

**Positioning Overt Narcissism as a Narration Technique in Uno Koji's Short Story
"Closet LLB"**

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Abstract

The emulative power of a fictional narrative with the social setting allows comparison with its particular milieu. The social setting referred to in this paper is a close relation to people who use others for their gain, have a grandiose sense of self-importance, preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited beauty, amplify achievements, are emotionally distant, and try to abuse, control, and manipulate others. We usually synonymize the above-mentioned character traits with a person exhibiting a narcissistic disposition. The myth of narcissism was first introduced into the literature in Ovid's Metamorphosis, but it was not until Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic study in 1914 "On Narcissism" that he gave this notion a proper foundation. Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) is included as one of the disorder types in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5, 2013) and Pearson's Abnormal Psychology (16th ed., 2014), with its roots in Freud's argument. In this research article, I closely study "Closet LLB" (2018), Uno Koji's short story in Japanese which comprises a protagonist who exhibits overt narcissistic traits employing Koji's narrative. I analyze the replication of character narration through plain narcissism and compulsive narcissism as discussed by Freud, DSM-5, and abnormal psychology in my study of the short story to establish the overlap of fiction with reality. The methodology of the paper along with 'cues of narcissism' adopts Roland Barthes's 'cultural codes' in S/Z for a narrative

investigation to suggest that the mimicry of life and fiction in the living expression of narration can be used to gauge overt narcissism as a narrative form in fiction.

Key Words: *Freud, Overt Narcissism, Narrative, Roland Barthes, Cultural Codes, NPD or Overt Narcissism*

Uno Koji is a twentieth-century Japanese writer, acknowledged and cherished for his short stories and novels. Koji had a keen interest in the works of Nikolai Gogol's fiction. His education comprised of the readings of symbolist poetry and an inclination toward Russian modernists. At the age of twenty-eight, he was able to publish his first major work *In the Storehouse*, the writing style of which has a colloquial resonance to it which also encapsulates the element of irony. His first work was censured as 'flippant' and 'popular'. He suffered seven years of mental illness and silence, and his publications became more conventional after this period. During World War II, he wrote essays on literary life in the Taishō period (1912–1926). He received accolades for his novel *River of Thought* (*Omoigawa*) and is admired for his 1951 critical biography of author Ryūnosuke Akutagawa. Meanwhile, Koji's short stories have made their way back to the twenty-first century contemporary times because of their relevancy and reliability to human dispositions. It is through an ingenious translation by Jay Rubin (a renowned translator and American academic) that Koji's work finds a worldwide readership.

The *Three Japanese Short Stories* (2018) translated by Rubin and published by Penguin Modern: 05 are drawn from the initial years of the twentieth century. They are representative of Japan's initial efforts to wrestle with a broader world. The second short story "Closet LLB", by Uno Koji is the core piece of this research article for a narrative study. At the beginning of this short story Otsukotsu Sansaku, the protagonist is seen five years past after his acquirement of a Bachelor of Law degree. His initial place of residence has not changed, even though the ownership of the building has changed multiple times within this tenancy. The story relays the gradual development of Sansaku's education; initially a prodigy in the

field of literature, Sansaku had the yearning to become a novelist. In the entirety of the narrative, this desire remains unchangeable. His convoluted decisions regarding his career choices wherein he passed his Law exams and acquired the letters LLB were because of Sansaku's father's passing and his passions thwarted Sansaku. The family debt piled up, and he eventually becomes dependent on a cousin of his father's, Oike. Sansaku gets pressurized by the family into studying Law. This is counterbalanced by the fact that he gains some repute as a writer of fairy tales and several short pieces, and hopes to score success with a novel for adults.

Koji has managed to inculcate several autobiographical connections of the protagonist in the story to contemplate. Debt circumferences Sansaku's mother and him after his father's death, followed by Sansaku's obsession with becoming a novelist. He has a nonconformist lifestyle, tirelessly sleeping away his days, and passing down comments on passers-by, and when he meets his friends, he often questions them if they want to die. Koji's writing style usually falls into two categories; one, a rather fragmented and experimental technique; and two, it evolves into a more conventional storytelling method. "Closet LLB" feels like a blend of both.

The latter part of the story sees Sansaku dive further into his retreating realm. To save him time and effort he located his futon in such a way that he managed to sleep in the closet and saved himself the regular bedding work. With the current sleeping angle and the level of his room, he can easily observe the back and forth of passers-by. The story ends on a meditative note with Sansaku's nature and temperament exhibiting a sheer lack of intellectual superiority.

I chose this work for its typical replication of today's world which is filled with an inflated ego, grandiose sense of self-importance, lack of empathy, indifference, and several other factors which hint at narcissism. This paper attempts to establish an interpretive analysis of "Closet LLB" with the 'lover of oneself' tone, which extrapolates the idea of narcissism. It is through the lens of a third-person omniscient narrator and a linear narration as employed by Koji that narcissism is hinted at throughout the story.

How did narcissism evolve in literature? The term ‘Narcissism’ was propounded in the eighth century A.D. by Ovid. It was mentioned in Ovid’s Latin narrative poem named *Metamorphoses*. The poem comprises 11,995 lines, 15 books, and over 250 myths, and narrates the story of the world from its beginning to its deification. The myth of Echo and Narcissus is told in Book III of the *Metamorphoses*, an Augustan Age Roman mythical epic. Ovid appears to have invented the myth of the mountain nymph Echo and its inclusion in the story of Narcissus, the beautiful youth who rejected Echo and fell in love with his own reflection. Ovid’s interpretation influenced how the narrative was depicted in later Western art and literature. The poem has been translated into English numerous times, the first being in 1480 by William Caxton. It has continuously evolved to the now-understood meaning of a lover of oneself through Freud, *DSM-5*, and abnormal psychology which I will elaborate on in the next section.

Over the years, renowned authors, poets, playwrights, and several others have tried to depict narcissism in diversified forms. Some of the popular and familiar works which include a character with traits of narcissism are *The Prince* (1513) by Niccolò Machiavelli, Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1608), Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Faust* (1808), *Middlemarch* (1874) by George Eliot, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900) by L. Frank Baum, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) by Oscar Wilde, *The Custom of the Country* (1913) Edith Wharton, and *The Baron in the Trees* (1957) by Italo Calvino. The mention of these works becomes important for their relatability and appropriateness to the depiction of human flaws portrayed through fiction, which are still widely prevalent. The aforesaid list is a few of the many works that have been critically contended to possess narcissistic cues. In this article, I try to establish “Closet LLB” as an addition to the list of texts which are imbued with narcissistic cues and codes.

I further my argument by not just establishing Koji’s protagonist as a narcissist but also by elaborating on how narcissism is a tool for narration in his work. It helps to identify a novel approach to narration with narcissism through a critical reading of Koji’s short story. For an

in-depth analysis, key works and concepts of Roland Barthes and Sigmund Freud are employed for an interdisciplinary framework.

Theoretical Framework

The term narcissistic narrative was first coined by Linda Hutcheon, a Canadian academic and theorist, in her 1980 work *Narcissistic Narrative*. She elaborated on its metaphorical meaning with regard to metafiction; i.e., the text recognizing itself as the text, defining it as the narcissistic attribute of the narrative. However, the implication of this article's methodology is not to situate the metafictional quality of the short story, but to interpret the main character's narcissistic cues for narration. For interpreting the psychological cues, an interdisciplinary framework is proposed, wherein, psychoanalytical analysis of the short story is intersected with the narrative study. I first adopted psychoanalysis for deriving narcissistic traits, and secondly, for positioning narcissistic cues as a tool for storytelling, a narrative investigation was implemented. The forthcoming sections comprise a general overview of what psychoanalysis and narrative theory are, followed by specific theorists from each theory whose concepts are inculcated in the study.

I will briefly put across our general comprehension of psychoanalysis as a literary theory, for this paper adopts its narcissism element throughout. Therefore to understand narcissism better let us first comprehend the broader concept. Psychoanalysis is a set of psychological theories and therapeutic practices that originated with Sigmund Freud's work and theories. The concept that everyone has unconscious thoughts, feelings, wants, and memories are at the heart of psychoanalysis. It is a clinical strategy for treating psychopathology through psychoanalysis which is a theory of personality organization and dynamics of personality development. Since Freud's work in the late nineteenth century, psychoanalytic theory has undergone numerous improvements. The psychoanalytical theory is also expounded for literary criticism. It comes in two forms: a) psychoanalyzing the author- this method puts the life of the author under extreme scrutiny, and their literary works are seen to supply evidence

for this investigation. It is commonly referred to as ‘psychobiography’ and b) psychoanalyzing one or more characters-the psychological theory becomes a tool to explain the motivations and behaviour of the characters. The more the theory appears to relate to the characters, the more realistic the work seems.

Thus, moving ahead with the concept of narcissism, I elaborate on Sigmund Freud’s 1914 essay “On Narcissism”. He deals with two kinds of narcissism in his essay, namely: a) primary and b) secondary. Primary narcissism or the earliest type of narcissism, according to psychoanalytic theory, is in which the infant’s desire is directed toward his or her own body and its satisfaction rather than the surroundings or things. The infant builds a narcissistic ego ideal based on his or her sense of omnipotence at this period. Whereas, secondary narcissism or self-love develops later in life, following the first infantile primary narcissism, and happens when the libido is withdrawn from objects and focussed on the self, according to psychoanalytic theory. While both primary and secondary narcissism appears in normal human development, according to Freud, difficulties in the shift from one to the other can lead to pathological narcissistic illnesses in adulthood.

To care for someone, according to Freud, is to transform ego-libido into object-libido by providing some self-love to another person, leaving less ego-libido available for primary narcissism, self-protection, and self-nurturing. When affection is returned, desire follows, restoring fundamental narcissism and self-worth. Psychological problems occur when this balance is not achieved or is disrupted. In this instance, the only way to restore primary narcissism is to withdraw object libido (also known as object love) to replenish ego libido. According to Freud, a child’s ego develops as he grows, and he continuously gives his self-love to people and objects, the first of who is usually his mother. The warmth and care offered to him should replace his dwindling self-esteem.

I focus on Sansaku’s lack of self-love which leads to his withdrawal and condemnation of the world to satisfy his ego-self. Freud gives us insight into how the myth is not solely clutching onto a parable but is indeed a neurotic personality type which in turn hampers the personality

with shifts in language, I say ‘shift’ because it is a deviation from the normal narrative tone. These deviations can be addressed with repetition and recurrence over a while. Thus, in the fictional narrative, it is through the emulation of the social milieu that these shifts can be evaluated or else analyzed. The advancement in the understanding of this personality type in the discipline of psychology, thus, has its grassroots in Freud’s essay.

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed., 2013) (hereafter *DSM-5*) is a publication by the American Psychiatric Association for the classification of mental disorders using a common language and standard criteria. The manual incorporates a chapter on “Personality Disorders”, under which Narcissistic Personality Disorder (hereafter NPD) has derived certain key elements from Freud’s essay and has further expanded it. In addition to *DSM-5*, even abnormal psychology is inclusive of different personality types which emerge from repetitive traits, coping styles, and ways of interacting with the social environment. Abnormal psychology is concerned with the research and treatment of mental and emotional problems that impair a person’s ability to operate normally and feel like themselves. Physical or emotional stress, genetics, or a chemical imbalance in the brain could all play a role in these diseases. This approach is again based on Freud’s concept that abnormality stems from psychological rather than physical reasons. Unresolved tension between the ego and the superego, he argued, might lead to abnormality.

One out of the five basic personality traits mentioned in ‘Cluster Personality Disorders’ in Pearson’s *Abnormal Psychology* (16th ed., 2014) is NPD. Pearson’s work has complete coverage of *DSM-5*. It is with this validity that the analysis of narcissism is juxtaposed with the narrative entity. I refrain from making any psychological diagnosis of Koji’s character; however, I try to correlate the similarities in Freud’s “On Narcissism”, *DSM-5*, and abnormal psychology to ascertain accurate overt narcissistic traits that would bring the character closer to reality. Extroverted, brash, and attention-seeking people are often afflicted with overt narcissism. If a person or circumstance threatens their feeling of status, they may become hostile or violent. The covert subtype is more subtle. Covert narcissism can make a person

appear meek, introverted, or self-deprecating. I stick to overt narcissism because Koji's narrative explicitly indicates the essentials.

Since I am trying to establish the mimicry of life with fiction and "Closet LLB" has biographical elements of the protagonist, how do we understand these characteristics?

The characteristics usually emerge during childhood and normally crystallize into established patterns by the end of adolescence or early adulthood. These patterns constitute the individual's personality—the set of unique traits and behaviours that characterize the individual (Butcher, Hooley & Mineka³²⁸).

It is the established patterns that I come across in Koji's narrative that constitute his protagonist's personality.

There is a stark difference between self-adulation and narcissism which normally get synonymised. Some of the key pointers which highlight a person as a narcissist are: an exaggerated sense of self-importance, a preoccupation with being admired, and a lack of empathy for the feelings of others. Numerous studies support the notion of two subtypes of narcissism: grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. The element of grandiosity is showcased by overt narcissists, and vulnerable narcissism is a trait of covert narcissists. The grandiose exhibition of narcissistic patients, highlighted in the *DSM-5* criteria, is displayed by traits related to grandiosity, aggression, and dominance. These are reflected in a strong propensity to overestimate their abilities and accomplishments while underestimating the abilities and accomplishments of others. Their sense of entitlement is frequently a source of astonishment to others, although they themselves seem to regard their lavish expectations as merely what they deserve. They behave in stereotypical ways (e.g., with constant self-references and bragging) (Butcher, Hooley & Mineka³³⁹).

Contrastingly in fiction, the narrative is used to support the overall development of the character, her/his motives, intentions, desires, and feelings, which differs from our understanding of the real world because we may or may not understand the true workings of the behaviour of the people in reality because there are no means to unravel onto someone

else's hidden agenda. Nevertheless, the narrative of the character through her/his or someone else's words adds to their character, which allows us to dig deeper into his/her psyche, further contributing to understanding human psychology. The characters' narratives have a unifying power to not only allow access to what has happened in the plot but also towards what may have happened, an additional knowledge. If the text mentions a character that is remotely related to someone we might know, we link it to ourselves, and then it is not wrong to assume that characters inherit human psychology.

Thus, it is this living expression depicted in fiction that seems closer to reality with psychoanalysis which I try to situate with narratives. With this, I move ahead with my second concept in focus, which is the study of narratives. The study of narratives enables the myriad possible ways in which fiction can impact how we as humans perceive the world. This paper deploys Roland Barthes's post-structuralist work *S/Z* (1970, translation 1990) for a narrational interpretation with narcissism cues. In his previous works, he has defined narrative as "international, trans historical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself" (Barthes, "Structural Analysis" 79). It is through this foundation that Barthes allows the readers to bring forth their own interpretation employing 'codes'. There are five codes according to Barthes (*S/Z*) namely: semantic, symbolic, proairetic, hermeneutic, and cultural. However, for the viability of my argument, i.e., expansion of narcissism cues, the cultural code technique of Barthes is utilized.

Cultural codes according to Barthes are an advantage for the readers, which he defines as a common body of knowledge. The cultural codes engage with the codification process which rests in the hands of the readers, implying that anything which constitutes our shared knowledge, i.e., how the world works. It allows for the assertion of those certain handpicked cultural codes such as physiological, physical, psychological, literary, medical, or historical, etc (Felluga). These chosen codes of shared knowledge can then be situated across other disciplines for the ongoing meaning-making chain of signifiers. It is the power that Barthes bestows to the reader which turns "a 'readerly' text into a 'writerly' one" (Hawkes 96). The

terms *lisible* (readerly) and *scriptible* (writerly) were coined by Barthes to distinguish between writings that are straightforward and require no extra effort to comprehend and those whose content is not immediately apparent and necessitate some effort on the reader's side. In plain words, the transition from readerly to writerly can only take place if the text is comprehensible, rewritable, employs visible codes, and allows [t]he total effect in free[ing] the text from its 'background', its context, the limitations imposed on its range by the traditions of historical scholarship and criticism" (Hawkes96).

the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text [writerly]...Opposite the writerly text, then, is its counter value, its negative, reactive value: what can be read, but not written: the *readerly*. We call any readerly text a classic text (Barthes, *S/Z4*, italics theirs).

The plurality of certain codes in the short story allows for a narrative-based study.

Therefore, building upon Barthes's narrative framework of cultural codes, 'Narcissism' is carefully excavated through Freud's essay and NPD in abnormal psychology and *DSM-5*. It is a conspicuous element to witness in Koji's character narrative by juxtaposing the key pointers mentioned above. 'Narration' through the works of Roland Barthes is transcending barriers to fit into multiple conjectures. The intersection of these terms brings in two disciplines, i.e., 'Narration' and 'Character Psychology', as a perspective within psychology that is concerned with the narrative-based or storied nature of humans as the harbinger of storytelling and the inner psyche. Human beings can juggle experiences through observing, listening, and evaluating the stories of others. It tends to function under the postulation that human activities and experiences are filled with creating meanings and stories, rather than logical arguments or lawful formulations. 'Narration' and 'Character Psychology' is the study of how human beings construct meanings within stories to deal with experiences. Meaning-making becomes the by-product of reading to gain experiences. Here, the meaning-making is with regards to a fictional character from Koji's "Closet LLB", exhibiting and

reproducing language, emotions, and temperament of the people residing in the real world, and in turn, suffer from overt narcissism. The cultural codes of narcissism closely resonate with the rhetoric of overt narcissists, thus engaging the character of our short story in the verisimilitude of a realistic narrative.

Narrative of Narcissism

This segment comprises five sections. For the feasibility of my argument, I have chosen five quintessential and overlapping traits in all three works (inclusive of narcissism by Freud, and NPD in *DSM-5* and abnormal psychology) of narcissism to analyze the protagonist's narrative, namely: a) grandiose sense of self-importance or uniqueness, b) preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success, power, brilliance/ beauty, or ideal love, c) exhibitionism: the person requires constant attention and admiration, d) cool indifference or marked feelings of rage, inferiority, shame, humiliation, or emptiness in response to criticism, indifference towards others, or defeat, and e) interpersonal relations.

Barthes's tool of cultural code which allows for the writerly or rewritable quality of an interpretable text paves the way for Sansaku (Koji's protagonist), as "it is impossible to combine (to produce) a narrative without reference to an implicit system of units and rules" (Barthes, "Structural Analysis" 80). Barthes's imposition of rules and units can be juxtaposed with the familiarity or homogeneity of the language framework of 'narcissism'. The repertoire of familiar narratives with the fictional narratives then permits "a homological relation between sentence and discourse" (Barthes, "Structural Analysis" 83). There are two ways in which I have analyzed the narcissistic cues in Koji's narrative: a) Sansaku's disposition toward himself and others and b) the Disposition of Sansaku through a third-person omniscient narrator and a linear narration. Both narratives are important for incorporation because of the symbiotic relationship of Sansaku as an overt narcissist with the characters at the receiving end.

Thus, the discourse of narcissism as a cultural code and its habitation in everyday rhetoric of an overtly narcissistic person thereby associates "Closet LLB" as a writerly text for

codification. Barthes advances his understanding of plurality or the heterogeneity of the conspicuous disturbances which he ascribes

is created in [an] order or hierarchy of voices: a disturbing process since it suggests that there is no longer an ability to separate the voices of the text from the voice of the author behind the text. Such a moment opens up the possibility that what is writing the text is not an ultimate, speaking subject (the author) but the general codes and conventions and intertextual discourses which make up the cultural text (Allen91).

The disturbances created by the narration of narcissism in Koji's narrative, which in turn recollect the narrative from a linear pattern to sly rhetoric, can be addressed based on certain Narcissism and NPD pointers. The paper will hereon deal with the analysis of the protagonist Sansaku with a correlation to the essential traits.

Grandiose Sense of Self-Importance or Uniqueness

Sansaku is a smug and arrogant individual. He is filled with disdain and contempt for everyone around him, including his blood relations. His urgent need to complement his own abilities surpasses the need to appreciate others. With time, he himself finds this behaviour pattern to be somewhat abnormal. Sansaku has LLB attached to his name but is determined to make his career in literature. However, apart from small work, he does not contribute significantly. His unemployment does not make him work for his passion vigorously so instead of devoting his time to writing, all works of art including not only fiction but critical essays, dramatic texts, and theatrical performances are notable to him for the immeasurable limitations. A person with narcissistic traits and NPD may fail to understand that their issues are caused by their own actions, instead of blaming others. This becomes evident in the following:

He has come to feel that he is the only one who can perceive their flaws and virtues (if, indeed, they possess any virtues), that he only truly understands them. He has gone so far [as] to think he should therefore provide models for other writers, [and]

write works that would serve to guide them to increasingly greater accomplishments; but in the end, nothing has ever materialised (Koji36).

The first means of recognizing an overt narcissist is to look for an exaggeration of achievements and talents, which focuses on the special nature of one's problems (American Psychiatric Association669).In the case of Sansaku,

[h]e believes himself capable of discovering points of beauty in things that everyone else dismisses, and equally able to find bad points in things that everyone else admires, which makes him very pleased with himself (Koji37).

Sansaku tries to negate the opinions of others and always finds the need to run in the opposite direction. Someone with narcissism or NPD may be extremely sensitive to perceived criticisms or slights, making it difficult for others to discuss their conduct and how it may be damaging. He does not hold opinions for anything constructive, but for the mere purpose of censuring the works, everyone else feels appreciative towards. The diegesis of self-importance and attention allows "to show how a narrative is not a simple sum of propositions and to classify the enormous mass of elements which go to make up a narrative" (Barthes, "Structural Analysis"85) thereby allowing narcissism to become one of the elements. "To interpret a text is not to give it a (more or less justified, more or less free) meaning, but on the contrary to appreciate what plural constitutes it" (Barthes, *S/Z* 5). The plurality of his normalcy with narcissism resonates supremely. Narrative over time has been ruled in common terms of linear, non-linear, quest, and viewpoint narrative. However, when the addition of all characteristics builds up to a certain human tendency can it bring a new form of narrative to life. The narcissism of Sansaku is bringing in that hue here.

Preoccupation with Fantasies of Unlimited Success, Power, Brilliance/ Beauty, or Ideal Love

The blending of the third-person omniscient perspective and Sansaku's own narrative allows multiple cultural codes to paint his nature and disposition, Barthes calls this "the plurality of

narratives” (“Structural Analysis”81). Sansaku lazes around his own closet space, with his breakfast, lunch, and dinner passing off in speedy succession, with each forwarding day his condemnation emerges with more vehemence. The “text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one” (Barthes, *S/Z5*). However, we can flourish the text with a multitude of interpretations not possibly one, but for an ongoing chain of meanings. Interpreting Sansaku’s incapacity to acknowledge the achievements of his school friends colours his tone with disregard and contempt.

Everybody is calling him unbeatable, but I knew him in middle school. At first, he and I were in the same class, but he was what they called a “backward” student and failed his exams twice in two years, ending up two grades behind me. Now you look at the sumo coverage in the paper and they’re calling him an unusually smart wrestler (Koji37).

The language placement of his denunciation portrays his preoccupation with desired success. The quote provided in the above paragraph accounts for his dissent. Sansaku does not take any initiative to work on his wrestling skills; however, when the media is calling his acquaintance an ‘unusually smart wrestler’ he loses his calm. His inability to stick to the present situation, and tirelessly relate to the events of the past symbolizes his vague boundaries between the past and the present.

It takes years of patience, practice, stamina, and continuous discipline for an athlete to be able to perform his sport in a championship. Sansaku, after his father’s death, lacked the emotional capacity to express gratitude for the ones providing for his hefty education. He even tossed off his mother’s urgent letters and failed to provide a mere sum for her. This very person compares his failure to the ones having gone through rigorous hardwork to prove themselves capable, that he is more worthy. Sansaku’s notion of success even with his desired field of writing is never fully materialized, healthy confidence and NPD are not the same things. Lastly, for him to compare his physicality to the one acclaiming nationwide praise seems perverse and mindless. Here Koji’s narration of narcissism gives weight to

ideas, elicits memories, and transports Sansaku to different places in compelling and triggering ways.

Exhibitionism: The Person Requires Constant Attention and Admiration.

Koji allows his narrative to blend in the perspective shifts of all the characters which allow a multiplicity of voices in the storytelling. Since the third-person omniscient narrator always has full knowledge and does not conform to biasness, it allows for “the heterogeneity of language”(Barthes,"Structural Analysis"80) in narration. Here Koji allows his narrator to employ Sansaku’s condemnation of everyone around him, supporting this heterogeneity.

‘I wonder why I never put more of myself into studying the law,’ thought Sansaku one day. ‘I mean, think of that stiff-brained, tongue-tied, unimpressive-looking classmate of mine, Kakii: I see in today’s paper they’re calling him one of the up-and-coming hot young lawyers for some stupid case he’s managed to win. The public is so damn easy to fool.’ ‘With my intelligence and my eloquence...’ More than once, such thoughts inspired him to resolve to hit the law books and apply to be a judge or public prosecutor, but the inspiration never lasted more than an hour (Koji38).

The criticism of his classmates, which we observe in the above text as well, symbolizes his undying need for attention. When they are not given the praise or special privileges, they believe they deserve, people with narcissism or NPD may be generally sad and disappointed. The attention he craves could be either, positive, or negative. His tone indicates unappreciative-ness for people achieving greater than him in life, firstly it was wrestling, and then the profession of law, which he rejects due to his lack of interest in it. Sansaku lacks perseverance. He wants to accumulate the attention of an individual onto his person, but ironically never works enough for it. “To him, everything was ‘stupid’, everything was ‘boring’, everything he saw and heard filled him with displeasure and sometimes even anger” (Koji38-39).

Feelings of aggression and admonishment are transferrable for him. He easily gets triggered by others’ appearances, not just limited to fame, but also body shaming them if it helps his

ego. The gas lighting and manipulation allow him to feel better about himself, and he eventually feels the attention shift with this behavioural pattern. Gas lighting is a type of mind control that makes victims fearful of trusting their own recollections and experiences in a scenario.

He was especially repulsed by his landlady's modern, swept-back hairstyle, to which she added an extra swirl by placing a black lacquered wire frame against her scalp and covering it as best she could with her thinning hair, each strand struck with pomade (Koji 39).

Sansaku's emotions are all over the place, he continues to sleep off his days and gets annoyed and repulsed by the mere sight of her. He goes onto explain the dire need for the landlady to be called 'Madam', whereas Sansaku makes it a point to irk her with inappropriate comments and title her such as 'Mistress Proprietor'.

He has a limited friend circle, with whom he occasionally hangs around. Instead of discussing their well-being and future goals, he insists on his pet questions like 'How much fun are you getting out of life?' or 'Don't you want to die?' His questions reverberate with his inner hollowness, and the innate desire to cling to something by digressing through a person's life, and then targeting his entire energy on disapproving it. This accommodates the lack of attention and brings the limelight upon himself again. "A person may love:— (1) According to the narcissistic type: (a) what he himself is (i.e. himself), (b) what he himself was, (c) what he himself would like to be, (d) someone who was once part of himself" (Freud14). Sansaku belongs to the category (c) what he himself would like to be, but will never bring in the motivation to work on it consistently. The heterogeneity of language, when detected and grouped in homogenous cultural codes of narcissism, liberates the narration of Koji.

Cool Indifference or Marked Feelings of Rage, Inferiority, Shame, Humiliation, or Emptiness in Response to Criticism, Indifference of Others, or Defeat.

Sansaku's relatives those who have been helped by his father try to help Sansaku financially and academically. They try to put him in the best foot front so that he could make something

substantial for himself. Rather than feeling emotions of gratitude and reciprocation, he shows neglect and disgust. After years of persistent efforts from his relatives, their willingness to help him also subsides.

Not one of his relatives, who felt only antipathy towards him, offered to help him find employment. Nor did he, in his strange arrogance, bother to approach any of his senior law colleagues in search of an opening. None of them liked Sansaku either (Koji29).

His indifference to people showing the remotest emotions seems abnormal and inhuman. “Many today take “narrative” to mean “a mode of knowledge” or a “cognitive scheme” by which we perceive and interpret the world” (Rimmon-Kenan14). The language impartment of Sansaku closely connotes the working of the world, thus the cycle of art emulating life, and life emulating art is closely scrutinized in his description of the world.

He has developed the ability to pick out local residents even if he has never spoken a word to them. saying to himself, ‘Aha! That’s so-and-so from such-and-such a house.’ Quite often, while lying in bed and watching the passers-by in this way, he will eventually slip into a dream while muttering something like ‘Oh, I’m glad to see him walking all the time again: he must have got over his sickness’ or ‘My goodness, look at that girl! She’s really decked out today!’ (Koji35).

The residents do not know the stale comments that Sansaku passes on to them for his momentary glorification, he plausibly wishes to feel better about himself. NPD is diagnosed in the real world, and codes found in Sansaku:

evokes commonalities between media and disciplines, similarities that may have been overlooked otherwise. These may be a “symptom” of some underlying “deep structures” of the human mind, but they also potentially enhance our understanding of the respective manifestations by comparison with each other (Rimmon-Kenan14).

The deep structures and analysis of the human mind allow the narrational belonging of Sansaku as an overt narcissist and his utterances concerning the world as his incapacity to

emote, thus augmenting the overall implementation of another aspect of narcissism in Koji's narration.

Interpersonal Relations: Lack of Empathy: Inability to Recognize How Others Feel, e.g., Unable to Appreciate the Distress of Someone Who is Seriously Ill.

Sansaku's viewpoint lacks personal relations. "The charm of a child lies to a great extent in his narcissism, his self-contentment, and inaccessibility" (Freud13). Sansaku portrays a childish attitude of not wanting to either grow up or own up to his responsibilities. He lives and gets by from one day to another for himself alone. His mother is unable to get through to him for any monetary help, and Sansaku casually tosses off her letters, and after sometime his conscience also stops dictating his guilt. The language symbols that are seen here are the words such as 'expected', 'every month', 'urgent', and 'conscience' rather than 'responsibility', 'guilt', 'self-aware', and 'without fail'. "It shares with other narratives a common structure which is open to analysis, no matter how much patience its formulation requires" (Barthes,"Structural Analysis"80). The latter half of the previous sentence show emotions of a responsible adult with a bare minimum emotional quotient towards an ageing mother, unlike Sansaku. People with a good sense of self-worth are usually humble, but people with NPD are nearly never so.

[O]nce he graduated he found that he was expected to send fifteen yen every month to his elderly mother in the country...[H]is payments to his mother fell further and further behind. Once that happened, it ceased to bother him, and he gradually stopped sending anything at all. In the end, he could toss her urgent letters aside with hardly a twinge of conscience...Since he had so often been late sending money to her, his mother said, their relatives had begun to hear of her difficulties, and several of them...had got together and collected ten thousand yen, enabling her to open a small but dependable shop (Koji30-31).

After continuous neglect, even Sansaku's mother gives up on him and turns to her relatives for help. Sansaku's indifference toward his own blood relations symbolizes his lack of emotions to empathize. An educated individual with the capability of getting himself employed and providing the same for himself along with his mother remains absent. The thought of juxtaposing him with an idea of responsibility seems like a distant dream for his remaining family, mainly his mother.

Overt narcissism is in vehemence since five of the main characteristics can be attributed to Sansaku's character. The overall tone, story narration, and character narrative are familiar with the narcissism codes that are found in Sansaku's personality. It embellishes the narration from linear to narcissism and linear.

Conclusion

The concept of narcissism has found its niche in almost every writing style. It often gets misunderstood with overbearing confidence, but with a confined definition we can categorize it efficiently. Uno Koji's experimental narrative structure combined with cultural cues of narcissism allows an interpretive and augmentative style of story-telling. Since it is a fairly new translation of almost a century-old work, the intermingling of the old and the new makes the research contemporary and achievable.

Sigmund Freud and Roland Barthes's theories act as the fundamental structure for interpretive analysis. Psychoanalysis concerning Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) gets an extension in abnormal psychology and a statistical manual for personality diagnosis. I refrained from making psychological diagnoses but for the accuracy of character study, developed a feasible model. The bi-sectional analysis: narcissism and narration promulgate an eclectic mode of story-telling. I attempted to produce a narrational approach with language placement, hinting towards overt narcissism as a new model for the short story "Closet LLB". The main protagonist Otsukotsu Sansaku resembles a person suffering from overt narcissism or NPD and portrays emotions accordingly. His exhibition of real-life emotions makes his analysis nearer to real life, events such as 'gas lighting',

‘manipulation’, ‘constant validation’, ‘violation of interpersonal relations’, and ‘grandiose sense of self-importance’ can be closely examined.

The key pointers mentioned in Freud’s essay, followed by the abnormal psychology and diagnostic manual allow Sansaku’s narrative to overlap with the narrative and the vocation structure of the same. The diegesis correlates with the discipline of narration and narcissism, thereby providing a new reading lens. The standard narration, thus, culminates into multiple clusters of homogeneous groups rather than one gigantic heterogenous narration. The analysed homogenous group can then be juxtaposed to similarly related discussions for an interdisciplinary reading.

The combination of voices allows Sansaku’s countenance to become coloured with multiple narrative hues. The cultural codes allow for the overall development of narrative tone, character personality, and storytelling. Narcissism through this paper has served as a mode of narration rather than a mere behaviour type or a personality disorder trait. The shifts in personality can hereafter have an overall alteration in the character dispositions and its subsequent narration form. The language texture then continues the domino effect of bringing the interpersonal relations, and people capable of invading the life of a narcissist crumbling down. Gas lighting and manipulation tamper with the physical and mental connections with these people. Conclusively, Sansaku serves as an archetype of a person exhibiting overt narcissism or NPD, and his perception of relations through his and for him through others resembles a close relation to reality. This intimate amalgamation of reality and fiction brings forth a new approach to seeking knowledge where Koji’s short story is not merely linear in its narration but also suggests narcissism as its narrative form.

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