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**Confrontation between Father and Son in *Rabbit Is Rich***

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**Confrontation between Father and Son in *Rabbit Is Rich***

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**Approval Letter**

This thesis entitled "**Confrontation between Father and Son in *Rabbit Is Rich***" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Ramesh Pathak has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The confrontation between the father and the son in *Rabbit Is Rich* is because of Harry's unquenchable sexual desire and his jealousy towards Nelson. Due to the sexual obsession and rivalry with his son, the relationship between them breaks, which causes the animosity resulting disintegration of familial order. Harry's involvement in extra-marital relationships does not give him full satisfaction. Harry tries, but fails to impose his will upon his son. As a result the serious tension prevails between them. The generation gap between the father and son dramatizes the passions that can divide closely held family business.

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## I: INTRODUCTION

The present research is basically based on the dark side of human psyche that is found in the widely acclaimed novel of John Updike '*Rabbit Is Rich*', which brings confrontation between Harry Rabbit Angstrom, the father, and his son, Nelson. Sex is both a destructive and a creative drive, if it becomes obsessive, the result is something negative. As in the case of this novel, Harry, the protagonist of this novel and his sexual obsession and jealousy towards his son creates tension between them. As a result, Harry obsessively involves in the sexual intercourse with his friends' buddies. He wants to feel pleasure having sexual relationships, but it only works temporarily. On the other hand, Angstrom is confronted by his son. Mutual resentment is felt by both father and son. Harry regards his son, Nelson as "clinging to both his mother and his grandmother" that can be connected with the basic structural feature of the oedipal struggle of Harry's attempt not to involve Nelson in Toyota dealership rather he wants to send Nelson away so that he can rest unchallenged beneath the root of Springer Motors. The confrontation between the father and son is the issue to be explored and the researcher is going to prove this by applying Freudian psychoanalysis.

In the novel *Rabbit Is Rich*, the main protagonist Harry tries and fails to impose his will upon his son, Nelson. He "has run his curve of fatherhood" and has witnessed the degeneration of values. He wants to save him from repeating his mistakes, but the son objects to the imposition of the father's will upon him. Serious tension prevails between them.

Moreover, the way Harry involves in having multiple sexual partners or extramarital affairs, the way he keeps sexual relationship with prostitute like Ruth and the way he treats other women like Cindy and Thelma as objects to be used for sex

prove that Harry is sexually dissatisfied. Thus, we can assume that Harry is sexually obsessed. So, he can not adjust his life with his son, Nelson. As a result, confrontation between father and son exists in the novel.

Harry confronts with his son because he has deep rooted sexual obsession and he is quite jealous towards his son. Harry's quarrel with Nelson, his wish to deny the boy a job at the car lot, turns out to be a wish to get his son out on his own. He inwardly bristles against his life as head of a family automobile franchise that he has conveniently eased into but that leaves him spiritually and emotionally adrift. Aware that life is passing him by, Rabbit longs to "break out, to find another self" (96). Unable to do so, he sees his son's increasingly insistent claims to succession in the family business as a severe personal threat. Heart breaking encounters between one generation and the next dramatize the passions that can divide and all too often destroy closely held family business. Nelson's return home from college dropping out is like the visit of nightmare to Harry of something neglected or repressed that can not be avoided any longer. Like his father, but lacking Rabbit's grace and conscience, Nelson's quest for attention to love leads him practically towards the feeling of disgruntled with his father.

The main obstacle to Harry's reconciliation with midlife decline is his own progeny. Nelson is still living at home, has not finished college, and has got his girlfriend pregnant. The son's irresponsibility is exceedingly irksome to the elder Harry. And when Nelson tries to prove himself as a salesman at the Toyota agency by marketing old gas guzzling convertibles, the results are at once uproarious and pathetic. In a fit of fury at his father's repeated humiliation of him, Nelson smashes the ancient clunkers, thus sending Harry into even crueler attacks on the boy's many failures.

Harry is all the angrier because he sees that Nelson is repeating his own sorry history: the son is the father one generation removed. Finally Harry comes to confess the humbling truth where hostility to his son is clearly seen. "I don't like seeing you caught," he blurts out to Nelson. "You're too much me" (Updike 22). Moreover, Harry is obsessed with vague romantic longings that he can not fulfill and finds his son as obstacle to get pleasure. What makes the situation worse is the arrival of Pru, who is carrying Nelson's baby. This reminds Harry of his marriage with Jenice and the adventures he had in *Rabbit, Run*. So, Rabbit desperately wants his son to live a different life. The father even far to offer to pay for an abortion for Pru just so his son will not marry her and this he does on the wedding day. But this does not happen as Harry's wish. Thus, the animosity exists between them.

It is obvious that Nelson's plight is not really the primary concern of Rabbit. What he most wants to do is to have sex with the wives of his golf buddies, and the plot with Nelson is really a serious concern for Harry. He seems to be heavy, successful, a country clubman, a golfer, faithful to Jenice outwardly, but in fact he is torn by sexually obsessed thoughts, the confinement of marriage. Moreover, the person who is the locus of his doubt is Nelson, his troubled son, who decides to return to Brewer after three years at Kent State University. Nelson returns with one young lady, Melanie, and then another appears, Pru, who is pregnant and whom he marries against his will. He also intends to get his start in the Toyota dealership, forcing Rabbit to acknowledge him. Although Rabbit fits well within his cozy life outwardly, he finds himself in a constant struggle with Nelson, who has Jenice and her mother (the co-owner of the dealership) on his side.

Nelson reminds Rabbit of all his own messes-in his disregard for property (he bangs up one car after another), in making a marriage that seems doomed even before

the ceremony. He is bitten by some disgruntlement which also gnawed at Rabbit and made him run. Unlike his father, Nelson has had no successes, only bad memories. He is a young man remembering the doomed Jill and Skeeter, the black revolutionary of *Rabbit Redux*, holding his father responsible for Jill's death. Skeeter, too, is now dead. Nelson has nothing to hold on to but these recollections, since he senses intense hostility in his father and has nothing of his own to sustain him.

Updike has successfully depicted Nelson as unpleasant as he is supposed to be. Jenice seems sympathetic, but she is a heavy drinker, under the sexual sway of Rabbit, a woman seeking her own pleasures. The accumulation of sexual thoughts and performances, the emphasis on women's bodies, their inner parts, graphic sexual scenes and protuberances, all make up Harry's sexual obsession.

*Rabbit Is Rich* broadens its focus on family to include new roles and more complicated configurations. Significantly, this is not a broken marriage novel, so its adulteries take on an incestuous quality that paradoxically emphasizes family. Updike uses family as a way of demonstrating Rabbit's mental structures for apprehending the world. Thus, one basic structural feature is the oedipal struggle of Rabbit's attempts to send Nelson away so that he can rest unchallenged beneath the roof of Springer Motors and Nelson's counter fantasy of Rabbit and Ma Springer dead: "Then he and Mom. He knows he can manage Mom" (Updike 323).

*Rabbit Is Rich* depicts obsessive hero Rabbit Angstrom who tries to seek pleasure from sex. He keeps extra-marital relation with his friends' wives. He wants to exclude his son from the house so that he would not be disturbed on his purpose. The clash between father and son is reflected in an interview given by Updike himself:

The father and son conflict in *Rabbit Is Rich* just sort of flowed naturally out of Harry's aging. He is better with smaller children than with bigger ones. I think with bigger children you need a certain set of principles, something to hang a disciplinary system on and he doesn't have that system. So, with the twenty-two or twenty-three years old Nelson, Harry is fairly worthless. Maybe parenthood has a certain season and curve, and Harry has run his curve of fatherhood and feels deep down that he should not have to mess anymore with this child of his[...] (2).

### **Reception of *Rabbit Is Rich***

John Updike is internationally known for his novels *Rabbit, Run* (1960), *Rabbit Redux* (1971), *Rabbit Is Rich* (1981) and *Rabbit at Rest* (1990). They follow the life of Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, a star athlete, from his youth through the social and sexual upheavals of the 1960s, to later period of his life and to final decline. At the beginning of 1970s and each of the past two decades, John Updike has published a novel about Harry, his prototypical American character who embodies the fears and hopes, the vices and virtues, of our age. It is fair to say that Updike's "Rabbit" books are forming an American saga. *Rabbit, Run* provided our first acquaintances with Harry Angstrom, the harried and anxious youth yearning to be free from all shackling commitments and responsibilities.

Harry's boyhood dream of greatness and glory is withering amid the dullness and mediocrity of adult life. The conformity of the Eisenhower era puts intolerable limits on his sexual fantasies. Rabbit strikes out for his soul's true West- namely, for unfulfilled sexual freedom. *Rabbit Redux*, as the title suggests, Rabbit has been "led back", restored to responsibility after suffering the illness of uninhibited youthful

desire. Jenice is no longer the dull bed partner she once was, having joined the sexual revolution herself, and Rabbit takes up with a flower child named Jill, who is young enough to be his daughter. There is, however, a good deal of the old romantic flame yet alight in Harry in *Rabbit Is Rich*. He is still willing to strike out sexually for the territories. The carnality in this novel is thus rawer than ever. But it is also a funnier and sadder kind of sex. Angstrom keeps thinking of Consumer Reports when he ought to be concentrating on erotic matters. He pours his Krugerrands over his naked wife in the hope that their new money will arouse them as their old passion increasingly will not.

*Rabbit Is Rich* is the third novel exploring the inner life of Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom, a former high school basketball star in a small Pennsylvania city. He finds it difficult to adjust himself with the life inside the limelight of his own son, Nelson. Updike, also from a small Pennsylvania city, much like Rabbit's Brewer, reveals in his introduction to the Everyman's Library edition of the collected novels that Rabbit is his way of seeing the country and American culture through different eyes. Those eyes belong to an ordinary blue-collar man who is driven to live his life in a way that feels right to him.

The novel has been observed from different theoretical outlooks based on existential, spiritual, religious, feminist and naturalistic perspectives. Many critics have expressed objection to Updike's portrayal of women, viewed by some as spacious and misogynistic; his graphic depiction of sexual activity, which have been faulted as gratuitous; and the grand historical and social backdrops of his fiction, considered by some an exploitative façade for the author's solipsistic concerns. Despite such criticism, Updike remains highly esteemed as a foremost man of letters whose prodigious intelligence, verbal prowess, and shrewd insight into the sorrows,

frustration, and the banality of American life separate him from the ranks of his contemporaries. Some critics have even viewed the novel in the light of family and adultery. Talking about the latter aspect from the above mentioned views, Kerry Ahearn, a famous American critic, states: “ The merged themes of family and adultery appear when Rabbit’s own sleep is ended by the return of fatherhood, first in the presence of the mysterious Annabelle, and then of Nelson, Melanie, and finally Pru”(76). The combination of paternal and erotic can be thought of as “unnatural “ but its appearance in other Updike stories suggests that it names a motive as natural as the human desire for complications, or grain of circumstances.

Victor K. Lasseter has analyzed the novel from naturalistic perspective. He assumes “sex is one of Rabbit’s primary goals, motivations, and failures”. “...Updike’s treatment of sex and violence echoes a major preoccupation of naturalistic writers often summed up as “the beast in man”. In the naturalistic novel, sex is seldom tender or erotic; sex is an animalistic unfulfilled urge” (432).

Rabbit’s sex life is one of his greatest discontents because the sexual reality is always less fulfilling than the sexual fantasy. What Updike highlights is that sex has become a nervous substitute for God. In this respect, the same critic, Lasseter views the novel from religious perspective. More importantly, however, the naturalistic emphasis on human helplessness appeals to Updike’s Christian theology.

Updike presents his characters, such as Harry Angstrom, exuding a deep despair of the sort described by the 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish existentialist theologian, Soren Kierkegaard. In Kierkegaardian terms, Rabbit’s sexual desires and attitudes keep him in the “aesthetic sphere of existence”, that is hedonism. Rabbit’s illegitimate daughter lives on the Kierkegaardian level of the ethical (between the aesthetic and the religious): a commitment to morality and a sense of personal duty.

I have planned this thesis dividing into four sections. The first section will be an introductory part. In this introductory section, I will clearly mention my points to be elaborated in my entire thesis and hypothesis and review of literature briefly. This research paper maintains the hypothesis that confrontation results from the father's deep rooted sexual obsession and his jealousy towards his son. In literature review, I have brought three critics who have analyzed the novel and its writer from different theoretical perspective.

In the second chapter, I will discuss about theoretical tool, and my theoretical tool will be Freudian psychoanalysis. In theoretical tool, I will basically concentrate on Freudian ideas under different titles and headings. The different titles and headings will be as: Introduction to Psychoanalysis, Freudian perspective, the theory of Unconscious, Infantile Sexuality (Oedipus complex), Neuroses and the structure of the mind, Psychosexual Development of Personality and Dream Interpretation.

In the third chapter, I will make an analysis of the text. In the textual analysis, I will primarily focus on the title "confrontation between Father and son". In the analysis of the text, I will apply psychoanalysis as a theoretical modality. Symbols and images will be brought into textual analysis to discuss the subject. The clash between father and son will be discussed in textual analysis. Finally, the fourth section will be my conclusion.

## **II: AN INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOANALYSIS**

Today's world is the world of science and technology, and this has brought immense innovation in creation of highly technological advancements. Many more facilities and luxuries are greatly achieved by the people. Although people have become materialistically successful, their needs and desires have remained unfulfilled. Personal relationship, personal thinking about others and relationship between internal and external reality, inner mental conflicts are also the cause of social as well as individual unrest. That is to say interrelationship among individuals, their different subjectivism and social disturbance cause difficulties in the society as well as psychological problems in individual. Psychological problems are borne from human experiences like desires, needs, fear, anxiety, emotions etc. Such psychological problems are in fact increasing day by day and these human experiences are thought to be studied systematically and scientifically for the establishment of peace and order in the society. Such psychological problems have given birth to too many problems in our life from which today's worldly people have been searching for loopholes of these troubles. So, in this context, psychoanalysis can play a vital role.

Human ordeals like anxiety, depression, nervousness, fear etc. cause psychological problems. To tackle with such psychological problems and to establish peace and order in the society, systematic study of human mind is quite essential. It is Sigmund Freud who studied different factors and developed very new and important findings of knowledge of human experiences.

Psychoanalysis has based its principles on the structure of mind. The basic principle of psychoanalysis is that man is not controlled by himself, but it is his unconscious mind that controls his life. In literature, we need to have psychological

motives of authors and characters both in which Freud's contributions are immensely considered. It has been brought to structure our society. Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorder "by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind" (as the Concise Oxford Dictionary puts it). The classic method of doing this is to get the patient talk freely, in such a way that the repressed fears and conflicts which are causing the problems are brought into the conscious mind and openly faced, rather than remaining "buried" in the unconscious. This practice is based upon specific theories of how the mind, the instincts, and sexuality work. In this respect, Freud remains a major cultural force, and his impact on how we think about ourselves has been incalculable. It is an attempt to dive into the unconscious territory of human psyche with logic and rationality. In other words, psychoanalysis is a method of "investigating mental process and treating neurosis and some other disorder of the mind (Webster: 1158).

Psychoanalysis has been defined after Freud from different perspective by different psychologists. Encyclopedia of psychoanalysis defines psychoanalysis as:

Psychoanalysis is used in three ways: to designate a loosely knit body of ideas, the nature of human mind, in particular personality development and psychopathology to describe a technique of therapeutic intervention in a range of psychological disturbance and to designate method of investigation. (86)

Psychoanalysis is investigative mode, therapy and theory. Beside this it has incorporated progressively into the mainstream not only of psychology but also of social sciences, humanities, history, and education etc. Psychoanalysis is not only the study of human instincts and human relationships but is used to explain literary relationship, action, motives and the very existence of text. In literary studies,

“Psychoanalytic criticism often disregards the textuality of texts, their verbal surface in favor of Freudian motives supposedly encrypted in their depths. Typically the work of art is treated as a window to the artists’ sex-fermented soul” (Elizabeth, 2).

Psychoanalytical literary criticism regards a literary text primarily as an expression of inner mental state and the structure of the personality of the writer. In the course of psychological investigation, Freud had developed the dynamic form of psychology that he called, “Psychoanalysis is as a means of therapy for neurosis, but soon expanded it to account for many development in the history of civilization, including, warfare, mythology and religion, as well as literature and other arts” (Abrams, 264).

### **Sex and Sexuality**

Sex is such a term which is really magical, suggestive and indefinable. It includes not only gender, neurology, psychopathology, hygiene but also pornography and sin, all hovering about actual experience of the most intractable subjectivity. “Sex” has been defined in different ways in different works. In this connection, Encyclopedia of Psychology defines sex on biological, genetic, psychological and in human terms:

Biologically, sex is the combination of characteristics that differentiate the two forms of parts of organisms reproducing themselves by the fusion of gametes and hence of genetic material from two different sources. Psychologically, sex is the behaviors directly associated with the meeting of two sexes and in some species their copulation, to allow the fusion of the gametes (fertilization) to take place. In human sex may refer specially to the act of copulation or heterosexual intercourse, but may extend to the related behaviors of two individuals of the same

morphological sex (homosexuality). Genetically, sex is determined by the presence or absence of the smaller 'v' chromosome in some relevant chromosomal pair. (777)

In the analysis of cultures many anthropologists have used the term 'sex' as useful in surviving culture to reproduce itself through sexual copulation. Anna Oakely remarks:

In Victorian times for instance a large group of Western females were denied their sexuality altogether, but the twentieth century has seen the emergence of the females, right to sexuality, which has come to be defined at least partly in terms of their own sexual needs. The Victorian lady was not supposed to have a sexual desire hence for paradoxical use as a sexual object for man's satisfaction. (35)

The 'sex' and 'sexuality' are the terms that create confusion and ambiguity. The aim of individual is to achieve the greatest satisfaction through sexual orgasm whereas the aim of nature is procreation. For individual, the desire for procreation remains there in one corner; sexuality and eroticism are interconnected with nature and culture. Feminists oversimplify the problem of sex when they reduce it to the matter of social convention: readjust society; eliminate sexual inequity, purity in sex roles and happiness and harmony will reign. In this regard Coilin Wilson indicating Tostoy's view writes, "Tostoy concluded that the only normal sex is directed specially to producing children. All indulgence for pleasure even between man and wife is abnormal, i.e. somehow unnatural" (16).

From these descriptions, the question arises whether to exclude the things like masturbation or even kissing which are not directed towards reproduction but they are supposed to be sexual- within the domain of sexuality. In general terms, sex is normal

instinct that demands the fulfillment through sexual activity, whereas sexuality is considered as a normal phenomenon that is universal and unchanging. In other words, our feelings and activities about sexuality are determined biologically. But Butler regards differently and views that our feelings and activities about sexuality are the product of social and historical forces. For these theorists sexuality is shaped by the context of social contact within which we live. So, it is assumed that sexual behavior is a behavior. It is not just the consumption of some biological drive. Judith Butler views that “sexuality is never fully expressed in a performance of practice. [...] There are not direct expressive or causal lines between, sex, gender, presentation, sexual practice, fantasy and sexuality (165).

There are some critics who assume that social environment and its crucial role is to be forgotten in discussion of “sexuality.” But in the nineteenth century sex seems to have been incorporated into the very distinct orders of knowledge; especially in those areas of knowledge concerning biology and psychology of reproductive norm of society. However, Michael Foucault views as, “not only a matter of sensation and pleasure, of law and taboo, but also of truth and falsehood, that the truth of sex becomes something fundamental, useful or dangerous-precisely or formidable in short that sex was considered as a problem of truth” (56).

Foucault argues that the field of sexuality must be understood from the viewpoint of a history of discourse. He assumes “the history of sexuality is a series of studies concerning the historical relationship of power and discourse on sex” (90). Generally, sexuality is seen as male and female and reproductive and non-reproductive. There is diversity in sexuality where homosexuality, lesbian, gay, sadism, masochism, pornography, rape, prostitution etc. are discussed. So we have to accept the instability in sexual relations.

## **Sigmund Freud**

Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalysis, is generally recognized as one of the most influential and authoritative thinkers of the twentieth century. Working initially in close collaboration with Joseph Breuer, Freud elaborated the theory that the mind is a complex energy-system, the structural investigation which is proper province of psychology. His theory states that human beings are dominated by unconscious motives and forces and driven by sexual and repressed desires. “All of Freud’s work depends upon the motive of the unconscious, which is the part of mind beyond consciousness, which nevertheless has strong influence upon our actions” (Barry 96).

Freud developed the theory of psychoanalysis as a means of curing neuroses in his patients, but he and his followers generally expanded its concepts as a means of understanding human behavior and culture. Basically, psychoanalysis attempts to inquire the irrational territory of human psyche, with logic and rationality. The structure of human mind is very complex due to the different relationships of human beings with human beings themselves and with the whole world. Freud brings out the idea of human personality into id, ego and super ego. Freud states that psychological forces control our actions.

Unconscious part is constituted of repressed desires that strive for revelation. Freud writes “The unconscious is the area of repressed forces struggling to break consciousness but held in check by repressing agency” (Osborne 55). Infantile sexual desires and other censored materials are in the unconscious. Such repressed desires emerge only in disguised forms as dreams, poetry, tongue slip, creative activities and neurotic behaviors. According to Freud, all human beings repress desires. Such

desires emerge in the form of dreams in disguised form. He shows the distinction between conscious and unconscious mental activities.

He articulated and refined the concept of the unconscious, of infantile sexuality, of repression, and proposed a tripartite account of mind's structure, all as part of a radically new conceptual and therapeutic frame of reference for the understanding of human psychological development and the treatment of abnormal mental conditions. Notwithstanding the multiple manifestations of psychoanalysis as it exists today, it can in almost all fundamental respects be traced directly back to Freud's original work. Further, Freud's innovative treatment of human actions, dreams and indeed of cultural artifacts as invariably possessing implicit symbolic significance has proven to be extraordinarily fecund, and has had massive implication for a wide variety of fields, including anthropology, semiotics, and artistic creativity and appreciation in addition to psychology.

Freud's investigation into internal conflicts led him to an eventual division of the mind into three parts, three conflicting internal tendencies, the well-known id, ego and super ego. The dynamic interaction between the id, ego and super ego, with each contending for as much libidinal energy as possible, illustrates the importance of the function of the mind. A man who invests most of his libidinal energy into the carvings of his id will act and live much differently than the man whose guilt-inspiring super-ego consumes most of his libidinal energy. This constantly changing balance and interaction between the various functions of the mind, in Freud's theory, determine personality.

If a young child was ruled entirely by his id, he would steal and eat a piece of chocolate from a store regardless of the menacing owner watching above him or even his parents scolding beside him.

## **The Theory of Unconscious**

Freud was arguably the first thinker to apply deterministic principles systematically to the mental sphere and to hold that the broad spectrum of human behavior is explicable only in terms of the (usually hidden) mental possessions or states which determine it. Thus, instead of treating the behavior of the neurotics being causally inexplicable, this had been the prevailing approach for centuries. Freud insist, on the contrary, on treating it as a behavior which is meaningful to seek an explanation by searching for causes in terms of the mental states of the individual concerned. Hence, the significance which he attributed to slip of tongue or pen, obsessive behavior, and dreams are determined by hidden causes in the person's mind, and so they reveal in covert form what would otherwise not be known to all. That is why we are governed by hidden mental process of which we are unaware and over which we have no control. The postulation of unconscious mental states entails, of course that the mind is not, and cannot be, identified with consciousness or that which can be an object of consciousness, to employ a much- used analogy, it is rather structurally akin to an iceberg, the bulk of it lying below the surface, exerting a dynamic and determine influence upon the part which is amenable to direct inspection, the conscious mind.

Deeply associated with this view of the mind is Freud's account of the instincts or drives. The instincts for Freud are the principal motivating forces in mental realm, and as such they 'energize' the mind in all of its function. Although he was not the first to talk of the unconscious mind, no one before or since has explained human behavior with such emphasis on the unconscious. Here Peter Barry agrees:

Another key idea is that of libido, which is the energy drive associated with sexual desire. In classic Freudian theory it has three stages of

focus the oral, the anal and phallic. The libido on the individual is part of a more generalized drive, which the latter Freud called Eros (the Greek word for love), which roughly means the life instinct, the opposite of which is Thanatos (the Greek word for “death”) that roughly means the death instinct. (97)

Having said this it is undeniably true that Freud gave sexual drives an importance and its centrality in human life, in human actions, and in human behavior. He argues that the sexual drives exist and can be discerned in children from birth, and that sexual energy (libido) is the most important motivating force in adult life. However, even here a crucial qualification has to be added- Freud effectively redefined the term ‘sexuality’ here to make it cover any form of pleasure which can be derived from the body. Thus, his theory of the instincts or drives is the human being is essentially energized or driven from birth by the desire to acquire and enhance bodily pleasure.

### **Infantile Sexuality (Oedipus Complex)**

Freud’s theory of infantile sexuality must be seen as an integral part of a broader developmental theory of human personality. This had its origins in, and was a generalization of, Breuer’s earlier discovery that traumatic childhood events could have devastating negative effects upon the adult individual, and took the form of the general thesis that early childhood sexual experiences were the crucial factors in the determination of the adult personality. From his account of the instincts or drives it followed that from the moments of birth the infants is driven in his actions by the desire for bodily/ sexual pleasure where this is seen by Freud in almost mechanical terms as the desire to release mental energy. Initially, infants gain such release, and drive such pleasure, through the act of sucking, and Freud accordingly terms this the

oral stage of development. This is followed by a stage in which the locus of pleasure or energy release in the anus, particularly in the act of defecation, and this is accordingly termed as anal stage. Then the young child develops an interest in its sexual organs as a site of pleasure (the phallic stage), and develops a deep sexual attraction for the parents of opposite sex, and a hatred of the parent of the same sex (the Oedipus complex).

This, however, gives rise to (socially derived) feeling of guilt in the child, who recognizes that it can never supplant the stronger parent. In the case of a male, it also puts the child at risk, which he perceives- if he persists in pursuing the sexual attraction for his mother, he may be harmed by the father, specially, he comes to fear that he may be castrated. This is termed 'castration anxiety'. Both the attraction for the mother and the hatred are usually repressed, and the child usually resolves the conflicts of the Oedipus complex by coming to identify with the parent of the same sex. This happens at the age of five, whereupon the child enters a 'latency' period, in which sexual motivations become much less pronounced. This lasts until puberty, when nature genital development begins, and the pleasure drive refocuses around the genital area.

This, Freud believed, is the sequence or progression implicit in normal human development and it is to be observed that at the infant level the instinctual attempts to satisfy the pleasure drive are frequently checked by parental control and social coercion. The development process, then, is for the child essentially a movement through a series of conflicts, the successful resolution of which is crucial to adult mental health. Many mental illnesses, particularly hysteria, Freud held, can be traced back to unresolved conflicts experienced at this stage, or events which otherwise disrupt the normal pattern of infantile development. For example, homosexuality is

seen by some Freudian as resulting from a failure to resolve the conflicts of the same sex. The obsessive concern with washing and personal hygiene which characterizes the behavior of some neurotics is seen as resulting from unresolved conflicts/repressions occurring at the anal stage.

According to a psychoanalytical view of personality, the process of individuation is different for males and females as soon as the oedipal stage begins. This stage is described by Freud as the oedipal complex, taken from the Greek play written in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. where king Oedipus kills his father and unknowingly weds his mother, introducing gender conflicts into social expectations or behavior. The Oedipal complex is a concept developed by Sigmund Freud to explain the origin of certain neurosis in childhood. It is defined as a male child's unconscious desire for the exclusive love of his mother. This desire includes jealousy towards the father and the unconscious wish for that parent's death. Developmental theories have roots in the Freudian theory of psychosexual development. One of the most critical milestones is the resolution of the oedipal situation where a young male experiences feelings of dominion over a valued female (mother) and is threatened from a larger male (father) who owns the territory (home). Freud's normal male development is complete with the achievement of separation from the mother and proper channeling of aggression, competition and sexual impulses away from her, since she resides with the father. Once separated, Freud's male can be dominant and have a 'self that is a model of self-reliance. In Freud's terms, a young male must learn to pull away from a woman to survive, denying any significant degree of his need for dependency or connection.

There are many conflicts and relational needs beginning to emerge throughout early childhood. Chodorow hypothesized that throughout life, the process of becoming an individual for girls, from age three or older, is more conflicting and

complex than the simpler process for males. Chodorow describes a pre-oedipal period (under three years old) as usually the same process for both males and females; however, as the Oedipal process begins from three to five years old, gender issues may arise. Traditional psychoanalytic theory describes the oedipal complex as boys separating from their mothers, wanting to marry them, and conflicting with the role of their fathers; while, girls want to marry their fathers, conflicting with attachment feelings to their mothers. During the early 1900's, Freud viewed the female personality as a 'lesser sex', since neither a girl nor her mother had a penis, assuming she had envied her father. The Oedipal complex, which was derived from the tragic Greek myth about king Oedipus killed by his son who eventually marries his mother, depicts the drive as male dominated which is repressed during elementary school years.

The Oedipus complex is a concept developed by Sigmund Freud to explain the origin of certain neuroses in childhood. It is defined as a male child's unconscious desire for the exclusive love of his mother. This desire includes jealousy towards the father and the unconscious wish for that parent's death. The idea is based on the Greek myth of Oedipus, who unwittingly kills his father Laius and marries his mother Jocasta. Freud located the beginning of the oedipal complex at the origins of human society, and postulated that all religion was in effect an extended and collective form of guilt and ambivalence to cope with the killing of the father.

### **Neuroses and Structure of the Mind**

Freud's account of the unconscious and the psychoanalytic therapy associated with it is best illustrated by his famous tripartite model of the structure of the mind or personality, which has many points of similarity with the account of the mind offered by Plato over 2,000 years earlier. The therapy is termed 'tripartite' simply because,

again like Plato, Freud distinguished three structural elements within the mind, which he called id, ego, and super-ego. These three parts are conflicting internal tendencies.

Freud conceived of the mind as having a fixed amount of psychic energy, libido, though the word libido has since acquired overt sexual implications, in Freud's theory it stood for all psychic energy. This energy fueled the thought processes, perception, imagination, memory, and sexual urges. In Freud's theory, the mind, like the universe could neither create nor destroy energy, but merely transfer it from one form or function to another. Because scope of the mind's capabilities was, thus, limited by the amount of psychic energy freely available, any process or function of the mind which consumed excess energy debilitated the ability of the mind to function normally. Repression demands significant amount of energy to maintain. A repressed thought might come perilously close to becoming conscious, only to be redirected or defended against by a defense mechanism. As well, a fixation on a past psychosexual stage of development could permanently sap this libido energy, causing in the extremes cases, neuroses or worse.

The dynamic interaction between the id, ego and super ego with each contending for as much libidinal energy as possible, illustrate the importance of the function of the mind. A man who invests most of his libidinal energy into the cravings of his id will act and live much differently than the man whose guilt inspiring super ego consumes most of his libidinal energy. This constantly changing balance and interaction, between various functions of the mind, in Freud's theory, determines personality.

He understood the mind as constantly in conflict with itself, and understood this conflict as the primary cause of human anxiety and unhappiness. Freud's investigations into internal conflicts led him to an eventual division of mind into three

parts, three conflicting internal tendencies, the well-known id, ego, and super ego. The id, the ego and the super ego function in different levels of consciousness: indeed, Freud's theory of the mind hinges upon the ability of impulses or memories to "float" from and level to another. The interaction between the three functions of the mind represents a constant movement of items from one level to another.

### **Id**

As the baby emerges from the womb into the reality of life, he wants only to eat, drink, urinate, defecate, be warm, and gain sexual pleasure. These urges are the demand of the id, the most primitive motivational force. In pursuit of these ends, the id demands immediate gratification. It is ruled by the pleasure principle, demanding satisfaction now, regardless of circumstances and possible undesirable effects. If a young child was ruled entirely by his id, he would steal and eat a piece of chocolate from store regardless of the menacing owner watching above him or even his parents scolding beside him.

The Id will not stand for a delay in gratification. For some urges, such as urination, this is easily satisfied. However, if the urge is not immediately discharged, the Id will form a memory of the end of the motivation: the thirsty in fact will form an image of the mother's breast. This act of 'wish-fulfillment' satisfies the Id's desire for the moment, though obviously it does not reduce the tension of the unfulfilled urge.

### **Ego**

The eventual understanding that immediate gratification is usually impossible (and often unwise) comes with the formation of the ego, which is ruled by 'reality principle'. The ego acts as a go between the id's relations with reality, often suppressing the id's urges until an appropriate situation arises. This repression of inappropriate desire and urges represent the greatest strain on, and the most important

function of the mind. The ego often utilizes defense mechanism to achieve and aid this repression. With the formation of the ego; the individual becomes a self, instead of an amalgamation of urges and needs.

Where the Id may be an urge and form a picture which satisfies this urge, the ego engages in a strategy to actually fulfill the urge. The thirsty five-year-old now only identifies water as the satisfaction of his urge, but forms a plan to obtain water, perhaps by finding a drinking foundation. While the ego is still in the service of the Id, it borrows some of its psychic energy in an effort to control the urge until it is feasibly satisfied. The ego's effort at pragmatic satisfaction of urges eventually builds a great member of skills and memories and becomes aware of itself as an entity.

### **Super Ego**

While the ego may temporarily repress certain urges of the id in fear of punishment, eventually these external sources of punishment are internalized and the child will not steal the chocolate, even unwatched, because he has taken punishment, right, and wrong himself. But if a person does something which is acceptable to the super ego, he experiences pride and self satisfaction.

The super ego, which uses guilt and self-reproach as its primary, means of enforcement for these rules. The super ego is subdividable into two parts: conscience and ego ideal. Conscience tells what is right and wrong, and forces the ego to inhibit the id in pursuit of morally acceptably not pleasurable or even realistic, goals. The ego ideal perfect aims the individual's path of life toward the ideal, perfect goals instilled by society. In the pursuit, the mind attempt to make up as a part of the never-ending interplay between the id, ego and super ego. The mind (in particular the ego) must constantly repress anxiety-causing impulses or memories.

This repression, though, is often tenuous and difficult to maintain. In order to sustain this repression and fend off anxiety, often in the face of constant reminders of the repressed item, the ego additionally employs several 'defense mechanism'. These mechanisms help to maintain the stability and sanity of the individual, though they sap a considerable amount of psychic energy in the process.

This division, it is important to note, is not the separation of the mind into three structures and functions which exist in physical partitions in the brain; they are not even truly structures, but rather separate aspects and elements of the single structure of the mind. Although it is convenient to say, for example, that the Id "demands" immediate gratification, the mind has no three distinct little men who engage in constant fistcuffs of conflict. The personification of these elements merely serves as a convenient guide through a complex psychoanalytic theory.

If the external world offers no scope for the satisfaction of the Id's pleasure drives, or more commonly, if the satisfaction of some or all of these drives would indeed transgress the moral sanctions laid down by the super ego, then an inner conflict occur in the mind between its constituent parts or elements. The failure to resolve this can lead to later neurosis. A key concept introduced here by Freud is that the mind possesses a number of defense mechanisms to attempt to prevent conflicts from becoming too acute, such as repression, sublimation, fixation, regression. Regression is one of the most important central defense mechanisms by which the ego seeks to avoid internal conflict and pain, and to reconcile reality with the demands of both id and super ego. However, the repressed instinctual drive, as an energy-form, is not and can not be reissued when it is repressed-it continues to exist intact in the unconscious, from where it exerts a determining force upon the conscious mind, and can give rise to the dysfunctional behavior characteristic of neuroses.

This is one reason why dreams and slips of the tongue possess such a strong symbolic significance for Freud, and why their analysis became such a key part of this treatment—they represent instances in which the vigilance of the super ego is relaxed, and when the repressed drives are accordingly able to present themselves to the conscious mind in a transmuted form. The task of psychoanalysis as a therapy is to find the repressions which are causing the neurotic symptoms by delving into the unconscious mind of the subject, and by bringing them into the forefront of consciousness, to allow the ego to confront them directly.

### **Concept of Dream Interpretation**

One of the significant contributions of Sigmund Freud to psychoanalytical theory is the systematic study and analysis of dreams. His own self-analysis- which forms the core of his masterpiece *The Interpretation of Dreams*- originated in the emotional crisis which he suffered on the death of his father, and the series of dreams to which this gave rise. This analysis revealed to him that the love and admiration which he had felt for his father were mixed with very contrasting feelings of shame and hate. Particularly revealing was his discovery that he had often fantasized as a youth that his half-brother Philip was really his father, and certain other signs convinced him of the deep underlying meaning of his this fantasy- that he had wished his real father dead, because he was rival for his mother's affections. This was to become the personal basis for his theory of the Oedipus complex.

In *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud has explored the dynamic role of the unconscious mind and he has analyzed dreams as 'the royal road' to the unconsciousness. His systematic study of dreams has helped the reader to achieve the pleasure from the literature. According to him, "the core feature of dreams and of insanity lies in their eccentric trains of thought and their weakness of judgment"

(Freud 123). Freud believes that dream represents disguised desires, wish fulfilling expressions of the unconscious and unacceptable thoughts in public. Dream is a mental process which is meaningful, purposeful and symbolic.

According to Freud, dreams represent those wishes, demands and desires which are repressed into unconscious and their instinctual gratification in conscious state of mind. He points out that dream is simply wish fulfillment of these wishes of id and super ego which could not be achieved in our real life. They are fulfilled in sleeping stage when the ego is in relaxed. Such dreams bring violent inner conflicts for the gratification of unconscious id. All dreams represent rejected and repressed wishes. The unacceptable thoughts and wishes appear in symbolic form in dreams. Freud says:

The dreams of young children are frequently pure wish fulfillments and are in that case quite uninteresting compared with the dreams of adults. They raise no problem for solution; but on the other hand, they are of inestimable importance in proving that, in their essential nature, dreams represent fulfillment of wishes. (Freud 206)

Those dreams are attempted wish fulfillment dreams. So, we can say that a dream can represent a wish as fulfilled. It is obvious that every dream has a meaning and a 'psychical value'.

One of the significant critics, Haynm clarifies Jung's idea: "... the enigmatic aspect of dream is viewed not as the product of censoring by the ego, but rather as a function of our lack of conversance with the primal language combined with the essential mystery of the never completely knowable" (28). Configuration of psychic energy is represented by this archetypal imagery within the individual psyche. Jung's idea about archetypes is recognized as the components of the collective unconscious.

A great deal of archetypes like energy, the hero, birth, death, rebirth god and demon, the earth mother can be found in unconscious. In his book, *Man and Symbols* Jung describes his use of dream analysis and theories of universal symbolic representation of man's inner personality.

The fundamental psychodynamic model proposes that mental illness is caused by unsolved, unconscious conflicts originating in the childhood. Furthermore, in such cases, defense mechanism such as repression of unpleasant memories, serves to protect the ego. Neurotic symptoms are argued to be the result of conflict between repressed or unfulfilled desires and attempts to control or resolve them.

In 1901, Freud published a quite scientific result *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which is supposed to be the core of his masterpiece, originated in the emotional crisis which he suffered on the death of his father and the series of dreams to which this gave rise. This analysis revealed to him that the love and admiration which he had felt for his father were mixed with very contrasting feeling of shame and hate. In this book, he demonstrated that dreams of every man, just like the symptoms of hysterical or an otherwise neurotic person, serve as a 'royal road' to the understanding of unconscious mental processes, which have great importance in determining behaviors. Following his work on dreams, Freud wrote a series of papers in which he explores the influence of unconscious mental processes in virtually every aspects of human behavior. He recognized that predominant among the unconscious forces which lead to neurosis are the sexual desires of early childhood.

Freud's influence on psychology is very widespread. It's not uncommon to hear people mutter the words Freudian slip, repression, or denial in everyday conversation. He has explained human behaviors with great emphasis on the unconscious that no one has done like him. Here Peter Barry agrees:

Another key idea is that of libido, which is the energy drive associated with sexual desire. In classic Freudian theory it has three stages of focus the oral, the anal and phallic. The libido on the individual is part of a more generalized drive, which the latter Freud called Eros (the Greek word for love), which roughly means the life instinct, the opposite of which is Thanatos (the Greek word for “death”) that roughly means the death instinct (97).

In conclusion, the structure of psychoanalysis rests upon the concept of repression, which Freud himself termed as “the foundation stone of psychoanalysis” and it deals with a mental condition of human personality. So, psychoanalysis has been chosen to analyze the text *Rabbit Is Rich*. Freud says that man is driven by unconscious mind rather than conscious mind. He further says that there is such a thing as ‘psychic energy’, that the human personality is also an energy system, and that it is the function of psychology to investigate the modifications, transmissions, and conversions of psychic energy within the personality which shape and determine it. This concept is the very cornerstone of Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. In the text, *Rabbit Is Rich*, the main protagonist Harry “Rabbit” Angstrom also undergoes never ending suffering resulting from his unfulfilled libidinous desires. Harry is incessantly guided by sexual drives and impulses. So, every time he is driven to acquire and enhance bodily pleasure. Escaping from reality, which is bitter and quite unpleasant to him, he wants to dive into the world of sexual fantasy. But he is confined in the territory of Toyota lot, and presence of his hostile son and depressing wife, where he can not exercise his will. With such unfavorable environment, he involves in extramarital relations with other women. On the one hand, his sexual passion is never fulfilled. On the other hand, he is jealous of his son, who is repeating his messes of

the past and of his girlfriends. As there is the confrontation resulted from sexual obsession and jealousy of Harry towards his son Nelson, psychoanalysis theory has been chosen as theoretical modality to analyze the text, *Rabbit Is Rich*.

### III: CONFRONTATION BETWEEN FATHER AND SON

The novel *Rabbit Is Rich* depicts the life of a sexually obsessed father and a rebellious and aggressive son. Harry “Rabbit” Angstrom has a burning passion for his friends’ buddies but the manner with which he chooses to act on this passion is greatly void of sexual pleasure within him. John Updike paints a portrait of passion driven by sexual obsession and jealousy and addresses the difficulty of finding satisfaction in sex at all. On the one hand, his heart passionately longs for sexual pleasure having extramarital relationship; on the other hand, his passion is never fulfilled because of his son’s presence at the lot. The presence of the son has locked Harry into a life where he can not exercise his will freely. Harry’s wife, Janice and other women are on the son’s side. Harry attempts to send his son, Nelson away so that he can rest unchallenged beneath the roof of Springer Motors. Harry says: “All he cares about is smashing ‘em up’, Harry says, “It’s his revenge”. He lowers his voice to confide, “I think one of the troubles between me and the kid is every time I had a little, you know, slip-up, he was there to see it. That’s one of the reasons I don’t like to have him around. The little twerp knows it, too” (155).

Harry further says: “You’ll promise me nothing. You’ll promise me to keep your nose out of my car business and get your ass back to Ohio. I hate to be the one telling you this, Nelson, but you’re a disaster. You’ve gotta get yourself straightened out and it isn’t going to happen here” (152).

One basic structural feature is the oedipal struggle of Rabbit’s attempts to send Nelson away so that he can stay untouched with him at home and at the Toyota lot. Nelson’s counter- fantasy of Rabbit becomes a great challenge for him. Ma Springer says: “Then he and mom. He knows he can manage mom” (323). This theme of regression shows itself again in Rabbit’s fantasy that the young woman who appears

one day at the Toyota lot is the child of his affair with Ruth, a suspicion Updike explores the dark side of human psyche resulting from sex and family because the fantasy embodies impulses toward infidelity.

Consumer Report has become Rabbit's Bible and "nickel rich" country club his paradise. He thinks of himself as a free man because of his place in a family he has all but ceased to function in as a father. Harry's "freedom that he always thought was outward motion turns out to be this inner dwindling" (97). The dwindling of self is shown by his grotesque fear of Nelson as a male and sexual rival.

Both Rabbit and Janice had the dubious privilege of bolting free to create the adultery dominated plot movements of the previous novels. Marriage has now become synonymous with the sex and repose Rabbit values above all. Updike here modifies the earlier formula by creating adulterous temptations that are characterized as conflict arousing agents. Thus, there is frequently in the novel an incestuous quality about sexual longing. The main situation of the novel – the reentry of Nelson and his women into the Springer household – extend the concept of confrontation, and within that context create animosity between father and son. This view can be seen in the following dialogue among Ma Springer, Stravos, Charlie, Harry, and Janice:

Ma Springer has been sitting there with thoughts of her own. She says to Stravos, "Nelson has been asking me all these questions about how the lot works, how much sales help there is, and how the salesmen are paid, and so on".

Charlie shifts his weight in his chair. "This gas crunch's got to affect car sales. People won't buy cows they can't feed. Even if so far Toyota's come along smelling pretty good".

Harry intervenes, "Bessie, there's no way we can make room for Nelson on sales without hurting Jake and Rudy. They're married men trying to feed babies on their commissions. If you want I could talk to Manny and see if he can use another kid on clean-up".

"He doesn't want to work on clean-up," Janice calls sharply from the kitchen. (89)

Most part of the novel revolves around the above mentioned events. The envious nature and obsession by sex can be clearly visible in all lovers in the novel. Harry, the protagonist of the novel, is in his mid-forties, and married with Janice. His dissatisfaction with Janice can be assumed by his way of keeping sexual relations with other women. He lusts after Ruth, Fred Byer's wife. She gives birth to a girl, Annebelle Byer, who may have been Harry's child. Harry's son, Nelson Angstrom marries Teresa "Pru" Lubel. Harry slept with Pru once. Charlie Stavros works at Springer Motors alongside Harry. He not only slept with Janice, while she and Harry are still married, but he also slept with Harry's sister, Mim. Ronnie Harrison, who used to play high school basketball with Harry, was married to Thelma Harrison. He also slept with Ruth Leonard before she became Harry's lover in *Rabbit, Run*. Harry lusts after Cindy Murkett, with whom Ronnie Harrison had slept. Thelma Harrison becomes Harry's lover near the end of *Rabbit Is Rich*. We can see that Ronnie and Harry have been linked for a long time through their desires for the same women. Such sexual affair with married women hardly gives any satisfaction to Harry. The way Harry keeps multiple sexual partners or extra marital affairs, his treatment to them as objects to be used for sex shows sexual obsession. He involves in sex to alleviate the anxiety resulting from his son's returning from college. Nelson comes home and brings Melanie, disturbing the little social order there; but then 'Melanie'

turns out to be just the precursor of “Pru”, and her introduction creates a whole new order. Pru’s pregnancy and all the quarrels and events and conversations are engraved upon the surface of her swelling belly and whom he marries against his will. Harry’s anxiety further intensifies by Nelson’s desire to work in the Toyota dealership. In *American Fiction 1940-1980s*, Frederick R. Karl writes:

The person who is the locus of his doubt is Nelson, his troubled son, who decides to return Brewer after three years at Kent State University. Nelson returns with one young lady, Melanie, and then, another appears, Pru, who is pregnant and whom he marries against his will. He, also, intends to get his start in the Toyota dealership, forcing Rabbit to acknowledge him. Although Rabbit fits well within his cozy life, he finds himself in a constant struggle with Nelson, who has Janice and her mother (the co-owner of the dealership) on his side.

(350)

But as one extra-marital affair fades into another, he remains oddly dissatisfied. The women he has sex with become as matter-of-fact as he is their encounters as prosaic as “coffee breaks”. Moreover, Nelson reminds Rabbit of all his own messes in his disregard for property. Furthermore, while Harry struggles with his son, he is haunted by the ghosts of his past, his dead daughter, his mother’s voice, and memories of Jill and Skeeter; he imagines that they embrace him, sustain him, and cheer him. Nelson’s revolt against his father is seen by the fact that he bangs up one car after another; he moves from one girl to another; and making a marriage that seems doomed even before the ceremony. Nelson has nothing to hold on to but recollections of his father’s mistakes of the past. He senses all wrongful deeds of his father. As a result, he realizes intense hostility in his father and has nothing of his own

to sustain him. Harry has peaked at forty-six, but Nelson has not peaked even his youth. In this way, Harry is quite jealous towards his son because his own energy and aspirations fade in his middle age. Harry is now a watcher instead of a runner. He is watching his son's messes. Nelson says: "Dad, you keep talking about yourself but I don't see what it has to do with me. What can I do with Pru except marry her? She's not so bad; I mean I've known enough girls to know they all have their limits. But she's person, she's friend. It's as if you want to deny her to me, as if you're jealous or something. The way you keep mentioning her baby" (186).

Harry not only has sexual obsession, he has also jealousy at the core of his heart. Harry further says: "[. . .] Harry interrupts: "You look scared, is all I see. Scared to say No to any of these women. I've never been that great at saying No either, but just because it runs in the family doesn't mean you have to get stuck. You don't necessarily have to lead of my life; I guess is what I want to say" (185). He seems to be a good father to his son but in reality he has evil thinking towards Nelson. He does not like his son to have sex with the women which is clear with the discussion between Janice, Harry and Nelson:

"Charlie's taking Melanie out really bugs you, doesn't it?" Nelson says to him.

"Not at all. What bugs me is why it doesn't bug you."

"I'm queer," Nelson tells him.

"Janice, what have I done to this kid to deserve this?"

She sighs. "Oh, I expect you know."

He is sick of these allusions to his tainted past. "I took care of him, didn't I? While you were off screwing around who was it put his breakfast cereal on the table and got him off to school?" (110)

In Harry's dark unconscious mind, he has possessive nature. There are so many textual references in which we find sexual jealousy, rivalry and sexual obsession. The will of Harry is thwarted by his son's sexuality and misdoings.

Though Harry shows courtesy towards Nelson, in reality, he was jealous of his relation with Pru. The narrator comments "Harry wants to hear that Pru hates Nelson, that she is sorry she has married him, that the father has made the son look sick" (355). Nelson thinks his mother would understand his inner desire and feelings. Being sympathetic, Janice tells Harry, "I don't push at Nelson too hard these days. Something's working at him from inside" (355). We can observe Nelson's attachment with his mother, whereas the hostility was prevalent between father and son. When Harry comes at home and asks Pru where Janice was, Pru says, "Janice took Nelson over to the club, to fill in with some ladies doubles, and then I think they were going to go shopping for a suit" (190). Nelson wants his father's death. In psychoanalysis, the male infant conceives the desire to eliminate the father and become the sexual partner of the mother. Many forms of inter-generation conflict are seen by Freudians as having Oedipal overtones, such as professional rivalries, often viewed in Freudian terms as reproducing the competition between siblings for parental favors. After the death of his father in law, Harry owns the Springer Motors. Nelson wants to be the part of Toyota Company, but the father objects to his son's longing to work at the lot. Harry is associated with ideas of strictness, authority, and power. Nelson is tempted to rebelling against the father by entering into a sexual liaison of which the father would certainly disapprove. Nelson marries Pru, with whom once his father had already slept. Thus, Harry's jealous nature is obviously seen in the novel. As a result, Harry runs after the women to have sex without thinking of his responsibilities towards his son and wife which germinates confrontation between the father and the son.

Harry's obsession is reflected by his incessant thinking of Consumer Reports when he ought to be concentrating on erotic matters- a good deal of the old romantic flame yet alight in Harry. He is still willing to strike out sexually for the territories. The carnality in this new Updike novel is thus rawer than ever. But it is also a sadder kind of sex. The accumulation of sexual thoughts and performances, the emphasis on women's bodies, their inner parts and protuberances, can not hide the fact that he keeps sexual relationship with Ruth, the part-time whore from *Rabbit Redux*, who bore Rabbit a daughter. She appears once at the lot:

“Is your mother's name by any chance Ruth Byer?”

“Well...yes.”

“And has she ever talked to you about your father?”

“My father is dead. He used to run the school buses for the township.”

“That wasn't your father. I'm your father.” (250)

Harry does the things what his hearts says. He is the man who is driven more by his heart than his mind. He is more likely to be guided by feelings and impulses than reasons and logical arguments. As a result, he goes against the code and conduct of the family. He regards his own son as an enemy. He recollects the misdoing and the repetition of his own mistakes in his bygone days thwarted by his will. For instance, Nelson abandons his family just as his father had. Like Janice and Harry, Nelson and Pru are becoming heavy drinkers. Both father and son are outsiders, discontented, seeking satisfaction in fantasy – one with voyeuristic sex. In many ways, Nelson is Harry's aimless soul reincarnated; Harry himself has to admit. When Nelson drops out of college and returns home, Harry says, “I like Nelson in the house. It's great to have an enemy. Sharpens your senses” (96). Nelson returns to the Toyota lot. To him,

his power and destiny is connected with it. He rebels against the limits put forward by his father. This is symbolically his revolt against his father. Furthermore, Nelson tries to sit on the chair of his father, which can be taken as his challenge to his father. But Nelson's problem is to face his father around the lot. He faces the claustrophobia of "hanging around the lot all day trying to deal around Dad and then coming home and having to deal around him some more, his big head grazing the ceiling and his silly lazy voice laying..." (284). In the meantime, he states about his father that "the trouble with Dad is he's lived in a harem too long..." (284). Nelson can not stand the way his father behaves to him. The narrator asserts:

Nobody except Nelson in the world seems to realize how nasty Harry C. Angstrom is and the pressure of it sometimes makes Nelson want to scream, his father comes into the room all big and fuzzy and shy when he is a killer, a body-count of two to his credit and his own son next if he can figure out how to do it without looking bad. Dad doesn't like to look bad anymore, that was one thing about him in the old days you could admire, that he didn't care that much how he looked from the outside, what the neighbors thought when he took Skeeter in for instance, he had this crazy dim faith in himself left over from basketball or growing up as everybody's pet or whatever so he could say Fuck You to people now and then. That spark is gone, leaving a big dead man on Nelson's chest. (284)

Harry does not like to stay in the narrow confinement of house because this confinement does not fulfill his sexual desires. Instead of fulfilling the demands primarily of his son and wife, he is more likely to be tended to fulfill his sexual passion. Although he has the responsibility as a father to carry the demands of his son,

he does not carry out any of these responsibilities. Hence, there is the conflict between father and son.

Harry is more guided by his unconscious part of his mind than the conscious. His unconscious part of mind plays significant role to shape his life. Harry is not controlled by his conscious mind. It is his unconscious that controls him. He is driven by the libidinal force all the time. Id has played the vital role in leading his life towards fulfilling his personal desires, neglecting the responsibilities towards his son. Rabbit earlier had found pleasure and excitement in sexual relationship with the whore like Ruth. Now he instantly recalls those memories of the physical relationships. He goes on keeping sexual relationship with the women like Pru, Cindy, Thelma and so on, but his passion never fulfills. He fucks up the ass of Thelma, which is quite abnormal kind of sex, and can be taken as the evidence of sexual obsession. At this moment, Harry feels quite satisfied and gives response to her: "O.K.," he says. "Thank you. That I won't forget" (378). He dares to confide to Thelma, because she has let him fuck her up the ass. But again no longer he gets satisfaction fucking up in ass and there is for him "something that wanted him to find that he was here on earth on a kind of assignment" (379). Rabbit does not want his wife with his heart, so he involves in extramarital relationships. This sort of relationship is reflected as he says: "[. . .] that look on Cindy's face in the photograph, Harry can't get it out of his mind: an anxious startled kind of joy, as if she was floating away in a balloon and had just felt the earth lurch free" (345).

Harry constantly has sexual thought in his mind and keeps on sexual relationships with many women as an experiment. As we observe in the dialogue between Harry and Thelma while having sex:

“Harry.” Her voice presses into his ear. “I want to do something for you so you won’t forget me, something you’ve never had with anybody else. I suppose other women have sucked you off?”

He shakes his head yes, which tugs the flesh of her breast.

“How many have you fucked up the ass?”

He lets her nipple slip from his mouth.

“None. Never”

“You and Janice?”

“Oh God no, it never occurred to us.”

“Harry. You’re not fooling me?”

How dear that was, her old-fashioned “fooling”. From talking to all those third-graders. “No, honestly. I thought only queers... Do you and Ronnie?”

“All the time. Well, a lot of the time. He loves it.”

“And you?”

“It has its charms”.

“Doesn’t it hurt? I mean, he’s big.”

“At first. You use Vaseline. I’ll get ours.”

“Thelma, wait. Am I up to this?”. (378)

All of Harry’s activities depend upon the notion of the unconscious, which is the part of the mind beyond consciousness which nevertheless has a strong influence upon his actions. Harry’s unsolved conflicts with his son, unadmitted desires, or traumatic past events are into the realms of his unconscious. Furthermore, his son Nelson reminds Harry of all his own messes that he had done in the past. He is struck by some disgruntlement which also gnawed at Rabbit and made him run after women.

Unlike his father, Nelson has had no successes. He had only bad memories. He is a young man of the sixties, remembering the doomed Jill and Skeeter, the black revolutionary of *Rabbit Redux*, holding his father responsible for Jill's death. Skeeter, too, is now dead. Nelson's mind is occupied by those bad memories. The father's dominant role in the house and his misdoings make him have the sense of hatred towards him.

Nelson appears quite unpleasant to his father. So with the twenty two or twenty three year old Nelson, Harry is fairly worthless. He just dimly at moments feels sorry for him, but is jealous of his girlfriend, is jealous of his youth, imagines that he, "Harry", never had, and the rest of it. But maybe by Nelson's age a normal boy shouldn't be there in the house with his father. Maybe parenthood has a certain season and code of conduct, and Harry has used his hook of fatherhood so as to make his son different from himself. On the other hand, Janice is sympathetic, but she is a heavy drinker, under the sexual sway of Harry, a woman seeking her own pleasures. So, Harry cannot integrate with his wife and son. He is associated with ideas of strictness, authority, and power in the domestic sphere, but he cannot manage as much as he wants since he himself is engaging in irresponsible and immoral activities. In *American Fictions 1940- 1980s* Fredrick R. Karl writes:

With his eye on the well filled out Cindy ( she is only flesh, not life), Rabbit is more than willing to trade off Janice in order to get his hands and mouth on her opulence. But he ends up with slim, prim Thelma, who turns out to be sexual dynamite. What is disturbing is the predictability of the strategy; good sex is not being used as part of something else, but as diversion, and yet Updike cannot maneuver in to something significant because he has established such limited actors

whose movement is, indeed, best in bed, or thinking about the possibilities. (351)

The underlying wish or desire is difficult to face for Harry, because of the presence of the son at the lot. He tries to cope with it by repressing it that is, eliminating it from the conscious mind. But this doesn't make it go away; it remains alive in unconscious, like radioactive matter buried beneath the ocean and seeks away back into the conscious mind, always succeeding eventually. There is a good deal of the old romantic flame yet alight in Harry. He is willing to strike out sexually for the territories. It is a sadder kind of sex. Harry keeps thinking of Consumer Reports when he ought to be concentrating on erotic matters. He pours his krugerrands over his naked bodies with the hope that their new money will arouse them as their old passion increasingly will not:

Consumers Reports had a lot to say a while ago about the SX- 70 land camera but never did explain what the SX stood for. Now Harry knows. His eyes burn [. . .] and tries to slide shoot the drawer to the exact inch it was open by. The room otherwise is untouched; the mirror will erase his image instantly. The only clue remaining, he has given himself an aching great erection. He can't go downstairs like this: he tries to tear his mind loose from that image of her open mouth laughing at the slight of herself being fucked, who would have thought sweet Cindy could be so dirty. (278)

Harry goes through life serving his own self interests. He does not care about his son and his wife rather he keeps on thinking about fulfilling his own sexual desires. He with his heart leaves his wife though he is physically close to her because she can not hold his interest any longer. One of the reasons he gives for swapping

other women is he is never satisfied with his wife in sex. He goes on comparing his wife with other women in the matter of sex while engaging with Thelma. Harry says:

Her nipples are not bumpy like Janice's but perfect as baby's thumb – tips. Since it is his treat now he feels free to reach up and switch off the light over the bed. In the dark her rashes disappear and he can see her smile as she arranges herself to be served. She sits cross legged, like Cindy did on the boat, women the flexible sex, and puts a pillow in her lap for his head. She puts a finger in his mouth and plays with her nipple and his tongue together. (377)

He goes on experimenting sex as on “assignment”, which he can not exercise with his wife. He feels pleasure in finding Thelma's “ass its warm dents; there is a kind of glassy texture to her skin” (377). Then, she gives him newer kind of experience by letting him fuck into her ass, which he can not experience with his wife. He is bored with his drunken wife. He is tired of his dead end job, selling Toyota cars. From his point of view, he is trapped in dead end situation. Meanwhile his son Nelson comes back at the lot escaping college, torn between two women. As a result, the romantic and sexual life of Harry becomes more complicated in general.

First and foremost, Harry doesn't want to listen to his son and Nelson wants to hear nothing of what his father has to say. He seems painfully self- aware of what's going on around him but powerless to do anything about it. He keeps thinking the young girl he has seen around town a few times might be his daughter, who was born by his lover Ruth- his beloved of twenty years ago. While staying at the car lot, Harry engages himself observing girls' body and desires for sex: “ He would look at the little girls on the sidewalks they drove alongside wondering which of them he would marry, for his idea of destiny was to move away and marry a girl from another town”

(121). Harry is obsessed because of these gloomy images into his unconscious. This is also one of the factors that brings the confrontation between father and the son.

Rabbit is a man who seeks salvation through sexual relationships, but that becomes in vain. During the first bedroom scene in *Rabbit Is Rich*, Janice falls asleep; “his prick has hardened, the competing muscles of anxiety having at last relaxed. But she is relaxed all over, asleep with his prick in her face” (47). In the second, Rabbit is too tired: “These July nights, you get thirsty for one more beer as the Phillies struggle and then in bed fell a terrific weariness, a bliss of inactivity that leads you to understand how men can die willingly, gladly, into an external release from the heel of having to perform” (81). In the next sexual scene, Janice makes love reluctantly. “In bed, perhaps it’s the rain that sexes him up; he insists they make love, though at first Janice is reluctant” (111). During another love scene, Rabbit is able to reach the climax by imagining Janice in a pornographic movie. Most of the time, Rabbit is driven by his passion. His sexual passion is intermittently overflowed. The role of Id has become dominant in him. The narrator comments about Harry as: “Yet what a marvelous thing the mind is, they can’t make a machine like it, though some of these computers Ed was telling about fill rooms; and the body can do a thousand things there isn’t factory in the world can duplicate the motion” (124). He can not repress and suppress his libidinal force. He finds himself depressed and monotonous with his wife, Janice. The main cause of his obsession is his dissatisfaction in sex with his wife and other sex partners as well, which is reflected through the comment given by the narrator in the novel. The narrator states:

At night when he’s with Janice, she needing a touch of cock to lead her into sleep, he tries to picture what will turn him on, and he’s running out of a woman on all fours being fucked by one man while she blows

another. And it's not clear in the picture if Harry is doing the fucking or is the man being blown, he is looking at all three from the outside, as if up on a screen at one of these movie theatres on Superweiser with title like Haren Girls and All the way, and the women's sensations seen nearer to him than the man's, the prick in your mouth like a small wet zucchini, plus the other elsewhere, in out, and in out, a kind of penance at your root. Sometimes he prays a few words at night but a stony truce seems to prevail between himself and God. (125)

Moreover, Janice falls asleep again and Harry masturbates. This engaging in excessive masturbation is the evidence of his sexual obsession. He feels uncomfortable as he finds his prick "hard and grown harder". He tries to take pleasure from masturbation: "left-handedly, on his back so as not to disturb Janice, he masturbates, remembering Ruth" (171). Rabbit feels constantly dissatisfied in the sexual intercourse with his drunkard and smoker wife. In the final scene with Janice, Rabbit discusses his desire for a new house. His thoughts drift quickly from erotic fantasies to sunken living rooms and real property appreciation. The longest sex scene is a wife swapping episode in which the disappointed Harry has to make love to the relatively homely Thelma instead of the attractive Cindy. The sex for Harry is too clumsy and sad – not even urgent or acrobatic – to be a means of growth for him. So, his sexual life is one of his greatest discontents because the sexual reality is always less fulfilling than the sexual fantasy.

The protagonist Harry 'Rabbit' Angstrom foresees the ultimate moral dilemma of disobeying family responsibility and following his instincts. Incessantly surrounded by societal pressures of being a good father and husband, Rabbit feels powerless and trapped in a net of maturity and responsibility. He does not find the meaning of life if

he discards his instinct. Hence, in his search, he finds that his ultimate obligation is to himself. He must find his own happiness and self fulfillment above all else. By the age of 46, Harry is extremely unhappy in his bizarre life and broken relationship with his son. At this point he seems to be happy when he is in the company of women. Temporary truth for Harry is women's body but this is not ultimate solution of his finding. The narrator states, "one world: everybody fucks everybody. When he thinks of all the fucking there's going to be and none of it for him, here he sits in this stiffy car dying, his heart just sinks. He'll never fuck anybody again in his lifetime except poor Janice Springer[. . .]" (314). But he cannot control his burning passion of his heart for women. Even he involves in anal sex with Thelma. Meanwhile, he is conscious of his son's hostility towards him. Abandoning his wife Pru, Nelson begins the cycle of irresponsibility and bad luck that plagued his parents twenty years earlier. At a point, Rabbit tells Nelson: "Maybe I haven't done every thing right in my life. I know I haven't. But I haven't committed the great (344).

Sigmund Freud in his essay, *The Interpretation of Dreams* views:

The obscure information which is brought to us by mythology and legend from the primeval ages of human society gives an unpleasing picture of the father's despotic power and of the ruthlessness with which he made use of it. Kronos devoured his children, just as the wild boar devours the sow's litter; while Zeus emasculated his father and made himself ruler in his place. The more unrestricted was the rule of the father in the ancient family, the more must the son, as his destined successor, have found himself in the position of an enemy, and the more impatient must have been to become ruler himself through his father's death. (358)

Freud's view is that there is the existence of immemorial struggle between a father and a son. The father becomes a disturbing rival to his son. Nelson wishes even his father's death. While drinking, Nelson speaks himself "Why doesn't Dad just die?" (292). On his unconscious level of mind, he wishes his father's death. Even his father's appearance disgusts him. The narrator comments, "But in thinking of his father, what strikes Nelson about the large blond face that appears to his inner eye is a mournful helplessness. His father's face bloats like an out-of-focus close-up in some war movie in the scramble of bottle before floating away" (298).

The book focuses on that man is bound to seek salvation alone. He is victimized by life itself. Harry is alone. He tries to forget his loneliness through sex. Harry's world is a world of the superlative and the superfluous, but not a world of fulfillment. He is bitten by some disappointment caused by his son's disregard to him. He is still incapable of being a father, although he wants some closeness and pays heavily for Nelson's mistakes. Moreover, he wishes to go to a prostitute and other women for the gratification of his sexual desire. Harry's desire to engage with women and his jealousy towards his son is a manifestation of his sickness of responsibility and sexual obsession. He dreads disagreements with his son and yearns for sexual freedom. Ultimately, Harry really has the feelings of being happy in life but sexuality brings discontentment and gives birth to animosity with his son.

#### IV: CONCLUSION

*Rabbit Is Rich*, a persuasive return to the theme of Harry “Rabbit” Angstrom’s inner life, presents Rabbit grown fat and happy with success. The 1970s have been kind to him. Now in his mid-forties, he has taken over his father-in-law’s Toyota dealership; he and Jenice, again reconciled, visit Poconos and the Carribbian and spend their ample leisure time in the country club. But Harry really experiences a kind of inner dwindling in spite of his material success and outer happiness. In the novel, confrontation prevails between the main protagonist Harry and his college-aged son, Nelson. Harry seeks women to get solace from the conflict with his son and to quench his sexual passion. Harry’s desire to engage sexually with other women neglecting his wife, Janice, is a manifestation of his sexual obsession and jealousy towards his son. However, Harry is not directly exposing his obsession and envious nature towards his son. He seems to carry out his responsibility as a father and a husband to some extent. But he is failed to play the role of father. Harry, the harried and anxious middle-aged man yearns to be free from all shackling commitments and responsibilities and more than that from his own son, whom he supposes as sexual rival. Hence, Harry’s confrontation with his son is because of his unquenchable sexual passion and his jealousy towards him.

The problem that lies with Harry is not a lack of fatherly love to his son. His trouble is a lack of realization for his responsibilities and control over sexual passion. He is trapped within domestic boundaries. These boundaries really affect Harry’s belief by creating a sense of confinement. This sense of confinement is manifested in his sexual obsession and jealousy. Harry is a man driven by his instinct rather than by his reasoning. He moves as his heart guides him. He can not freely exercise his power in his son’s presence at the lot. Nelson objects his father’s misdoings and repeats

those sorry mistakes, which Harry can not tolerate. Harry observes his son repeating his past evil works and is envious with Nelson's romantic life engaging with many women, with whom he still desires to have sex. The problem with Harry is that he is guided by his instincts and sexual impulses in spite of his physical weakness. He tries to show his dominant role in family business. But all the family members are opposed to him. He is willing to stay alone and not disturbed by anyone, even by his wife. Here, in the novel, Harry, the protagonist is guided by abnormality thereby showing the dark psyche in the case of sex and family behavior. Sex and sexuality play the vital role in the novel. The animalistic nature and attitude of Harry in sexual matter is reflected in his behavior of abnormal sexual relationships with prostitute like Ruth and other women. Such sense of abnormality and evil thoughts are the product of dark side of human psyche which is evident in Harry. He is not satisfied with his wife sexually. So, at times he shows quite unusual behavior with his wife regarding the matter of sex. His mind is preoccupied with sexual act of his friends' buddies. He has not shown only brutal sexual behavior but he has cultivated within himself some evil qualities- sexual rivalry, sense of hostility, jealousy, anger, and so on with his son.

Sex is something to regenerate, but if improperly utilized, it becomes the destructive force as in the case of the novel. Because of this sexual obsession and envious nature of the father, and ongoing oedipal struggle of the son, the confrontation exists between them. Even the son once thinks to kill his father. This can be connected to the concept of oedipal complex, where a son always tries to remove his father to get his mother. Sexual rivalry, jealousy, obsessive behavior, sexual dissatisfaction and oedipal complex are the domains in the novel which bring the confrontation between the father and the son.

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