

Tribhuvan University

Self-Psychology in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department English, T.U.

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

Shiddharth Jha

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

January, 2009

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Mr. **Shiddharth Jha** has completed his thesis entitled “**Self-Psychology in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra***”, under my supervision. He carried out his research from June, 2008 A.D. to January, 2009 A.D. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva-voce.

.....

Mr. Shuvaraj Ranabhat
Supervisor

Date:

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

This thesis titled “**Self-Psychology in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra***”, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Shiddharth Jha has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research committee.

Members of the Research Committee

.....

.....

Internal Examiner

.....

.....

.....

External Examiner

.....

.....

.....

Head

Central Department of English

Date:.....

Acknowledgements

Concrete reality stands upon the scaffolding of abstract ideas. Similarly, the concrete existence of my thesis has its root in the relentless inspiration and support of different people. The warm love and encouragement of my parents and my brother always strengthened my faltering steps in course of thesis writing; the moral support will be encouraging my will power.

I deeply owe my gratitude to Mr. Shuvaraj Ranabhat, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, who always stood beside me for the fulfillment of required material during the preparation of the thesis.

I wish to acknowledge my gratefulness to Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, Head, Central Department of English, Kirtipur for the opportunity given to me to write this dissertation.

I also express my hearty gratitude to lecturer, Dr. Beerendra Pandey who paved a new way to generate and arrange my ideas systematically and provided the praiseworthy instruction on thesis writing during the seven days writing classes. Similarly, I am greatly indebted to the American Center where I got sufficient materials to complete my thesis.

At last but not the least I would like to thank Mr. Gokarna Prasad Aryal and Keshab Adhikari of Jupiter computer Center for their warm cooperation while preparing this thesis.

January, 2009

Shiddharth Jha

Abstract

The present thesis titled "Self-psychology in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*" covers the leading psychological problems of twentieth century America. O'Neill has recorded in a powerful way the plight of men and women, and their struggling with self-fragmentation, suicidal frustration, alienation, violence, and addictive behaviours. O'Neill's characters are leading the life of unfulfilled desire and fractured families. Their self-cohesion is assaulted by world wars, drastic distinction between race and social class and weakening of supportive familial ties. Their fractured and fragmented selves lead them to the state of destruction, where almost all the characters are either killed, or committed suicide or prisoned themselves till death.

Contents

	Page No.
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
I. Introduction	1-10
Literature Review	8
II. Theoretical Framework	11-20
Introduction	11
Freud's Oedipus Complex	13
Heinz Kohut: Self Psychology	15
III. Self-Psychology in Eugene O'Neill's M. Becomes Election	21-41
Individual, Familial and Social Fragmentation	21
Suicidal Frustration	35
Effects of World Wars	37
Self-Love of Mannon	39
IV. Conclusion	42-43
Works Cited	

I. Introduction

Eugene O'Neill was among the foremost dramatists of American theatre. He set out to create meaningful drama in America, at a time when the barriers against it were significant (Reardon 205). Although outstanding dramatists were experimenting throughout Europe, American dramatists were into standard commercial practices and dominated by monopolistic forces controlling the theatre. As a result, by the time of O'Neill's first production in 1916, the American theatre was a quarter century behind European theatre. Twenty years later, when O'Neill received the Nobel Prize for literature, America had assumed a leading position in world drama.

O'Neil's Creative Career spanned the crucial period between the two world wars. The period of three decades from 1914 to 1945 was charged intense dramatic potential which O'Neill used to good advantage by writing some highly stirring plays. His words reveal a varied and colourful thematic and structural spectrum. They touch upon a large variety of themes and show theoretical experimentations with virtually all sorts of devices and patterns. Even in size and shape O'Neill's plays range from short plays to the plays of epic dimensions. O'Neill's works thus, show a restless and creative spirit at work.

In his early writing O'Neill concentrated heavily on the one act form (Reardon 206). His apprenticeship in this form culminated in great success with the production of his full length *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), for which he won the first Pulitzer Prize. The play is indebted to the one-act form in its structure. Although the play is essentially naturalistic, O'Neill elevated both characterization and dialogue, and for the first time he added a poetic and articulate character to achieve high dramatic moments.

In spite of pressures in his personal life, O'Neill was incredibly productive in the 15 years following the appearance of *Beyond the Horizon*, 21 plays were produced. Always daring in his conceptions, always willing to experiment, he brought forth both brilliant successes and atrocious failures.

O'Neill's successful plays reveal interesting experimentation -apart from *Anna Christie* (1921), a rather standardly organized and realistic play which was awarded a Pulitzer Prize, and *Ah Wilderness* (1933), a nostalgic comedy unique in the O'Neill canon. *The Emperor Jones* (1920) is a superb theatrical piece of realism and another, expressionistic piece is *The Hairy Ape* (1992) which gained a remarkable success.

O'Neill was the genius behind the change that came over American theater and made the 1920s and 1930s the greatest period in its history. He wrote things of contemporary interests, gave American drama its requisite genius and authority, dynamism and force. American theatre was in a desperate need for reform. There were notable playwrights in America before O'Neill but the drama had got enmeshed in a stereotyped pattern demanded by the commercial theater, a pattern consisting of a mixture of Elizabethan tradition and the "well made" play. Eugene O'Neill proved himself to be the chief insurgent against worn out dramatic conceptions and the romantically banal and established himself as the symbol of a renaissance that paralled on the stage, the so-called renaissance in poetry.

Despite some critical effort to debunk him, Eugene O'Neill remains America's outstanding playwright, the only one to win international fame and recognition, and the Nobel Prize. He not only built up the American theater, but also put it on the world map, where now it has a dynamic and distinguished place, beside the European and continental theatre.

All O'Neill's plays are great tragedies but they are not tragedies of the conventional sort in the Aristotalian tradition. They are tragedies with a difference. Their themes and subject matter may be the same, but their form is different. They are modern tragedies which strike out the very root of the sickness of today.

In O'Neill's plays cause of suffering is neither the hostility of 'Fate', as in the Greek tragedy, nor Hamartia or 'fatal flaw' in the characters of the chief protagonist. Man suffers and his life becomes a tale of suffering ending with the cessation of his earthly life. (Falk-9)

Eugene O'Neill is the dramatist of an idea. Shouted, whispered, or silently assumed, one theme unites all his plays, from the earliest experiments to his last mature works. The theme is rooted in O'Neill's own personal need, and its power to shape both form and meaning in the plays is derived from this source. It represents an attempt at once to express and to assuage the lifelong torment of a mind in conflict (Falk3).

According to O'Neill, though man may be fated, he is ultimately a free and responsible agent who brings most of his grief upon himself through pride (Falk 4). Similarly the humility, which can lead to self-acceptance, may take the sick distorted form of paralysis and self-destruction. Man, according to him, must find his way somewhere between pride and humility.

He sees the duality of all value. In his view, life and action exist in a perpetual tension between opposites, each of which owes its existence to the presence of the other. This tension is the source of all change and growth. The life of the race is perpetuated in the flow of natural process from birth to death to birth again, the life of the individual man moves from joy to pain to joy eternally.

To O'Neill, the order of existence which he refers as "fate", "mystery", "the biological past" is to be sought in the forces at work in the human psyche (Falk 6). He assumes that one's problems and actions spring not only from his personal unconscious mind, but from a "collective unconscious" shared by the race as a whole, manifesting itself in archetypal symbols and patterns latent in the mind of all men.

The constant need to establish reality in a world of relative values, to determine one's true identity amid opposite self-images are sources of a torment as stultifying as it is creative. O'Neill's plays are a consistent chronological record of this torment, charting as clearly, perhaps as historical biography the direction of his growth as man and artist (Falk 10).

Influenced by Jung, O'Neill thinks that the unconscious is an autonomous force existing independently of the individual man expressed through him. All his life man is forced to wrestle with the unconscious in an attempt to reconcile its demands with those of his conscious ego. Man is in fatal error when he assumes that his conscious ego can fulfill all his needs without acknowledgement of the power of the unconscious. Man must find self-knowledge and a middle way, which reconciles the unconscious needs with those of the conscious ego (Falk 6). This means that life inevitably involves conflict and tension but that the significance of this pain is the growth, which is the gradual realization of the inner, complete personality through constant change, and process.

O'Neill's plays are strung like beads along the all-but-visible cord of an abstract concept not only clarifies their meaning, but also suggests the significant criteria by which they may be measured as drama. The complexities of the idea itself and its relationship to O'Neill's psychological difficulties are the sources of

his unique qualities -both virtues and defects-as an artist (Falk 11). At the core of O'Neill's work is conception of the inward, uniquely personal experience of modern man.

Many of O'Neill's first plays were grim one-acters based on his experiences at sea. In these, the dialogue was a striking departure from stage eloquence. It was crude, natural, and slangy. Instead of the elegant parlors of drawing room comedy, audiences were faced with ship holds, sailor's bars, and the kind of characters who frequented them. An exaggerated realism, veering toward "expressionism", was the mode of these works (Baym 1300).

Later, his plays became longer, their subject matter broader, and his aim more ambitious. His first works were stark and naturalistic; but he began to experiment with stage techniques to enable his plays to convey inner emotions that usually were not openly expressed in dramatizable action-the world of the mind, of memories and fears. He ignored normal play divisions of scenes and acts; paid no attention to the expected length of plays; made his characters wear masks; split one character between two actors; and reintroduced ghosts, choruses, and Shakespearean-style monologue and direct addresses to the audience. He employed sets, lighting, and sounds to enhance emotion rather than to represent a real place (Baym 1301).

Mourning Becomes Electra is a retelling of the tragic tale of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, Orestes and Electra; an almost contemporary rearrangement of the first two parts of the Aeschylean trilogy, with a curiously modern interpretation of the theme of *The Furies* or *The Enumerides*. But it is not an exemplification of the Greek religious problem of fate, for O'Neill has reconceived

the old doctrine of Nemesis in terms of the more or less modern biological and psychological doctrine of cause and effect.

In *Mourning Becomes Electra* no mortal has offended a divinity. It is an American New Englander, a puritan, who has transgressed the moral code of his time and people. The son of Mannon's family victim turns upon the living representatives of Mannon family for revenge.

Captain Brant, the son of Ezra Mannon's uncle, whose parents were kicked out from the heritage of Mannon for anti puritan activity, becomes the helpless instrument of his own passion, and instead of seeing through to the end of his bitter mission, he succumbs to the superior strength of his mistress's daughter. Lavinia then drives her mother to suicide, her brother Orin first going mad and then killing himself.

For a moment it seems Lavinia might find peace, but here again the heritage of hate is too heavy for her, since Orin in dying has made it impossible for his sister to marry the man she once loved with that moral courage and single-mindedness that have sustained her thought. She sees that death is too easy a solution for her and with a gesture of perfect beauty and tragic serenity she turns her back on the world and walks into the house, never to come out again.

The history of Mannon family, which becomes obvious to the audience at its beginning is fractured, fragmented and weak family ties David Mannon, the father of captain Brant and uncle of Ezra Mannon has been exiled from family because he has married against puritan system. Ezra Mannon's family is also distorted and fragmented. Though the characters are physically in the family, psychologically they are alone and depressed.

Captain Brant becomes so much rigid with his passion to take revenge that he did not care the end of his bitter mission. Due to that bitter mission he meets tragic end and engulfed all other character to tragic end.

The effect of war upon the psyche of Orin makes him a living corpse. Under the influence of Lavinia, he shot dead to captain Brant for his adulterous relation with his mother. Finally he goes mad and killed himself. Christiani, the mother of two children, becomes so much fascinated with captain Brant that she poisoned her husband and herself committed suicide.

Lavinia, the central female character is psychologically fragmented and lonely. Her mother is her rival. She quarrels with her mother for her adulterous relation with the captain. She is attached with her father and she knew that it is her mother who has killed her father. Along with her brother she detected that captain Brant makes Christianity to poison their father. Therefore, she was set to punish the criminal and made Orin shot the captain. Towards the end of the play, we find she becomes so fragmented and lonely, that she sees death as easy way of escaping punishment. She closed herself in the house to live with dead and never to come out again.

Kohut, through self-psychology found that the leading problems of the contemporary characters were suffering from self-fragmentation and the psychological dependency of the individual on the human surround. Two decades earlier than Kohut, O'Neill has dramatized the issue of narcissistic disorder of characters. A number of characters embody narcissistic issues and the suffering and behaviours derived from narcissistic disorder. These include a propensity for self fragmentation, loneliness, emptiness, depression and despair, addictive behaviours

and violence. Thus a resonance exist between thinking of Heiziz Kohut and dramatization of Eugene O'Neill. This thesis will try to prove this hypothesis.

A text can be viewed in several ways. It can be analyzed from psychological point of view, formalist point of view, feminist point of view and so on. In this thesis the text is going to be dealt with a rather different way, i.e. from self-psychological point of view. To analyze the text, the help of major self-psychology theorist Heinz Kohut will be taken.

Only *Mourning Becomes Electra* will be studied in this thesis. References however, can be made to other relevant texts and they will just be auxiliary to the target of the study. As indicated above, the text will be viewed from the self-psychological point of view. Any other theories to analyze the text will be ignored here.

Literature Review

O' Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* attracts many literary men's attentions and they have analyzed the text differently. They have viewed the play and presented their commentary on themes and techniques of the play. There are critics who have treated the theme of psychology in the play.

Commenting on *Mourning Becomes Electra* Stephen A. Black writes:

O' Neill's trilogy *Mourning Becomes Electra* has a similar story, modified by the conscious parallel of his characters, themes and situations with those of the classical Electra legend used by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides. Obviously Ezra Mannon is Agamemnon, Captain Brant Aegisthus, Christine Clytemnestra, Lavinia Electra, and Orin Orestes. The Trojan War becomes the civil war. The old hired man Seth Beckwith and towns people and

Workmen parallel a Greek device, a kind of chorus. Many of the shading and atmosphere are from the older plays. The division of the play into three parts is, of course, like the trilogy of the Greek dramatists. The mask-like faces rigid and motionless imply the masks seen in the Greek theatre. (142-143)

Another critics, Elder Olson says:

O' Neill creates a fine plot and characterization comparable to Shakespeare's. The Shakespearean influence has been observed both in O'Neill's specific plots and characters and his technique. He revived the use of ghost, soliloquies, and asides in order to probe hidden psychological depths beyond the scope of superficial realism and its conventional dialogues and characters. (90-91)

Regarding *Mourning Becomes Electra*, Virginia Floyd is of the opinion that "*Mourning Becomes Electra* may have more in common with Shakespeare's *Hamlet* than the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus. The Murder of Ezra Mannon and his dying words accusing his wife resembles the situation in *Hamlet*" (9).

Frederic L. Carpenter declares that "*Mourning Becomes Electra* describes the tragedy of man, who envisions the perfect struggles vainly to achieve it, and finally accepts inevitable defeat" (250).

Michael Manheim analyzed *Mourning Becomes Electra* and writes "It [the *Oresteria*] was a readymade vessel for O'Neill to fill with the various and contradictory facets of his personal agony, but at the same time its precise events were such that it is difficult to recognize O'Neill's own story in them" (77).

While commenting on *Mourning Becomes Electra* Louis Shafer has pointed out that:

The fundamental contribution which the Freudian dynamics of *Mourning Becomes Electra* makes to the impact of the play, its weakness of literature as the prime source of the play's strength as theatre, for the schematic Freudian pattern constantly sets the stage for confrontation. (43)

Helen Delitsch and Stella Hanau view psychological fate in *Mourning Becomes Electra* as:

O'Neill's first sketch for the psychological fate in *Mourning Becomes Electra* indicates Orin's furies are expressions of his own puritan conscience, which drives him to suicide and drives his sister. Ultimately, to a life of secluded torment. The last step in the doom of the family is the final defeat of love and joy by puritanism. The murders and suicide in *Mourning Becomes Electra* owe part of their causation to the puritanical distortion of love. (248)

Besides all these comments of different literary critics' view on *Mourning Becomes Electra*, my research tries to trace self psychology in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*. For this topic, I'm going to apply the theory of self psychology of Heinz Kohut.

II. Theoretical Framework

Introduction

Psychology emerged as a therapeutic technique for the treatment of hysteria and neurosis psychoanalysis generally deals with the state of mind and structure of personality of the individual. If we go to the history of psychoanalysis, this approach emerged in the early decades of 19th century. But, since 1920s this psychological literary criticism has come to psychoanalytical literary criticism whose premises and procedures were established by Austrian psychiatrist and neurologist Sigmund Freud. Freud and theory of psychoanalysis has become the most influential personality theory in modern era. He concentrates on "understanding the forces at work in personality and the internal structures which channel and directs them" (Guerin 129). But in this process he gives emphasis on sexual motivations in development of personality which has made his followers disagree with him.

Freud asserts that the study of human psychology can provide a strong support for understanding personal and social, over which we have very limited control. He puts forward the ideas of conscious, subconscious and unconscious aspects of human psyche. His underlying assumption is that when it is difficult to face some wishes, fear, memory or desire, we may try to cope with it by repressing it, i.e. eliminating it from the conscious mind. But, this does not make it go away, it remains alive in the unconscious state of mind.

For Freud, like the iceberg, human mind is so structured that its great weight and density lie beneath the surface (below the level of unconsciousness). He argues that the unconscious plays vital role in the process of creativity. Man suffers from agitation, frustration and inner mental conflicts which is a great challenge of modern

conflict, which is a great challenge of modern civilization. Psychological problems of human beings are immensely increasing in the modern world.

According to Freud, human psyche has three parts namely the Id, the Ego, and the Superego and these three levels of personality roughly corresponding to the unconscious, the consciousness (conscience) and the subconscious. While talking about three components of human personality, Guerin asserts that the Id, the primary source of all psychic energy, works also as "the store house of all instincts, wishes and desire" (129). Its function is "to gratify our instincts of pleasure without any regard for social conventions, legal ethics or morality" (130).

The other psychic agency, the ego, protects an individual and society from the dangerous potentialities of the Id. This component of personality is rational and is the governing agent of psyche. The Ego is the executive of personality which operates the cognitive and the intellectual function of the person.

Another component of personality, the superego, represents the dictations and behavioural expectation of society. This is the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride, which primarily functions to protect society. Acting either directly or through the ego, the superego, serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the Id to block off the thrust back into the unconscious and those impulses towards pleasure that society regards as unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passion, and oedipal instinct.

Thus, it can be said that the Id is dominated by the pleasure principle, the ego is dominated by reality principle, and the superego by the morality principle. The ego is only the psyche agency which can create a balance between the Id and the superego. Hence, personality is the result of the ego's efficiency, a balance created by controlling the Id and the superego.

The foundation of Freud's contribution to modern psychology is his emphasis on the unconscious aspect of the human psyche. He believes that all the wishes, desire and pleasure instinct are in the unconscious state of human mind. He argues that most of the individual's mental process is unconscious, is the first major premise, the second is that all human behaviour is motivated, ultimately by what we would call sexuality. This premise is rejected by the followers of Freud, like Carl Gustav Jung; Alfred Adler, Heinz Kohut. Freud designates the prime psychic force as libido, or sexual energy. He asserts that because of the powerful social taboos attached to certain sexual impulses, many of our desires and memories are repressed (that is actively excluded from conscious awareness).

Freud's Oedipus Complex

As a father of psychoanalytic theory, Sigmund Freud develops a concept of oedipal complex in his book *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He develops this concept by turning the Sophocle's drama, especially Oedipus myth. According to him, Oedipus complex is the repressed desire or we can say the infantile sexual desire in which the male infant conceives the desire to eliminate the father and become the sexual partner of the mother. For Freud, sexuality begins not at adulthood with psychical maturing but in infancy, especially through the infant's relationship with the mother. Regarding the concept of Oedipus complex, Freud analysed in his book, *The Ego and the Id* (translated and edited by James Strachey):

As a very early age the little boy develops an object-cathexis for his mother, which originally related to the mother's breast and is the prototype of an object-choice on the anaclitic model; the boy deals with his father by identifying himself with. For a time these two relationships proceed side by side, until the boy's sexual wishes in

regard to his mother become more intense and his father perceived as an obstacle to them; from this the Oedipus complex originates. His identification with his father then takes on a hostile coloring and changes into a wish to get rid of his father in order to take his place with his mother. (31-32)

In this Oedipal triangle, the libidinal object-cathexis and identification with his father are imagined as two separate and parallel objects. In this paragraph, the desire for the mother is reinforced and the identification with the father is also reinforced which takes on a hostile and revelries way.

In the unconscious of every individual, according to Freud, there are residual traces ("residual memory") of prior stages of infancy which have been outgrown but remain as "fixations" in the unconscious of the adult. And those memories always seek the way back. This repressed wish is revived and motivates a fantasy in disguised form. The desire to kill the father and marry the mother may be rooted in deepest natural psychological development of the individual. One of the best known books in this mode is *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1949) by Ernest Jones. Taking earlier ideas by Freud himself, Jones explained Hamlet's insanity to make up his mind to kill his uncle by reference to his Oedipus complex- i.e. the repressed by continuing presence in the adult's unconscious of the male infant's desire to possess his mother and to have his rival, father, out of the way.

The child feels sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex and desires the death of the parent of the same sex. It first appears between the ages of three and five years and return at adulthood ("puberty") and in this point it is resolved, more or less, through the choice of an appropriate object outside the family. Freud remarks how "every new arrival on this planet is faced by the task of mastering the Oedipus

complex, anyone who fails to do so fall a victim neurosis" (149). As a psychiatrist, Freud developed his theories from the initial observation that patients were relieved of their neurotic symptoms by recalling the memory of certain events and ideas related to infantile sexuality.

Heinz Kohut: Self Psychology

Heinz Kohut is well known as someone who had transformed major tradition. This transformation was that of moving Freudian psychoanalysis into new era of what many feel is a more humanistic approach. He urged traditional psychoanalysis away from its preoccupation with sexual and aggressive drives along with the centrality of the Oedipus complex to a more open inquiry of the self, its goals and ambitions, and its interactions with others. His writings come together into a separate area of psychoanalysis called self psychology.

Approximately, towards the 1960s, Kohut began a process of differentiating his psychology of the self from the classical Freudian meta-psychology that had interlocked drive theory with the Oedipal complex. Kohut challenged the primacy of the drives and evolved a psychoanalytic model of development at whose core is self, as the superordinate structure. Kohut's model of the mind directly addressed the suffering that he witnessed in the clinical arena and this model extended the reach of psychoanalysis. According to Kohut:

Classical analysis sees man as conflict ridden, struggling between submission to and rebellion against the pressure of civilization. Self psychology sees man in addition as center of independent initiative, as psychological organization held together by a self whose nuclear program (determining his potential destiny) he attempts to fulfill in the course of his life. (182)

Kohut, in the field of psychoanalysis, first challenged and then deconstructed the prevailing conventions of the respective field. Ultimately he constructed new form that was more expressive of the meaning of human experience as he had witnessed it. Kohut's self psychology had recognized and addressed the central psychological problems of twentieth century America, albeit in different arenas.

Within this cultural and temporal context, the individuals' self cohesion was assaulted by world wars, the growth of the technical industrial complex, drastic distinction in race and social class, and the weakening of supportive family ties. This shifting social environment contributed to familial and cultural fragmentation, and individual's struggle with a sense of disordination, disconnection and self-enfeeblement.

This sense of individual, familial and social fragmentation are particularly amenable to analysis of self psychology. In his ground breaking book *The Restoration of the Self*, (Kohut 313) identified the "broken-up, distorted, and enfeebled self of man" the falling apart of the world" (780) as the leading psychological problem of the contemporary America.

In contradiction to the "Guilty man" of Freudian Psychoanalysis, Kohut referred to the individual, which his self-psychology addressed and attempted to heal, as "tragic man". Regarding tragic man, Kohut argues that the need of new psychology, because the old Freudian psychology failed to analyze it. According to him, classical theory can not illuminate the essence of fractured, enfeebled, discontinuous human existence; it cannot explain the essence of the schizophrenic's fragmentation, the struggle of the patient who suffers from a narcissistic personality disorder to resemble himself, the despair, the guiltless despair, he stresses- of those

who in late middle age discover that the basic patterns of their self as laid down in their nuclear ambitions and ideals have not been realized.

Kohut's "Tragic man" resembles the contemporary characters. A number of these characters embody narcissistic issues and the suffering and behaviours derived from narcissistic disorder. These include a propensity for self-fragmentation, loneliness, emptiness, depression and despair, addictive behaviours and violence. All these manifestation of narcissistic disorder are addressed explicitly by self psychology.

The leading problems of the contemporary characters of Kohut's time were suffering from self-fragmentation, and the psychological dependency of the individual on the human surround. Kohut expressed this theme by virtue of what is undeniably, the central construct of self psychology, namely, that of self objects. Self object refers to our subjective experience of people who are important to us, for example, parents, spouses and close friends. These people provide us with the psychological functions needed to maintain our self-cohesion and, although the intensity of this need changes as a result of development, self object, are nevertheless, considered essential during the entire lifespan.

Kohut referred to as the self object functions of mirroring, most especially and twinship, to a lesser extent. Kohut viewed an individual character is always seen in relation to an embedded in some social context, either a dyadic relationship or a milieu of other people. Moreover, it is the quality of these relationship that affects the mood and behaviours of the character, as well as their cohesiveness.

The self psychological studies that have emerged during the last ten years have utilized conceptualizations around self objects and hence, have deepened the level of understanding of the dynamics of the characters in plays.

A literary work can be analyzed at least two levels. First, each piece of fiction can be considered as being a discrete story about particular people and their interactions. This approach termed "endopoetic" research (Essler 6) limits analysis to the play taken as a whole and eschews making connections with external elements. The second level of analysis, termed "exopoetic" research (Eissler 7), involves making connections between the drama with elements outside of the work. These elements not only include author's life, but also, more importantly his or her subjective experience of important life events. In this context, the plays can be analyzed as expression of author's conscious and unconscious mind, in a manner similar to the exploration of both the manifest and latent content of dreams.

Moreover, the plays can be studied with an explicit aim of finding expressions of the characters' recurrent, narcissistic fantasies. Some of these "archaic narcissistic fantasies" (Ulman and Brothers 15) are linked with author's subjective experiences.

The first level- the endopoetic analysis- considers the group of characters- often, a family as revealing their identity, their history and moods of interaction and behaviour in the course of the action of the play. Using what is termed in self psychology, "the emphatic vantage point", this pursuit of emphatic understanding of undertaken by applying what Kohut views "defined by the position of the observer who occupies an imaginary point *Inside* the psychic organization of the individuals with whose retrospection he emphatically identifies" (219).

According to this approach, one listens to the dialogue as if the characters were people relating a story about their lives, their feelings, and their fantasies, much as an analyst listen to the patients. One 'hears' how these characters related to one another and the presence or absence of emotional content underlying the dialogic exchanges. From this emphatic perspective. One comes to appreciate the actual

subjective meaning of exchange. In the main, the characters are well-rounded literary personages replete with character traits, feelings, motives, and fantasies. The author presents the clearly delineated psychic reality of his characters, not just their actions and behaviours.

To analyze "narcissistic health" of fictional character, Eissler has argued that fictional characters have much in common with real people, particularly as regards narcissistic issues. Berman has shown how characters' behaviour can be used to evaluate their narcissistic health. From the perspective of self-psychology, there are several points in a dramatic text that can be used in this regard. These include the characters' behavioural and emotional manifestations as regard empathic capacity, narcissistic rage, mood swings chemical dependency, and violence.

When the dialogue between characters is examined via empathic impression and introspection, empathic failures can be perceived by discerning the subjective experience of the recipient of the communication. When one character consistently fails to respond to another, this suggests that person is *unable* to hear the other's communication in an empathic manner. A character's inability to communicate empathically suggests psychological deficits in the narcissistic sphere of the personality.

In general, the characters' emotional responses to each other provide information about the nature and quality of the interaction between them, as well as their individual emotional health. Childlike and unrealistic narcissistic fantasies, narcissistic rage, substance abuse and addictions, abrupt changes in mood, and violent behaviour point to a character lacking sound narcissistic health. Similarly, the level of psychological health or dysfunction of the "families" in the plays can be evaluated

on the basis of the individual characters' emotional and behavioural responses towards one another.

At the second level of literary analysis, that is, the exopoietic approach, the emphatic-introspective observational stance is applied in gaining an understanding of how author's conscious and unconscious experience influenced his or her dramatization.

The application of the constructs of self psychology enables the illumination of the interrelated thematic threads of narcissism, the family and madness. Self psychology enhances the dramatic works by virtue of its conceptualizations of the developmental model of narcissism, the constructs around self objects, and its elaboration of the need for an emphatic self object milieu (or sense of home and family) in order to maintain self-cohesion. The application of self-psychological theory to dramatic characters and their interactions illustrates how narcissistic issues impact on families and those social milieus within which individuals live and which provide people with a sense of home and belonging, indeed, a sense of self. Furthermore, self psychology explicitly addresses trauma and addictions.

III. Self-Psychology in Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*

O'Neill in *Mourning Becomes Electra* dramatized the central psychological problems of twentieth century America. The twentieth century America was suffering from the problems of fragmentation, frustration, alienation, depression, loneliness, addictive behaviour and violence. These problems of contemporary Americans were most distinctive as well as most troubling in Modern America. O'Neill's characters in *Mourning Becomes Electra* embody these psychological problem in different arenas.

The self-cohesion of O'Neill's characters is assaulted by World Wars, drastic distinction in race and social class and the weakening of supportive family ties. And these shifting social environments contributed to individual, familial and social fragmentation of characters. The major characters in the play are suffering from the psychological problems at different levels.

Individual, Familial and Social Fragmentation

O'Neill has presented the family of Ezra Mannon to dramatize the central problems faced by twentieth century America. The members of Mannon family are representing the individuals of contemporary America. Besides the individual, the family of Mannon is representing the American family of twentieth century and similarly, the society is the twentieth century American society. The characters are totally fragmented and they are alone and empty and have no sense of belonging with their family member as well as with others. The Mannon family is broken up, where the members are feeling one another as an obstacle on the way of satisfaction. The society of New England Seaport town is dramatize, which is fragmented because of the drastic distinction between race and social class of people. Marie Brantomart belongs to the low social class, and therefore she is unacceptable to Mannon.

O'Neill's character in *Mourning Becomes Electra* are individually fragmented. The characters are afraid of one another and even in family their life becomes meaningless and dissatisfied. The head of the Mannon family is Ezra Mannon who is Brigadier-General in army, and well known man in the town and has good prestige in politics too. He is known as able man who has got prosperity in several sphere of life. But we can see, he is unable to get love from his wife. The unfulfilled love of his wife made him to rejoin the army. He believed that his wife hopes his death and even he too, feels that he will be dead any moment. His unhappy married life fragmented his self and enfeeble his life. His fragmented married life makes him so much confused that he sees death as the beginning of life. He says to his wife:

MANNON. It was seeing death all the time in this war got me to thinking these things. Death was so common, it didn't mean anything. That freed me to think of life. Queer, isn't it? Death made me think of life. Before that life has only made me think of death! (I-III-47)

Ezra has seen death and life very closely since, he himself involved in War and get tired of that. Christine wants to know his attitude about these things and Ezra told her that this is Mannon's way of doing. According to him being born is staring to die. For Mannon's death is the beginning of life. His experience of war and bitter marital life made him to take death simply. Generally, people are afraid of death but Ezra Mannon is so much fragmented with his life that he takes death simply.

Ezra Mannon returns from war with the hope to live the life of satisfaction and would get the love of his wife. But, all his hopes got collapsed and he finds even he has lost his wife. Christine inform him about her affair with bastered of the family Adam Brant. That shocked him too much and fragmented his inner self. He becomes

so much tensed that he has got heart attack and his wife replace the medicine with poison. In his home coming he wants to win the love of his wife. He reveals his heart before her with a hope of getting her; but he soon feel that he is the fool. He expresses to Christine:

MANNON. (with a harsh laugh) And I had hoped my homecoming would mark a new beginning new love between us! I told you my secret feelings. I tore. My insides out for you-thinking you'd understand! By God, I'm an old fool! (I-IV-55)

But, Christine has no feelings for him and respond him of being late. All these broken hopes of better future life fragmented him and he becomes enfeeble physically as well as psychologically. His psychological fragmentation leads to physical fragmentation and that attacks his heart which becomes the cause of his death.

Christine Mannon is the mother of two grown up children, but she is suffering from fragmented married life. She finds her husband as alien who does not love her. She has unfulfilled love of her husband. She is seeking some one to love her because when Ezra went to Mexico with army. She has Orin to love but, he took Orin too into War, and that makes her totally empty and lonely. She has no one to love. Lavinia was shocked with her mother's infidelity and asked her wheather she hates him always; Christine answers her:

CHRISTINE. (bitterly) No. I loved him once before I married him- incredible as that seems now! He was handsome in his lieutenant's uniform! He was Silent and mysterious and romantic! But marriage soon turned his romance into-disgust! (I-II, 27)

Further Christine justifies her love for Adam and explains her fragmentation of love as a wife of Ezra. She explains the cause of her infidelity towards Ezra and attraction towards Adam Brant to her daughter. She was very much fragmented by the lack of love in her family and was felt that there was nothing left for her after the departure of Orin to War with his father. She says to Lavinia about her love from Adam Brant:

CHRISTINE. Well, I hope you realize I never would have fallen in love with Adam if I'd had Orin with me.' When he had gone there was nothing left-but hate and a desire to be revenged-and a longing for love! And it was then I met Adam. I saw he loved me
(I-II-27)

Christine's fragmentation becomes more clear when she says that she has given her body to a man she hated. According to Christine, Ezra has not taken her soul or heart, rather her body only. She wants to convince Lavinia about her fragmented self by telling her:

CHRISTINE. (with strident intensity) you would understand if you were the wife of a man you hated. (I-II-26)

Christine wants to get rid of her fragmented state, but the more she attempt to surpass it, the more she is trapped. She finds Ezra as an obstacle on the way of her freedom. Therefore, she planned to poisoned him. She did according to her plan, but there emerge two, Lavinia and Orin, as her enemy. After poisoning Ezra, she become so nervous that she couldn't hide properly the box of poison, and even Ezra has Pointed her as guilty when he died.

After the death of Ezra, she wants to win the concent of Orin by showing false love towards him and on the another hand she want to Warn Adam against Lavinia and Orin. But, Orin and Lavinia saw her love for Adam and her attitude towards them.

When Christine comes out of Adams Cabin, Orin shot Adam and he was dead. In the house Orin told her about her real love for Adam and her act of killing father. He informs her about the death of Adam. Initially she did not believe him, but later on she finds the death of Adam as a last insult for her. She finds all her hopes got collapsed and there is no one for her to live. She finds her life so much fragmented that it was unable for her to live.

Christine's life is fragmented because of lack of love from inside the family as well as from outside the family. When she loved someone, the person was detached from her either by war or by violence. She manages to live, though her two lovers, Ezra and Orin left her, but she did not want to lose Adam Brant, with whom she had planned her future life. The death of Adam Brant fragmented her psyche and enfeebled her too much and her life became meaningless and in the state of fragmentation she commits suicide.

Lavinia's psyche is broken up since her childhood as her mother never accept her as daughter with love. She finds her mother's disgust since she was little. That sense of detachment with mother fragmented her. She says to her mother:

LAVINIA (Wincing again- stammers harshly) so I was born of your
disgust: I've always guessed that, Mother-ever since I was little—
when I used to come to you—with love—but you would always
push me away ! I've felt it ever since I can remember- your
disgust ! (then with a flare-up of bitter hatred) oh, I hate you ! It's
only right I should hate you ! (I-II, 27)

As Lavinia grows, her problems grows respectively. At her childhood she lost the love of her mother, and in her adulthood she is also deprived of the love of her father. Her mother plays vital role in depriving her of satisfaction of love. She loves her

father too much and wants her mother too must be sincere towards him, but the case is totally opposite. Christine hates Ezra. It is generally believed that captain Adam Brant comes to court Lavinia and loves her. But in reality he loves Christine and he only pretended to love Lavinia. Lavinia accused her mother as:

LAVINIA: (in an anguish of jealous hatred) I hate you ! you steal even father's love from me again ! you stole all love from me. When I was born ! (then almost with a sob, hiding her face in her hands) oh, mother ! why have you done this to me? What harm had I done you? (-with passionate disgust) Father, how can you love that shameless harlot? (then frenziedly) I can't bear it ! won't ! It's my duty to tell him about her ! I will ! (she calls desperately) Father, Father ! (I-III 50)

Lavinia is shocked with the behaviour of her mother who always push her away from loves of every one Lavinia did not get loves of her mother, father and Adam Brant because of her own mother as she always steal her love. She is depressed with her condition and questioned her mother about her mistake towards her.

Lavinia has discovered her mother's infidelity. She loves her father and she believes her duty to save her father from shameless harlot. She knows the relation between Adam Brant and her mother and she afraid of the plan of her mother that it will harm her father. And finally she caught her crime of poisoning Ezra. Lavinia warns her of getting punishment and threatens her of police.

Lavinia's father's death fragmented her and after that she is set to give punishment to the criminal. She makes Orin believes the reality of her mother and shot Adam. She calls the death of Adam as 'justice'. Lavinia is the strong character who doesn't escape from life. Towards the end of the play she becomes pessimistic

because of her fragmented life that she opines, "I'm not asking God or any body for forgiveness. I forgive myself. . . "She has lost her faith over God and believes upon herself. She is strong enough that she choose self punishment. Towards the end she asks Seth to decorate the house with flowers and says:

LAVINIA. (grimy) Don't be afraid. I'm not going to the way mother and Orin went. That's escaping punishment. And there's no one to punish me. I'm the last of Mannon. I've got to punish myself ! Living alone here with the dead is a worse act of justice than death or prison ! I'll never go out or see anyone ! I've the shutters nailed closed so no sunlight can ever get in. I'll live alone with the dead, and keep their secrets, and let them hound me, until the curse is paid out and the last Mannon is let die ! (with a strange cruel smile of gloating over the years of self-torture) I know they will see it I live for a long time ! It takes the Mannons to punish themselves for being born ! (III-IV 63)

Lavinia is strong enough even in the state of fragmentation. She has lost her all love and even all the family members. She has made her mother to commit suicide. Towards the end, she has broken totally and finds no meaning in worldly life and therefore, she confined herself among Mannon's ghosts. She says that Mannon has to punish themselves for being born and for that reason she closed herself inside the dark house to live with dead till she died. The decision which she took towards the end shows her psychological state, in which she is fragmented, lonely and empty. She finds no meaning to live among her surrounding and therefore she closed herself among dead Mannon's for the rest of her life.

Lavinia's decision to nail herself inside the house is taken in state of fragmentation and depression. It becomes hard for her to live where all family members meet untimely death. She is of the opinion that death is common for her and committing suicide is escaping the punishment, which Orin and her mother did. In this way her fragmentation and depression of unfulfilled love grows since her childhood. When she grows up she lost the love of Adam Brant and even her father. And all these events in Lavinia's life broken her self and became enfeeble. In the state of broken-up, enfeebled and self-fragmentation she decided self punishment.

As an army men, Orin is enfeeble both physically as well as psychologically. In war he gets severe wound in his head and was under treatment for long time. His physical wound leads to his psychic enfeeblement. When she comes to his home he finds every thing strange. His fractured self is obvious through his experience in battlefield, he says to Lavinia:

ORIN. Before I'd gotten back I had to kill another in the same way. It was like murdering the same man twice! I had a queer feeling that war meant murdering the same man over and over and that in the end I would discover the man was myself ! Their faces keep coming back in dreams— and they change to Father's face- or to mine- what does that mean. Vinnie? (II-III 87)

Orin got confused by the nature of war as he was nearly dead in that war. He asks his sister about why the dead man, at the end appear resemble himself or with his father. But, Lavinia is unknown about all his queer feelings. His home coming was strange one, because his father's death. He shows normal reaction towards his father's death. He said that he was alive in war. On the other hand, he was very close with his mother. He was shocked with Lavinia's accusation of her mother as the killer of father.

Lavinia has caught her mother's act of poisoning her father and she wants to make Orin believe, but Orin's love for his mother doesn't allow him to listen such charge on his mother and he asks Lavinia to show him proof. And Lavinia made Orin to see the proof of her mother's relation with Adam Brant. Adam Brant, as he too belongs to Mannon, resembles to some extent with his father and himself. He shot him dead because he finds Adam as stealing his mother from him.

Orin believes that the death of Adam will not do any thing to mother and he believes he along with his mother went to the Island and enjoy there. But, Adam's death made her so fragmented that he commit suicide as this was the last insult for her. This event of Orin's mother's death break all his hopes of the Island. He believes himself as the cause of his mother death. Now he becomes fragmented and depressed. He was repented over his killing of Adam. His life becomes meaningless, he said that his mother is only girl for him but he insult her and paved the way for his suicide and also close the way to get his mother's love.

Orin's behaviour is changed and is totally fragmented and alone. Meanwhile, he saw Lavinia as 'dead images of her mother' and he wants to live with Lavinia. But, Lavinia plans to live with Peter Nills. So, he feels alienated and empty. In the state of depression and loneliness he hates the daylight that is God's light according to Orin:

ORIN. (harshly) I hate the daylight. It's like an accusing eye ! No, we've renounced the day, in which normal people live- or rather it has renounced us. Perpetual night- darkness of death in life- that's the fitting habitat for guilt. You believe you can escape that, but I'm not so foolish ! And I find artificial light more appropriate for my work- Man's light, not God's- Man's feeble striving to understand himself, to exist for himself in the darkness ! It's a

symbol of his life- a lamp burning out in a room of waiting
shadow ! (III-II 37)

Orin is shocked with his guilt and that fragmented his self and he becomes enfeeble to face even daylight. He hates, therefore, the daylight as it is God's light. He says that he cannot escape from the punishment for his guilt and says to Lavinia that darkness is the appropriate habitat for guilt. In his depression and fragmentation he shot himself inside his house. Therefore, in the state of fragmentation and depression he finds his life meaningless and decide to punish himself for the guilt of his mother's death.

Adam Brant is the bastered child of Mannon family. His father David Mannon was married with Canadian maid servant Marie Brantomart and for that they were expelled from family heritage and they face starvation and meet tragic end. Therefore, Adam avoids the last name of his father and was very much shocked with miserable condition of his parents. To avenge his parent's condition on Mannon family, he is set to damage Mannon family. Adam becomes the helpless instrument of his own passion and instead of seeing through to the end of his bitter mission, he is set to insult Mannon by taking his wife and put Ezra in public scandal.

But, Adam Brant falls in passionate love with Christine and planned for better future. His love for Christine ruined the whole family and he himself meet tragic death by the hands of Orin. So, Adam Brant is depressed and fragmented because of the miserable condition which his parents has to suffer. He holds negative attitude towards Mannon family and believes Mannon as cheater and coward. And his depression and fragmentation and alienation caused the tragic end of both the Mannon family as well he himself.

To say pointedly, all the leading characters of the play are fragmented, depressed, distorted and enfeeble one. They are living the life of unfulfilled desire,

frustration and crumbled self. They are not unified whole, rather crumbled or fragmented individuals of society. The characters of O'Neill resemble the suffering individuals of contemporary American society who are suffering from psychological problems. These problems come because of the complexities of the time which assaulted the individuals' self cohesion.

The individual fragmentation leads to the familial fragmentation. Though the individuals are living in a unit of family, but they are alienated and isolated. Though the characters are physically in the family, they are psychologically fragmented, distorted and broken up. They have no concern and co-operation with fellow family members, rather they are afraid of one another and tried to torture and put obstacles on one another's way. The familial fragmentation becomes vivid from the relationship between husband and wife and between parents and children.

The family of Ezra Mannon is a vivid example of familial fragmentation, in which all the members are suffering from tension of unfulfilled love. They have no faith, respect and dependence over each other. They are full of suspicion over others. Family is well known as a unity of members. Each and every member must have faith and respect among them. But all these conventions of family are ignored. There is a bitter relation between wife and husband.

Christine, the wife of brigadier-general Ezra Mannon and the mother of two grown-up children, hates her husband in particular and Mannon family in general. She passionately loves the bastard of Mannon family Adam Brant. Adam Brant is set to take revenge over Mannon family. Christine wants to free herself from all the responsibility of her family. But, she was afraid of Ezra's power and position. Therefore, she decides to poison him so that she would be free to marry Adam. It is shocking, that the wife is loyal to the enemy of the family.

Adam Brant doesn't want to kill him, but Christine made him to help her on the act of poisoning him. At that time, Ezra was suffering from heart trouble. And Christine planed to take advantage of his heart trouble and replace the medicine with poison. For out side world Ezra died of his heart trouble. When Adam says poisoning as coward things, Christine blackmailed him emotionally. Her loyalty towards Adam shows, on the one hand her fragmented self and on the other the breakdown of supportive families ties. Being the wife, Christine has to help Ezra to overcome his heart trouble, but, she took benefit from that. Her fake mourning over the death of Ezra shows the weak familial supportive ties.

It is very shameful matter for a husband to listen the affair of a wife with others. Christine wants to enlarge his heart trouble. Therefore, she openly revealed the identity of Adam and her relation with him. This bare fact made Ezra mad and he got a heart attack. At the time of providing him medicine Christine replace the poison instead of medicine.

The most faithful person of a man is wife but wife poisons her husband. So, there is no any faith in family. The family members are afraid of each other. Even, the mother is supposed to be the closed one of children, but there is antagonism between them. They are so much fragmented that, children made her mother to commit suicide. They call their own mother with most abusive words that is, harlot, whore and others.

The relationship between Christine, the mother, and Lavinia, the daughter is only in appearance but in reality they are enemy of each other. They are not psychologically tied with each other. It is believed that mother should fulfill the desire and needs of their children. But, we see both the woman are fighting to get Adam. Adam is supposed to be Lavinia's beue, but not in reality. He comes to see Christine

and only shows to court Lavinia. Lavinia accused her mother for stealing all loves from her. Christine without having any shame blamed her of want to get Adam.

CHRISTINE. you wanted Adam Brant yourself ! And now you know
you cannot have him, you are determined to that at least you'll take
him from me. (I-II 28)

Christine and Lavinia doesn't seem like mother and daughter, rather they are the two beloved of a man. Mother loves with the supposed beau of her daughter. On the other hand Christine accused her daughter of stealing her own place:

CHRISTINE. I know you, vinnie ! I've watched you ever since you
were little, trying to do exactly what you're doing now ! you've
tried to become the wife of your father and the mother of Orin !
you've always schemed to steal my place ! (I-II 129)

Christine is trying to escape from the family. She forgot her all the responsibility for the sake of her new love. She is trying to damage the family as she had poisoned her husband. But she did not get success. She did not only ruins herself rather whole family and even her lovers too. Her insincere behaviour dismantled the cohesion of family.

Therefore, the relationship among the family members are weak. At the same time the outsides relationship are also weak. Adam Brant is obsessed to collapse the Mannon family and he got it. Besides Mannon's family, the family of David and Marie Brantomart is also very miserable one. They are collapsed with starvation. They are quarreling with each other. The husband taken to drink and bit wife. Both the parents of Adam Brant meets miserable end. At the moment of severe need of economic help of Marie Brantomart, Ezra refused to help her. And therefore, Adam blame Ezra as responsible for the death of his parents.

All these events among the family members and between the family member shows the weak supportive familial ties. Faith is the basic element in the family, but we see that there is no faith among the family members. As a result, wife poisons husband, mother and daughter quarrels for getting love. The family members are feeling their fellow as an obstacle on the way of freedom. Christine believed Ezra and Lavinia as an obstacle on her way and she wants to clear them. There is no basic bond among family members and family, rather they are guided by their self love and have no concern for others. Thus, the families are fragmented and broken up.

Besides, individual and familial fragmentation, there was social fragmentation which was dominating psychological problems of contemporary time. There were drastic distinction between race and social class. Marie Brantome belongs to servant class, whereas Mannons belongs to high class. To marry with the servant class lady was the question of reputation and fame. When Abb Mannon's brother, David Mannon has to marry with Chunk Canadian maid servant, the family expelled him from the family. That was only because of difference of race and social class.

The society was fragmented on the economic level too. When David and Marie expelled from family they became poor and leads the life of starvation. But, Ezra ignores the request of Marie to help her in crucial time. There are other group of characters who have longing to see the Mannon's mansion. They are Amos Ames, Louisa and Minnie, but they are afraid of Christine. So the society were fragmented at different levels.

There were individual, familial and social fragmentation were pervaded the twentieth century America. These fragmentation were the psychological problem which the society were suffering from. The individuals self were broken-up, crumbled

and enfeebled. There were no unity in family and family is fragmented and society was also divided at racial and economic level.

Suicidal Frustration

O'Neill's characters in *Mourning Becomes Electra* are suffering from suicidal frustration because of their self-fragmentation, broken-up and enfeebled self. They found their life meaningless as they were suffering from pressure and tension of unsatisfied love. That frustration leads them to suicidal death. The suicidal frustration can be seen upon Christine and Orin who shot themselves as they found the world were meaningless for them.

Christine was suffering from the problems of unsatisfied love and she needs some one to love her. She expressed that there were love between her and Ezra before their marriage, but "soon after marriage love turns into disgust". So that, Christine needs someone, and finds Adam Brant who loves her passionately. To get Adam Brant, she poisoned Ezra Mannon, but her daughter Lavinia discovered her guilt. She made Orin believe that her mother loves Adam and killed Ezra, their father. When Orin saw the proof, he shot Adam dead.

The news of Adam's death as known as last insult for Christine. She finds all her hopes and desires to get united with Adam were collapsed. She had no meaning in her life as she didn't get her love, so that to quench her unsatisfied love, she hides her face with her palm and went to her bedroom and there she shot herself with Ezra's pistol. In her frustration of unsatisfied love she commits suicide.

Christine was only girl for Orin. He saw the image of her mother even in his illness. But her suicide frustrated him. Orin has planned to visit the Island with her but all his future plans were collapsed. Orin told her about his act of shooting Adam because of her incincerity. And that made her to suicide. Orin feels himself as guilt

of his mother's death. Orin guilty conscience torture him so much that he finds himself frustrated. He become the cause of her death, whom he loves more.

Now, he wants to get forgiveness from her about his guilty, but she is no more alive to forgive him. He says:

ORIN. Let me go ! I've got to find her ! I've to make her forgive me !

But, she is dead- she's gone now Can I ever get her to forgive me now? (III-I-I 129)

Now, he repents over his act of killing Adam and weeps over his mother's death. He sees Lavinia as the image of his mother, but she too has planned to leave him alone. That shocked him too much. He lives in artificial light in day time. He avoids Gods light and use man made lights. He opines that darkness is the right habitat for the guilt. Orin is totally fractured and saw there were no meaning in his life. He was frustrated with his mother's death. In the state of frustration he shot himself. He hopes to be united with his mother.

Lavinia plays an important role in the suicide of her mother which leads to the suicide of her brother too. But towards the end of the play, she too was suffering from frustration. She didn't get even Peter to marry her. She planned to marry Peter but that was collapsed. In her frustration she avoids the living world and joins the dead Mannons in her house. She nailed herself inside the house to live with ghosts till death.

The suicidal frustration is obviously engulfed David Mannon. He was frustrated with his poor condition and expelled from his father's heritage. His marital relation was very troubling. He had taken to drink and quarrel with his wife and even bit her. Once he left the home and next day he was found dead. He too committed suicide.

Suicidal frustration among individuals were dominating in twentieth century. Peoples are suffering from lack of love, peace and harmony in family as well as outside family. But it is very hard to get it. And they resort of suicide to get rid of frustration. Lavinia has remarked that suicide is nothing but escaping the reality. When people fail to face the problem they take resort of death as one and only way. The characters of Christine, Orin, and even off-stage characters, David Mannon finds their life meaningless and were unable to face the world. Therefore, they chose the path of suicide to get rid of that.

Effects of World Wars

The beginning of twentieth century is well known for the two great World War which human civilization faced. Those war had brought not only physical casualty but also heavily affect the psychology of people. Those wars had created self-fragmentation, frustration, distortion, loneliness, alienation and others. O'Neill's characters in *Mourning Becomes Electra* representing the contemporary individuals and their psychological problem caused by World Wars. All the major male members are engaged in army professionally.

Ezra Mannon is Brigadier-General in Army and spend most of his life in army. He has got affected both physically as well psychologically. Physically he got heart trouble, which becomes the cause of his death. And psychologically he leads the life of hatred. He was suffering from unsatisfied love. When he becomes back from battlefield he found Adam has won the love of his wife which frustrated him so much.

Similarly, Orin is also affected by wars. He said his sister that war means murdering the same man over and over and ultimately the man himself die. He was tired of war and wants there shouldn't be war. He has got dangerous wound on his

head which made him nearly mad. The physical would made him queer feelings towards it.

Orin's horrifying image of war and his experience working as a soldier under the command of Brigadier-General Ezra Mannon are heart rendering when he comes home, he is visited by the memory of his dream of coming home. Before his arrival here he thought that the dream would never end, and he and other armymen would go on murdering and being murdered until no one was left alive. He is glad that he has come home, though he still thinks that he is dreaming of coming home. His own house looks to him to be strange, ghostly and dead. He cannot believe his father is dead; he recalls to Lavinia his experience of soldier under the command of his father.

ORIN. I hardened myself to expect my own death and everyone else,
and think nothing of it. I had to- to keep alive ! It was part of my
training as a soldier under him ! (II-I-168)

But this doesn't mean he is unfeeling, as Lavinia says. His mind is still full of ghosts; he cannot grasp anything but war: in which his father was so alive. He was the war to him- the war that would never end until Orin dies.

Orin's psychic structure was fragmented. His speaking straight to his mother, makes her suicide. He is fragmented and frustrated, and in such crucial time he became familyless and his frustration made him to suicide.

The war has not only affected the participants, but the peoples who are not directly involved in it are bitterly affected. Christine is affected by war, as she cannot enjoy the love of either her husband and son. The war made her to lead the life of unsatisfied love which assaulted her self-cohesion and that put the whole family under tragedy.

So, the war has played as a factor affecting the self-cohesion of individuals. War taught people violence, and violence brought tragedy. It not only damaged physical property, but brought miserable psychological breakdown in life. It made the people difficult to live as they lose their close ones and other important things. War enfeeble the self of man and they became fragmented, lonely and frustrated.

Self-Love of Mannon

Mannon's family members are suffering form evil of self-love. Their passion with themselves put the family under tragic doom. They became the helpless instrument of their own passion and ignored result of their bitter mission. Ezra Mannon loves with his profession and has no concern for Christine. Similarly, Orin and Lavinia are also in the same situation. The love of self made them so selfish and blind, that leads the family to fragmentation, frustration and finally the family was meet tragic end.

In the first part, Lavinia's brother Orin is still away in camp, recovering from a serious head wound which was weakened his whole nervous system. But we came to know that Orin is as much devoted to his mother, of whom he constantly dreams in his illness, as Lavinia is devoted to her father. Yet between brother and sister there is a similar bond of deep attachment. Lavinia has no concern for her mother's emotion and discovered her infidelity, but instead of threatening to tell her father, offers her to keep silent for ever. Christine is quick to strike at the truth of Lavinia's action: "You wanted Adam Brant yourself", she says accusingly, "and now you know you cannot have him, you're determined that at least you'll take him from me ! . . . But, if you told your father I would have to go away with Adam. He'd be mine still. You can't bear that thought even at the price of my disgrace, can you? . . . I know you Vinnie: I've watched you ever since you were little, trying to do exactly what you're doing now !

you're tried to become the wife of your father and the mother of Orin ! You've always schemed of to steal my place !" Of course Lavinia denies and resent all these charges bitterly, but persist in her determination until her mother, in depression, promises to send Adam Brant away.

Orin loves his mother more than any other people and that takes violent turn when he sees his mother in captain Adam Brant's arm. Self-love of Orin made him think about his desire to go to the Island with his mother. He finds his dream collapsed, and therefore, he killed Adam Brant. After killing Adam Brant, Orin accused his mother of her infidelity and the death of his father. He boasts before her mother about Adam's killing, he may hopes that his mother will proud of him. The death of Adam broke her and life became meaningless for her and she choosed to die rather. But, Orin consolate her to live for him, he says:

ORIN. Mother ! Don't moan like that ! you're still under his influence !

But you'll forget him ! I'll make you happy ! We'll leave Vinne

here and go away on a long voyage-to the south seas. (II-I-148)

But that didn't console her. Christine wants to lice only for Adam Brant and when she knew that Adam is no more alive she finds her life meaningless and shot herself. But, Orin is guided by self-love of Mannon's familial trait. He has no concern for his mother's sentiments and feelings, but wants to live with her. He becomes mad after the death of his mother, because all his dreams get fractured.

Each characters in *Mourning Becomes Electra* is doomed in the same way by the hopeless conflicts between the needs for love aroused by the family and the attitudes towards love engendered by the family. The doom of the Mannon is because of their inability to gain satisfaction in love. The murders and suicides of the play are only incidental expressions of the chief doom of the Mannons, their fated frustration

in love. The culminating horror in the family fate is not a death, but Lavinia's final abnegation of love and return to a life of perpetual frustration within the walls of the family.

All the members of the Mannon family are suffering from unfulfilled desire of love, and that desire of love engulfed the family into tragic end. Towards the end of the play we find no members are satisfied and except Lavinia all other died either by violence or by suicide. The first two part of trilogy ends with death of Ezra Mannon and Christine Mannon. Ezra was frustrated and fragmented because of his wife's infidelity and, Christine too is unsatisfied from Ezra's love. Similarly, Lavinia, the daughter is deprived of all love in her life and that made her to chose self-punishment. Orin too, is suffering from lack of love. The death of his mother fragmented him and he finds his life purposeless and empty and chose to eliminate himself. The play ends in the destruction of family members. And, single living member of family locked herself inside the house to live along with the ghosts of dead Mannons. Their own helplessness and obsession to get love emerges as the cause of self-fragmentation. Frustration, anxiety, alienation and murderous rage, greed and envy of each other.

IV. Conclusion

O'Neill has recorded in a powerful way the plight of man and woman struggling with central anxiety of the twentieth century. These central anxieties, which include most especially a sense of fragmentation, contribute in large measure to the alienation, rampant violence and self-destruction in society. But, these anxieties are no less true today than when O'Neill captured them in dramatic form more than a half-century ago. O'Neill's characters are struggling with particular cultural milieu and he provides self psychology an opportunity to understand greed, envy and murderous rage in the context of a highly individualized and materialistic culture. O'Neill's characters serve as a template to understand and evaluate an anxiety which is most distinctive as well as most troubling in modern America.

Thinking of Heinz Kohut, in general, and the plays of O'Neill, in the specific, are explicated; since both men deal the suffering of contemporary people. Kohut addressed the suffering of individual that he had witnessed in clinical arena. Kohut finds classical study was not capturing the fragmented self of individuals. Therefore, he deconstructed the classical thought and addressed the central psychological problems of twentieth century America. Kohut has tried to integrate the two most important disciplines are art and science and he contended that the two disciplines could enrich each other to a meaningful life.

O'Neill's characters in *Mourning Becomes Electra* embody the psychological problems of fragmentation, frustration alienation, enfeeblement and others. We see that all the characters are suffering from the problems of unfulfilled desire of love. The desire of unfulfilled love engulfed the family, in specific, and society, in general, under the thread of destruction. All the social relations are meaningless as the family is mere physical unit, and psychologically they are all alienated, and frustrated. The

society is full of murderous rage and jealousy. Almost all the characters find death as redemption from the psychological problems of society.

Both, O'Neill and Kohut have recognized and addressed the central psychological problems of twentieth century America, albeit in different arenas. Kohut had identified the broken-up, distorted, and fragmented self of man, as the leading psychological problems of the time that had been recognized decades earlier by O'Neill.

Summing up, there is understandingly, a remarkable resonance exist between O'Neill's play and Kohut's self-psychology. The sense of individual, familial and cultural fragmentation which is so pervasive in O'Neill's play is observed by the self-psychology of Kohut, decades later.

Works Cited

- Baym, Nina. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989.
- Berman, J. *Narcissism and the Novel*. New York: New York University Press, 1990.
- Black, Stephen A. *File on O'Neill*. London: Methuen, 1993. 142-143.
- Carpenter, Frederic L. *The Romantic Tragedy of Eugene O'Neill*. New York: Council of Teachers of English, 1945. 250.
- Eissler, K.R. *Discourse on Hamlet and HAMLET: A Psychoanalytic Inquiry*. New York: International University Press, 1971.
- Falk, Doris. *O'Neill and the Dramatic Tension*. New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1958. 1-15.
- Floyd, Virginia. *The Plays of Eugene O'Neill: A New Assessment*. New York: Ungar, 1987. 9.
- Freud, Sigmund. Ed. James Strachey. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Harper, 1998.
- - -. Ed. Hazard Adams. "Creative Writers and Day Dreaming." *Critical Theory Since Plato*. New York: Harcourt, Javanovich, 1992. 711-716.
- Guerin, Wilfred La. *Mythological and Archetypal Approaches*. A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature. 4th ed. New York: OUP, 1999: 158-191.
- Helen Deutch and Stella Hanau. *The Province Town: A Story of Theatre*. New York: Norton, 1931.

- Horst, Frenz and Martin Mueller. *More Shakespeare and Less Aeschylus in Eugene O'Neill's Mourning Becomes Electra*. New York: American Literature, 1966. 85-100.
- Kohut H. ed. P. Ornstein. *Reflections on Advances in Self-Psychology. The Search for the Self: Selected Writings of Heinz Kohut*. Madison: International UP, 1978. 261-357.
- - - . *The Restoration of the Self*. Madison: International UP, 1977.
- - - . ed. C. Strozier. *Self Psychology and the Humanities*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1985.
- L.W. In Memorial: Eugene O'Neill. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 13. (2), 1954. 190.
- Manheim, Michael. *O'Neill's New Language of Kinship*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1982. 77.
- Olson, Elder. *Modern Drama and Tragedy: A View of Mourning Becomes Electra*. Wayne State: University Press, 1961. 90-91.
- O'Neill, Eugene. *Mourning Becomes Electra*. New York: Random House, 1982.
- Reardon, William R. *O'Neill*. *Encyclopedia of World Biography*. Vol. 8, New York: McGraw Hill Books, 1973. 205-207.
- Sheaffer, Louis. *O'Neill son and Artist*. Boston: Little Brown, 1973. 43.
- Ulman, R.B. and Brothers, D. *The Shattered Self*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: The Analytic Press, 1988.