

**Tribhuvan University**

**Gloomy Facets of Personality in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres***

**A Thesis**

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Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English**

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This thesis entitled "Gloomy Facets of Personality in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*" by Padam Bahadur Rana has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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## **Abstract**

Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* attempts to explore the zones of human heart through its major characters Ginny and Larry. Every human being more or less deserves immoral and asocial ideas on the unconscious level and so is the case in Ginny and Larry too in the novel. This very fact is analyzed delving into the actions and conversations of the characters on the basis of psychoanalytical perspective in this study. Ginny, the narrator and protagonist of the novel, lives in between two distinct worlds: world of appearance and world of secrecy. Outwardly, she tries to appear as a responsible house-lady but inwardly she is crumbled with immoral and asocial ideas and actions such as adultery with Jess, her neighbor, treachery to Rose, her own sister etc. Similarly, Larry, a successful farmer with a thousand acres of prosperous land, turns into a neurotic due to his unfulfilled desire that he couldn't continue abusing his daughters later. What appears outside and what really is differs greatly among the family members; one can't trust the other that ultimately puts the happy family into a crisis.

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## **I. *A Thousand Acres: Measuring the Landscapes of the Human Heart***

Jane Smiley was born in Los Angeles, California on September 26, 1949 and moved to the suburbs of St. Louis, Missouri as an infant. In Missouri, she accomplished her grammar school and high school at the John Burroughs School and her B.A. at Vassar College in 1971. Then she travelled in Europe for a year, working on an archeological dig and sightseeing. Returning from Europe, she earned her doctorate from the University of Iowa in 1978. She taught at Iowa State University in Ames from 1981 to 1996. In 2001, she was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Smiley is an author of both fictional and non-fictional works. Her remarkable works of fiction are *The Age of Grief*, *The Greenlanders*, *Ordinary Love and Good Will*, *A Thousand Acres*, *Moo*, *Horse Heaven* and *Good Faith*, as well as many essays on various magazines. Her most recent work *Thirteen Ways of Looking at the Novel* (2005) is a non-fiction meditation on the history of the novel that spans from *Don Quixote* to the modern literature of today. She has written on politics, farming, horse training, child rearing, literature, impulse buying, getting dressed, marriage and many other topics.

In most of her fictions, Smiley explores complex relationship among family members, friends and lovers while providing detailed character studies of her protagonists. It is her artistry that she can woven very interesting stories exploring the theme of familial relationship:

Smiley is fascinated with the subject of family because she feels that what has happened in this century is that all the forms of systematic thought about society and culture have failed. They have proved themselves to be brutal and ineffective. Right now writers are trying to

come up with some other system for thinking about individuals as social beings and society as formed of individuals. Clearly the immediate form between the individual and society is the family.

(Charters 1178)

Her work is often labelled as "domestic fiction" because of its familial settings and its focus on relationships. Though her fictions are concerned with the domestic aspect of life, they also deal with larger underlying themes such as political agenda, loss and recovery of ideas etc. Heller McAlpin stated, "She is as adept at capturing the subtle nuances of relationships as she is at chronicling complex political activity" (23). Her witty and humorous novel *Moo* recognized Smiley as a comic writer too. In this novel, she attempts to satirize the absurd mores of the academic field.

The writing style of Jane Smiley is simple as if she were sitting at the kitchen table telling a story to a friend. Yet she never misses a detail. Her keen observations of daily routine and her use of sharp, revealing dialogue serve as effective tools that enable her to explicitly define her characters and their emotions. Similarly, her fictions become fascinating and exciting because of her technique of juxtaposing past events through memory with present.

Jane Smiley's the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics' Circle Award winning novel *A Thousand Acres* (1991) follows a complicated story of family relationship of an American Midwest farming family. This novel is said to be a subversive revision of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, transplanted from ancient Britain to a family farm in Iowa of 1979. The intertwined stories of Larry Cook's division of his prosperous thousand acres among his three adult daughters and the strained relationship of his neighbour, Harold Clark, with his two sons immediately establish Smiley's Shakespearean pre-text, as she relocates the story from Albion to Zebulon

county. Yet it is striking that rather than praise *A Thousand Acres* for its profound reconception of Shakespeare's tragedy, critics have more often praised the novel for its ability to stand on its own, commenting approvingly and with evident relief on Smiley's success in avoiding the excesses or preciousness of a literary exercise. To Edmund Fuller, *A Thousand Acres* seems "quintessentially mid-American," while Ron Carlson remarks on the "stunning nostalgia" generated by "Smiley's portrait of the American farm" (qtd. in Carden 181).

The novel *A Thousand Acres* begins by seemingly quite conventionally – securely affiliated, in its form and style, to the Great Tradition of realistic narrative. Place and time are as detailed and mundane as the goods in an Iowa farmhouse. Characters have average, plausible names like Cook and Clark and common, petty drives. Ginny Clark, the protagonist of the novel, narrates in a voice remarkable for its transparency: she has no style, it seems, that would call attention to itself. Her account of family life beings with unadorned factual assertion:

At sixty miles per hour, you could pass our farm in a minute, on County Road 686, which ran due north into the T intersection at Cabot Street Road. Cabot Street Road was really just another country blacktop, except that five miles west it ran into and out of the town of Cabot. (3)

*A Thousand Acres* is a woman's story of mundane domestic life which is told in a plain style. In the novel, memory plays vital role as a means to chronicle the history of family relation. Through the simple narrative technique, Smiley explores complex family relationship with emotional unheaval of the characters which ultimately derived success in her writing career.



Once Jane Smiley had said, "*A Thousand Acres* was my monster child, . . . two pages and I was wiped out. I could hardly drag myself back to the typewriter, and normally there's nowhere else I'd rather be" (Siciliano 3). Why did she express such bitter reaction to *A Thousand Acres*? It might be her true experience; it was difficult because the novel was about people in a state of conflict constantly. *A Thousand Acres* takes on themes of truth, justice, love and pride, and reveals the beautiful yet treacherous topography of humanity.

This thesis is a short research to find out the dark and gloomy facets of humanity in *A Thousand Acres*. It attempts to analyze the psychological aspects of the characters and their complex relationships. In other words, it seeks to find out the naked human nature such as hatred, jealousy, sexual desire, greed, treachery etc. on the part of characters. The novel deals with psychological tension or conflict on the relationship of each other too. Characters conceal their real selves and appear as something else; their real selves are no more good rather dark and gloomy.

*A Thousand Acres* projects a tragic story of family relationship of an Iowa farming family. Larry Cook, the landowner of a thousand acres, has no wife but three adult daughters. He decides to divide the land among his three daughters; two elder daughters Ginny and Rose accept but the youngest daughter Caroline objects to sign on the incorporation papers and the transfer papers. By profession, Caroline is a lawyer and stays in Des Moines. In fact, she dislikes the agricultural life and favours for city life since her childhood. It results that Caroline is cut out of Larry's will. Ginny and Rose take land and cultivate it; they start cooking food for their father turn by turn but there prevails a vast abyss of untrust among the family members. Unspeakable nature of the Larry generates cold relation and he sues a case in the court against his daughters Ginny and Rose to repossess the land again but Larry fails.

Similarly Ginny attempts to kill Rose by poisoning though they seem close companions to each other. It means the false appearances of the selves of the characters lead their family relation into tragic apart at last.

Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* is not only the story of Mid-Western American farming land but also the story of the dark and gloomy landscape of its characters' hearts. There is vast gap between what appear outside and the real selves of the characters. Larry's madness can be taken as the result of his suppressed tumult of his internal desires. When his abuses of daughter and land cannot be continued, he remains silence to others. Similarly, though both Ginny and Rose are married women, they desire to make Jess Clark as their lover. Because of this very reason, Ginny attempts to kill her sister by poisoning her food.

To reveal the real selves of the characters, the psychoanalytical tool especially of Freud and Lacan will be taken in this research. According to Freud, man is lead by the unconscious; the unconscious is the site of sexual instincts and of desires and feelings that are considered unacceptable by the conscious mind. Similarly, for Lacan, central to the conception of the human is the notion that the unconscious, which governs all factors of human existence, is structured like a language. He bases this on Freud's account of the two main mechanisms of unconscious process, condensation and displacement. Both are essentially linguistic phenomenon, where meaning is either condense (in metaphor) or displaced (in metonymy). Lacan says that the contents of unconscious are acutely aware of language, and particularly of the structure of language.

### **Reviews on *A Thousand Acres***

Jane Smiley's 1991 novel *A Thousand Acres*, which won both highest American literary awards: the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and the National Book Critics'

Circle Award in the year 1992, has received much critical appraisals since its publication. The novel can be read from different perspectives; criticisms from various perspectives show its richness and literary height. Basically the novel reflects the tragic story of an American Midwest farming family and the personal emotions and experiences of the characters.

According to the blurb of the novel published in 1992, "In *A Thousand Acres*, Jane Smiley transposes the *King Lear* story to the modern day, and in so doing once illuminates Shakespeare's original and subtly transforms it." And almost all critics show their affinities on this remark. In an interview with Jana Siciliano, Jane Smiley herself had said, "I thought I had thoughts to offer about the play *King Lear* and about American farming, but the material was very uncongenial to me. It's not a happy story and was pretty relentless" (3). Comparing *A Thousand Acres* with Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Susan Strehle draws parallel lines:

Lear becomes Larry, and his daughters Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia return as Ginny, Rose and Caroline. Lear's kingdom turns into Larry's a thousand unmortgaged acres of prime farmland, both to be divided among three daughters. The two eldest accept their father's wishes, but the youngest refuses to endorse his plan and is cut out. In exile, she marries Frank/France. The main plot involving daughters is linked to a subplot involving sons: Ginny and Rose are both passionately attracted to Jess/Edmund, whose brother Loren/Edgar has lost favor with their father Harold/Gloucester. In the face of Larry's increasingly rash behaviour, the girls attempt to set rules and to thwart his will. The two elder daughters meet their father, who demands better treatment; both

pairs of girls hold hands in the face of their father's imperious  
wrath. (212)

However, the novel is as much as interesting to all readers whether they know the story of *King Lear* or not. It is Smiley's grand success that she transmitted the story of *King Lear* into the modern Midwest American farming family as if it is the story of original American land.

Reviewing the novel *A Thousand Acres*, Sinead McDermott, in his article "Memory, Nostalgia, and gender in *A Thousand Acres*" writes:

Smiley's text most obviously presents the theme of memory through the central character and narrator, Ginny. Ginny's situation in the novel is an interesting one, because unlike her sister she has forgotten, or repressed, the memories of her father's abuse [. . .]. Ginny's acceptance of the status quo is a clear example of what Greene sees as the danger of forgetting [. . .]. (393)

Remembering and forgetting both are human phenomena; to chronicle the history of family relation, memory of Ginny, the protagonist is a means in the novel. Sharon O'Dair says, "In her thousand acres, all 371 pages of it, Jane Smiley buries objects and people, but also memories of good and evil, and mostly, it seems, of evil. Perhaps not surprisingly, the narrator, Ginny Cook Smith, and so has the most to uncover or remember" (263). Tyler Kessel has read the novel from the perspective of power relation. He sees Larry, the father as an oppressor and Ginny, his daughter an oppressed in the beginning but later the case reverses:

Larry Cook, the principle antagonist of Jane Smile's *A Thousand Acres*, remained invisible to this daughter Ginny because she had blocked out the memory of Larry's rape and beating for many years. Unable to

identify him as the source of her misery, Ginny could not resist her father. Ultimately, however, Ginny is able to resist her father and carve out a livable existence because she comes to see Larry as the center of the power exerted over her. (242)

Kessel reading of *A Thousand Acres* attempts to show the ongoing reconstruction of power which never exists on a single authority forever. Some of the critics have read the novel from the feministic perspective; Susan Strehle finds the daughter's subversion in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*:

Smiley's novel is narrated from the perspective of the daughter: not the third daughter, who refuses her father commands out of a sense of her own dignity and honor, but the eldest daughter, who first gives her father all he asks. Ginny Cook is the pure product of her father's upbringing and values. She is obedient, quiet, clean, self-deprecating, careful of appearances, ashamed of her body, unable to take pleasure. (212-13)

We can take Larry Cook as an epitome of patriarchal society; he not only abuses the land but also his daughters too. Sinead McDermott further writes "Larry's abuse of his land and his abuse of his daughters are connected: both are justified by a patriarchal discourse of property and implicitly condoned by his community" (395). So the novel also deals with the domestic violence and incest.

Catherine Cowen Olson, reviewing the novel finds it as a story of cooking and eating varieties of foods:

Anyone who reads *A Thousand Acres* cannot help asking this same question about the eating habits of the farmers who inhabit this Midwestern novel. Smiley's aptly named Cook family is always

cooking or eating, and much of the food sounds heavy and unappetizing. Most of us cringe to think of Midwest - Mex garbanzo bean enchiladas or pork liver sausages canned with Sauerkraut, yet these are foods that her characters prepare and expect their family and friends to eat [. . .]. (151)

Of course, the novel is about farming land and eating of what they harvest in their land. But Kyoko Amano traces the Alger's shadow in this novel. In the Alger myth, there are many stories of success such as a working class boy emerges as a respected businessman when story unfolds. Here, Kyoko Amano writes:

Ginny's knowledge of the rape is crucial to her rejection of the family legacy. The dark side of the Cooks' success story narrated from Ginny's point of view reveals a dark side of the Alger myth of success - the myths that have never been told from the female point of view. While John and Larry Cook stand in the spotlight like the Alger heroes, Edith and Ginny's mother remain silent, like female characters in the Alger myth. Smiley's novel clearly reflects how the Alger myth of male success depends on the suppression of women. (32)

Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* concerns with psychological as well as physical conflicts of people. There are the stories not only of love and justice but also of hate and treachery too. Sharon O' Dair, reviewing the novel, writes:

[. . .] Ginny, who never went to college, is engaged in a 'lifelong course of study about the tricks of appearance'; about the 'lure of appearance'; about the seemingly 'irrefutable logic of appearance' [. . .] which is to say that for these farmers, what is beyond the surface of the visible shall remain beyond, and invisible. (264)

Many things are repressed; that are not revealed in the novel. What is seen as the appearances of characters may not be the real one. Katie Roiphe further remarks:

[. . .] when they were young, the respected pillar of the community entered their yellow and pink-flowered bedrooms and had sex with them. Rose remembers and Ginny forgets. On finding out the dark secret, the reader is supposed to think with satisfaction, oh yes, now it all falls into place. Ginny's passivity, Rose's hardness, their fear and anger and cruelty, their putting their father out in the furious storm - - all make perfect sense. (66)

The complex family relationship exists with the family members' oddities to each other. The more Ginny and Rose reveal the dark secrets of their father and their own, the more the story of the novel takes its twist towards psychological upheaval of the characters. But Mary Paniccia Carden sees *A Thousand Acres* through Lacanian perspective:

Here, Smiley seems to formulate Ginny's position in almost Lacanian terms. For Jacques Lacan, the symbolic register-language-is a function of the law of the father: It is in the name of the father that we must recognize the support of the symbolic function which, from the dawn of history, has identified with his person with the figure of the law. (186)

Similarly, Marina Leslie, reviewing the novel through psychoanalytical perspective, writes:

[. . .] Freud did not systematically deny the reality of incest. When one female patient, for example, attempt to protect the identity of her abuser on the grounds that such behaviour in "high-minded" people

was "a disease, a kind of madness, and I must excuse them," Freud was able to determine that 'her supposedly otherwise high-minded and respected father regularly took her to bed when she was from 8 to 12 years old.' (43)

In conclusion, the novel concerns not only the history of a thousand acres land of Mid-Western America but also the complex relationship of family members. Love, hatred, responsibility, treachery, greed and so on are interconnected; and the false appearances of the selves of the characters leads the family relationship into a tragic fall apart at the end of the novel.



## II. Psychoanalysis: Unconscious, the Split Self and Oedipal Complex

### Introduction

Psychoanalysis took its start in medicine and it was a part of the medical discipline which grew slowly in its endeavour to understand and treat mental disorder. So it can be taken as an attempt to inquire the irrational domain of human psyche, with logic and rationality. In other words, psychoanalysis is a method of "investing mental process and treating neuroses and some other disorder of the mind" (Webster 1158).

The compound word "psychoanalysis" consists of two words - "psycho" and "analysis". 'Psycho' refers to the person who behaves in an abnormal way whereas 'analysis' means the study of something by examining its parts and their relationship. Psychoanalysis, etymologically, can be taken as a study of the nature and behaviour of those abnormal people whose mental condition is not in order. It apparently suggests that psychoanalysis attempts to scrutinize and analyze the human psyche of the mentally retarded people. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, psychoanalysis means "a method of treating somebody's mental problems or orders by making them aware of experiences in their early life and tracing the connection between these and their present behaviour or feelings" (935). In James D. Page's view:

The term 'psychoanalysis' has three different meanings. It is first a school of psychology that emphasizes the dynamic, psychic determinants of human behaviour and the importance of personality. Secondly psychoanalysis refers to a specialized technique of investigating unconscious mental activities. Finally psychoanalysis is a method of interpreting and treating mental disorders especially the psychoneuroses. (179)

It means psychoanalysis is used "to designate a loosely knit body of ideas on the nature of the human mind, in particular personality development and psychopathology; to describe a technique of therapeutic intervention in a range of psychological disturbance; to designate a method of investigation" (*Encyclopedia* 137). Psychoanalysis, as therapy, is officially regarded as the task of uncovering all the pathological memories. Human experiences like anxiety, fear, desire, emotions etc. are the elements which provide a strong support for the psychological problems resulting in frustration, conflict and inner mental disorder. Psychological analysis helps in exploring the causes of the mental tensions and conflicts. It is 'the talking cure' that emerges out of the dialogue between patient and the therapist in which repressed human sexual desires, fantasies and anxieties are explored.

In literature, psychoanalysis is immensely applicable to the study and analysis of the psychological motives of authors and characters both. It is an excellent tool for reading beneath the surface of the text. In other words, psychoanalysis is not only the study of human instincts and human relationships, but also is used to explain literary relationships, actions, motives and the very existence of text. M.H. Abrams, in this context, writes:

The chief enterprise of the psychoanalytic critics in a way that parallels the enterprise of the psychoanalyst as a therapist, is to reveal the true content, and thereby to explain the effect on the reader, of a literary work by translating its manifest elements into the latent, unconscious determinants that constitute their suppressed meanings.(249)

To read a literary work through the psychoanalytical perspective, one can analyze characters invented by authors, the language they use etc. Psychoanalytical

literary criticism takes a literary piece as an expression of the state of mind and the personality of an author. So one should delve beneath the surface of the text to find out the meaning in psychoanalytical criticism.

### **Freud and the Theory of Unconscious**

Psychoanalysis is a term first coined and developed by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) in Vienna in 1896. Freud systematically and scientifically studied various factors working in human mind and developed an important area which is often known as psychoanalysis. His contribution to the understanding of human nature is of great importance; he introduced major methods, ideas and concepts of psychoanalysis in a scientific and systematic way. Primarily, he studied mental disorder, and took psychoanalysis as a psychotherapeutic technique. Later it became a great psychological theory encompassing all the areas of normal and abnormal personality. Then it entered into the fields of sociology, anthropology, history, education and the arts:

Psychoanalysis studied neurotic symptoms in conjunction with dreams, jokes, and 'the psychopathology of everyday life' – that is, mistakes of all sorts, such as slips of the tongue or of the pen, bungled actions forgettings - as well as art, literature and religion, with a view towards establishing the laws of functioning of the 'mental apparatus' as Freud called his hypothetical model of the mind of the psyche.

(Surprenant 200)

Psychoanalysis is an interpretation of all types of human activities, including art and literature. Psychoanalytical literary criticism emerges specifically from a therapeutic technique for the treatment of hysteria and neurosis. Psychoanalysis is "a means of analysis and therapy for neuroses, but soon expanded it to account for many

developments and practices in the history of civilization, including warfare, mythology, and religion, as well as literature and the other arts" (Abrams 248).

The fundamental psychodynamic model proposes that mental illness is caused by unresolved, unconscious conflicts originating in childhood. Furthermore, in such cases, defense mechanism such as repression of unpleasant memories, serve to protect the ego. Neurotic symptoms are argued to be the result of conflict between repressed or unfulfilled desires and attempt to control or resolve them. Freud argues that recovery depends on insight and working through past problems. Similarly he "draws an analogy between the artist's creations and dreams or fantasy. He is interested in literary works as expressions of the author; he sees a piece of creative writing as a continuation of or substitute for the play of childhood" (Adams 711).

Freud's major contribution reached to the peak when he published his famous book *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900. Since the publication of this book, psychoanalysis has become an autonomous discipline. Freud considers that "interpretation of dreams is, in fact, the royal road to a knowledge of unconscious, it is the secured foundation of psychoanalysis" (Osbrone 41). Psychoanalysis is the most significant study of the non-rational process that emerges at the kingdom of unconscious inherent in depth of human psyche.

The notion of psychoanalysis is rooted in the process of unconscious. Freud was not the first man to bring forth the idea of the unconscious. The scholars before him had already suggested that human mind is conscious and rational, but not all the time and levels. He himself has admitted that poets and philosophers had already discovered unconscious, what he discovered was the scientific method by which the unconscious could be studied.

Freud, the most systematic exponent of the mental theory, divides mind into two levels: the 'conscious', and the 'unconscious'. The conscious is that part of mind which provides immediate awareness, perceptions, thought, or feelings of mental events and memories. Conscious is also a process or sequences of events which constitutes the relationship with the environment. It refers to the experience of an object or event at present moment. Freud mainly emphasizes the importance of the unconscious by pointing out that even the most conscious processes are conscious for only a short period; quite soon they become latent, though they can easily become conscious again. In view of this, Freud defines two kinds of unconscious:

One which is transformed into conscious material easily and under conditions which frequently arise, and another in the case of which such a transformation is difficult, can only come about with a considerable expenditure of energy, or may never occur at all [ . . . ] .

We call the unconscious which is only latent, and so can easily become conscious, the "preconscious", and keep the name "unconscious" for the other. (qtd. in Guerin 128)

The preconscious mind is the storehouse of memories and wishes, which can be recalled into consciousness. Those memories and desires, which are dimly conscious, constitute preconscious mind. It is a recalling process to mind's consciousness. The unconscious is the most obscure part of the mind, but it is the single segment where every concept of psychoanalysis depends. The unconscious is the site of sexual instincts and of desires and feelings that are considered unacceptable by the conscious mind.

Freud lays too much emphasis on unconscious mind. The unconscious mind, according to him, is the reservoir of buried thoughts, emotions, feelings, wishes and

impulses that cannot be brought into consciousness by any ordinary means.

Psychoanalysis can only bring the unconscious desires, experiences, and thoughts into conscious level. Freud wrote in the last year of his life:

The concept of the unconscious has long been knocking at the gates of psychology and asking to be let in. Philosophy and literature have often toyed with it, but science could find no use for it. Psychoanalysis has seized upon the concept, has taken it seriously and has given it a fresh content. (*Essentials* 129)

The unconscious is timeless and chaotic in nature. It is infantile and primitive too. It is the gloomy and dark facet of personality as well as humanity, which has no concern with morality, reality, good and evil, and norms of the society. The contents of unconscious come from two sources: animalistic feelings and strivings, which had never been conscious, and repressed wishes and thoughts, which were once conscious. These repressed desires are mainly sexual and they always try to come into the surface of the conscious. The unconscious wishes are extremely powerful and dynamic. They are not easily allowed to come into conscious awareness because the unfulfilled desires can spoil one's self-esteem, and therefore they express themselves symbolically in dreams, slip of tongue, mental conflicts, and neurotic symptoms.

Civilized life restraints on the desires and wishes of unconscious; if there does not remain any exit for those unfulfilled desires, it ultimately invites mental diseases:

Forgetting is an active process in which painful memories are repressed. The Freudian unconscious is a pool of mainly repressed energy, distorted by frustration and exerting a stress on conscious reason and its shaping of the pattern of daily life. The strain produced

by this stress, present in some degree in all civilized men and women, is seen in neurosis. (*The Encyclopedia* 189)

Freud believes that the inhibited feelings and wishes of childhood remain influential as a part of active unconscious. Louis Kaplan and Denis Baron clarify that "the unconscious serves as a reservoir for all past experiences. We commonly say that we have forgotten the experiences of childhood. But nothing is ever lost once it has been experienced. The past is stored in the unconscious, and there it remains throughout life" (120). The mental processes stored in this chamber of mind are charged with energy. This energy has a profound influence on our thinking, feeling, and acting. It may make us to activities we did not intent to do. These activities go on automatically whether we will them or not. Therefore, many of our acts are not voluntary. The motives behind these acts lie in the unconscious level. The theory of unconscious motivation plays a significant role in the theory of psychoanalysis.

Unconscious motives are those of which we are not sure and which we do not recognize as determining our behaviour. Freud laid great stress that a man's behaviour cannot be understood fully unless we know his unconscious motive too. Slips of tongue or pen, forgetting of unpleasant experiences, involuntary movements, dreams and the like result from unconscious motivation, as we do not quite recognize them. Those motives can be brought to light by the technique of free association in which the subject is asked to relax and speak out whatever passes his/her mind on the presentation of key words. It is claimed that in this way will reveal one's unconscious motive.

### **Theory of Personality: Id, Ego and Superego**

Freud introduced another important aspect, the structure of human personality in the psychoanalytical theory. As a structural model, the model of the psychic

apparatus often refers to that part of psychic process which Freud sees as being differentiated into three psychic zones having different functions: the Id, the Ego and the Superego. The character of an individual is shaped and analyzed as a result from the interaction of these three key subsystems. He has studied the relationship between Id, Ego and Superego as well as their collective relation to the conscious and the unconscious.

The Id is a reservoir of unconscious wishes and drives. Freud explains this "obscure inaccessible part of our personality" as "a chaos, a cauldron of seething excitement [with] no organization and no unified will, only an impulsion to obtain satisfaction for the instinctual needs, in accordance with pleasure principle" (129). It means the Id functions to fulfill the primordial life principle, which Freud considered to be the pleasure principle. It is the representation of primary process of mode of thinking. It manifests itself in dreams, jumble of thoughts and intoxication.

The Id is the source of all our aggressions and desires. It is lawless, asocial and amoral. Its function is to gratify our instincts for pleasure without regard for social conventions, legal ethics, or moral restraint. It can be taken as irrational and selfish part of human psyche, and is concerned only with the immediate gratification. It has no concern with logic, time sequence, morality and social manner. Id, according to Freud, is "inborn part of unconscious mind that uses the primary process to satisfy its needs and that acts according to the pleasure principle [ . . . ] the attempts of the Id to seek immediate pleasure and avoid pain, regardless how harmful it might be to other" (Lahey 466). Id is the depository of the innate instinctual drives and in it even the contradictory conflicting impulses may coexist. If unbridled, the Id would always seek instant satisfaction of primitive irrational and pleasure seeking impulses. It is seen at the early stage of personality development but it becomes dominant in adult



personality structure of normal people. Thus, the Id is the underground storeroom of buried thoughts, feelings, desires and experiences that are repressed and prohibited to come on the surface of adult normal personality.

The Ego is the rational governing agent of the psyche. In other words, it is our ordinary social self that thinks, decides, feels and wills. It maintains all the worldly functions and makes them as realistic and rational as possible. It creates a balance between inner demands and outer reality. The Ego seeks "to defend itself against unconscious feelings by denying them, or by converting them into their opposite, or by acting them out in indirect ways of splitting them into good and bad components" (Ryan 36). Though a large portion of the Ego is unconscious, it nevertheless comprises what we ordinarily think of as the conscious mind. It is associated with reason and gets governed with critical judging.

The Ego can be taken as an executive director of personality whose functions are of perception, conscious thought, memory, learning, choice, judgment, action and so on. According to James D. Page, the functions of the Ego are "to satisfy the nutritional needs of the body and protect it against injury; to adjust the wishes of the id to the demands of reality; to enforce repression; and to coordinate the antagonistic strivings of the id and the superego" (185). The Ego deals with sexual and aggressive impulses originating in the Id at the unconscious level. The desire for immediate pleasure must be checked and it has to pass a long route to obtain pleasure in a proper manner. The Id is governed solely by the pleasure principle; the Ego is governed by the reality principle. Id is dominant in infantile whereas ego rules the id in maturity. But there occurs a constant conflict between the id and the ego. Mostly the ego controls over the id and in some occasions the id sways the ego that creates some abnormality in an individual's behavior. Ego has also knowledge of the

consequence of its behavior and tries to strike a balance between the needs of the organism and the demand of the physical and social environment.

The Superego is the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride. In other words, it is "the internalization of standards of morality and propriety" (Abrams 249-50). When a child becomes able to learn something, he/she is exposed to rules, regulations, morality, standards, values and codes of the society. Initially, a child acquires his/her notions of right and wrong, dos and don'ts, and good and evil from his/her parents. The child determines the negative and positive values on the basis of the punishments and rewards after his/her acts. According to these values as well as the cultural periphery and social norms, the Superego is moulded. Thus it is a censor, which classifies all the functions of human personality on the basis of social values and moral codes. In this context, Kaplan and Baron opines:

The superego performs its work in two ways. First it acts as a conscience which gives the ego a means for distinguishing right behaviour from the wrong behaviour. Secondly, it establishes ideals or goals toward which the ego is compelled to strive. These functions elevate man to higher plane of human behavior [ . . .]. The superego is a product of modern civilization, and in a sense represents the most recent achievement of human evolutions. (128)

The Superego is dominated by the morality principle. It prohibits the Id and the Ego for the irrational and anti-social gratification. Thus, the Superego is the norms and values oriented judge of the human psychic personality. It becomes almost synonymous with the idea of conscience. It serves to repress or inhabits the drives of the Id, and to block off and thrust into the unconscious to those impulses that tend

toward pleasure. Thus, it is a regulator that governs all the functions of human personality on the basis of social values and norms.

### **Oedipus Complex, Repression and Neurosis**

Freud derived the term 'Oedipus complex' from Greek tragedy *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. In *Oedipus Rex*, the story bears that the protagonist Oedipus unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother. Here 'Oedipus complex' means "the repressed but continuing presence in the adult's unconscious of the male infant's desire to possess his mother and to have rival, the father, out of the way" (Abrams 250). It can be defined as the feelings of sexual desire that a boy has for his mother and the jealous feelings towards his father. Such problem in the case of girls is called 'Electra complex' in which the girl desires her father for sexual love. It apparently means that the child's object of love is opposite sex parent accordance to Freud.

Psychosexual development of personality, as categorized by Freud, has five stages from birth to puberty: oral, anal, phallic, latency and genital. In Freud's view, 'Oedipus complex' is associated with 'the phallic stage' which starts at the age of three years and continues up to six years of the child. Phallic stage brings pleasure from the genital organs by manipulating and stroking. Biologically, the child is attracted towards the opposite sex; in the case of the boys, mother is the one who is not only opposite-sex but also of easy access. But the boy finds his father as an enemy on the way to fulfill his internal sexual desire and wants to kill him. Here, the boy in demanding sexual love from his mother comes into rivalry with his father and the girl becomes a rival of her mother for the father's love.

According to Freud, the child's object of love is opposite-sex. The child, in order to resolve the threatening conflict, begins to copy the role of his or her rival to become like the same sex-parent to share the affection of the opposite sex parent. The

identification of the child also manages to play the role of same sex parent. However the resolution of Oedipus and Electra complex is to understand social norms and standard and parental punishments – "A boy must resolve his unconscious sexual desire for his mother and the accompanying wish to kill his father and fear of his father's revenge in order that he proceeds in his moral development" (Walranen 238).

To sum up, Freud believes in bi-sexuality but not in homo-sexuality. Every child ties the feeling of love and desire of the parent of the opposite sex, and becomes jealous, hostile and rival of the parent of the same sex in phallic stage. The problem exists on the point that such Oedipal desire remains not only Phallic stage but also throughout the life in repressed form; all the unconscious desires cannot be fulfilled due to social norms and values rather they are repressed. When the internal desires do not get any exit, it ultimately invites to anxiety, despair, neurosis and other many mental diseases.

The theory of repression, however most psychoanalysts take repression as a fact, greatly concerns with the conflicts among 'the Id', 'the Ego' and 'the Superego'; the mutual relationships among these psychic agents determine what to manifest and repress. The unconscious wishes are extremely powerful and dynamic; these unconscious wishes always try to come into the surface of the conscious. But all the wishes or desire mainly sexual germinated in unconscious mind cannot be manifested rather they are repressed. For Freud, "the superego acts as both control and defense; it controls the child's oedipal desire and defenses him from the anxiety caused by castration fear. It was conceived of as operating by means of the mechanism of repression" (Edwards 191). So, repression is to Freud the paradigm of defense mechanism against anxiety.

Repression is the forgetting or ignoring of unresolved conflicts, unadmitted desires or traumatic past events, so that they are forced out of conscious awareness and into the realm of the unconscious. Freud's theory of repression states that much of what lies in the unconscious mind has been put there by consciousness. Basically infantile sexual desires and other censored materials are repressed to an unconscious state. Such repressed desires find outlet through dreams, slips of tongue and pen, creative activities and neurotic behaviors. To Freud, all human beings repress desires and because of the powerful social taboos attached to certain sexual impulses, many of our desires and memories are repressed. If we repress our desires too much that might cause neurosis. It is an element of creation as well as cause of unhappiness. So it is better to express those desires through socially acceptable means so that our civilization keeps on moving. It even makes us happy and helps society to run in healthy way. Art and literature also carry the unfulfilled, repressed desires of the writer, as well as characters in a distorted form that is accepted by the social standards of morality and propriety.

Repression does not exist in the period of complete immaturity; it starts to remain in the individual's life when he/she comes to internalize the parental code or social norms. The psychic agent Superego, acting either directly or through the Ego, "serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the id, to block off and thrust back into the unconscious those impulse toward pleasure that society regards as unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passions, and the Oedipal instinct" (Guerin 131).

Neurosis reflects a conflict between the Id instinct and the Ego mechanism, both of them are unconscious. This conflict is caused because of the friction between two opposite poles of the Id and the Superego. Neurosis also reflects the ways in which the individual attempts to use defense mechanisms to avoid anxiety and guilt. If

we repress our unconscious desires too much, it might result in neurosis, a state of mental illness that causes depression or abnormal behavior, often with physical symptoms but with no sign of disease. Neurosis has the result of forcing the patient out of normal life, an alienation of the patient from reality. The neurosis is subject to evolve under the pressure of 'libido'. According to Freudian analysis, a person falls ill of neurosis only when the ego loses its capacity to deal in some way or other with the libido. Freud claims that "regression of libido without repression could never give rise to a neurosis but result in perversion" (129).

For a neurosis, the decisive factor would be the predominance of the influence of reality. Neurotic symptoms are the outcome of a conflict which arises over a new method of satisfying the libido. In a neurosis, the Ego, in its dependence on reality, suppresses a piece of the Id, whereas in a psychosis, this same Ego, in the service of the Id, withdraws from a piece of reality. In the words of Freud:

It was found that men become neurotic because they can not tolerate the degree of privation, that society imposes on them in virtue of its cultural ideals, and it was supposed that a return to greater possibilities of happiness would ensure if these standards were abolished or greatly relaxed. (qtd. in Pervin 218)

In fact, man is basically in conflict with the demands of society in the pursuit of pleasure. The frustrations imposed by society on the instinctual life of man lead to the most creative works of civilization, but they also lead to neurosis. Psychoanalysis rides with the instincts and seeks a reduction to the extent in which the instincts are frustrated. Neurotics attempt to turn away from reality because they find it unbearable either the whole or parts of it. Neurosis is the expression of a rebellion on the part of the Id against the external world.

To sum up, man is an energy system, driven by sexual and aggressive drives and operating in the pursuit of pleasure, functioning lawfully but often aware of the forces determining his behavior, and basically in conflict with social restrictions on the expression of inner desires. When the unfulfilled desires do not get any exit, they are ultimately stored on the unconscious and cause neurosis.

### **Lacan and the Linguistic Turn**

Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) is a French psychoanalyst who began his career by taking a medical degree and then training in psychiatry in the 1920s; he began in the 1950s to develop his own version of psychoanalysis based on the ideas articulated in structuralism linguistics and anthropology. Lacan's psychoanalysis attempts to understand the unconscious of human mind in regard with language. It was Lacan who first read the writings of Sigmund Freud through the lens of structuralism, and he is perhaps best known in theoretical circles for his pronouncement that "the unconscious is structured like a language" (Adams 897).

In Western philosophy, the conscious mind has long been regarded as the essence of selfhood. This view encapsulated in the proclamation by the philosopher Descartes, 'I think, therefore I am.' Lacan lays down "a dramatic challenge to this philosophical consensus when he reverses this into 'I am where I think not'" (qtd. in Paudel 127) that is, in the unconscious where one's true selfhood lies. According to Lacan, central to the conception of human is the notion that the unconscious, which governs all factors of human existence, is structured like language. Essentially unconscious process is identified with the unstable signifiers according to Lacan. He bases the unconscious process on Freud's account of the two main mechanisms of unconscious process, condensation and displacement. Both are essentially linguistic phenomena in the sense that they correspond to the basic poles of language identified

by the linguist Roman Jakobson, that is, to metaphor and metonymy, respectively.

Lacan goes on to emphasize the linguistic aspect of Freud's work: whenever the unconscious is being discussed the amount of linguistic analysis increases, since puns, allusions, and other kinds of word play are often the mechanisms which make manifest the contents of unconscious. Lacan says that the contents of unconscious are acutely aware of language, and particularly of the structure of language.

There are two major, but not mutually exclusive, periods in Lacan's work: the years inspired by structuralist linguistics and the post-structuralist years. His psychoanalysis is based on the ideas articulated in structural linguistics of Saussure and in structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss. He privileges the Saussurean signifier over the signified, decentering both the unconscious and language. To uncover this post-structuralist modes of language and unconscious, Lacan posits three stages of human development: the mirror stage, the imaginary and the symbolic.

In the mirror stage the child discovers its own image, which becomes other to the self, thereby establishing subjectivity. The mirror stage refers "to the joy expressed by the child of six to eighteen months, when faced with its image in the mirror. This joy, according to Lacan, results from an anticipation of bodily unity of the mirror image, in contrast with the physical immaturity of the child's own motor development" (Mautner 229). At this stage, the body treats mother as mirror and identifies itself with mother. But in reality the mother is 'other' and the child feels that the image united with the mother's body does not belong to itself. The image has separate existence. In the essay "Psychoanalysis after Freud", Josiane Paccaud-Huget writes:

The 6-18-month-old child sets up mechanisms of identification with objects outside - whether material things, other people, or the image in



mirror. These mechanisms are accompanied by ambivalent affects: first jubilation at the recognition of one's own image, soon marred by a sense of anguish when the child realizes that the changing reflection is fake. What matters here is the function of the image as our first mediator and our perpetual other: we never completely forgo the longing for unity and identification with our own beloved reflection (our specular image) which we will constantly look for in adult life, whether in the social or the familial mirror: in the other's eyes. (281)

Fundamental to the theory of the mirror stage is the view that the 'self' constitutes both itself and the other through an identification with an image of itself as other. When the child knows the difference between itself and its (m)other, and starts to become an individual being, it loses the primal sense of unity that it originally had. This is the element of the tragic built into psychoanalytic theory: to become a civilized "adult" always entails the profound loss of original unity, a non-differentiation, a merging with others. This mirror stage is also called pre-linguistic stage where child first identifies himself/herself with mother and at the same time it identifies itself to be alienated from the mother too.

In the imaginary stage, the dualism of self and other is further developed. It is the period between the mirror stage and the symbolic stage, when language enters. So it is also a pre-linguistic stage. However the sense of 'ego' is formulated before learning language. As in the mirror stage, the sense of harmony with (m)other and alienation go on simultaneously during the imaginary stage too. A child, nevertheless, can distinguish the self from the other. Therefore everyone's self identity is "split internally, formed from a duality - a constitutive dialectic of self and other - that can never be bridged or unified" (Ryan 37).

In the symbolic stage that starts after the age of eighteen month, the child enters language, and the subject, now linguistic, is continually deferred down the chain of signifiers. In fact, language consists of a network of signifiers that can only be defined in relation to each other and are themselves meaningless. Lacan says that language is always about loss or absence; words are only needed when the object is not there. It is at this purely formal level of language, conceived as a network of signifiers, that Lacan locates the other. For him, the 'other' is other to the subject (ego), speech and language. This other exists prior to subject entry to language and after the access to the language, there is the split. Subjectivity is thus always on the move and is formed only in and as dialogue, which is never ending except in death. It can be understood as the primal oneness with the lost mother's dead body becomes possible only at the cost of death. Whenever a child enters at symbolic order, s/he has already been enchained by all the man made rules and regulations of morality, religion and social affairs. Even the presence of father in the form of language threatens the child's unification with the mother. Michael Ryan, about the Lacanian symbolic order, writes:

If the presence of the word is the absence of the thing, then to be obliged to live in language (what for Lacan entry into the Symbolic Order entails) is to learn to endure the permanent absence of objects and the impossibility of any unity with or presence of the thing named or desired (what the imaginary unity with the mother supposedly provided). With this separation from the mother, the parental injunction against incest (the "Law of the Father") initiates the passage into the symbolic that institutes adult self-identity as something founded on a primordial alienation that can never be healed. (30)

In the 1960s Lacan began to develop his concept of real. The real is excluded both from the symbolic and the imaginary. It is the hard kernel around which symbolization fails, the resounding echo felt in the gaps of the symbolic, that which never stops not being written except in moments of traumatic encounter. Based on the concept of trauma that Freud initially regarded as the ultimate origin of all neurotic disorders, the real is an 'aporia' internal to the symbolic which progressively reveals itself to be at the centre of the analytic experience.

Thus, Lacan restates Freud's theories in the language of Saussure and even later expressed post structuralist view. It is no doubt that his work has had an extraordinary influence upon many aspects of recent literary theory.

So far as applying psychoanalytical methodology is concerned, the unconscious motives of the major characters will be analyzed in its perfect manner as it can. Most of the characters are tormented by the psychological problems in the novel *A Thousand Acres*. The false appearances of the characters deceive each other; one remains mysterious and obscure in the sight of others. Larry's mental crisis is the direct outcome of his suppressed tumult of his unconscious desires; when his abuses of daughters and land cannot be continued, he becomes obscure to others. Similarly, though both Ginny and Rose are married women, they desire to make Jess Clark as their lover. Ginny's adultery drives her on the point that she even attempts to kill Rose, her sister by poisoning food. It means there is vast abyss between what appear outside and the real selves of the characters.

### III. Gloomy Facets of Personality: Psychoanalytical Reading of *A Thousand Acres*

#### Introduction

Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* basically deals with the complex relationship of the Midwestern American farming family. It attempts, though the story evolves around the land ownership and its consequences, to measure the dark and gloomy landscapes of its characters' hearts and as a whole, human heart. Larry Cook, the owner of the thousand acres prosperous land, has three adult daughters: Ginny, Rose and Caroline. But the relationships among them seem quite complex and mysterious to some extent. In fact, the false appearances of the selves create the vast abyss of untrust among them and it ultimately leads that very happy family into tragic separation at last.

Larry Cook, a respected pillar of the community (Zebulon County), has no wife but three adult daughters. He abuses not only the land but also his daughters, Ginny and Rose. It is his dark secret that once he entered their yellow and pink flowered bedroom and had sex with them. Rose still remembers but Ginny forgets this very incestuous relationship. Larry's madness can be taken as the result of his suppressed internal desires that he could not help abusing his daughters.

The novel resembles Shakespeare's tragedy *King Lear* on the point that as King Lear, Larry decides to divide the farming land among his three daughters. Ginny and Rose agree but Caroline objects to sign on the incorporation papers and the transfer papers. It results that Caroline is cut off Larry's property will. Ginny and Rose take the land and cultivate it; they start cooking food for their father turn by turn but there prevails a vast abyss of untrust among the family members. Larry becomes silent and mysterious to others. His unspeakable nature and crazy activities generate

cold relations and he sues a case in the court against his daughters to repossess the land again but Larry fails. Greediness is a human phenomena and it also occurs in this family that "live together for years without speaking, for whom a historic dispute over land and money burns so hot that it engulfs every other subject, every other point of relationship or affection"(8).

Ginny, the narrator of the novel is an obedient and loyal daughter of Larry whereas other two sisters Rose and Caroline are somehow challenging. It means Ginny is overshadowed by her father's upbringings and values. However her relationships with her husband Ty, her father and her sisters are not as straight and simple as it appears. Of course she is a woman who has common ethos of love, hatred, jealousy, treachery, rivalry and so on. Actually, she does not have any child yet but has bitter experiences of five miscarriages.

Ginny has also another world that is her own secret world: "one of the many benefits of this private project, I thought at the time, was that it showed me a whole secret world, a way to have two lives, to be two selves. I felt larger and various than I had in years, full of unknowns, and also of untapped possibilities" (26). She keeps secret about some miscarriages, her adultery with the neighbor Jess, treacherous plan to kill Rose and so many other internal desires. So it is very hard to know the real self of a person through the outer appearance and activities. What appears outside may not be the true one.

### **Unconscious Motives in Ginny Cook**

Ginny Cook, the protagonist of the novel, is engaged in a "life long course of study about tricks of appearance" (56). In Zebulon county, which was settled mostly by English, Germans and Scandinavians, "most issues . . . return to the issue of keeping up appearances" (199), which is to say that for those farmers, what is

beyond the surface shall remain invisible. It clearly indicates that everyone does have two worlds: one is the world of appearance (conscious one) and another, world of secrecy (unconscious one). Ginny's life is in the clash between these two distinct worlds.

She attempts to bury, as anyone does, most of her evils from the world of appearance. Under the floor of the dairy barn, Ginny buries "the bloodstained nightgown and underclothes of miscarriage number five" (255). Down the trash chute of the Savery Hotel in Des Moines, where she spend her honeymoon, she buries "the washcloth she uses after sex that does not reveal the signs of her lost virginity" (279). In "the heap of leaves and grass clippings beside the garden", she buries the ashes of the minced hemlock with which she poisoned "a batch of canned liver sausage and sauerkraut" (313). And several years later, she buries the ground up remains of "the liver sausage and sauerkraut by flushing them into the city sewer system" (366). Moreover, she has buried many other ideas and activities within herself. It is meant to say that the repressed internal desires invite her to commit some activities very secretly; "it was better now to keep this conversation to myself" (119).

Ginny's adultery can be analyzed through her discontentment towards her conjugal life with Ty. They have "spent our life together practicing courtesy, putting the best face on things, harboring secrets. The thought of giving that up, right now with my next remark, was terrifying"(260). Of course, there was not any complaint on Ty's side: he was a hardworking and laborious man. He has "married up and been obliged to prove his skills worthy of, not a hundred and sixty acres, but a thousand acres"(104). But her fidelity upon her husband remains no more when she possesses the vehement desire to sleep with others. Her love for Ty, "which I had never

questioned felt simple like that, like belief. But I believed I was going to sleep with Jess Clark with as full as a certainty" (144).

When Jess returned after fourteen years to his home, slowly and gradually he comes to be close with Ginny. Her inner heart was also seeking some change or new thing in her routinely life because it is, in everybody's case, quite boring and uninteresting having same events daily. Ginny feels something ease with Jess that "how automatically I thought of him as a younger man, somehow relatively unformed,... that I don't often feel with strange man" (50).

Her psychological tumult does not allow her to stay comfortably. She becomes excessively crazy towards Jess but in conscious world, she has to accomplish her family responsibilities as a housewife. One night, Ginny and Ty slept together but when "I was certain, he was asleep, I slipped out of bed ..." (261). Then she watched towards the room where Jess had stayed. It was impossible to go to Jess's room at that night, so she found its substitution through her imagination:

Now the imaginary me sang out, "Jess! Hey Jess! Jess Clark!"

Magically, the figure turned and came out the window, pushed the sash higher, and bent down. He said, "Hi! Who's out there?"[. . .]

Although the light was behind him, I saw the white flash of a smile. I said, "I guess I haven't seen you in a while, huh?"

"Lots going on. I miss you". His voice softened. He should not have said that. He should not have said it because then I said "I love you", and he said "Oh, Ginny." (262-63)

Imagination is the realm of human mind where every unfulfilled desire or idea even impossible one comes be fulfilled. Ginny also wants to make Jess her lover but the problem exists on the point that she cannot break the relationship with Ty too.

However, the relationship between Ginny and Jess gets its apex that they come to make love secretly. Outwardly, there are social norms and values which restrict to keep physical relation between Ginny, a married woman and Jess, an unmarried boy. But it is the matter of heart but not of mind, they come close together emotionally and start making love secretly:

He smiled warmly at me, then wrapped his hand around my arm, pulled me around him, and kissed me. It was a strange sensation, a clumsy stumbling falling being caught, the broad, sunlit world narrowing to the dark focus of his cushiony lips on mine. It scared me to death, but still I discovered how much I had been waiting for it. (128)

Furthermore, they have sexual intercourse on truck bed at dump secretly but Ginny, instantly after having sex, starts to shiver due to "Maybe t-t-t-terrified"(163). It means there is tension between Id, unconscious mind and Ego, conscious mind of Ginny. Since she is a married woman, it is an immoral and asocial to keep physical relation with a boy but she has strong inner desire for it. Here her unconscious motif leads her: "But I wasn't, not any more. Now the shaking was pure desire. As I realized what we had done, my body responded as it didn't while we were doing it- hadn't ever done, I thought. I felt blasted with the desire, irradiated, rendered transparent"(163).

In sleeping with Jess, she has a bit sense of guiltiness after returning home because she thinks, she hasn't "slept with men. I have slept with Ty"(163). We can say that this sense of guilt is an outcome of dominance of Ego over Id. At home, she is chained by social and familial norms, values and responsibilities and unconscious motives are scattered or repressed. Human activities, according to psychoanalysts, are guided by unconscious, not by conscious mind. Then here too, Ginny is at first guided



by her inner unconscious desire to keep relation with Jess and later feels the sense of guilt: "I sat there for a long time, staring out the door, struck for the first time at what I had done and thought and felt that day, how, to the eyes of almost any outsider, it would look like I had become my own enemy and the enemy of all my family and friends"(166). Now she fears from the society, it is her sense of guiltiness in the conscious mind.

However Ginny has emotional touch with Jess. She feels more comfortable with Jess than her husband and also shares her secret with him:

"You are such a nice person how come you and Ty don't have any kids?"

"Well, I have had five miscarriages."

"Jesus. Oh, Ginny."

"Ty only knows about three. He couldn't stand it after that, so I've sort of kept the fact that we're still trying to myself."(164 )

Actually, Ginny has the strong desire to be a mother but every attempt to give birth turns into miscarriage. Perhaps, her sleeping with Jess might be the result of it because she may articulate it as Ty's fault. But Ty, because of his pure love towards Ginny, does not want to hurt anymore through her miscarriages. Due to this very misunderstanding between them, Ginny keeps in secret about her latest miscarriage. She thinks if there had been "no miscarriage, the baby would have been a week or two old now, a startling thought"(255). It means Ginny is very much distressed being unable to be a mother but does not know the reason behind her miscarriage. Jess points out that the water they used is responsible for it. Whether water is its real cause or not, but she is determined that "If I got pregnant again, I wouldn't drink it" (259). Ginny, while sleeping with her husband, parallels herself with a sow:

Ty, who was asleep, rolled over and put his hand on my shoulder, then it down my back, so slowly that my back came to seem about as long and humped as a sow's, running in a smooth arc from my rooting, low-slung head to my little stumpy tail. I woke up with a start and remembered the baby pigs. (161)

It clearly indicates her vehement desire to breed children as a sow breeds piglets. A person, it is common human nature, desires what he/she does not have. In the same way, Ginny does not have any child, so desire to be mother very much. Ginny comes to be obsessed with children and sometimes has "the image that things always looped back to those five miscarried children. It was my habit to think that if I could be a certain way, embody a certain attitude, a child would come to me and stay with me"(147).

It is really a panic stricken to face miscarriages to the woman who has vehement desire to be a mother. When one, it is human nature that, does not have what he/she desires, then he/she begins to envy in others'. Ginny also becomes jealous toward her sister Rose who does have two beautiful daughters:

Linda was just born when I had my first miscarriage, and for a while, six months may be, the sight of those two babies, whom I had loved and cared for with real interest and satisfaction, affected me like a poison. All my tissues hurt when I saw them, when I saw Rose with them, as if my capillaries were carrying acid into the furthest reaches of my system. I was so jealous, and so freshly jealous every time I saw them, that I could hardly speak, and I wasn't very nice to Rose, since some visceral part of me simply blamed her for having what I wanted. (8)

Everyone, it is a common characteristic of humanity that, has the selfish nature. Rose confesses that she is most selfish among her sisters. "It's my besetting sin. I'm grabby and jealous and selfish and Mommy said it would drive people away, so I've been good at hiding it"(304). When Rose discloses another fact concerning with Jess that made Ginny shock much. Rose says that Jess "loves me, Ginny. You don't think I would let him have anything private with my own sister, do you?"(303). Ginny hadn't expected such reversed situation would come that Jess is snatched away by her own sister. Rose even uncovers Ginny's adultery with Jess which makes her surprise and stunned. After Pete's demise, Rose was not so much distressed as she must have. It's reason might be 'Jess' because she realizes that "having lovers is not something that women around here do, though I suspect it goes on more than we think ..." (299).

The relationship between Jess and Rose becomes unbearable for Ginny. Psychologically, she is depressed and determines to take revenge. Secretly, she makes treacherous plan to kill Rose. For it, she says that "the perfection of my plan was the way Rose's own appetite would select her death. It would come as a genuine surprise even to me" (313). Ginny spends a lot of times for searching poisonous food to kill her sister. At last, she makes liver sausage and sauerkraut poisonous through mixing hemlock, a poison:

The hemlock root I had minced finely with a parking knife. I decided to use it [. . .]. After grinding the mince into the meat along with pepper, garlic, onion, cumin, red pepper, cinnamon, allspice, a dash of cloves, and plenty of salt, I filled the sausage casing and tied them of every six inches [. . .] then I packed the canning jars with sausage, shredded cabbage and brine. (321-22)

In fact, Rose is a close sister to Ginny. More than that she is an intimate friend to whom she can share her feelings. But when Ginny feels hurt by her sister Rose, she forgets her social or familial duty towards her. She, by her inner heart, determines to revenge and waits "for Rose to die, but the weather was warm for sauerkraut and liver sausage-that was a winter dish" (316). But later these poisonous foods are not necessary because Rose dies suffering from cancer. Then only, Ginny herself pours "the sausages and sauerkraut down the disposal ... " (366).

Human mind always envies to others' beautiful objects if that is not with him/her. Pete, Rose's husband, was really handsome and popular in the college life through his musical talent. Ginny's inner heart, it ultimately questions towards the fidelity to her husband, seeks to be with Pete. This very fact becomes more apparent when Rose and Pete get married:

The night before Rose got married, she sat at the foot of my bed rolling up her hair, caroling her amazement that she had actually gotten him to marry her. Secretly, I was amazed, too, and may be a bit jealous, so handsome was Pete, the image of James Dean, but smiling and ebullient, never rebellious or sullen. And he had real musical talent [. . .]. (30)

Outwardly, Ginny is the elder sister to Rose and has certain responsibilities toward her. At Rose's marriage, she has to be appeared happy but she secretly wants to have the relation with Pete, Rose's husband. When Ginny and Pete were alone near the quarry, they saw a snake:

We began back along the path to my car. A snake appeared, vanished, leaving the low sound of grass nestling in the air. I halted, Pete ran into me. That close, there was plenty we had to say to one another, but

habit and probably fear prevented us. Later, it was strange to think of his body bumping me, how solid that was; the smell of his sweat mixed with the plant and water smells of the place; the sight of his face that close, his gray-blue eyes with their long pale lashes, turning toward me, holding me then releasing me. I barked, "Snake!" (252)

From this phallic symbol, we can infer that Ginny has inner desire to be penetrated by Pete. But the social norms or barriers obstruct this desire to be accomplished rather it remains into the unconscious part of mind. Then her attraction towards Pete is repressed forever. But same phallic symbol of snake is used in another context with Jess and Ginny. Their conversation about snake symbolizes their sexual desires:

"What are you poking at?"

"Snake".

"What?"

"Snake..." (123)

Ginny and Jess keep physical relationship secretly. And Ginny has thought that their sexual affair is very secret from others. But Daddy, at his scolding, pronounces the trivial words -"barren whore!" and "slut", then Ginny estimates that "he had some knowledge of my time with Jess Clark materialized" (185). This very doubt brings psychological upheaval within her mind that she herself wonders:

I wondered too, what Jess Clark would say to all this. It seemed like nothing could batter that out of me. Impossibilities disguised as possibilities floated out of the depths-Jess must have told, Jess must entertained Harold and Loren with the story, and Harold told Daddy, even if Jess didn't tell, he probably thinks about me the same way, no,

he doesn't think that way at all, he knows me better than that he would stick by me if I asked him. (186)

None can know the truth within other's mind. Actually, Ginny has the fear what other people will think about her if they know her affair with Jess. At the same time, she has another fear what is being thought about her by Jess to whom she trusts more than other. In fact, there exists, in every human mind, tension between two distinct domains of mind that are Id and Ego which represent the irrationality and rationality respectively. The tension between Id and Ego determines the activities of a person. Ginny also feels this very tension between the diverse faculties of mind. On the one hand, she evaluates her 'rational faculty' and on the other, she finds herself as an animal:

And I was surprised to discover how my mind worked over these things, the simultaneity of it. I seemed, on the surface, to be continually talking to myself, giving myself instructions and admonishments, asking myself what I really wanted, making comparisons, busily working my rational faculties over every aspect of Jess and my feelings for him as if there were actually something to decide [. . .]. Beneath this was an animal, a dog living in me, shaking itself, jumping, barking, attacking, gobbling at things the way a dog gulps its food. (172)

There is clash between rationality and irrationality in Ginny's mind; outwardly, she wants to appear as a good housewife but in her inner heart she possesses animalistic nature. Animalistic nature, everybody more or less possesses, refers to those unconscious motives which are immoral and asocial. Ginny's unconscious motives further can be traced through her dream. Dreams, according to psychoanalysts, are the

manifestation of repressed desires; they represent the inner unconscious motives of the dreamer. If a person cannot fulfill his/her inner desires, they remain in repressed form and always seek exit to be manifested. Dream is an exit of the repressed desires; Ginny also dreams "about standing in the lunch line naked ..." (62). This very dream suggests that she wants to be emancipated from any kinds of rules and restrictions; she does not wish social norms and values anymore rather prefers to enter into the animalistic world where there exists no barriers of norms and values at all.

### **Representation of Oedipal Dynamics**

In psychoanalysis, Oedipal complex can be defined as an incestuous desire that a boy possesses to have with his mother and jealous feeling towards his father. Such sexual desire is continuously present in every child's unconscious mind in repressed form. In the case of a girl, sexual desire is directed towards her father and jealous feeling towards her mother which is called 'Electra complex'. It means a child is sexually attracted towards opposite-sex parent and does have rivalry with same-sex parent. When such kind of feeling gets stronger and is repressed too much, it leads the person towards abnormality.

Ginny, central character of the novel, behaves with her father in an abnormal way. It is true that she presents the many stories of the family and long history of the land through her memory but unlike her sister Rose, she has forgotten, or repressed the memories of her father's abuse. Actually, she always has positive attitude toward Larry even at his mistakes. It seems that she has a bit repressed desires to have sexual relationship with her father, as Electra complex described by psychoanalysts. No doubt, she and Rose both were grown up within the patriarchal society; Rose can

challenge Larry but Ginny hesitates to speak against him. Why? If we analyzed it in depth, its root might be linked with Electra complex.

Prior to the storm in the story, Larry does have a hot quarrel with his daughters: Ginny and Rose. He scolds Ginny with very much trivial words - 'barren whore!' and 'slut'(181) which is shocking to others except Ginny. Instantly, Ty and Pete get surprised with those damn words, Rose becomes infuriated with her Daddy but Ginny does not care it much. In fact, she has close emotional touch with him; she is "after all, my father's daughter ..." (94). To be somehow soft with father, though he had cursed with bitter words, seems quite unnatural for a normal man but not for psychoanalysts.

As stories unfold, we reader come to know that Larry had excessively abused his daughters in their childhood. Rose remembers Daddy's abuse:

I thought that he'd picked me, me, to be his favorite, not you, nor her.

On the surface, I thought it was okay, that it must be okay if he said it

was, since he was the rule maker. He didn't rape me, Ginny. He

seduced me. He said it was okay, that it was good to please him, that

he need it, that I was special. He said he loved me. (190)

However Rose too has some sort of emotional attraction towards Larry otherwise she would not keep the subject of abuse in secrecy for so long time. She, though she does have knowledge of Larry's abuse, does not take any action against him. While Daddy assigns Rose a "special" standing in the farm economy by virtue of her value in supplying his "needs", Ginny receives no such assurances. Ginny expresses very little about Larry's abuse; it is doubtful whether she really forgets or deliberately wants to repress:



I could remember him saying, "Quiet, now, girl. You don't need to fight me". I didn't remember fighting him, ever, but in all circumstances he was ready to detect resistance, anyway. I remembered his weight, the feeling of his knee pressing between my legs, while I tried to make my legs heavy without seeming to defy him [ . . . ]. But I never remembered penetration or pain, or even his hands on my body, and I never sorted out how many times there were. I remembered my strategy, which had been desperate limp inertia. (280)

Ginny's forgetting about the intercourse with Daddy might be her pretension to conceal the reality. When Rose frankly speaks about Larry's abuse, Ginny even does not believe on her words. Its reasons might be that she wants to be socially fair woman in the eyes of others. But while preparing bed for Jess in Daddy's house, Ginny knows that "he (Daddy) had been in there to me, that my father had lain with me on that bed, that I had looked at the top of his head, at his balding spot in the brown grizzled hair, while feeling him suck my breasts" (228). Here we can say that Ginny's inner self is desiring for Daddy but she appears outside something differently. When the inner self (Id) clashes with outer appearance (Ego), it creates bizarre and abnormal condition in a person's life. Ginny, too, feels such condition:

I would have said that the state of mind I entered into afterward was beyond me. Since then, I might have declared I was "not myself" or "out of my mind" or "beside myself", [ . . . ]. It was a state of mind in which I "knew" many things, in which "conviction" was not an abstract, rather dry term referring to moral values or conscious beliefs,

but a feeling of being drenched with insight, swollen with it like a wet sponge. (305)

The split personality of Ginny is an outcome of her psychological tumult within her mind which is rooted in Electra complex. In fact, Ginny wants to be appeared as a responsible housewife in the society but her inner desire flees far away from the social rules and regulation.

### **Larry as a Neurotic**

Neurosis is a mental state that causes depression or abnormal behavior, often with physical symptoms but with no sign of disease. Actually, it results in high level of anxiety, unreasonable fears and behavior and often a need to repeat action unnecessarily. Neurotic person lacks self-confidence. According to Freud, neurosis causes his/her onset in the frustration of a vital instinctual drives. Neurosis is the result of conflict between the Ego and the Id.

Larry, father figure in the novel, deserves very important attention to analyze the stories from the psychoanalytical perspective. His incestuous relationship with his daughters Ginny and Rose cannot be continued when they cross their 'teen' age; his own wife dies; he does not get any other women to whom he can share his emotions. These are some reasons behind Larry's neurosis. Of course, neurosis is the outcome of mental state in which Id and Ego clash against each other. When Id, the irrational domain of mind becomes dominant, the symptoms of neurosis appear outside. Neurotic person loses all the social norms, values and moralities.

At the opening of the novel, Larry has a happy family having not a thousand acres land but only six hundred and forty acres land without any mortgage. Of course, Larry was a laborious and hardworking farmer. In his community, he has earned respect, fame and average success which indicate his social status. Later, he buys his

neighbor Ericsons' three hundred and seventy acres land and he becomes the owner of a thousand acres prosperous land. Once he defines the desirable character of the good farmer through a classically agrarian "catechism" that equates the farmer with the land:

What is a farmer?

A farmer is a man who feeds the world.

What is a farmer's first duty?

To grow more food.

What is a farmer's second duty?

To buy more land.

What are the signs of good farm?

Clean fields, neatly painted buildings, breakfast at six, no debts, no standing water.

How will you know a good farmer when you meet him?

He will not ask you for any favors. (45)

The land and machinery possessed and managed properly, the volume of goods, produced and sold, the independence and ingenuity of the creator, these are the measures of the successful farmer which Larry possesses. Inside his grand success, was the hidden dark secret of his abuses to his daughters; he had accomplished his inner desires keeping physical relations with them. In the conversation between Rose and Ginny, remembering his abuses, Rose says:

But he did fuck us and he did beat us. He beat us more than he fucked us. He beat us routinely. And the thing is, he's respected [ . . . ].

However many of them have fucked their daughters, step daughters, nieces or not, the fact is that they all accept beating as a way of

life [. . .]. That's the thing that kills me. This person who beats and fucks his daughters can go out into the community and get respect and power, and take it for granted that he deserves it. (302)

Of course, the abuse of daughters is an outcome of patriarchal society. Moreover, Larry had psychological problem that he was dissatisfied with his wife, so entered into his daughter's bedroom and had sex with them while they were children. But later this very hidden activities can not be continued, then the symptoms of neurosis appear upon him.

After Caroline's disapproval on Larry's decision about dividing the land among his daughters, Caroline is cut out of Larry's will and he behaves her a bit unnaturally; he hangs up the phone when he listen her. In fact, Caroline, a lawyer who stays in Des Moines, favours for city life since her childhood and is "not interested in farming" (99). But Ginny and Rose accept Daddy's decision and sign the incorporation papers and transfer papers. They take the land and cultivate it; they start cooking food for their father turn by turn. Though Larry posits his decision of dividing the land favors his senile life but he himself somehow feels a sense of dissatisfaction on it somewhere in the corner of his heart. Ginny and Rose both have their conjugal life with Ty and Pete respectively and they pay attention on Daddy for cooking food only. Neither Daddy could share his inner feeling with them nor they come to ask. His wife had already died and now he even could not use his power as he used when they were children. In their childhood, he had amply abused his daughters but it came to stop later. When he cannot fulfill his inner desire, it slowly and gradually turned him into abnormality. He becomes very silent and mysterious to others. Ginny, Rose, Ty, Pete and Caroline all could not understand him and his almost weird activities. He speaks very little with them.

One day Larry, without informing to others, bought "a pantry cabinet, a sink, four base cabinets, and two wall cabinets, as well as eight feet of baby blue laminated countertop, the floor display in the kitchen department of the lumberyard" (81). But all the things actually did not match with the house; he had brought them only for showing Harold, his neighbour. Moreover his idiosyncrasy becomes more visible when he, while it's going to rain soon, did not notice to save those cabinets which were dropped on the road. However Ginny had requested him and he said, "I'm minding my own business" (81). Similarly, in another event, Larry got an accident and wrecked his truck by drinking much because he felt loneliness, having no one to share his feelings. After returning from hospital, Ginny asked him if he had got those pills the nurse gave him. But the question "went unanswered, so unanswered that it got to be like a question that no one had ever expected would be answered" (146). It apparently suggests that Larry has repressed so many ideas or matters in his mind. When there is much repression, it ultimately sublimates into neurosis and so is the case with Larry.

In Larry's economy, a woman is a daughter and her speech is only a reflection of his point of view. Larry's youngest daughter, Caroline, provokes his wrath and begins the textual conflict by speaking "as a woman rather than as a daughter," something Ginny and Rose are "pretty careful never to do" (21). Ginny subordinates her voice to Daddy's: "of course it was silly to talk about 'point of view.' When my father asserted his point of view, mine vanished. Not even I could remember it" (176). In Lacanian terms, there can be no discursive process outside the symbolic, and no participation in the symbolic outside the access is provided and created by paternal law. And, because Lacan reverses the position of speaking subject for the male child learning to become the father, "woman" is an alien speaker of a language skewed to

represent male desire. Ginny, the narrator of the novel, loses her subject and represents her Daddy's desire.

Larry can be taken as an epitome of patriarchal society; he has the assumption that children (daughters) are to serve their parents. As he had the family authority, he ruled in an authoritarian way; he greatly abused his daughters. Rose has such an impression about him that she sent her daughters Pammy and Linda to the Quaker School in west Branch just to protect them from Larry's abuses. But Larry loses almost all authority in the family after dividing the land among his daughters. Then he cannot do what he desires. In his mind, there comes many psychological tumult to repossess the land again which he had already granted to his daughters Ginny and Rose. But it was not possible to be so immediately that causes him uneasiness and restlessness.

Larry's madness further can be traced in his hot discussion with his daughters Ginny and Rose. When Larry time and again commits crazy activities from buying of expensive kitchen cabinets to taking Pete's truck without information, Ginny and Rose attempt to suggest him to follow good manner. But he quarrels and scolds Ginny bitterly:

He leaned his face toward mine. "You don't have to drive me around any more, or cook the goddamned breakfast or clean the goddamned house." His voiced modulated into a scream. "Or tell me what I can do and what I can't do. You barren whore! I know all about you, you slut." You've been creeping here and there all your life, making up to this one and that one. But you're not "really a woman, are you? I don't know what you are, just a bitch, is all, just a dried-up whore bitch." (81)

Unexpectedly, Larry pronounced very much trivial words for Ginny. In this madly scolding, he expressed what he had thought about Ginny. Of course, Ginny had not got any child yet; she was barren but it was not her fault. Why did he say her 'whore' and 'slut'? Perhaps he had known her secret affair with Jess or it might be an expression of jealousy that he lost his access to have physical relation with her after her marriage. It means many days, weeks, months and years passed but not his inner desire could pass away. It remained in the repressed form somewhere within his heart and splashed through scolding. So the repressed desire of incestuous relationship might be changed into verbal scolding of Larry for manifestation.

There happens a big quarrel among Larry and his daughters Ginny and Rose. In their temper, Ginny and Rose declare that they are no more concerned with him: "from now on you're on your own" (183). Then Larry vanishes from their sight in the storm at night. Aftermath it, he comes to be close with his youngest daughter Caroline who was already cut out of his will.

It is interesting to examine Larry's recollections of his daughter's childhood. The conversation between Larry and Caroline towards the end of the novel, shows that Larry is losing his memory power. Ginny, by now estranged from her father, overhears him reminiscing with his youngest daughter, Caroline, about Caroline's childhood:

"You were a little birdy girl. Remember that brown coat you had? Little hat too. You were so proud of that. It would have been that velvet stuff."

"Velveteen", said Caroline.

"I called you my birdy girl. You looked just like a little house Wren."

"Did I?" . . .

"You didn't like it either, nosiree. You didn't want any brown coat and hat. You wanted pink! Candy pink. You had it all worked out in you mind about that pink velveteen, and you took a pink crayola to that coat, too!" He laughed a full happy laugh. "Your mama had to spank you then for sure!"

"I don't remember any of that. I remember something red - a jacket with hearts around . . ."

"Couldn't ever get you to stay away from those drainage well!" (272)

This is one of the most sinister moments in the novel, as it rapidly becomes clear that Larry is amalgamating aspects of the childhood of Ginny and Rose and attributing them to Caroline: in fact, Rose had the velveteen coat, and Ginny was the one who played at the drainage wells. This misremembering can be read as an obsession of Larry with his daughters' childhood to whom he had emotional touch. Ginny and Rose's childhood was the golden period for Larry when he could accomplish almost all internal desires. So, it is no surprise to amalgamating Ginny and Rose's childhood with Caroline's in his memory. In fact Larry couldn't get any opportunity to abuse Caroline whereas he had amply abused Ginny and Rose. Caroline is the only daughter to have escaped the farm, an escape was made possible only by the protection of her older sisters, who shield her not only from the abuse of their father but from the knowledge that such abuses ever took place. She has strong disagreement on Larry's decision of dividing the land among them. When Larry quarrels with Ginny and Rose, then he comes close with Caroline. Caroline, too, behaves her sisters Ginny and Rose as to a stranger. Caroline's indifference towards her sisters gets its height when Ginny and Rose get the news of her marriage with Frank through *Pike Journal Weekly* (138) which makes them stun and Rose's temper splashes in a wonderful way:



Then she (Rose) told me (Ginny) [. . .]. "The thing is just to take it in stride to not even be surprised. And I'm going to send her a present! An expensive present, with just a little card saying, 'From Rose and Pete and the girls, thinking of you both.'"

I laughed but when Rose left, I realized that I felt the insult physically, an internal injury. It reminded me that she wasn't in the habit of sending birthday cards, or calling to chat, that [. . .]. (139)

Among the family members, there prevail inimical feelings which ultimately invite tragic situation of the family at last. Ginny and Rose, as the family members are departed into two camps, fall into one group and Daddy and Caroline into another. The issue of land becomes the central issue to debate between these two groups. Since Caroline, being a lawyer in Des Moines, chooses the legal way; she and Daddy sue a case against Ginny and Rose in the court for retuning the land from them. To debate in the court, Ginny and Rose take the help of Mr. Cartier as their lawyer and they prepare every step very cautiously according to Cartier's instruction. When the court date October 19 arrived, all the preparations were done from both sides. In the court, Larry's madness reaches its apex; he starts to fear from his own daughters:

Daddy said, "Could be they killed her. That day after church. She didn't show up to get her share. And then, when I went down to Des Moines to find her, she wasn't there, either." He turned to look at the judge. "You're a judge. I'll swear to that. I swear that maybe they killed her and buried her."

Caroline said, "I 'm right here with you Daddy. You live at my house now. You can live there always. As long as you like."

The judge said, "Who killed whom, Mr. Cook?"

"Those bitches killed my daughter." (321)

Larry, in his madness, has the fear from Ginny and Rose to whom he had excessively abused, and accuses them for killing the youngest daughter Caroline. Haunted by the overshadows of his own daughters, we can say that, the sense of guiltiness has been germinated in his heart. He knows he had committed mistakes but fears from the punishment. In many years, he suppressed his dark emotions, ideas and tumults of mind which later exploded turning him into a neurotic. Ginny and Rose, who spent almost all their life-period with him, become 'bitches' but Caroline, who stayed most of her life away from home, is called his daughter. Larry does not have any fear from Caroline because he never got any opportunity to abuse her.

To sum up, Larry, father to Ginny, Rose and Caroline, suffers from neurosis and its root is attached with his repressed ideas, and derives. During their childhood, he had excessively exploited his daughters having sexual relation and beating them daily. But later such activities can not be continued when they are grown up and got married. Similarly, many other gloomy inner drives and ideas are repressed in his mind that they don't get any exit to manifest. Then Larry ultimately becomes the victim of neurosis.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

This is an attempt to scale the dark and gloomy typography of human heart through delving into the behaviors and activities of the major characters in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*. Psychoanalytical reading of this novel throws light on the hidden or unconscious aspects of the central characters Ginny (daughter) and Larry (father). The study scrutinizes the different events and conversations between the characters that provoke to the real human self.

The relation of Ginny with each of the characters is the central issue in the novel from the psychoanalytical perspective. Outwardly, Ginny seems a common housewife who has no child yet but only the experiences of five miscarriages. She never expresses her dissatisfaction with her conjugal life with Ty; she is a loyal and obedient daughter of her father Larry; and a responsible sister for Rose and Caroline too. But if we examine a bit in depth, her identity differs. There exists a vast gap between what appears outside and what really is. This research tries to measure the distance between the outer appearance and the real self of Ginny. Similarly, Larry, a successful farmer, turns into a neurotic in the novel. In fact, neurosis results from over repression of inner desires; it is an explosion of unconscious desires.

Ginny's adultery with Jess ultimately raises question on her fidelity with her husband. Why does she make love with Jess secretly? Its answer is that she does not want to break relation with Ty and at the same time, her unconscious mind desires to sleep with Jess. In fact, she was dissatisfied with her marital life; its further evident is that she left the house without information and started to work at a hotel in the city at the end of the novel. It's Ginny's inner feelings that she feels more comfortable and intimate with Jess than her husband. She can share secret matters with Jess which she had not shared with Ty.

For Rose, Ginny is an elder sister as well as a close friend. Once Ginny envies with her husband Pete who was not only handsome but also popular in college life by his musical talent. Similarly, when Rose snatched her lover Jess, she makes treacherous plan to kill her secretly; she makes liver sausage and sauerkraut mixing poison for Rose and waits for her death. Here her feeling of sisterhood is replaced by revenge but later Rose dies suffering from cancer.

The relationship between Ginny and her father Larry is more complex and mysterious. Larry had excessively abused her daughters Ginny and Rose in their childhood; he had kept physical relationship with them. But Rose remembers and Ginny forgets about his abuse. It is doubtful to the readers that whether she really has forgotten abuses or deliberately ignored them. In the novel, she is always positive and obedient to her father even though he scolds her with very much trivial words. It means she has some sort of affection with him that is directly or indirectly linked with 'Electra complex'. In fact, Ginny has lost her own 'point of view' and looks everything from her father's perspective in the novel.

On the other side, Larry was a successful farmer with a thousand acres prosperous land in Zebulon County. But behind his successful life, there was hidden dark secret of his daughter's abuses. In his daughter's childhood, he could accomplish his sexual desires with them. But later it can not be continued, and he becomes unspeakable and mysterious to other. He repressed many derives in his mind for a long period and that turned him into a neurotic.

To sum up, Ginny and Larry both have different selves from what they appear outside in the novel. Similarly, other characters also wear false masks over their real selves which are very dark and gloomy and it creates lack of trust among the family members that leads a happy family into tragic apart at last.

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