

## I. Introduction

The present research work aims at analyzing Determinism in Eugene O'Neill's *Dynamo* in which most of the actions and life as a whole of the protagonist are inevitably determined by biological inheritance, sociological background, psychological state, and the immediate environment. The study exposes how the attempt of a person to exercise his freewill and establish his individual identity is shattered on the face of heredity and environment.

Determinism is derived from the verb 'determine' which, according to dictionary meaning, means 'to cause something to happen in a particular way or be in a particular type.' However, in philosophy, the word 'determinism' is often used to designate the belief that one is not free to choose the sort of person one wants to be, or how one behaves, because these things are decided by one's background and environmental surroundings.

Determinism is a philosophical doctrine which holds that every event has its antecedent causes. Certain set of factors or causes are responsible in the occurrence of every event or action. Determinism is based on a simple principle "ex nihilo nihil/fit" (from nothing, nothing comes). The world is governed by the principle of inner connectivity. The *New Encyclopedia Britannica* defines the term determinism as a "Theory that all events including moral choices are completely determined by previously existing causes that preclude free will and the possibility that man could have otherwise" (494). That is to say that what is necessitated by previously existing causes is unavoidable.

There are two kinds of determinism: Scientific Determinism and Theological. Scientific Determinism, as defined by Karl Kopper, is “the doctrine that the structure of the world is such that any event can be rationally predicted with any desired degree of precision, if we are given a sufficiently precise description of past events, together with all the laws of nature”(12). On the other hand, Theological Determinism, which has its roots in God, believes in the predestination. All the past, present and future events are already determined by omnipotent and omnipresent God. Only cause for everything, for theological determinists, is God. But this research work deliberates on scientific determinism in O’Neill’s *Dynamo*.

Since this study explores determinism in literary text, it is essential to explicate determinism in terms of literature. In doing so, it is appropriate to observe naturalism which incorporates the thesis of determinism to give scientific objectivity in literature. Naturalism is essentially a literary expression of determinism. According to naturalism, characters do not have free will; external and internal forces, environment, or heredity control their behavior. This very notion of naturalism is called determinism. Only after the advent of new scientific thoughts like naturalism mainly put forward by Emile Zola, Materialism of Marx and Darwinism of Charles Darwin, that the determinism assumed fresh impetus in the field of literature. Naturalism, Marxism and Darwinism are the vantage points for the writer who writes in deterministic fashion.

Naturalism was a new trend of realistic writers of 19<sup>th</sup> century in which the basic goal was reproduction of reality in literature and other figurative arts. In the mid-nineteenth century, in counter to the literary modes like idealism and Romanticism, the interest in realistic details, psychological motivation for character and concern for social

problem led to naturalism with the focus on its scientific and experimental nature.

Turning to science for aspiration, the naturalists felt that the goal of art, like science, should be the betterment of life. Dramatist, like scientist, should objectively observe and depict the real world. The naturalists, influenced by the theories of Charles Darwin, believe that heredity and environment are at the root of all human actions and that drama should illustrate this. The leading naturalist was the French writer, Emile Zola, who compared the playwright with a doctor who must expose disease to cure it. The drama, therefore, has to bring social ills into open. Unlike the Romantics, who distinguish literature from scientific practice, Zola sees the artists adopting the experimental method recommended by Claude Bernard. In his essay “The Experimental Novel”, he says:

I shall restrict myself to irrefutable arguments and to giving the quotation of Claude Bernhard which may seem necessary to me. This will then be but a compiling of texts as I intend on all points to entrench myself behind Claude Bernhard. It will often be but necessary for me to replace the world doctor by the word novelist, to make my meaning clear and to give it the rigidity of a scientific truth. (645)

The result of this, thus, was the drama that emphasized on the seamier elements of society rather than beautiful or ideal. In the words of French playwright Jean Jullien naturalists sought to present “a slice of life, put on the stage with art” (32). Ideally, all naturalist plays had no beginning, middle or end or any sort of dramatic continuance. In practice, of course, incidents were selected and shaped for dramatic effect.

Naturalism aims at objective empirical presentation of human beings in literary composition. It differs from realism in adding amoral attitude to the objective

presentation of life. Naturalistic writers present characters and their behavior to be motivated primarily by biological, economic and social forces, and reject free will, adopting to a large extent the biological determinism of Charles Darwin and economic determinism of Marx. Often emphasis is laid upon the more brutish aspects of their way of life.

Eugene O' Neill, one of the greatest figures of American theatre, combines enormous technical originality with freshness of vision and emotional depth. O' Neill's earliest dramas concern the working class and the poor whereas later works explore subjective realms such as obsession and sex, and underscore his reading in Freud and his dead mother, father and sister. His powerful plays reveal different personalities reverting primitive emotions or confessions under intense stress.

O' Neill's plays explore human condition and predicament. His *Bound East for Cardiff* (1916) dramatizes the story of a sailor dying on board the ship S.S. Glencairn. Peter B. High argues that in this "S.S Glencairn series of three plays, 'the mood is dark and heavy'. The theme of each play goes beyond the surfaces of life to study the "forces behind life" (High 225).

In all of O'Neill's works, human existence and fate are one of these forces. In *Anna Christie* (1920) and in many other plays, fate is symbolized by 'that old devil' sea. Psychology is another of these 'forces behind life'. In fact, O'Neill often uses the new psychology of Freud to deepen his dramas. High opines that O'Neill was one of the first playwrights to study "the struggle inside a character's mind between conscious motives and unconscious needs" (225). While most of his plays are realistic in form, he experimented with anti realistic techniques. He sometimes 'distorted' reality in order to

‘express’ the inner meaning or problem in a play. The *Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1992) are important examples of this “expressionism.” In order to show the sailor in *The Hairy Ape* as caged animals, prisoners and robots, O’Neill calls for an expressionistic setting.

The treatment of this scene, or any other scene in the play, should be by no means naturalistic.... The ceiling crushes down upon the men’s heads. They cannot stand upright. This accentuates the natural stooping posture which shoveling coal... has given them. The men themselves should resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal Man is guessed at. (qtd. in High 226)

The form of each play of O’Neill is based upon the special dramatic needs of that play. D.V. Falk notes that “he never echoes himself” (47) from play to play. O’Neill takes the stream of consciousness technique from the novel, *Strange Interlude* and dramatizes it. The characters allow the audience to hear their inner thoughts. O’Neill has also used themes and technique from Greek tragedy in such plays as *The Great God Brown* and *Mourning Becomes Electra*. *The Great God Brown* uncovers the unconsciousness of a wealthy businessman. Similarly, *Desire Under the Elms* reveals the passions hidden within one family. This shows natural factors in O’Neill’s writing.

In the play, *Dynamo*, O’Neill employs a character who hesitates to accept his father’s belief in God due to his attraction to the fruit of science – the dynamo. Reuben Wright is unable to reconcile between his father’s religious fanaticism and Mr. Fife’s radical atheistic attitude. Reuben, being torn between these two extremely opposites aspects, fails to establish his own individual judgment and position on the basis of his

free will. On the one hand, though he seems not to have been affected by his father's religious profession and strict beliefs, he can't go against his father in a radical way. He, at times, exhibits the sign of the impact of his father's religiosity and fear of God. On the other hand, despite his father and mother's constant warning' he shows fancy towards Ada, Mr. Fife's daughter. He is also fascinated by Mr. Fife's atheistic beliefs because of liberal and modern attitude advocated by his family.

Being deceived by his mother whom he believes most, Reuben embarks on the search for truth and create his own individual attitude and position, he abandons his parents and love, Ada. Their religious fanaticism adversely affects his life, leading him to the brink of suicide. At the beginning he is possessed by the miracle of the power of electricity. Finally this also fails to give him any meaning as his mother dies because of him and his father blames him for her death. He totally loses his faith in God as well as science which he tries to live with as replacement of religion. So, Reuben's individual choice is devastated and he commits suicide because of the double impact. In this context, the study exposes the reasons behind Reuben's failure in his love affair, family relation and death thereby proving the impact of heredity and environment upon him.

Regarding the source of the *Dynamo*, in most critical discussions it is often hinted that the play was influenced by *The Education of Henry Adams*. Critics like Travis Bogard, Edwin Engel, John Henry Raleigh, and Louis Sheaffer in their respective books *Contour in Times*, *The Haunted Heroes of Eugene O'Neill*, *The Plays of O'Neill*, *O'Neill: Son and Artist*, point out O'Neill to be indebted to Henry Adams. A more searching look for influences is an early newspaper article by Fichard Watts, Jr, "Literary Ancestors of *Dynamo*." Watts discusses the ubiquitous Henry Adams, but also speculates that the

Capeks' R.U.R. and John Howard Lawson's processional were influential predecessors of O'Neill's play. As recounted by the Gelbs, O'Neill himself said that the idea for his play came from a visit to a hydroelectric plant in Connecticut: "He had stopped to visit the plant and had retained a vivid image of the dynamo, 'huge and black, with something of the massive female idol about it, the exciter set on the main structure like a head with blank, oblong eyes above a gross, rounded torso,' which he used in the setting of the last part of the play." (qtd in Tuck 1)

In terms of excavating the source of *Dynamo*, Eugene O'Neill is sometimes associated with D.H. Lawrence. A deeper observation exhibits that both writers shared many of the same concerns especially the belief that the modern world – be it England or America – was a vast decaying wasteland D.H. Lawrence, in a letter, wrote, "I think there is no future for England, only a decline and fall. That is the dreadful and unbearable part of it: to have been born into a decadent era, a decline of life, a collapsing civilization" (33). O'Neill's often quoted letter to George Jean Nathan about the genesis of *Dynamo* is quite similar, "it is a symbolical and factual biography of what is happening in a large section of the America (and not only America) soul right now. It is the first play of a trilogy that will dig at the roots of the sickness of today as I felt it...to find a meaning for life in, and to comfort its fears of death with" (119). Thus, both the statements hint at the profound dissatisfaction at the excessive impact of science and materialism and loss of spirituality.

O'Neill is a serious dramatist concerning himself with major issues of modern time. His plays including this present play *Dynamo* (1929) have received a host of criticism from the numerous critics. Edward Albert views *Dynamo* as having the theme of

“religion, philosophy, psychology and scientific thought in many of his works, such as *Dynamo*” (553). Another critic Edmund M. Gagey views the changing attitude of O’Neill’s heroes in the plays. He comments, “O’Neill returns to abnormal psychology as he sketches his characters. His heroes lose faith all of a sudden and follow atheistic life like in *dynamo* they leave home recognizing no faith” (58). This shows the loss of faith in modern man.

Regarding the play, *Dynamo* Brooks Atkinson has observed that O’Neill had clearly “cut loose from the realistic drama” (4). An overwhelming majority of reviewers lamented the squandering of such an astonishing production on poor dramatic material. Fichard Skinner, for instance, called *Dynamo* “a case of immense talent in play writing, acting and production all being wasted on the immature profundities of a man whose intelligence cannot catch up with his chaotic and intense feelings” (15). Here the focus is on technical aspect- theatricality of the play.

According to Dennis G. Jerz, *Dynamo* is an experimental seduction of mechanistic modernism. He highlights on the writing techniques. He believes American dramatists struggled to find theatrical form to express America’s development from an isolationist agrarian nation into and industrial world power. He remarks:

Eugene O’Neill’s *Dynamo* (1929) features a scathing critique of blind faith in scientific progress...which used expressionistic staging devices and religious imagery to explore the seductive quality of technological progress. Modernism, futurism, techno eroticism, the lofty optimism of the emerging industrial design and profession form the backdrop against



which historical sources and contemporary reviews are used to analyze these plays. (184)

Joseph Wood Krutch finds the theme of belongingness again in *Dynamo*. He says: “It appears in *Dynamo* whose insane hero electrocutes on the Dynamo which comes to seem to be the altar of the God electricity” (89). This highlights on the scientific advancement in the modern time.

Commenting on the conclusion of *Dynamo*, Travis Bogard says, “No view, Reuben’s or that of any character, has supremacy at play’s end. The confusion was fatal and the play ends in an unresolved suspension: does Reuben find God? Or does his death demonstrate ‘the general spiritual futility of the substitute-God search’?” (321). This hints that the conclusion of *Dynamo* is not successful.

However, the present research will observe determinism in the text which has not been explored yet. The research work will study *Dynamo* from the perspective of naturalism.

The study has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of the work, a short introduction to O’Neill’s plays and a short critical response. Moreover, it gives some spaces in explaining determinism in relation to naturalism.

The second chapter attempts to briefly explain the theoretical modality that is applied in this research work. It discusses naturalism in relation to theories like biological determinism of Charles Darwin, realism and others.

On the basis of the theoretical framework established in the second chapter, the third chapter analyses the text at a considerable length. It analyses how the factors like

heredity and environment determine the behavior and life of characters. It sorts out some extracts from the text in order to prove the hypothesis of the study: the major character Reuben Light in O'Neill's *Dynamo* is destined to commit suicide because of the impact of heredity and environment on him.

And, the fourth chapter is the conclusion of this research work.

## **II. Naturalism – Theoretical Tool**

Naturalism implies a belief which rests upon the principle that nature is truth and reality which can, essentially, be determined only by means of scientific methods. So, taking the methods of science as only and ultimate way to truth, it denies the existence of anything supernatural and rejects faith, revelation and intuition as source of truth.

Naturalism assumes that the natural world of objects and events in space and time is all that is real. For naturalists, all meaning originates in experience in accordance with the general principle of scientific method. The world or nature, they insist, is not kind, friendly and a gateway to divinity rather it is stern indifferent and unmindful of anything surrounding it. Naturalists question existence of supernatural anywhere in the universe and hold that if any non natural entities exist they may be known only by their observable influences on natural objects. Idealism for them is fickle in the sense that idealists believe in things abstract that is “idea” and imaginary unreal things which have no concrete existence. Thus, naturalism, in a sense, entails atheism.

Naturalism, in essence, is simply the idea that human beings are completely included in the natural world. It perceives human beings as a part of nature and only an incidental product of world process. From that point of view, naturalist perspective regarding human beings is different, to a large extent, from traditional religious or supernatural understanding and it has profound implications. Human beings don't have souls that continue after death instead they are fully physical creatures fully caused to be who they are. They don't have free will in the sense of being able to choose or decide without being fully caused in their choice or decisions. Instead human beings, as individuals, are part of the natural unfolding of the universe in all its amazing complexity.

Science, the best and most reliable means for discovering what exists, displays that each and every aspects of a human being comes from and is completely connected to natural world and is understandable in terms of those connections.

Arthur C Dento, in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* proposes naturalism as:

A species of philosophical monism according to which whatever exists or happens is natural in the sense of being susceptible to explanation through scientific methods which [...] are continuous from domain to domain of objects and events [...] thus, there cannot exist any entities or events which, in principle, lie beyond the scope of scientific explanation. (448)

Naturalism, thus, focuses on scientific methods on the explanation of entities in the world. It holds the deterministic notion that every event in nature, including human choice and action, is the result of and can be explained in terms of antecedent or preexisting causes or conditions. Scientific determinism includes both – environmental conditions, or forces outside of individual persons such as climate, culture, history and technology and psychological conditions, inner forces or conditions operating within the person's own "psyche", behaviour or genes. In his *Philosophical Essays in Pragmatic Naturalism*, Paul Kurtz says:

Naturalism is the philosophical generalization of methods and conclusion of sciences, or equivalently, it is a philosophical movement that wishes to use methods of science, evidence and reason to understand nature and the place of human species within it [...]. It is the view that everything is natural i.e. everything belongs to the world of nature and so can be studied by the methods appropriate for studying that world. (12).

From these definitions we can infer naturalism as the philosophy that maintains that nature is 'all there is' and whatever exists or happens is natural; nature consists only of natural elements i.e. spatio-temporal material elements - matters and energy and non-material elements-minds, ideas value, logical relationships etc are either associated with human brain or independent of it, but are still immanent in the physical structure of the universe. Nature operates by process, and follows natural rules, laws and it can be explained or understood by science and philosophy.

In literature, naturalism is an adaptation of the principles and methods of natural science, especially the Darwinian view of nature, with the aim of representing the reality in a faithful and unselective way. It is, essentially, a literary expression of determinism which denies religion as a motivating force in the world and instead perceives the universe as a machine. As an extended form of realism, it primarily presents veritable slice of life without moral judgment. Although not all the naturalistic works are harsh, many of them portray the experiences of impoverished and educated people, imprisoned perform in a milieu of filth, squalor, and corruption. As a result naturalism is often equated with depressingly dreary slice-of-life-documentation of irredeemable and brutal realities. Naturalism emphasizes men's accidental, physiological nature rather than his moral and rational qualities. Different in terms of its connection with philosophical doctrine of determinism from realism, it shows individual characters as helpless products of heredity and environment. They are presented as motivated by strong instinctual drives from within and harassed by social and economic pressure from outside. As such they have little will or responsibility for their fates and the prognosis for their 'cases' is pessimistic at the outset. Thus, if a writer wishes to depict life as it really is, he or she

must be rigorously deterministic in the representation of characters' thoughts and actions in order to show forth the casual factors that have made the character inevitably what they are.

The term 'naturalism' describes a type of literature that attempts to apply scientific principles of objectivity and detachment to its study of human beings. For naturalistic writers, since human beings are, in Emile Zola's phrase, 'human beast', characters can be studied through their relationship to their surrounding. In other words, naturalism can simply be defined as a manner and method of composition by which the author portrays "life as it is" in accordance with the philosophic theory of determinism.

In George Becker's famous and much annotated and contested phrase, naturalism's philosophical framework can simply be described as "pessimistic materialistic determinism" in which human being is merely an animal devoid of free will. Another such concise definition appears in the introduction to *American Realism: New Essays*. In that piece, "The Country of the Blue", Eric Sundquist comments:

Reveling in the extraordinary, the excessive, and the grotesque in order to reveal immutable bestiality of Man in Nature, naturalism dramatizes the loss of individuality at physiological level by making a Calvinism without god its determining order and violent death its utopia. (13)

Naturalists were the first crusaders to challenge the taboos and explored deep into these things exposing the horror, filth, sordidness lurking around the society and human psyche. Though, this was indisputably a shock to the readers of that time for which the writers had to go ordeal for sometime, as the veil of spirituality, mystery and duality was uncovered, men and society became bare, people realized reality and began to applause it.

Now, the notion that human being is merely a higher animal whose characters and behaviors are entirely determined by heredity and environment is established. The idea of a man as normal animal inheriting compulsive instincts – especially hunger, greed, sexuality become dominant. Thus, the dark alley of human psyche becomes a plausible reality and significance of humanity before the vastness of universe was validated.

Therefore, naturalism reveals the bestiality of man instead of the rational behavior of human being. The naturalistic literature usually contains tensions or contradictions and the contradiction in conjunction constitute the theme and form of naturalistic literature Donald Pizer describes the characteristic of a literary work in his *Realism and Naturalism in the Nineteenth Century American Fiction* as:

The first contradiction in the fictional world of naturalist is that of the common place and unheroic in which life world seem to be chiefly the dull round of daily existence. [...] but the naturalist discovers in the world those equalities of man usually associated with the heroic or adventurous. The second contradiction is the naturalist often describes his characters as though they are controlled by environment, heredity, instinct and chances [...] but he also suggest a compensating humanistic value in his character or their fates which affirms the significance of the individual and his life.

(10 – 11)

Naturalistic literature presents a determined world where characters are given less or no choices; their free wills are crushed and driven helplessly by the hereditary qualities, instincts within and environmental pressure without. They do not act but are always acted upon in the cycle of machine like world. Their helplessness is often revealed by

projecting them before powerful natural forces. Their everyday life is a series of violence, anarchy and fight for survival. Stake of existence direct them to routinely struggle. Social and economic factors run counter to them letting them degrade even more. In terms of themes and motifs of naturalistic fictions Charles Child Walcott opines:

The major themes and motifs are determinism, survival, violence, and Taboo. The theme of determinism, which is of course basic, carries the idea that natural law and socio-economic influences are more powerful than human will. The theme of survival grows out of the application of determinism to biological competition; [...] the theme of violence grows with the transfer of emphasis from tradition (ultimately supernatural tradition) to survival. (20)

Naturalism, thus, uses themes like determinism violence survival etc. to show how individual will is crushed by the biological and environment forces that control the human behavior and lives.

Although naturalism is an autonomous and distinct kind of philosophy, it is often linked with other concepts and theories. For the further clarification, these theories and concepts associated with naturalism are discussed below.

Naturalism is perceived often as a break away from supernaturalism.

Supernaturalism, the antithesis of naturalism, is the belief as truth in supernatural beings, their realms, activities and concerns. It is, in simple terms, a belief in everything superstitious from the highest to the lowest. Opposite to naturalism which regards that nature is all there and all basic truths as truths of nature, supernaturalism assumes the



existence of the phenomena which is beyond the known forces of nature. With precise definition, *Encyclopedia Britannica* classifies supernaturalism as being posed by religion:

A belief in an outwardly realm or reality that, in one way or another, is commonly associated with all forms of religion [...] In higher religions a gulf is created between the sacred and the profane or here and there [...] the most radical division between the natural and supernaturalism is established by those forms of religion that posit a final or ultimate coincidence between the natural and the supernatural.

Naturalism is the theory that everything in the world and life is based on natural causes and laws and not in spiritual or religious ones. Religion believes in the existence of god and the activities that are connected with the truth of faith. Therefore, supernaturalism is a part of religion. Arthur Staler writes about supernaturalism in his *Science and Earth history* that:

Supernaturalism is a philosophical doctrine which refers to God's creativity (or any sort of Divine activity) to justify the very queries of the world [...] it includes theological proportions which are beyond the domain of science, [...] scientists have no alternative but to ignore the claims of the existence of supernatural forces or causes because supernatural forces, if they exist, cannot be observed, measured or recorded by the procedures of science – that's simply what the word 'supernatural' means. (124)

Quite in contrast to supernaturalism and its notion, naturalism denies the existence of the supernatural and deemphasizes metaphysics or the study of ultimate reality. It holds the

notion that cause and effect relationship, as in science, are sufficient to account for all phenomena. Teleological conception, which suggests design and metaphysical necessities in nature, while not necessarily invalid, are excluded from consideration. The ethical implication, since the naturalists deny transcendental or supernatural end of human kind, is that values must be found within the social context. It is impossible to determine what is best in an ultimate contest, because the ultimate is beyond discovery. Values, therefore, are relative and ethics is based on custom, inclination or some form of utilitarianism, the doctrine that what is useful is good.

At present, in all areas of intellectual inquiry, the dominance of critical thinking is ubiquitous and granted. As result, supernaturalism finds itself in the hostile arena where it is increasingly irrelevant, attacked and unsustainable and therefore undergoing a reactionary resurgence. It is not so because methodological naturalism is so effective, powerful and successful that it leaves no rooms for appeals to the supernaturalism. Methodological supernaturalism is not effective, but it is positively ineffective and counter productive especially in attempts to understand the natural world. An education, which includes science and other disciplines that inculcate critical inquiry, only reinforces this perception.

The emergence of naturalism does not mark a radical break with realism; rather the new style is a logical extension of realism. It is an extended tradition of realism aiming at an even more faithful, unselective representation of reality. Naturalistic and realistic literature are similar in the sense that both modes often deal with local and contemporary and dissimilar in the sense that naturalism is sometimes claimed to give more accurate depiction of life than realism.

M.H. Abrams in his *A Glossary of Literary Terms* relates naturalism with realism in this way:

Naturalism is sometimes claimed to give an even more accurate depiction of life than realism. But naturalism is not only, like, realism, a special selection of subject matter and a special way of rendering those materials. [...] Naturalism, as thesis produced by post – Darwinian biology in the nineteenth century, held that a human being exists entirely in the order of nature and doesn't have a soul nor any mode of participating in a religious or spiritual world beyond the natural world. (261)

Realist literature is often opposed to romantic literature. The romance is said to present life as we would have it – more picturesque, fantastic, adventurous or heroic than actuality. Realism, on the other hand, is supposed to represent life as it really is.

Naturalism is similar to realism in the sense that it contradicts with romanticism but naturalism is different from realism in its assumption of scientific determinism which led naturalist author to emphasize man's accidental and physiological nature rather than his moral or rational qualities. Pizer, in his *Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth Century American Literature* writes: "Naturalism is an extension or continuation of realism with the addition of pessimistic determinism. It is no more than an emphatic and explicit philosophical position taken by some realists, that position being one of pessimistic materialistic determinism" (82). Determinism has much to do with naturalism. In naturalism characters do not have free will; external and internal forces, environment and heredity central their behavior. This belief is called determinism. All determinists believe in the existence of the will, but the will is often enslaved on account of different reasons.

The thesis of determinism, a product of post Darwinism development in the nineteenth century, held that a human being exists entirely in the order of nature and doesn't have a soul or any mode of participation in a religious or spiritual world beyond the natural world; and therefore such a being merely a higher order animal whose character and behavior are entirely determined by two kinds of forces: heredity and environment. A person inherits compulsive instincts – especially hunger, the drive to possessions and sexuality – and is then subject to the social and economic forces in family, the class, and the milieu into which that person is born.

Unlike realists, naturalists tend to choose characters who exit strong animal drives such as greed, sexual desire and who are helpless victims both of glandular secretion within and of sociological pressures outside. They explore dark, deep and sordid reality with scientific objectivity and the image or man they present is alone, cruel, and possessive, sinful and animal like. Naturalistic texts often describe the futile attempts of human beings to exercise free will, often ironically presented, in this universe that reveals free will as an illusion.

Charles Darwin propounded the theory of natural selection and evolution which simultaneously become the foundation of modern evolutionary studies and challenged the age long belief regarding the origin of human beings. On the one hand, this was a matter of profound shock for Victorian society to suggest that animals and human shared a common ancestry. On the other hand, this non religious biology appealed to the rising class of professional scientists. As a result, by the time of his death, evolutionary imagery had spread through all of science, literature and politics. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2006) explains the theory of Darwin in the passage below:

Evolution which is essentially brought about by the interplay of three principles: 1. Variation, a liberalizing factor present in all forms of life: 2. Heredity the conservative force that transmits similar organic form from one generation to another: and 3. The struggle for existence, which determines the variation that will confer advantages in a given environment, thus altering species through a selective reproductive rate.

Darwin's sustained study of natural world provided him with the fact that the planet earth and all species in it come about through evolution on the basis of natural selection. His book *Origin of Species* (1859) revolutionized the man's conception with regards to nature and defied the creation story based on Testaments that universe was created by God having certain "Purpose" and "Design". Darwin's discovery of evolving nature of species challenged the biblical account of a static creation in which man had been deliberately placed at its sacred culmination and center. His further investigation revealed that biological evolution was maintained by random variation and natural selection. The species best adapted to their environment are preserved and those who can't adopt are wiped out. For this the environment or natural world allows them to vary or change upon varying conditions of living. So the species mutable enough to cope with the changing environments are permitted to live and propagate their kind in the natural world. This is the iron law of nature made public by Darwin.

Another significant point of Darwin's discovery is the descent of man. He traced the link of human to the low forms of primates which shook the religious foundation as never before. Church would believe that man is the supreme creation of god, modeled out on him with a divine "Purpose" of ruling the earth as per the God's command. With the

discovery of man's ancestor being apes Darwin further disclosed the fact that the morality, religiosity and conscientious human beings are all shams. In the deeper elemental level of existence all the creatures including men are subject to the instinctual drives like anger, violence, sex, desire for material possession within and socio economic pressures of environment without. The image of man was no longer a fallen angel espoused in divine mould, but a jealous beast whose entire networks of existence are motivated by internal and external forces which are beyond their control. The present form of civilization and moral uprightness demonstrated by man is merely a modified structure of human being to match the rational level but the actual human nature is manifested in bloody battles and warfare for existence. The concept of man as magnanimous, tolerant and virtuous is replaced by hostile, aggressive, and vicious brute in the natural world. The procreative nature of every species cause the birth rate higher than the food and other essentials can sustain. So for the sake of survival a ferocious battle becomes inevitable, where victor is preserved and vanquished wiped out. Same is true to human species whose survival in the deterministic world is a series of battles, despair, trials and tribulations. In a nutshell Darwin describes the concept of struggle and survival in the passage below:

Individuals having any advantage however, slight over others would have the best chance of surviving and of procreating their kind [...] any variation in the least degree injurious would be rigidly destroyed. This preservation of favorable individual differences and variations, and the destruction of those which are injurious, I have called Natural selection, or the survival of the fittest. (54)

Darwin's concept exerted profound influence on his contemporary literary artists of Europe and America. There developed two tendencies quite contrary to each other. One following the Darwin's notion of evolution found mankind liberated from the clutch a conventional Christian dogma, morality and constructing social norms and began to depict man as independent, irresponsible and happy in this very material world, celebrating the moment whereas another turned quite pessimistic at the discovery of cosmic order which was deterministic and man's fruitless struggle for existence in the huge, indifferent universe. Writers of this group presented characters whose lives are surrounded by inexorable laws. They often dealt with sordid life, with human beings showing bestial nature, engulfed in poverty and crime, having no way out in their control to better their life except to succumb to whatever the circumstances dictates them to. Stephen Crane's *Maggie a Girl of the Streets* and *The Open Boat* also feature the same kinds of universe. In England, Hardy, who was most influenced by Darwin, portrayed pessimistic deterministic universe in his fictions. In these kinds of writers' fictional world everything is to be endured nothing to be done. The only principal of life becomes 'eat or be eaten'.

Thus, Darwin concept contributed in establishing the idea of deterministic universe which in turn contributed to boast new literary tendency called naturalism. Darwin's ideas are scientifically proved. So they have factually observed proof to account for the cause of determinism. In the absence of Darwinian, determinism remains unsupported and without determinism naturalism is unthinkable.

Material determinism is a theory propounded by Karl Marx which holds that all cultural and social movement and ideas are brought about by changes in economic and

other material condition. Marx believed that the entire socio-economic relations become base of society over which is founded the institutions like religion, morality, culture, scholarship and others, the superstructure of society. So, this theory, which is related with his notion of historical evolution, led to consequence that there is no objective content to the concept of God, that is, God doesn't exist. All religious ideas and practices, as a result, are strictly illusory. They arise because of social forces but anyone with a true grasp of reality would not believe in God, nor would he observe any code of religious practice. The forces that drive historical change are material in nature. This is why, his doctrine is called material determinism.

Marx asserted that the material forces that drive historical change are dialectical, a term that he borrows from the philosophy of Hegel. Hegel pictures history as the working of opposed principles. At any time there are two historical forces, one a thesis, the other an antithesis. These two forces battle it out, until there is a resolution of the conflict in the formation of a synthesis. However, for Hegel the process is perpetual, for the synthesis becomes just another thesis, and a new antithesis arises to contend with it. But, Marx interprets this historical dialectic in terms of the conflict of economic classes and also departs from Hegel in postulating the existence of a final resolution to all historical conflict. The prelude to this final resolution, which is a classless society, is the advent of the modern division of the classes brought on by industrialization thesis; the bourgeoisie, Antithesis: the proletariat, Synthesis: classless society. Conflict in society will accelerate as the proletariat become more and more conscious of their position class. This idea is clearly expressed by Marx and Engels in their "Manifesto of the Communist Party" after their investigation of the entire process of history from dawn of human civilization down



to the industrial world. They put fourth the view that “the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggle, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed class” (17). Because of the dialectic nature of the material forces this notion is also widely known as ‘historical materialism’ or ‘dialectical materialism’ of Karl Marx.

Ideas concerning the economic relation of Karl Marx have much affinity with the literary text. In the wake of industrial revolution, many countries moved towards a more consumer- oriented society and as a result society divided into two distinct group of owner and labor or haves and have not. The lower class people are always oppressed, their dream to be a good human beings was always shattered. The social and economic reality always became burden to uplift their position in society. However they tried, they were bound to remains in the same condition. They had only two options either to run as they were run or be crushed in the mechanized world out of poverty just like an animal. This kind of reality was revealed by the fiction of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Material prosperity is the only means to escape to the horrible reality which the characters do not have access to. That sort of desperate need make the characters do many things but to no avail. The resulting landing is even more ominous and awful. Writers of that kind of fiction have deeply embedded indignation for the unequal distribution of means in the society and voice for a new society based on equality but since the reality is just the other way around, they cannot present a nice society in fiction as well. The reality is so much stifling that the over crowded housing, unsanitary condition, low pay, difficult working condition and oppressive ruling class make their lives a living hell. In this way the

characters living are determined by the social and economic forces over which they have no command.

Thus, naturalism has close link with theories like Darwinism, Marxism and Determinism and relies on these concepts as its basic principles. These concepts assist naturalism as basis to create deterministic universe with human being having no freewill, rendering them to be helpless creature. The research work, therefore, analyses determinism within the periphery of naturalism in O'Neill's *Dynamo*. In the following chapter this research paper deals thoroughly how this idea is explored in this text.

### **III. Textual Analysis**

#### **Determinism in *Dynamo***

Eugene O' Neill, in his play, *Dynamo*, presents a character, who is like a puppet in the grip of heredity and environment which determine his thought, behavior and ultimately his life as a whole. The impact of heredity and environment is so pervasive and compelling that his endeavor to shape his life and effort to make the desired things remain futile.

He is shown to be facing life at crisis and engulfed in a terrible impasse of circumstances where question of ethical choice and personal judgment and free will becomes irrelevant. The attempt to exercise freewill to overcome the indispensable influence of these determining forces proves disastrous, ultimately, compelling him to commit the violent act of self-annihilation.

Reuben Light, the central character of the play, finds himself trapped in the maelstrom of two opposite forces: heredity and environment. A boy in his teens, he is simultaneously influenced by his father's religious fanaticism and radical atheistic belief advocated by his family's neighbor, Mr. Fife. Moreover, he can't resist himself from being motivated by his unconscious instinctual impulses. Reuben is too immature and lacks logical ability to synthesize these two opposite tendencies to create a favorable balance. Consequently, he is doomed to push himself to the state of severe mental confusion which is later intensified by his committing suicide. Though he tries to resolve his obfuscation by completely embracing science, he can't escape the impact of heredity and environment i.e. religion and science, which leads him to commit suicide. O' Neill,

thus, conspicuously presents the horrible and devastating effect of environment and heredity which will be analyzed in the part of this thesis extensively.

Almost entirely set in the antagonistic atmosphere of two neighborhoods, where Reuben is unknowingly victimized, the play starts with the tension between these two families and ends with Reuben's throwing himself into the moving dynamo. Reuben's father, Reverend Hutchins Light, being a minister in the local church, displays strict carefulness regarding his religious principle. A man with the "stubborn jaw, weakened by an indecisive mouth, his voice is the bullying one of a sermonizer who is the victim of an inner uncertainty that compensates itself by being boomerily overassertive" (422). Since his profession is the legacy of his forefathers, he wants his son to follow his religious path and perpetuate the same profession as his successor regardless of the choice and interest of his teenager son. Mr. Light's determination is revealed in his conversation with his wife.

Mrs. Light: Hutchins please pay attention to what I'm saying. Don't you think we ought to decide definitely about Reuben's future?

Light: I have decided. He shall follow in my footsteps-mine and those of my father before me his father before him. It is God's manifest will. (423)

Mr. Light is adamant in his decision without any consideration for Reuben. For him in the comfortable path of life the "spirits decays in the sinful sloth of the flesh ..." (425). His harsh purpose is motivated not by his willingness to provoke spirituality through religion but to impose religion as the tradition on his son. What he emphasizes is not spirituality but religiosity which is culture. He is horribly suspicious and afraid that his son would be contaminated and corrupted so he doesn't want his son to mix with others

who do not believe in religion and God. When Mr. Fife, who lives next door, says anything to Reuben, he expresses his outrage:

Mr. Light: What did he mean about Reuben? ... that foulmouthed scoundrel? ... "Better call in your son or same night I might mistake his odor of sanctity of a skunk's and fill his" ... I heard the corners loafers laugh ... and I had to slink by and pretend not to hear? ... If it weren't for my cloth I'd have beaten his face to a bloody pulp!" (423)

This shows Reuben father's over solicitude for an atheist, Mr. Fife. Ironically, Reuben seems to be uninfluenced by his father's orthodox beliefs and principles. Rather he develops an anti-religious stance which is the outcome of his father's over-emphasis and blind faith in religion and God. Naturally, for a teenager like Reuben strict fundamental principles are not the things of primary necessity and importance. Such strict rules and regulations are difficult to shallow for the moment is the stage to be fascinated and experience the materials comfort and prosperity. But Mr. Light lacks knowledge of this natural aspect and fails to acknowledge the distinctions. As a result, his one-sided imposition has negative impact upon his son. Hence, Reuben's negative attitude towards religion and God is determined by his father's excessiveness.

Marx, in his book, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, avers that "it is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence; but on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness" (18). All cultural and social movements and ideas are brought about changes in economic and other material condition. No person can escape the ineluctable impact of his/her socio-economic condition and Reuben can't be an exception. Reuben's anti-religious attitude is the

consequences of his consciousness which is determined by the socio-economic in which he is living.

Though Reuben doesn't express his awareness about the economic condition of his family openly, he is aware of the fact they are living in the situation of material depravity. The Lights reside in the house where the rooms are "sparsely furnished with the bare necessities; there is a lighted kerosene stove ... the ceiling of both rooms are low ... the wallpaper so faded that ugliness of its color and design has been toned down into a neutral blur" (421). These all details expose, clearly, the bleak economic status of the Light family. Apart from these details, it is highlighted by Mrs. Light's comment and disagreement with his husband regarding Reuben's future:

Mrs. Light: He is always so sure of what's God will! ...but Reuben'll never be a minister if I can prevent it! ... rather see him dead than got through the poverty and humiliation I've had to face? ... Reuben's get to go to college ... then into business ... marry a nice girl with money ... he doesn't care about girls yet, thanks goodness. Each of us must judge about Reuben according to the Light vouchsafed by God. (423)

Thus, Mrs. Light's dislike towards her husband's idea to make Reuben follow his path is the consequence of the humiliation and poverty she undergoes. She has experienced the bitterness of economic depravity as a minister's wife and she doesn't like her son face the same condition by following the profession of his father. Her consciousness is determined by her material condition.

Reuben, too, can't remain unaffected of his family's economic condition. Though, he doesn't demonstrate his awareness frankly and openly, he is unconsciously influenced

by his material condition. In spite of his father's continuous devotion to religion and God, their material condition could not improve and the family has to face economic shortcomings. This reality has obvious impact on his consciousness. As he sees no improvement in economic condition by following the religious path, he takes a rebellious path. So, Reuben's anti-religious streak is the outcome of his consciousness which is determined by his socio-economic condition. Reuben's consciousness of this condition can be vividly perceived when he explodes responding his father's blame against him:

Reuben: Pneumonia, eh? Well, it's damn wonder we didn't all die of it years ago, living in this dump? Ever since I can remember the Cellar's leaked like a sieve. You never could afford to get it fixed right. Mother was always after you about it. And I can remember the ceiling in my room. Every storm the water'd begin to drip down and Mother'd put the wash basin on the floor to catch it. It was always damp in this house.

Mother was always after you to make them put in a decent furnace instead of-(465)

This marks the decisive role that material reality plays in Reuben's rejection of religious faith.

Reuben's lack of interest in religiosity is enhanced by Mr. Fife's radical atheistic belief very strongly. Mr. Fife, who is the nearest neighbor of Light family, is the man of materialistic bent of mind. He has biting tongue, but at a bottom is a good-natured man "except where the religious bigotry of his atheism is concerned" (428). As an antithesis of Mr. Light's religious fanaticism, he strongly disparages his fundamental views. He exhibits no fear and worry when he mockingly challenges the existence of God. Due to

their extremist views, Mr. Fife and Mr. Light often engage in verbal intrigue. But Mr. Light cannot defend himself and shamefully submits in front of Mr. Fife pretending that its sin to argue with an atheist.

Reuben is the sole witness of the tussle that takes between his father and Mr. Fife. He finds his father unable to counteract Mr. Fife with logic in order to prove the superiority of his belief neither the God comes to interfere and assist his father. On the other hand, Mr. Fife's arguments are more challenging and convincing. So, these incidents contribute to heighten the stance taken by Reuben and make his belief stronger.

On the same ground, the Fife's strong economic condition and their more liberal and modern attitude are also responsible for Reuben's inclination towards Mr. Fife. Although a diehard atheist, Mr. Fife and his family are living a life of profound material comfort and prosperity. Reuben can realize the vast economic gap between his family and the Fife's. His fascination towards Mr. Fife's atheistic attitude and denial of his father's strict religiosity is, therefore, his attempt to transcend the barrier imposed by his father and society to go and get the glittering beauty of life.

Reuben's father expresses hatred towards Fife for his atheistic practices. He curses Fife in this way:

But, Lord, Thou knowest what a thorn in the flesh that atheist, Fife, has been since the devil brought him next door? ... How long, O, Lord ... does not his foul rating being to try Thy patience? ... is not the time him dead? ... Lord God of Hosts, why dost thou not strike him? ... If thou didst, I would proclaim the awful warning of it overall America! when Mr.



Light hears this he, “with his voice booming”, says it is “God’s will.”  
(424)

This shows Mr. Light extreme dislike towards an atheist, Mr. Fife. But Reuben is neither affected not convinced by this. Instead, Reuben begins to argue with his father taking Fife’s side:

What’s he shouting about? ... what do I care about? ... What do I care about him any way? ... he hates Fife because he’s scared of him any ... there’s God nor not ... when Fife took out his watch and said if there was a God let him prove it by striking him dead in five minutes, why was it nothing happened? ... I should think of ... (424).

This shows how environment is responsible to shape the thought and attitude. But when ha says this he finds himself in confusion as to whether totally support Fife or put trust in his father. After all, the impact of heredity is unavoidable. His confusion is seen in his statement “I should think of”. Then he looks around uneasily, afraid of where his thought are leading him” (424). He starts guiltily and hastily which makes a reassuring declaration of faith as he says, “Of course there’s a God ... He wouldn’t pay any attention to a fool like Fife that all ...” (424).

Though Reuben doesn’t seem to have been affected by his father’s religious profession and possesses a rebellious streak, he can’t go against his father in a radical way. Despite his continuous attempt, he can’t escape from the effect of religion which flows in his blood. His fear of God is the inevitable influence of heredity.

His father’s religiosity and concept of traditional God and Mr. Fife’s atheism work simultaneously to exert influence upon Reuben’s thought and attitude due to which

he is unable to reconcile them. His consciousness is caught up in an intensely complex relation of distinct values. The contradictory process of simultaneous influence leads him to the state of acute dilemma and mental instability. Heredity and environment have dominated his fate; free will has become insignificant cipher to be manipulated and guided by these forces.

Mr. Light, who is always anxious about Reuben, mentions “storm” as he says “storm must be coming this way” to warn Reuben that something bad might happen to him challenging for God. Mr. Light further says that “lightening by implication, faith gets on lots people’s nerves without their being afraid of it” (424). At this, Reuben again disagrees with his father about the question of God as he says, “Aw, what’s the matter with me? ...that lightening had nothing to do with what I was thinking ...” (224). This statement of Reuben shows both awe and apathy towards God. One of the major reasons why Mr. Light is furious with Fife, whom he calls an atheist, is that he has got a daughter whom Reuben loves. He sits thinking gloomily and says:

Mr. Light: Why? ... have I been too stern? ... but even when he was little I sensed in him is his mother’s rebellious spirit and now ... if it is Fife’s daughter ... what a feather in that blasphemers’ cap to corrupt my son? ... how the gossip would sneer at him? (426)

Mr. Light’s fear of Reuben being corrupted by Fife’s daughter is the realization of the fact that Reuben is in the stage when human beings are attracted towards their opposite sex. This is further made obvious by the conversation between Mr. Light and his wife:

Mrs. Light: Do you expect a boy of his age to stay in like a poor stick-in-mud just because he happens to be a minister's son-especially when it's spring.

Mrs. Light: I remembered that its spring and I've just remembered that Fife has a daughter? (425)

Lights are, thus, conscious about Reuben's teenage stage and the situation the stage invites. They acknowledge that it is quite natural for a boy like Reuben to experience and enjoy the beautiful world outside, especially in the spring. It is ironical that despite his knowledge of the natural laws, Mr. Light wants his son to confine himself within the periphery of his limitation. He attempts to invalidate the laws of nature by inflicting his religious laws which is no way possible.

Human being is the victim of his compulsive instincts. Powerful biological instincts-amoral, aggressive, erotic are the significant motivating factors, and that on the face of these factors the human virtues of rationality, moral conscience and religious feeling are conceivable no more than reaction-formations and delusions of civilized self concept. The sense of human freedom becomes fragile in front of the existence of such unconscious determinants which determine man's behavior and conscious awareness. Reuben somewhat exhibits fear and consideration for ethical values and his father's faith in God. He is aware about "what's he shouting about? ... has he heard about Ada and me? ... he'll raise the roof!" (424). But this rationality and awareness becomes frozen when it encounters with his idea of meeting Ada. His compulsive sexual instinct is so intense that he loses his patience and "goes to the window and looks over towards the Fife home" (424). He expresses his obsession and eagerness to meet Ada:

Reuben: Ada said she'd put a record on the Victrola as soon as she was free.... then I was to meet her down by the lilacs .... Gee, these lilacs smell sweet... I wish she'd hurry up .... I've got to get up my nerve and tell her I love her .... Gosh, I wish Ada'd hurry up ...(430)

Nevertheless, though, Reuben possesses unconscious instinctual desire for opposite sex, the environment in which he is living is quite responsible to excite his hidden instinctual impulse. Environment offers Ada as the means to motivate Reuben's desire like Reuben, Ada, a girl in her teens, is passionately enthusiastic to meet her boy friend. Reuben. She is overtly conscious of her self-decoration and often puts heavy make-up of rouge and mascara. She is romantically aware of her boy friend's longing for her and expresses her feeling for him:

Ada: Gosh how long is it since I put on the record? ... Rube'll be waiting ... he is as bashful as a kid...but that what I like about him ... Rube has got honest-to-God feelings ... but of course, I'd never love him ... he's too big a mama's boy me ... (430).

Upon thinking about Reuben her emotion heightens so excessively that she is "dying to see if he'll have nerve enough to kiss me....(430). When she meets Reuben "She suddenly raises on tiptoe and kisses him...with a little laugh to help keep his nerve up" (430). But, at this juncture, Reuben becomes highly excited. A wave of passion comes over him, "grabs her by the shoulder and bends his face close to her" (433). He is absolutely guided by his animalistic passion. Ada, being hurt, opposes his violent act but Reuben could not escape from the grip of his hidden bestiality and says "I don't care if it

does! I love you, Ada” (433). At this stance, Reuben’s animalistic sexual impulse is profoundly at work and symptom of his civilized part is repressed.

Thus, in the face of biological need, no logic works; impulse, desire, emotion becomes dominant and rationality fades away. Reuben fears and cares the principles of religion and morality but when his instincts dominate these ideas become weak. In addition to his instinctual impulse, the environment also contributes to motivate his instinct.

Reuben’s state of mental instability and confusion intensifies with his visit to Mr. Fife’s house. When Reuben visits Fife, Mr. Fife provokes him into argument regarding religion, God and faith which even deteriorates Reuben’s condition. His challenge that whether “he is ever going to take up my challenge to debate with me” make’s Reuben uncomfortable and thoughtful. While there he cannot side with Fife and opposes his father. Neither does he fully support his father when he is with his father. So, Reuben replies “defensively” saying “No he is not? He can answer all your argument easy with things right out of the Bible? He is only scared that folks’d think he was wrong to argue with you! But I’d argue if I was his place?” (436). However, when Mr. Fife says that they would argue it out sometime when becomes a minister. He says, “Father wants to be. Besides, I’ve never felt the call” (437). This shows that Reuben suffers mental instability because of his being squashed between his father’s fanaticism and Fife’s radical atheistic attitudes. At this, Fife retorts sarcastically:

And how does call you, tell me? I am thinking he wouldn’t use the telegraph or telephone or radio for they’re contraptions that belong to his archenemy Lucifer, the God of electricity. What’s the trouble young

fellow? Are you afraid of a bit of lightening? Don't worry about me. The devil looks after his own? But a minister's son has reason to worry, may be, when he's in a den of atheism, holding intimate converse with a dammed man! I'm thinking your Jehovah might aim a thunderbolt at me but Lucifer would deflect it on to you and he's the better electrical expert of the two, being more modern in his methods than your God! (437)

Mr. Fife is fearless about the god and challenges and satirizes Reuben of being a minister's son. This makes Reuben even more confused and disappointed as he says in turmoil of guilt and fright, "I wish I'd never come here" (437). Mr. Fife is too antagonistic and critical towards Mr. Light's blind faith on religion and God. With the intention of shocking Reuben and his father and destroy their faith, Mr. Fife, on the basis of the murder story published in the newspaper, waves a false story that he committed a murder of a person, who was supposed to marry his would be wife twenty years ago. As Reuben has not been able to totally free from the impact of his father's belief in God, even when Mr. Fife doesn't connect him with the story Reuben is greatly moved. He thinks from the perspective of his father; the predominance of his father's belief can be clearly perceived. He harshly expresses his judgment in his father's tone:

That other fellow should have killed them, that's what I think? That girl was engaged to the other fellow? She has no right to love Clark. This wasn't love, it was lust? She was an adulteress. It would have been only her just punishment if that fellow had killed her? I would have. (440)

At this moment, Reuben is expressing his judgment as an independent thinker and strict moralist. But when Mr. Fife dramatically confesses and cunningly discloses that he was

in fact the Clark himself, Reuben goes off balance. He concludes that Mr. Fife and his wife are great sinners as they have committed murder and adultery. So, he thinks his love for their daughter will not materialize. He says, “Then that’s her mother! She is the daughter of an adulteress! and murder? ... how can I ever trust her? ... She’s gone around with lots of fellows ... how do I know she never? ... Oh, God, why did I ever come here tonight? ...” (441). Reuben, thus, exhibits the impact of the religion and morality. This incident leads Reuben into a complex situation lacking ability to logically solve it. He can neither support Fife’s atheistic practices blindly nor can he go to surrender to his father’s beliefs. He can’t reveal the incident to the police because he loves Fife’s daughter. Mr. Fife intentionally does this because he thinks Reuben is like his father. He wants to show Reuben worthless in the eyes of law and God. Fife says: “You don’t say a word. Well, may be I shouldn’t have told you, become now I have made you an accessory in the murder for you’ll be shielding me unlawfully by keeping silence. And the devil knows what sin you’ll commit in the sight of God!” This makes Reuben much tormented and “conscience-stricken” (441). He cannot decide as to how to act in such a condition. He expresses his indecision and recitation, “But God! ... I’ll be guilty before God! ... but he knows I gave my word? But does that count with him? ...” (441). Reuben remembers his words and mumbles to Mr. Fife: “I won’t tell the police you needn’t worry” but inside him a sense of hatred was developing as he thinks: “Why does he rub it in? ... God, I hate him! ... (442). Reuben is, thus, more confused and unstable. However, on the other hand, his father’s influence is equally working on him. He says to Fife:

“You needn’t be afraid I’ll tell but you ought to go to and tell yourself?

You know you’re guilty in the sight of God? Do you want to burn forever

in hell? Don't take you dare talk like that? I won't stand for it-not! If you don't stop your blaspheming, I'll mean, it'd serve you right if I ... (442)

Fife openly neglects what Reuben says: "Your hell and God mean no more to me than old women's when they're scared of the dark." (442). When on his way to home Reuben thinks over the whole incident at Fife's house, he becomes desperate as he becomes torn between his father's belief and Fife open atheism. He thinks:

As, what is sin, any way? ... may be that's just old women's nonsense like Fife says ..., why should I have a guilty conscience? ... It is God's fault! ... Why hasn't he done something to Fife? ... I should think he'd have to punish adultery and murder ... if there is any God ... (444)

Reuben takes thing literally. Reuben is suspicious of the existence of God for not interfering when Mr. Fife is openly and fearlessly denouncing Him. At the same time he comes in the clutch of his unconscious sexual desire. He romantically remembers Ada kissing him and wishes, "She'd have let me kiss her ... I've have had her in my arms ... like her mother was with Clark" (444). But at once his rational part is evoked and he becomes conscious. "No I didn't mean that? ... I didn't mean sin? ..." Reuben can neither overcome his father's religions principles nor can he avoid the immediate influence of his instinctual impulse.

At this very moment a "great flash of lightening reminding him of his father's warning" (444). He becomes more and more absorbed by a feeling of guilt, of being a condemned sinner alone in the threatening night. He thinks "it comes every time when I deny God!" (444). Then he begins to get frightened of God. He says: "Fife damned me with him? There's no use praying? It's getting black! I'm afraid of God! (444). Thus,



Reuben's entire thought, attitude and activities are determined by heredity, environment and his hidden sexual impulses. The question of free will and personal judgment all gets shattered in front of these forces.

Being totally confused and instable, Reuben hurries towards home seeking his mother's assistance and desperately calls, "Mother where are you?" (445). Since he is a son of minister he cannot remain silent when he arrives home. Finding his mother less strict and harsh and due to his confidence that his mother supports him, he decides to confide in her the secrets of Mr. Fife. In order to console himself he takes his mother's favor: "I love mother better than anything in the world ... she always forgives me ... I wish I could tell her ... she would know what was right ... I'm scared, Mother? I'm guilty dammed!" (446).

Quite contrary to Reuben's expectation, Mrs. Light was furious enough to see her son's growing intimacy and meeting with Ada. Like her husband, she was strict regarding religiosity at least so far as Reuben's visit to the Fifes is concerned. So she was, in no way, to excuse Reuben's act. She expresses her profound dislike and hatred towards Ada when she kisses Reuben: "She kissed him? ... the brazen little harlot? ... where is she taking him? ... I have got to stop her?" (446). Reuben, however, is totally unaware about his mother's attitude towards Ada. Having seen the activities between Ada and Reuben and Reuben's interaction with Mr. Fife, Mrs. Light gives up her favor for her son and speaks taking her husband's side:

Sshh! Let him come up here ... You hide in that closet and listen? I'll make him acknowledge every thing. He'd only lie to you ... I promise I won't stand between him and punishment this time? ... (445)

Reuben, on the other, has no idea how his mother has changed her side. With the intension of knowing the reality, Mrs. Light puts her arms around him with maternal tenderness and persuades him:

There, there! It's all right, Reuben? Mother's here! ... what have those awful people been doing to my boy to get him in such a state? ... Now don't deny you're there? Don't make matters worse by lying? What happened between you and that man? Tell mother! (446)

Being entirely overwhelmed by pretentious maternal compassion and love, Reuben hesitatingly discloses all about the event that happened in the Fife home to lessen his severe mental tension. But ultimately the fact is revealed and Reuben realized that he has been deceived by his mother. His mother betrays him by letting Mr. Light to know all what he says. This incident entirely shatters Reuben's faith. Moreover, his mother criticizes him severely and calls Ada a "little harlot" despite his plea that he loves her "with all his heart" (447). He thinks in a tortured agony of spirit: "She cheated me! ... when I trusted her! ... when I loved her better than anyone in the world!" and cries out in a passion of reproach, "Oh, Mother! Mother!" (448). His mother mercilessly asks her husband to punish Reuben for his misdeed. But the deception and rude behavior of his mother instigate Reuben's repressed violent rebellious spirit. He abandons all faith and affection for his mother. He defiantly protests his father. His anger and hatred grows to the extent that he declines to accept Mrs. Light as his mother. He furiously says: "You're not my mother anymore! I'll do without a mother rather than have your kind." (450)

When Mr. Light whips him as punishment for what he calls a sin, Reuben grows bold and defies his father and his God. He fiercely warns his father against touching him,

calling him “fool”. He further says, “I’m not scared of you and of your God any more?” (452). His father prays to God to have mercy but Reuben says with a sneer: “What God? Fife’s God? Electricity? Are you praying it for mercy? It can’t hear you? It doesn’t give a damn about you?” At this moment O’Neill creates an atmosphere favorable for Reuben’s father because there is tremendous crash of thunder. Reuben looks up at the sky saying challengingly to God, “Shoot away, old Bozo! I am not scared of you!” (452). At this point Reuben totally abandons his faith on traditional God and pronounces his belief in the miracle of science:

What’s the matter? Do you still believe in his fool God? I’ll show you if there is his (father’s) God let him strike me dead this second! dare him there! didn’t I tell you! There is no God! No God but Electricity. I’ll never be scared again! I’m through with the lot of you? (453)

Reuben, thus, openly challenges his father’s god and embraces electricity as the new god. After this Reuben leaves his home and family to establish his own identity and value on the basis of his own judgment and free will. Up to now, O’Neill has cleverly created the chain of cause and effect. Reuben’s confusion is caused by the double impact of heredity and environment i.e. religions and science; this confusion leads Reuben to seek mother’s assistance and the betrayal of his mother cause him to revolt against his family. Moreover, his mother’s deception is caused by Reuben’s activities. In this sense, all events and state of affairs are determined by antecedent ones.

Naturalism, which follows Darwinian notion of evolution, places human beings on the same or slightly above the level of animals. It perceives human beings as inherently possessing animalistic instincts which primarily incorporates aggression, erotic

impulse and tendency to accumulate possession. O' Neill highlights this thesis in play through his protagonist Reuben. Reuben's violent aggression and rebellion against his family is the manifestation of his repressed animalistic impulses which a human being inevitably possesses. His rejection and announcement of the death of his living mother is the epitome of the expression of his concealed bestiality and exaggeration of his rational and civilized faculty. Mrs. Light's unexpected betrayal serves only as a catalyst to vividly expose the bestiality inherent in his son. In fact, the explosion of Reuben's hatred and anger against his father is not sudden and automatic but the outcome of the gradual development of rebellious spirit repressed inside him. It is evident from the beginning that Reuben didn't exhibit interest towards his father's religious fanaticism but developed a rebellious streak against his father's attempt to impose religiosity upon him. But he couldn't openly reject and revolt against his father and support Mr. Fife because, on the one hand, the so called ethics didn't allow him to do so and on the other hand, he couldn't escape the influence of heredity. When circumstances become favorable his repressed anger and hatred is expressed vehemently and he is able to choose his own way according to his free will by surrendering himself to the electric God. So he leaves home and his family as a result of his freedom of choice.

After the betrayal by his mother and his verbal tussle with his father, Reuben leaves home for good reason; leaving home is freedom of will to embark in the search of truth on his own, irrespective of any obstacles. He devotedly indulges himself in the study of the things related to science seeking truth and returns after 15 months as a completely changed person fully embracing science as the essence of his personal judgment. In his meeting with Mrs. Fife, he confesses that Mr. Fife changed him as he

says, “He did me a favor. He woke me up. You can tell him I’ve joined his church. The only God I believe in now is electricity” (458). In order to affirm and express his devotion to the study of science to seek truth, he tells Mrs. Fife:

I am studying a lot of science. Some time I’ve gone without eating to buy books: and often I’ve read all night – book on astronomy and biology and physics and chemistry and evolution. It all comes down to electricity in the end. What the fool preacher’s call God is in electricity somewhere-Did you ever watch dynamo? What I mean is in them-somehow? (458)

This shows that Reuben has totally forsaken his father’s fundamentalist and fanatical beliefs. He has completely substituted the traditional God with a new electric God-dynamo.

Reuben’s radical aversion towards religion and God, apart from his mother’s betrayal and father’s fundamentalism, is also evoked by his need to justify himself “not an yellow-rat” before Mr. Fife and Ada. Mr. Fife’s cunning and cruel conspiracy to debase Reuben by weaving a false story and show him inappropriate as candidate for Ada is a great challenge and shock to Reuben’s self-esteem and trust on Ada. So, his rebellion and departure from his family is also motivated by this very cause which can be evidenced at the moment when Reuben boasts himself before Ada after his return:

Guess nothing! You loved me before I went away-even when you were bawling me out for a yellow rat. That was what made you so mad, wasn’t it? You were ashamed of loving me when I was so dumb and didn’t get what you wanted and was so damned scared to touch you. But you needn’t worry any more Ada. I’ve learned a lot about love since I left-and I get

you, all right! You are damned right I've changed. I'm not yellow about you or God or anything else! Don't forget that, Ada ... (460)

Reuben total surrendering to science consequently led Reuben to be overtly-obsessed with science-electricity. He sees every thing through the lens of science. Not only his attitudes and perception but also his manner and behaviour is also radically changed.

Unlike, the previous shy and light hearted Reuben, the present Reuben is full of courage and confidence in his dealings. After meeting Ada he thinks to "Go right up and kiss her" and being overwhelmed by this idea he boldly "pulls her head down and kisses her keeping lips on hers while she struggles instinctively for a moment ..." (459)

Ada responds at this instance saying "Rube! You - you have changed -I hardly know you! I shouldn't have kissed you-like that, I don't know why I -" (460). At this moment Reuben's sexual instinct is also seen to be overpowering him and his activities.

Reuben's visit to his house marks another important turning point in his life. After his severe and blasphemous words to his mother, Reuben intends to meet his mother. He is unaware of how his mother is shocked by his despicable words and face untimely death. In his encounter with his father, he learns of his mother's death through him and becomes dejected. He quarrels with his father blaming him for his death. On the contrary, his father puts the blame on him:

She'd been pinning away for almost a year. Her heart was broken because you'd gone. She hoped her time you'd come back but finally she gave up hoping - and gave up wanting to live! And your horrible blasphemous postcards kept coming! She blamed herself for your ruin and she wrote long letter begging your forgiveness, and asking you to come home! But

you'd never given her an address? She couldn't mail them, and that broke her heart most of all! You killed her as surely as if you give her poison.

You unnatural accursed son! (465)

Reuben is greatly disturbed and traumatized by this and feels himself responsible for the death of his mother. On the one hand he is obsessed by science and electricity on the other hand his mother's death extremely affects him. This leads him to acute delirium. When his father reveals that his mother's last words were "Don't be fool" he thinks excitedly, "we have electrocuted your God. Don't be fool ... That's what I kept writing her ... her last words ... Then I'd converted her away from his God!..." (406). Even when his father reminds him that he has sold his soul to Satan he immediately becomes resentful and with his cold smile he says:

Your Satan is dead. We electrocuted him along with your God. Electricity is God now. And we've got to learn to know God, haven't we? Well, that's what's I'm after! ... Did you ever watch dynamos? Come down to the plant and I will convert you? I converted Mother didn't I? Well, so long. (467)

This clearly shows how Reuben is obsessed and influenced by electricity and the atheistic views.

Ada wants to be ensured that Reuben doesn't hate her which Reuben responds positively. She pleadingly asks him to put his arms around her tight and kiss her again as a proof of his love. Reuben, at first, kissed her mechanically but as he comes in physical contact with Ada his sexual instincts is evoked and he forgets everything. He says with a reawakening passion "Gee you are pretty Ada! You've certainly got me going!" (469).

This shows how Reuben is naturally guided by his instinctual desire. But once his desire is over he neglects Ada and the impact of science starts to work upon him. When Ada asks him that she wants to help him forget the things he is thinking about, he responds determinedly: “I can’t forget. And I don’t want to. I want to face things. I won’t ever be satisfied now until I’ve found the truth about everything” (469). This shows how Reuben is obsessed with the idea of seeking truth like a scientist regardless of anything else.

When Ada tells him that he has scared her Reuben is irritated:

Reuben: Cut out that talk of being scared! What are you scared about?

Scared what we did was a sin? You’re hell of an atheist! Ada you’re the one that used to be always kidding me about being a goody boy! There’s nothing to be scared about or sorry for, what we did was just plan sex-an act of nature- and that’s all there is to it?

Ada: Is that all- it means to you?

Reuben: That’s all it means to anyone! What people call love is just sex- and there’s no sin about it. (469)

These statements best expose his atheistic views i.e. the influence of science. For Reuben nothing other than material is truth. He has forsaken anything abstract. His conception of love changes radically after he rejects God; love has become a mere manifestation of sexual currents. O’ Nell is clever enough not only to show the impact of science upon his character but also to focus on the thesis of naturalism in his play through him. When Ada reminds Reuben of his promise to marry her, he says sarcastically:

Talk sense Ada? We’re married by nature now. We don’t need any old fool of a minister saying prayers over us. Say, here’s one on me, Ada-



speaking of praying. It was out at Mother's grave. Before I thought, I started to do a prayer act – and then suddenly it hit me that there was nothing to pray.... It just goes to show you what a hold that bunk gets on you when you've had it crammed down your throat from the time you were born. You can't pray to electricity unless you're foolish in the head, can you? But may be you could, at that – if you knew now! (470)

Reuben has given up all social practices. Everything that happens, for him, is nothing other than natural process. He sees everything from the naturalistic perspective. For him, the traditional way of marriage has no significance at all. All customs, rituals are only the veil to envelope the hidden compulsive instincts and natural process of human beings.

Though Reuben's words manifest the influence of science, he can't remain unaffected by the memory of his mother. He is simultaneously searching both for his belief and for mother. His attempt to neglect and shun his sexual feeling for Ada is the outcome of his feeling that it is the betrayal of his mother's pure love as his mother was always against their relation. When he is alone he thinks bitterly about his mother:

The last time I was here... there's the closet where she hid him ... here's where she sat lying to me.... Watching him beat me.... I'm glad she's dead.

(Then immediately, remorseful) No... I don't mean that. Mother... I was thinking of how you acted that night.... I wish I could have seen you after you'd changed... after you'd come back to my side. (471)

Reuben, thus, develops positive as well as negative thinking about his mother. Even when he thinks about his mother Reuben can't escape the impact of the principle he has

adopted. He remembers that for her mother Ada was no better than a street walker but he can't help analyzing his mother's view. He thinks with coarse sensuality:

But it's grand to have her around handily whenever I want ... the flesh, as the old man would call it ... she's all right other ways, too... I like her ... she got me the job ... She'll be useful ... And I'll treat her decent ... may be it's love ... Whatever the hell love is? .... Did Mother really love the old man? .... She must have or how could she stand him? .... And she made me with him ... act of Nature ... like me and Ada .... (472)

Reuben's thought echoes the impact of science upon him. He is caught in the intensely complex conflict of his feelings. He can neither resist himself from thinking about his mother nor can he avoid the impact of scientific principles. With the intension of being free from the conflicting emotions he goes down to the plant to take a look in at the dynamos.

Reuben becomes mesmerized by the sight of dynamo. Whenever he visits hydro-electric plant his mind is occupied intensely by the environment of the plant. He can't think and talk anything other than the dynamo. His thought comes under the grip of the sound of dynamo and fascinatingly he thinks: "It so mysterious ... and grand ... it makes you feel things ... you don't need to think ... you almost get the secret ... what electricity is ... what life is ... what God is ... its all the same thing ..." (474). Now, for Reuben the dynamo is all that exists; it is like the great dark idol which is like the old stone statues of Gods people prayed to. He, further, sees the image of his mother in the dynamo as he thinks: "Below it is like a body ... not a man's ... round like woman's .... As if it had breasts ... but not like a girl ... not like Ada ...no, like a woman ... like her mother ... or

mine ... a great dark mother! That's what dynamo is! .... That's what life is" (474).

Reuben thus is totally obsessed with dynamo. Its sounds are like the sounds produced from the church "always singing about everything in the world" (474). To know what it means, for him, is to know the real God. Thinking that there is something in it to pray which will answer him he starts praying aloud to the dynamo: "Oh, Mother of life, my mother is dead, she has passed back into you, tell her to forgive me, and to help me find your truth" (474).

As Reuben is suffering from the sense of guilt of the death of his mother, he takes his prayer to his God, dynamo, as a prayer to forgive him. So after he prays to the dynamo "there is a look of calm and relief on his face now." He thinks reverentially "Yes, that did it ... I feel I'm forgiven ... Mother will help me ... I can sleep ... I'll go home ...." (474). Thus, Reuben is struggling through conflicting emotions, leading him to the verge of insanity.

The influence of the dynamo upon Reuben gradually becomes intense. He thinks everything in terms of this electric god. Even the sound of the rushing water in the dynamo resembles the song of his mother. For him, everything rises and ends in the dynamo. The excessive impact of this machine can be observed when he speaks to Mrs.

Fife:

Yes, you're like her-Dynamo-the Great mother-big and warm [...] But there must be centre around which all this moves, mustn't there? There is in everything else! And that center must be the Great mother of Eternal life, Electricity, and Dynamo in her Divine Image on earth! Her power houses are the new churches ... (477)

Thus Reuben's new religion is science; dynamo serves as the supreme entity-God, on the earth. She is the source of all things on earth. She would give the secret of truth to one who loves her purely and that person being the savior who will bring happiness and peace to man. Reuben's such mental instability and obsession is intensified when he further talks to Mrs. Fife:

I'm going to be that savior-that's why I asked you to come- I want you to be a witness! I know the miracle will happen to me tonight because I had a message from my mother last night ... just as she used to when she came into kiss me good night [...] know she came from the spirit of the Great Mother into which she passed when she died to tell me she had at last found me worthy of her love. (477)

This shows that Reuben is gradually moving towards insanity.

Reuben is preoccupied with the idea of the truth that the new God, dynamo, would reveal him. His finding the secret is more important than anything else. As Reuben has, now, embraced dynamo as his new God, the Divine Image, he thinks "that Dynamo would never find me worthy of her secret until I'd given up the flesh and purified myself!" (475). Similarly, dynamo is his mother figure and Ada is the hindrance in the attainment of the motherly love. So, he develops a tendency to avoid Ada fearing that she would contaminate him with her flesh. When he sees Ada coming near him, he becomes conscious and thinks: "It's Ada! ... Dynamo sent her here! ... she wanted to prove I've conquered the flesh! ..." (471). What is evident here is that, though Reuben has embraced dynamo as his God, he can't escape from the impact of the belief of his father that the "flesh" is the obstacle in the path to attain God and religiosity. So, the impact of heredity

is found here. When Ada, hearing Reuben saying “it was she who made you come” (481), surprisingly asks who she is, Reuben takes a threatening step toward her and denouncing says in a booming voice like his father:

You blasphemous fool, you! Do you dare to deny her “The fool saith in his heart – ” Say, did you get me quoting from the Bible, Ada? That’s one on me. That comes from arguing with the old man lately. He’s got fool notion that dynamo is the devil [...] Listen to me, Ada! Tonight the miracle will happen! ... and then there will be only the kingdom of happiness on earth – my kingdom! – for us Ada! Only you’ve got to help me! (482)

Ada, being frightened by this state of Reuben, thinks “For God’s sake, what’s come over him? ... the damned dynamo! ... It’s driving him crazy! ...” (482). This justifies that Reuben is on the way to insanity.

Reuben’s insanity reaches to its zenith. He is completely devastated and strongly preoccupied by the conflicting thoughts. He thinks:

Mother ... I’ve betrayed you ... you will never bless me with the miracle now ... you have shut me from your heart for ever! ... Mother have mercy on me! ... I hate her now! ... as much as you hate her! ... Give me one more chance ... what can I do to get you to forgive me? ... tell me! ... yes ... I hear you, Mother! ... and then you’ll forgive me? ... And I can come to you? ... (487)

Reuben, thus, is completely insane being obsessed by the idea of the mother. A terrible look of murder comes on his face. He starts for the stairs, his hands out stretched as if he

were already strangling her ... then stops thinking: "No ... Not with my hands ... never touch her flesh again ... how? ... I see ... Switchboard room ... In the desk ..." (487).

This shows Reuben thinks Ada as the hindrance in his way to mother's love and forgiveness as he is also obsessed by the idea of his mother. So, in his extreme state of insanity, he kills Ada with a revolver saying her 'harlot', the word his mother used to call her. Then thinking with an anguished appeal he calls for his mother: "Mother ... where are you? ... I did it for your sake ... don't leave me alone" (488).

Ultimately, Reuben pleads to the dynamo like a little boy and kills himself by throwing himself over the exciter. "There is a flash a light of bluish light about him and all the lights in the plant dim down until they are almost out and the noise of the dynamo dies until it is the faintest purring hum. Simultaneously, Reuben's voice rises in a moan that is a mingling of pain and loving consummation and this cry dies into a sound that is like the crooning of a baby and merges and is lost in the dynamo's hum. Then his body crumples to the steel platform and from there falls heavily to the floor." (488).

Thus, Reuben faces a horrible death. He tried to overcome the influence of dynamo and his conflicting emotions but to no avail. The impact of dynamo and working of his feelings is so forceful that his mind is totally occupied by the intense thought of these forces. Finally, this excessive thought leads him to the horrible state of insanity and heinous act of murder and suicide. The effect of environment and instinctual impulses is, therefore unavoidable.

#### IV. Conclusion

The research study has been accomplished by applying naturalism to prove determinism in Eugene O' Neill's *Dynamo*. Naturalism affirms that nature is the whole of reality and can be understood only through scientific investigation. So, with the aim of uncovering scientific objectives in the portrayal of characters, naturalistic literature shows characters to be motivated primarily by biological, economic and social forces and their behaviour, activities and life as a whole determined by these inevitable forces. The raw and unpleasant experiences reduce characters to "degrading" behaviour in their struggle to survive, which often results in the acts of violence and passions leading to desperate moments and violent death. O' Neill, in the play, portrays a character who is victimized by heredity and environment. The antagonistic and unpleasant living atmosphere degrades the protagonist to a state of actual mental confusion intensified by the explosion of his violent aggression against his own family. He attempts to escape the impact of his instinctual impulse, heredity and other environmental forces to affirm his individuality and life. But he is compelled to come in the grip of these forces which lead him to the state of insanity and ultimately to the violent act of murder and self annihilation.

Reuben, the protagonist of the play, undergoes an unpleasant experience. He is such a fragile creature who is torn between his father's religious fanaticism and Mr. Fife's atheistic values. His father's excessive religious bent and tendency to impose his belief on others makes Reuben's life unpleasant and dull. On the other hand, he can't resist himself from being fascinated and influenced by materialistic and liberal attitudes. Even though he develops a rebellious streak, he can't go against his father in a radical

way and blindly follow atheistic path. In addition, he is simultaneously guided by his instinctual drives. The harrowing effect of these contradictory forces impels him into the state of extreme mental instability. Reuben, now, is offered with two inevitable choices, either to surrender to fanatical belief or to follow atheistic path revered by Mr. Fife. His confusion is worsened by the betrayal of his mother whom he supposes would assist. Reuben is, ultimately, compelled to revolt against his family because of the bitter experience of betrayal. He denies the traditional God and surrenders to the new electric God-dynamo. His brutal animalistic instinct is revealed when he violently announces the death of his mother. Thus, the unpleasant experience and dull way of life degrades Reuben's manner.

Substituting science for religion and conforming 'dynamo' as a new God doesn't necessarily confirm Reuben's individuality and free will. Once he comes in the grip of dynamo, the electric God, he can't free himself from its devastating and fatal influence. Though he has denounced the traditional God of his father, he is not able to reject the concept of God as a whole and like his father he blindly and passively believes and is obsessed with his new God. Science or new God-dynamo, is his existential choice but he can't handle it in his own way rather he is gradually mesmerized by its overwhelming power. Reuben becomes excessively occupied by the idea of dynamo and his mind is guided by dynamo rather than vice versa. Apart from this, Reuben can't escape the influence of his conflicting feelings for his mother. So, over-obsession with dynamo and his conflicting feelings lead him to insanity resulting in the horrible and disgusting acts of murder and suicide.



Thus, it becomes clear that the influence of heredity and environment on human beings is indispensable. Any attempt to overcome the power of these forces becomes futile and the human being finally falls prey to these forces.

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