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Sexual Repression in Ibsen's *The Master Builder*: A Freudian Perspective

A thesis submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus,
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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This thesis titled, "**Sexual Repression in Ibsen's *The Master Builder*: A Freudian Perspective**" submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in English, by Komal Prasad Phuyal, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Chapter - One

1. Ibsen and New Drama

Henrik Johan Ibsen was born in Skien, Norway, on March 20, 1828. He began writing plays with *Catiline* in 1848. The most productive and fruitful time which brought a break through in his life and the history of dramatic art is the 1870s. This is also the high time of Queen Victoria's reign in Great Britain. In fact, the Victorian Europe was a different scene in the development of dramatic art. Dramas were censored if the authority thought they would not serve the purpose as it believed to be fit for society. Thus, a new form of drama that caused provocation and roused intellectual stimulation was born with Ibsen. However, David Daiches states that the term "New Drama" was coined by Dutch born drama critic Jacob Thomas Green. He writes:

This movement was much influenced by Ibsen and sought to make the drama a vehicle for responsible discussion of modern problems. This is not in itself a dramatic objective. Neither Shaw nor any other Ibsenite worked out an essentially new way of exploring reality. (Daiches 1107)

The new genre of drama as established by Ibsen and furthered by G.B. Shaw and Michael Meyer in England sought to explore the problems of society. Hence, such plays also came to be known as the problem plays. In the Renaissance, Shakespeare had written some "bitter comedies" called problem plays. But, Ibsen was the first playwright to revitalize the problem plays both in their form and content, and also to popularize them.

1.1. New contours of Problem Plays

Problem play raises an issue, which has not yet been realized by society. Author of such plays always asks the society such questions, which may create uproar in it. Such plays brought a break in dramatic art in the nineteenth century in that the earlier tradition of

presenting great protagonists in tragedy was challenged with ordinary figures like Nora, Helene, Oswald, or Dr. Stockmann. The Victorian attitude towards the questions of male-female relationship, marriage, property rights of females, and ideal patriarchy was threatened. Ibsen pioneered such form of drama for the first time. Hence, he is also known as the father of modern drama. Lynn R. Wilkinson states:

Most studies of modern drama begin with a discussion of Ibsen's [...] break with conventions of nineteenth-century theatre, usually described in terms of the well-made play or naturalism [...] The drama of modernity came into being in the Renaissance. It was the result of a bold intellectual effort made by a newly self-conscious being [...] Man entered the drama only as a fellow human being [...] (N. pag.)

Originally, the term 'problem play' was applied to Shakespeare's three plays : *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, and *Troilus and Cressida* (Abrams 246).

Troilus and Cressida (ca 1602), *All's Well that Ends Well* (1602 – 04), and *Measure for Measure* (1604) have been called "problem plays or "bitter comedies", because, though not technically tragedies and, in case of the last two, having a happy ending, they have nothing of the golden cheerfulness of the "middle comedies" and show human behaviour [...] gross and unedifying. (Daiches 288)

These bitter comedies explore the dishonourable aspects of human nature. The moral questions raised in these plays are not answered even after the end of the play.

The central issue is the dramatic constitution of moral ambiguity in Shakespeare's problem plays. A.P. Roister recognized it as "something like doubleness of vision or aim" (164) and Norman Robin described simply as "either/or".

Shakespeare raises questions of moral ambiguity in these plays differently: in *Measure for Measure*, by providing substitutes to carry out the foul responsibility; in *Troilus and Cressida*, by dramatizing restless disillusion; and *All's Well*, by presenting offensive folk morality.

Angelo, the substitute for the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, commissioned by the Duke himself in order to enforce the law, decides that Claudio be executed for his pre-marital sexual relation with Juliet. Still, when he sees the blossoming beauty of Isabella who goes to Angelo for her brother's life, he cannot resist himself to commit that same 'sin':

ANGELO. By yeilding up thy body to my will;
Or else he must not only die the death,
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out
To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,
I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true. (2.4.164 – 170)

Angelo thinks he is the symbol of justice; yet, he believes that he can prove his action true because he holds the position of power. He is trying to clean the society by enforcing or coercing law that is supposed to control pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relationships. Still, he attempts to blackmail Isabella as she is beautiful enough to lure anybody in Vienna. The Duke, in disguise of a friar, helps her accomplish the foul work by replacing her with Miriana, who is the real and forlorned mistress of Angelo.

As the play ends, the Duke's real identity is revealed. Now, he proposes Isabella to be his wife. At every level, Shakespeare presents moral discrepancy of human heart, which is never answered satisfactorily. Moreover, the master dramatist provides the play with a Christian framework; so too, Angelo is forgiven at the end.

Troilus and Cressida and *All's Well* also dramatize the moral problems of human heart. Troilus and Cressida are separated inspite of their true love to each other. The trojan war had popularized many heroes; never could the heroes understand what was between Troilus and Cressida. The heroes were restless to win; but what gets defeated is the true love. This problem is never resolved in the play.

Yet, another problem play of Shakespeare is *All's Well*, carrying two folk themes:

[...] the story of Helena's curing the King and her rewards in obtaining a husband of her choice, and the story of the deserted wife winning back her husband by substituting herself, unknown to him, in the bed of his mistress [...]. (Daiches 291)

In all, Shakespeare ventured to present the human issues, viz. love, sex, marriage. However, he provided either folk theme, or Christian framework to resolve the issue. Hence, his raising of these issues in the then society could not leave an impact as deep as the social novels of the 1850s did in the contemporary society.

After the fall of the Renaissance drama, no writer even showed an interest in shedding light on prevailing social issues through problem plays. The nineteenth century emerged as the great age of novels on the both sides of the Atlantic. The position of the problem plays was now taken by the social novels of the era. Defining this genre of novel, M.H. Abrams writes:

The social novel emphasizes the influence of the social and economic conditions of an era on shaping characters and determining events; often it also embodies an implicit or explicit thesis recommending political and social reform. (193)

Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) is a social novel. Stowe shows how the blacks were exploited under institutionalized slavery. The damage caused by slavery in

the lives of black people of America came out in the novel. The novel also worked as a catalyst in American Civil War that lasted from 1861 to 1865. In this connection, Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury note:

"So this is the little lady who made this big war!" Lincoln said to Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of two prodigiously popular novels that could be fairly said to have altered the course of the nation and created international feeling on the slavery issue. (182)

The novel tells a story of a black slave, Tom who passes through different degrees of slavery. Peter B. High writes:

It is a story of an old black slave, Uncle Tom, who has the hope of freedom held before him but who never escapes from his slavery. In the end, he welcomes the death caused by his cruel master, Simon Legree [...] It helped expand the campaign in the North against Southern slavery, which led to the Civil War. (74)

However, like Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is wrought within a Christian framework. Uncle Tom suffers in the hope of freedom, which comes directly from his knowledge of the Bible. He always carries the Bible with him. At the end of the novel, when Simon Legree punishes him severely for not carrying out orders, he forgives him. The New England puritan novelist cannot break free from the Christian faith; hence, she incorporates it in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Uncle Tom suffers to forgive; Uncle Tom dies to rise high in the heaven. He becomes Christ figure for the blacks. This helps strengthen Northern feelings against slavery. Thus, social novels have played an important part to bring about changes in America of the 1860s. Such novels helped shape the public opinion of mass on crucial social issues.

Twenty-five years after Stowe's anti-slavery novel, Henrik Ibsen published *The Pillars of Society* in 1877, which is the first of his problem plays. In the next five years, he worked to enrich the world-drama with *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, and *An Enemy of the People*. The issues of freedom, truth, and society played very significant role in these plays. With these plays, he successfully set up new horizen in problem plays. In past, religion often provided some frontiers to problem plays. But, the Norwegian playwright transcended the limits of faith in order to grasp the universal themes in his new drama. Also, he did not go for folk themes as Shakespeare in *All's Well*, but found materials for his works in real life. David Daiches mentions that "Ibsen's great contribution, as Shaw saw it, had been two fold : the presentation on the stage of life as it is really lived in contemporary society, and the introduction of the discussion into drama" (1105).

Ibsen's time is marked by Victorian illusions: coy females, brave males, and protective patriarchy. In order to bring about new form in dramatic art, he had to tear asunder those velvety illusions of Victorianism, which was not an easy task, since these illusions had always flourished under and were assisted by patriarchy. But, as a revolutionary dramatist, he had the insight that freedom and truth could never be attained without debunking these illusions. Therefore, his first attack was on patriarchy. As a result, he was largely understood as a feminist playwright. Even Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) opposed Ibsen attacking patriarchy:

Ibsen, "that typical old maid", created the "emancipated woman". "Woman was created out of man's rib? – 'wonderful is the poverty of my ribs!' says man. Woman has lost power and prestige by her emancipation; [...] Equality between man and woman is impossible because war between them is eternal; there is no place without victory – peace comes only when one or the other is acknowledged master. (Durant 432)

Never does Ibsen show the victor or the vanquished as Nietzsche opined; rather the Norwegian playwright brings out the sham values in order to make his audience realize that they are holding them firmly. The solution is not provided in the play. When an issue of contemporary society becomes public, or comes out into discussion, it is people of the society who have to find an answer to the problem. In this regard also, his problem plays are unique.

Ibsen saw many of the social problems in the middle class. Since the second half of the nineteenth century was the time of rapid development of industry and commerce, the 'new people' had come into existence. The new class of people of society had also set up new system of values, in which he found contradiction, lack of truth, and want of individual freedom. How could the father of modern drama remain passive in front of such social issues? He felt he had to do something against such new kind of ideals. Stella Adler states:

Ibsen did not "criticize" the middle class – he annihilated it. He said middle class is simply not to be believed, what it has done to the human race. He is the prophet who made us understand that we were led down every drain in the world and still are by the institutionalism of the middle class – its politics, religion, morality, family life, economics. We are all surrounded by and part of these institutions. (N. pag.)

Consul Bernick, for example, in *The Pillars of Society* is a respectable man of the society. What is his foundation? How is his past? The public gossips reveal that he had pre-marital affairs. Now, does he still have any right left to preach morality? Still, he opposes the new railway scheme because he says that it brings corruption in the society. In fact, he is afraid that industrialization will cause his downfall in business. The end of the play is interesting to note:

At the close of the [...] drama, Bernick does indeed say, 'It is you women who are pillars of society'; but only to be contradicted by Lona Hessel with the

impeccably respectable truism: 'No, no; the spirits of Truth and Freedom – these are the Pillars of Society.' (Lucas 125).

Ibsen always fought to establish truth and freedom in his plays. Nora in every age had urge for freedom, which he saw, understood, and finally materialized in *A Doll's House*. A certain *ism* cannot accomodate what he did, except if it is Ibsenism itself. The Victorians believed females to be coy, and males to be brave and protective. It was there he found some contradictions. Therefore, he created Nora who can cross the boundaries of meek woman, unimaginable for Victorian mind. So, he brought Helmer who is not at all brave and protective. Helmer becomes a degenerate one, harbouring all bogus values in himself and his wife. Therefore, the playwright shows Nora on the path to recognize herself, be herself, and live for herself. Nora's urge for freedom and truth might give reasons to support feminist activists their cause, but the play attempts to present a human being in Nora. Michael Mayer opines:

A Doll House is no more about women's rights than Shakespeare's *Richard II* is about the divine right of Kings, or *Ghost* about syphilis [...] Its theme is the need of every individual to find out the kind of person he or she is and to strive to become that person. (*Ibsen*, 457)

Ibsen himself writes on this play:

There are two kinds of spiritual law, two kinds of conscience, one in man, another altogether different, in woman. They do not understand each other; but in practical life the woman is judged by man's law, as though she were not a woman but a man. (*Modern Tragedy* 635)

Therefore, it was nothing other than chasm between these two spiritual laws and consciences that the Norwegian playwright presented in the play. He wanted to dramatize the social conflict arisen out of the gap, which gets proper form into *A Doll's House*. In addition to this,

he found degeneration in society, which he presents in *Ghosts*. Though the play is "the most infamous" (Lucas 156), the problem it has pictured from society is not less interesting. The Orphanage, Helene Alving founds with foul intention of bringing back her one time lover Pastor Manders, gets burnt to ashes because its foundation lacks sincerity. In the similar vein, the playwright exposes how their insincere past gets into Oswald, a promising painter, in form of syphilis. This is the symbol of degeneration of society that damages the creative potential:

OSWALD. But it wasn't. I soon realised that. I could not work anymore. I wanted to start on a big new picture. But my skill just seemed to desert me, I felt paralysed, I couldn't concentrate, I felt giddy, everything went round and round. Oh, I was in a terrible state! (*Ghosts* 138)

The venereal disease causes such suffering that Oswald begs his mother for the 'sun' – Helene is kind enough to give her son enough morphine tablets in order to relieve him of the pain for ever.

Who is to blame? Ibsen never answers during the course of the play; rather, he presents Oswald (like Dr. Rank) as a victim of the crime he never committed. "The prominence of syphilis and other maladies in the plays of Ibsen [...] was more symptom of society's degradation" (Jenkins 146-47).

Who is the enemy of Helene, Oswald, Dr. Rank, or Nora? Why does Helmer become like him? Ibsen never provides the audience with clear-cut answers; however, the issues stir the heart of public and compel discussion in order to bring out solution. The more the dramatist presented newer problems in his plays, the more he was attacked. Therefore, the year 1882 witnessed another typical Ibsen play *An Enemy of the People*. Dr. Stockmann is the enemy of the people, and hence he is punished. Why? Because he loved humanity (Lucas 173-75). By telling truth, he caused his ruins. Had he kept silent about the poisonous water of

the spa, many people would have died; yet he would have commanded respect in society. What he said was quickly politicized; his windows smashed; his daughter expelled from her job; his children disinherited from his father-in-law's property; moreover, he was declared the enemy of the people. Both Ibsen the creator and Dr. Stockmann the creation had well-understood that speaking truth is dangerous. However, the creator does not detain the created from speaking truth since the playwright believed that truth and freedom are one.

The corruption of Consul Bernick, the double standard of Torvald Helmer, the sufferings of Oswald and Helene, and the risk undertaken by Dr. Stockmann spring forth directly from the heart of society

[...] which could not satisfy the natural need of the individual for freedom. It all had to do with power, with status and with the roles of sexes. The repressive attitude of bourgeois society towards everything that threatened its own position of power demonstrated only too clearly how far it had moved from the stand point of the revolutionary citizens of 1789. (Hemmer 69-70)

The questions of marriage, property right, individual freedom, and love as opposed to law were not dramatized until Ibsen. Unlike Shakespeare or Stowe who gave a touch of religious coloring to the development of plot and resolution, Ibsen provided his plays with realistic texture and finishing. He was the first person to revolt against the prevailing melo-drama and well-made play of Eugene Scribe in order to achieve new sort of dramatic form. Furthermore, he brought new themes as well. G.B. Shaw explains:

The whole point of an Ibsen play lies in the exposure of the very conventions upon which are based upon those by which the actor is ridden. [...] Neither Fielding nor Sheridan forces upon [...] audience the dilemma that [...] there must be something hopelessly inadequate in the commercial and sexual

morality which condemns them [...] How far Fielding and Sheridan saw it [...] how far Milton went in his sympathy with Lucifer : all these are speculative points which no actor has hitherto been called upon to solve. But they are the very subjects of Ibsen's plays: those whose interest and curiosity are not excited by them find him the most puzzling and tedious of dramatists. He has not only made 'lost' women lovable [...] and has accordingly argued on their side and awarded them with the sympathy which the poetic justice grants only to the righteousness. (198-99)

His influence was so tremendous that Shaw presented the morality of prostitution in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Hence, the play could not be accepted in the Victorian society. As a result, "thirteen theatres, three hotels, two music halls and the Royal society of British refused to lend their premises" (Holroyd 95) for the first public performance.

Shakespeare's plays *Troilus and Cressida*, *All's Well* and *Measure for Measure* were termed "problem plays" by F.S. Boas (Dobson 117) because they explored the darker dimensions of humanity. Thus, the credit of coining the phrase "problem plays" goes to F.S. Boas. Its equivalent in novel is social novel. H.B. Stowe's social novel presents the real problem of the then society but with Christianity in its background. It was Ibsen the Norwegian dramatist who for the first time rendered realistic social issues with prophetic visions so as to excite public discussions of hitherto suppressed subjects and shape public opinion in a newer way. The difference between Stowe and Ibsen is that the former is analytical artist whereas the latter a visionary artist. M.H. Abrahms noted in *The Mirror and the Lamp* that "there is a difference between visionary artists who light up new pathways and analytical artists who reflect an existing reality" (Brustein). Furthermore, he captures the critical moments of human life for his plays; however, he never neglects the personal history of characters, who are the people we meet everyday in society since they are always modelled

after the real people. His characters are the representatives of the society depicted in the problem plays. Thus, Ibsen had returned the theater a sense of truth and freedom. At this point it is noteworthy to state Alfred Kerr as quoted by Simon Williams:

The best and most momentous things that Ibsen has given us are the impulse to truth in an artistically untruthful time; the impulse to seriousness in an artistically superficial time; the pleasure of agitation in a time of stagnation; and the courage to grasp whatever contains something human whenever it grows. (179)

For Ibsen, this shift could have meant novel way of presenting new social subject matters. But looking at what he did from the twenty-first century perspective, a giant leap in modern dramatics is perceived.

1.2. Saying the Unsayable: Dramatizing Sex

Ibsen's time is marked by English Victorian era and European industrialization. The Victorian era is roughly demarcated within the reign of Queen Victoria, 1837-1901. This was the high time of technological and colonial expansion of Europe. In fact, the nineteenth century witnessed industrial power paving way for a new middle class people to power as it is said that power generates power. The foundation of society was now money; feelings of love and cooperation in bourgeois culture were supplanted with money. However, religion also had its firm hold on people. On the one hand, people were always making attempts to shift into a newer era of laissez-faire; on the other hand, they still had some traces of their god-fearing past left in their society. It is called Victorian dilemma. Yet, Victorianism is different from present perspective:

[...] the term "Victorian", and still more Victorianism, is frequently used in a derogatory way, to connote narrow-mindedness, sexual priggishness, the

determination to maintain feminine "innocence" (that is, sexual ignorance), narrow-mindedness, and an emphasis on social respectability. (Abrams 329)

Industrial enhancement gave rise to a new middle class people, with whom emerged new set of moral standards. In the new founded moral system, sex became a taboo in European societies. Consequently, to dramatize sex in the works of art was not only difficult but also dangerous for artist in such societies. The power and significance of sex to a culture were completely suppressed in Victorian society.

Unlike the Victorians, Greeks were the first people to realize importance of sexual power of both sexes. Aristophanes, the Greek playwright, proposed female sexuality as the strongest weapon to put an end to Peloponnesian war as early as 411 B.C. through his seminal play *Lysistrata*.

Lysistrata, the central figure of the play, organizes the women from Athens and Sparta in order to put her scheme into effect. In this connection, it is apt to note:

The scheme is preposterous, [...] its very outrageousness is its source of strength, and in time the idea begins to seem almost reasonable: Lysistrata asks the women to refuse to engage in sex with their husbands until the men stop making war. [...] And because they are confident of getting the support of the larger community of women in other nations – who suffer as they do – they do not fear the consequence of their acts. (Jacobus 145)

Aristophanes does not present female sexuality as a female weakness; rather, it is a source of power for them. Also, he does not give the drama a tragic end because he had insight that such tragic end to the conflict between sexes could have caused social disorder. Moreover, the Greek mind always believed the "cosmos as an ordered expression of certain primordial essences or transcendent first principles" (Tarnas 3). So too, he manages comic

ending to the play in order to serve two function : primarily, social harmony and order are maintained ; and secondarily, the power of female sexuality is heightened.

Implicitly or explicitly, sex has been often dealt in dramatic art. Like Aristophanes, Sophocles also presents this issue in *Oedipus Rex*. Freud has coined the term "Oedipal complex" in order to denote the situation of Oedipus in which a child develops attraction towards the parent of opposite sex and hatred towards the parent of same sex. About this protagonist, Freud states:

His fate moves only because it might have been our own, because the oracle laid upon us before our birth the very curse which rested upon him. It may be that we were all destined to direct our first sexual impulses towards our mothers, and our first impulses of hatred and violence toward our father [...]
(The Interpretation of Dreams 157)

Freud thus universalizes the issue that Oedipal complex is present in every human being. This can be shown in the following diagram.

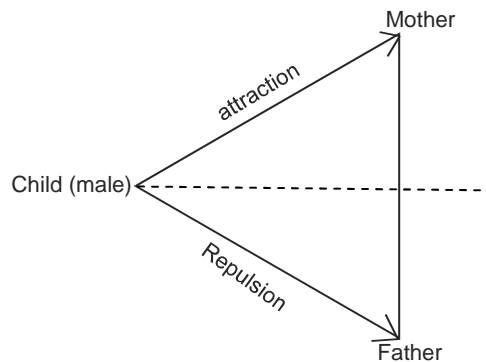


Fig. No. 1

This triangle, also called Oedipal triangle, shows the position of parents and child. A male child, like Oedipus, is unconsciously attracted toward his mother and develops envy toward his father. Thus, it is established that the issue of sex being dramatized is not a new one. Still, it was an enormously difficult task in Victorian time.

Freud was interpreting established works of great dramatists like Sophocles and Shakespeare in new light of psychoanalysis when Ibsen was creating new characters. Though it was Herculean task, bringing sexual issues in dramas was not impossible even in Victorian time. The Norwegian playwright has raised the question of marriage, property and the position of women in society. He has brought forth the conflict between sexes on which to base a quite many of his plays. Can the question of marriage be raised without mingling the issue of sex? Can the issue of position of women in society be brought into public discussion without traces of sexuality? Furthermore, Ibsen has presented the sexual issues to shed light on the meanness of the society. Mr. Alving is not sexually satisfied with his bride Helene in *Ghosts*; therefore, he seeks refuge in his maid-servant for the bliss of marital life. Besides, he had many liaisons. As the outcome, his son Oswald inherits syphilis. Dr Rank's spastic colon is also the consequence of his father's sensuality. Rank's father had relations with many women; hence, the unfortunate doctor suffers to teach Nora something of the real society in *A Doll's House*. Thus, Ibsen had daringly presented the forbidden subject in his drama.

Halvard Solness, the master builder thinks that his wife is dead for him after the death of twin sons. It also shows how sexuality is implied in another Ibsen play *The Master Builder* since Aline, the builder's wife, is physically alive and has not given birth to any child for last ten years. Hence, she is sexually dead for the master builder. Thus, the conflict of desires and morality gets insued in the play but only to get Solness to his death in an accident. Thus, Ibsen has expressed the unexpressable of the late nineteenth century with the help of dramatic art.

As it is said that "drama creates a world modeled on our own" (Scholes 785), sexuality inevitably enters this form of art consciously or uncounsciously because human life cannot be detached from sex. Therefore, drama has worked as a significant vehicle to express the unsayable subject, i.e. sex, effectively.

Chapter - Two

2. Sexual Repression and Drama

Sex as such is the only source of procreation in humans and animals. Since animals lack vision of future, they exercise sexuality only for gratification of biological needs. Hence, it has no value beyond libidinal pleasure for them. On the contrary, human beings see two purposes of sex: first and foremost, fulfillment of physical and psychic need as in animals, and continuation of posterity. Both are carried out with single activity. Moreover, sex is such a powerful element in human life that pleasure obtained from it cannot be overridden with anything else. It also works as a unifying force: primarily, its gravity brings male and female together; its presence makes social order and harmony possible; and its power helps families establish new relationship among them.

On the other hand, sex has quite often played its role as a destructive force. Families have been set apart because of sexual dissatisfaction. Besides, literature, as a medium to present potential incidents of human society, has often exploited such issues. Furthermore, many dramas have explored the possible destructive consequences, arising from sexual matters. For example, Mr. Alving in *Ghosts* is sexually discontented with his wife Helene; therefore, he takes up maid servant as sexual partner. The husband and wife never have a healthy relationship. As a result, their son, Oswald is also not healthy – he suffers from inherited syphilis. Likewise, history has witnessed the destruction of Troy because Helene elopes with Paris. On the whole, sex has both creative and ruinous potentials. Human history, art, and literature have recorded such consequences in great details.

Drama is such genre of literature that has quite frequently captured this issue in various ways. Especially in tragedy, we experience how sex can act as one of the catalysts in order to bring about the ruin of protagonist. Consciously or unconsciously, sex has remained

one of the major forces, in tragic plays as in society, where its undercurrents are always attempted to check by imposing moral authority on them.

The moral system as an authority has come into existence in every society in order that it can judge and declare what sort of sexual activities are wrong and which are correct. Such system negates much of which people always long to do; hence, most of the taboos are related with sex. It aims at founding an ordered society. When moral standard as such come into effect with an authority behind it, revolt against its rigidity becomes inevitable since moral system emerges from power so as to serve its interests.

Power can suppress desires of people within and without, but never can it destroy them. Instead they get accumulated at a certain space and wait for a right time to get manifested. With the explosion of such collected energy, social chaos can occur. Dramatists are sensitive enough to perceive such latent dangers at both social and individual levels. They present such potentialities through their representational art in order to make public aware of possible catastrophe. Even Aristotle gives more privilege to the creative artists like dramatists. He writes:

[...] it is not function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen – what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity [...]
Poetry [...] is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poets tend to express the universal, history the particular [...] tragedians still keep to real names, the reason being that what is possible is credible [...] (55)

Morality also creates censor to serve itself. As an outcome, what accords the rational judgement is accepted and the rest discarded.

The same phenomenon works in the case of individual human beings as well. The discarded human wishes, desires, and thoughts do not go anywhere but remain stored up in – as Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) was to discover as an irrational sphere of mind towards the

end of the nineteenth century – the unconscious. These repressed materials always seek a proper outlet, in the absence of which they grow bigger and bigger in order to bring calamity in the end.

Freud also saw drama as a means of expression of the repressed on part of the author. Moreover, the characters in quite many plays are also neurotic because of such repression. For Freud, Hamlet is one of such protagonist who fails to express the repressed wishes; hence, the tragedy occurs.

2.1. Id: A Primary Source and Depot of the Repressed

The recorded history of human civilization shows that conscious people believe they think most of the times before making decision to undertake a certain task in their life. They like to be logical or rational most of the times they perform certain work. It is where the problem begins since the internalized codes of moral standard immediately know which kind of thoughts should emerge and which not. Those thoughts and desires that are not expressed are suppressed into the farther corner of psyche. In other words, such materials, likely to be unaccepted by the society, are repressed. Hans Bertens writes:

In our first years, we must again and again give up longings and desires either because we are forced to realize that they are impossible or because their realization would take us into forbidden territory. Those desires, however, do not go away, but take refuge in a part of our mind that is beyond our conscious control: the *unconscious*. In later life, too, we may find that we have to repress desires because they are unacceptable. (159)

Freud, the propounder of psychoanalysis, has systematized the study of mind by dividing it into three abodes, viz. conscious, preconscious and unconscious. He has found that the unconscious is the domain of the repressed:

The repressed is the prototype of unconscious for us. We see, however, that we have two kinds of unconscious – the one which is latent but capable of becoming conscious, and the one which is repressed and which is not, in itself and without more ado, capable of becoming conscious [...] The latent, which is unconscious only descriptively, not in dynamic sense, we call *preconscious*; we restrict the term *unconscious* to the dynamically repressed; so that now we have three terms Conscious (Cs.), Preconscious (Pcs.) and Unconscious (Ucs.) [...] (*The Id and the Ego* 15)

All that is repressed is accumulated in the unconscious. The conscious restricts the unacceptable to reality into two levels of mind: preconscious and unconscious. The matters excluded from conscious and stored up in preconscious have ability to surface in the conscious. In this way, Freud divides human mind into three compartments; however, the partition does not bring out the real picture of human mind. Therefore, he allocates three functionary terms to each of the abodes as presented in the figure below:

Perceptual Consciousness

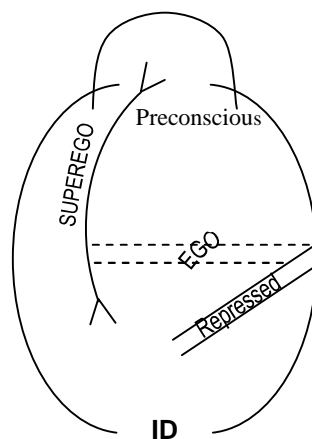


Fig. No. 2 (Guerin 129)

This model of human mind shows vast mechanism which is unconscious. It also clearly states the position of the id, the ego, and the superego. Besides, the id is entirely unconscious. Moreover, the id is the abode of instincts for Freud. On top of it, he has also

associated the id, the ego, and the superego with the pleasure principle, the reality principle, and the moral principle respectively. At this point, it is relevant to note:

The id is the most primitive part of the personality, present in new born infant, from which the ego and superego later develop. The id consists basic biological impulses (or drives); the need to eat, drink, eliminate wastes, avoid pain, and gain sexual pleasure. Freud believed that aggression was also a basic biological drive. The id seeks immediate gratification of such impulses. Like a young child, the id operates on the *pleasure principle*: it endeavors to avoid pain and obtain pleasure regardless of the external circumstances. (Atkinson 395)

Freud also categorizes instincts into two classes: “Sexual instinct or Eros” and “Death instincts” (*The Id and the Ego* 40). Every child is born with the unconscious or the id. As the child develops physically, the other two dimensions of psyche emerge. Hence, the id is the primary aspect of mind. And so is the instinct because it is present in the id. In addition to this, the principle purpose of the instinct is the gratification of wishes. Freud writes:

The aim of an instinct is in every instance satisfaction, which can only be obtained by removing the state of stimulation at the source of the instinct. But although the ultimate aim of each instinct remains unchangeable, there may yet be different paths leading to the ultimate aim [...] The object of an instinct is the thing in regard to which or through which the instinct is able to achieve its aim. (*On the History of Psychoanalytic Movement* 122)

Sexual instinct consists the major portion of the id in the pursuit of pleasure in life. Sex is the primary source of pleasure, for which the Eros must be appeased. Thus, the id is taken as the “reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy”, (Guerin 129). The sexual feelings get roused in it, but when they are censored and pushed back to the

unconscious, they are stored up there. As a result, the id - in the absence of expression of repressed desires through different means like slip of tongue or pen, dream, sublimation, or creative writing – has to perform double roles : primarily as source and secondarily as depot of the repressed.

The id continuously produces desires for gratification of the Eros. It knows nothing beyond pleasure since it works on the basis of the pleasure principle. The superego, based on the moral principle, does not agree to it, and censors such notions and ideas, confining them to the unconscious. The reality principle found in the ego tries to maintain equilibrium between the moral and pleasure principle. Thus, Freud finds a sort of tussle in mind. Such process of mind can be compared with the flow of water. Robert Bocoock states:

Freud's model of the way mind works makes use of a metaphor derived from natural science, namely that it consists of flows, discharges, and the damming up of these flows. This model has been called the hydraulic model, because it suggests water flows as the key metaphor. (*Sigmund Freud* 35 -6)

This flow of thought begins in the id and essays to pass through the ego for expression. Whenever the superego finds it unacceptable, the very flow is checked and forced back to its origin where the contents have to remain until the proper outlet is obtained. Since the id is the perpetual source of the flow of desires, the conflict between the superego and the id is also perpetual. This psychic clash can thus be presented:

Freud at times traced such a conflict situation to the antagonism between conscious will and an unconscious "counter-will", or to the opposition between ego and trauma; later he ascribed it to the friction between self-preservation and sexual instincts, or to the dichotomy of incest-wish and barrier against incest, and finally he conceived it as the tension between the ego and the id. (Frey – Rohn 36)

Shakespeare has also presented such clash in his seminal play *Othello*. This play basically dramatizes the issue of sexual jealousy. The senator's daughter, Desdemona elopes with Othello, the moor. Othello's ensign, Iago, was attracted to Desdemona and had wanted to marry her for two reasons: first, she is very beautiful; and her father is a senator. Thus, for Iago, she is symbol of both beauty and power in one, and his thirst for both sex and power could have been quenched if he had succeeded to marry her. Between Iago and his object of love comes the black moor as an obstacle, in order to eschew which Iago employs all his time and energy.

Pleasure was what Iago previously wanted from Desdemona. Now, it is utterly impossible for him to have any kind of pleasure from her, so he sets himself to revenge upon the moor. Meantime, he succeeds in winning Othello's trust. In this tragic play, Desdemona has to pass through several roles: daughter of a senator, beloved of Othello, wife of the Commander, and finally victim of Iago's intricate plot. However, at unconscious level, she always remained sexual object for Iago.

The principal characters in a tragedy are "led by overwhelming passions"(Long 151). Iago, Othello, and Desdemona are such characters in that Iago wants the senator's beautiful daughter but Othello's adventurous life-story moves fair Desdemona's heart. In this regard, the overwhelming passions, which spring forth directly from the id, provide fertile ground to *Othello* in order to provide tragic direction. Since Desdemona was brought up in an aristocratic environment, she lacks the ulterior understanding of male-ego. Iago's wife, Emilia has better knowledge of male sexuality:

EMILIA. 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;

They eat us hungrily, and when they are full,

They belch us [...] (3.4. 104 – 107)

Though Emilia's intentions are not foul ones like those of Iago, unfortunately she turns out to be poisoning Desdemona in terms of her attitude toward male sex as a whole. Obviously, she knows better than Desdemona about male sexuality. On the other hand, Iago is leading Othello in the direction that inevitably claims Desdemona's life. Emilia does indeed try to make Desdemona aware by providing her with an insight into the mind of the males from the female point of view.

Iago, on the other hand, convinces Othello that Desdemona has liaison with Cassio. The handkerchief Iago applies in the intricate plot against the commander turns out to be the strongest evidence of her extra-marital affair in the eyes of her husband. His beloved wife must die, Othello takes bold decision. He is overwhelmed by passion; rational judgement finds no place there. Now, he must act in accordance with the unconscious and the id. Iago gratifies his instincts by getting the commander to see double vision in his beloved: she is his ideal beloved cum the worst whore in the single body. One must leave the body. Is it possible? If not, both must leave the body:

[...] whenever a tragic hero makes the tragic error, and sees that double vision (and all do), we shall know that Iago is whispering in his ear, and that he is taking the whisper as a divine oracle. [...] readiness to see the double vision [...] is nothing but a neurotic susceptibility to the Iago factor. (Hughes 231)

The sexual instincts were always there in Othello's id. Iago unconsciously knows it; he wants to open up the Pandora's Box. The box is not only a store but also a continuous source. Poisoning the senior officer through his ear, Iago revives the source. Consequently, Othello loses his rationality. Now, overcome by passions, the moor is capable of doing anything and everything to quench his thirst for revenge.

2.2 Neurosis and Sex

Neurosis and sex have deep rooted connection between them. Freud was the first person to realize and carry out scientific study of such relationship. As every society puts restrictions on sexual matters, people cannot freely express such desires most of the time. However, the id as the source keeps on producing such longings for gratification of instincts. Those desires unaccepted by the consciousness get stored up in the id. The matters hoarded in the id are repressed matters. The repressed always seeks an expression through various means like slip of tongue, slip of pen, daydreaming, dream and creative writing. Since the major part of the repressed incorporates sexual or libidinal wishes and desires, it often fails to find proper outlet from mind. In such case, the suppressed endeavours to sublimate through creative, artistic, and scientific works. For example, a painter may sublimate his subdued libidinal thoughts through his paintings. It is apt to note:

[...] people are born with a certain strength to sublimate their sexual instincts which varies from one person to another. Some people are more able than others to repress their sexuality and to direct their more perverse sexual desires into culturally valued activities, such as scientific and artistic work. This process Freud called *sublimation*. (Bocock 45)

But everybody cannot have equal power of sublimation in that most people fail to redirect their libidinal desires into creative, artistic and scientific works. Consequently anxiety begins here. A victim of anxiety gradually loses his rationality, which, if we consider the view of Aristotle, is itself an anti-human feature:

Aristotle [...] was the first man to proclaim that man is a rational animal [...] He thought that there are three kinds of soul: vegetable soul, possessed by all living things, both plants and animals, and concerned with nourishment and growth; the animal soul, concerned with locomotion, and shared by man with

lower animals; and finally rational soul, or intellect, which is the Divine mind, but in which men participate to a greater or lesser degree in portion to their wisdom. It is the virtue of the intellect that man is a rational animal. (Russell 70-71)

The defeat of rationality originated in the id, as the outcome of sexual repression, leads a person toward irrationalism. That is, the subject cannot act in accordance with the reality because neurotic anxiety strengthens mind to go astray from the real society. Freud states:

[...] neurotic anxiety has its origin in the sexual life and corresponds to libido which has been deflected from its object and has found no employment. The accuracy of this formula has since been demonstrated with ever-increasing certainty [...] the anxiety-dreams are dreams of sexual content, and that the libido appertaining to this content has been transformed into anxiety. (*The Interpretation of Dreams* 69)

In this new light, it is perceived that the id is not only the source and depot of libido but it is also the origin of anxiety. However, Carl Gustav Jung does not consciously emphasize sex to the Freudian extent; rather, he says food in primitive and power in civilized societies are important:

I could not deny the importance of sexual instinct [...] But later on I saw that it was really one-sided, because you see man is not governed only by the sex instinct – there are other instincts as well. For instance, in biology you see that nutritional instinct is just as important as the sex instinct, so in primitive societies sexuality plays a role much smaller than food. Food is all-important interest and desire. Sex [...] is something they can have everywhere, they are not shy. But food is difficult to obtain [...] so it is the main interest. Then in

other societies – I mean in civilized societies – the power drive plays a much greater role than sex. (267)

The primitive societies as referred by Jung put minimum or no restrictions over libidinal desires. The moral system in order to impose embargo over the internal feelings is not developed as yet; therefore, they do not have to suppress their sexual desires. Instead, they can easily find a sexual partner for intercourse. Hence, as Jung agrees, such people pay their attention toward food, the rare thing. On the other hand, the civilized societies entertain power. This does not mean that people do not have libido in such societies. Jung, while refuting Freudian notion of sex, unconsciously strengthens the master's argument. The drive for power originates in the id, which is bigger in civilized societies in that they have developed moral system. Such moral standards play a vital role to give strength to the power of the superego. Hence, the repressed accumulated in the id is bigger. A few people have ability to sublimate the subdued in order to achieve power in society. Unlike primitive societies where restrictions on sexual activities are either nil or few, civilized societies and their moral system produce more neurotic people. Lacan writes:

For what Freud intends to make present in the function of this libido is not some archaic relation, some primitive mode of access of thoughts, some world that is there like some shade of an ancient world surviving in ours. The libido is the effective presence, such as, of desire. It is what now remains to indicate desire – which is not substance, but which is there at the level of primary process, and which governs the very mode of our approach. (153)

Lacan also agrees that this great force of libido is at the primary process of mind. Hence, it always seeks an expression. Alternatively, a person can remain sound by sublimating it as well. But societies possessing complex moral system with its moral codes have extremely empowered the ego and the superego; therefore, both the expression and

sublimation of libidinal desires become utterly impossible. Then what happens to the repressed? With the suppressed in it, the id keeps growing bigger and bigger. Thus, the mental equilibrium gets disturbed. Different kinds of mental disorders erupt. For Freud, its initial phase is anxiety, which later leads to neurosis. In other words, the neurotic anxiety originates in the unconscious, without any awareness of the person at risk. Rita L. Atkinson notes:

Freud believed that neurotic anxiety was the result of an unconscious conflict between *id impulses* (mainly sexual and aggressive) and constraints imposed by the *ego* and the *superego*. Many id impulses pose a threat to the individual because they are contradictory to personal or social value. (431)

Regarding the position of the repressed in mind, she states:

[...] some conscious memories and wishes may be repressed – that is, diverted to unconscious where they remain active although lost to recall. In some instances, repression may divert unacceptable thoughts to unconscious before they ever become conscious. The unconscious is believed to be responsible for dreams, mannerisms, slip of tongue, even symptoms of illness. (167)

Atkinson indicates toward the possible neurosis in the absence of proper outlet of the repressed through dreams, mannerisms and slips of tongue. There are three major symptoms of neurosis: paranoias, obsessions and phobias. A paranoid person wrongly believes that somebody or something is going to harm him. Alternatively, he may also firmly hold on to the belief that somebody or something is of excessive significance to him. John Fowles's Frederick Cleggs, the collector, suffers from obsessional neurosis. Therefore, he collects butterflies. His true madness is perceived when he imprisons Miranda, a young art-student, simply because she is beautiful enough to convince himself to be in love with her. Frederick says:

In my opinion, a lot of people who may seem to be happy now would do what I did or similar things if they had the money and the time. I mean, to give way to what they pretend now they shouldn't. Power corrupts, a teacher I had always said. And money is power. (*The Collector* 24)

He takes Miranda's photographs in naked state but refuses to have sex. As a matter of fact, the butterfly collector makes Miranda a new and lovely butterfly.

Phobia is excessive and irrational fear of something. In *The Master Builder*, Halvard Solness is a victim of acrophobia. Similarly, Othello is very much afraid of Desdemona's liaison with Cassio. The content of phobia can be anything, from darkness as in nyctophobia to light as in photophobia. It is a neurotic symptom.

The following figure can picture the gist:

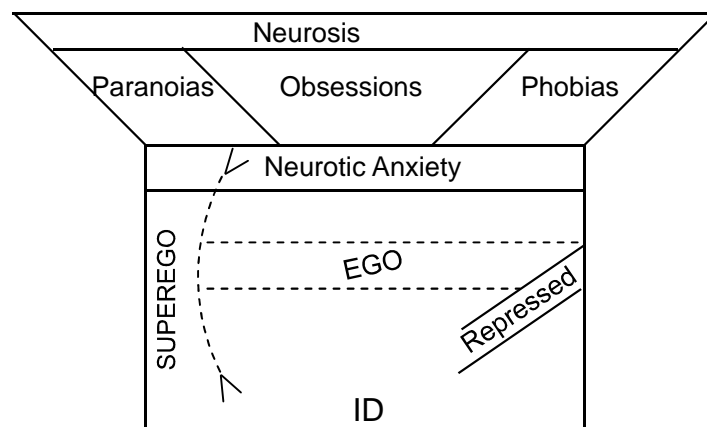


Fig. No. 3

The figure posits the three forces—the superego, the ego, and the id—as in the figure no. 2. At the unconscious level, the sexual repression takes place but the person is unaware of it. When the repressed fails to find proper expression, neurotic anxiety is manifest in different forms: paranoia, obsession and phobia. Either one, or two or all of them may be traced in a neurotic. What is seen is neurosis; however, the root cause is present in the id.

The subject in question wrongly believes that somebody or something is going to harm him in case of paranoia. In addition to this, a certain kind of fear gets developed in his

unconscious mind; still, he is unaware of it. This very fear works against the interest of the id, i.e. the pleasure principle. The repressed also has a particular sort of strength, which must be realized in order to avoid neuroses. Otherwise, as the force in the id cannot be detained forever, it makes a way out in a different manner. Paulo Coelho states that "so many neuroses and psychoses had their origins in sex [...] fantasies were electrical impulses from the brain, which, if not realized, released their energies into other areas" (129). The "electrical impulses" in Coelho's words must be expressed in proper time and manner in order to eschew the possible dangers of neuroses and psychoses. Otherwise, it seeks outlet itself, disturbing the equilibrium of the mind. Meantime, the ego and the superego, which function to impose order within psyche, become weaker. Now, the id claims the superior position with its accumulated superior energy. As the ego and the superego are the agencies to maintain the right organization of mind, with superior energy, the id becomes the most powerful agent and begins to work against the accepted norms of the reality principle. Furthermore, it does not show its demand of pleasure in direct and clear-cut ways. Distorted and symbolic forms manifest in the victim's behavior. There, sex remains the latent force; what appear in the surface are paranoia, obsession and phobia. Freud writes:

In obsessional neurosis and paranoia the forms which the symptoms assume become very valuable to the ego because they obtain for it, not certain advantages, but a narcissistic satisfaction which it would otherwise be without. The systems which to obsessional neurotic constructs – flatter his self-love by making him feel that he is better than other people because he is specially clearly or specially conscientious. The delusional constructions of paranoid offer to his acute perceptive and imaginative powers a field of activity which could not easily find elsewhere. (*An Autobiographical Study* 99)

These symptoms are the true substitute for the repressed impulses; moreover, the id is the place from where they arise. The same is true in case of phobia. As a neurotic symptom, the sufferer of phobia develops morbid fear of something or somebody as the subject in paranoia harbors wrong beliefs. The apprehension seems quite irrational when viewed from the conscious world, because the genuine cause lies in the id.

As has been already stated, the object or content of phobia can be anything from open air to open space, and spider to snake. Even darkness, sunlight, height, depth and water can be content of phobias. In this sense, a subject may suffer from any kind of phobia. Freud shows us a link between phobia and the libido thus:

[...] the analysis of phobias has not much more that is new to teach us. For the same thing happens with them as with children's anxiety: unemployable libido is being constantly transformed into an apparently realistic anxiety [...] If, however, the libido belongs to psychical impulse which has been subjected to repression, then circumstances are re-established similar to those in the case of a child in whom there is still no distinction between conscious and unconscious; and by means of regression to the infantile phobia a passage is opened, as it were, through which the transformation of libido into anxiety can be comfortably accomplished. (*Introductory Lectures* 409)

These symptoms in the forms of paranoia, obsession, and phobia create anxiety in the subject's mind. In other words, anxiety is also manifest in the sufferer as a neurotic symptom. The neurotic anxiety emerges out of an unconscious conflict within the individual; hence, the victim is not aware of the reason of anxiety. Freud notes:

[...] the deflection of libido from its normal employment, which causes the development of anxiety, takes place in the reign of somatic processes.

Analyses of hysteria and obsessional neurosis yield the additional conclusion

that a similar deflection with the same outcome may also be the result of a refusal on the part of the *psychical* agencies. (*Introductory Lectures* 404)

The source of every mental disorder, viz. anxiety, paranoia, obsession, or phobia is the id where the libidinal desires are produced and stored up. Therefore, to explore the right cause of such abnormalities in neurotic persons, one has to make investigation into the id of the subject. The task is not an easy one since the disorders are manifest but the main cause lies in the unconscious. However, it is not an impossible act because such investigation has been successfully carried out with the help of psychoanalysis as developed by Freud.

The dramas of Sophocles and Shakespeare have employed neurotic characters, who inhibit different types of neurotic symptoms. Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex* does not only show the universality of Oedipal Complex, it also presents Oedipus suffering from obsessional neurosis. Likewise, Shakespeare's *Othello* has gathered different characters who are victims of paranoia, obsession, and phobia. Othello's anxiety originates in the id. Furthermore, a complex web of Oedipal feelings, phobia and anxiety is present in Hamlet's psyche.

Oedipus suffers from obsessional neurosis because he has to always fight against the calls of his id. He is ever obsessed to abstain from patricide and incestuous relation with mother as the knowledge is achieved beforehand through prophecy. Freud also says:

[...] the chief part in the mental lives of all children who later become psychoneurotics is played by their parents. Being in love with the one parent and hating the other are among the essential constituents of the psychical impulses which is formed at a time and which is of such importance as determining the symptoms of the later neurosis. (*The Oedipus Complex* 99)

Oedipus runs away from Polybos and Merope who raise him in order to avoid the oracle. The oracle is the physical manifestation of his own desires of the id. In attempting to escape from what he feared most, he falls victim of neurosis.

Shakespeare's *Othello* stages another obsessional neurotic character, Iago. He is obsessed with a desire to cause Othello's ruin because of sexual jealousy. After Othello marries Desdemona, he becomes certain of not getting her. Now his actual love towards her turns into aggression toward both Othello and Desdemona. Since he believes that his love was betrayed, he wants to murder them. However, the reality is different in that Othello is the commander and Desdemona's father the senator. Therefore, he cannot take revenge with his own hands. Hence, he proceeds to convince the commander that Desdemona has affair with Cassio. Iago deploys the whole energy of the id to poison their sexual life and project what he had in unconscious into Othello. After successful projection of sexual jealousy, Othello, with Iago's *good* counsel, also falls victim of anxiety in that he is assured that Desdemona is Cassio's mistress. Othello's libidinal energy now gets transformed into neurotic anxiety with sexual jealousy at its heart. Toward the end, he becomes fully neurotic; so too, he succeeds in murdering her. Yet, it is contextual to note what Othello says after knowing the truth in the end: "I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but this, / killing myself, to die upon a kiss" (5.2. 368-69).

Another Shakespearean play, *Hamlet* presents the protagonist of the same name suffering from neurotic anxiety. He is so intricately trapped in complexities of the unconscious that he forgets to recognize what is what. He even confuses himself in that he takes Ophelia for his mother. Moreover, Claudio is his father-substitute in succeeding to win both his mother and his father's throne. Therefore, he identifies himself with his uncle. On the other hand, he has to avenge his father's murder since his father's ghost has informed who the murderer is. The ghost materializes the demand of the superego in that it demands Hamlet to fulfill the filial duty. The id has something else in that by compelling Hamlet to identify himself with the father-substitute, the instincts are gratified. Thus, Hamlet is able to commit patricide without doing anything to his father and enjoy mother's body, unlike Oedipus,

without having to marry her. Furthermore, he wants his mother to be in his complete possession; he cannot share her with another person but he has already identified himself with Claudio. The situation of utter confusion drives him into neurosis. In fact, Hamlet's confusion is quite relevant to note here:

Meanwhile, just as he cannot separate Ophelia from his mother, so he cannot separate the mother he loves from the mother he loathes, since both inhabit the same body [...] the hero cannot separate Sacred Bride, Divine Mother and Queen of Hell, and therefore in rejecting one he must reject all. (Hughes 234)

The double vision Hamlet perceives in woman and his uncle is the evidence of his neurotic state of mind. Due to the very double vision in uncle, he fails to act. Unlike Othello, who is quick to take action, Hamlet keeps on delaying action until both the women, i.e. his mother and beloved Ophelia, the objects of his love, die. Now, the psychic energy, which was previously divided into love and hatred, gets directed in revenge. Hence, he slays Claudio. The dilemma is itself the product of psychoneurosis.

The dramas that have employed neurotic characters show self-destruction of these characters because such characters lose the balance of mind. The ulterior force that leads to their self-destruction is sex and its repression leads them to neurosis.

2.3. Catastrophe from the Repressed

The repressed gets collected in the id. The conflict between the id on the one hand, and the ego and the superego, on the other, originates in mind on account of the repressed in that it always seeks an expression from there. In mentally sound people, it finds an outlet in different forms: slip of tongue, slip of pen, and dream or creative and artistic works. For Freud, creative writing and day-dreaming are also means of articulating the subdued libido from the unconscious:

If the meaning of our dreams usually remains obscure to us [...] it is because of the circumstance that at night there also arise in us wishes of which we are ashamed; there we must conceal from ourselves, and they have consequently been repressed, pushed into the unconscious. Repressed wishes of this sort and their derivatives are only allowed to come to expression in a very distorted form. ("Creative Writers" 714)

Dreams are wish-fulfillment in that the repressed rejected from the consciousness finds articulation, though in distorted form, from the id. However, everybody cannot succeed in expressing the subdued libido. As shown in the figure no. 3, such failure leads a person to neurosis and final collapse. Every human being cannot develop equal ability to accept the social reality because they have different tastes, temperaments, qualities and degree of pleasure and unpleasure:

[...] each human being is unique, each with own qualities, instincts, forms of pleasure and desire for adventure. However, society always imposes on us a collective way of behaving and people never stop to wonder why they should behave like that. (Paulo Coelho 153)

John Fowles presents Fredrick Cleggs as the victim of obsessional neurosis in *The Collector*. He imprisons Miranda simply because he thinks he loves her. The butterfly collector, Cleggs does not make any attempt to have intercourse with her since he has suppressed his libido to such extent that it never surfaces. Consequently, Miranda dies a death of an insect like a butterfly. Such kind of criminal mentality in society also develops due to sexual repression.

The subdued libido invites other types of calamities in people's personal life. For instance, Shakespeare presents Hamlet failing to carry out his moral responsibility toward his father, mother, beloved, and on top of it, his nation. It is his duty to avenge his father's

murder and he knows it; however, he cannot fulfill it. Why? It is because of his Oedipal feeling toward his mother at the unconscious. He had always willed patricide, which is realized by his uncle, Claudio. Hence, he cannot help identifying himself with Claudio, who has stolen both his mother and the throne from his father. On the one hand, his latent wish is gratified; on the other hand, the ghost of his father acts as the moral principle of the superego in order to remind him his filial duty. He faces total bewilderment. He cannot decide what to do, not because he lacks intelligence, but because he comes face to face with dilemma inside his psyche. The tension between the alliance of the superego and the ego, and the id gets Hamlet to utter:

HAMLET. To be, or not to be, that is the question:

Whether it is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep -
No more - and by a sleep to say we end.
The heart-ache and thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to [...] (3.1. 57-64)

The agony Hamlet experiences is the consequence of the mental disorder. He, therefore, forms belief that women are the symbols of "frailty". Such generalization stems from the intense conflict within. As the outcome, he cannot accept Ophelia's true love. The rejection causes her suicide. The externalization of the internal complexity, initiated by Claudio, results in death of Ophelia's father, his own mother, Claudio, Ophelia's brother, and Hamlet in the end. Furthermore, it becomes tragedy for Denmark in that there is nobody left to succeed the throne after the protagonist's death.

The tragedy of Othello bears sexual or libidinal desires at its core. Iago plots to trap him because of pure sexual jealousy. Iago had wished Desdemona to be his wife. As he triumphs in convincing Othello that Desdemona has liaison outside marriage, Othello decides and does away with his wife's life in order to appease his aggressive instinct coming from the id. Both Othello and Iago are destroyed at the end.

Hence, the subdued libido in the absence of proper expression always directs the subject to be victim of neurosis. Such neurotics like Frederick Cleggs, Hamlet, or Iago are capable of doing anything and everything. Such neurotics can bring about both personal and social disasters.

Chapter - Three

3. The Repressed in *The Master Builder*

The major characters in *The Master Builder* (1892), the first play of symbolic phase by Henrik Ibsen, also called “the father of modern drama” (Abcarian 1247), are victims of mental disturbance in one way or another. Such psychic restlessness has its root mostly in their sexual life. Halvard Solness, the builder, is always busy in building different structures with towers. Until he carries on with this, he is mentally healthy. When he stops building churches with high towers, his wife and friends begin to be convinced that he is mentally ill. To state plainly, he is mad. But what is madness? Paulo Coelho answers:

Madness is the inability to communicate your ideas. It's as if you were in a foreign country, able to see and understand everything that's going on around you, but incapable of explaining what you need to know or of being helped, because you don't understand the language they speak there. (156)

Therefore, he cannot express himself freely even in his own house. Kaja Fosli is there as a potential love object for Solness but she is torn between him and her betrothed Ragnar. In this sense, she is also a victim of neurosis.

Solness's wife, Aline, thinks it her duty to please her husband. She must have been brought up in a god-fearing family in that she is obsessed with 'duty' every time she does something. As she has not given birth to any child for last twelve years when her twin sons died, she is present in the play as a female who has greatly repressed her instincts. As a housewife, she has none to share her feelings because it takes like minds to understand each other better. It is apt to state:

Social life properly so-called is communication between like minds. That alone can give us positive pleasure or happiness in the company of other men.

But it must not be imagined that social life as we know it in the workaday world can be or will be only that. It can be and will be as much a duty and an infliction as happiness. Not to be prepared for that would be to court disappointment and frustration quite unnecessarily. (Chaudhary 106)

A question here: Why can Solness and Aline not communicate their ideas as both have subdued instincts? It is because they are husband and wife who fail to fulfill the sexual demands of each other. As long as Solness builds towers, he succeeds in sublimating the repressed through his constructive works. Meantime, he forms a belief that Aline is sexually dead after the fire broke out in their house.

Now, what do both want? As Chaudhary says that like minds can communicate, both of them long for a like mind with whom to share their inner feelings. Initially, power-thirsty Solness believes that he is conceived to be mad by all because he fails to communicate his ideas clearly. In Coehlo's words, he is in a foreign country where he can see but cannot explain himself. On the other hand, Aline becomes obsessed with duty which is valued by others as a womanly quality. Still, she, like her husband, lacks somebody who can understand her inner self. That is why Ibsen sends Hilde Wangel who can talk to and comprehend both of them. She is synthesis of Solness and Aline. Besides, she knows both of them before she appears on the stage. To put it in plain words, she is a like mind for both of them.

As an unmarried young woman, Hilde attracts Solness toward her, and he finds in her a possible sexual partner who is better than his book-keeper Kaja Fosli. Hence, he releases Kaja from office. He can express every feeling before her as both of them are like minds in search of an illusion with which to live life together.

As a young woman who has left her father's house for the first time, Hilde has much less experience than Aline. Aline meets in her a like mind with whom to reveal the secret of her life. Like a typical Ibsen female, she tells Hilde that it is not the death of her twin sons

that has shocked her; rather, the loss of nine dolls due to fire made her what she is now.

Surprisingly, we meet Aline as a victim of obsessional neurosis.

For Solness, the fire is what he willed for a long time to occur. It is Hilde who takes us to the truth that both have victimized themselves. Meantime, Hilde also gets victimized. The master builder who is afraid of youth gets attracted toward Hilde. Why? If any answer to this is to be found, it must be extracted from the id. It is the symptom of paranoia that he is frightened with youth. It is not really the fear of youth present in Solness because he wants Hilde, a youth.

Both the young beloved and the aging lover agree that they have trolls in them. They do what the trolls inside wish them to perform. The trolls are nothing if they are not the calls of the id, which is very powerful in them because it has hoarded the repressed electrical impulses. Moreover, Solness had developed the fear of height, i.e. acrophobia. The reason behind this is the suppression of libidinal desires for a long time. Is this not a neurotic symptom? However, he is ready to climb up the tower of his newly built house under Hilde's spell because he wants to challenge the God for the second time. Once, he had challenged the God at Lysanger and promised not to build churches anymore. The God symbolizes the superego or the moral principle of his mind. This provocation becomes a threat to the superego and causes the loss of mental balance. As an outcome, he falls down from a great height of the tower to die like a moth.

3.1. Fire and Success

The discovery of fire has led human beings to the present state of civilization. It has made life easy and comfortable every time we employ it constructively. In broader sense, the credit of success of human civilization goes back to the discovery of fire. In *The Master Builder*, fire plays a very significant role in that it destroys the house Aline had inherited from her mother. The plot originates from it. Shabby though it looked from outside, even her

husband had found it cozy inside. This house symbolized Ibsen's idea of home in that Halvard, Aline's husband, did not hate it although he disliked it. As long as the spouse lived there, they were happy: Aline had given birth to twin sons; the family enjoyed in the old garden; and Halvard had a job under Knut Brovik. However, Halvard ever wished that fire would break in the house and destroy it because he had in his unconscious mind some sort of inferiority that he was living under the roof of his wife's house. In fact, his wish came true in order to enable him to achieve the success he ever longed for. How does he make fortune out of the ashes of the burnt house? Let's hear what Halvard Solness and Hilde Wangel say:

HILDE. But you made your way to the top, all the same, master builder.

SOLNESS. Yes, thanks to that fire. I divided up most of the grounds into building sites. And *there* I could build the way I wanted. From then on I never looked back. (314)

Is that all? No, because Solness had to pay for the fire with the death of his three-week old twin sons. What the outside world sees is the financial achievement in a bourgeois society. Because he earned much money after the fire, people believe that he is a happy man. Is monetary success everything in life? Did the fire destroy only the old house inherited by Aline from her mother? Symbolically, it also destroyed maternal instincts, a real home, and happiness forever.

After the fire broke out in the house, everybody endeavored to save the mother and the twin babes. Outside, it was severely cold; yet, human casualty was to be avoided. Therefore, the mother and the three-week old twins were brought out of the burning house. Consequently, Aline began to suffer from fever. Nonetheless, she did not stop breast-feeding her sons, who later died of poisoned milk. Most probably, she had pneumonia. Still, she was conscious of her maternal duty, which turned out to be counter-productive. Duty for her is also a kind of obsession.

What makes a home, got burnt. After the pneumonia and the consequent death of their twin sons, Halvard Solness believed that Aline had shocks. On top of it, he found her sexually incompetent. Therefore, he says:

SOLNESS [*softly, with emotion*]. A talent for building children's souls, Hilde.

So building their souls that might grow straight and fine, nobly and beautifully formed, to their full human stature. That was where Aline's talent lay. And look now where it lies. Unused ... and for ever unusable. No earthy use for anything Like a charred heap of ruins. (316-17)

It also shows us clearly that Aline lost her sexual potency ever since the fire. As the outcome, she will never be able to use her talent of building souls of children. That is, she has become barren.

The fire succeeds in creating guilt in Halvard because he thinks that he is responsible for it. To state it in other words, he believes that he is the sole reason behind what happened to Aline. Thus, his past always haunts him as the shadow of crime. Why does he form such a conviction? It is because he had longed for the house to get it ablazed. According to him, had he not craved for it, it would never have occurred. He had seen crack in the flu from where he fancied the fire would break out. But, it started from a different place. Also, he never tried to repair it because he conceived something good would come through it. He says:

SOLNESS. Because I'd got an idea. [*Slowly and in a low voice.*] Through that

little black crack in the chimney I might perhaps make my way – to success as a builder.

HILDE [*staring into space*]. That might have been exciting.

SOLNESS. Irresistible almost. Utterly irresistible [...] I wanted it to happen in winter some time. Just before dinner, I would be out for a drive in the

sleigh with Aline. The people at home would have had great fires going in the stoves ... (320)

At that time, he desired nothing else than the position of the master builder. He did not pay any attention toward how much he would have to pay for it. Even after he found Aline sexually incapable, surprisingly enough, he never made any attempt to understand why she was so much withdrawn. So too, he employed all his physical energy in building towers and churches. Thus he could sublimate his libido through artistic and creative works like building churches with high towers, because as a person brought up in a god-fearing family, he thought any service rendered to the God was worth-doing.

On the other hand, Aline was not shocked because of the demise of her twin sons as she accepted it as the act of destiny. Instead, what disturbed her was the loss of her possessions that symbolize her personal and family history. She tells Hilde:

MRS. SOLNESS. Just little things [...] All the old silk dresses were burnt.

Things that I had in the family for years and years. And all Mother's and Grandmother's lace – that was burnt too. And even the jewel! [*Sadly.*]
And all the dolls.

HILDE. The dolls?

MRS. SOLNESS [*choaking with tears*]. I had nine lovely dolls. (335)

Aline loved the dolls like her 'unborn children'; therefore, this shocked her a lot. At symbolic level, the burning of the dolls to ashes can be viewed as the destruction of her 'unborn children'. What do unborn children signify? If examined critically, it can be concluded that the fire did not only destroy her identity but also put an end to sexual vigor. Now, she became sexually impotent. As a result, Halvard did not have to pay any attention to her sexual needs. Besides, he could sublimate his libido through his artistic and creative works.

Halvard got enough time to work to become what he wanted to achieve for a long time. He had will to power. It is apt to cite:

To be sure, he did not absolutely sprinkle paraffin on firewood and ignite the combustibles. He only willed that it should be so, and there being a Crack in the Flue the thing was done. He has the power – so he confesses to Hilda – 'of *desiring* a thing, *craving* for a thing, *willing* a thing, so persistently and so inexorably that, at last, it *has* to happen'. (Egan 286)

In Nietzsche's term, he is a "noble human being":

The noble human being honours the man of power in himself, the man who has power over himself, who knows how to speak and how to remain silent, who enjoys practicing severity and harshness upon himself and reveres everything severe and harsh. (*Selected Writings* 91)

Ten years ago, he built a tower in a church at Lysanger. The tower was so high that the people thought it to be the highest tower in the world. By then, Halvard had already secured his position as the master builder. When he climbed up and reached the top of the tower in order to hang wreath on the weathercock, he realized the price he had paid to achieve the position. At the conscious level, he thought that the God was not pleased with him, for he could not be happy even after becoming the master builder. At the unconscious level, the hanging of wreath on the top of the tower reminds him of sexual intercourse which he could not do for some two years. Though he had been sublimating desires through constructive works, his superego was strong enough to tell him why his children died. All of a sudden, he had a flash of light in his mind that the God wanted him to devote completely to the art of building; therefore, love and children were taken away from him. It is surprising that he promised from the top of the tower to construct no churches but to build homes for people to live together.

What is home? Robert Frost beautifully defines the idea of home in the following verses:

‘Home’, he mocked gently
‘Yes, what else but home?
[.....]
‘Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in’. (116-17, 122-23)

A home is a place where father, mother, and children live together. There is love, warmth, and *oneness* in it. Understanding and care are very important pillars of Ibsen's home. Nora does not possess a home but a house because she is nothing more than Helmer's doll there. Understanding and care lack there from both sides. Consequently, the marriage fails. Home is what Halvard realizes lacking in his life because the husband and the wife cannot open up and talk freely. They face a kind of restraint checking them. Aline cannot give birth to any other child because the fire destroyed her ‘unborn children’ as symbolized by the dolls. As a matter of fact, children bring happiness, love and feeling of oneness in family. So too, Oscar Wilde presents children as the harbinger of the Spring:

So he crept downstairs and opened the front door quite softly, and went out into the garden. But when the children saw him, they were so frightened that they all ran away, and the garden became Winter again. Only the little boy did not run [...] And the Giant stole up behind him [...] and put him up into the tree. And the tree broke at once into blossom, and the birds came and sang on it [...] (3-4)

Without children and prospect of any child from Aline, Halvard suffers within. He thinks he builds home for people; yet, he has only *house* to live in.

Undoubtedly, there are three nurseries in the house but they are as empty as Aline's womb. This terrifying emptiness and the suppression of libidinal desires in both Halvard and Aline work as the vital forces in the play in that the emptiness always reminds both of them how it all began. Each finds oneself guilty in their own way. Moreover, they never talk of the past; hence, the guilt never gets expressed. In addition to it, Aline is obsessed with duty right from the beginning but the obsession becomes even more intense when she feels that her failing to fulfill sexual needs of her husband has resulted in his disturbed state of mind. After the construction of the church tower at Lysanger, Halvard does not get an opportunity to build any tower because he has to build what people want. Thus, he faces restraint put in his work. Hence, he cannot sublimate his libidinal desires. This helps repress 'the electrical impulses' of instincts in his id. As he never dreams, every way of expression and sublimation is thus blocked. Hence, he falls victim of sexual repression. Likewise, Aline's duty-obsession originates from the id because she fails to perform her duty as sexual partner of her husband; yet, the desires have not been eliminated. She craves for it; but, she fails to materialize. Hence, she too falls victim of suppression of instincts.

It all began with the fire twelve years ago. Meantime, Solness has succeeded in establishing himself as the master builder; yet, the success is not a cheap one. He had to pay the happiness of his life for it. He is a great success for the outside world. He has friends like Dr. Herdal, who is the representative of new middle class society. Besides, the fire in his life is a destructive force in that the fire without helps create the unappeasable fire within.

3.2. Self-victimization

The master builder, Halvard Solness, ever yearned for the house to burn to ashes. This fact helps us guess that he must have come from a poor family and married Aline not because he genuinely loved her, but because she was to succeed her mother's property. The society at the background of the play also justifies it in that newer middle class was on its way to power

at that time. In fact Dr. Herdal says that Halvard “started as a poor country lad” (284) and reached the top of his profession. To make fortune, Halvard accepted Aline, but, he unconsciously rejected the authority of his wife. The craving to overcome this inferiority is manifest in his yearning for the fire.

On the other hand, Aline is obsessed to duty right from the beginning. Like her husband who begins the chapter of self-abuse by accepting Aline for her property in order to rise high in society, she cannot refuse her twin sons breast-feeding even while suffering from pneumonia. What happens afterwards is the act of destiny. Therefore, she does not take the death of her children much negatively. What shocks her for life is the loss of possessions she bequeathed from her mother. Hence, she is completely withdrawn from life. Meantime, she loses her sexual ability.

For Halvard, there is nothing else to think about. Thus, he devotes his total psychic energy on fortune-making. He plots the garden and builds houses as he likes. Does he ever pay attention to his wife’s wishes? How does Aline express her dislike? She opines in her talk with Hilde:

MRS. SOLNESS. It’s all become so remote. I am almost afraid to look at it again.

HILDE. Your own garden?

MRS. SOLNESS. I don’t feel it is mine anymore.

HILDE. Oh, come now ...?

MRS. SOLNESS. No, no it isn’t. Not like it was in Mother’s and Father’s day.

They have taken such an awful lot of the garden away, Miss Wangel. Do you know, they’ve split it all up and gone and built houses on it, for a lot of strangers! People I don’t even know. And they sit there in their windows looking at me. (333)

This discussion between Aline and Hilde reveals that at the core of the former's unconscious, she still believes that it is her property that Halvard has utilized to achieve his aim. Her own garden is inhabited by strangers. Though married for more than thirteen years, they are strangers to each other since the unifying force, i.e. sex, does not function properly after the fire.

Halvard does not build churches any longer after the church at Lysanger. Now, he constructs homes for father, mother, and children to live together. So too, he has to build houses for people as per their needs. His artistic skills cannot work freely in such undertakings. As a result, he fails to redirect his libido into creative works. Hence, he forms a conviction that people treat him as mad. This is how he prosecutes himself. This self-mistreatment on his part creates anxiety in Aline and she begins to suspect him. In broader sense, she always suspected him, or at least he believed she suspected.

This duty-conscious lady says that she is ready to do anything to please her husband but fails to carry out the fundamental duty of a wife to husband. Whenever Halvard and Kaja Fosli, the clerk at office, converse, Aline suspects both of them. Despite her inability to gratify her husband's instinctual needs, she cultivates sexual jealousy within herself. At this point, it is suitable to note:

She is insanely jealous of her husband, and eternally bemoans her sterility and the loss of 'nine lovely dolls' which were destroyed in a certain fire [...] For her jealousy Mrs. Solness had every reason. Nor was her husband very particular about the age of those to whom he offered somewhat fly-blown attentions. In one case, at least, he had made love to a girl of thirteen. (Egan 285)

The clerk, Kaja Fosli, is in her early twenties and betrothed to Ragner, one of his assistants at office. Halvard says that he flirts with Kaja in order to make her feel that he loves her. He

believes that his love can keep Kaja, who in turn can make Ragnar stay at his office. But, his argument is not plausible at all. As the master builder, he has earned enough name and fame. Furthermore, he is in two minds whether to continue building houses or not. As he has understood the hollowness of his life, most probably he is not going to continue the building job any longer. What he has in his unconscious is just the opposite of what he does and says in reality. Unconsciously, it is Kaja Fosli whom he wants to keep. But its manifestation comes as in dream. That is, if he lets Ragnar work independently, it becomes possible for him to marry Kaja. After all, she is engaged to him. Thus, by detaining Ragnar from leaving his office, Halvard is making the best of his attempts to keep Kaja. Therefore, it is not unnatural for Aline to develop sexual jealousy, which is why Kaja and Aline do not exchange dialogues in a casual way in the course of the play.

Kaja Fosli is torn between two males: the master, Halvard and the assistant, Ragnar. In fact, she is engaged to Ragnar but takes to Halvard:

SOLNESS [*takes her head in his hand and whisper*]. You see, I can't do
without you. I must have you near me every single day.

KAJA [*in rapture*]. Oh God! Oh God!

SOLNESS [*kisses her hair*]. Kaja! Kaja!

KAJA [*sinks at his feet*]. Oh, how good you are to me! How incredibly good
you are! (275)

She victimizes herself by letting her to be divided between them. Had Hilde not arrived earlier to displace her, she would never have succeeded in freeing herself from Halvard's trap.

Similarly, Ragnar also gets self-victimized in the course of the play. He waits for his master's green signal in order to start business on his own. Like his father Knut Brovik, he has lost both self-esteem and self-confidence because he knows something is going on

between the master and his betrothed. As an assistant, he cannot warn Halvard in that he may lose the present job. As a lover, he cannot caution Kaja in fear of suffering the loss of her faith. As the consequence of this tension, he fails to revolt against Halvard by taking up the construction of the villa even though he knew the couple and they liked his plans. He perceives that he lacks something in him but is not sure what it really is. Hence, he waits for Halvard's consent, which he gets only after Hilde persuades Halvard. Halvard allows Ragnar to begin a business on his own not because he is kind enough, but because he sees no use of Kaja now. That Kaja can go means he has to detain Ragnar no longer.

In a sense, Hilde Wangel is wild. At the same time, she is also bird of prey. So too, she did not allow herself to be confined in her father's cage. In hope of turning her childhood fancy into reality, she comes to Halvard in order to procure the "Kingdom of Oregia". As a matter of fact, she ill-treats herself by literally believing Halvard that he would come to take her off like a troll:

HILDE. [...] And when I asked how long I had to wait, you said you'd come back in ten years – like a troll – and carry me off. To Spain or somewhere. And there you promised you'd buy me a kingdom.

SOLNESS [...] But did I really say all this?

HILDE [*laughing quietly*]. Yes. And you also said what this kingdom would be called.

SOLNESS. Well?

HILDE. It was to be called the Kingdom of Orangia, you said. (293)

She has come to achieve everything. In other words, she always wanted Halvard to be the prince of her heart since she had once seen him on the top of the tower. Therefore, she had formed a conviction that he is happy. On the contrary, the Halvard she meets is a hollow being, tied to a sexually dead woman. He tells her about his wife:

SOLNESS. Yes, devils ! And the troll in me too. They have drained her of all her life's blood. [...] And it was for my sake they did it ! [...] And now she is dead – on my account. And here I am, chained alive to this dead woman. [*In wild anguish.*] Me ... a man who cannot live a joyless life!
(338)

Still, Hilde does not suspect that much is wrong in Halvard's life. She is obsessed to secure for what she had left her father's house. She desires to see Halvard as she had once seen him. Although she knows from Aline and Dr. Herdal that he feels giddy from height, she persuades him to climb up the tower of his new house. He does not refuse because the "impossible" is very inviting and seductive for him. In one sense, Hilde hypnotizes him by inviting him to build 'castle in the air' together with her. In fact, she is abusing her fancy and victimizing herself.

To sum up, the major characters in the play are guided by the repressed libido in the id. Therefore, without being aware of what they are doing, they are self-prosecuting; some in hope of achieving success in life; some to enjoy secure future; and some because of wrong beliefs they inculcate in themselves.

3.3. Fear of Youth: A Form of Paranoia

Paranoia is one of various forms of manifestations of sexual repression. As a victim of sexual suppression, Halvard is also a paranoid in that he fears the youth. "Youth" is a very complex word, for many layers of meaning are found inside it. Before Hilde's arrival, this youth who he is so much afraid of is Ragnar. He tells Dr. Herdal:

SOLNESS. The turn is coming. I can sense it. I feel it getting nearer.

Somebody or other is going to demand. Make a way for me! And then all the others will come storming up, threatening and shouting: Get out

of the way! Get out of the way! Yes, just you watch, Doctor! One of these days, youth is going to come here beating on the door (285)

The youth he is talking of is to bring change. The thoughts of change are enough to tremble his mind because he wants to continue in the present state. Furthermore, Ragnar is in his thirties; hence a perfect youth. As the betrothed to Kaja, if he begins a business on his own, they will marry and leave the master builder forever. Therefore, Halvard does not want youth to beat on the door. The door also carries symbolic meaning as Kaja's vagina, which Halvard craves to enjoy. So too, he is terrified at the prospect of their marriage. He takes everybody instrumentally because he used himself instrumentally for about twelve years. He never paid attention to anybody's feelings including his own. Bemrose writes:

Solness has put his feelings (and the feelings of others) aside in order to become pure instrument of his own professional success. But his feelings persist nonetheless, in a paranoid moodiness that a tinder to the inflammatory attraction of Hilde. When she batters down his defenses and enters his inchoate, infantile emotional life, he quickly becomes a prisoner of her fantasized vision of him. (N. pag.)

By not giving due place to his own feelings and his wife's feelings, he kept on repressing the instincts. This led to the paranoia he suffers now. The source of this fear is the id itself where he has stored up shame as well. He does not want to let Ragnar go in order to suppress the shame he has earned while becoming the master builder. Nina daVinci Nicholas critically assesses:

There is a mysterious telepathy at work in the relationships – Ibsen was interested in mental phenomena like telepathy and hypnosis. Solness also has kept down Ragnar's father, an engineer [...] So it is not the youth "knocking at his door" who threatens him with disclosure and shame. (N. pag.)

Indeed, Halvard is not afraid of youth as he believes. The “disclosure and shame” in Nicholas’s words are important to explore at this point. He is ashamed of his past for two reasons: primarily, he has never enjoyed the sexual pleasure as people do in youth; and secondarily, his fame and position are founded on foul acts. These foul acts include his desire for the burning of house to knocking Knut Brovik down. On the whole, a guilty conscience has developed in him because of his activities that he carried out when he was young. Hence, it is not the youth represented by Ragnar that frightens him so much as his own youth terrifies him. He has tolerated the shame and guilt so far but he seems to bear them no longer since facts are stronger and evident. Anytime, they can be disclosed and made issues of public discussion. It is relevant to note:

Yet Ibsen is the undisputed master of modern drama [...] he writes about the “individual caught in the fact”. The kind of fact is the unavoidable network of social and moral “laws” intended to limit individual behaviour to what other people expect. But the only way the soul can emerge into full consciousness is to violate convention; the resulting conflict [...] displays the new state of spiritual awareness. (Moore 170)

To possess Kaja as a means to express the subdued psychical energy, Ragnar must be out of his way. Halvard has realized it; yet, he wants Ragnar to stay with him because if Ragnar leaves him, he will certainly snatch Kaja from Halvard’s grip. Does Halvard have enough courage to keep Kaja as his second wife? It seems next to impossible because the legacy of his wealth, name, and fame goes back to his mother-in-law. That is, at the foundations of his position as the master builder lies Aline’s property she bequeathed from her mother. This is very crucial fact of life that limits the wishes of the central figure in the play. Moreover, this genuine fact also strengthens the superego, the repressing agent, which can be stated in plain words as the moral laws of society. The more he understood his reality,

the more he found emptiness in his life. Why is his life so empty, void of happiness? The answer can be sought in his 'own' youth. Therefore, he feels alone. He tells Hilde:

SOLNESS. I've been so alone here. Staring at everything, so utterly helpless

[...] I tell you – I have begun to be so afraid, so terribly afraid, of youth.

HILDE [*snorting*]. Pah! Is youth anything to be afraid of?

SOLNESS. Yes, it is. That's why I've locked and barred myself in.

[*Secretively*] I tell you, youth will come here and beat on my door, and force its way in! (299)

After Hilde arrives, Halvard's id welcomes her as a means through which to channel the repressed out. The outcome is that he gets attracted to her. Had he really been afraid of youth, he would have refused her entry into his life. Furthermore, he does not hesitate to reveal the secret facts of his life. Indeed, Hilde is such a powerful character who performs the role of like mind for both Halvard and Aline. Due to lack of communication between them until Hilde's first appearance, it is very difficult to understand the situation they are undergoing. In fact, the play is a beautiful study of disordered minds since all three major characters have mental problems. Aline suffers from duty-obsession; Hilde is after turning childhood fancy into fact; and Halvard is a paranoid. While discussing Ibsen and his plays, Martha Fletcher Bellinger writes:

He made many studies of disordered minds, and analysed restlessly the common relationships – sister and brother, husband and wife, father and son. There is much in these relationships [...] that is based on sentimentalism, on desire to dominate, on hypocrisy and lies. He pictured the unscrupulous financier, the artist who gives up love for fancied demands of his art, the unmarried woman has been drudge and the unthanked burden-bearer – all with

a cool detachment with cloaks, but does not conceal, the passionate moralist.

(321)

Does Halvard succeed in giving up his love for the “demands of his art”? He certainly thought he was quite different from others because he was sublimating the instinctual desires through art. He could not sublimate it entirely and eternally as his superego is supported in its strength by the existing moral values. And now, he finds himself hallowed out. The subdued has to surface in another form if it is always checked in its original form. The paranoid believes that youth will bring retribution. It is Hilde who counsels him to accept youth on friendly terms. So, he decides to use her against youth. That is, she wants him to accept his own youth and her youth. If both come together, she knows her fancy will easily turn into fact of life.

Why does Halvard fear his own youth so much? Because he feels as if he were cracking up under some terrible burden of debt:

MRS. SOLNESS. Debt, you? But you're not in debt to anyone, Halvard!

SOLNESS [*quietly, with emotion*]. Endlessly in debt to you ... to you ... to you, Aline?

MRS. SOLNESS [...]. What is behind all this? [...]

SOLNESS. There's nothing wrong behind it. I've never done you any wrong.

Never knowingly, never deliberately, that is. And yet – I feel weighed down by a great crushing sense of guilt. (306)

This debt and crushing sense of guilt are both the products of his past and sexual repression. After the fire, he never paid any attention to his wife's emotional needs because he was busy all the time to reach the top of his profession, i.e. to be the master builder. Furthermore, he abused his ability by not caring for his own sexual passion; hence, he feels 'weighed down by a great crushing sense of guilt'. Besides, he deliberately overthrew Knut Brovik in order to

materialize his aim. The bitter fact has made him feel ashamed of himself. When did he do all these things? Certainly, in his youth. Therefore, he is terrified with his own youth, which has led him to abuse a child of thirteen at Lysanger. Can he welcome such youth again in his life? No, because his superego will not let him. On top of it, he projects his youth in young people like Ragnar and other junior builders in order to realize the wickedness of his past. When he perceives the shadows of his past in them, he begins to fear them. As his mind is disturbed because of internal conflict between the alliance of the superego and the ego, and the id, he fails to distinguish whether he is afraid of his own past reflected as the result of the projection or the youth themselves. Even the thought of fierceness of youth is enough to terrify him. Consequently, this victim of paranoia is convinced that the doctor and Aline think him mad. The crushing sense of guilt and debt to his wife are the symptoms of neurotic anxiety whereas the fear of youth is itself paranoia. The wrong belief on himself being thought mad by others shows that there are only a few final steps for him to reach the state of neurosis. Where do such notions stem out from? It is obviously the id which is the source of instincts and depot of the repressed.

The other reason which helps justify this fear baseless is that Hilde successfully frees both Kaja and Ragnar. She displaces Kaja from Halvard's grasp and frees Ragnar by persuading Halvard to build 'castle in air' together with her. This illusion symbolizes the complete sexual intercourse; therefore, Halvard agrees to it. His major problem is his failure to redirect the repressed. As he sees these prospects in the young girl from Lysanger, he is ready to allow Ragnar to start independent business. Halvard is neither afraid of nor rejects Hilde, another youth. Therefore, the fear of youth is what makes him a paranoid.

3.4. Trolls Within: An Urge to Fulfill the Repressed

Trolls are ugly giants or dwarfs in mythical stories. In the play, Ibsen uses this term to signify the repressed in two major characters. An article under "Troll" in *Encyclopædia*

Britannica defines it as "giant, monstrous being, sometimes possessing magic powers" in early Scandinavian folklore. It is further stated:

Hostile to men, trolls lived in castles and haunted the surrounding districts after dark. If exposed to sunlight they burst or turned to stone. [...] In the plays of Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen, especially *Peer Gynt* (1867) and *The Master Builder* (1892), trolls are used as symbols of destructive instincts.

(N. pag.)

The troll makes them restless because it is the product of want of pleasure in their life. It is apt to note:

Man is a restless animal, not content [...] to have a good meal once a month and sleep the rest of the time. Man needs, for his happiness, not only enjoyment of this, or that, but hope and enterprise and change. As Hobbes says, 'felicity consisteth in prospering, not in having prospered'. (Russell 15)

Halvard has reached the apex of his profession. There is no place beyond it. What has he done on the way to the summit? He did not care his own psychical needs. He lived his life without any pleasure for about last twelve years. Twelve years are a short time for a person to reach the achme of profession; and they are a long time for a person to live without any pleasure received from sex. What he did is the subjugation of desires. The instincts can be suppressed for a certain period of time; yet, it is impossible to subdue them for ever. They must find an expression in the absence of which they seek a different way, causing mental disorders. The repressed convinces Halvard that the 'impossible' is 'seductive' and 'inviting'. Now, Hilde sees in him a like mind with whom she can communicate effectively because both have repressed libido for a long time. Therefore, Hilde says:

HILDE. So you've also something of the troll in you?

SOLNESS. What do you mean – troll?

HILDE. Well, what would you call a thing like that?

SOLNESS [*gets up*]. All right, just as you say. [...] But is it any wonder I'm becoming like a troll ... the way things are going for me! The way *everything* is ... everlasting! (316)

The presence of troll in both of them makes it easy for them to share their ideas. Hilde is always after the 'impossible' in that she never thinks whether she can be happy with the male (Halvard) as old as her father. As the id is illogical and makes human beings restless if it gathers power from the repressed, both are restless. So too, Ibsen provides a rocking chair on the stage. The rocking chair helps us understand the state of mind of characters. Besides, Hilde says that she would be glad to be 'taken' (324) off by a brute when they talk about the Vikings. Halvard mentions that the Vikings "sailed to foreign lands and plundered and burned and killed" (323) people. They even carried off women as captive and took them home with them in their ships. All these features are related to the functions of the id. That is, aggression, brutality, killings, murders, and so on directly spring forth from the id. For Hilde, such things are very much exciting because she has waited for Halvard for last ten years in hope that one day, he would come and carry her off like a troll. As a child of thirteen, it is plausible for her to believe him for some time. Nonetheless, even as a grown up girl of twenty-three, she firmly holds on to the promise made by Halvard ten years back. She says:

HILDE. If he was a brute I'd grown really fond of, I ...

SOLNESS. *Could* you grow fond of a man like that?

HILDE. Good Lord, you can't always help whom you get fond of, can you?

SOLNESS [*looks thoughtfully at her*]. No ... I dare say it's the troll within us decides *that*. (324)

As the repressed gets powerful enough to display mental disorders, it decides which course people take. The reality principle in the ego and the moral principle in the superego always

guide us rationally. When they become weak, people do not know how and why they act. Irrationality originates from the id which works on the basis of the pleasure principle. Reason and intellect lose their ways when the id becomes stronger than the ego and the superego. Therefore, Halvard and Hilde conclude that it is the troll that decides what they do. What both of them are after is pleasure, which is the 'impossible' for him because his wife cannot sexually satisfy him. Moreover, he cannot possess Kaja because she is engaged with Ragnar. The issue of prestige also plays a vital role in Halvard's life in that his superego does not let him bear the scandal with his own book-keeper.

Tower is classical symbol for phallus. The high tower Halvard built at Lysanger becomes his penis when Hilde sees both the tower and the builder on its top. In her child-psyche, desire to own both his phallus symbolized by the tower and the master builder originates. Since she was only thirteen years old at that time, she had to repress such craving. In the evening, he kissed her and promised her to carry her off like a troll within ten years. This leaves such deep impact that she begins to live each day to complete the promised time. She kept on suppressing her libidinal desires each day. Even after the years were up, Halvard did not return to keep his promise. Hence, she comes to accomplish the 'impossible' because the repressed directs her in that way. It is not her rational will; instead, she is led by the troll of her id. Henry James opines:

Hilda Wangel, a young woman whom the author may well be trusted to have made more mystifying than curiously charmless name would suggest, is only the indirect form, the animated clock-face, as it were, of Halvard Solness's destiny but the action, in spite of obscurities and ironies, takes its course by steps nonetheless irresistible. (268)

James is right in calling her “the animated clock-face of Halvard Solness’s destiny” because the troll within him comes out in the form of Hilde. She is the internal daemon present in Halvard and vice versa. A reviewer writes:

When Socrates wanted to do what Mrs. Gamp would call a ‘bold, bage thing’, he declared that he obeyed the promptings of his dæmon. What internal dæmon was to Socrates, that the troll is to Halvard Solness, the hero, and to Hilde Wangel, the heroine of Dr. Henrik Ibsen’s new play, *The Master Builder* [...] (An Unsigned notice 280)

Though the comparison between Socrates, and Halvard and Hilde looks misleading, the troll has daemonic power. Otherwise, Halvard and Hilde could not have run after the impossible and firmly held on to the conviction that it is ‘seductive’ and ‘inviting’.

Besides, Hilde succeeds to displace Kaja Fosli from Halvard’s id because of presence of troll there. The troll available in his unconscious immediately identifies the other troll of Hilde’s id. Hence, it decides that there is no use of Kaja. Rejecting Kaja means Ragnar’s freedom, for Halvard does not have to detain Ragnar when Halvard finds substitute for Kaja in Hilde. Is it not surprising to state that his troll acts so rationally at this point? In fact, the troll has daemonic power that is made available from the repressed libido accumulated in the id.

The two other impossible things they decide to do are: building castle in the air together, and Halvard’s decision to climb up the tower despite acrophobia in him. Who takes all these decisions though they are impossible? It is the troll in them that determines every act they perform. What does the troll signify? Obviously, it is the symbol of the repressed libido in them. Hence, the characters in the play are irrational, talk of the impossible things, and develop irrational and illogical beliefs without being aware that they are victimizing

themselves. The subdued is the principal force, pushing them forward. In other words, they are not the agents but the puppets. Thus, Hilde and Halvard are the puppets of trolls.

3.5. Acrophobia as a Neurotic Symptom

Phobia is one of the results of sexual repression. In Halvard Solness, the master builder, it is present in the form of acrophobia, i.e. the fear of height. He feels giddy when he is in high places. In fact, it is esoteric fear of height. The real cause of this acrophobia lies in his id since he has subdued sexual desires for last twelve years. For him, the pleasure procured from sex is “domestic bliss” and its result “peace of mind”:

SOLNESS. Who better than I? Considering the price I've had to pay to get
where I am.

HILDE. Oh yes ... you mean your domestic bliss ... or whatever you call it.

SOLNESS. And with it my peace of mind. (319)

Halvard and his wife, Aline, have lived together for about fourteen years. Still, they never attempted to search for the happiness together. Ibsen in his poem, “DE SAD DER, DE TO –” has explored the essence of the play. William Archer thus presents the poem in English translation:

THEY SAT THERE, THE TWO –

They sat there, the two, in so cosy a house, through autumn and winter days. Then the house burned down. Everything lies in ruins. The two must grope among the ashes.

For among them is hidden a jewel – a jewel that never can burn. And if they search faithfully, it may easily happen that he or she may find it.

But even should they find it, the burnt out two – find this precious unburnable jewel – never will she find her burnt faith, he never his burnt happiness. (xxi)

The 'jewel' Ibsen employs in the poem is the symbol of what brings "domestic bliss" in Halvard's life. Neither of them searches it sincerely; instead, they always ignore and endeavour to forget it. That is, they always suppress their libido, which could have brought physical and spiritual union in their life. As the result of this very subjugation, duty-obsession manifests in Aline whereas acrophobia appears in Halvard. From outside, he is a happy and successful man as Erika Fischer-Lichte notes:

Halvard Solness is a successful builder who has not only won the recognition of society, but also leads a bourgeois life style. He manages an office with three employees, he is married and lives in a representative house in which the honoured members of the city, such as Dr. Herdal, and ladies of good society are welcomed. (265)

In fact, he is in the direction towards neurosis the symptom of which is acrophobia. He has lived a life of contradiction as yet in that he says that he fears youth but he inwardly covets for youth. In addition to it, he believes that he is responsible for his wife's present state. He is psychologically disturbed because of the tension between the combined force of the superego and the ego, and the force originated from the repressed in the id.

Aline knows he is sick. That is to say, he feels dizzy and cannot stand height.

Therefore, she tells Hilde not to persuade him to go up the tower of their newly built house:

MRS. SOLNESS. Dear God, Miss Wangel, put that out of your mind! My husband ... ! When he gets so dizzy?

HILDE. Dizzy! No, surely not!

MRS. SOLNESS. Oh, he does.

HILDE. But I've seen him myself right at the top of a high church tower.

MRS. SOLNESS. Yes, I've heard people say that. But it's quite impossible

....

SOLNESS [*vehemently*]. Impossible ... yes, impossible? But I did it, all the same. (330)

He is always after the impossible. As a country lad, he came to city and married Aline, the heir to a big estate of her mother. He longed for the burning down of his wife's house. After that, he plotted the land and built as he wished in order to achieve his aim, i.e. the position of the master builder. On top of it, he employed his one time employer, his son, and Ragnar's betrothed. In Lysanger, he accomplished the impossible by climbing up the church tower so as to challenge the God though he suffered from vertigo even at that time. Now, when he hears his wife saying that it is impossible for him to go up the tower, he is tempted to scale up the tower. The repressed in the id tells him that it is inviting and charming to ascend the tower since it is another form of the impossible.

Hilde is the catalyst in the play, for she quickens Ragnar's freedom. She helps Ragnar also by displacing Kaja from Halvard's id. Just as Halvard had challenged the God ten years ago, she challenges him to go up the tower:

HILDE [*looks intently at him*]. Is it true, or isn't it?

SOLNESS. That I get dizzy?

HILDE. That *my* master builder dare not ... cannot climb as high as he builds?

SOLNESS. Is that the way you see it?

HILDE. Yes.

SOLNESS. I'm beginning to think no part of me is safe from you. (331)

Why does she question him that way? Because she had seen him on the top of the church tower at Lysanger ten years ago. All these years, the picture has remained in her mind. After hanging the wreath on the weathercock, he had kissed her in the evening. She wants the same incident to recur there. That is, she wants to see him from the same height as before and have sexual intercourse with him in the evening. This is how she has sought to express the

repressed libido. When she says that they are to build together castle in the air, he is convinced that she is the sexual partner whom he has ever longed for. He is assured that the illusion will make their life happy. About this irregularly educated builder, Emund Gosse, Ibsen's biographer, notes:

[...] we find a solid and objective study of the self-made man, the head-strong amateur, who has never submitted to the wholesome discipline of professional training, but who has trusted to the help of those trolls or mascots, his native talent and his unfailing "luck". Upon such a man descends Hilda, the disorganizer, who pierces the armour of his conceit by a direct appeal to his passion. Solness has been the irresistible sorcerer, through his good fortune, but he is not protected in his climacteric against this unexpected attack upon senses. (209-10)

When Aline leaves the responsibility of stopping Halvard from going up the tower on Hilde, Hilde realizes that she is forcing Aline to disown her husband. Therefore, she decides to leave him. But can she so easily depart from him? As she has already shown him hope of illusion to live together their future, he will employ all his psychical energy to stop her. Hence, it is his turn to confess what his wife has really signified for him for last twelve years. Without any hesitation, he says that he has been "chained to this dead woman" (338). Since his wife is physically alive, what does the word "dead" indicate at? Obviously, she is sexually dead. Therefore, he pleads Hilde to stay for him. Like an obedient student, she agrees to stay when he explores into the joyless and futile life she was living with her father. Now, under the master sorcerer's spell, what she deciphers is that she can ask him for anything. Hence, she demands him to build castle in the air:

HILDE [*slowly*]. My castle shall stand on high ground. Very high it must stand. And open to all sides. So I can see into the far, far distance.

SOLNESS. With a high tower, I suppose?

HILDE. A tremendously high tower. At the very top of the tower there's to be a balcony. And out up there I shall stand ...

SOLNESS [*involuntarily clutches at his forehead*]. How you can enjoy standing at such a dizzy height ... (341)

Though she claims for castle in the air initially, her irrationality is displayed when she wants it to “stand on high ground”. As the one guided from the force of the id, she cannot help herself to be illogical. And, he wants himself to be present in the castle as symbolized by the tower. It is his phallus which she wants there. The “tremendously high tower” has special significance in that it is the builder's erected penis. Still, he is afraid of the dizzy height. He forgets acrophobia and determines to scale up the tower of his newly built house in order to prove her that he has not yet lost all his sexual power when she persuades him to build castle in the air together. Now, he is overcome by passion and agrees to her demand.

Acrophobia developed in him is just the symptom of neurosis. When he consents to mount up the tower, he becomes fully neurotic. This decision may cost him his life but he does not care it. As a mad person, he comes under her spell. The duty-obsessed Aline goes to welcome guests, requesting Hilde to “hold tight on to him” (347). Ironically, Hilde has held the builder so tightly that nobody can detain him from going up the tower. After all, he realizes that he has “built nothing” (350). This very realization convinces him it is the worthiest thing to build castle in the air than to build homes for people because he would not have been happy, even if he had “owned one” (349) home. By putting wreath round the spire of the tower, he decides to complete symbolic intercourse and then to begin real sexual relation with Hilde. Therefore, he does not care for acrophobia as he has already become victim of neurosis.

3.6. The Second Challenge: Defying the Authority of the Ego

Halvard Solness, the master builder, after he began his profession, thought it worthy to build churches because he was brought up in a God-fearing family. The fire provided him with an opportunity to set himself in the occupation. Ten years ago, he had built a church tower at Lysanger. When he was atop the tower to put wreath on the weathercock, he realized the emptiness of his life. The dedication of garland on the spire is itself a symbol of sexual intercourse, which he had not had for at least last two years at that time. He, therefore, understood the pleasureless state of his life. Besides, the builder, who felt giddy from height even at that time, had done the impossible by standing on the top of the tower. So, he decided to challenge the God:

SOLNESS. And as I stood there on high, at the very top, and as I hung the wreath on the weathercock, I spoke to him: Listen to me, Almighty One! From this day forward, I too will be free. A master builder free in his own field, as you are in yours. Never again will I build churches for you. Only homes for the people. (349)

By questioning the authority of the God and making himself the God's equal, he has challenged the power of the superego of his mind. The pleasure principle has thus equalized its significance with the morality principle because the only thing lacking in his life was pleasure at that time. Besides, Hilde, then a school girl of thirteen, heard him singing there. It sounded like "harps in the air":

SOLNESS [*looks at her in amazement*]. Singing? I sang?

HILDE. You most certainly did.

SOLNESS [*shaking his head*]. I've never sung a note in my life.

HILDE. Yes, you have. You sang then. It sounded like harps in the air. (292)

After the ceremony, he was overcome by the passions and the id seeking pleasure. Therefore, he abuses the thirteen-year old girl by kissing her. She says, “You took me in your arms and bent me backwards and kissed me. Many times” (294). That is, he challenged both authorities of his life: first, the authority of the superego by rejecting the moral restraints; and the power of his wife by kissing a school girl of thirteen. At symbolic level, he has empowered the id by accepting its demand for pleasure.

Ignia-Stina Ewbank finds the symbolic and mythical significance of the names used in the play. She writes:

Solness, whose very name evokes myth (Norwegian ‘*Sol*’ meaning ‘sun’, and ‘*ness*’ an ‘isthmus’ – placing him half-way between gods and men?), challenges the Almighty from the church tower at Lysanger (‘*lys*’ meaning light) and aims to do so again from the top of his own tower. Ibsen evokes resonances of a Lucifer, a Faust, a Prometheus, even an Apollo – but without locking Solness into an identification with anyone of these myths. (132-33)

Like most Ibsen protagonists, Halvard also makes his attempts to move from darkness to light. So too, Ibsen must have employed the meaning of light in these names. But the rest of the argument that forces to explore the mythical aspect in the play is hard to accept for two reasons: primarily, the protagonist is an ordinary man from a country and aspires the highest position of his profession; and secondarily, he lacks the qualities that Lucifer or Faust had displayed. He simply desires something to happen. It is a mere good coincidence if it really happens. His challenge to the God from the top of the church tower also means the rejection of his wife’s control over his sexual life and the rejection of the morality over his desire for pleasure.

The play’s loose structure corresponds to the looser psyche of the major characters: Halvard, Hilde, and Aline. On top of it, Halvard is a mentally disturbed character because he

has not found any way to redirect the libido stored up in the id. In this connection, John Rees Moores notes:

In the play beginning with *The Master Builder*, however, Ibsen allows himself a looser structure. Though Solness can evade his fate no more than earlier protagonist, “he is free within the dramatic narrative to choose the events that will reveal and constitute it”. What happens is truer revelation of his own powers and perceptions. “Nothing Solness does issues from the past like a time bomb going off, nothing has to happen simply because something has happened earlier”. So his decision to go up in the tower is no less than a “tragic attempt ... to overcome the laws of time and physical being” and thus turn himself “into a legend” [...] (170-71)

He may be free to choose any event inside the dramatic narrative for John Rees Moores but he is bound by the repressed as the id becomes so powerful that even he does not know what he is doing. The id finds the impossible seductive and guides him to run after it. As a victim of acrophobia, he should never have thought of climbing up a tower again. When the Lysanger episode took place, he was ten years younger than he is now. However, under Hilde’s spell and demand, he becomes ready to scale up the tower of his house this time:

HILDE. That you ...? Say it !

SOLNESS ... That I ought to have done it.

HILDE [*brusts out gaily*]. You could never be dizzy!

SOLNESS. Tonight we’ll put up the wreath ... princess Hilde.

HILDE [*with bitter grimace*]. Over your new home ... yes.

SOLNESS. Over the new house. Which will never be a home for me. (331)

As he says about his house never becoming home for him, it is evident that he lacks physical and spiritual union with his wife. When he tells her about putting up wreath, his inner desire

to have sex with the damsel gets manifested. Hence, he agrees to her desire to see him atop the tower. Moreover, he wants to challenge both the moral system of the society and his wife a second time. By climbing up the tower, he thinks he will be able to prove his sexual potency, in order to shock the moral system. By pleasing Hilde, he desires to shock Aline. Furthermore, he comes completely under Hilde's spell and says:

SOLNESS. I shall say to him: Hear me, Great and Mighty Lord! Judge me as you will. But henceforth I shall build one thing only, quite loveliest thing in the whole world ...

HILDE [*carried away*]. Yes ... Yes ... Yes!

SOLNESS. ... Build it together with the princess I love ...

HILDE. Yes, tell him that! Tell him that!

SOLNESS. Yes. And then I shall say to him. Now I go down to take her in my arm and kiss her ... (351)

It is here that he forgets the reality. That is, the ego fails to function in that by passing total attention to revolt against the censors of pleasures, he forgets his own acrophobia. Thus, he falls victim of pure neurosis.

The neurotic, capable of doing anything and everything, is now in his mood only to follow the commands from the id. His single aim is to please Hilde by revolting against the authority of the superego, symbolized by the God and the ego that is indicated at by his wife. When he reaches the middle of the tower, Aline is panic-stricken because she is sure that he will fall down. Dr. Herdal silences everybody so as not to disturb him with any sound. As he reaches the top, Hilde is the happiest one. Therefore, she waves him a white shawl. Kernan Alvin states:

It is in fact Mrs. Solness's shawl that Hilda waves, and the matter of ownership is crucial in the meaning of the play – Mrs. Solness, and her shawl,

represent that quality in the world and in Solness which have always brought him trumbling back to earth and prevented him from scaling the heights of freedom towards which Ibsen's heroes always move. (267)

The magnetic effect of Aline's shawl pulls Halvard down after Hilde experiences the scene as she did ten years ago. She also hears harps in the air. When he falls down, a voice says, "His head is all smashed in" (355). The mutilated part of his body is the head because it is where he had stored libido beyond the limit he could bear. While falling, the repressed libido explodes, smashing the head. Thus, because of sexual repression, Halvard Solness, the master builder, gets killed in the accident. At last, another victim of sexual repression, Hilde claims the ownership of the master builder by uttering, "My ... my ... master builder!" (355). Most probably, she will go mad.

Chapter - Four

4. Pitfalls of Repression

Repression of passion emerges out of our desire to form a disciplined society. It helps us maintain social harmony because uncontrolled desire for sex leads society to chaos. If such feelings are suppressed in accordance with the demands of reality and given outlet in time, the mental health can be kept in sound state. In society, moral principles work in order to check perverse behavior. They aim at the collective welfare of people. Within an individual, the superego carries out the same role. It judges the acceptable and the unacceptable. To support it, there is another dimension, called the ego, which evaluates the demands of the id and the expectations of the superego. When the calls of the id are not let to surface, they are subdued in itself. As a source of instincts and depot of the repressed, the id advances to inspire the subject to creative, artistic, and scientific works in order to get sublimated. Hence, a certain degree of sexual repression is essential in human beings.

Excess in everything is bad. As absolutely uncontrolled sexual behavior brings damaging consequences, complete repression of libido causes different calamities right from individual to social level. At the individual level, different sorts of mental disorders like phobia, obsession, and paranoia come into being. They lead the subject in question to untimely collapse. At the social level, the victims of repression display such neurotic behavior that goes against the collective welfare of people. To put simply, social crimes also result from suppressed libido. Since passions, desires, and feelings for sex are psychic energy and subjugation of such energy makes the id more powerful, they should be duly channelled out. If the superego persists that it must always check them, revolt breaks out inside mind. Furthermore, the tussle within displays neurotic behavior in the subject.

The Master Builder dramatizes the risk of libidinal suppression. For last twelve years after the fire, Halvard Solness, the central figure, has not had sexual intercourse with anybody. The fire that destroyed his wife, Aline's inherited house, also ruined the sexual potential in her. Therefore, after realizing the emptiness of his life from the top of church tower at Lysanger, he kissed Hilde, then a thirteen-year old school girl. As the ten years he had promised the girl are up, she comes to claim her kingdom. He finds in her the potential sexual partner. Hence, he is attracted toward her. Moreover, he comes under the damsel's spell. Erika Fisher-Litche writes:

Hilde does not use her attraction to destroy Solness, but on the contrary, to bring him back to himself, she wants to persuade him to realise the image that both she and Solness have made of his true self. And it is Solness who decides to take on the challenge. He is destroyed because he is not in a position to realise this image in reality under the present social conditions. (270)

The absolute repression for twelve years has made the id so powerful that he fails to sublimate all the psychic energy through creative work. Since he does not even dream, the suppressed materials remain in the id, waiting for an opportunity. Hilde's arrival brings his past fresh into his mind. The id immediately informs him that he should accept her as his sexual partner. It is what the superego cannot accept. That is, he fails to realize it under the current social conditions.

The gap between high demands of the id and the utter suppression of the superego takes form of revolt in Halvard's mind. This revolt becomes almost hysterical when he comes under Hilde's spell and agrees to climb up the tower of his newly built house. Despite acrophobia, he chooses to go up the tower in order to defy the authority of the superego. Alvin Kernan assesses:

Revolt has doubtlessly taken an extravagant, almost a hysterical, form in the modern theatre; still it is not the mark of rebellion which distinguishes the faces [...] of an Ibsen hero standing at last in the clear light or the high place toward which he has struggled and finding it unendurable. (268)

Why does the success become unendurable? It is because he could not pay proper attention to his psychological need, i.e. sex, while working for it. The repression has made him as fragile as “china” in Edmund Gosse’s word. He notes:

Solness, who breaks everyone else, is broken by Hilda. The inherent hardness of youth, which makes no allowances, which demands its kingdom here and now upon the table, was never more powerfully depicted. Solness is smashed by his impact with Hilda, as china against a stone. (210)

The builder is frail from within because of the repressed libido. He has understood the value of happiness. Successful though he is, he can never be happy because he has a house, not *home*. A home is a cosy place where father, mother, and children live together. As intercourse between the husband and wife is impossible and the twin sons died after the fire, *home* is impossible for him. But, the subdued in the id forces him to run after the inviting and seductive impossible.

Hilde’s demands are fulfilled by Halvard only because she is a female. The builder, master builder though he is, lacks mastery over himself. However, he has understood the emptiness of his life. In an attempt to live meaningful life with Hilde, he challenges the power of the controlling agency of his mind, i.e. the superego, and gets killed like a fly by falling from the tower.

John Fowles’s *The Collector* also presents its central figure Frederick Cleggs subduing instincts. The repression is so rigid and absolute that he refuses to have sex with Miranda even though she displays her naked body before him. This young art-student gets

trapped in Cleggs's house because he thinks she is beautiful. The struggle between Cleggs and Miranda lasts throughout the novel but he does not free her. Just like the powerful superego present in his mind, he censors her activities and keeps her imprisoned. At last, she dies in his cell. This sort of social crime also originates from the repressed libido, accumulated in the id.

Hamlet's tragedy carries both the individual and social hazard of the libidinal suppression. He subdued all of his instinctual force toward opposite sex because his mother becomes the symbol of archetypal woman for him. Since she could remarry Claudio, his uncle, he generalizes this incident and hence rejects Ophelia's love. Until his mother is alive, he cannot act because he is busy brooding over the female nature. After she dies as the consequence of the poisoned drink, he understands Claudio is the responsible one behind all this. Therefore, he slays his uncle. As he has been already cut in his arm with poisoned sword, he too dies. Due to the repression, he fails to act on time. Consequently, the promising prince of Denmark dies without anybody of his line to succeed the Danish throne.

In *Othello*, the calamity brought by the repression at the individual level has been depicted. The major issue is sexual jealousy. Iago, the ensign to the moor, successfully projects himself into Othello. Hence, he is poisoned with the belief that Desdemona is not sexually faithful to him. Since the object of hatred is mother in *Hamlet*, the repressed slows down the action; whereas the object hatred turns out to be wife in *Othello*, so Othello is quick to act. The superego is more powerful in Hamlet but Othello has more powerful id. To be totally on only one side as in above cases means to welcome catastrophe in our life. Therefore, we should be able to maintain balance between these two extremes with the help of the ego, which functions on the basis of reality principle.

Reality is what different people find same, in a broader sense. The next dimension of the mind that keeps the superego and the id in equilibrium is the ego. It lets ideas that accord

with outer reality emerge in the consciousness. Since the repression of sexual desires leads to various kinds of dangerous situation in life, the power of the ego must be sustained in balance. It helps to minimize the conflict between the extremes to a certain extent.

Other measures to avoid absolute repression must also be adopted in order to live a mentally healthy life. Sex is natural. Therefore, longings for it are natural. It is better to provide expression to such feelings and emotions through creative and scientific works. Having to spend life without a sexual partner for a long time can create problems; hence, due attention must be paid to such things.

To sum up, the pitfalls of repression are many; still, they are categorized in two groups: individual and social. Both lead human society to chaos as illustrated in above examples. In fact, it is wise to act on the recommendations of the ego than to go for extremes.

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