselves. This is still essentially accurate today. Psychoanalytic criticism is a type of applied psychoanalysis, a field of study that investigates the laws of mental functioning and the interaction between conscious and unconscious processes. It is important to distinguish between this and psychotherapy, which is focused on the treatment

of behavioral issues and mental disorders. Nevertheless, many psychotherapists employ a variety of analytical techniques in their work. Psychoanalytic criticism is merely one of numerous research methods that employ psychoanalytic concepts to comprehend specific subjects. Thus, there are sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists who are inclined toward psychoanalysis, as well as sceptics. All of these individuals incorporate concepts and insights from psychoanalytic theory into their work.

Like any other scientific domain, psychoanalysis has developed theories drawn from its observational data that aim to organise and clarify those findings. What we call psychoanalytic theory, therefore, is a set of hypotheses concerning human mental activity and development. It is a branch of general psychology and contains what are widely regarded as the most significant contributions to human psychology to date. It is important to recognise that psychoanalytic theory deals with both ordinary and pathological mental functioning. It is not simply a theory of psychopathology. It is true that the practice of psychoanalysis primarily involves the treatment of people who have a mental illness or are disturbed. However, the theories of psychoanalysis relate to both the normal and the abnormal, even though they have been derived largely from the study and treatment of abnormal conditions. As in any scientific discipline, the various hypotheses of psychoanalytic theory are closely connected. Some are inherently more fundamental than others, some are supported by stronger evidence than others, and some have received such a high level of verification that they appear so fundamental in importance that we are likely to regard them as established laws governing the mind.

This paper employs qualitative textual analysis to explore the dark sides of the uncanny in the short story written by Nagamatsu, Fukuyama Pig Son. The study is informed by psychoanalytic literary criticism; that is, it relies on Sigmund Freud's theory of the uncanny (das Unheimliche) as its main theoretical basis. As the research aims to develop the idea of psychological and symbolic interpretation embedded in the story, a qualitative approach is most suitable for interpreting the intricate themes, imagery, and character dynamics. The study is primarily based on a close reading of the chosen literary work. Close reading allows the researcher to identify narrative elements, motifs, and symbolic representations that evoke discomfort, incoherence, and mental instability. The focus is on specific issues such as hybridity, the transformation of the human body, broken relations within the family, and the delimitation of the borders between the human and the non-human, all of which can be identified as primary features of the uncanny in Freudian psychoanalysis. By attentively reviewing these literary attributes, the analysis is expected to identify how the story builds psychological tension and unveils the darker side of the human mind.

Freud's concept of the uncanny is applied as an analytical tool, as its theoretical basis is utilised to read the passages and themes chosen in the story. Freud's concepts of repression, the return of the repressed, and the destabilisation of familiar structures lead the reader to interpret the uncanny's actions in the narrative. Using this psychoanalytic framework, this paper explores how the narrative embodies underlying fears regarding identity, humanity, and the dilemmas of ethical intervention associated with scientific intervention. In addition to the primary textual analysis, secondary scholarly sources, such as scholarly articles and critical analyses of the concept of the uncanny, psychoanalysis, and more modern speculative fiction, are included in the research. The sources furnish the theoretical underpinning and context that add depth to the interpretation of the text. In general, this methodological approach also enables a systematic investigation of how the uncanny imagery and narrative techniques in Nagamatsu's Pig Son help unearth the secrets of psychological fear and cultural anxiety, thereby further clarifying the application of the uncanny in present-day literature.

ANALYSIS

The short story by Nagamatsu, Pig Son provides an insight into the troubling and intricate aspects of the uncanny. The novel raises issues of mourning, scientific ambition, hybridity, and emotional displacement through an odd connection between a scientist and a genetically engineered pig capable of speaking human language. The uncanny, according to a Freudian psychoanalytic approach, occurs when something familiar is presented in an unfamiliar or deviant way, thereby causing psychological unease and disorientation (Freud, 1919). In Pig Son, this is created by the blurred line between human and animal identity, the re-emergence of repressed grief, and the transformation of a laboratory animal into an allegorical stand-in for a lost child. All these aspects are manifestations of the deeper psychological tensions which lurk behind the story.

The narrator's emotional state at the start of the story provides the psychological basis for the uncanny experience. When his son dies, the narrator, a scientist working on xenotransplantation, devotes his time to growing human organs in pigs. The death of the child, in a brief term called Peter, is a possible trauma which becomes central to the development of the motivations of the narrator. According to Freud, the uncanny usually arises from repressed emotions that return in unanticipated ways (Freud, 1919). The narrator's deep immersion in science can be seen as an attempt to escape grief. The appearance of the genetically modified pig is, however, slowly recovering the suppressed emotion into consciousness.

The uncanny first appears when one of the pigs begins to speak more like a human. The animal tries to say the word doctor, but the sound comes out as dahktar. The incident interferes with the instinctive difference between animal and human dialogue. Freud (1919) explains that the uncanny commonly arises when boundaries that define the structure of reality, e.g., the distinction between human and nonhuman, are accorded instability. If a pet in a laboratory begins to exhibit human language skills, it raises doubts and discomfort. This phenomenon cannot be easily explained using the narrator's scientific knowledge, only escalating this disconcerting impact.

The narrator and his colleague start teaching the pig simple vocabulary as it grows, using teaching tools such as flashcards, cartoons, and books. These items are usually reminiscent of childhood learning, and their application in the lab setting imparts an indirect metamorphosis to the pig, making it resemble a child. According to Freud, uncanny experiences are largely due to the reactivation of childhood associations, especially when those items or situations from early life are encountered in unusual circumstances (Freud, 1919). The learning resources used in this story are reminiscent of child growth and parenting. This makes the pig more than a scientific specimen; it begins to resemble the narrator's lost son.

The motif of hybridity is key to heightening the tale's uncanny quality. The pig is also a creature between species, that is, with both human and animal identities. This form of biological obscurity generates what Freud has called intellectual uncertainty, a situation in which individuals fail to readily identify what they are experiencing (Freud, 1919). The pig remains a physical animal, but they have human intelligence and speaks. Doctor, lonely, son, and all such words unveil the cognitive ability of the animal as it grows bigger, and it becomes harder and harder to deal with only as an object in the laboratory.

The other important aspect of the uncanny is depicted in the way the narrator deals with things related to his dead child. At some point in the story, the narrator finally goes to the attic to collect something, including toys, books, and clothes. These things serve as feelings of the past. According to Freud (1919), the uncanny tends to occur whenever objects linked to memory turn out to be synonymous with unresolved mental conflict. The narrator subconsciously combines the pig and the child by giving the pig his son's belongings and situating him in the pig's

surroundings. The laboratory room is slowly being transformed into a distorted home setting where scientific study and parental desire collide.

The pig's growing emotional consciousness further heightens the uncanny experience. When the pig is introduced to the word lonely, the word is not only representative of the pig being lonely, but it is also representative of the narrator somehow being in a lonely state. Freud's theory posits that the uncanny reveals concealed psychological facts that people suppress. The pig's loneliness reflects the narrator's unresolved sorrow over the loss of his son. This emotional appeal reinforces the symbolic relationship between the lost child and the pig, supporting the notion that the pig serves as a psychological surrogate.

The uncanny double is also present in the story. The figure of a double, promoted by Freud as something that resembles the self or a loved one, usually evokes discomfort or fear (Freud, 1919). The pig in Pig Son is an alienated image of the son of the narrator. This doubling is hinted at when the pig comes across Peter's name in a book. The words "Peter" and "son" form a symbolic scene in which the pig becomes an accidental substitute for the narrator's child. Even though the pig is not literally taking over the boy, the psychological association between them grows.

The moral uncertainty about the pig's existence also heightens the sense of the unnatural. Initially, the genetically modified pigs were designed to produce organs that could be transplanted into human beings. The narrator discusses organs that have been shipped to other locations, including the heart, liver, and lungs. These sources bring out the utilitarian role of the pigs. The moral setting of the experiment is, however, extremely questionable after the pig proves to have some intelligence and emotional perception. The animal is not to be considered a mere biological matter anymore. According to Freud, the experience of the uncanny usually occurs when repressed moral anxieties are revealed (Freud, 1919). In this story, the talking pig makes the narrator consider the ugly consequences of treating living creatures as disposable products.

The laboratory room also contributes to the story's uncanny nature. The concept of laboratories is usually associated with rationality, scientific control, and empirical observation. However, Pig Son turns the laboratory into a place of failure through reason. The use of words such as "test," "alteration," and "genetics" constitutes the scientific context of the narrator's work. Still, the fact that the pig can speak introduces a phenomenon that cannot be readily explained using scientific concepts. Such opposition between scientific rationality and inexplicable behaviours adds to the story's disturbing tone.

The disintegration of the line of life and death is another significant factor of the uncanny. Freud believes that uncanny fear is a common phenomenon that arises when one is exposed to life circumstances that cast doubt on one's interpretation of death (Freud, 1919). The narrator's mourning over his son's death is not addressed in the story. The pig's voice seems symbolic, linking it to the dead kid. At some point, the narrator imagines that the mysterious phenomenon enabling the pig to talk can go beyond science, even beyond the line between the living and the dead. Such a supernatural reason is not directly proven in the story, but the narrator's speculation appears to reflect his deep psychological desire to reunite with his son.

Nagamatsu (2022) meticulously builds a sense of the world in which mundane things become disturbing throughout the story. Words such as child, voice, home, family, and so on are mostly associated with feelings of familiarity and comfort. Nevertheless, when these things are used in the context of a genetically engineered pig, they take on an unnerving aspect. This turn-around, according to Freud, is the essence of the uncanny: the point at which something that normally resonates with one turns unrecognisable and frightening (Freud, 1919).

Finally, Pig Son illustrates how the uncanny can expose other psychological tensions in the human encounter. The talking pig is not only a scientific anomaly but also a symbolic representation of the narrator's unresolved grief. The story reveals the thin line separating humanity, identity, and emotional attachment by transforming a laboratory animal into the outward appearance of a child. The pig symbolises not only the narrator's scientific spirit but also his profound personal defeat, so we cannot distinguish between the spirit of rational experimentation and emotional desire.

Finally, the dark aspects of the uncanny in Pig Son are revealed when the psychological trauma, biological hybridity, and ethics are combined. The fact that the pig speaks upsets the human-animal boundary, whereas the narrator's sorrow makes the animal a figurative duplicate of his dead son. With these disturbing details, Nagamatsu is showing how repressed feelings and loss that have never been properly mourned can come out in surprising ways. Using Freudian theory of the uncanny, one can easily argue that the story's mysterious force lies not merely in its hypothetical premise, but in certain psychological anxieties of identity and mortality, and in the end of scientific domination.

CONCLUSION

In the nuanced examination of the uncanny, Pig Son by Nagamatsu Sequoia relates and reveals its nature through the destructive connotations surrounding grief, scientific ambition, and biological hybridity, destabilising the known borders of identity and humanity. In a Freudian psychoanalytic analysis, the narration illustrates the subsequent emergence of the uncanny as a redistribution of repressed feelings or emotions (Freud, 1919). The science fiction pig, with human-like speech, is a genetic anomaly and a symbolic representation of the narrator's unresolved loss of his son. The story is consistent in its blurring of the human and the animal, the scientific and the human feeling, and the life and the loss, which generates a mood of psychological instability. Aspects like broken speech, childish schooling, and the incorporation of items that evoke childhood support the disturbing transformation of the lab pig into a makeshift child of the narrator's lost kid. In this manner, the story demonstrates Freud's concept that the uncanny is a manifestation of the familiar that is now strange or disturbing. In the end, Pig Son reveals the shadowy side of psychology hidden by scientific advances and parental desires. The speaking pig turns out to be a poor mirror of human frailty, in which efforts to define life through the power of science fail to overcome emotional trauma. The discovery of such tensions and by showing these tensions, through Nagamatsu, the narrative proves that speculative fiction continues to use the concepts of Freud to explore underlying anxieties of identity, loss, and the outer boundaries of scientific intervention.

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