

Tribhuvan University

Psychosexual Confrontation in *The Grass is Singing*

A Thesis

Submitted to the Central Department of English

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts

in English

By

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September, 2006

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This thesis entitled Psychosexual Confrontation in *The Grass is Singing* by Ram Chandra Sharma 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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Acknowledgements

Inspiration always plays a vital role in every step of life for the success. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my respected teacher and supervisor Mr. Saroj Ghimire whose inspiring suggestion and guidance helped me complete this thesis.

Likewise, I acknowledge my gratitude to Mr. Baikuntha Poudel, Mr. Puspa Acharya, Mr. Nirmal Adhikari and Mr. Ghan Shyam Sharma for their invaluable suggestions. Credit goes to Prof. Chandra Prakash Sharma, Head of Central Department of English, T.U. for permitting me to write this thesis. I extend my thanks to all of my teachers who have directly or indirectly helped me in the completion of the study.

I am deeply indebted to my parents Mr. Maheshwor Sharma and Dhankumari Sharma for their great help and constant encouragement. At last, but not the least, I sincerely thank my sister Bimala, wife Sita, brothers Tilak Poudel, Krishna Lamichhane and friends Hari, Deepak, Krishna, YB, Bhim, SP. Pradip, RB, Bijaya, Raju, S.G. Kamal, Bishal and Prem for their genuine ideas and suggestion.

September, 2006

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Abstract

The Grass is Singing is a complex psychological and social analysis. It explores the human psyche presenting a commentary on race relation in imperial Rhodesia. It is viewed as an exposition of the timeless dichotomy of culture and nature and its impact on the characters.

The present thesis makes a study of Mary, the protagonist, exploring her psyche. Exploration of psyche has been analyzed on the basis of Freudian psychoanalysis. She is made to realize her sexuality and sex by the white male dominated society which she negates and accepts at the same time, is the manifestation of her psychosexual conflict. Dick, her husband neglects her desire that leads her to extend her relation with Moses, the black boy, but fails to have completion due to the interference of a racist society. The strained relation between them creates a conflict and finally results in Mary's murder by Moses.

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I. Introduction

Introduction

Doris Lessing was born in Persia (Iran) to British parents in 1919. Her family moved to Southern Africa where she spent her childhood on her father's farm in Rhodesia. Lessing is an outstanding literary figure in English Literature. She is mostly regarded a feminist writer who has been writing novels about the social issues related to the feminism, sexuality and racism .She has written the novel from the perspective of Marxiam feminism too. Her novels mostly explore the psyche of the characters .She presents the real context of the society and its relation to the people.

Much of Lessing's fiction is autobiographical, based on her early experience in Africa. She draws on her childhood memories of her parochial existence in Southern Rhodesia, and her engagement with politics and social concern. Lessing writes about the clashes of culture, especially those of Blacks and Whites in Southern Rhodesia, she also portrays the injustices of racial inequality and struggle between the individuality and collective mass. Lessing's stories and novels published in 1950s are set mainly in Africa in which she attempts to expose the harsh culture of colonial society set up by the whites in Southern Africa. Due to her outspokenness, she was prohibited from re-entering Rhodesia.

The Grass is Singing is her first novel published in 1950. It has received enthusiastic public praise in Britain, America and in many European countries. A masterpiece of realism, *The Grass is Singing* invited various comments since its publication. It was well reviewed, translated into ten languages and it launched Lessing's career as a novelist. The novel blends Lessing's imaginative vision with her own remembered childhood to recreate the horror of the woman's struggle against the societal norms and values.

Lessing is regarded as one of most genuine post-war writers in English. This novel is written in the context of post-war South Africa and it explores the claustrophobic atmosphere of the small locale, Rhodesia, an isolated veldt and oppressive nature of male-dominated world with racism and its impact on the protagonist, Mary Turner. The racism and poor economic condition, Mary Turner confronts results in psychic disturbance in the novel. Her novels, short stories and essays have focused on a wide range of twentieth century issues and concern from the politics of race to the politics of gender and race. The novel digs out the racism and dynamics of the native versus colonist relationship in a tragic story. The text shows the colonial aspect of the people in Rhodesia. The power manipulation of whites on the native blacks shows a tragic ending as an outlet to avenge with racial discrimination. The psychic horror and anger in the characters, Mary and Moses respectively is the outcome of racial phenomenon.

The novel deals with the problems of psychological confrontation in relation to sexuality. This is faced by the central character who is consciously and perpetually tormented by her present role as a wife and former life as an independent woman. The psychological disturbance within her changes into nervous breakdown. She leads the fragmented and disappointed life with no solution to cohere. Eventually, she reaches to the point of crisis where she loses all her self-control and identity. Her identity incorporated with Moses, black boy, creates a crisis in her. The disruption in the affiliation with whom she loves culminates into total loss of self and results in psychological conflict. The dilemma within Mary finally deserves her willingness towards death.

Lessing in her novels portrays social, political and psychic features of woman's subjectivity. Her novel shows the need and the way to radical social change. Lorna Sage quoted the view of Lessing on Olive Schreier describing her own

background, “To the creation of woman, novelist seems to go certain psychological ingredients” (387). This research focuses minutely on the psychological conflict within Mary, between Mary and Dick and Mary and Moses. It shows the reasons behind the conflict and its consequences. Mary and Dick have their conflict because of their two diverse positions. i.e. Mary represents the modern city life where as Dick the traditional rural life. Their thought and action vary each other and make them separate psychologically and physically too. Moses and Mary psychologically seem to be attached and physically detached because of social barrier and restriction. The boy is black in race whereas she is white, a colonist member. We find the conflict between Mary Turner and Dick Turner in an angle but conflict lies between the protagonist and antagonist, Moses, vehemently in relation to sexuality triggered by racial differences. The entire society cast an ironic eye to Moses, the Black boy who has cultivated an illegal relationship with a white woman, Mary Turner breaking the societal codes.

In regard to woman, her early life and life later is psychologically in contrast. After her family struggle with poverty in her childhood, she grows to be an independent young woman. She has an office job, lives in a girl’s house and has a lot of friends, but does not have romance. She is content until she overhears friends speaking of her age, and her youthful dress. This bites her and she starts seeking a husband. When she fails of getting married to an old-man-lover, seeks for a young man as her husband. There is an emergence of her sexuality, which gets formal completion with Dick, her husband and ultimately meets a tragic result due to psychosexual relation and its imperfection with Moses.

Mrs. Turner after getting married to a poor farmer, Mr. Turner, feels lonely and depressed due to the lack of financial adequacy and isolation of life on a farm. The novel also exposes the negation of Mrs. Mary to black boys. She nags and berates

the native houseboys until they quit one by one. Her negation towards black boy eventually turns into attraction due to her sexual impulse since her husband couldn't cultivate good relationship and understanding with her. Her strong attraction to the black Moses taken by Dick to home as a houseboy, who was already beaten harshly by Mary while being on the farm, is a tuning mode of the novel for its tragedy.

Psychological tract is changed as she sees him (Moses) as a human rather than a slave, which is an unpardonable sin for the white colonist. Moses, sturdy boy, speaks English to her (Mary). This infuriates her; she fears him and gets attracted to him at the same time. She criticizes his manners as well as thought but can not leave him as her need when he requests to leave his position. She desires for the sex and so does the black boy. But, both can not seek the way to the completion of their sexual urges due to social barrier. Here, we see the psychological conflict between them. Mary cries and begs him to stay. He realizes his power over her. Mary recognizes her weakness and need in core. She goes mad. Meanwhile, he does what he can do to care her and pleases her. He even helps her while dressing and undressing her though touching a white woman is forbidden in the society. This is a part of psychic attraction to each other forgetting the social code.

The novel traces Mary's story, from her young and happy days in town, through her unwise conjugal relationship with Dick, to her eventual derangement and death while reflecting Mary's situation, the narrative weave recounts her growing frustration with her situation. Moreover, Lessing's motive in this novel is to present the evils of colonialism and evil of patriarchal societies. Elizabeth Maslen has opined, "Lessing in the novel is addressing the plight of woman and how it is shaped and maintained by society's discourses. The novel also explores the racial pressure on a woman both to marry and maintain certain role in marriage" (9 -10).

Mary's and Moses relationship starts falling in problem when society sees them getting nearer and in touch. It can not digest the situation thinking they have broken the limit of society and wants them be apart. Charlie Slatter, a neighboring person to Dick, thinks of sending the couple on a vocational trip and makes a plan to separate Moses and Mary. This plan hurts their hearts. Though Mary accepts the same in the manifest but negates by heart. Moses, a symbol of sexual energy, can not tolerate and losses his patience for the departure with her and kills her for the outlet of excessive desire incorporated with sex. Here we find the excessive psychosexual confrontation within individuals and between them. Lessing here shows the psyche of the individuals concerning the sexuality. Marine Vlastos commenting the nature of novelist and her impact on her novels opines, "Lessing and Laing behave not in heart but in psyche [. . .]. Lessing and Laing may be seen not only as social analysts but also social visionary prophets of contemporary culture" (246). The critic has shown the interest and impact of Lessing's psychological concerns in the writing. In fact, the novel, *The Grass is Singing* is an exploration of human psyche. For him, Lessing is a writer of social analysis and vision. The novel has greatly explored the social impact in psychology including sexual hemisphere of the individuals. In this study, the character of Mary Turner, her life and her murder by Moses will be analyzed in relation to male and female sexuality in a racist society. People in the Rhodesia do not see the act of her reaching out to Moses as a desperate plea of the human contact that might save her from dissolution and madness. Instead, the whites see her as a threat to the myth of their own cultural superiority a threat to the conventional status quo.

What Lessing's novel portrays are two such worlds in mid-twentieth-century's South Africa: the severe, well run, relatively domesticated suburban world and the uncontrolled chaotic, unattainable and intimately evil world of the high veldt and bush land Mr. Turner Loves. Regarding life of Mary, it is kind to her in town. It is fatal to

her in the high veldt, where the incompatible worlds of colonizers and colonized clash more openly; Mary does not like African laborers whose sweat has made possible the privilege all the colonizers enjoy. In the destruction of both Mary and Dick, the novel also seems to suggest that chaos lies always on the margins of the white civilization in colonial Africa. Generally, two phases characterize colonialism: dominant phase and hegemonic phase. The indigenous people are subjugated by colonial material practices in the dominant phase whereas the natives accept the system of colonizers in the hegemonic period. In between these two phases, natives' internalization of western culture begins. This internalization is experienced while trying for independence. Lessing's novel demonstrates the transition in colonized Africa from the dominant phase to the hegemonic. The transition, of course, is symbolized by the changes in Moses as he moves from an early version of colonial oppression to the later system of that which saves the sense of his identity to ensure him in a more oppressive situation. His initial and relatively harmless rebelliousness is evident in the scene where Mary whips him. But, later, when he is taken to do housework at Dick's house, he becomes someone an individualized human being to Mary. He becomes someone apparently capable of scripting his own narrative of self-worth, dignity and racial equality. But, no sooner Moses does achieve this status, he immediately loses his status when the colonial white man, Tony Marston comes on the scene to intervene their relation. Moses is huge and black, the embodiment of colonial fears of African and fears of African sexual prowess. Mary's dreams of playing the sexual game her father played with her is the psychological state inclined to Moses. Lessing does not make it clear whether she has sexual relationship with Moses but has lots of conflicts for the same. Moses desires to kill her after her final rejection.

Lessing and her Works

Lessing has described her childhood as an uneven mixture of some pleasure and much pain. The natural world, which she passed with her brother, Harry, was one retreat from miserable existence. Her mother, obsessed with raising daughter, enforced a rigid system of rules at home; then kept Lessing in a convent school. Lessing was sent to girl's high school soon. Since then, she made herself-educated intellectual. This is similar to the case of Mary in *The Grass is Singing*. The book explores the complacency and shallowness of white colonial society in South Africa. The books in *The Children Violence Series (1952-69)* are strongly influenced by communism and rejection of a domestic family role. The novels are autobiographical in many ways, telling the story of Martha Quest, a girl brought up in Africa who marries young despite her desperate desire to avoid the life her mother has led. The second book in series, *A Proper Marriage* (1954) describes the unhappiness of marriage and Martha's eventual rejection of it. The sequel *A Ripple From the Stream* (1958) is very much a novel of the thoughts, exploring Marxism and Martha's increasing political alertness, after then, Lessing's novel advocates the feminist view. *The Golden Notebook* (1962) explores the feminist view. Lessing became firmly identified with the feminist movement. The novel concerns Anna Wulf, a writer, caught in a personal and artistic crisis, who sees her life compartmentalized into various roles: woman lover, writer and political activist. Her dairies written in different colored notebooks corresponds to each different part of herself in regard to woman life. Anna eventually suffers a mental breakdown and it is only through this disintegration that she is able to discover a new whole ness. This event is somehow similar to Mary in *The Grass is singing*. In late 1970s and early 1980s, Lessing turned almost exclusively to writing fantasy and science fiction in *The Canapos in Argos* series. Lessing's more recent novels have continued to confront social taboos and

challenge preconceptions generating many different and conflicting opinions. *The Good Terrorist*, awarded with the WH Smith Literary Award (1985), has been written on political concerns. *The Fifth Child* is concerned with alienation. It talks about human attributes. The acclaimed first volume of her auto biography, *Under My Skin*(1994), won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and followed by a second volume *Walking in the Shade*. Her fiction *The Ben, In the World* (2000), a sequel to *The Fifth Child* and *The Sweatest Dream* (2001) which follows the fortunes of a family through the twentieth century set in London during 1960 and contemporary Africa. Her latest book *The GrandMother* (2003) is a collection of short stories centered on an unconventional extended family and the *Time Bites* (2004), essays are based on her own experiences. Her stories and novels set in African background, talk of the dispossession of black Africans by white colonials, and expose the sterility of white culture in Southern Africa. *The Grass is Singing* shows the same matter. In 1956, in response to Lessing's courageous outspokenness, she was declared a prohibited alien in Southern Rhodesia and Africa. Lessing's life has been a challenge to her belief that people resist the currents of their time, as she fought against biological and cultural imperatives. She fought through writings, and she believes that she is freer than any general people since being a writer.

Lessing's work covers more than a half of century exploring the relationship and realities of the people. Character used in the novels mostly have mental breakdown that carries forward her metaphorical message. In *The Grass is Singing* too, she has presented a character, Mary, who gets divided between two selves: one self which conforms to the social rules, another one which struggles to get free from the social boundary that restricts her freedom. The result is mental breakdown and death. The various factors are responsible for the destruction of Mary's self. The plot, tone and setting are properly arranged for the portrait of her self crisis, which is in between society and Moses, black boy. The society is a cause of restricting her

freedom to have complete attachment with the boy. The same restriction has been the cause of psychosexual confrontation.

***The Grass is Singing* : A Synopsis**

Lessing was brought up in Southern Africa. She has exposed the socio-economic construct of Rhodesia in novel. The novel explores the ideology of the white colonists in Africa. In particular, the idea that extreme racism develops out of a need to justify economic exploitation, is poignantly posed. It is not that whites oppress black because they hate them rather they hate them because they have to oppress them and deny their human wish to maintain their standard of living.

Telling about the thematic aspects of the novel, Rowe writes, "*The Grass is Singing* has been read as social critique, mythic novel, romance and detective story" (14). The novel is about the colonial system in Africa. The white concept on the black and their regard, Rowe writes, "*The Grass is Singing* offers a limited analysis of what the colonial system has brought an marginal white settlers like Turners. When it come to the natives, particularly Moses" (16-17).

The novel begins with the newspaper article of Mary's death, and then moves to a description of the sham inquiry into her murder by neighbors and by colonial officials. The rest of the novel is about the early life of Mary, her life at town, marital life with Dick, her marital infelicity and life in love with Moses. The main characters of the novel are . Dick and Mary. Dick an unsuccessful farmer, who lacks the mindset and risk- taking manner of a commercial farmer or entrepreneur. He is always in debt facing bad harvest.

In regard to Mary's life situation, her early life is not happy. She having seen the extremely poor life of the parents decides not to get married. Her instinctual desire for sex is repressed and hidden. She does not like to have sexual relation with any one. It, in fact, is a threat to her identity. It is her negative understanding towards sex

and sexuality. When she is sent to town for study her life becomes full of rejoice and romance but lacks sex. It is nothing more than falsehood.

She marries Dick simply she realizes her friends think she should marry, and her meeting with the harsh realities of the countryside devastates her. After marriage, she feels as if she is again with her mother. She is highly frustrated due to the economic status of her husband. At last, her unhappiness overcomes her to the point of full fledged psychosis.

We find in the novel that she is not interested in having sexual relation with Dick in the beginning days though she has vehement sexual desire. But later, Dick does not help her fulfill her desire. He becomes busy in planning and managing the farm. This creates a gap between them. Dick does not like the way Mary wants to live. Mary represents the modern city life whereas Dick wants the traditional rural life. Life of Mary with Dick and the level of Dick is analyzed by Rowe, "[. . .] soon enough overhead gossip, ironic in light of the silence that attends her murder, pressures Mary into a break down and an arid marriage to Dick Turner, a farmer with dreams and no practical sense (19).

It is obvious that Mary is forced to marry despite her reluctance. The compulsion finally takes her to mental stress and she meets nothing than hatred. Dick does not help her rather, frustrates her. He is quite impractical and can not understand the interest of his life. He even rejects the desire of Mary to bear a child. He ignores her motherhood and sexuality. This relation makes Mary think of getting next someone. She meets Moses, a black boy who is taken to work as a house boy at her own house. Though he was beaten by Mary, she forgets the day and gets attracted to him. Her repressed desire gets melted. Lessing has presented Moses as " a sexual energy than a person" (Rowe 17). The relation strengthened is blocked by the racist society. When Marston, an English youth from England, sees Mores dressing and

undressing her, he can not digest this and starts making a plan to separate them. Charlie Slatter, a neighboring person to Mary and Dick, helps him for the same. When relation is disrupted the psychological conflict between them touches the climax. The desire for sex in Moses gets repressed. He kills Mary in emotive states of stressed mood. Regarding the dependency of Mary on Moses and its consequences in a racist society, Elizabeth analyses the character of Mary and her plight, "She comes to rely physically and emotionally on her black servant Moses when Marston, a youth from England arrives on the farm, she sends Moses away, only to have him return and kill her" (41). Relating the life Mary passes and the world she faces and its result, Zak writes, "[. . .] oppressive world in which Mary Turner was born, went slowly and undramatically mad, and violently died" (482).

Thus, ironically her obsession with escaping the life of the parents traps her in a similar life after getting married to Dick and ends her life in murder at the hands of Moses.

II. Psychoanalysis

Introduction

Human experiences like anxiety, fear, desire, emotions, etc. are the elements which provide a strong support for the psychiatric problems resulting in frustration, conflict and inner mental disorder. It is Sigmund Freud, who for the first time studied these experiences in an order and developed an important discipline which is known as psycho analysis. Freud's Psychoanalysis is immediately applicable to the study and analysis of the psychological tract of author and characters both. Psychological analysis helps in exploring the causes of the mental tensions and conflicts. So, psycho analysis is the 'talking cure' that emerges out of the dialogue between patient and the therapist in which human sexual desires, fantasies and anxieties are expressed through dreams, jokes and slips of tongue. From this respective psychoanalysis can be read as an significant tool for analyzing the unconscious desires of the character in the literary work under the veil of language. In *Fundamental Conception of Psychology* A.A Brill opines :

In probing the unconscious, Freud thus discovered material that is of the utmost importance not only in the treatment of patient but also in the development of normal people in education, folklore, religion, art and literature, and every other field of human interest. (24)

In other words, psychoanalytic approach is an excellent tool for reading beneath the surface of the text. It is an attempt to investigate the unconscious territory of human psyche with logic and rationality. Its application unfolds the mental disorder and neurosis. The unconscious contains repressed desires especially sexual ones that are inaccessible to the conscious mind since one cannot know his or her unconscious mind going directly to it. Analysis of mental process is studied on the basis of

unconscious and its impact. The unconscious contents of the mind were found to consist fully in desires and wishes which derive their energy directly from the primary physical instinct. Freud in the same context says:

[. . .] since, moreover, these (unconscious) primitive trends are to a great extent of a sexual or of a destructive nature. They are bound to come in conflict with the more social and civilized mental forces.

Investigation along with this path was that led Freud to his discoveries of the long disguised secrets of sexual life of children and Oedipus complex. (22)

This present thesis is the analysis of principal character Mary and her antagonist, Dick in relation of conflict they face in reality between conscious and unconscious arena. Their desire for the sex and the deficiency for the same become the cause of Mary's destruction resulting in the murder(death).

Psychoanalysis is not only the study of human instincts and human relation but also the study of same with the characters of literary text. In regard to the psychoanalysis, *The Oxford English Dictionary* Vol. VII says:

A theory of personality and psychical life derived from this, based on the concept of ego, id and super ego, the conscious, preconscious and unconscious levels of mind and the repression of sexual instinct ; more widely, a branch of psychology dealing with the unconscious. (761)

Psychoanalytic literary criticism takes a literary piece primarily as an expression of the state of mind and the structure of the personality of an author. Literary text is analyzed in relation to the conscious and unconscious psychic parts of the characters. Concerning this, *Random House Unbridged Dictionary* defines the psychoanalysis, "a systematic structure of theory concerning the relation of conscious and unconscious psychological process" (1561). In the course of psychological

investigation, Freud has developed the dynamic form of psychology that he calls, “Psychoanalysis as a mean of therapy for neuroses, but soon expanded it to account for many developments in the history of civilization, including warfare, mythology and religion, as well as literature and other arts” (Abram 248).

Similarly, psychic exploration of Mary, the central character and her relation to Moses in regard to sexuality deserves the significance in this study based on psychoanalysis. The mental illness of Mary being deprived of getting approach to sex with Moses due to her consciousness is to be analyzed in this study. Her unconscious desiring for sex and conscious refraining from it is the major cause of her destruction in the novel *The Grass is Singing*.

Division of Personality

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 that Freud sees as 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 unconscious.

The Id

The id is a reservoir of unconscious wishes and desires. It is directly related to the instinctual drives, which are considered to be of two types : destructive and constructive. While destructive drive tends towards aggression, dissolution, and eventually death. The constructive drives, which primarily are of the sexual nature, constitute the libido or basic energy of life. The id is absolutely lawless, asocial, amoral, irrational and selfish part of human psyche, and is concerned only with the

immediate gratification. In Freud's words "Id' stands for "Untamed passions" (qtd. in Guerin 156).

Id gets outlet through dreams, jumble of thoughts and intoxication. 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 of how harmful it might be to others" (Lahey 466). In the novel *The Grass is Singing*, the desire for the sex irrespective of race in the protagonist, Mary's part of id is to be analyzed in the study. It is controlled by pleasure principle. It is the depository of the innate instinctual drives. If unbridled, the id would always seeks instant satisfaction of primitive irrational and pleasure seeking impulses. It is seen at an early stage of development but it gets dominant in adult personality. In fact, the id is the underline store room of buried thoughts, feelings, desires, experiences that are repressed and prohibited to get on the manifest level of matured moral personality.

The Ego

The ego is our ordinary social self that thinks, decides, feels and wills. It regulates and opposes the instinctual drives. It helps an individual to protect himself/herself. It is a rational governing agent of psyche, which deals with sexual and aggressive impulses originating in the 'Id' at the unconscious level. It is mainly conscious, partly unconscious in contact with Id. Ego is associated with reason and gets governed with critical and politic judging. Defining ego, Benjamin B. Lahey opines, "The ego operates according to the reality principle. This means that it holds the id in check until a safe and realistic way has been found to satisfy its motive [. . .] the attempts by the ego to find safe, realistic ways of meeting the needs of id " (467).

The Superego

It is another part of psyche associated with critical judging function, which is known as conscience or moral principle. It serves to repress or inhibits the drives of 'Id', and to block off and thrust into the unconscious to those impulses that tend towards pleasure. Thus, it is a regulator that governs all the functions of human personality on the basis of social values and norms. Lahey, defining superego writes, "restriction are placed on the actions of id and ego when the superego develops" (467). Similarly, critics Wilfred L. Guerin and others in *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* say, "[. . .] the superego is the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride" (158).

It is super ego, which prohibits id and ego to operate with fulfillment and sometimes it wars with both id and ego. Thus, superego is the norms and values oriented judge of human psychic status.

Freud and Psychosexuality

The sources of unconscious have shaped the growth of psychosexuality that is also known as libido. Freud argued that the instinctual sexual drive appears not only in "sexual acts" but also in most fundamental acts like a mother nursing the infant, an act that produces pleasures which Freud defines specifically as sexual pleasure. *The Oxford English Dictionary* Vol. VII defines psychosexuality, "involving the mental and emotional aspect of sexual impulse" (769).

Freud talks about sexual tensions and writes, "in every case in which tension is produced by sexual processes it is accompanied by pleasure; even in the preparatory changes in the genitals feeling of satisfaction of some kind of plainly observed" (qtd. in Acharya 29)

Freudian psychoanalysis in relation to sexuality will be an important tool to accomplish the present task. Peter Barry defines psychoanalysis in *Beginning Theory : An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, "Psychoanalytic criticism is a form

of literary criticism which uses some of the techniques of psychoanalysis in the interpretation of literature" (5). Unconscious is highly explored in the Freudian psychoanalysis as it is the reservoir of libidinal desire. The sexual urge is repressed in unconscious of an individual. Many of Freud's ideas are related to sexual urge and its impact. Peter Barry says, "Many of Freud's ideas concern the aspects of sexuality" (97). Thus psychosexuality is the desire or urge for the sex. Regarding sex and sexuality, Freud says:

If you take the sexual act itself is the central point, you will perhaps declare sexual to mean everything which is concerned with obtaining pleasurable gratification from the body (and particularly the sexual organs) of the opposite sex; in the narrowest sense, everything which is directed to the union of the genital organs and performance of sexual act. In doing so, however you come very near to reckoning the sexual and the improper as identical, and childbirth would really have nothing to do with sex [. . .] reproduction the kernel of sexuality, you run the risk of excluding from it a whole host of things like masturbation, or even kissing [. . .] nevertheless undoubtedly sexual.(qtd.in G. Hazo 29)

In fact, sexuality can be stretched to include related carnal desires, such as those that accompany erotic kissing or caressing. The present study will explore the love between Mary and Dick as the way to aiming at physical pleasure. Therefore, unconscious has the significant role in exploring the human psyche. Repressed desire in unconscious gets relief through the dreams. This way unconscious and dream are to be explored and interpreted for psychoanalytic study of the characters.

The Unconscious

The first of Freud's innovations was his recognition of unconscious processes in human psyche state. Under the influence of the unconscious, thoughts and feelings

that belong together may be drifted or displaced out of context; two different ideas or images may be condensed into one; thoughts may be dramatized in the form of images rather than expressed as abstract concepts. Certain objects may be represented symbolically by images of other objects, although the resemblance between the symbol and the original object may be farfetched. Defining conscious Freud writes:

We have learnt from psycho-analysis that the essence of the process of repression lies, not in putting an end to, in annihilating, the idea which represents an instinct, but in preventing it from becoming conscious. When this happens we say of the idea that it is in a state of being 'unconscious', and we can produce good evidence to show that even when it is unconscious it can produce effects, even including some which finally reach conscious-ness; but let us state at the very outset that the repressed does not cover everything that is unconscious. The unconscious has the wider compass: the repressed is a part of the unconscious. (*Essentials* 142)

Recognition of these modes of operation in unconscious mental processes made possible the understanding of such previously incomprehensible psychological phenomena as dreaming through analysis of unconscious processes, Freud saw dreams as serving to protect sleep against disturbing impulses arising from within and related to early life experiences. Thus, unacceptable impulses and thoughts, called the latent dream content, are reserved into a conscious, although no longer immediately comprehensible, experience called the manifest dream. Knowledge of these unconscious mechanisms helps the analyst to explore the so-called dream work, that is, the process by which the latent dream is transformed into the manifest dream, and through dream interpretation, to recognize its underlying meaning. Unconscious is for

the repressed desire and dream is an outlet to this giving the relief in conscious psyche of an individual. Relating this, Freud says :

[. . .] established the concept of repression and have brought dream-distortion into relation with repressed psychological material, we can express in general terms the principle finding to which we have been led by the analysis of dreams. In the case of dreams which are intelligible and have a meaning, we have found that they are undisguised wish-fulfillments; that is, that in their case the dream-situation represents as fulfilled a wish which is known to consciousness, which is left over from daytime life, and which is deservedly of interest. (*Essentials* 115)

Dream as the Manifestation of Repressed Desire

Dreams represent disguised desires, wish fulfillment and expression of unconscious and unacceptable thoughts. For Freud, dream represents those wishes, demand and desires that get repressed into unconscious and their instinctual satisfaction is knotted in conscious state of mind. For him, sexual desire or impulses getting barred in the real life situation get the outlet through dreams. In this regard Brill writes in *The Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis*, “ In the time he was well convinced that the dream is not a mere jumble, a senseless mechanism but that it represents frequently in symbolic form the person’s inmost thoughts and desire that represent a hidden wish”(23).

The dreams that are not fulfilled create violent inner confrontation for the gratification of unconscious id, which is itself a threat to ego. In *Essentials of psychoanalysis* Sigmund Freud writes about how dream appears:

During the night this train of thoughts succeeds in finding connections with one of the unconscious tendencies present ever since childhood in

the mind of the dreamer, but ordinarily *repressed* and excluded from his conscious life. By the borrowed force of this unconscious help, the thoughts, the residue of the day's work now become active again, and emerge into consciousness in the shape of the dream.(140)

Unacceptable thoughts and wishes appear in symbolic form in dreams. These symbols have universal meaning. Freud found the unconscious feelings and thoughts are the materials for dream. Latent dream thoughts determine the manifest content of dream. Freud says, "The latent thoughts of the dream differ in no respect from the products of our regular conscious activity; they deserve the name of fore-conscious thoughts, and may indeed have been conscious at some moments of waking life" (140). It is clear that manifest and latent dreams contents can only be exposed through free association. Free association is vital because it leads to the hidden connection between ideas and images. Freud stresses that we cannot fulfill our desire in reality or in the awoken state. The desire that cannot be fulfilled is stored in the unconscious mind, not erased and comes onto the surface in the dream. Distortion of the unconscious dream thought in the manifest as well as in the content level is called dream mechanism. Many factors contribute to the dream mechanism. In this study, the dream of Mary Turner, the protagonist will be analyzed as an outlet of her repressed sexual urge. The processes for the dreams are stated in the following chapters.

Condensation

In this process, one image can stand for many association, the complexity of the latent content of the dreams can therefore be derived from analyzing how repressed ideas and thoughts in association connect up with the condensed image that is at the forefront of the dream. The way that a single idea or event can

simultaneously represent different impulses. Asserting this Freud in *Interpretation of Dream* writes:

Strictly Speaking, then, it is impossible to determine the amount of condensation. There is an answer, which at first sight seems most plausible, to the argument that the great lack of proportion between the dream-content and the dream-thoughts implies that physical material has undergone an extensive process of the condensation in the course of the formation of the dreams. (383)

Displacement

In this process, the feelings related to one thing are related to a different one, for instance, the murderous feeling of someone is displaced onto the next different object. Dream displacement helps in finding distortion. Freud writes:

It is the process of displacement which is chiefly responsible for our being unable to discover or recognize the dream-thoughts in the dream-content, unless we understand the reason for their distortion.

Nevertheless, the dream-thoughts are also submitted to another and milder sort of transformation, which leads to our discovering a new achievement on the part of the dream –work- one, however, which is easily intelligible [. . .] represented symbolically by means of similes and metaphors kin images resembling those of poetic speech.

(Essentials 103)

Dream Symbol

Wishes repressed in the unconscious get through the dream in symbolic form. Mostly the dream symbols serve by representing person's, parts of body or activities invested with erotic interest. "Dreams make use of this symbolism for the disguised representation of their latent thoughts" (*Freud 469*). By Freud's example of dream

interpretation, we are made to believe all the concave images like ponds, flowers, boxes, caves, etc. are the female genital organs or body whereas things whose length can exceed their diameter especially vertical in shape are phallic symbols. Talking about the dream symbols, Freud in *Essentials of Psychoanalysis* writes:

Sharp weapon, long and stiff objects such as tree trunks and stick stand for male genital; boxes, ovens [. . .] represent uterus [. . .] a staircase, or going upstairs to represent sexual intercourse [. . .] dream symbol are bisexual and can relate to the male and female genitals according to the context. (123)

Psychoanalytical study should interpret the dream symbols to analyze the psyche of character. This helps in exploring the sexual desire of an individual.

Sentiment of Sex Love

A sentiment is an organized system of ideas, feelings, emotion and impulses, to an individual, an object, an institution or an abstract concept. The feelings and emotions occur in modified form and get closely associated with idea and impulses. The impulses arise from biological and psychogenic needs. Thus, a sentiment is essentially a pattern of experience. The social sentiments include the so-called moral sentiments which consist of ideas, feelings and the impulses pertaining to the good. They also include the sentiment relating to social custom, manners, good taste, etc. Love is such an important sentiment which plays a vital role in emerging sexual emotions in an individual. James Winfred Bridges in *Psychology: Normal and Abnormal* writes :

The central factor in the love of man and woman is the sex need or what Tridon has called ‘the organic impulsion’. This impulsion is not ordinarily aroused indiscriminately by only one of the opposite sex. It is usually elicited only by persons possessing certain characteristics

which have a sex appeal [. . .] it may be color of eyes, hair or size and shape of hands, feet or body. (287)

The sexual emotion as well as the sex impulse forms part of the sentiment of love. Lover and beloved often appreciate their loved one. They idealize and do overvaluation if their loved one has possessed few of fetishes being fit into the love image. This is similar to that of Mary while she falls in love with Moses. She makes overvaluation of Moses. Bridges asserts:

The sentiment of love involves idealization of the person loved, idealization impulses modification of the primitive sexual feelings and emotions, their transference from the original sex object and attachment to other perceptions and ideas pertaining to a total personality. This modification and transference may be partly due to sexual restraint. [. . .] Idealization also means overvaluation of the loved person, who has thus a biologically unwarranted appeal. (289)

The love that Greek called Eros and the Roman Amor is certainly always a love that involves intense bodily passion, persistent, emotional drives, powerful of ten-disturbing desires, and a mixture of sensational pleasures and pains that are usually inseparable from one-another. This is clear or plainly intimated in the passage that treat sexual or erotic love. Erotic love Eros is defined as “a romantic and sexual love” (Cousini 533). Thus, erotic love seeks romance. The love of Mary incorporated with Dick couldn’t be successful as he lacks romance and gets busy in managing the farm. This theory is well applied in this study. Love cultivated by Mary with Moses could not get completion as she happens to block the sexual desire with him.

Regarding love and its application in literature, Robert G. Hazo in *The Idea of Love* writes:

We need only report the common understanding of sexual desire to be found in Freud's theory of Love and in other theories. [. . .] we have found that the notion of sexual desire has the widest possible applicable in the literature on love when it is taken as the yearning for genital, or other directly related physical pleasures. (29)

Freudian psychoanalytical study in relation to sexual hemisphere talks about genital and physical pleasures. His views on love and its tendencies are worthwhile to be explored in this study.

Male Versus Female Sexuality

Sexuality as the determining factor determines the character of the person. The social factors are supposed to have less impact. In fact, sexuality is a biological issue, it is inextricably related to the social factor. The meaning of the term defers according to the context. Male sexuality is highly praised. Female sexuality is over powered by male one. The issue of superiority is always associated with man. Women on the other hand are supposed to be fickle and mere flesh. This labeling is not because of biological or psychological factor. Her behavior is the outcome of situation and the context which society has created. Woman is made to accept the authority of the male. Women have been suppressed for ages. Woman is the part of sexual joy for the man. It is an age-long concept. Concerning this view, Simone De Beauvoir says :

[. . .] in sexuality and maternity in order to be a true woman subject can claim autonomy; but to be a "true woman" she must accept herself as the Other. The men of today show a certain duplicity of attitude which is painfully lacerating to woman ; they are willing on the whole to accept as a fellow being, an equal; but they still require her to remain the inessential [. . .] whereas woman's independent

successes are in contradiction with her femininity, since the “true woman” is required to make herself object, to be the Other. (1000)

The above lines show that woman are made sexual partner and supposed to be another or the other for the male in the male dominated society. Women are made to be an object for the male and his pleasure. bell hooks writes, “[. . .] that female sexuality exists to serve sexual needs of man” (157). Regarding the sexuality in modern culture, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in the essay “Gender Criticism” opines :

[. . .] the whole realm of what modern culture refers to as ‘sexuality’ and also calls ‘sex’ - the array of acts, expectations, narratives, pleasure, identity formation and knowledge in both women and men, that tends to cluster most densely around certain genital sensation.
(247)

III. Psychosexual Confrontation in *The Grass is Singing*

Emergence of Psychosexual Conflict

Mary Turner, the child of unhappy parents, often saw the frustrations in the face of her mother. Mother's pitiable condition associated with poverty laid a negative mark in her life. She succeeds in creating a comfortable life living on her own doing secretarial work and staying at a girl's hostel. She becomes good at cultivating relation equally to women and men and remains content to be unmarried. It is fact that she wants to be young forever. She has desire for the youth so she wears her hair little – girl fashion on her shoulders and little-girl frocks in pastel colors. Her desire for marriage was neglected by her since she witnessed cruel manners of the father with her mother. She had sexual impulses but has the distaste for sex at the same time. Her desire for sex couldnot come out in the reality as it was barred by her conscious feeling. This is psychosexual conflict within her psyche:

When thought of marriage she remembered her father coming home red-eyed and fuddled; when she thought of children she saw her mother's face at her children's funeral- anguished, but as dry and hard as rock. Mary liked other people's children but shuddered at the thought of having any of her own. She felt sentimental at weddings; but she had a profound distaste for sex. (39)

Here, it is clear that her mother was dissatisfied with her conjugal life due to her extreme poverty. So, she was not much sad and tolerated the death of her children with the rock like heart. That incident brought negation of married life in Mary. Her smooth routined life is destroyed one evening when she overhears gossip about herself. She hears her friends taking and accusing her of not getting married and having "something missing somewhere" (40). When she heard this comment, she started seeking someone to marry. This is the emergence of psychosexuality. She

meets a widower and allowed him to approach her. She couldnot prolong her relation with him as she denies sexual activity with him. She denies despite having taste for sex. There comes psychosexual conflict between them:

But things went wrong. He underestimated her experience; it seemed to him that a woman who had been on her own so long should know her own mind and understand what he was offering her. A relationship developed which was clear to both of them. Until he proposed to her was accepted, and began to make love to her. Then a violent revulsion overcame her and she ran away. (42)

This shows her repulsion to sex. Again, she realizes her mistake to run away, “Next morning, she was horrified at her behavior. What a way to behave; she, who was always in command of herself, and who dreaded nothing more than scenes and ambiguity. She apologized to him, but that was the end of it” (42). This exposes her psychosexual confrontation within her. There is conflict between the unconscious and conscious, and desire and the action in reality. She was left by him. It is obvious in the text that she feels a great impulse for the sex and sexuality takes a room in her. Her desire for the sex and sense of her sexuality is understood through the following lines:

It seemed to her that she had run from him because her was ‘an old man’ that was how the affair arranged itself in her mind. She shuddered, and avoided men over thirty. She was over that age herself; but in spite of everything, she thought of herself as a girl still. All the time, unconsciously, without admitting it to herself, she was looking for a husband. (43)

She has a vehement desire for the sex with a young man. The desire repressed in her while seeking outlet through marriage gets changed and takes her to the world of psychosex. She searched for a man to marry but couldnot get one. This grew

frustration in her and she got mental breakdown. She gets heavy inner psychological conflict within her. And she was afraid to meet people, afraid above all, of men. If a man kissed her, she was revolted; on the other hand she went to the pictures even more frequently than before and came out feverish and unsettled. There seemed no connection between the distorted mirror of the scene and her own lives; it was impossible to fit together what she wanted for herself; and what she was offered.

After sometime, she meets Dick Turner, a poor farmer. Relationship between them gets deeper and deeper. Mary starts dreaming of struggling to get him. Her sexual desires are traced in the dream, “[. . .] and at night she dreamed long grey her mind in which she struggled through sand, or climbed staircase which collapsed as she searched the top” (49). The staircase she climbed is the symbol of phallus according to Sigmund Freud.

This is the psychosexual emergence getting displacement and condensation for the outlet of sexual drive. Eventually, their love affair gets completion through marriage. No sooner she gets married, poverty haunts her. Her desire to celebrate honeymoon gets shattered and conflict between them starts growing. It eventually disrupts love-life situation. This evidence is found in the following line, “He hated the idea of waiting about the town while a woman fussed with clothes and bridesmaids. There was no honeymoon. He explained he was too poor really to afford one, though if she insisted he could do what he could. She did not insist” (50).

She regretted having been married to Dick. She starts feeling as if she is in with her mother and it reminds her of the day her mother faced the crisis. It leads her to the frustration. Her thoughts right after marriage can be traced in the following lines:

She began to feel, slowly, that it was not in this house she was sitting, with her husband, but back with her mother, watching her endlessly

contrive and patch and mend-till suddenly she got to her feet with an awkward scrambling movement, unable to bear it; possessed with the thought her father, from her grave, had sent out his will and forced her back into the kind of life she had made her mother lend. (54-55)

She posits her in her mother's position and Dick in her father. This again blocks her sexual desire. Dick himself feels regretted to marry her. He finds her lying in the bed with her back turned. This shows she is reluctant to have sex with him, "[. . .] he approached her with the timid adoration which was the only she could have borne (55).

Dick always gets busy in planning business and getting it in action but lacks his time with his wife. He never tries his best to give her enough time and make love to her. There is a physical gap between them and psychological detachment. Thus, desire in Mary couldnot get out and completed. It remains unfulfilled. In fact, Mary wants sex or physical contact and psychic satisfaction. It is not possible to her to fulfill due to his obsession in other business world, "Mary lost her temper - lost it finally and destructively, even as she raged against him, her feeling was of cold self-condemnation because she was giving him the satisfaction of seeing her, thus. But it was a feeling he would not have understood" (92). Their poverty and gaping physical relation create frustration in Mary's life. She wants to escape her misery and goes back to her old friends. The conflict emerged in between them pushes her to go out of her home. This situation erased her desire to live with Dick and leaves the house. When she reaches the town "she had not been thinking of herself as married" (100). This exposes her irritation towards marital life and sexual urge.

Dick's weak physical feature as well as his poor condition makes Mary feel negation and she lacks love to him; rather she tries to seek someone stronger than

Dick. Here, Mary's psychosexuality is explored. Her desire for the sex remains incomplete. The following lines explore her inner desire :

When she saw him weak and goalless, and pitiful, she hated him, and the hate turned in on herself, and she was trying to create one out of Dick. If he had genuinely, simply, because of the greater strength of his purpose taken ascendancy over her, she would have loved him, and no longer hated herself for becoming tired to a failure. (127)

Mary completely loses hope for future prosperity and sees her life empty. "There was nothing. Nil. Empty" (132). Now, she desires for a child as a companion to her. She feels a desperate need of bearing a child. Her desire for baby can be taken as a desire for sex and motherhood. Her psychosexuality gets shattered when Dick goes in opposition to her impulse. Lessing exposes her psyche this way, "[...] asked if they might have a child [...] he said, Mary, now can we have children?' [...] he saw she was desiring a child for her own sake. [...] just one child? Persisted Mary [...] It was she pleading with Dick to have a child" (134-135). Here, the desire for the baby is the matter of motherhood as well as psychosexuality. Her desire in unconscious and expression in conscious and its rejection by Dick is vehement psychosexual confrontation. The words of Mary "I am getting on for forty [...] can't you see that very soon I won't be able to have a child at all?" (136), show the dissatisfaction of her married life for about ten years. Her desire has been neglected. She still keeps desires for the baby and keeps her company with him for weeks but results in confrontation. Her psychic intention is found in the lines, "It was all the same to her what she did. For a few weeks, she accompanied Dick everywhere he went, and tried to sustain him with her presence [...] . It has hopeless, hopeless" (136).

The desire for sex or the baby is seen strongly in Mary but it is even in Dick. Dick is not active in this regard as he wish the happy life with full economic prosperity. This is not possible to him and her.

Mary's Relation with Moses

When Dick brings Moses as a house boy to support Mary at home, Mary comes to know that the boy was already badly treated at the farm by her. She remembers the boy being beaten. "She recognizes him as the one she had struck with the whip over the face two years before" (141). Gradually, she likes him and hatred to black gets erased. His strong body attracts her. Her abstracted sexual desire, remained unfulfilled with Dick, gets exposed when she stays with Moses. Her desire for sex with Moses comes out no sooner Moses is brought home to work. The sentences in the novel are the evidence to her desire: "She used to sit quite still, watching him work. The powerful broad - built body fascinated her [...] He was a good worker, one of the best she had had" (142).

She becomes near to him and his activity. She watches him working where sexual desire is associated with. It is clear through the lines" [...] From the house, she sometimes caught a glimpse of him bending over it, sluicing himself, naked from the waist up. But, she tried not to be around when it was time for his bath" (143). This can be taken as the further development of psychosexual relation between her and the boy. Desire for the physical presence of the black boy was clinched to her in the unconscious. This is traced in the lines:

He had his back to her. As she looked, he turned by chance or because he sensed her presence, and saw her. [...] Therefore she was annoyed when he stopped and stood upright, waiting for her to go, his body

expression resentment of her presence. There [...] this thought, of course, was not conscious. (143)

We see here the psychosexual desire developed more in Mary and less in Moses. However, they have psychosexual relation. The way she follows up him matters the emergence of psychosexuality in her.

His presence creates emotion in her. She likes him but cannot explain desire. The lines in the novel explore the mental phenomenon of Mary, “Moses had come back into the kitchen, and she heard his footsteps, she was sitting in the front room rigid with a hysterical emotion [...] she felt as if she had put her hand on a snake” (144). This shows there psychic conflict between her and the boy. The boy has not understood her desire. He has not taken any action yet to fulfill her intention. His presence gives a sort of psychic disturbance to her. It is nothing more than sexual impulse getting suppressed.

Now, the presence of Moses becomes the part of her life. She can not imagine her life in his absence. She is partly afraid of getting accused of chasing the boy and mostly feared that she would live in his absence. She responds to his willingness to leave home this way: “You mustn’t go [...] You must stay” (151). This shows her interest in staying with him. The black boy crosses the social norms and touches her for soothing her. They cultivate the relationship with each other. This is evident in the line, “Madam lie down, on the bed. [...] they approached the bed, the soft touch still on her shoulder, she felt her head beginning to swim and her bones going soft [...] he gently hold her shoulder and pushed her down” (151). This shows that she feels pleasure while being touched by the black boy. It is the cultivation of psychosexual relation between them. Sexual desire in them gets cultivated and seeks the way to strengthen. He, after pushing her to bed, happens to tuck her coat. This shows the desire for the sex in the boy. Their relationship is on the way to the completion.

Mary is in between hatred and love emerged in her with Moses. She likes him as he has a sturdy body and hates him as he is a black. This has created psychosexual confrontation mainly within her:

She thought of herself weeping helplessly, unable to stop; of drinking at that black man's command; of the way he had pushed her across the two rooms to the bed; of the way he had made her lie down and then tucked the coat in round her legs, she shrank into the pillow with loathing, moaning out loud, as if she had been touched by excrement.
(152)

Here, it is clear she is pulled and pushed by love sentiment and hate sentiment respectively. The word 'excrement' shows the excessive hatred towards him as he is a black boy. This is a racial issue, white concept on the black. This is the major factor to create a gap and confrontation between Mary and Moses. This eventually gets into psychosexual confrontation and leads Moses to kill her as an outlet to his desire for the sex.

Relation between them is getting strengthened and Moses thinks of pleasing her. He wants to help her. He wants to protect from any physical danger. He says, "Madam should not walk around in the dark bush by herself" (156).

Mary's Dream and Psychosex

Mary dreams of sexual images in different forms. Her dream is caused by the relation she has cultivated with him. She has psychosexual attachment with Moses but cannot be with Moses for the completion of her sexual impulse with him due to racial phenomenon. So, the dream becomes an outlet to the desires repressed. Freud's idea of dream thought is quite matching with her dreams. Her dreams display her sexual desire with Moses. She dreams her father bending over her mother. This is her desire

to have sexual activity with Moses. Moses is here taken as her father and herself as her mother:

There was her father, the little man with the plump juicy stomach, beer-smelling and jocular, whom she hated, holding her mother in his arms as they stood by the windows. Her mother was struggling in mock protest, playfully expostulating. Her father bent over her mother, and at the right, Mary ran away. (163)

This dream shows the conflict between her father and mother. Psychosexual conflict between mother and father is similar to that of Mary and Dick on one hand and Mary and Moses on the other hand. She take Moses as her father. Desire for the sex with him is not possible due to social construct so desire repressed gets outlet through her dream. The lines explore her negation towards Dick and her attraction to Moses.

There is psychosexual desire between her and Moses, her black house boy: "In her dream, the conviction grew that Dick was dead – that Dick was dead and that black man was waiting next door for her coming" (163). Dick's presence is no more good for her. His absence is way to relief to Mary. Dream exposes this : " He was dead [...] it was cold, and she felt only relief and exultation" (164). Her relationship with Moses gets deepened. Her relation with Moses is also not out of confrontation. The psychosexual relationship is quite confronting.

Margaret Moan Rowe in *Doris Lessing* writes about the sexuality and her relationship with Moses as:

Presenting Mary as victim, Lessing never grants her even the glimmer of an intellectual life so that Mary becomes more and more trapped in a physical world that frees her dream life and challenges her sexuality, a challenge extensively and erotically dramatized in her relationship with Moses. (19)

Mary's relation with Moses increases psychological terror in her. Her dreams of Moses and her father, there is to show the terror she has undergone. She has strong desire to have sex. Desire of sex appears in the dreams as an outlet . The presence of her father is to show that he is sexual figure whom she does not like. Her negation to sex emerged due to his act on her mother. Moses for her is the energy of sex. But, there is conflict in psychological world. That is why, the dream appears as:

He approached slowly, obscene and powerful and it was not only he, but her father who was threatening her. They advanced together, [...] He came near and put his hand on her arm. It was the voice of the African she heard. He was confronting her because of Dick's death, consoling her protectively; but at the same time it was her father menacing and horrible, who touched her in desire. (165)

They have conflict. Moses wants attachment in physical distance where Mary has psychological attachment and physical detachment. This shows they have conflict regarding the sexuality. This evidence is clear in the lines:

She knew it would be fatal to meet his eyes [...] a dozen times she was on the point of saying to Dick, 'He must go', But she never dared. [...] They were two antagonists, silently sparring. Only he was powerful and sure of himself, and she was undermined with fear, by her terrible dreams-felted nights, her obsession. (167)

The relationship between Mary and Dick gets challenged when Tony Marston sees them in the room together and Moses shipping her dress. It is not moral and the way they behave is against the white code. The black boy according to the white colonial society, couldnot touch the white woman. This is how their relation is here to be ended because it is the climax for the white. Now the society stands as a barrier in between them:

He was struck motionless by surprise. Mary was sitting on upended candle box before the square of mirror nailed on the wall. She was in a garish pink petticoat, and her bony fellow shoulders stuck sharply out of it. She stoop up and held out her arms while the native shipped her dress over them from behind [...] Moses was buttoning up the dress; she was looking in the mirror. The attitude of the native was of an indulgent warrierness. (185)

The above lines unfold their relation. Mary does have fear while sitting by him. She can't be with him as she is afraid of her husband. She said, "you had better go now. It is time for the boss to come" (185).

Tony Marston is horrified being "ignorant of the implication of Mary's sexual and existential search" (*Zak* 489). He considers the relation with black boy is just like having relation with animal. As a white, Marston does not like to see the black boy touching her and behaves him as an animal. Here, it is good to trace his feelings: "he felt it would be rather like having a relation with an animal, in spite of his progressiveness" (186). This is also similar to the view of Frantz Fanon in the *Wretched of the Earth*. He has written whites concept on the black as an animal:

[...] and dehumanizes the native, or to speak plainly, it turns him into an animal. In fact, the terms the settler uses when he mentions the native are geological terms. [...] When settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to the bestiary. (42)

The main cause of Mary's destruction is her relation with Moses, the black boy. The racial issue is pertinent. It is exposed when Marston sees Mary and Moses while dressing and undressing. It is clear in the lines: "Does that native always dress and undress you ?" [...] It is not customary in this country, is it?" (156).

When she is questioned about her relation with Moses, she can not resist rather she means and she has psychological conflict within her:

She stopped. Her face was pitiful; her eyes were painful holes in her face. I don't know anything. I don't understand. Why is all this happening ? I didn't mean it to happen. But he won't go away, he won't go away : and then, in a different voice, she shapped at him [...] she burst into tears, moanity. He won't go away (187).

The above lines explore her inner conflict. The relation with Moses cultivated by her has resulted in psychological conflict. Conflict reaches the climax when she commands him to go away. When she negates his presence, he violently gets anger at her. Marston presents himself as a barrier representing whole society to break their relation. The following conversation is the evidence that shows the conflict existing between them:

'Madam want me to go?' said the boy quietly.

Yes, go away!

Madam want me to go because of this boss?

'Madam is leaving this farm, yes?'

'Yes', said Mary faintly.

'Madam never coming back?'

'No, no, no, she cried out.'

'And this boss going too?'

'No', she screamed. 'Go away'. (188)

Here, it is obvious that they have great conflicts their desire for the sex is not complete. She cried as she can not leave him. This shows that she has love at heart to Moses. It is her inner psyche concerning love. Now onwards, she has great

psychological problem. When Moses goes away due to Tony's threatening word, she starts sobbing where the psyche is explored through the following:

Mary sobbed, her head on her arms. 'He's gone, she cried, he has gone! Her voice was hysterical with relief. And then she suddenly pushed him away, stood in front of him like a mad woman, and missed you sent him away. He'll never come back ! It was all right till you come ! And she collapsed in a storm of tears. (188)

Her desire for sex is unfulfilled. The repressed desire has made her ill for years. " I have been ill for years", she said tartly. "Inside, somewhere. Inside. Not ill, you understand. Everything wrong, somewhere [. . .] He is there" (201). This traces that the cause of her illness is just her husband, Turner. He could not understand her desire and made her ill. She accepts she is ill for years as she could not fulfill her sexual desire. "Of course, I am ill, she said confidently, addressing the Englishman. I have always been ill ever since I can remember. I am ill here; she pointed to her chest, sitting bolt upright in bed" (203). It explores her unfulfilled repressed desire for sexual pleasure. It also indicates that she could not achieve motherhood as she could not bear a child due to her husband's rejection. Her neurotic problem got emerged due to this. She said she was ill at chest. This shows that her unfulfilled desire for sex. That is why she and Dick have psychic confrontation concerning the sex.

Identity and Sexuality

Mary has always shunned her need for sex. She negates the sense of sexuality. When she remains unmarried up to her thirties, a question arises in her life. Her question of sexuality is the question of identity. "Why does not she marry ? [. . .] something is missing somewhere" (40). These lines in the novel are about the questioning her life as a woman. She is compelled to marry. Else, she loses her identity losing her womanhood lacking or missing something. So, she enters the

institution of marriage so as to confirm one of the important aspects of marital life that is sex. "She was able maternally to bestow the gift of herself on this humble stranger and remain untouched" (55).

Here, we see her psychological conflict within her and between Mary and Dick. Her desire for the sex and refraining from it with Dick puts a question on her. Talking about sexuality, Freud writes, "Sexuality must suffer and complete sexual satisfaction be renounced as the price we pay for civilization" (qtd. in Longbaum 290). Robert Longbaum opines the realization of Lawrence:

[. . .] that successful sexuality flows from a certain phase of identity and that the modern sexual problem is an identity problem. A properly reciprocal sexual relation is impossible so long as each partner is locked up in self-consciousness. (251)

Her negation to the sex since her childhood due to the poor economic condition of the parents often hurts her even with Dick due to the same status with him. Mary becomes sick. She becomes neurotic due to her unconscious sexual urge remained unfulfilled. We see her suffering from the memories of childhood as well where she sees her father playing game with her showing his sexual desire:

Her father caught her head and held it in his lap with his small hairy hands to cover up her eyes, laughing and joking loudly about her mother hiding. She smelt the sickly odor of beer, and through it she smelt too-her head held down in the thick stuff of his trousers – the unwashed masculine smell. She always associated with him. She struggled to get her head free, for she was half-suffocating, and her father held it down, laughing at her panic. (163)

These memories lead her to the past and gets affected by the present. She becomes hysterical and speaks language which she is unable to understand herself. Now, she

wants sex but Dick does not co-operate for the same. So, there lies conflict between them regarding psychosexuality.

The Psychology of Marital Infelicity

Mary after getting married to Dick could not develop good relation and understanding with him nor she was made happy. Mary had negation towards sex up to the time she was criticized. The sexual impulse emerged right before and after her marriage could not be satisfied. Mr. Turner was quite indifferent to her in terms of having sex with her. He becomes indulged with his occupation or farm work. Marital happiness is obviously dependent upon the mutual satisfaction of many biological and habitual needs and interests. Hence unhappiness is often due to unsatisfied needs.

Bridges asserts this view:

[. . .] it arises from an unsatisfied sex life. The unsatisfied sex need may be the customary ones, or certain unconventional ones which are likewise present [. . .] unhappiness may also be due to lack of satisfaction for other needs involved in the sentiment of love. The ego needs may not get adequate gratification in the person will then complain of lack of attention and appreciation and will feel slighted and ill-used [. . .] the desire for proper and sufficient food, clothing or housing may be only partly and inadequately fulfilled. (292)

Mary's life is similar to the views stated above. She could not have sexual satisfaction from him. She was highly shocked at the poor economic condition of Dick Turner:

[. . .] she began to feel, slowly, that it was not in this house she was sitting, with her husband, but back with her mother, watching her endlessly contrive and patch [. . .] thought that her father from his grave, had seen tout his will and forced her back into kind of life he had made her mother lead. (55)

She was highly dissatisfied with her marriage to Dick. The house she entered was alike her parents home. She is compelled to think and compare her life in present and past. This is a cause that her married life was unhappy. She thinks her life is to struggle against poverty, "Poverty, which Dick had warned of with a scrupulous humility, was another abstraction [. . .] she saw it as a rather exhilarating fight against odds" (52). Her dissatisfaction with her marriage due to Dick's poverty has become the cause of her unhappiness. Thus, marital infelicity is due to her tension and difficulty he has faced after her marriage with her husband. The sexual relation between Mary and Dick couldn't be satisfied and Mary's mental stress gets high and frustration gets added. The importance of sex in marital life is expressed by Rita K. Baltus in *Personal Psychology for Life and Work* this way:

Most young married couples - even though they are very much in love and are sexually attracted to each other – are faced with sexual adjustment. Enjoyment of sex by both people is not as automatic as they might have imagined. The desire to please the other person, which is the essence of love, is an important factor. The intimate experience of sexual relation can also reduce frustrations caused by other problems in the life of a young couple. (147)

Sexual gap between them leads them apart in physical and psychological state. They undergo heavy conflict. The desire repressed in unconscious results in conflict between them. This relation pushes Mary to cultivate psychosexual relation with Moses.

Nihilistic Thought and Guilt in Mary

When she finally rejects the black boy and orders him to go away, she becomes extremely frightened with him and she sees no hope ahead. She thinks she

would be dead soon. "It will rain, she said to herself, after I am dead" (202). This shows that there will be something as creation after her destruction. Mary is hopeless. She is pessimist in getting life.

She does not think that her life would be safe with her husband, Dick. This situation for her is due to the lack of co-operation and mutual understanding with her husband. When she sees Moses, she approaches him to appeal. She felt guilty having rejected him:

[. . .] at the side of him, her emotions unexpectedly shifted to create in her an extraordinary feeling of guilt, but towards him, to whom she had been disloyal [. . .] she felt she had only to move forward, to explain to appeal, and the terror would be dissolved. (205)

No sooner she reaches him, he "darted down the plunging steel" (205). He killed her as he could not bear the pain in rejection. His love sentiment was of sexual approach. When he could not fulfill the desire, he killed her as an outlet for his libidinal desire.

Plight of the Black: Racism and Social Inequality

The background of the story is based on the local, Rhodesia of South Africa and the gap created between white and blacks. The black man was not allowed even to touch the white woman. The strife between white and black is in the practice while the novel was written. Blacks were not in servile status and any sort of affection or amicability towards them is considered highly deplorable. The relation between the black man and white woman was highly condemned. White talking about the black woman asserts that whites have the licenses to use the black woman as an object. Colling in her essay "Black Woman and Sex/Gender Hierarchy" opines:

While the sexual and racial dimensions of being treated like animals are important, the economic formation underlying this treatment is

critical. Animals can be economically exploited, worked, sold, killed and consumed. As 'rules' African- American women become susceptible to such treatment. (qtd. in Subedi 52)

Mary's emotion towards Moses is that of hatred and attraction at the same time. She feels attracted to his sturdy body as a sexual energy and repulsed at his black body. Her attraction to Moses makes her feel better about her relation with Dick and hates the idea of the contact in night with Dick's weak body. She feels and sees the same in dream too. She wishes Dick to be dead. Here, we see psychic confrontation between Mary and Dick and psychological attachment with Moses. But, this relation can not prolong and get completion in the racist society. Their relation is aparted by the white men Charlie Slatter and Tony Marston. Regarding the domination of the white on blacks, William Chafe in the essay "Sex and Race" gives the analogy:

The outermost circle, of course, consisted of physical intimidation. When Richard asked his mother why black men did not fight white man, she responded, "The white man have guns and the black men don't". Physical force, and ultimately the threat of death, served as a constant reminder that whites held complete power over black lives.(375)

Talking about race Joe R Feagin and Meloin P. Sikes in *Living with Racism : The Black Middle-Class Experience* writes:

[. . .] racism in a broad sense to refer not only to the prejudices and discriminatory actions of particular white bigots but also to institutionalized discrimination and to the recurring ways in which white people dominate black people in almost every major area of the society. (3)

Racism is one form of the social inequality. It causes conflict resulting often in crime. The behavior shown by whites to black is traced in the line of the novel: "Get out' he said, half-chucked with anger. Get out before I kick you out" (188). When black boy is threatened to leave, it causes great conflict between him and Marston. He wants to revenge and takes the revenge against Mary by murdering her. This murder is sexual murder in a racist society.

Mary's Rebellions as Failure

Lessing shows societal code suppressing the individual ego of Mary. The individual ego is all the time trying to transcend the collective experience. It is depicted that Mary's life failed because her individuation process left her with a sense of lack, hatred, and ultimately mental breakdown. This is all because of her unfulfilled desire. In the novel, Mary seems to have accepted her destiny in the form of marriage despite her unwillingness. She has extreme disgust towards the idea of family and marriage. When she thinks of children she remembers "her mother anguished face at her children's funerals" (39). She feels sentimental towards wedding ceremonies but has a deep hatred for sex. Her hatred towards sexuality is related to her past. Due to her repulsion against her parents married life, she abstains from the sexual side of marriage. When she makes relationship for the first time with Dick, she is unable to meet him sexually. It is because of her marriage with him due to the collective pressure. She wants to have a child at times but sometimes negates the same desire. When she sees a group of African women with their babies, she feels the babies are like "Leeches hanging on to their bodies, the ideas of a child's lips on her breasts made her feel quite sick, at the thought of it she would involuntarily clasp her hands over her breasts, as if protecting them from a violation" (95). It is her strong distaste for having a child. This is also a cause of bringing psychosexual confrontation with in her and later with Dick and Moses.

Her marriage with Dick forces her to enter a life which is unacceptable and opposite to her imagination. She sees, "[. . .] that tiny stuffy room, the bare brick floor, the greasy lamp, were not what she had imagined" (53). This poor condition of Dick brings marital infelicity and comes a conflict between them. The psychosexual conflict between them is born out of this. Gradually, it leads Mary extend her relation with Moses. Mary finds herself trapped between her past existence of liberty and present existence of poverty. She wants to free herself from the depressing condition. Her individual will forces her all the time to transcend the social codes so she runs away in order to take up the employment in her old office. After reaching there, she finds difference between her past experience and the present one. Again, she is made to get back home without any hope. She becomes aware that she can not create her own identity.

Mary is seen to have tried to cross the social values developing her intimate relation with black Moses. She is afraid of Moses and at the same time dazzled by him. Moses' black skin symbolizes power which he imposes over her. When Mary becomes hysterical after Moses asks her for a leave; he gives her a glass of water and asks her to drink. It seems "as if he were speaking to one of his own woman', and she drank." (151). But, she is afraid of him being aware of her sexuality and need. She is in dilemma, she could neither live the life of a white 'missus' nor could she associate herself with her husband emotionally and physically. Her existence gets in trouble. She loses her sense of identity to the extent that she allows Moses to help her to dress. She does not show etiquette to her neighbours. She violates the formal patten of black and white relation as she allows Moses to be familiar with her, "Madame lie down on the bed' (151). Though she tries to break the societal codes before and after marriage, she achieves nothing more than failure.

Lessing presents the plight and tragic experience of Mary who feels entrapped in the andocentric society which limits her psychic growth and freedom. Her decision not to get married can be taken her rebellion against the male-dominated society. Her thought associated with this gets failure due to the force imposed on her by society. Even after her marriage, when she wants to establish her relation with the black boy crossing social norms gets shattered. Thus, her rebellion gets ended in failure.

IV. Conclusion

Mary becomes a threat to the male-dominated white society as she prefers life without sexual interaction with men. Her hatred to the sex develops out of parents' poor economic status and father's ill manner upon her mother. She rejects the social norms and values as a passive and subservient but becomes the subject to public criticism as the society finds this sort of behaviour as unacceptable.

Mary is made to enter the institution of marriage to prove her womanhood for her identity. The compulsion imposed by the society makes her suffer in her husband's economic deficiency. Her interest is neglected and wish ignore. That is the way to the conflict between them. The lack of pleasure and understanding between them creates conflict between them regarding sexual concern. This relation with her is highly mechanistic without any love-sex sentiments and need that leads her to extend her relation to Moses. The relation of Mary with Moses gets in trouble in a racist society. This results in the conflict between them. This is how she wants physical detachment with Moses but gets fettered in psychological attachment. Mary's compulsion to cut off the relation with Moses results in a heavy psychological conflict with in her and between them. This conflict is centered to sex. The confrontation touches the climax when the society completely opposes their relation and she finally rejects. Moses's desire for sex with her remains unfulfilled and repressed. This situation is the state of psychosexual conflict between them.

Mary's existence faces crisis before and after her marriage. In fact, her crisis emerges after she enters Dick's house. Being unable to locate her identify, she loses control and plunges into nervous breakdown. She experiences existential anguish. She wants to escape from the social ethics and notion for getting her true existence but her quest for freedom is not materialized. It is shattered by the white racist society. Thus, the novel explores the conflict with in individuals and between two

characters. The novel portrays the Mary's life from her childhood to the death at Moses's hands. The novel exposes that the society is responsible for the crisis and conflict. The human disposition in regard to sexuality and the outside world consoling over it is well traced in the novel. It shows the notion rooted in the white imperial society and the desire repressed in the unconscious. Then, the conflict gets birth due to the presence of unconscious and conscious in the individual.

Thus, Lessing is not to incite sympathy but to bring across a poignant tale of human psychic conflict. She tries to convey the complexity of human emotion. Therefore, *The Grass is Singing* is the novel exploring human dispositions with the psychological portrait.

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