T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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Ph.D THESIS

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ONAY FORMU

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this thesis document "Family Conflicts in the Plays of Eugene O'Neill, Sam Shepard and Harold Pinter" has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical values. I also declare that, as required by these rules and values, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results, which are not original to this thesis. (22/06/2021).

Ayşe Gülsüm KARAALİOĞLU

To my Family, my source of constant encouragement, strength, and motivation…

FOREWORD

Even though the idea for a doctoral thesis and its writing may belong to an author, the labor of making such kind of a work a reality cannot be accomplished without a great deal of assistance. It is a pleasure to thank the wonderful people without whom this thesis would never have been. I feel the honour of expressing my thanks to all.

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June 2021 **Ayşe Gülsüm KARAALİOĞLU**

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FAMILY CONFLICTS IN THE PLAYS OF EUGENE O'NEILL, SAM SHEPARD AND HAROLD PINTER

ABSTRACT

This study aims at clarifying the nature of the family dynamics in the 20th century drama, by focusing on the aggressive and abusive attitudes in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Sam Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class*, and Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming*. And, by this way, it aims at building a bridge between American theatre and British theatre. All three plays, which are written in the period following the onset of World War II, are not only among the most representative examples to concentrate on when illustrating the unharmonious state of the familial bonds, but also among the ones which show the reflections and the probable, potential, consequences of a battle, the effects and echoes of which can be seen and sensed all over the globe.

At the heart of the thesis will be the wasteland image of the families which tear themselves apart from the inside. The family members are entangled in a seemingly endless struggle for power and control; however, theirs is not a Machiavellian world where one pitilessly deceives the other, following a series of dishonest strategies and tactics. In an unfortunate sort of way, the families are unable to function the way they are supposed to; and, the family members to whom the audience is introduced lack the ability to attain peace and harmony. Alps on alps arise when one can find no single character who might be referred to as 'an example of who and what individuals should all aspire to be'. Émile Durkheim, whose ideas on family marked a turning point in the history of sociology, viewed the family as one of the most important social institutions; and, it is this fact which will initially be used to bring out the diversions from the ideal family picture, since the actions stand in stark contrast to what is referred to as acceptable. The families in the plays are paradoxical unions, life-giving, nurturing, consoling, protective, destructive, inoperative, but above all necessary, inescapable.

With the sole intention of being able to set the scene, the defining characteristics of the era in question will be brought to the forefront; and, the common features of the families – such as tension, dispossession, self-deception, instinctive impulses, personal and interpersonal dilemmas, obstacles, obsessions, emotional burnout, fragmented and disordered selves, parental neglect and ineffectiveness, toxic and narcissistic members, the cycle of intergenerational transmission and legacies, the desire to escape from reality, the endless and hopeless effort to overcome the trauma of a non-functioning unit, violence and the point of no return, the revelation of unpleasant truths, the ethical values which turn upside down, the financial difficulties, the 'in vain' struggle for adaptation to the world around, the seemingly never-ending questions of existence, the sugar-coated announcements, the 'supposed' dominance of men in almost every sphere, and the 'sui generis' counterattack, self-assertion, of the female sex – will be discussed in all their fundamental details. The dividing line between the pre-war period and the post-war period deserves considerable attention while illuminating the possible reasons behind the deeds of the characters. In this context, to shed new light on the family relationships, the distracting behaviours – and, at certain parts of transition, repetitive utterances – will specifically be highlighted.

Being in the presence of others, being with other human beings, which is the actual basis of social life, is what becomes problematic as an existentiale. The apparently damned characters, who struggle to acquire an identity by avoiding victimization and nothingness, are not able to move forward in the existential hell of self-conscious paralysis. In this context, Jean-Paul Sartre's ideas about the look and the perpetual ontological struggle of being caused to see oneself as an object from the view of another consciousness, and his *Huis Clos (No Exit)* – the predecessor of the theatre of the absurd, and the source of his famous quotation "Hell is – other people!" – constitute another point of departure for the explanation of the relationships in the plays. The utterly transcendental situation of hell hints at the picture where one becomes the other's torturer; and, the feeling of being on the threshold of death, and the thought, retrospection, that death makes possible gives expression to the particular process whereby one's own life becomes an absolute object of examination.

While approaching the whole matter of the causes of the domestic unrest, the psychoanalytic theory and its building blocks will also be used, as the problematic relationships are mainly the by-products of the functioning of the human psyche. By starting with the individual profiles of the families, and by proceeding with the excavation of the possible psychic reflections and influences, and by resorting to Sigmund Freud's, the Austrian neurologist's, belle vue, his distinct view, of the unconscious, the psychological drama of the families will be underlined. The inconsistency, which is visible at first sight, is, up to an extent, an inescapable outcome of what is repressed in the unconscious. The conflicts between the id, the ego, and the superego, the psychic war between the cathexes and the anti-cathexes, the traces of the Oedipus complex and the Electra complex, and the extreme cases closely connected with the 'Nirvana principle' – which seeks rest, vacuity, and an ultimate release from the antinomies, contradictions, of existence, from the cycle of existence into a state of non-activity – will be explained within the framework of family relationships.

Since the atmospheres depicted in the plays, quite explicitly, display unethical and unhomely characteristics, during the course of analysis, the utmost psychological emphasis will be laid on the manoeuvres as filtered through Freud's work which is entitled *Jenseits des Lust-Prinzips (Beyond the Pleasure Principle)*. Since the monumental treatises of some other psychoanalysts are like extensions and reinterpretations of the work of Freud, and since they can shed light on the diversity of the family relationships, they will also be given place. And therefore, at particular phases, Carl Gustav Jung's theory, Jacques Lacan's views on the superiority of patriarchy, and the psychoanalytically-oriented views of the, mostly French, feminists will be used. Owing to the fact that the chosen plays all involve aspects concerning the inner workings of the unconscious mind, they lay a profound psychological portrait before the eyes of the audience; and, this makes it a valid enough reason to consider how war-related issues are transferred into the domestic environment. As any small society inherently has the same characteristics as the much larger system encircling it, the dynamics of the families under scrutiny will tell something about the dynamics of all, and thus, about the general portrait of the 20th century familial institution. As man is a microcosm – a reflection of the great cosmos in miniature – the detailed study of the individuals will give ideas about the more general, the macrocosm.

Keywords: *Violence*, *Existential issues*, *Psychological problems*, *Pleasure principle*, *Nirvana principle.*

EUGENE O'NEILL, SAM SHEPARD VE HAROLD PINTER'IN OYUNLARINDAKİ AİLE İÇİ ÇATIŞMALAR

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Eugene O'Neill'in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Sam Shepard'ın *Curse of the Starving Class* ve Harold Pinter'ın *The Homecoming* adlı oyunlarındaki agresif ve istismarcı tavırlar üzerine yoğunlaşarak, yirminci yüzyıl oyunlarındaki aile dinamiğinin temelinde yatan gerçeklere ışık tutmayı, ve bu şekilde, Amerikan tiyatrosu ve İngiliz tiyatrosu arasında bir köprü kurmayı amaçlamaktadır. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın başlangıcını takip eden dönemde yazılmış olan bu üç oyun, hem ahengi bozulmuş aile bağlarını göstermeleri açısından odaklanılması gereken en belirleyici örnekler arasında yer almaktadır, hem de etkileri ve yankıları tüm dünyada gözlemlenen ve hissedilen bir savaşın yansımalarını ve olası, potansiyel, olumsuz sonuçlarını gözler önüne seren eserler içerisindedir.

Kendilerini içten içe paramparça eden ailelerin kısır görüntüsü bu tezin özünü oluşturacaktır. Aile fertleri güç ve kontrolü ele geçirebilmek için, sonu gelmeyen bir savaşa tutulmuşlardır; ancak, yaşamakta oldukları dünya, birinin bir diğerini, birtakım aldatıcı stratejiler ve taktikler kullanarak acımasızca kandırdığı Makyavelci bir dünya değildir. Talihsiz bir şekilde, aileler olması gerektiği gibi işleyememektedirler; ve, izleyici karşısındaki aile fertleri barış ve uyum sağlayabilme konusunda yetkin değillerdir. Oyunlarda, 'ideal bir kişi', 'kim ve nasıl bir insan olunması gerektiğini gösteren bir örnek' bulunmadığı hallerde, durum daha da ciddi bir hale bürünür. Aileyle ilgili fikirleri sosyoloji tarihinde bir dönüm noktası oluşturan Émile Durkheim, aile kurumunu en önemli sosyal kurumlardan biri olarak değerlendirmiştir; ve, ideal aile resminden sapmaları ortaya çıkarırken bu gerçekten yola çıkılacaktır, çünkü oyunlardaki eylemler ve toplumun 'kabul edilebilir' olarak tanımladığı eylemler taban tabana bir zıtlık teşkil etmektedirler. Oyunlardaki aileler – hayat veren, besleyen, teskin eden, koruyucu kollayıcı, yıkıcı, işlevini yitirmiş, ancak tüm bunlara karşın, gerekli ve terkedilmesi mümkün olmayan – paradoksal birliklerdir.

İçinde bulunulan ortamı en belirgin şekilde sergileyebilmek gayesiyle, çalışmanın odak noktasını oluşturan dönemin belirleyici özellikleri ön plana çıkarılacaktır; ve, ailelerin – gerginlik, ait olmama duygusu, kendini kandırma, içgüdüsel tetikleyiciler, kişisel ve kişiler arası ikilemler, engeller, takıntılar, duygusal yıkım, parçalanmış ve bozuk benlikler, ebeveyn ihmali ve yetersizliği, zararlı ve narsist fertler, nesillerden nesillere aktarılan kalıtlar döngüsü, gerçekten kaçma arzusu, işlevini yitirmiş bir kurum travmasının üstesinden gelebilmek için sarfedilen sonsuz ve umutsuz çaba, şiddet ve geri dönüşü mümkün olmayan noktası, hoş olmayan gerçeklerin uluorta açıklanması, tepetaklak olan etik değerler, maddi zorluklar, gerçek dünyaya ayak uydurmadaki 'boşuna' gayret, sonu gelmeyen varoluşsal sorular sualler, kötü anlamı bir şekilde kamufle edilmeye çalışılmış sözler, hayatın hemen hemen her alanında erkeğin baskın sayılması, ve karşı cins olan kadının kendine özgü karşı koyması ve kendini ifade etmesi gibi – ortak özellikleri tüm önemli detaylarıyla tartışılacaktır. Karakterin davranışlarının arkasında yatan nedenleri irdeleme aşamasında, savaş-öncesi ve savaş-sonrası dönemler arasındaki ayırıcı çizgi, dikkat çekilmesi gereken bir konudur. Bu bağlamda, aile ilişkilerini aydınlığa kavuşturabilmek için, rahatsız edici davranışlar – ve, bazı konu geçişlerinde, tekrarlanan sözler – özellikle vurgulanacaktır.

Bir var oluş hali olarak sorun teşkil eden şey, sosyal yaşamın temelini oluşturan, başka bireylerin huzurunda olma, başka insanlarla bir arada olma durumunun kendisinden başka bir şey değildir. Esaretten ve hiçlik duygusundan kaçınarak, bir kimlik edinme çabasında olan, kör talihli oldukları aşikâr olan karakterler, bilinçlerinin adeta felç olduğu varoluşsal cehennemde ilerleyememektedirler. Bu bağlamda, Jean Paul Sartre'ın, bir bireyin kendini diğer bir bilincin perspektifinden görmek zorunda bırakılmasının bakış ve daimi ontolojik çabası hakkındaki fikirleri, absurd tiyatonın öncüsü olan *Huis Clos (No Exit)* adlı eseri, ve ünlü "Cehennem, diğer insanlardır!" sözünün kaynağı, oyunlardaki ilişkileri açıklarken, bir başka çıkış noktası oluşturmaktadır. Cehennemin tamamen transandantal olan hali, bir kişinin diğer bir kişinin işkencecisi olmasına işaret etmektedir; ve, ölümün eşiğinde olma duygusu, ve ölümün mümkün hale getirdiği düşünce, geçmişe bakış, bir insanın kendi hayatının mutlak inceleme nesnesine dönüştüğü süreci dile getirmektedir.

Aile içi huzursuzluğun nedenlerine bir bütün olarak yaklaşılırken, ayrıca – problemli ilişkilerin, büyük ölçüde, insan zihninin işleyişinin ortaya çıkardığı sonuçlar olmaları dolayısıyla – psikanalitik teori ve bu teorinin yapı taşları kullanılacaktır. Ailelerin kendilerine özgü profilleriyle başlamak, ve muhtemel aklî yansımaları ve etkileri irdeleyerek ilerlemek suretiyle, ve Avusturya'lı nörolog Sigmund Freud'un, oldukça yaygın olarak bilinen, bilinçaltıyla ilgili fikrine başvurmak suretiyle, ailelerin psikolojik dramalarının altı çizilecektir. İlk bakışta kendini belli eden tutarsızlık, belli bir noktaya kadar, bilinçaltında baskılanan duyguların kaçınılmaz sonucudur. Id, ego ve süperego arasındaki çatışmalar, kateksis ve anti-kateksis arasındaki zihnî savaş, Oedipus kompleksinin ve Elektra kompleksinin izleri, ve – bir dinlenme, bir boşluk arayışında olan, varoluşun antinomilerinden, karşıtlıklarından, nihai kurtuluşu amaçlayan, varoluş döngüsünden eylemsizlik durumuna geçme halini hedef edinen – Nirvana ilkesiyle bağlantılı olan uç noktadaki durumlar aile ilişkileri çerçevesinde açıklanacaktır.

Oyunlarda resmi çizilen atmosferler açık seçik bir biçimde etik olmayan ve eve ait olmayan özellikler gösterdikleri için, analiz boyunca, en büyük psikolojik vurgu – Freud'un *Jenseits des Lust-Prinzips (Beyond the Pleasure Principle)* isimli eserinin süzgecinden geçirilmek suretiyle – manevralar üzerinde olacaktır. Büyük ilmî eserlerinin Freud'un çalışmalarının bir nevi uzantısı ve yeniden yorumlaması olması nedeniyle, ve çapraşık aile ilişkilerine ışık tutabilmeleri nedeniyle, bazı diğer psikanalistlerin fikirlerine de yer verilecektir. Ve dolayısıyla, belli safhalarda, Carl Gustav Jung'un teorisi, Jacques Lacan'ın ataerkilliğin üstünlüğü konusuyla alakalı düşünceleri, ve, çoğunluğu Fransız olan, psikanaliz eğilimli feministlerin düşünceleri kullanılacaktır. Seçilmiş olan oyunların tamamı, bilinçdışı aklın iç faaliyetleriyle ilgili özellikleri olması nedeniyle, tiyatro seyircisinin gözleri önüne hatırı sayılır bir psikolojik portre sergilemektedir; ve, bu da savaş-ilintili konuların aile yaşam alanına nasıl transfer edildiğini muhakeme etmek için yeterince geçerli bir sebeptir. Her küçük toplum, doğası gereği, onu çevreleyen çok daha büyük olan sistemin özelliklerini taşıması nedeniyle, incelenen ailelerin dinamiği, bütünün dinamiği – ve dolayısıyla, 20. yüzyıl aile kurumunun genel portresi – hakkında bilgi verecektir. İnsanın bir mini-evren, diğer bir deyişle, büyük evrenin minyatür bir yansıması olmasından ötürü, bireylerin detaylı araştırılması daha genel olan, kainat, hakkında fikir verecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Şiddet*, *Varoluşsal durumlar*, *Psikolojik sorunlar*, *Haz ilkesi*, *Nirvana ilkesi.*

1. INTRODUCTION

It was Bernard Shaw who wrote his masterpiece, *Heartbreak House*, in immediate reaction, response, to the war going on in the years 1916 and 1917; but, with an intention in mind, he chose to conceal that immediacy by disguising the particular dramatic work "as a monitory image of prewar complacency", as a picture of that disapproving emotion of calm satisfaction. In the period following the end of the war, while the repercussions of the unprecedented military disaster were still being felt, it was received with a blend of the negative feelings of "incomprehension and disgust". The situation being so, there was no option, for the play, other than waiting for another, more globally threatened time to find an audience for what was then interpreted as "its apocalyptic warning of catastrophe", of sudden destruction. (Grene 2014, p. 82). In Ellie Dunn's, one of Shaw's characters', words, the environment in question is "[a] silly house, [a] strangely happy house, [an] agonizing house, [a] house without foundations. I shall call it Heartbreak House" (cited in Unwin & Woddis 2001, p. 41).

Echoing the above-mentioned points, in parallelism with the given facts, writing in the years 1940 and 1941, during World War II itself, Eugene O'Neill consciously constructed a unique time capsule of private life. He, likewise, created a specific milieu and period, this time, an Irish-American family in 1912 with all the inheritance of its history; and, in wanting, stipulating, the play to be published two and a half decades after his passing away, he set up his time capsule to be opened long after the moments of composition. Had his wife, his widow, Carlotta Monterey O'Neill, not decided to disregard the embargo that had been put on it, it would have been in 1978, not 1956, that *Long Day's Journey into Night* received its premiere, its first public performance. Considering its specific time, its action viewed down the telescope of the years (Grene 2014, p. 82).

Studies on the history of humanity commonly reveal that some instabilities have roots in two globally threatening, tempestuous events: World War I which started on 28 July 1914 and ended on 11 November 1918, and World War II which started on 1 September 1939 and ended on 2 September 1945. The distress and corruption they led to, the stir they caused on the universal plane, is frequently reflected in literature, in

society, and thus, in the family structure and atmosphere. Individuals are forced to face the fundamental fact of their identities; after all, they are not natural, spontaneous individuals but subjects of a certain culture which defines them. As an extension of this cultural issue, at this stage, one is obliged to come up with satisfying responses to a set of specific questions: In the post-war era, if the world was being created anew by a new mentality, if this was the case, who seemed to have authoritative manners, who was part of the creating team, and where did the ultimate power lie? As new social and political rules changed, who was the one in charge of making the rules to be obeyed, and how did the dramatic works suggest ways of living in this new, constantly shifting world? If all the formerly familiar terms are being altered, is everyone an outsider, or are some individuals more outsiders than others? And, to what extent, do these aspects show themselves within the boundaries of the domestic environment, and how do they affect the relationships between the members of the nuclear family?

The summer of 1914 not only "brought [World War I] and mechanized slaughter, triggering a [very] long struggle for dominance in Europe which was only resolved by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989", but also "brought a[n] [inevitable] questioning of the social order which led to both the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the widespread nationalist, pacifist and socialist ideals." The controversy – that is, the willingness to fight versus the unwillingness to fight – led to unrest among some circles, and eventually to a worldwide chaos. In America, the "industrial might", the production power, "marched onwards". Meanwhile, in Europe, the savage struggle between labour and capital was eventually brought home to Britain in the General Strike of 1926. "[T]he new Soviet Union was [obviously] consumed by the practical consequences of its revolution and in [Joseph] Stalin found a leader whose purges and persecutions took terror to unprecedented heights." The Great Crash of 1929 – namely, the Wall Street Crash – and the Depression, and the economic chaos which followed, "unleashed Fascism in Germany, Italy and Spain, as well as timidity in the West, which initially failed to challenge this new [mode of] barbarism" (Unwin, in Unwin & Woddis, 2001, p. vii). Under such circumstances, humanity suffered; and, as a matter of fact, the social unit of family was unable to emerge from the unharmonious state unaffected and unwounded.

While some mentalities were labouring under the illusion that the chaos would come to an end, some others were lost in dreams which were all later shattered. "[T]he bubble

of prosperity [subsequently] burst"; and, the American Dream of continuously-increasing success, the independence to follow personal targets together with "a close community ethos", the search for happiness, love and the close nature of family bonds, appeared "to be just that: a dream" (Shiach 2007, p. 12). The world was surrounded and consumed by nothing, but a state of total confusion and lack of order; the society, which was previously on the verge of corruption, became permanently plagued; and, these negativities, in turn, gave harm to the institution of the family.

It is an undeniable fact that the effect of World War II was much more massive. "The world plumbed . . . [formerly non-existent] depths in man's inhumanity to man, whether in the Nazi Holocaust or on the Russian front", and with the development and sudden use of nuclear weapons the human race became for the first time, in history, capable of destroying itself, without mercy, without pity. World War II also "brought profound changes in industrial production and social structure", and the tormenting doubt, "the scepticism, pessimism and democratic questioning" (Unwin, in Unwin & Woddis, 2001, p. viii). The big masses doubted the truth and value of the set of beliefs and ideas; and, the tendency to emphasize the bad part rather than the good part, and uncertainties came to the forefront as the typical, defining, characteristics of the particular era. The global circumstances being like this, literary characters showing the aggressive, "bloody . . . [parts], [corners], of life" (Hinchliffe 1967, p. 157) may well be considered and interpreted as an extension of the highly destructive combat on the world stage.

At the end of the fourth decade of the 20th century, in 1940, the attitude America showed towards the war in Europe was mostly ambivalent. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was then the President, referred to the U.S. as the "arsenal of democracy" – ready to provide Britain with the necessary weapons and equipments – and, simultaneously assured his citizens that the U.S. would not be actively involved. Nevertheless, the situation was reversed by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour and the, eventual, U.S. declaration of war in December 1941. The step-by-step progression from the pre-war state to the while-war state shows that "1940 was a moment of isolation, in which the old world seemed to be descending into darkness while America kept herself aloof" (Unwin & Woddis 2001, p. 93). This was the atmosphere in which O'Neill wrote *Long Day's Journey into Night*; and, this was the atmosphere in which absurd theatre was born.

Absurd theatre, which is the expression of the common consciousness created by certain societal conditions and cultural accumulation, and which tells about the psychological situation of the ones who lived during World War II, is the umbrella term under which the selected plays of O'Neill, Shepard and Pinter can be brought together. After the war came a period of hopelessness; the human idea was paralysed due to the enormous forces which the human beings were not able to understand; and, the source of the pressure they felt deep within seemed to be beyond their comprehension. The death of millions, mass killings, the splitting of the atom, and the destruction caused in cities were more than frightening. The feelings associated with fear and lack of trust, the reasons of which were more or less known, were replaced with a meaningless anxiety and depression, and the sense of vain. The hope for a better world was replaced with the acceptance of the irreparable, eternal, fragmentation. Individuals felt as if they were in a never-ending exile in this world of paradoxes (Şener 1998, p. 298).

As the above-mentioned facts may well hint at, in the decades following the onset of World War II, there was the disappointment, the lengthening frustration with the existing forms of theatre; and, one of the "human problem[s] which reach[ed] a peak after the war is that of family disruption and disintegration" (Burgess 1944, p. 47). The apparent freedom and diversity of the contemporary theatre cannot be considered as a matter of pure chance or a coincidence; it is one of the major characteristics of the 20th century. The simultaneous desires – the rejection of tradition and the adventurous determination to leave no intellectual, moral or emotional stone unturned – are blended with a basic sense of confusion and fragmentation of experience. Arnold Aronson attracts attention to "[the] new spirit of iconoclasm", and, with the sole intention of illustration, points out that "[e]ven Holden Caulfield, the protagonist of [Jerome David] Salinger's [coming-of-age novel] . . . *The Catcher in the Rye* [published in 1951], had something to say about it" (2003, p. 42): "I did . . . [not] care . . . when anybody in the family . . . died or anything. They were all just a bunch of actors. . . . They did . . . [not] act like people and they did . . . [not] act like actors. It . . . [is] hard to explain" (Salinger 2010, p. 136).

In American culture, the post-war era was distinguished by a self-conscious sense of place in the world. Not only the ascendant economic growth, but also the feeling that the U.S.A. was responsible for winning World War II, did give Americans a sort of

self-confidence about their ability in leading the whole world. However, simultaneously, they had to struggle with the big question marks in their minds, as they continuously questioned their sufficiency in some other areas. In the post-war period, the dynamics of these two contradictory cultural sensibilities showed themselves, reaching a kind of climax during the 1960s and 1970s, when the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War set the desire to correct and improve certain things. Concerning the familial bonds, there was one thing for sure: The men who returned from the war could not handle, could not manage to cope with the requirements of domestic life. Leading a traditional family life was an absolutely hard task assigned to them, something bigger than themselves. As a matter of fact, nothing, but familial fragmentation could come to the forefront.

In the context of family relationships, some of the related issues which deserve emphasis are the resulting economic readjustment, an upswing in financial matters, the painful transition from wartime to peacetime employment, and the consequences of bad housing. The war, which brought unparalleled prosperity to America and the greatest fear to millions of what will happen after the war, paved the way for the creation of lonesome and restless wives who seek social life (Burgess 1944, pp. 47-48); and, this, in turn, led to a desperate search for ways of self-expression. It was only after the coming of some forms of new societal regulations that the female sex could win spectacular symbols of equality. The rise of the women as a counter force, the way the matriarchs counterattack the patriarchs, is a point which attracts considerable attention in the dramatic works under scrutiny.

The aim of this thesis is to explain the nature of the domestic problems in the 20th century, by focusing on the aggressive and abusive attitudes in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Sam Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class*, and Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming*. This study which is limited to three of the most representative family plays will mainly concentrate on the domestic unrest – and thus, the problematic relationships, and verbal, emotional, and physical violence – and look at the multi-dimensional matter from three different perspectives: The focus will be on how the sociological, psychological, and existential issues fit into the fabric of the works that portray individuals on the verge of corruption.

'War-related, societal, psychic, and existential issues combine to reflect the domestic unrest in the selected plays of O'Neill, Shepard and Pinter.' This being the thesis

statement, the consequences coming with the start of the war, the abnormalities that fall beyond the confines and boundaries of the social unit of family, the underlying psychological implications, and the existential capacity behind the chosen dramatic works will be brought out. The actions, reactions, and interactions which, under normal circumstances, the human senses find disturbing will be underlined; and, the common denominators will be shown. The layers of meaning will be clarified by providing satisfying responses to three interrelated research questions: In the sociological context, how do the family profiles and portrayals differ from the ideal family picture? What unresolved psychological issues can be seen and sensed in the communication of abuse? How is the existential fear – and, by extension, the attempts at bolstering one's identity – reflected in the domestic environment of the plays?

The idea of the historical, sociological, psychological, and existential aspects behind O'Neill's work cannot be thought of as something new, but the relationship of his work to Shepard's and Pinter's can be relatively referred to as a new field of study. O'Neill lays a profound psychological portrait before the eyes of the audience, by 'digging at the roots of today's illness', and by "presenting variations of the archetypal waste land image" (Engel 1953, pp. 298-99); and, this is what is basically done by Shepard and Pinter. The more shady parts – tension, dispossession, self-deception, instinctive impulses, personal and interpersonal dilemmas, obstacles, obsessions, emotional burnout, fragmented and disordered selves, parental neglect and ineffectiveness, toxic and narcissistic members, the cycle of intergenerational transmission and legacies, the desire to escape from reality, the endless and hopeless effort to overcome the trauma of a non-functioning unit, violence and the point of no return, the revelation of unpleasant truths, the ethical values which turn upside down, the financial difficulties, the 'in vain' struggle for adaptation to the world around, the seemingly never-ending questions of existence, the sugar-coated announcements, the 'supposed' dominance of men in almost every sphere, and the 'sui generis' counterattack, self-assertion, of the female sex – will be under the spotlight. The focus will be on how these factors, which are encountered within the structure of the plays, come together, pile up, and eventually lead to unrest among the individuals living under the same roof.

The American style had a remarkable aspect in the 1950s: The apparent commonality of the transparent scenery and the concentration of theatre on the personal concerns and psychological problems of the individual rather than on the social issues that

loomed large in that particular decade, one of which was the McCarthyism. In spite of the appreciation and the international respect felt for O'Neill, it was after World War II that American drama could take its rightful place in the world repertoire and have the privilege to enjoy a time of dominance on the world stage. Quite visibly, the majority of the playwrights tended to use the common techniques of the two coexisting aesthetics, realism and modernism, in order to enrich their works. As time passed by, psychology-related topics gained a greater and greater significance; and, themes revolving around the institution of the family were deliberately chosen. To exemplify, related to the latter point, the family of extremes Shepard portrays in his play is like an extension of the one O'Neill portrays in his, as both have psychological sides which can never be set aside. O'Neill – one of the guiding dramatists using the American vernacular with the intention of focusing on characters that are marginalized by society – brought not only psychological realism, but also social realism to the American theatre; and, some others, including the American Shepard and the British Pinter, followed in his footsteps. The reason behind the preference for focusing on familial bonds is to show the extent of the familial fragmentation and the psychological unrest in the era, the beginning of which is marked by World War II. As Susan C. W. Abbotson points out, around that time, the human race was "[d]epressed by the onset of World War II" (2005, p. 100).

Michelene Wandor claims that "[a]t the grass roots level" of daily life, post-war society had a dramatic sort of influence on the institution of the family, that "[a]n extensive rehousing programme" rubbed away the safety, of a great number of "working-class communities and attenuated family networks", that [n]ew technological consumer affluence brought labour-saving devices for the housewife, . . . all the things that [individuals] now take for granted", and that the woman was "isolate[d] [and thus, forced to suffer from solitude] . . . at the centre of her individual family" (1993, pp. 7-8). It is true that this led to a raise in women's voice in Britain in the 1960s, but there was one more inevitable end result; and, it is equally functional in our case: The psychological state of the families, and the way it is reflected in the plays. Wandor argues that the family is at the core of the ways women's complex, complicated, "sense of identity and [various] life choices are constructed (Marriage or not? Sexuality in what context? To work or not to work? One job or two? Children or not? When? And so on)", that the family is also "the formative influence" and effect "behind the ways

in which male identity is constructed", and that "issues of power and patriarchal authority, the bread-winner, [and] what kind of fathering" are all important factors (2001, p. 36). It is family which molds and shapes personal identity, and equips individuals with the necessary norms and values; and, a study which digs and delves into the untraditional qualities – characteristics which contradict, which fall beyond the acceptable – can contribute to the task of the clarification of the war-related points, societal problems, mental processes, and existential matters.

In addition to the above-mentioned issues, Wandor writes about what wartime service meant for the male sex, how the men belonging to this category were obliged to take care of themselves, how they acquired a series of domestic skills, and how they formed a second image, besides their "macho heroic image of the soldier" (2001, p. 29). In the plays chosen, there are no soldiers; there is no one who returns from the war; however, the patriarchs have interestingly taken on new identities; they do things which are generally done by matriarchs, which means that the war atmosphere is frequently between the lines. In Shepard's play, there is a father who willingly and meticulously does the housework; and, in Pinter's play, it is the father, the supposed head of the house, who, in the kitchen, cooks for the family.

When considered within the sociological framework, the problem at the core is the incapability of individuals to maintain close relationships and live peacefully in communities. Émile Durkheim, whose ideas on family marked a quite remarkable turning point in the history of sociology, viewed the family as a very significant social institution, and gave place to the sociology of the family within the broad area of "juridical sociology and the science of moral phenomena" (Harry Alpert cited in Bynder 1969, p. 527). After all, it is this particular institution which ultimately forms the bigger crowd, which is referred to as 'society'. Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi points out that "[i]deas [form] the source of social life, its sine qua non", and that "[a] shared community [means] shared representations, common ways to see the world" (2014, p. 46). In the plays chosen, the leaning, the inclination, towards unacceptable behaviours – which result from inappropriate ideas – leads to fragmentation within the household; and, the strategies the individuals use to cope with the world around are more or less the same. According to Durkheim, the distinct thing which unites human beings into society is a common way of considering, "of picturing things" to their selves (cited in Falasca-Zamponi 2014, p. 46). In the plays which will be dealt with in details, it is, at

times, the strained system of thought, mentality, that takes the family members further away from the ideal family picture.

At a time in between the two world wars, in his 1925 prose text entitled *General Security: The Liquidation of Opium*, the French Surrealist 'prophet' Antonin Artaud urges desperate people – ones who are tortured in body and soul – to forget about all hope. He puts forward his view that there can be no solace in the world where such kind of people are condemned to live; and, he specifically refers to their flesh, by using the adjective "rotting" (in Sontag 1988, p. 101). As his words indicate, in times of emotional crisis, human beings may tend to give up all hope, be it major or minor. Nevertheless, the reverse side of the medal can never be disregarded: Without the presence of a ray of hope, dreams are sure to transform into disappointments, and the so-called life may turn out to be utterly unendurable. Each and every individual, like a sailor, owns an anchor which can assist him/her in his/her endeavours to stand still through the violent storms of life; and, this possession of them can be thought of as hope itself. Regarding the issue of the family, it is nothing other than pure hope which keeps sinking families afloat. Just as an anchor stays in one piece, an ideal, functional, family is a whole; and, its members are supposed to interact harmoniously with each other. Though this is a prerequisite, though this is necessary for things to come to fruition, in the plays chosen, the ships cannot escape the risk of sinking. The characters are aware of the fact that they are going deeper and deeper into the bottom of an ocean-like existence, at full speed; and, they are sure to end up being like the "pair of ragged claws / [s]cuttling across the floors of silent seas" in T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (2012, p. 2526).

When making comments about O'Neill's play and the illusion of hope, Olivia Coolidge writes: "No passing gleam of sunshine lights it up" (1966, p. 194). In parallelism with this statement, the very first word of the name of Shepard's play reveals a lot at the very first minute; and, as for Pinter's play, 'homecoming' is, without doubt, an intentional – to the point – pun, hiding some unconventional realities and unsolved problems behind. In one of his classic essays, Thomas Stearns Eliot claims that the more successful the artist, the more separate in him/her will be the person who suffers and the psyche that tries to create (1982, p. 40); and, this seems to be the situation reflected in the plays to be analysed.

In an interview with the filmmaker Michael Almereyda, Shepard himself openly said that he was greatly influenced by *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and added that there was something unusual about the family: "There was a demonic thing going on that" no one "could put their finger on." Everyone "knew the ship was sinking." Although the family members all took "desperate measures to stay afloat", they were altogether dragged towards the point of total failure. Despite every effort on the contrary, everyone "was going down", and no one knew why they were going down or how they were going down (n.d., n.p.). What is striking is that, in all three plays, the futility of the efforts causes everyone to go down; and, despite resorting to every possible, imaginable, way to get rid of the undesirable situation, the twisted families are, unfortunately, unable to sail again. As is normally, when confronted with unwanted conditions and occasions, people want to grab a helping hand which they never ever consider letting go; and, like the younger brother mentions and does in O'Neill's play, at times, a person may have to see himself/herself as "the sun [or] the hot sand, [or even as a] green seaweed anchored to a rock" (1956, p. 153). Needless to say, these are all for the sake of not losing that glimmer of hope, that slightest chance of hope. This point is a noteworthy one, as it instantly takes one to the territory of the human psyche, and thus, to the Freudian land, where feelings spurting from the unconscious gain a greater and greater significance.

One of the underlying triggering factors at the core of the family relationships, in the plays, is particularly associated with the activities of the unconscious mind. Lois Tyson points out that the familial unit is of great importance to psychoanalytic theory, due to the fact that individuals are all "product[s] of the role[s]" they are assigned within the structure of "the family-complex" (1999, p. 16). This implication hints at the fact that the distinct identities of individuals have an influence on the way they interact with each other. To state in a different way, within the confines of the theory itself, family has a pivotal conceptual role; and, in that context, the plays demonstrate a key psychological concept: The particular idea that family may define a person.

During the course of analysing the plays, one has to confront the challenging task of searching for someone who can manage to show psychologically consistent behaviours; however, after the quest, what becomes obvious is that no single character can escape the risk of falling to bits. In accordance with the explanations about the inability to sail, all three families are like leaky ships foundering alone at sea. As if

referring to this particular point, Travis Bogard argues that O'Neill has relied on a historical detail, by setting his play specifically in 1912: "[T]he sinking of the Titanic" may have "provided imagery" for the intensely alienated family (1988, n.p.). So striking and capturing are the links.

In order to lessen the burden, and the weight of the world on the shoulders, human beings may to have construct other worlds to live in, and to breath in; and, in these self-made worlds, they live in the midst of positivities, hopes, misty-eyed dreams, and so on. Carl Gustav Jung points out that "[h]istorically, it is mainly . . . during physical, political, economic, and spiritual distress" that people turn, with some glimmer of hope, to tomorrow, and during the moments when expectations, "utopias, and apocalyptic visions" accumulate (1990b, p. 3). And, he goes on to say that the image of the macrocosm is imprinted upon one's psychic nature. Although his desires forcefully pull him to different directions, man is eternally attached to the macrocosm by his instincts (p. 34). What is significant is that these issues all call to mind the situation of the characters in O'Neill, Shepard, and Pinter's plays. Clearly opposing the suppositions of the Western rationalism, Jung states that viewing the unconscious human mind as a storehouse of knowledge is not a delusion (1933, p. 185). Therefore, during the course of interpreting the relationships in the plays, the unconscious mind will be as telling as the consciousness, the late-born descendant of the unconscious psyche.

O'Neill underlines the psychological view that feelings are instinctive, that they directly arise from pure human instincts, that they are the result of not only one's own experiences, but also of the experiences of the entire human race, through the generations, through the long ages, and that these emotions are nothing, but "deep undercurrent" (O'Neill, in Carpenter 1964, p. 175). From Jung, O'Neill specifically took the concept of 'racial memory': Thoughts and instincts which are taken biologically from ancient ancestors, and which still give shape to the lives of individuals. According to Jung, in the collective unconscious, there lies "the species' [distinct] memories of humanity's past" (Bressler 2007, p. 150). Related to this point, in the part entitled *Haunting Ghosts: 1846-1912*, Arthur and Barbara Gelb directly quote O'Neill, who says that he is always aware of "the Force" which is close behind; and, by this force, he refers to such powers as "Fate, God, [and] [the] biological past" which creates one's present, one's current time (1962, p. 4). This particular force can

also be felt in the 'cursed' – and "biological[ly] trap[ped]" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 183) – family portrayed by Shepard, and in the wasteland portrayed by Pinter.

Young O'Neill was saddened by the belief that his mother – a woman who grew more withdrawn as her morphine addiction became more pronounced – was insane, a belief which forced him to question himself, and his own stability; he feared that the mental illness from which he believed his mother suffered might be hereditary (Cahill 1992, p. 6). In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud deals with one of the triggering 'Force[s]' which O'Neill mentions, and asserts that "[b]iology is truly a land of unlimited possibilities" (1989, p. 73). In addition to all these, in *Modern American Drama, 1945-2000*, in the part entitled *Sam Shepard: Imagining America*, C. W. E. Bigsby writes about the force of the heritage, the 'pull' of the elder generations, the great-great-great grandfathers:

> There is action in Shepard's plays. There are stories. But more than anything else they are explorations of emotional states, expressions of anxieties, disturbing journeys into the individual subconscious or the collective psyche of the tribe. No wonder he has said that he feels the pull of 'the ancient'. (Bigsby 2000b, p. 174)

The psychoanalytic details in the plays are so related that they can all be woven together. In his introduction to Freud's writings, A. A. Brill writes about Freud's view that human beings are the direct resultants, the by-products, of constitution, fate, heredity factors, and the surrounding environment; and, he states that the constitution – which a person brings with himself/herself from the previous centuries – can never be changed (1938, p. 3). For instance, in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, the mother's affliction, the suffering, that forms a ghost or a fog person from a quite normal flesh and blood human being, is a consequence of sheer coincidence, pure chance and circumstance; in *Curse of the Starving Class*, the atmosphere they are condemned to live forces the individuals to be the way they are; and, in *The Homecoming*, the themes are [g]eneration, [h]eredity, [f]amily, [and] [h]ome" (Morris 1966, p. 186).

Human helplessness is one of the aspects of life which is easier to ignore than to contemplate; and avoidance – ignorance to a certain extent – is apparent in life, and in the plays as well. Jak Deleon points out that "[man] wavers between despair and hope", past joys and current miseries, and that "[h]ope, like a thread, is very febrile", and is

in some cases "kept alive by ignorance" (1994, pp. 6-7). To be able to cope with the bombardment-like problems emerging in the violent or semi-violent environments they have to live in, the characters feel the urgent need to form some creations of their tempestuous minds: A sort of defense mechanism. Whenever the situation pushes them to do so, they resort to escapism and 'delusions' – one of "[t]he most [common] . . . psychopathological expressions" that involve "a deep-seated", severe, "disturbance" (Brill 1938, p. 21). To be able to sooth the soul, just to be at peace with the world surrounding them, the characters tend to use strategies of some sorts.

Related to the issue of the relaxation of the soul, Michael Abbott asserts that O'Neill and Shepard "share a 'touch of the poet,'" and that they use alcohol to allow "a special state of consciousness as well as an escape mechanism" for their characters. He goes on to say that both playwrights have sticked to the same technique: "[E]xploit[ing] the 'truth serum' quality of alcohol as a device to uncover the truth about a character or a situation" (1994, p. 197). At times, the mind must be set free; otherwise, psychic deterioration will occur, and bigger complications will be at the door, as problems all accumulate in the unconscious. In accordance with the latter point, Pinter's characters also resort to defense mechanisms.

In the works of the leading psychologists, O'Neill, whose 'haunted heroes' "sought the remoteness of the cosmos, the privacy of the womb, [and] the anonymity of the grave" (Engel 1953, p. 297), found modern scientific explanations for the trapped – and, at the same time, doomed – quality he felt in the experience of human beings. In the introduction he wrote for a critical work, Harold Bloom refers to O'Neill as "the elegist of the Freudian 'family romance,' of the domestic tragedy" of which human beings all die every day, "a little bit at a time." According to what Bloom says, "[t]he helplessness of family love to sustain, let alone heal, the wounds of marriage, of parenthood and sonship, have never been so remorselessly and so pathetically portrayed, and with a force of gesture too painful ever to be forgotten by any of us" (1987, p. 12).

When evaluated within the similar confines, Shepard's play can be interpreted as an extension of the extremity in familial bonds. Stephen J. Bottoms points out that Shepard's play seems concerned with the pressing "question[s] of why the . . . [familial unit] is a . . . [unit] at all, with what a . . . [familial unit] [really] is and how it holds together", if it can succeed in holding together (cited in Crank 2012, pp. 36-37).

Regarding the sexual aspects, Pinter's work is a far more extreme point of debate. "The founding of Pinterland is . . . one of the most significant achievements in post-war theatre. It's a place we all visit at times . . . We come upon it unexpectedly in what the world throws up or in what appears from within. . . . Pinterland is an island. Made of rock. It will take a long time for the sea to wear it down" (Dromgoole 2002, p. 228).

Constantly coming face to face with certain barriers and barricades, and with all the generational conflicts, the fragmented, never close-knit, families try to go ahead, and proceed in the arduous journey of life, in a supposedly determined way. There is the deeply flawed relationship within the members of the families that fight heart and soul to stay alive; and, most of the pain felt deep in the heart is a consequence of failure rather than malice. Related to the latter point, in the interview published in the *Saturday Review* on 8 April 1967, in his response to a question posed about *The Homecoming* – "Does this family represent a disintegration into pure evil?" – Pinter touches upon a point of vast importance. He says that the family members display calculated and violent behaviours not only towards one another, but also towards the son who returns after a six years of absence. He goes on to say that they do it just because of "the texture of their lives" and for some other reasons that are "not evil" at all, "but slightly desperate" (in Batty 2005, p. 120).

"[S]ome campaign for the legalisation of drugs assert . . . their power to expand the mind and open new worlds." And, apart from this fact, individuals tend to believe that alcohol encourages and brings violence and hate, and that dope encourages and brings peace and love. Drug taking, the connotations of which are generally negative, becomes particularly associated with rock music, and with utopian visions of a better world; and, what is more, an influential, an inspiring phrase used by the maverick American psychiatrist Timothy Leary becomes the one and only slogan: "Tune in, turn on, and drop out." Actually, 'dropping out' from mainstream society and values becomes a sort of aspiration and the rebellion of choice for many educated young people from middle-class homes. Some drop back in again the moment their holiday is over, whereas others insist on creating alternative lifestyles and continue to live in communes (Nicholson 2012, p. 6). Under such circumstances, the situation being like this, the set of behaviours displayed by fathers, mothers and siblings are not the ones to be appreciated, but the ones to be disapproved by mindsets which act in accordance with the social norms.

In the plays, there is a psychic war which can be sensed in the actions undertaken by the characters; and, related specifically to this aspect, one of the departure points will be Sigmund Freud's opinion that two forces – namely, the 'pleasure principle' and the 'reality principle' – are in competition within the human psyche. The cathexes, an individual's instinctual and psychic energy, aims at maximizing pleasure, as the ultimate goal of the pleasure principle is to get rid of all pain and suffering immediately. The pleasure principle – which not only craves instantaneous satisfaction of instinctual drives and desires, but also ignores moral and sexual limits that are clearly defined by society itself – is not allowed to reign independently in the psyche, since it is constantly checked by the anti-cathexes, which is an anti-charge of energy that is controlled by the reality principle, the part of the psyche which is aware of the need for societal standards, for some form of social restrictions. What needs to be questioned is the issue of the moral and sexual boundaries in the domestic environments of the plays. This discussion naturally leads to a further discussion of a sine qua non kind: That of the Oedipus complex. It is in that Oedipal land that one can discover the previously unconquered regions of the plays, the well-concealed meaning of the puzzle-like – and, at times, riddle-like – familial relationships, and the unavoidable role of the unconscious in the whole process.

One other symptom of family maladjustment is incest, since it does not conform to the socially acceptable attitudes and values. In case of incestuous relationships, normal family hierarchies which are based on age and sex are irreparably destroyed; and, as a result, the family falls on its head. In spite of the fact that incest is utilized in order to reduce repression and tension, and maintain balance within the family, resorting to it only points at the pathology of the family. According to Freud's theory of child development, children who are between the ages of three and six tend to develop sexual, or libidinal, feelings towards the parent of the other sex and violent feelings towards the parent of the same sex. This situation which, in boys, is called the 'Oedipus complex' – named after the legendary Theban Oedipus, who murdered his father and married his mother – can explicitly show itself in domestic settings. In line with this point, Pamela Thurschwell claims that, in the Oedipus myth, Freud found a form of a tragedy which can be observed in each and every family, even though "on a less dramatic scale" (2001, p. 47). In the plays, the extent, or degree, of this complex varies. Be that as it may. Whether major or minor, the details have to be given in conjunction

with the family dynamics, since the complex in question has something to do with one of the ways of exploitation, namely 'sexual abuse'.

According to what Michelene Wandor says, women were no more "as inevitably tied to child-bearing roles as their mothers", as their elders had been. For the male sex, sexual pleasure and procreation had always more easily been two different alternatives; and, women – for the first time – were confronting a situation where those choices could become not only a "biological" reality, but also a "social reality" for them too. Wandor underlines the fact that the decade which was referred to as the 'Swinging Sixties' made it quite possible for the female sex to have more sexual freedom than they used to have, and therefore, "more sexual power" (2001, p. 28). In Pinter's 1965 play – where "[d]ecorum and normal social interaction" become bits and pieces, and take with them traditional morality, and eventually reveal archetypal Oedipal desires" (Peacock 1997, p. 83) – the characters are controlled by their pure instincts, that is, their energetic, bodily drives to certain sorts of action. Martin Esslin points out that the sons are "proud [of] [being] [in] possession of the mother's sexuality" (2004, p. 257), and that the very last image is the culmination – in a way, the achievement – of "[the sons'] Oedipal dreams." Their mother has finally become available to them as a sex object, as a sexual partner; and, the father – who is "grovel[ling] on the [ground]", making emotional statements, and requesting "some scraps of her sexual favours" – is obviously defeated, by being reduced to animal docility (2000, p. 143).

In *A Room and Some Views: Harold Pinter*, John Russell Taylor puts forward his view that Pinter's play is about the war "between intellect and instinct, between thought and action" (1969, p. 354). Irrationality – and therefore, appetite – precedes rationality; and, there is a void of animalistic struggle. Simon Trussler goes much further, and interprets one of the men as a kind of "contemporised Oedipus, who's been sleeping with his mother-substitute but loses her to the father he hasn't got the guts to kill" (in Scott 1986, p. 183). According to Richard Schechner, a woman is brought home in order "to be devoured"; the opaque kind of language is mirror-like, immediately reflecting back not only on the character who is speaking, but on each and every member of the family; and, the world of the dramatic work can appropriately be described as "a beautifully orchestrated sextet" (1966, p. 183). The central image is the "lioness" posing before the eyes of a group of men; and, what keeps the family

together as a unit, as a sociological institution, is "a warlock of antagonism, a sense of threat" which is sustained by verbal combat and assault. More-than-necessary self-searching, more-than-necessary introspection, leads to nothing other than lack of communication. The minor communicative efforts – if there is any – are even accompanied by violence (Deleon 1994, p. 60). The family members all play at each other's complete destruction; and, there is a father figure who responds to filial demands not because he feels any moral obligation, but just because he desires to remain the head of the family.

Bringing her psychoanalytically-oriented views to the forefront, and emphasizing the 'supposed' contradictory nature of the two sexes, Hélène Cixous asserts that binary oppositions such as "[a]ctivity/[p]assivity, [s]un/[m]oon, [c]ulture/[n]ature, [d]ay/[n]ight, [f]ather/[m]other, [h]ead/[h]eart, [i]ntelligible/[p]alpable, [l]ogos/[p]athos" (in Belsey and Moore 1997, p. 91) struggle with each other for the sole purpose of becoming the supreme one; and, the fact that the winner is always the masculine is an evidence of 'phallocentrism'. When the latter term is combined with Jacques Derrida's 'logocentrism' – the hierarchical structure of winner-takes-all – 'phallogocentrism' is what comes out; and, when applied to society in general, it refers to the one who attempts to control by using social and sexual power. At a metaphorical level, the operation of language is chiefly organized by nothing, but the phallus. And, Cixous argues that woman is not included in this process and procedure, since her relation to the symbol of power – that is, the phallus – is, at all times, one of lack. The situation of the woman characters can never be fully illuminated without giving place to ideas on phallocentrism. With these facts in the background, women are represented outside the symbolic, in her own terms, that is, in terms of her body.

As is known, following the war, the very specific idea of honesty in art became one of the most pervasive themes in all disciplines. The overwhelming sense, which was explicitly traceable in the mainstream culture, was that the important institutions of society were not only false, misleading and dishonest, but also disturbing, distracting and destructive. The fact that Shepard was "[h]eavily influenced by [the Beat Generation writer] Jack Kerouac" (Shewey 1997, p. 32), without doubt, reveals something about his perspective. John Clellon Holmes, another Beat writer, expressed the intense sense of alienation felt by many; and, the absurd details call to mind the absurdities in Shepard's work.

Holmes points out that conventional notions of morality have become weaker and weaker because of the frequent cases of treason in government, the corrupting impact on both labor and business, and the scandal in both Broadway and Hollywood. According to Holmes, Orthodox religious conceptions of good and evil are no longer adequate to describe a "world of science-fiction turned fact, past-enemies turned bosom-friends, and honorable-diplomacy turned brink-of-war." This world, in which elder individuals might be disinterested, is a world of cynicism; and, the Beat Generation is the direct result of this 'unique' world, and, for its important figures, there is no other world (Holmes cited in Aronson 2003, pp. 50-51).

Two of the most significant Jungian points which attract attention in all three plays are the 'anima' and the 'animus', the former denoting the feminine part in the male, and the latter denoting the masculine part in the female. To state it in a different way, the anima is the female aspect of the man's psyche, while the animus is the male aspect of the woman's psyche. Beneath a conscious masculine personality, there may lie an unconscious feminine side, or vice versa. According to what Jung says in *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, "[a]n inherited collective image" of the female exists in a male's unconscious; it is this image which assists him in his endeavours to understand the exact nature of woman; and, "[t]his inherited image" is one of the most significant sources for the femininity of one's soul (1990a, p. 190). These archetypes of the collective unconscious, which are crystal clear in the works under scrutiny, say a lot about the psychology of the crumbling – and, at the same time, rotting – families. Regarding the symbols and images in the plays, it is possible to say that they are the golden keys which are capable of opening up doors not to a Utopia, but to the chance of delineating the – mostly – undesirable worlds, and thus, to previously unconquered worlds of universal meanings and messages. The symbols add gravity to the various compelling forces which threaten the domestic cohesiveness.

Due to being constantly pressed by the heavy demands, forceful requests, of the world around, human beings may tend to seek refuge by way of withdrawing totally; and, since going back to the mother's womb is something impossible, people look for a kind of substitute, "a room", a territory of one's own, which will provide them with a protective wall around their vulnerable personality. The moment this shelter-like place is invaded, and retreat behind a closed and locked door becomes no longer possible, there is no other alternative left for people other than being imprisoned within their

individual selves; and, their seemingly never-ending endeavours for integration prove to be nothing, but futile efforts. “Man, the dispossessed vagrant of the well-ordered world, struggles to integrate without total loss of personality, and very often fails” (Deleon 1994, p. 84).

The more the characters in O’Neill’s play yearn for spiritual fulfillment and higher ideals, the more imprisoned they become in their absolutely claustrophobic worlds; and, they give the impression that they are in an existential exile. In Shepard’s play, the plight of the almost suffocated individuals, by itself, tells a lot. In close connection with these, the continuous questioning of the essence of the almost unendurable existence, the curiosity about how one came to be in the mother’s womb, and the ever-present subconscious desire to reverse the ever-flowing time all the way back to the womb are the points which are worthy of exploration in Pinter’s play. Jak Deleon claims that, in Pinter’s play, “[t]he room is the womb-like refuge of [the] frightened characters”, and that, like the mother’s womb, “it is a false and vulnerable refuge” due to “the outside world” which “inevitably bears in” (1994, p. 7). Taking the matter still further, he asserts that once human beings “leave the pure serenity of the starless void of the womb and join the crowds”, they are, in a paradoxical way, isolated (p. 19); and, he even goes on to say that, when they come out of the “supposedly peaceful canopy of the womb”, human beings find themselves forced to cling to an area which “offers safety and identity in a basically hostile world” (p. 86). Once more, the details support the crystal clear nature of not only the psychological, but also the existential inclinations underlying the plays.

Just like the way it is in Shepard’s plays, the major problem with Pinter’s plays is the “victimization of the other”, and thus, the individual’s ongoing struggle to avoid victimization by the other individual. Man desperately tries to find something to hold on to, something to cling to, something that can count as ‘a raison d’être’ in an age of solitude, alienation, dehumanization, and estrangement. In order to run away from the various versions, stages and phases of captivity, in order to get rid of the victimization of the other – the other person, the society in question, the particular forces that are either un-named or un-namable – one has no alternative apart from victimizing the other, and thus, the thing that is called ‘hell’ becomes the other or the others, in Jean Paul Sartre’s existential philosophy and terminology (Öndül 1997, p. 49). For the sole purpose of avoiding non-being, Shepard’s characters, without a second thought, fight

against the idea; they resist being victimized by forces, the names, the faces, the identities of which are either many or long-forgotten; and, they, heart and soul, struggle to create – and then, bolster, and re-bolster – an identity in order to escape the tormenting feeling of nothingness.

While dispossession gives man something – a valid enough reason – to fight against, the instinctive need for security and recognition give him something to fight for; and, the desire to fight is synonymous with the desire to live. Coming face to face with anxiety is what gives the individual the strength, the power, to confront the actual human condition, naturally breeding the vitality which is essential to adjust himself/herself to the world in which he is condemned to live. In Sartre's existentialist 1944 play *Huis Clos (No Exit)* – where the mistreatment of a wife, the execution by firing squad for desertion, the seduction by a manipulative and misandrist sadist, the act of asphyxiating oneself, the 'on purpose' flooding of a room with gas, the killing of a child who was born as a result of an unfortunate affair, and the suicide committed all show signs of violence – man is condemned to stay within the surrounding four walls till the end of his life. In our case, the play – which ends with one of the characters exclaiming, "after a taut pause, 'Eh bien, continuous'" – may well be taken as a point of departure: "Continuation, and the [distinct] desire [which] propels it: that is the essence of Pinter's theatre" (Deleon 1994, p. 88).

According to Artaud, theatre urges the human mind to "share a delirium" that increases its energies; and, the focused action of theatre, just like the shattering plague, is necessary for making human beings see their selves "as they are"; it makes the mask disappear, shows the fake part, the unreal aspect, the slack nature, the not-honourable side, and the "hypocrisy" of the real world (1958, pp. 31-32). In the metaphysical theatre he advocates, it is a fatal mistake to separate theatre from life; what is being represented on the stage must disturb the audience profoundly, pierce him heart and soul in such a way as to release the tendencies repressed in the unconscious part of the psyche, and force him to confront his real self, his identity. In the Artaudian 'theatre of cruelty', both the audience and the actors experience the same life situation (Candan 2003, p. 139). Even if the sight of someone slapping or punching another is disturbing, what needs to be shown must be shown; the human reality has to be acted out without something being hidden, without certain things being concealed; and, regarding these aspects, there is much beneath the surface of the plays. For instance, Shepard's family

plays ignite the stage with ferocity, madness, volatility, and crude eroticism; and, they fracture taboos and shock the audience. But still, hidden amid the grotesque violence and primal savagery, there is hope.

The "pre-occupation with the cruelty of man against man", the relentless treatments, the "torture", man's inhumanity to man, and the "helpless individuals" (Esslin 2000, p. 273) in Pinter's work are further relevant points that attract attention. In *Harold Pinter's Theatre of Cruelty*, Esslin points out that "[t]orture is the most blatantly visible exersise of power by one human being over another", and that there is also the "verbal torture". He underlines the fact that all verbal confrontations, all conversations, enhouse an element, a component of a battle for dominance: One of the two interlocutors will be dominant; the one that cannot succeed in being dominant "will have difficulty in getting a word in edgewise"; "one will [apparently] have the wider [range of] vocabulary", a faster "response reaction" than the other one. In short, the dialogue of Pinter's work is a violent battle for linguistic dominance, a sort of power struggle, which, ultimately, is nothing, but "a life-and-death matter". The person whom one can call 'the terrorist', or 'the torturer', "[keeps] lurk[ing] behind the verbal exchanges" (in Burkman & Kundert-Gibbs 1993, p. 32). "The sadistic torturers and executioners of . . . [his] universe", the characters of the metaphorical torture chamber, who seek domination by way of "verbal fencing", are all "engag[ed] in a sadomasochistic [search]" for genuine human interaction. And, in the particular forms of cruelty employed, it is possible to identify the erotic elements which are at work (p. 34). The striving for power over the other is, most frequently, the cause of the domestic unrest.

Shepard intentionally "turn[s] to the subconscious" (Innes 2005, p. 218). "[H]is 'holy theatre', like [Peter] Brook's, is earthed in what the British director called the 'rough theatre', a theatre in which the grit of experience scored itself across the world of the subconscious and repressed" (Bigsby 2000b, pp. 165-66). One can feel the pressure of an imminent violence which presses against the characters from the inside, from within themselves. Rock and roll, a kind of music which belongs to the ones on the edge of society, becomes a kind of encoded violence; and, his characters are simultaneously drawn to silence and a neurotic sort of volubility and fluency. Related to the third dramatist, Pinter, the matter is taken further, as the audience is introduced to a family with a past. The play's sudden demolishing, knocking down, of the views like "'home,

sweet home', and [the] satiric . . . [usage] of clichés such as 'woman's place is in the home'" attract a great deal of attention (Innes 2002, p. 344); and, in Katherine H. Burkman's words, "the unity of the home is in a shambles". The men, who can all be referred to as "fragments", try to do their best to make the woman like themselves (1993, p. 198). To be specific, they want to 'fragment' the woman who has chosen to stay with them.

In her work on the aesthetics of theatrical performance, Emma Creedon admits the fact that Shepard's play is disturbing, and distracting, in its representation and description of the "antithesis" – the exact opposite – of "domestic bliss" (2015, p. 50); and, according to what Lynda Hart asserts, some images of destruction, the cool manners and attitudes, and the quiet acceptance of the violent treatments show that the family has just fallen – upside down – "to the bottom of . . . [its] long day's journey" (1987, p. 69). Here, even the last phrase, the final three words, of the latter quotation shows the extent of the similarities between O'Neill's and Shepard's plays, how brilliantly the works can be interwoven. For instance, in Shepard's play, some scenes immediately "impl[y] the bizarre"; what the stage directions dictate functions as an intentional "aesthetic realization" of the Freudian concept of the 'uncanny' (Creedon 2015, p. 50); and, the bizarreness part is absolutely the same in Pinter's play.

After this introduction, which shows the scope and the theoretical significance of the study, there comes the heart of the thesis, the main chapters which are entitled '*The Tyrones in Long Day's Journey into Night*', '*The Tates in Curse of the Starving Class*', and '*The Male Wasteland in The Homecoming*'. Under these headings, the families coming to the forefront are introduced; the historical background, the sociological requirements, the psychological facts, and the existential issues are taken into consideration; and, the plays are analyzed in terms of the aggressive and abusive attitudes. The effects of World War II on the institution of the family, the diversions from the ideal family picture, the psychological realities beneath the surface, and the existential problems underlying abuse are discussed; and, special emphasis is placed on the reasons and consequences of domestic unrest, the most concealed, but still the least studied aspect. In the fifth and last chapter, which is the conclusion, the interrelated ideas deduced from the study are wrapped up; and, in this way, the extent of the corrupted relationships is highlighted. Thanks to the scholars' enlightening writings on the problems confronting the family following the onset of the war, the

Durkheimian sociology, the Freudian, Jungian, and Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Sartrean existentialism, as they provide opportunities to dig and delve into the issues about the historical, social, mental, and existential processes involved in the plays.

2. THE TYRONES IN *LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT*

2.1 Under the Magnifying Glass: A Family of 'Hopeless Hope'

As is known, among the distinguishing characteristics of the wartime drama are surprising and shocking signals from the stage, the grim vision of life, the spiritless men, and the representation of unrest and irrationality (Styan 1996, p. 125). The focus of theatre being mostly on the negativities which came along with the global changes, the general mood was one of devastation and suffering. As a matter of fact, the 'Waste Land' pessimism of O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* – which was written in 1939, and produced in 1946 – "displeased the hopeful" after World War II (Gassner 1954, p. 735). The inclination of the majority was towards the antithesis of positivity, of gaiety, of hope.

Directly referring to the imminent, unpleasant, global event – that is, World War II – O'Neill's wife made an entry in her too-much-personal diary, on June 21, 1939; she wrote about "Gene talk[ing] to [her] . . . about a dramatic work" that occupied place in his thoughts; and, she mentioned the inevitable distress they felt: "A hot, sleepless night – an ache in our hearts for things we can[not] escape!" (cited in Gelb & Gelb 1962, p. 6). In 1940, unable to ignore the events leading up to the war, unable to isolate themselves from the news, the O'Neills agonized over the fall of France, where they had spent two years happily. In his own words, O'Neill spent a considerable period of time "with an ear glued to the radio for war news" (in Barlow 1985, p. 72). In short, World War II was a dreadful distraction from his meticulous work; and, his own words can adequately enlighten the situation, and summarize the conditions under which *Long Day's Journey into Night* was written: "The mad tragedy of world catastrophe is too much on my neck. My mind is distracted – as whose isn't who isn't an idiot" (cited in Gelb & Gelb 1962, p. 841). Right after the above-mentioned events, two months later, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour; this also added gravity to the unrest surrounding the whole world; and, O'Neill finished writing his play just before America's stepping into World War II on December 7, 1941 (Gale 2015, n.p.).

Being a victim of domestic violence, living in a heightened state of vigilance, sort of tiptoeing around an abuser each and every minute of the day is nothing, but a traumatic experience. The worst part of victimhood is, without doubt, the dread, the fear of what will happen next, the fear of what an abuser could do, and that is what is at the core of the stress of such kind of a relationship. And, the very significant fact is that physical abuse is generally far less treacherous than the psychological and emotional abuse. Although the violence in *Long Day's Journey into Night* differs in its kind and extent, there is much beneath the surface, as the situation of being exposed to biting words also has the potential to tell a lot. Although it is not a dramatic work of violence, the emotions embedded reveal themselves in the violent language that has been used throughout the play. According to Frederic I. Carpenter, the father reminds the audience of the "petty dictator" quality "of all O'Neill's fathers"; however, he remains more sympathetic, more understanding, and therefore, more tolerable than the others. The play, in which one can sense the tyranny and the cruel side of the father, dramatizes the children's "guerilla warfare against his miserliness and his pompous self-importance" (1964, p. 160). The boys never miss opportunities; at every possible moment, they make fun of their father, calling him "old Gaspard" (1956, p. 155, p. 157), after a thoroughly nasty miser in a comic opera from the late 19th century.

The unique world of the Tyrones is, in a way, closed and relentless, and therefore, is metaphorically of the colour grey. It is one of unremitting, unmitigated, pessimism and unendurable pain. According to what Freud's theory proposes, a sort of anarchy within the three constituents of the psyche – the id, the ego, and the superego – leads to an unavoidable tumult within a person; and, this is the precise situation of the characters in O'Neill's autobiographical "whiskey-soaked . . . tragedy" which "in its poetic, Shakespearean heart . . . captures the long day's journey of life from sunlight and health into the twilight and gloom of sickness and death" (Unwin & Woddis 2001, p. 97). The step-by-step progression from good to bad, the inevitable move from the land of light and extravagance to the land of darkness and vagueness is what comes to the forefront throughout the play.

According to Doris V. Falk, the guiding force of the familial fate "hurtles" the Tyrones into their own darkness, into their own kind of night and blight, and causes them to take the rest of the Tyrones with them. They are all "doomed to destroy and be destroyed"; they are all doomed "to be victimized", not only by one another, but also

"by the dead". "[W]ill[ing] them a heritage", an inheritance, of illness, sickness of sorts, alcoholic beverage consumption, and morphine addiction, the dead has hurled them towards the unavoidable doom, "curs[ing] them" with much deeper problems of "self-destructiveness", loneliness, opposition, and contradiction (1958, p. 182).

In the play – where the audience is introduced to the robust but appallingly stingy matinée idol James Tyrone, who once became a rising star on Broadway and had a promising career which later transformed into a soul-sucking one; the full-blown morphine-addict Mary, who not only sinks further and further into a fog of narcotics, but also has rheumatoid arthritis; the elder live-at-home son, Jamie, who is a dissolute alcoholic guy and a wastrel; and, the bewildered, sensitive, delicate, and frail younger son, Edmund, who is diagnosed with the fatal respiratory system disease, tuberculosis, and is therefore about to be admitted into a 'cheap' sanatorium – it is possible to sense the fatal forces beyond the control of the characters. To make things even worse, the audience is also presented with the information that the Tyrones actually lost a third child, Eugene, due to lethal measles.

A basic tension which underlies the play is the constant conflict between fate and free will. The characters desire to alter the course of their lives, but they cannot kick the depressing fatalism out of their imprisoning minds. O'Neill does not sentimentalize or moralize; and, he blames no outside agency for the family's collective failure. Each of the Tyrones experiences the heightened awareness which results from a kind of comparison; and, each attempts to resolve the accompanying suffering in a different, in a personal way. Despite the fact that they are not fighting against divine will, they are all shaped by the sinister-sounding forces which are completely out of their control. What one can sense is a weird vacuum; there is no respected authority in the house; instead, there are four people who demand nothing, but help.

In between the lines is the deterministic claim that individuals are unable to control their fate. Human beings are born broken, and they live by mending. Babies come out of the mother's womb with the curse of humanity on them; it is a curse which springs from their position as intruders and distractors in a world, the peace and harmony of which they disrupt. According to Richard B. Sewall, the actual cause, the origination point, of tragic pain is the distinct sense, "in the consciousness of tragic man", of the dual – "simultaneous[ly]" functioning – element of "guilt and guiltlessness" (cited in Barlow 1985, p. 106); and, this is the exact situation which is forced upon Edmund.

He is both responsible and not responsible for Mary's addiction. What he is guilty of is the Christian notion of the original sin (Barlow 1985, p. 106). Regardless of what is being done, regardless of what is being thought of, man is born guilty. At one point, Mary, helplessly, laments Edmund's birth, and says that he has never been far away from the feeling of sadness, and that he will never be happy or healthy. She – directly and honestly – shows, appoints, herself as the cause of the utterly saddening situation, when she says that Edmund came into existence as a "nervous and . . . sensitive" one, and that this is "[her] fault" (1956, p. 88).

What is significant is that the past is paramount in the play, as every decision has future repercussions the person can never foresee. Additional forces – such as heredity, environment, and personality – make the decision more and more complicated. By way of uttering Shakespeare's words, James points at the argument for free will: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in . . . [our] [selves] that we are underlings" (1956, p. 152). James, who opted for the role of the Count, subsequently lost forever his chance to be a successful Shakespearean actor. On the other hand, Mary accepted morphine just to ease her pain, but she became a victim of the 'numbing' drug. These details all show that the choices the Tyrones made were not entirely free. Fear of poverty, fear of being penniless, physical pain and suffering, feelings of guilt, and even love, combined to push them toward the wrong decision. And, these all caused them to remain entrapped on the verge of familial collapse.

In real life, O'Neill could not prevent thoughts about his mother from rushing in on his psyche. According to Edmund Burke, "[i]t is the nature of grief . . . to keep its object perpetually in its eye" (1998, p. 50). And, this is what is observable in what the Tyrones do: Even when thinking of the other members, the object is forever there. Young O'Neill had once poured out his soul to Beatrice Ashe, talked about his undying love, and pleaded that she become his spouse. Not accepting the offer, "she told him that he was looking for a mother" (Diggins 2007, p. 227). Quite obviously, the latter part echoes the situation in the Tyrone household, that is, the lack of a 'healthy' mother figure. Mary, a slave of her thoughts, cannot respond to the needs of the other Tyrones.

In the play, the meticulously documented library comprises the whole weight of a civilization; the lengthy stage directions instantly give the audience the feeling that the Tyrones are educated; important works of the Western canon have been placed on the bookshelves; and, one gets the impression that the books are used often. It is as though

literary ‘consumption’ is Edmund’s psychological and artistic disease. In his piece of writing on the philosophical and literary paragons, Egil Törnqvist states that Edmund’s bookcase tells the audience what his alter ego, the young O’Neill, was reading in 1912 (in Manheim 2000, p. 18). So, the social and political climate of the time might be reflected in the dramatic work. The audience knows that, in real life, O’Neill was keen on literature, and that his favourite writers of fiction were Jack London, Joseph Conrad, and Joseph Rudyard Kipling. In this case, it must be his interest on literature which pushed him to include a number of unforgettable characters – such as Iago, Cassius and Brutus – in his play. If one has a closer look at the characters O’Neill mentions in his play, he/she may get some clues to what actually is in his mind. For instance, Iago is possibly the most heinous villain in the Shakespeare canon; he is treacherous and immoral; his actions are without justification; he is quite good at manipulating the others into falling for his countless deceptions; in short, he is the sum of negative characteristics. Even mentioning the name of such kind of a person may be seen as an extension of not only the danger and disloyalty O’Neill sensed around himself, but also the competing forces in his psyche; and, it seems that he and his characters are all trying to find their rightful places on earth. The issue of immorality stems out of the issue of the violation of the religious values; and, the play has roots in O’Neill’s parents’ great appreciation of Catholicism.

The ‘Oedipal war’ between James and his sons is fought out by resorting to the Shakespearean canon, that is, by way of literary allusions. James’ personalized form of Shakespeare – a high-sounding Victorian source of power, wisdom, and morality – is used to shout at his good-for-nothing family, his offspring. At one point, James starts up by saying “‘How sharper than a serpent’s tooth it is –’”, but Edmund has heard it so often that he instantly interrupts his father to complete the rest of the quotation, “‘[t]o have a thankless child’” (1956, p. 89). What is more, earlier in the play, Jamie – in an effort to make his father feel embarrassed or something – deflates James on his snoring, with a famous line from *Othello*: “‘The Moor, I know his trumpet’” (p. 21). The listed authors in the bookcase shows that Edmund has read the works of the 19th century heresiarchs including Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Karl Marx; however, it is, specifically, the poetry of the 1890s which is quoted most frequently, because it is the direct expression of the brothers’ rebellion.

Civilization is born out of the continuous need of humanity to conquer the world from all sides, to make its harsh components somehow bearable, tolerable, and serviceable to the desires of the human race. The point, which revolves around the question 'What is the reason for the unhappiness of humanity?', shows that one of the catalysts behind the dolefulness is the inadequacy of the rules that adjust the relationships of individuals in the familial unit, the state itself, and society (Freud 1962, p. 88). The maladjustment of the relationships between the members of the Tyrone family – a group of social outcasts – is the actual cause of the general distress; and, the unharmony and the anti-social nature are even reflected in their relationships with the neighbours, the Chatfields passing "in their new Mercedes". The brand of the Tyrone family automobile hints at their real exclusion from the society around, as they own a "secondhand Packard" (1956, p. 43): They are not attached, but detached. Regardless of what they do, none of the characters can contribute to the task of finding a balance or a rail to hold on to.

To be able to come up with satisfying explanations, excerpts from the written documents – left behind by the playwright – have to be deciphered under a magnifying glass. To begin with, whether they have been put there intentionally or not, even in O'Neill's twelfth wedding anniversary note to his dearest wife – which is published in the dedication page of the autobiographical play, and which is dated July 22, 1941 – the neatly formed juxtapositions cannot escape attention. O'Neill's beautifully-worded sentences, for sure, say a lot: Even though it is intended as a sort of present, it does not seem to be an appropriate one; even though he starts with a pessimistic tone, he reverts to a far more optimistic one, making use of a heartwarming language. Even the 'night' of the title has been changed with its opposite, becoming pure 'light'. In his note, O'Neill says that he is giving her the original copy of his work of deep sadness which is not only written in "*tears*", but also in "*blood*"; he admits the fact that it is not a quite appropriate present for a day of celebration; he appreciates her "*love and tenderness*" that provided him with "*the faith in love*" which finally "*enabled [him] to face [his] dead . . . and write [the] play*" in question. And, openly addressing his "*[b]eloved [o]ne*", he concludes, finishes his words, by saying that those years have been nothing, but "*a Journey into Light – into love*" (1956, p. 7).

In the play, there is a dual movement. The characters are moving forward – due to the non-stop flowing of time – as it is symbolised by the passing of one single day. On the

other hand, because of getting extremely drunk, they travel psychically back in the timeline to happier moments when they think they did not have so many problems. It is clear that there is no stable source of comfort. The play succeeds in dramatizing the mental action "to a superlative degree"; and, the mother, step by step, "regresses" from the sunny world of pure actuality to the blurred, to the foggy world of "dope and dreams" (Carpenter 1964, p. 160). In the beginning, she "*[s]miles affectionately*" (1956, p. 14); however, at the very end of the play, "*[s]he stares before her in a sad dream*" (p. 176). The Irish-American family members – who all have serious personal issues that attract attention, and who are all under the firm grip of their subconscious psyche – unsuccessfully grapple not only with their individual failings and weaknesses, but also with their collective, altogether, deterioration. The intransigence in the Tyrone family results in resentment, constant blameworthiness, fury, depression, and, most obviously, repression. Being able to withhold mutual support and effort to understand each other during moments of crisis never brings happiness; it leads to nothing, but sorrow and further familial decay.

According to what Freud argues in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, through the particular psychic act of discharge, the mind looks for the lowest possible level of pressure and tension (1989, p. 25). The dictates of the pleasure principle – the precept according to which psychoanalytic processes are controlled by the satisfaction of personal needs and the avoidance of undesirable tension – are always between the lines. The moment the audience exposes the Tyrones to this psychoanalytic light of pleasure-tension relationship, he/she comes to realize that the family members suffer from violent instincts, the particular view that if necessity did not rule or control the workings of the mind, they would just do things for their own gratification.

The Tyrones, whom the audience often finds moving backwards in time at full tilt, never stop worrying about the old mistakes which still show scars; and, they cannot help talking about taboo subjects like drugs, alcohol, careers, and the past. All the members of the family have been caught in a destiny from which they are unable to escape, and their reactions to this negativity are almost identical. All become larger than their own lives, and the degree of their exhaustion is nearly the same. They are all left in between two contradictory things; and, they are all desperate, because of looking for something without knowing what that particular thing is. Provided that one forgets about their varying ages, they are like quadruplets, in some respects. At times,

it is difficult to distinguish one non-exemplary attitude from the other. Psychoanalytically speaking, when the rules do not seem to matter any longer, when the so-called regulations no more make sense, the Tyrones do speak their tempestuous minds; and, thus, they are pulled towards a point at which they cannot help showing aggressive and abusive attitudes.

During the course of interpreting the play, Lionel Trilling quotes O'Neill in between his words, and writes: "[L]ife is a 'hopeless hope' – but still a hope" (in Bloom 1987, p. 17). With World War II going on in the background, the mood is naturally that of pessimism and gloom. Tragedy that is ennobled in pure artistic work is what O'Neill frequently referred to as a person's 'hopeless hopes'. According to O'Neill himself, any success, any victory, human beings may get from real life was an ironic one, and "'life in itself was [absolutely] nothing.'" It was only the dream itself which kept human beings "'fighting, willing – living'" (in Gelb & Gelb 1962, p. 5). This is nothing, but "the 'hopeless hope' that directly springs from Cybel's assumption" of the inevitable nature of life opposites and extremes, between which one's own fate is suspended, and in which one can find some thrusting and stimulating sort of value and motion (Falk 1958, p. 175).

Within all the members of the Tyrone family, the emotional and psychic equilibrium is disrupted in an irreversible way. Because of the totally unconscious repositories which are actively and consistently functioning within the Tyrones' raging, tempestuous, psyche, the unconscious impulse of the family members, unfortunately, cannot succeed in negotiating with their present, current, situation. With the morphine addiction and alcoholism being in a state of equilibrium, it seems likely that the Tyrones are unable to confront pure reality without getting some kind of chemical help. Mary's drug addiction and the Tyrone men's alcoholism are in a state of equilibrium: There is a kind of balance between these two normally unacceptable behaviours. Despite the fact that morphine is a more destructive drug, the ongoing use of alcohol has its consequences as well. Getting drunk, which is a personal response to life itself, has obviously led to Jamie's failure; and, Edmund's alcohol consumption has, most probably, resulted in ruining his formerly good health. Because of the fact that they are all intoxicants, they are altogether dragged into a separate world where they may possibly have the chance to fulfill their suppressed desires.

In the play, the act of "[d]rinking is normalised" whereas "drug taking is demonised" (Grene 2014, p. 99). Mary's readdiction to drugs is in fact "a betrayal of her own wishes as well as a betrayal of her family" (Barlow 1985, p. 79); it is the father, the supposed head, who "*clutch[es] at hopeless hope*" (1956, p. 91); and, the latter detail reveals much about the psychological state of the family. Old arguments, old verbal assaults, old resentments, and accumulating regrets continue to boil up; and, the pressures, tensions, and recriminations of the former years never allow the current moment to live. Every single dialogue gives way to the utterance of some sort of scab-tearing cruelty. What is striking is the difference, the distinction, between the official Irish-Catholic morality and the unpleasant realities of drink and dope. Everybody has betrayed everybody else, which hints at the fact that the turncoat psychology permeates the play:

> The family goes round and round in that worst of domestic rituals, the Blame Game. I blame my agony on you; you blame yours on her; she blames hers on me. Father blames his past; mother blames father; elder son blames both; and younger son blames all of them. . . . The wheel, coming full circle, runs over all of them. (Tynan 1961, p. 224)

The past is both a kind of burden and refuge for the Tyrones who continuously remember the same old pains and grievances, and do everything possible to open the old wounds; and, as a matter of fact, the same problems add to their negative state of mind as they are brought to the surface one by one. From time to time, Mary makes journeys in time, and looks for shelter in the past, clinging on to events from which she seems to get power. Mary, who complains desperately about Tyrone's incapability of making a real home, has sublime fantasies about the role of home. Mary, who has a specific idea of what a 'home' is, has spent her life following James on tour, from one inexpensive hotel to the next.

All the Tyrones anaesthetize themselves; and, this numbing process only leads them to snipe at each other not only more angrily, but also more maliciously and more violently than before. Here, in this context, love is something shared, but loneliness, solitude, requires no company. While dealing with the play, one cannot help watching the rivalry between hope and hopelessness with eyes wide open; one watches what is unfolding before his/her eyes with full awareness; and, all that happens is disturbing for the human senses. O'Neill, does not wait so long in order to beat the drums of

doom: Hope is beaten; it is defeated by hopelessness; and, what leads to all these is aggression among the Tyrone family members, that is, their spoken behaviour which involves, more or less, harm.

The most apparent, dominant, image of O'Neill's 'extremist's plays' – the dramatic works which were written between the years 1919 and 1921 – is that of "the ambitious, [vigorous], driving, and all but heartless father." The ones who are referred to as 'extremists', heart and soul, try to find their way out of the fog by way of clinging to a robust and dominating image of the self; however, this specific image subsequently reveals itself to be a rather false image, a mask that cannot cover any face. The face – in other words, the actual self – has been sold for the crazy-kind-of-power and illusive richness represented by the mask. Regardless of what O'Neill's father was, to his son he represented nothing, but this sort of "pseudosolution to the search" for individual self. He can be referred to as "the father of all O'Neill's proud", abusive, and "grasping" patriarchs; however, he is "self-deluded", and, besides, he arouses intense feelings of pity, because James, by extension, was altogether "fashioned by *his* fathers", incapable of the strength to escape, to get rid of the past which they specifically created and shaped for him (Falk 1958, pp. 185-86).

It is the ancestral causes of his miserliness which guides the father. In the play, what James so often does is to sacrifice his family to his need for secure richness, which was not given to him in the past, especially when he was a child. In an obsessive kind of way, he invests huge amounts of money in land, to the deprivation of his own family. With – more or less – justice, his wife and sons constantly blame him for their biggest problems, that is, for most of their afflictions. Not only his desire, insatiable appetite, for money, but also his insistent-ignorance and defensive-pride in his Irish-Catholic background, "re-enforcing his drive to outdo the [humiliating] Yankees", have been at the core of the problems which – this way or that way – affect the entire family. The tragedy of James is that, like the rest of the extremists, he has sold his wounded soul for the false belief in achievement, in other words, for the illusion of some form or forms of accomplishment. He eventually "looks behind the mask" (Falk 1958, p. 186); and, he cannot help confessing to Edmund: He questions the 'already' inherent meanings behind "fake pride and pretense", and admits that the "God-damned play" has corrupted his 'self' with its guarantee of an easily attainable fortune. He is quite aware of the fact that he has become the "slave" of the absolutely damned-thing; he

asks himself what the hell on earth pushed him towards money issues and matters of materialistic gain. What is clear is that, he knows that it is too late: "It's a late day for regrets" (1956, pp. 149-50). After all, gone is gone.

According to Harold Clurman, the Tyrone family's belief in Catholicism "is not so much a faith as a guilt". Because of the fact that he feels much guilt, O'Neill naturally comes and goes in between a "self-pity" that he keeps on despising and a sense of "blame" that he continually tries to counterattack. The accusation he directs at his own guilt and the obsessive sort of wish to "purge" his 'self' of it by way of blaming does nothing other than "nag[ging] at him". Out of this disturbing sense of guilt and a related sense that "the guilt feeling is in itself a sin or at least a fatal blemish" comes an insistent and continuous change of mood. The members of the family all speak in two different voices, two different tones, two different moods, one of anger and displeasure, the other of apology and forgiveness; and, it is this switch, this chain of alternation, which results in "a kind of moral schizophrenia" (in Cargill, Fagin & Fisher 1961, pp. 215-16).

On the other hand, being a person with a shade of the mental illness of schizophrenia, in other words, dementia praecox, the father suffers from a dual-personality disorder; and, the imbalance of the id and the ego within his psyche is what makes the actions diverge markedly from the normal, and often intended, course. Schizophrenia involves a detachment from what is real; it involves the situation of being distant from what is actual and a turning in on the individual self, "with an excessive but loosely systematized production of fantasies"; it is as if the 'id' has flooded the conscious-mind with its illogical connections; it is as if the conceptual connections between certain ideas have completely been lost (Eagleton 2003, p. 138). When the psychic process of repression is over, the withdrawn instinct never looks for a new object; instead, it tends to retreat into the ego (Freud 1963, p. 142). This is almost the state of mind in which James finds himself. The situation of the elders of the family being like this, the issue of the brothers' peace of mind is somehow debatable.

When one finds a part, in the play, in which both James and Jamie are present on the stage, it is – without doubt – a guarantee that they are entangled in a quarrel, that they are caught in a verbal fight. Apart from his verbal combats, the father is famous for his extended shows of sensitivity; and, from time to time, he shows the characteristics of a feeling individual. The moment James is being teased because of his snoring, the

moment Jamie pokes fun at his repeated act of snoring, James immediately snaps back, and starts a sentence saying, "[i]f it takes my snoring to make you remember Shakespeare instead of the dope sheet on the ponies. . . ." However, he is quick to settle down again when his wife confronts him with her words about his being so "touchy" (1956, p. 21). Later in the play, while talking about his mother, he starts "*wip[ing] tears from his eyes*", and says that she was "[a] . . . brave [and] sweet woman, and that "[t]here never was a braver or finer" woman than her (p. 148). There is no end to the usage of opposites; sort of antonyms are constantly brought together; it is the father's mood swings which lead to abuse; and, this is one of the negativities which subsequently casts a shadow over the happiness of the Tyrones.

At times, James – who is not only naïve and sentimental, but also misanthropic and temperamental – tends to behave like a thirteen-year-old boy. In spite of the fact that he is grumpy and really ready and quick to fight, he just resembles a childish teddy bear on the inside. In an unfortunate sort of way, his first instinct is to lose temper and start arguing furiously. His fighting instinct constitutes a big, and a real, problem for the family, as one can frequently catch him jumping down his elder son's throat. James, who talks "*[w]ith rising anger*", does not approve of Jamie's behaviours in general; he accuses him of being disrespectful and lazy, saying that he has never tried to find a job for himself, that he always preferred loaf in barrooms, and that he would have been so "content to sit back like a lazy lunk and sponge on [James] . . . for the rest of . . . [his] life" (1956, pp. 31-32). James seems to lack even the slightest sign of maturity and thoughtfulness to give Jamie a single compliment; it is not that possible to hear a comment which shows that he stands beside him, as his father. Instead of being the caring and motivating parent in the house, James, most of the time, gets angry at what he says or does. Nevertheless, it does not take one long to infer that James did not have a good role model before him, as his father had forgotten all about his family: He "deserted [his] mother", got rid of his family, and later committed suicide, leaving James as the head of the household, as a child. "He mistook rat poison for flour, or sugar, or something. There was gossip it wasn't by mistake" (p. 147).

Because of the fact that James never had the chance to go through the usual child development process, it is not surprising that he still has some childish qualities. Here, once more, the issue of existence – living versus killing oneself, and the famous Shakespearean question 'to be or not to be' – comes to the forefront as a purely

Freudian point. 'Being' and 'not being' stand in stark contrast to each other; and, according to Freud's theory about the uncanny, the former is homely whereas the latter one is unhomely. The two topics, which are inseparable, are both mentioned within the household of the Tyrones. One derives from the other: In order to die, one has to be alive, and vice versa. In order to start existing in the world, first of all, one has to come out of the mother's womb, the dark abdomen, the death-like existence. When issues about death arise, one can talk about the issue of abuse; when the sweet connotations about home are disregarded, the living environment cannot escape the risk of being destroyed to the core. Digging and delving into his deeper emotions and speaking in a "*[d]ully sarcastic*" tone, Edmund cannot help reminding his father that he – Edmund – once "tried to commit suicide at Jimmie the Priest's, and almost did" (1956, p. 147). Related to the act of taking one's own life voluntarily and intentionally, in *Erroneously Carried-Out Actions*, Freud gives an enlightening explanation: According to what Freud says, injuries that are inflicted on the self are a compromise between a sudden strong desire and the forces that are, altogether, working against it; and, the inclination to commit suicide is something that exists, in the human psyche, for a considerable length of time. This inclination may not be that powerful, or it may exist as a repressed, unconscious tendency. "[S]uicide [that is] consciously committed" selects its own time, way and chance; it is quite normal that unconscious suicide ought to wait for a particular "motive to take upon itself one part of the causation and thus free it from its oppression by taking up the defensive forces of the person" (Freud, in Brill 1938, pp. 124-25).

In Edmund's case, there is his inclination to push himself towards the ultimate end, that is death; in other words, he has an insistent desire for passing away. He tends to commit that act, since he is under the influence of his unconscious mind which is full of repressed thoughts. Regardless of what he does, the awful idea follows him wherever he chooses to go. As the quotation above indicates, according to Freud, suicide 'chooses its time'; and, out of this, one can draw a conclusion: The past moment, which Edmund chose to commit that action, must have been a depressing one; it must have been a minute – or, perhaps, a second – when he felt he could no longer bear the burden of life, and the burden of the seemingly unending familial problems. It is aggression which pushes Edmund towards the act of committing suicide, which is nothing other than violence directed towards oneself.

James, who, once upon a time, heard good comments from Edwin Booth – one of the most famous actors, celebrities, of his day – was so honoured that he wanted a proof which he wanted to keep with himself for the rest of his life. He cannot forget about the moment at which he received praise; emotionally, he was so affected by the praise – "[t]he praise . . . Booth gave [his] Othello" – that he made the person-in-charge "put down his exact words in writing." James, who carried it "in [his] wallet for years", had the habit of reading it every once in a while until finally it made him feel so upset that he did not want to see it any longer (1956, p. 152). The 'supposedly' beautifully-worded note, in which positive feelings are expressed, eventually becomes something which is absolutely annoying. Positivity gives way to negativity, just like the way the homely leads to the unhomely. The distinct occasion, which can be considered as both lucky and unlucky, affects James psychologically; and, it has a direct role on the attitude he shows in the Tyrone household. Once again, something the audience is familiar with is transformed into something which is unfamiliar. In short, a purely Freudian juxtaposition comes out of the equation that has been meticulously solved; and, the birth of the feeling of the uncanny is the end result.

Various programmes of extensive rehousing stimulated the desire for creating estates, apartments, and blocks of flats that were "more spacious and had more amenities than pre-war housing stock" (Wandor 2001, p. 28); and, this very specific point is what emphasizes the interest in investments in the era in question. Due to being a result of capitalism, the head of the family, who is in his off-season, hates colourful shows of extravagance, and is eager to save money in every way that he can; and, it seems that he is willing to do anything and everything for even a penny. It does not take one long to infer that – although he is sufficiently rich to make other real estate investments – James is planning to send Edmund to a cheaper sanatorium. His habit of carefully and cautiously skimping on the medical expenses is, with no doubt, the most damning of all; he chooses the option of hiring a doctor who "only charges a dollar" (1956, p. 30). Under such circumstances, his interest in real estate investments, his insatiable appetite for money matters, can be interpreted not only as another symptom of his miserly nature, but also as another sign of his numbness towards the institution of the family. Grant H. Redford attracts attention to the very specific theme – that devotion to material things corrupts – and, underlines the fact that this 'corruption' theme is embodied in the father figure (1964, p. 529).

James is guided by the damned thought that buying areas of land is much securer than keeping it in some banks or in the stock market: "[L]and is land, and it [is] . . . safer than the stocks and bonds of Wall Street swindlers" (1956, p. 15). Here, the real problem is that, while throwing all his money into 'worthless' areas of land, he does not remember to leave enough cash to give the rest of the Tyrones the life that they deserve to live. James, who is "driven by the so-called American Dream" (Fathima 2016, p. 351), and who is pushed towards a precarious – dangerous, because of not being firmly fixed – position within his own family, tries to balance his burning desire to save money with the needs of his family. In spite of the fact that he is "one of the biggest property owners" in the neighbourhood (1956, p. 31), repetitive echoes of rampant materialism, materialistic thoughts and actions, talks of cash, economy, budget, and so on are always in the background: When Mary asks why he does not "light the light", James reacts quite "*mechanically*", and says that "having . . . [the bulbs] on" only amounts to "mak[ing] the Electric Light Company rich" (pp. 116-17).

Harold Clurman writes about how O'Neill's immigrant-father's unavoidable fear of poverty resulted in an interest in money, about why his own sons disliked him, and about how this situation resulted in so many problems ostensibly far away from their origination point (in Cargill, Fagin & Fisher 1961, p. 216). Tendentious jokes – which normally have to contain lust, hostility, or both – are specifically preferred with the intention of "mak[ing] aggressiveness or [complaint] . . . possible against [people] in exalted positions" that claim to exert authority (Billig 1999, p. 98). The smartly facetious remarks and jocular sorts of mood lead to nothing, but slight humour in the household of the Tyrones; and, related to this, what James does cannot escape attention: The parsimonious, penny-pincher father "tries to contradict" the cost of miserliness; he tries to erase, or partly erase, his 'not-generous' image, by suddenly switching on all of the lights in the parlor; and, following this, he "cautiously" switches them off one by one, once again (Gassner 1965, p. 40). One cannot help questioning the 'weakness that is associated with being mean' and the 'virtue that is associated with prudence'. Being tight-fisted, and highly concerned about the coming electricity bills, James thinks that they had better turn off some of the chandelier bulbs. Despite this, he later turns all the light bulbs on himself, in a moment of extravagance, undergoing a change of heart as to throw all calculations and financial considerations to the wind (1956, p. 128).

Just prior to the above-mentioned action, after "*cursing*" because of having "*collid[ed]*" with an unnamed object in the dark hall, Edmund switches on the hall lamp, and – despite his father's reflex response, that is, his instant warning – comes in without turning off the light, to which James reacts by "*frown[ing]*", getting "*irritat[ed]*", and ordering his son to switch off the lights: He says that he has told him to turn out the light, that they are "not giving a ball", that there is no need to "have the house ablaze with electricity at [that] [particular] time of night", and that he is doing nothing apart from "burning up money" (1956, pp. 125-26). The audience is also presented with the piece of information that it was James' childhood wish to become a really rich one in a very short length of time. It is this penny pinching attitude which results in many psychological complications and structural – in the familial, institutional sense – irregularities within the Tyrone family, the chief of them being Mary's addiction, and then readdiction, to drugs.

Although James is really desperate to understand the needs and emotions of the others and tries to comfort each and every member of the family, he has a definitely 'disturbing' stingy side. The doctor, whom James has found, gives a medical treatment which forces Mary to use morphine for the temporary relief of her labor pain; and, unfortunately, her frequent use of this sedating liquid, needles, and syringes automatically brings another disaster with itself. Injecting herself with morphine becomes a habit which she can never get rid of; it becomes an act which she can never leave behind. At one stage, being "*[c]ynically brutal*", Jamie cannot help shouting: "Another shot in the arm!" (1956, p. 75). Most probably, because of the doctor's little understanding of the complexities of Mary's torment, she is given the most effective legal painkiller of the day. Having nothing to do other than placing herself in the hands of the others for help, Mary feels euphoria; she senses a sweet release from her physical and mental anguish, but, it is a temporary, a non-permanent one. Here, there is one thing which is nothing, but interesting: In spite of being absolutely materialistic in action, James is just the contrary through his intention. There is a big conflict which takes refuge in his mind; and, around this revolves the actions of the play.

Despite living under the same roof, there is an indescribable sense of isolation. Compared to the other characters, Mary's alienation reveals itself as the most multi-dimensional: She is not only isolated by her gender, but also by her morphine addiction, which takes her to a place in the middle of nowhere, far away from reality,

far away from the surrounding world. The other Tyrones are worried that she will eventually lose her battle with morphine addiction. She nervously wrings her hands which are knotted from rheumatism; her arthritically gnarled hands cannot help playing around her mouth, and this 'playing' is actually a demonstration of the destructive effects of drug addiction on a soul which is more-than-gentle. The isolation the characters suffer from is so extreme that they appear to be living in a sort of bubble which acts as a barrier to their involvement with reality.

It is possible to finish the psychobiographical analysis of the Tyrones with a concluding remark, since the audience knows quite well about O'Neill's state of deep depression, about how "his trembling was getting worse and worse", and about how "Carlotta's arthritis kept pace with the terrible trembling and rigidity in O'Neill's hands and arms" (Bowen & O'Neill 1959, n.p.). The slow onslaught of Parkinson's disease resulted in the tremor in O'Neill hands, which made it difficult for him to write. In the play under scrutiny, again, it is a pair of hands which become the center of attention: Mary's hands are never still; rheumatism has knotted, locked, and blocked the joints, and warped the fingers, giving them "*an ugly crippled look*". It is better not to gaze at the 'nervous' hands, as she is extremely sensitive about how they appear. And, she is utterly humiliated by her lack of ability in "*control[ling] the nervousness*" that draws all attention to them (1956, p. 12). As these all show, the disturbing movements of the limbs mirror the mental states and anxieties of the characters; and, certain symptoms actually show certain types of psychic problems. It is impossible to hide the contents of the unconscious; whatever it houses will eventually come out, laying everything bare in front of the eyes of the Tyrone men.

The psyche starves for something; and Mary, who wants her voice to be heard, complains about not having friends: She attracts attention to her urgent need to find a place to where she could go just "for a day, or even an afternoon"; she talks about her rising willingness to make friends, about how desperately she wants to "laugh, . . . gossip and forget for a while", and that, to do that, she has no one apart from the servant, no one apart from "that stupid Cathleen" (1956, p. 46). O'Neill's father's "professional life was lived entirely in public, . . . he thought of his wife less as a partner than as a sweet and private treasure of his own" (Coolidge 1966, p. 24); and, he did not think much about his wife's growing loneliness. It is apparent that Ella's –

O'Neill's mother's – calmness and alienation, psychologically, weighed heavy on O'Neill's mind; and, the end result is Mary's talk about the poor 'stupid' girl.

Ella married James, and "[h]ow [she] ever married [him] without noticing the smell" which "hung about him remains a mystery" (Coolidge 1966, p. 25). Ella – who had a superior social standing – was always aware of having taken a step down; because actors never had homes of their own, and they always dragged their wives around on tour. In his play, O'Neill, whose mind almost comes to the point of explosion, gives place to all these. Both Ella and Mary had to spend nights at the least expensive hotels; both did not have a place of their own, a place to which they could belong, a place which they could call 'home'.

Throughout the play, the audience does not witness an actual family meal, which, among traditional families, is usually considered as a clear sign of family bonding and a time of real intimacy. Food, the primal source of life and energy, is something handled and prepared by one person and passed on to others for consumption; thus, it involves human beings in an intimate relationship. Normally, it is something shared; however, in the play under scrutiny, there is the absence of a 'real' family meal, with the family members all going to different directions, and getting lost in their destinations. Because of the fact that everyone heads towards some other places, dinner is what falls apart. What Cathleen, "*[t]he second girl*", says about the father's habit seems to summarize the situation: "He's a divil for making the meals late" (1956, p. 51). Jamie, who hopes his father will not forget about the lunch while "listening to himself talk", says that he is hungry (p. 54). After Jamie's "*[d]ully-[made]*" complaint concerning his father's ways – "I wish the Old Man would get a move on. It's a rotten trick the way he keeps meals waiting, and then beefs because they're spoiled" (p. 61) – Edmund "*is heard calling [his father] from the porch*", and exclaiming, in impatience, that they "can[not] wait all day!" (p. 62). Having a family meal is, without doubt, something homely; but, in the play, the endless desire to eat together brings its own problems with itself. While wholeheartedly searching for unity, the Tyrone family members experience nothing, but disunity and division.

What is striking is that the situation of being unable to share food is closely linked with psychology: It is, most of the time, selfishness, dilemmas, and psychological clashes which prevent the characters from having a heartwarming meal altogether. Jamie's particular suggestion – "Damn it! Why don't you go ahead without him?" – and his

explanation which follows – "He's told us to" – are also telling. However, Mary's words which put the final full stop – "He doesn't mean it. . . . He'd be so terribly hurt" (1956, p. 62) – reveal that there is a psychic clash within the father. The individuals all listen to the dictates of an internal voice, and act accordingly. When considered from the audience's perspective, point of view, there is no escape from experiencing the feeling of the uncanny. It is this unique dimension which adds depth and gravity to the details which are related to the unconscious layer of the human psyche. Postponing the act of eating to an unspecified time is a form of abuse in itself; and, here, it is the father's carefree attitude which leads to emotional suffering within the rest of the Tyrones.

The fog is O'Neill's distinct symbol of human beings' incapability to know his/her individual self, or other human beings, or his/her future, his/her destiny. In the first act, the sun is shining brightly in the heavens; in the second, the haze, the thin fog which makes everything seem unclear and less colourful, gathers; and, in the third, a barricade-like wall of fog keeps standing against the windowpanes. In the vision-blurring atmosphere of the fog, at intervals, a foghorn is heard, and this metaphorical moaning is followed by an alerting chorus of the ship's bells; and, this specific instance can be referred to as the "leitmotif" of the familial fate, which sounds whenever that fate attempts to assert itself (Falk 1958, p. 181). The compact play – which is wrapped in a very short length of time, which is about eighteen hours on "a [summer] day in August, 1912" (1956, p. 9) – is about the Tyrone family's downward spiral into addiction, disorder, disease, and their haunted pasts. O'Neill's very personal depiction – of the tragic tale of the common occurrences of a common man – implicitly shows the sorrow and difficulty in everyday circumstances of the existential survival.

Normally, a foghorn helps direct ships through the fog to safety, to places where there is no risk of danger. However, in O'Neill's play, the audience is left looking for a beacon of hope which will guide the Tyrones through its foggy communication and relationships. Despite all hopes, Mary quickly becomes a full-blown morphine addict once again, and things start to turn upside down. With her troubled mind frequently leaping from one point to the other, Mary is a searcher; and, during the 'searching' process towards which she is ultimately dragged, she transforms into someone who is an alien from her individual self. She constantly wants to find some kind of meaning and identity; however, whenever she approaches the reality, the truth, about her own

self, she immediately has to run away, back to the arms, back to the protective wings of the 'mother-like' fog, where, alone, she may experience the sense of belonging (Falk 1958, p. 184), where she may feel more comfortable, considering the fact that she is at least accompanied by something other than herself. She says that she "really love[s] [the] fog", and that it is quite capable of hiding a person from the world and the world from him/her. According to what she says, the foghorn, which she hates, will never let the person alone; she says that it will keep reminding that person of something, that it will continue to warn that person, and that it will always call that person back (1956, pp. 98-99). Edmund – who loves to stay amidst fog due to the fact that it allows him to live "in another world" – feels like he can get lost in the vastness of the ocean, as if getting drunk on liquor (p. 131). In this case, the ocean also becomes a means of escape, as it helps the person experience the releasing and relaxing feeling of freedom. While such extreme things are happening, it is as though the characters are all watching the others, without a hint of understanding, without empathy, without real, genuine, interest in them.

Edmund's mentioning and emphasizing of the "native eloquence of us fog people" (1956, p. 154) is so telling, in the sense that fog is a well-known reminder of unconsciousness. The fog, which normally obscures one's perception of the world, parallels the efforts of the Tyrones to obscure the painful, tormenting, reality. Psychoanalytically speaking, as fog is the symbol of unconsciousness, the fogginess of the stage signifies the digging and delving into the unconscious human mind. In real life, due to his "debilitating nervous disorder", O'Neill's very rare acts of smiling were just like the unexpected – all-of-a-sudden – going-away of a fog; the fog came back again with exactly the same, identical, surprising "rapidity" and velocity (Gelb & Gelb 1962, p. 4); and, this situation is perfectly reflected in his piece of drama. One gets the impression that everywhere is foggy in the play, which means that there is always a place reserved for psychology.

Mary is aware of the fact that Edmund has inherited from her his more-than-enough sensitivity, his easily-influenced nature, his obvious "nervousness" and fear of the actual world and life, and through her, from her father, his susceptibility to consumption, the widely-feared disease of the respiratory system organ. In addition to this curse-like set of inheritance, from her, Edmund takes "her sense of Fate, her [consciousness] . . . of the fog", and her desire to view things through that layer which

blurs the vision (Falk 1958, pp. 183-84). According to J. Dennis Rich, in the progression of consciousness experienced by each of the tormented Tyrones, the problem of existence is encountered in the "climate of the absurd." What is absurd is the apparent comparison between the ideal images of life and pure reality (in Floyd 1979, p. 258). Revealing herself as the play's most insistent apostle of determinism, Mary describes the inescapable end, that is, the fate, of all the searchers: She says that none of the Tyrone family members is capable of helping the things which real life has done to them, and that they are done before they realize them. She goes on to say that the things that are done make them do some other things till everything comes between them and what they would, in fact, like to be. And, she concludes by saying that it is actually their true selves which they lose forever, which they lack eternally (1956, p. 61).

2.2 A Neurotic Electra, A State of Nirvana

Mary suffers from a psychological imbalance, that is from the disagreement between the ego and the id. The disproportionate, incommensurable, state of the ego and the id – the former means her reality, and the latter means the enclosed world of her own – leads to negativities which, more or less, affect all the members of the Tyrone family. In Freudian psychoanalysis, the 'ego' and the 'id' refer to "the rational, logical, waking part of the psyche" (Bressler 2007, p. 340), and "the irrational, instinctual, unknown, and unconscious part of the psyche" (p. 345), respectively. And, in the character of Mary, these two are not in equilibrium. Mary's innate state of denial, her particular mode of rejection, does not let her accept Edmund's heartrending suffering from consumption. Mary believes that confiding to the upsetting fact will only put her in a similar situation as before, when she saw the death of her father as a result of the same dangerous disease of the lungs. What James says helps to make the situation become much more explicit: He says that her father's death due to consumption makes things even worse; he mentions how she "worshiped" her father, and how unable she is when it comes to forgetting all about her father (1956, p. 37).

Helplessly trying to escape the familiar pain for the second time, Mary cannot help getting freaked out. One can understand how much Edmund fears the scenario when he wants his mother to "promise [him]" that even if it turns out to be "something worse", she will continue to take care of herself. Even though Mary "promise[s]" and

"give[s] . . . [him] . . . [her] sacred word of honor" (1956, p. 48), her word is not valid; it cannot be taken seriously; because it is no good where the drug, morphine, is concerned. Mary – who is quite good at coming up with excuses – this time, deliberately, chooses not to accept Edmund's disease as being tuberculosis, but intentionally labels it as 'a normal cold', more specifically, "a bad summer cold" (p. 16). Rather than facing the painful reality, and confronting the severity of the problem, she prefers living in a fake, artificial, world of denial. "[F]ooling herself with that summer cold talk" (p. 29), refusing to trust the medical profession, refusing to believe the doctor's diagnosis, and not admitting the gravity of the illness is nothing, but her defense against the life which presses so much on her psyche. Despite sensing this fragility in her, the father and the sons, at times, tend to act without thinking. On the other hand, Edmund, who seems unconcerned about the malady he suffers from, is imperceptive to the suspicions of the other Tyrones. The discovery that Edmund is stricken with consumption is what gives way to the general atmosphere of sorrow that reigns over the household.

Usual things, the things human beings are accustomed to, turn upside down; and, one is left facing an unusual, extraordinary, familial unit where the female parent finds contentment through her relapse into her idealized past, and through her morphine addiction. She blames her husband for her current condition; and, most of the time, she – "a [former] romantic day-dreamer" (Hinden 1990, p. 48) – mentally goes back to her blooming youth, and the moment she chose to get married to the Shakespearean actor, leaving aside her greatest ambition, her biggest dream of becoming a nun who serves the divinity: She expresses the strength of her past desires, dreams, by privileging one over the other, in other words, by putting emphasis on one of the two: "To be a nun, that was the more beautiful one. To become a concert pianist, that was the other" (1956, p. 104). Like a rock embedded in soil, the vexing and perplexing thoughts, ideas of entering the convent in the hope of becoming a nun, and her former aspiration to become a concert pianist stand firmly in her almost suffocated mind. Emil Roy describes how she pendulates, comes and goes, between two irrelevant past ideals; she draws attention to the fantasized roles of the virtuoso pianist – who receives the adulation, admiration, applause, praise and worship of an audience – and the nun who is withdrawn to a secret, far-away, place (1969-70, p. 272).

Mary has mentally taken herself to the dream land of the past, to the particular time when she still had faith in the Virgin, humanity's sacred mother in the Catholic doctrine, which signifies the benign, not malign, smile of the Mother Superior, and which is the symbol of female purity, innate unworldly innocence, and unaffected charm, and thus, the patron saint of Irish Roman Catholic convent girls. Mary makes use of an idealized recreation of her younger years, as a way to escape from reality; and, she, once more, lives her childhood days at the Catholic school. Apparently, in order to cope with the present bleakness which she has to live in, she looks for a shelter, and seeks a sort of comfort in the arms of the beautiful memories of the past. Having been swallowed up by the family guilt, she deliberately marches back to the one and only justice which has the potential to soothe her down a bit; she directly goes back to the self which, alone, is able to give her a sort of expiation. Mary – who is under the spell and the well-fixed grip of her subconscious which never allows her to come out of her capturing, enslaving, past – wants to roll back from her present life, because her ambition is not fulfilled. It is this sense of sacrifice which ultimately ruins all the, hardly ever normal, relationships in the Tyrone family. Having retreated from the Tyrone men, Mary reaches out to another woman, and this is "a tendency" which she "shares with the hysterics, notably Bertha Pappeheim who abruptly left treatment" and ended up becoming a feminist (Hall 1993, p. 43).

Apart from her worries, the audience learns about Mary's regrets, her resentments which take shelter in the depths of her psyche. Because of having experienced that sort of thing before, she quite well "know[s] . . . what a [real] home is like"; to be specific, she gave up her father's home for the sole purpose of marrying James (1956, p. 72). According to what she says, at the Convent, she had a lot of friends who had the habit of visiting her in her father's home; she and her friends often paid visits to each other; however, after marrying an actor, many of them "gave [her] the cold shoulder" (p. 86). At this point, Mary's captivating habit of returning to the past, once more, reminds the audience of some psychoanalytic assumptions: According to Freud's theory, the past is what one always carries with himself/herself; it is always with the person who remembers it; it is inseparable from the person; it is never lost; it is never irretrievable; there is nothing in the psyche that is old; and, there is nothing that can disappear or die away. In *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist*, in the part entitled *The Authority of the Past*, Philip Rieff points out that "[n]eurotics 'try to make the past . . . non-existent'"

(1961, p. 205); because it is their absolute and current reality. Like that of a neurotic, Mary's high levels of anxiety and fears force her to be the way she is. The reason why she suffers that much is a direct consequence of the ignorance of the rest of the Tyrones. One of the issues which becomes problematic in the household is the oblivious way she is treated.

According to Freud, the human unconscious knows almost nothing about time limit; and, each and every previous state of the memory component can, interestingly, be brought back. Even if all the actual relationships have all been changed and replaced by completely different ones, it is always possible to remember, to keep in mind what happened in the 'good old days'. The latter phrase, which is a cliché in popular culture, refers to a very specific time, a time which is considered to be better than the present time one is living in; it is a form of nostalgia; and, as it has been highlighted, Mary's 'journey' to the past is the best example which can be given in this context. Being metaphorically suffocated in the midst of the disturbing behaviours, she – in all her helplessness – struggles to find a resting place, where she can find a better state of mind, or peace of mind. The audience is confronted with the need for the exegesis of her line: "The past is the present, isn't it? It's the future, too" (1956, p. 87). These words, which underline the preponderance, the superiority, of the past, are striking, as they have a "semiotic brilliance and efficacy" (Karim 2010, p. 161). The past, which left an indelible mark on her psyche, is what she cannot leave behind. The spill of the special language with which she "struggles to conceal her collapsing, [crumbling], world is no less appalling than the autism towards which she is pulled" (Bigsby 2000a, p. 18). Moreover, Mary's talking about her "great, generous", "nice. . . . prosperous . . . able" and "noble Irish gentleman" father, and her father's "wonderful" home cannot escape attention (1956, p. 137), as it shows her attachment to the parent of the male sex, at a particular point in her life. She always talks about the two in glowing terms; and, this praise of hers gives psychological messages which are altogether Freudian. To be specific, she is "a product of [the] Electra complex" (Fathima 2016, p. 350), the female version of the Oedipus complex as defined by Freud.

Acting in accordance with the dictates of the above-mentioned complex, the designation of which is based on the myth of Electra and Agamemnon from Greek mythology, Mary clings to her memories of her father; it is her final refuge; and, the other Tyrones, who fail to understand her, mostly make fun of the situation. Electra

complex – which roughly means the unresolved, unconscious libidinous desire of a daughter for her father – affects the way Mary behaves. According to what Freud says, it is necessary for girls to "negotiate", to travel along the route of the Electra complex; it is necessary for them to "make the transition" from girlhood to being a normal, mature adult. A young girl, who is – in an erotic sort of way – attracted to her mother, sees that her father is no one, but a competing person, in other words, a rival for her mother's love. In an unconscious sort of way, the girl realizes that she is castrated just like her mother is castrated. Because of the fact that she knows her father owns that which she wants, she directly changes the direction of her desires; she directs her desires to the father, while distancing away from her mother. When the seduction of her father becomes unsuccessful, she marches towards her mother, and chooses the option of identifying with her, thus successfully negotiating the Electra complex (Bressler 2007, p. 340).

Geraldine Fitzgerald – while giving the details about a production of the play – points out that Mary is a person who mainly suffers from "what is called in medical slang a 'cat' reaction to morphine (so-called because only women and cats have this atypical response), which would make her overactive and excitable rather than drowsy (the so-called 'dog' reaction, the usual one.)" In spite of the fact that, without medical reports, this hypothesis can never be proved, Mary is, without doubt, a victim of her own condition, her own neurosis. She is what she is since she has her own senses of guilt. Specifically, she feels guilty about her relationship with her female parent, whom she disliked, and about her male parent, whom she greatly admired, but who passed away at an early age. So many of O'Neill's characters have something to do with ancient prototypes; and, in this context, Mary is a sort of "Electra". According to Fitzgerald, her attitude is rooted in the fact that she was a woman who thought that she was going to be given the worst possible punishment for her guilt of cutting out her female parent with her male parent (in Floyd 1979, pp. 291-92).

Absolutely "[c]onsistent with the typical patriarchal scenario", it was impossible for Mary to have her father as a love object, so she had to gain "a phallus of her own through her marriage" to James (Hall 1993, p. 42). Echoing Freud's understanding of the phallus as power, in the play, the 'phallocentric' – most particularly "[o]bsessed with the phallus", or inclined "towards [the] cultural assumptions of [the] male dominance" that is widely "symbolized by the phallus" (Colman 2002, p. 550) –

ideology is, at times, at work. Mary appears to have played the phallic sort of game; she clearly remembers her mother opposing the marriage; and, according to Freud's theories of female sexual development, the difference of opinion is a natural occurrence in such kind of processes, and the unavoidable by-product of these experiences is a female subject who intentionally turns away from her mother as love object. Here, what is significant is that these can all be counted as the further symptoms, traces, of the Electra complex in Mary.

Jean Chothia writes about the human mind under the influence of morphine, a tranquillizer which mostly blurs problems and makes reality seem a distant dream, a dream which seems to be further and further away from what is actual. Transgressing the boundaries, exceeding the limits, "[f]reed from the normal . . . [limitations] of [social] intercourse", Mary cannot help speaking her resentments, tensions, fears, and anxieties; she cannot help showing her "impulsive warmth" and her "perceptions" about the character of others (in Bloom 1987, p. 115). She starts to reminisce quite sweetly and peacefully, but, all of a sudden, all pleasantness goes away; her feelings change direction, and head towards another destination; and, finally, repressed resentment bursts through into bitter complaints or self pity.

Due to the fact that Mary lacks the – emotional – strength to endure the conditions under which she happens to be living, morphine offers an escape, and helps her to retreat into a dream world of her own. There is no doubt that her neurotic attachment to Edmund – in whom the dramatist, O'Neill, finds himself – weighs heavy on her. When Edmund, her beloved, informs her about his lungs' urgent need for treatment, when he says that he has to "go to a sanatorium", Mary reacts by saying that he is "[her] baby", that James will never be able to "take [him] from [her]", and that he can do such a thing to Jamie, but not to Edmund. She says that she knows why James wants to send him to a low-grade sanatorium; she says that he does all these just because "[h]e knew [she] loved [him]" – Edmund – most (1956, p. 119). Obviously, this is her declaration of preference; this is how the devastated mother 'speaks her fears'. Leaving a child, or allowing him to leave her, is synonymous with death; in other words, separation from the mother is a sentence of death. Mary's drug-induced reverie, her falling into a hallucinogenic state in which she is unable to differentiate between the distant past and the traumatic present, and her carrying the wedding dress which "signifies her movement" into another sphere – to be specific, "into the realm of

commodity" (Hall 1993, p. 46) – without even recognizing her own family all reflect the unconscious activities going on in her mind.

The Tyrone men deceive themselves by believing that whiskey has benefits for body and health, and that it is a good appetizer, and the best of tonics. In the play where the audience hears Edmund even quoting from Baudelaire – "Be always drunken" (1956, p. 132) – the men try to appear sympathetic to Mary's bloodcurdling sort of condition, giving the impression of placing her wishes before their own, and honouring the sanctified place of the female parent in patriarchy. However, this generosity of spirit is actually triggered by their own selfish wish to have the self-possessed and anaesthetized mother return to the stereotypical role. Moreover, at one point, the audience hears James saying that his wife's virginal past is just a pipe dream, and that she was, in reality, a flirt. "Nowhere is the law of the father made more explicit in the play" (Hall 1993, p. 39). Quite obviously, this is an exemplification of the psychoanalytic view that the male is in the position of the lawgiver, just because he is the one who owns the symbol of power, the phallus. Due to being extremely interested in language and the symbolic, Jacques Lacan took the challenge of reinterpreting Freud's Oedipus complex in his own terms, that is, in symbolic terms: The patriarchal, dominating force of a real Oedipal-father translates into the dominating force of the 'name-of-the-father' – a concept which derives from the mythical-symbolic father of Freud's *Totem and Taboo* – within Lacan's symbolic order. What is more, according to Lacan's concepts of the 'law of the father' – the father's 'no!' – and the 'name-of-the-father', the male is in the position of the law-giver, "not because he has a superior procreative function"; he stands in that position "merely as an effect of the linguistic system" (Selden, Widdowson & Brooker 1997, p. 140).

Being a hysteric, and therefore, being in the grips of a series of unpleasant psychic experiences, Mary constantly confronts the same emotional state. According to Freud and Joseph Breuer, memories that are trapped, and the emotions that are associated with them, result in hysteria. Those memories and emotions have not been lived through in a usual way; they have "become split off from the rest of the . . . [psyche], only to fester and rise to the surface" in the shape of disconcerting and impossible-to-explain kind of signs (Mitchell & Black 1995, p. 4). Hysterics, who suffer mainly from reminiscences, from troubling memories of earlier experiences, have to endure the feelings associated with loneliness, and like Mary, they often live in a dream world of

their own making. Hysterical symptoms, which one can observe in Mary, are not logical actions in themselves, but blocked discharges, the outcomes of "accretion[s] of excitation in the nervous system, which the latter has been . . . [incapable of] dispos[ing] of . . . by motor reaction" (Freud in Neu 1998, p. 30).

In *Studies on Hysteria,* a compilation of a series of case histories, Freud and Breuer, focus on the lives women lead, the 'consoling' stories they have to tell themselves, the 'saddening' stories they refuse to tell themselves, and the situations which make them susceptible to hysteria, a disease of the nerves which cannot be separated from the social standing of women at the time. The disease, which can be seen in Mary, can be explained as 'an inactive form of resistance to the social expectations which surround the female sex'. In the part entitled *Case Histories: Case 1,* Breuer underlines the restrictions, the limited possibilities in – his patient – Fräulein Anna O.'s life, and how she led a monotonous life in her puritanically-minded family (in Freud 2010, p. 21). Needless to say, these points all echo the points related to Mary's illness of traumatic origins.

Carroll Smith-Rosenberg describes how the hysterical woman of the times began to see her own ways; and, the points she mentions call to mind not only Mary's deep state of unhappiness, but the conditions under which the other Tyrones live. Smith-Rosenberg draws attention to the hysterical woman's disinterest in the needs of the ones near her, her withdrawal from the role of the "self-sacrificing" family member, her hysterical nature which pushes others to assume the "wife" and "mother" functions, and the reorientation of the "[h]ousehold activities" to answer her "importunate needs". Among the other details are "[silenced] [c]hildren", "darkened [rooms]", "suspended [entertainment]", "medical bills", amounts of money spent on drugs, the bowed shoulders of the worried male parent, and the instant transformation of the domestic area into a hospital, and the male parent into "the nurse" (Smith-Rosenberg 1985, p. 208). And, these qualities of psychological origins, which lie at the roots of Mary's affliction, can be seen in the general atmosphere of the Tyrone household. Life conditions inevitably change Mary, and Mary, in turn, changes the living conditions in the house. And, what is seen at the end is a series of scenes of domestic unrest, that is, distressing disagreements and verbal fights.

In the final act, what Edmund says about Mary's morphine haze reveals something about the love and hate relationship in the family. He talks about the "blank wall"

which she tries to build around herself; and, he asserts that it is "more like a bank of fog", and that she chooses to hide and lose herself in it. And, he puts the full stop by saying, "You know something in her does it deliberately – to get beyond our reach, to be rid of us, to forget we're alive! It's as if, in spite of loving us, she hated us!" (1956, p. 139). Edmund's uttering of the words 'love' and 'hate' within the same breath is interestingly both familiar and unfamiliar, and is uncanny when evaluated within the confines of the Freudian psychoanalysis. While there are things which one likes about home, there are some other things which he/she dislikes about it; and, according to the psychoanalytic logic, this situation can be classified as something quite normal. Home houses not only love, but also hate. The place which can appropriately be called a 'house' normally "arous[es] a sense of peaceful pleasure and security"; however, at the same time, it houses shocking details, due to the fact that the "Heimlichkeit" of the home is destroyed (Freud 1919, p. 3). In the dramatic work under scrutiny, things which should have been kept as secret are revealed; they are brought to light; they are made accessible to all.

In the play, where the bombardment-like usage of the opposites starts at the very first minute, with the antonyms 'day' and 'night' in the title, Mary is seen as nothing, but "a ghost haunting the past"; and, what is striking is that there is a special emphasis on this phrase, as it is used more than once (1956, p. 137, p. 152). Considering the Freudian explanations about the uncanny, there must be something unhomely about the situation of the 'ghost' mother. In a helpless sort of way, Mary chooses to stand or wander at the remote corners of life, and of her own burden-like existence. To be able to make his point more understandable, in *The Uncanny*, Freud quotes from Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* – "Heimlich, . . . in the sense of a place free from ghostly influences . . . familiar, friendly, intimate" (1919, p. 4) – and, then, in his notes at the end of the essay, he provides the readers with Grimm's original German explanation: "[H]eimlich ist auch der von gespensterhaften freie ort . . . vertraut; freundlich, zutraulich" (p. 21). Quite normally, all these factors combine, and eventually push forward a valid enough reason to tag Mary as someone who is unfamiliar and, at times, unfriendly in the middle of the Tyrone household, which is also occupied by three other unfamiliar and, at times, unfriendly family members. It is home itself that creates these problematic characters; it is home that gives birth to all these faulty figures.

What Freud calls ‘the uncanny’, and the ambivalent nature of its dual meaning – familiar and, at the same time, unfamiliar – cannot be separated from “the repeated return of the repressed” (Thurschwell 2001, p. 118). If one has to state the final phrase of this quotation in a different way, he/she can say that the ingredients, the constitutive parts, of the psyche come out, regardless of every effort on the contrary, regardless of what is being done. Sooner or later, what is buried within the recesses of the human mind shows itself, in varying – either verbal or behavioural – forms. The moment the negative aspects in the play are considered, one finds himself/herself in the territory of the uncanny. Although Mary’s relapse into morphine addiction is the central traumatic event, it cannot label her as the sole cause of the family’s problematic relationships. Her addiction is not as important a sign of the family’s dysfunction as her tacitly appointed role as a scapegoat. The Tyrones limit, restrict, their understanding of their family dysfunction to one individual; therefore, they do not have to account for the dynamic interplay of their conflicted and competing desires. The obstinate obsession with Mary’s relapse in fact hints at their collective denial of the present time. They, helplessly, try to flee their desire and intensify collective experience of loss. The matriarch is not the only problematic character to blame; she is just one of them; however, the fact that she is mostly mistreated marks her as the victim. Mary is the one who is forced to endure the most abuse, the ignorance of the other Tyrones, the supposed victors. Despite being abused most of the time, the husband’s despair over the wife’s addiction is always genuine; the pain which the audience sees and senses in James is never a ham’s imitation grief.

The anaesthetized matriarch’s, Mary’s, words are an immediate reflection of the extent of the unrest in the household: She says that she is “so sick and tired of pretending” that it is a ‘real’ home, that he does not know “how to act” in a shared living environment, and that he has never wanted such a place (1956, p. 67). What she says at another stage, in the play, supports the above-mentioned points. She says that it “was never a home”, and that, for her, it has “always been as lonely as a dirty room in a one-night stand hotel” (p. 72). Following the big scandal of the suing of James by one of his ‘past’ mistresses, Mary’s isolation grows, lengthens, multiplies, and thus worsens, as her “old friends either pitied [her] or cut [her] dead” (p. 86). She is usually left waiting for her wandering husband to get done carousing with his theatre buddies. Judith L. Fischer and Richard S. Wampler point out that the particular role which can

be referred to as the "scapegoat role" is "associated with heightened vulnerability" (1994, p. 469); and, in O'Neill's play, Mary, who is emotionally and mentally hurt and influenced by the bombardment-like attitudes of the other Tyrones, is more like a scapegoat.

The Freudian 'uncanny' is meticulously embedded; instances of this concept are skillfully scattered in the play. The eerie feeling – which accompanies the audience, as it is always between the lines – can easily be sensed. The specific atmosphere one is talking about is a house; but, the one he/she is invited to is not the standard living environment, as he/she comes face to face with verbal assaults and words of love, in succession. According to what the Freudian theory emphasizes, it is possible to encounter such extreme situations; it is not impossible to hear such contradictory things among the individuals living under the same roof, as the roots of the uncanny, unheimlich, lie in the 'heim' itself, and as "[u]nheimlich is, [this way or that way], . . . a sub-species of heimlich" (Freud 1919, p. 4).

Steven F. Bloom identifies two different "Marys in the play" – the Mary on the stage, the Mary who is recovering from her addiction, "the 'fat and sassy' Mary"; and the Mary who the Tyrone men "fear she will regress to – the 'hophead,' the 'dope fiend,' the 'mad ghost'" (2004, p. 231). Mary's apparent affliction – which turns her into a ghost, or a fog-kind-of-person, out of a normal, flesh and blood human being – is nothing other than the direct consequence of chance and the circumstances in which she finds herself, and thus, fate. According to Freud's psychoanalytic considerations and assessments, neurosis is seen when society imposes too much frustration upon the person. This hints at the fact that Mary's final state – walking around in hallucination, "*[s]taring dreamily before her*" (1956, p. 175) – is the result of the demands she is exposed to, since the crowd which is referred to as 'society' is composed of people. Mary's mind cannot be at peace with the outside world, as she is completely captivated by her unconscious train, or track, of thought. The set of neurotic behaviours which she frequently shows in front of the others is a real reflection of the disappointments she experiences in daily life, and thus, in the household of the Tyrones.

While trying to evaluate the extent of the divergence of the Tyrones from normal family routines, one is bombarded by a series of biting words. In this context, one of the concentration areas must be the climactic 'Ophelia's mad scene': Specifically, the reason why Jamie callously utters the words "The Mad Scene. Enter Ophelia!" at the

exact moment he sees his mother, who is lost in thoughts. When Jamie makes a crack at his mother's expense, Edmund cannot stop himself, and smacks him. He does not hesitate to slap him "*across [his] mouth with the back of his hand*" (1956, p. 170). At this stage, William Shakespeare's, the Renaissance dramatist's, sweet and innocent Ophelia, in the tragedy of *Hamlet*, quite naturally guides one's thoughts. The utterance of the very specific name 'Ophelia' and the direct association with the theme of 'madness' cannot be left there to dangle. O'Neill, subconsciously, turned to Shakespeare's plays – his "nurture" – "to quiet the ghosts of his family" (Westgate 2008, p. 23).

Like Ophelia, Mary is a doomed character who marches towards the highest point, the peak, of insanity. In the Shakespearean work, Ophelia, who has received several tributes of love from Hamlet, rejects him after her father, Polonius, orders her to do so. She also obeys her brother, Laertes, and this makes it clear that she is controlled by the men in her life. Dependent on the male ones to tell her how to behave, Ophelia, who gives in to her father's schemes to spy on Hamlet, is moved around just like a pawn; she is frequently mocked by Hamlet and lectured by Polonius and Laertes about her sexuality; and, at the end, she goes mad after Hamlet accidentally murders her father. Grieving over, mourning after, the death of her father and the loss of her love, there is no alternative left for her, other than delving into madness. Even in her final move, that is to say, even in her spiralling down into madness and death, she succeeds in remaining maidenly, sings songs about flowers, and subsequently drowns in the river in the midst of the beautiful flower garlands she had previously gathered. Due to not being able to hide her despair, Ophelia sings songs which consist of seemingly random words; it is not impossible to hear the unceasing rhythms which come from her mind, in other words, from her tortured soul. What comes to the forefront is her burst of feelings: "Larded with sweet flowers; / Which bewept to the grave did go / With true-love showers" (1999a, p. 700). "There's rosemary. . . . [T]here is pansies. . . . There's fennel for you, and columbines. . . . There's a daisy: – I would give you some violets, but they wither'd all when my father died" (p. 702).

Regarding the issue of the male gaze, in O'Neill's play, there are similar, Shakespearean, attempts at keeping Mary under constant control. From the beginning till the end, her protest, her sort of refutation against the all-male family members, the clutch of men, keeps one alert. Being the only female in the family, Mary touches the

specific issue of the Lacanian 'gaze' as if hitting the mark, and her words reveal a lot in this respect. She says that it is so hard to live in a place of "constant suspicion", that she knows the rest of the Tyrones are "spying on [her]", and that no one "believe[s] in [her], or trust[s] [her]." Her statements, after which exclamation marks are used, show the extent of her unhappiness: She says that they pretend to be asleep, just to be able to "spy on [her]", and that they had better "[s]top suspecting [her]" (1956, pp. 46-47). At this stage, one may question whether it is suspicion or consideration. In the house, there is always the primitive suspicion, the fierce doubt, that nobody is to be trusted. Because they sense that she is back on morphine, all the other Tyrones feel the need to approach the situation in a considerate way, as is expected. Nevertheless, the mother is the one who is emotionally abused at the end, as a consequence of the continuous act of staring. Letting go seems to be quite impossible, and thus, the Tyrones are, in a way, stuck and unable to move on.

By the end of O'Neill's play, the excessive dose of the anodyne causes Mary to fall into a mental, hallucinogenic, state in which she is unable to differentiate between the distant past and the traumatic present. Not hearing anyone, coming to a state which unconsciously forces her to be more-than-vulnerable, she cannot even recognize her own family, carrying the "wedding gown" which she claims to have "found . . . in the attic hidden in a trunk" (1956, p. 172). Being completely high on morphine, holding the white bridal gown – an obvious symbol for some kind of lost promise, squandered potential, and anticipated happiness which never could come – in her rheumatic hands, dragging it, and "mov[ing] [to and fro] like a sleepwalker" (p. 174), she is nothing, but a heart-wrenching sight. With both of her wings metaphorically broken, her helpless attitude directly calls to mind the actions undertaken by Shakespeare's unlucky character, Ophelia. As these all indicate, the substitution of a single word has the potential to say a lot about psychological matters, about the functioning of the human mind, which, at all times, remains under inescapable pressure. Being a result of an unconscious flow of thoughts, Jamie's Shakespeare-inspired words convey deep meanings. A suppressed component, at all times, strives to assert itself somewhere else; and, Jamie has apparently attempted at making a joke by referring to his numb mother as 'Ophelia', by using the name of a literary character who is known for her madness. At the moment of uttering the quite meaning-'full' words, he is "*sardonic*"

(p. 170); he is humorous in an unkind way which hints at the fact that he does not respect his mother.

What one perceives as uncanny in the play is, at times, anxiety-provoking and frightening due to not being familiar at all. Mary seems uncanny to the audience, because, near the end of the play, she has totally transformed into a mad woman. It seems that she has lost her individual self; and, her actions appear to be against her own will. In the scene with the wedding gown, there is something "*uncanny*": "*[H]er face . . . [at present] [looks] so youthful*" (1956, p. 170). Considering her age, she is not that young; and, there is a contradiction, an unharmony, between the 'invisible' reality and the 'visible' sight. It is home, the atmosphere itself, which prepares the necessary conditions for all these; it is home which houses unfamiliarity. Mary's transformation into an almost mentally-ill one is a consequence of the, seemingly random, way she is treated.

In the fourth and final act, referring to his morphine-addict mother, Jamie asks Edmund where the "hophead" is, a question which immediately triggers negative feelings in Edmund, who, with rage, comes up with a swift physical reflex action, and defends Mary from Jamie's nasty tongue (1956, p. 161). *Thesaurus* defines the above-quoted informal word as "a person addicted to narcotics" (n.d., n.p.). To be more specific, the slang is an umbrella term for users of everything from cocaine to marijuana – in other words, 'tea', which is a well-known Jazz era term – from opium to heroin, or to benzedrine. Jamie's use of the term, which sprang from the early Jazz scene in 1920's and 1930's America, is an indicator of the problems which take refuge in the unconscious part of his psyche; it is a reflection of the toxic thoughts which keep his 'cursed' mind busy throughout the play. It is not such kind of, unkind, words which should echo in the living environment of a family. Nonetheless, when compared, every other force is less powerful than the force the unconscious holds within itself: What is in the mind always finds a way out, as nothing can stop the Freudian aspects from resurfacing. In this particular instance, in the 'hophead' scene, once more, the target is Mary.

Mary, the convent-bred child, can find no home in this alien milieu; she is not well-equipped to face the big terrors of life outside; therefore, she has no other alternative apart from playing the role of the passive. On the other hand, the lack of sexual equality has its own consequences. What strikes attention is the embodiment of the male

outlook; there is the expression of a view and counter-view within a particular system in which the male is the fixed, 'unchanging', norm. The female protagonists are adjuncts to the male ones, or they are seen as ciphers for male concerns. This specific situation does not arise as a consequence of a big and conscious conspiracy among the male ones; it is altogether an unconscious result of the accepted norms of relationships between the two sexes in society. This is definitely based on a certain ideology, a system of thought, which supposes that biological differences between the male and the female must necessarily mean that their areas, realms, of social activity are dissimilar, and that men's job is more important than women's job; and, related to this understanding, what may follow is that it may lead to the argument that women are all incapable of taking power (Wandor 1993, pp. 16-17).

Mary embodies the characteristics of "unworldly innocence" which is "typical" not only of "American womanhood" of the 19th century, but also of "all Christian mariolatry", as the very specific name, 'Mary', implies (Carpenter 1964, p. 160). In the play, where one can see a masterfully-drawn portrait of the fundamental human emotions, one comes face to face with richly textured characters who are all negatively affected by desperate love and aching loneliness. The Tyrone family's past and present are so harrowing that normal coping mechanisms, such as love and togetherness, are unable to keep up with the pace. The particular form of retreat the family members choose – alcohol and narcotics – brings other problems which were not there at first place, which were not present previously. For instance, Mary's frequent zoning out distracts the ones who witness her mounting the steps of the house. Mary is under scrutiny every time she comes down the stairs of the doomed household. From time to time, the audience sees her going upstairs, presumably to shoot up once more. At one stage, hoping to "take an overdose" one day, Mary says that she has to go upstairs, as she has not "taken enough" (1956, p. 121). The more morphine she takes, the more trapped and imprisoned she becomes.

In the play, the characters all try to armour themselves. Vincenzo Conigliaro defines 'defense mechanisms' as the "psychological operations [which] protect . . . the conscious socialized ego from too direct an experience of id, superego, and unconscious processes" (1997, p. 373). Through a variety of such mechanisms, certain things are kept unconscious, in a seemingly intentional way. For example, if anxiety provoking memories or images were directly accepted into the consciousness by the

unconscious, they would provoke intense feelings – of guilt, disgust, shame, etc. – within the psyche of the individuals. While Mary goes upstairs for a shot of morphine, the Tyrone men booze it up downstairs. In the Tyrone household, where alcohol and morphine function as symbols of retreat, no one has anywhere to go, neither in the literal nor in the metaphorical sense. Therefore, they have to choose one of the two imaginable alternatives. They either prefer fight or flight.

As she is unable to endure most of the loneliness, Mary produces more pathos throughout the play. With the maddening sort of detachment which comes to her when she has begun to take the drug again, she – once more – repeats her "litany of complaints" to James himself (Grene 2005, p. 111): She says that James has always "preferred the Club or a barroom", that – "[i]n a real home" – no one can feel lonely, that she "know[s] from experience what a [real] home is like", and that she has left her father's home, just to be able to get married to him (1956, p. 72). "Alcohol in the context of barrooms" usually creates a "feeling of unity and togetherness"; and, by this way, some "personal" or "hierarchical" differences could temporarily be forgotten, due to being under the influence of alcohol (Chitra 2016, p. 685). And, this is the strategy the Tyrone men use to be able to deal with the world surrounding them. According to Freud, men's constant association with men, with people of the same sex, and his dependence on his relationships with them, take him further away from his responsibilities as a husband and father. So, the woman finds her individual self pushed into the background by the assertions of civilization; and, under such circumstances, she eventually cannot help adopting a hostile, aggressive, attitude towards it (1962, p. 51).

In order to be able to question the unacceptable nature of Jamie's behaviours, one feels the pushing need to go back; and, the moment one steps back, he/she sees that it is the patriarch of the family who introduces the sons to alcoholic beverages. Mary's words to her spouse are enough evidence to prove this: She says that James brought Jamie up "to be a boozer", that Jamie has always seen him boozing, and that – as a father – he used alcohol as a "remedy", that he gave Jamie a "teaspoonful of whiskey" to quiet him when he had a bad dream or a "stomachache" (1956, p. 110). All these details about the act of boozing hint at nothing, but the roots of abuse in the household of the Tyrones.

Freud points out that the pleasure principle has something to do with the workings of the 'sexual instincts', which are instincts so difficult to "educate". Beginning exactly from these instincts, or possibly in the ego, it generally overcomes the reality principle, "to the detriment" of the living organism as a whole (Freud 1989, p. 7). In close connection with this psychic war between the two principles, there are two remarkable forces controlling each and every action of the humankind. In other words, there are certain limitations imposed upon individuals. Freud is of the opinion that human beings suffer from both external and internal restrictions; and, as a matter of fact, one cannot commit certain acts because there is no doubt that he/she will end up feeling guilty if he/she is caught in the middle of doing unacceptable and undesirable things. For instance, Mary is exhausted because of the three pairs of eyes continually 'spying' on her; she is constantly scrutinised by her men folk for signs that she is returning to her drug use; and, the boys, who cannot comfortably consume alcoholic drinks in the presence of their father, complain about – and, sometimes make fun of – their father's "eagle eye", because of his repeated attempts at "memoriz[ing] the level in the bottle" after each and every act of drinking (1956, p. 54).

During moments of alcoholic exuberance, Jamie has even found a system for stealing alcoholic drinks – especially whiskey – from James, who is always watchful: Refilling the bottle with some water, to keep the level of the liquid the same. As the brothers are psychologically under constant pressure, they – having nothing else left to do – feel obliged to find ways to relax, to soothe their soul. That they have a desire is for sure; however, in John Henry Raleigh's words, it is "the impossible desire for a nirvana that lies at the bottom of a bottle of whiskey" (in Gassner 1964, p. 133).

The symptoms of 'paranoia' – "a more or less systematized state of delusion" (Eagleton 2003, p. 138) – in the parents' behaviours also catch a great deal of attention. Due to the constant failure of communication, the audience sees Mary and James showing some symptoms of paranoia: For instance, Mary becomes more and more disturbed when she realizes the Tyrone men watching her each and every movement. On the other hand, James interprets every burst of laughter coming from the kitchen, or the dining room, as the boys enjoying a funny joke about him: He says that it is "on [him]", that he will "bet that much", and that it is "always" on him, "always on the Old Man" (1956, p. 18). And, after a while, he says "never mind"; and, he goes on to say that he is "used to [all that]" (p. 22). In addition to these points, Mary's incapability in

making the necessary connections, in tying the loose ends, deserves emphasis. The glasses which she always seems to misplace represent her inability to see things for what they truly are; and, her ignorance – not being in a rush to find them – shows that she does not want to face reality. Mary, according to what she says, ought to buy new glasses because her eyesight is "so bad now" (p. 27). At other points, she says that she, as is usually, cannot find her glasses (p. 68), and that she has to fix her hair, "[t]hat is if [she] can find her glasses" right away (p. 75).

In their article on the defense of psychoanalysis in literature, Albert Rothenberg and Eugene D. Shapiro write about projection which is a kind of defense directed at un-conscious or pre-conscious drives, desires, or conflicts, through which mind-related products are comprehended and, in a way, shown as coming from somewhere apart from the individual self (1973, p. 53). It is obvious that Mary cannot trust her individual self; she continually feels guilty about beginning to take the narcotic again; however, as a kind of counterattack, she goes on to defend herself by blaming James, Jamie and Edmund, the ones who are always around her. This is nothing other than her personal form of protection; she constantly looks for ways to set her mind free from the weight of the emerging familial problems.

The word 'denial' can be appropriately explained as a total repudiation of a threat – whether internal or external – despite clear evidence of its existence, its presence. There is no doubt that Mary semi-consciously thinks that Edmund suffers from tuberculosis, the same feared and damned disease which led to the death of her father; nevertheless, she chooses the option of denying it vigorously, hopelessly trying to convince herself that Edmund only has a cold. Edmund's obvious consumption is denied by Mary who insists on believing that he only has 'a bad summer cold' which may make "anyone irritable" (1956, p. 26). Avoidance is their main and unchanging strategy for dealing with the problems which keep piling up in front of their eyes. In addition to these, at times, personally unacceptable thoughts, feelings, or actions are justified, rationalized, by giving reasons which only result in distorting the actual facts and the entire system of logic. Generally, the reasons which are shown are socially acceptable ones; and, this is another noticeable defense mechanism used in the play: Stubbornly, James defends himself against his – possibly tormenting – guilt at having chosen a cheap doctor for Edmund, by finding a number of reasons in order to justify, or dismiss, the act of hiring Doctor Hardy: He says that their "sneers" against Doctor

Hardy are all "lies", and that he does not "put on frills, or have an office in a fashionable location, or drive around in an expensive automobile". He attracts attention to the meaning underlying the latter part, once more showing his stinginess: "That's what you pay for with those other five-dollars-to-look-at-your-tongue fellows, not their skill" (p. 31).

Since it is an autobiographical play, O'Neill shows his own "antithetical toughness and tenderness" (Engel 1953, p. 298) throughout. The realities underlying the juxtaposition of brutal fighting and tender times – for example, Jamie's repressed jealousy of his brother being balanced by his intrinsic love – are relevant issues to include under the title, category, of 'the uncanny aspects'. Like their parents, the siblings can be full of hate at one moment, and of love at the next. When it comes to Edmund's 'consuming' consumption, "*[Jamie's] love for his brother com[es] out*" (1956, p. 30). On the other hand, calling him "[a] dirty bastard", Edmund "*punches [Jamie] in the face*", a sudden blow which "*glances off the cheekbone*"; but then, he "*[r]eaches out and pats his arm*" (pp. 162-63). However, after a little while, Edmund, once more, cannot help "*slap[ping]*" his brother (p. 170). The recurrence of this pattern gives rise to uncanny feelings, which, in turn, makes it an obvious Freudian point to discuss, as the homely and the unhomely are brought together. One derives from the other, which means that the two aspects are inseparable. The brothers' anger towards each other, which results in abusive relationships, in fact, springs from their love. They physically attack each other "like the caged animals that they are"; however, in what seems to be the "next breath", they march towards acts of "deep and genuine affection" (Chitra 2016, p. 686).

The actions undertaken by Jamie are mostly debatable. He can possibly be an arrogant and cynical son who is continuously mistreated by his parents; the same bitter guy can be an embittered person, as well; and, he can also be someone who carefully targets at destroying the happiness of the ones around him. For instance, the extent of his desire to corrupt Edmund can never be ignored. Jamie, whose family seems to have given up on him, has given up on himself. For the sole purpose of comforting and consoling himself, he, at times, turns to mean-spirited interference in Edmund's life. At one point, he says that he has "made [him]", and that Edmund is "[his] Frankenstein" (1956, p. 164). The latter part deserves emphasis, as there exists in the notion an implication, an underlying meaning, that "Jamie is someone Edmund can rely on"

(Black 1988, p. 28). However, out of childhood jealousy, Jamie purposefully sets Edmund an example of dissipated self-destruction, in the guise of sophistication and romantic-kind-of adventure; and, he wants him to live in a world which is like hell.

Jamie admits what he has done; he confesses that he has "ma[d]e a bum of [his brother]", "[o]r [that] . . . [a] big part [of] [him]" did. He is quite aware of the flaws in his character and personality; he is quite aware of his bad, destructive side, the part which has been dead for a long time, the part which is not alive any longer, the part which does not like life at all. He says that he has put his brother wise so that he, Edmund, would learn from his, Jamie's, mistakes. He even admits that he sometimes "[b]elieved that [himself]", but that it is "a fake". To be able to deceive his brother, Jamie hid his "mistakes" and bad intentions behind colourful masks; he made them appear as something "good", something preferable and desirable. For instance, he showed being 'drunken and ragged' as something "romantic"; he turned dumb and "diseased" whores into fascinating-kind-of-vampires, in Edmund's imagination; and, he went so far as to "[m]a[k]e fun of work as sucker's game". Jamie openly says that he has never wanted his brother to be successful, because that would only make him – Jamie – "look even worse by comparison". And, he concludes by saying that he has always wanted to see him failing, and that he has "[a]lways [been] jealous of [him]" (1956, p. 165).

Showing his verbal dexterity, and being superimposed on the image at all times, Jamie – who "re-incarnates the Mephistopheles of Dion Anthony . . . without the artificiality of a mask" (Carpenter 1964, p. 160) – turns his younger brother on to drinking in hopes of destroying him. He talks about the underlying subconscious reasons of his difference from his brother; and, he admits that he had pushed Edmund into temptation with an intention in mind, and that he wanted to make him and see him fall. Two of the climactic points of the play, without doubt, are the subtle conflict of the brothers and the discovery of the causes of this conflict. It is this which brings along the final illuminating moment, the enlightening moment, and the particular moment of tragic catharsis. In a burst of drunken self-revelation, Jamie talks about the subconscious reason behind Edmund's 'consumption'. Jamie – "the cynical tempter of innocent youth, Pan, Mephistopheles, Cain" – explains why, subconsciously, he has tried to 'murder' the lively and nurturing illusions of Edmund. The conflict of the elder brother with the younger – of "Cain with Abel", of the "cynical materialist" with the "aspiring

artist" – sheds light to the conflict of the two philosophies of life (Carpenter 1964, p. 161). The conflict between the cynical negations that are shown by Jamie and the tragic transcendence of these negations deserve emphasis. By especially focusing on the difference between his Mephistophelian cynicism and Edmund's real, authentic, tragic idealism, Jamie makes a clarification about the particular values.

In human psychology, certain things are undone; certain attempts are made to erase or take back something the person has done; and, this process is applicable to feelings and thoughts as well. In the play, one can not only witness Jamie's sharp criticisms of Edmund, but also his repeated retractions; and, what forces him to act in such strange, contradictory, ways is his real ambivalence about his brother's success. Because Jamie, who gets a punch in the face from Edmund, senses and sees his mother's love and affection for Edmund, and because this eventually takes the form of something too intolerable for him, he targets specifically at trying to lead his younger brother in his immoral ways; and, he turns Edmund on to drinking in hopes of destroying him. In the final act, when Edmund yells at Jamie saying that he is "crazy", and when he orders him to "[c]ut it out", Jamie reacts cautiously to the situation, and therefore, responds softly: He tells him never to "get wrong idea"; calling him a "kid", he says that he "love[s] [him] more than [he] hate[s] [him]." (1956, p. 166). When considered within the framework of Freud's ideas, such a defensive statement urgently calls for psychological help. In other words, Jamie's reply makes it clear that he is in need of assistance. Here, there is one thing for sure: The Tyrone family members intrinsically love each other, but, at the same time, they hate each other. And, it is exactly these contradictory feelings which instantly and directly point at a very deep psychological imbalance and clash – of the powerful emotions of love and hate – within their battlefield-like psyche.

Another defense – an extension of the above-mentioned psychological issues – one can observe throughout the play is reaction formation, which involves the psychic act of changing all unacceptable and unconscious drives, attitudes, or emotions into their exact opposites. Although Jamie confesses both hatred and jealousy for Edmund, after a short period of time, he asserts that they have been more than brothers, and that he would do everything for him. The sudden protests of love, which are not convincing enough, are, in fact, unconscious manoeuvres, and proofs of the workings of the human

psyche. Edmund is definitely "a blameless victim" of the Tyrone family members' "assorted dysfunctions" (Dowling 2013, p. 9).

It is as though Edmund, the only person who has individual integrity, has been given a duty, a responsibility, under the roof of the Tyrone household. From the beginning till the end, he tries to quell fights; functioning as a peacemaker, he attempts to squelch arguments; and, he tries to silence the furious and accusative Tyrones. Despite the fact that his orders all end in exclamation marks, his verbal attacks are actually lovingly administered. Edmund, who protests just to avoid worse conflict, uses imperative sentences, softening them in his own way. For instance, he wants his "[Mama!]" to be quiet, to keep silent, for "God's sake" (1956, p. 74); he patiently waits for his turn to speak when he says "Mama! Please listen!" (p. 92) and "Listen, Mama!" (p. 118); and, with intervals, he "*[b]rokenly*" says "Mama! Don't!" (p. 94, p. 119). At times, his words go to James, as he chooses his father as the target of his words: He "*[m]iserably*" shouts "Cut it out, Papa!" (p. 78); he does not want to listen when he says "Papa! Shut up!" (p. 110); he does not want to hear nonsense when he says "Don't lie, Papa!" (p. 144); "*[p]lead[ing] tensely*" he says "For Christ's sake, Papa, forget it!" (p. 152); and, when he wants to stop his father, he yells "Papa! Quit it!" (p. 168). Again, the good and the bad can be seen simultaneously, showing the uncanny nature of the relationships.

Despite sincerely loving each other, the Tyrones continuously isolate their selves from each other and the real-nature of their piling up problems; and, subsequently, they cannot counter the corrupting effect of their personal demons. In spite of the fact that James' words to his wife – "I can't tell you the deep happiness it gives me, darling, to see you as you've been since you came back to us, your dear old self again" – and the following stage direction, "*He leans over and kisses her cheek impulsively*" (1956, p. 17), are full of powerful feelings, after a short while, the tone gets closer to a furious one; the family members look as if they are complete strangers to each other; and, they do not want to think about how serious their problems are. What James says can adequately explain the latter point: He says that when one "[f]orget[s] [about] everything", he/she, naturally, "face[s] nothing"; and, according to what he says, this is a quite "convenient philosophy" (p. 21). Due to being a multi-dimensional play with a strong and insistent Freudian overtone, the repercussion of a repressive mind within the Tyrone family members is for sure.

From time to time, personally unacceptable impulses or fantasies which are appropriate to an individual or thing can immediately be shifted onto another individual or thing. For example, when the siblings look at Mary with suspicious eyes, Mary – who has just returned to her old habit of using morphine – shifts her own concern about her addiction to something which is irrelevant, unrelated, to the actual matter. And, as a matter of fact, she starts talking about her hair: She asks them why they are "look[ing] at [her] like that", and whether "[her] hair [is] coming down" or not. She says that she "was so worn out from [the] [previous] night", that she thought she "[had] better lie down [that] morning", that she "drowsed off" and had a "refreshing nap", and that she is sure that she "fixed [her] hair again" after she got up (1956, p. 68). This long explanation of hers shows that, by way of using the defense mechanism of displacement, she wants to protect her intensely troubled psyche; what is clear is that she feels the pushing need to delicately armour her train of thought.

Repression – which, in psychological terminology, refers to the main defense against unconscious or preconscious drives, fantasies, or conflicts – can be sensed throughout the play. Feelings and thoughts which are categorized as unacceptable and too anxiety-provoking are kept out of consciousness; and, they are, in a way, forgotten. To be able to soothe their soul, the Tyrones helplessly resort to defense mechanisms; and, the psychological point which attracts attention is not only their collective process of repression, but also the dramatic structure's reinforcement of this repression through fear and animosity. The 'fog' mother's, Mary's, behaviour can be given as an example for this psychological instance: For a while, she completely forgets about her anxiety-laden return to the "drugstore" (1956, p. 86) for more and more morphine, and reacts by asking what they are talking about, what drugstore and prescription they are trying to find about. To state in a different way, by repressing, by not allowing feelings to be expressed, Mary desperately struggles to keep particular thoughts and desires out of her conscious mind, for the sole purpose of defending and protecting it. Disturbing deeds – of psychological roots and connotations – lead to the unpleasant emotion of fear, which in turn leads to the undesirable and the unfamiliar.

Another point which deserves attention is Mary's 'regression', the reversal to behaviours, ideas, or emotions that are suitable to a much earlier phase of emotional development. Instead of thinking about Edmund's particular illness and her own return to morphine, she regresses to the happier days, to the old days at the Convent. She

chooses to take the road back to the virginal childhood, and, in John Henry Raleigh's words, hers is "a psychological regress to her convent days" (in Gassner 1964, p. 132): Mary says that she cannot play beautifully, that "Sister Theresa will give [her] a . . . scolding, and that she will "practice" each and every day. She then attracts attention to "[her] hands", saying that something has happened to them. And, she again turns to one of the 'Sisters', and says that Sister Martha will "give [her] something to rub on [her] hands", that she will "tell [her] to pray to the Blessed Virgin", and that, at the end, her hands will get better (1956, p. 171). Having nothing else left to do, and being lost in suffocating kind of thoughts, she is in search of a stable source of comfort.

Within the broad scope of psychology, introjection – the exact opposite of projection – is a mechanism which works by selecting something outside the individual self and showing it as if it were an inner characteristic of the individual self; and, it is usually marked by a certain change in a certain attitude. What Jamie does – in the context of his relationship with his bright brother – can be considered as the best example for this. He incorporates his parents' remarks and wild accusations about him; and, he consciously, or semi-consciously, chooses the distinct way of elaborating on them as if they were his own: "Want to warn you – against me. Mama and Papa are right. I've been rotten bad influence. And worst of it is, I did it on purpose" (1956, p. 165).

Resorting to similar behavioural modes, displaying more or less the same attitudes with the other members of the family, cannot be left there to dangle. The use of the defense mechanism of 'identification' – modelling oneself unconsciously after another one to ward off unacceptable sort of feelings towards that individual – is another psychological point that is worthy of underlining. It can possibly take three different forms: Identification with someone feared, which overcomes fears by assuming the threatening characteristics; with someone disliked, which reduces anxiety about feelings of hate and ambivalent feelings of love; or with someone loved, which lessens tensions directly resulting from hostility. Jamie clearly identifies with James, using his father's words – his special language, his personal kind of jargon – in order to respond to an accusation from Edmund: He asks what he is trying to do, and what he is accusing him of. He orders Edmund not to "play the wise guy with [him]", saying that he has learnt "more of life than [Edmund] [will] ever know." And, he ends up saying, "Just because you've read a lot of highbrow junk, don't think you can fool me!" (1956, p. 163).

The behaviours they specifically resort to help the Tyrones deal with the difficult situations they find themselves in. They feel rather insecure, and the rude kind of behaviours shown are nothing, but defense mechanisms. According to John Deigh, sadness and the desire to run away – which normally accompanies it – "give rise to a need for illusion when the [sadness] . . . is deep and the prospect of escape is nil" (in Neu 1998, p. 303). The struggle of the characters – to keep sane – never stops, at all. For instance, in the very beginning of Act Two, Scene Two, the particular stage direction – which attracts attention to Jamie's "*defensive cynicism*", and how Edmund tries to imitate that specific "*defense*" (1956, p. 71) – shows how the characters try to hide themselves behind masks, how helplessly they try to be something other than themselves, how they deny to confront their real selves, how they desire to take on another identity, a self which is not himself or herself at all.

As in *The Iceman Cometh* and *Hughie*, O'Neill deals with the fundamental question of the absurd – whether or not life is worth living – in *Long Day's Journey into Night*. The problem of man is how to find himself in a world in which the ultimate reality is a return to nowhere, a return to nothingness. In accordance with this fact, the Tyrones find themselves in the middle of nowhere, no matter how hard they struggle to exist psychologically. Man, who is a lonely being of desperation, worry and gloom, lives in a meaningless universe; and, he merely exists till he makes a critical and crucial choice regarding his own future course of action. Pursuing this aim with dogged determination, a person acquires an identity, a purpose and dignity as an individual; and, for preference, existential man ought to adopt some social or political cause to achieve all that. In this context, a great deal is revealed in O'Neill's play; and, it has something in common with Sartre's *Huis Clos (No Exit)*, which is "about the manoeuvring of . . . people forced to share a small room together in hell" (Styan 1996, p. 118). As in Sartre's existential hell of self-conscious inactivity and powerlessness in *No Exit*, the characters in O'Neill's play, who are trapped behind closed doors, seem unable to move forward. At times, it becomes nothing, but a totally challenging task to understand whether they are still in the land of the living. The Tyrones, altogether, end up failing in their existential endeavours.

According to Henry Hewes, most individuals live in several planes of existence. There is the "plane of impulse" and desire, in which they respond spontaneously, suddenly and naturally, and without any kind of reflection. There is the "plane of society", in

which they treat with, impress, and deceive the others. There is the "plane of compromise" and agreement, in which they tolerate the unwanted, the undesirable, instead of risking a certain correction. There is the "plane of contemplation" and consideration, in which they – with some hope – look for the reality of what they are. And, finally, there is the "plane of escape and dreams." In O'Neill's play, the Tyrones continually move from one plane to the next, in an utterly unpleasant, "grim dance of life" (in Cargill, Fagin & Fisher 1961, p. 217). It is a place which resembles hell; it is a domestic environment where the characters live in a sort of captivity. It is the inability to sleep which afflicts them, the probability, the likelihood, of staying awake for the rest of their lives, eternally tormented – helplessly and hopelessly – by their sins, by their past years, which exert considerable pressure on them.

A twitch, a sudden movement in one of the Tyrones causes a shaking spasm, an uncontrollable tightening in the other. For each and every question comes a blow-like response; and, each and every action has a 'corresponding effect', in other words, an equivalent and opposite kind of reaction and reflection. If Edmund has striking literary gifts, Jamie feels like a total failure and is angry with his younger brother. If Tyrone finds a really cheap physician, Mary acquires a drug addiction which transforms her into someone mostly alienated. Related to the latter part, James not only wants to pack his son off to a second rate – state-run, junky, and inexpensive – sanatorium, but also hires a bad doctor – "a cheap old quack" who is "rated third class" and who "only charges a dollar" (1956, p. 30) – for his pregnant spouse who is about to give birth to a boy, and who, having nothing else left to do, injects herself with the prescribed narcotic to stop the unbearable pain, the physical suffering that is almost beyond endurance. Adriana Carolina Bulz draws attention to Jamie's existential tragedy, how he is forced to work, and how he failed at school; following this, she draws attention to Edmund's intellectual aspirations and 'poetical ravings' which can be interpreted as indirect, somehow hidden, comments on the apparent decadence of the regime of the time. And, the situation of the brothers is a quite familiar theme, subject matter, "topoi, of the Communist times" (2013, p. 173).

In Act I, the Tyrones seem to be a quite normal family. However, when the day light turns into a foggy and gloomy night, the family members have all scatterred around and discovered each other's secrets and "proven Sartre's conviction" that hell is nothing apart from 'other people'. There is a curse which has been put on the house of

the Tyrones, and its roots, its origination point is somewhere in life, somewhere in existence itself. The family members are stuck; they are, in a way, caught, grabbed, and "chained together" by guilt, resentment, mutual and bitter recrimination, and unconditional love (Brustein 2006, pp. 99-100). "[A]s in Sartre's *No Exit*, hell for the Tyrones is other people", which means, which hints at each other. They all express a desire, "a yearning for an isolated existence" (Chitra 2016, p. 685). Needless to say, the most explicit examples are Edmund's lines in Act IV in which he clearly admits that all he desires is to be alone with himself in a different world "where truth is untrue" and where life may "hide from itself." According to what he says, having been somewhere "beyond the harbor", he even lost the particular sense, the "feeling of being on land" (1956, p. 131).

Edmund, the inarticulate child of fog, wishes to be an inhabitant of that unknown and unfamiliar land where individual self was completely lost and the troubling and tormenting masks of individual self may be lost for the second time (Falk 1958, p. 184). As his own words show, at the roots of Edmund's problem lies a series of existential matters: "The fog was where I wanted to be. . . . Everything looked and sounded unreal. Nothing was what it is. . . . Who wants to see life as it is, if they can help it? It's the three Gorgons in one. You look in their faces and turn to stone. Or it's Pan. You see him and you die" (1956, p. 131). In the blocking fog of their past mistakes, the misdeeds for which they feel upset, they constantly grope for themselves; and, with the sole intention of finding themselves, their real selves, the Tyrones move towards that ghost-like 'thing', about which they know absolutely nothing. What they, subsequently, see is the Gorgon and the Pan, which can simply be defined as 'the opposite masks of death and life'. They are obliged to confront these two, just to be able to survive.

The Tyrone family members are most frequently trapped in between two things, two edges, two poles: They vacillate, come and go, between the feelings of love and hate; they tend to move between a longing for companionship and a longing for privacy; and, they are simultaneously lost in thoughts of sexual fulfillment and purity. Because of the fact that they are dreamers, they have no other alternative apart from living in the midst of illusions, that is, fake constructions of their mind. All they can do is to hold on to their insistent idealism and the various 'hopeless hopes' they have. They catch a fleeting glimpse, a brief sight, of one particular vision. The idea is that the

forever-seeker and the idealist in human beings try to "overcome the limitations of [the] [real] self, to make the 'mystery behind things' express him." Although "[t]his is a tragic effort" which is sure to fail, it is all that has the potential to add value to the lives of the searchers. Nevertheless, for the majority of the searchers, the experience is never permanent; the vision is just a temporary, momentary one. The Tyrone men remain, like Mary, "lost and alienated" somewhere between the individual self which mainly limits and restricts, and the individual self which mainly desires and aspires (Falk 1958, p. 185).

Just like the way in *No Exit*, the characters in O'Neill's play cannot escape their pasts. Due to being unable to leave their pasts behind, the situation worsens day by day; the pressure caused by the accumulation of problems leads to further decay. Like Sartre's play, O'Neill's play assembles the characters into a closed, shared area and allows them to tear away at each other; and, the weapon which they generally use, which they forcefully wield is the past. Though the degree may vary, like the Sartrean elements – Inez's homosexuality and cruelty; Estelle's lust, her man with a hole in his head, and her killing of her baby; Garcin's womanizing, his tortured wife, and his faint-heartedness and pusillanimity – the O'Neillian elements have something to do with unrest. Sartre's play is reduced to an invariable, perpetual present, that is, a present with no temporal markers, no life-related signs, no night and day, and no sleep. However, the subject matter of much of the conversation is the past, specifically, what the characters did in order to guarantee that nightmarish place, to ensure their place in hell. Related to the latter part, similar points combine to create the desired dramatic effect in O'Neill's play.

The shabby living room of the Tyrones is somewhere like hell; it is a place where such a shocking sentence like "I've always found that good whiskey, taken in moderation as an appetizer, is the best of tonics" can echo (1956, p. 65). According to the explanation *Online Etymology Dictionary* gives, the noun 'whiskey' comes "from Gaelic uisge beatha 'whisky,' literally 'water of life,' from Old Irish uisce 'water' . . . + bethu 'life'" (n.d., n.p.). James, who seems to agree with his Irish ancestors, admits having given whiskey to his sons as medicine. It is as if James – whose "avarice" (Weales 1962, p. 82) catches attention – is using the 'water of life' to be able to avoid life altogether: "*[In spite of] all the whiskey in [his system], he has not escaped*" (1956, p. 125).

Jamie's continual, fixed, state of drunkenness – which is usually conveyed through emollient, euphemistic slang – is, without doubt, the most direct expression of his powerful yearning for loneliness; and, his mother's morphine addiction points at the same kind of strong wish to run away from the actual world, and camouflage and cover herself in a protective fog. Each and every behaviour takes the form of a problem, turns into attitudes which result in unwanted consequences, and eventually transforms the Tyrone household into a soul-sucking living environment, that is, into hell. The scene of Sartre's play, the title of which is already an indication that the work deals with hermetically sealed space, opens in a drawing room in hell. Sartre puts forward his view that life in society is hell, and points out that "hell is a 'drawing room in Second Empire style'" (Szondi 1987, p. 61). It is in this claustrophobic room that his hero, Garcin, takes it from an existential standpoint, and concludes with the key statement of the play:

> I'm looking at this thing on the mantelpiece, and I understand that I'm in hell . . . [E]verything's been thought out beforehand. They knew I'd stand at the fireplace stroking this thing of bronze, with all those eyes intent on me. Devouring me. What? Only two of you? I thought there were more; many more. So this is hell. I'd never have believed it. You remember all we were told about the torture-chambers, the fire and brimstone, the "burning marl." Old wives' tales! There's no need for red-hot pokers. HELL IS – OTHER PEOPLE! (Sartre n.d.b, pp. 46-47)

Needless to say, a room with "[n]o mirrors" (Sartre n.d.b, p. 2) at all, with no time at all, with no life at all constitutes a problem which can never be solved, a more-than-dilemma, a paradox which has to be confronted, just as the characters are obliged to come face to face with their own inner demons, their own pasts, their own sort of hell. The moment identity breaks down and one face becomes indistinguishable from another, the other dissolves, like a solid being absorbed by a liquid. It disappears, as it is consumed by the force which comes from outside. "[H]ell is then, by necessity, oneself"; and, in his present entrapment, for Edmund, "the sea is the epitome of this condition" (Chitra 2016, p. 685). In his quite long reminiscence about his unique transcendental experiences at sea, he expresses complete satisfaction with an existence in which he was together with nature itself, with "none of the crew in sight," a particular time when he, psychologically, belonged to somewhere else. Aloft in the

crow's nest of a steamship, he felt the ecstasy and release; he sensed, in solitude, "[t]he peace, the end of the quest, the last harbor, the joy of belonging to a fulfillment beyond men's lousy, pitiful greedy fears and hopes and dreams!" (1956, p. 153). The particular experience does not last long, but it is, definitely, the kind of 'belonging' which he could never find at home.

As in Sartre's hell, even a single month takes a matter of minutes in O'Neill's play. To explain, the relationship between the individuals in the play and the actual world of the living is not in equilibrium. When Garcin says that his spouse died one month ago, he underlines, and thus, qualifies his words by saying, "Just now" (Sartre n.d.b, p. 22). In fact, one month ago is the present; one month ago means the current time: The characters all slip back and forth in time, and even their personal visions of the world below are non-permanent; the fleeting images are doomed to fade to the darkest colour possible; and, the transient sounds are sure to fall silent and still. Likewise, Mary is lost in time; and, that is why she asserts that the past is nothing other than the current time and the coming time, that the past is no different from the present or the future (1956, p. 87). Using such markers of time almost interchangeably points at her way of psychic working and functioning.

The big 'Other' – a Lacanian key concept that can be seen in the background of the play – shows radical alterity, an other'ness' which goes beyond the illusory other'ness' of the imaginary, as it can never be assimilated by way of identification. Lacan links this radical alterity to both the language and the law; and for this reason, the big 'Other' is included in the order of the symbolic. The dualism of religion-blasphemy runs through O'Neill's play; and, the big 'Other' is shown both by religious limitations and the father in whose web the others are entrapped psychologically. According to Lacan, desire is specifically directed at countless objects during a person's life, starting from the female parent that is the initial big 'Other', moving to the male parent that is the main figure while entering the symbolic order. Afterwards, the role of the big 'Other' is assumed by some kind of authorities and social institutions. In the play, the arguments revolving around religious issues lead to nothing, but domestic unrest.

O'Neill's particular view of isolation is so complex and complicated that it even denies the existence of God; and, in accordance with this, after the prayers fail to save Mary from a regression into addiction, the younger son – in one of the most memorable scenes, in Act II, Scene II – quotes from Friedrich Nietzsche's, the German

existentialist's, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and says that God is no longer alive: "God is dead: of His pity for man hath God died" (1956, p. 78). There is no doubt that both sons are militantly atheistical; and, when James – whose mind concentrates on questions of belief in God – says that the boys have, quite intentionally, disobeyed and avoided the "faith of the Catholic Church" which they "were born and brought up in", and that their rejection has brought along nothing apart from "self-destruction", Jamie verbally attacks him, confronting him with his words of accusation: "I don't notice you've worn any holes in the knees of your pants going to Mass." Because of being a conventionally pious man, James blames the worldly failures of Jamie and Edmund on the fact that they have both become 'apostates', that is, people who have given up their religion. After a couple of lines, James starts talking about Mary's religious beliefs and connections: He says that Mary has not denied her faith, but that she has forgotten all about it. He thinks that she has lost all the "strength of the spirit" she used to have in the past, and that – because she lacks this – she cannot "fight against her curse" (pp. 77-78). After all, according to the firmly grounded psychoanalytic belief, religion is a source of ideas born naturally from human beings' "need to make [their] helplessness [more] tolerable" (Freud cited in Thurschwell 2001, p. 104).

There is the understanding that "[r]eligion . . . is a kind of defensive fantasy re-creation of the family situation, in the form of gods". "[I]n order to subjugate unacceptable longings and impulses into a more acceptable form", some individuals tend to be on the side of this view. However, Jung argues that a certain religious instinct exists within human beings, and that there is always an "inherent striving" towards a connection, towards a relationship with "a [s]omething or a [s]omeone" that goes beyond "human limitations", a bigger, higher and stronger power (Hopcke 1999, p. 66). O'Neill's father and mother were both devout Catholics; and, into the multi-layered structure of the play, various Catholicism-related issues are embedded. According to O'Neill's point of view, the death of the 'Old God' is what leads man to turn to materialistic possessions, science, and technology. Nonetheless, these fail to provide the comfort man is looking for. Instead of things getting better, man is turned into a kind of programmed machine which goes through a series of mechanical actions. In the play, the audience sees that Edmund is a believer in Nietzsche, who wrote about the death of God in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Under the calamitous effect of the

blinding forces, the characters are plunged into a fog-bound darkness, like the O'Neills.

As it is known, the premise of Nietzsche's whole philosophy rests on the postulate that 'God is dead', and that human beings have destroyed their faith in God. What Nietzsche wants to do is to fill the frightening void – the enormous blank created – by finding an appropriate source of faith in which human beings can all believe (Nietzsche 2008, n.p.). O'Neill, who is a supporter of these ideas as well, tries to uncover certain things, and he wants to reach at the roots of the thing which can be so attractive to modern men. According to him, the 'sickness of today' can be found in Zarathustra's gospel. By accepting life in an exultant manner, religion can be attained in a certain extent. O'Neill is interested in exploring the life and death desires that drive human beings on to their destinies; and, it is a well-known fact that men are locked in cities resembling nothing other than prisons.

In some sense, the Tyrones are all trapped. According to Nietzsche, human beings are the reason why God is dead. In a way, they are murderers, and they need someone or something to wipe this blood off them. At this point, it is important to mention the exact meaning behind Nietzsche's words: The Christian God is no more a reliable store of absolute moral principles. 'The death of God' means that human beings do not believe in such kind of a cosmic order because they are unable to recognize it themselves. It also means a rejection of certain values. If the absolute basis for morality is lost, nihilism is sure to come to the forefront. Nietzsche tries to find a satisfying explanation and solution by making an evaluation of the foundations of human values. What is needed is a set of foundations which is deeper than the Christian values (Nietzsche 2008, n.p.). In O'Neill's play, Edmund's interest in Nietzsche and his leanings takes the form of an argument.

Nietzsche's ideal man tries to turn himself into a superman – Übermensch – and this is exactly what the O'Neill protagonist does. Zarathustra shows the Übermensch as the one who creates new values; and, this seems to be the solution for the problem of the death of God and nihilism. The moment the audience tries to make sense of the issue of existence after the death of God, the concept of the superman gains a greater prominence. Pain is necessary for inner growth, and – just like the way in Greek tragedies – the superman achieves a kind of spiritual attainment, as a result of suffering (Nietzsche 2008, n.p.). O'Neill's messianic revolt revolves around the modern man's

dilemma in the middle of a 'godless' world. This seems to be like calling for a new savior who will show the audience how they can all be saved from themselves; and, this is the exact situation which the Tyrones find themselves in.

O'Neill expresses his disapproval of the idea of the absence of Christianity, but simultaneously, he focuses on the human beings' seemingly unending search to find something which can replace it. Man suffers when he accepts the unrealistic truth of temporal existence, and concentrates on materialism and greed. Suffering can be seen as an inevitable consequence of there being no new gods, not as a causal implication which is inherent in the idea of the death of the 'Old God'. There is the problem of the relation of human beings to something else, something apart from himself/herself, something which he/she can ground his/her life in so that it can have a better form or shape, something which gives a sense of purpose and belonging, something which saves him/her from feeling alone, something which prevents him/her from getting lost in an existential exile.

In the absence of God, there can be more possibilities for human beings, and thus, for the Tyrones. If the belief in God is relinquished, there may be more creative alternatives. The individuals who create their lives once again will represent a new phase in human existence, and at this point emerges the Übermensch: The personal archetype who – as a result of being immersed in his own nihilism – turns into a kind of heroic figure (Nietzsche 2008, n.p.). The Tyrones are all lost in the process; and, they are all trying to tie the loose ends. Godlessness may be seen as a liberation and as a kind of gateway to intellectual fulfillment. In a way, people need lies to live; and, in Nietzsche's sense, atheism means the act of substituting truth, and this truth is that people live in a meaningless chaos which is completely indifferent to the hopes of mankind. According to O'Neill, there is no one who is not a liar; people – and thus, the Tyrones – all cling to a set of illusions which makes it possible for them to get through the day; and, they have the tendency to deceive themselves about something which they cannot bear to face: It can be a problem with romantic love; it can be a religious disillusionment; it can be a tormenting guilt; it can be a humiliating anxiety; it can be anything.

Despite the fact that Mary still believes, she feels she has fallen so far, so remote, from God that she does not have the right, or the chance, to pray any more. On the other hand, in spite of not attending church any longer, James sounds like a religious

Catholic. The two sons – who have the tendency to squander money – have long abandoned the Catholic religion. Edmund keeps mentioning the names of the writers he likes, but James finds his favourite ones degenerate: He starts his speech by saying that they are "[m]orbid filth"; he openly asks "[w]here the hell . . . [he] get[s] [his] taste in literature" from; and, he refers to Edmund's favourite writers not only as "[f]ilth, . . . despair and pessimism", but also as "atheist[s]". And, he points at the problem which he thinks Edmund has: "When you deny God, you deny hope. That's the trouble with you" (1956, p. 134).

By writing about religious issues, and aiming at drawing attention to the 'sickness of today', O'Neill reflects not only the concerns of his own parents, but also the psychological state of his own mind. Throughout the play, the audience hears James repetitively talking about a 'poorhouse'; and depending on this, it is possible to say that, in a world so full of greedy mindsets, while concepts like materialism are gaining a greater significance, religious values are being put on dusty shelves. Here, the important point is that each of these details actually shows the religious forces coming and going out of sight – and, struggling for supreme authority – in the unconscious of O'Neill himself. His familial experience revolving around the issue of religion is a direct influence on his psychology, and thus, on his play.

The play under scrutiny "marks the climax" of the playwright's development not only artistically, but also psychologically (Babaee 2011, p. 7), O'Neill has made an effort to bring his conscious self and his subconscious mind together; and, by his distinct way of integrating these two poles, he has attempted at reliving his unforgettable past years through his work, which can be counted as a pure act of self-psychoanalyzing. In real life, due to having a desire for his mother, O'Neill subconsciously yearned for the love of his parent of the female sex; he wanted to feel the love of Ella Quinlan O'Neill. As a matter of fact, his intense Oedipal complex seeked the love of his female parent in his three spouses, in his three life partners. Keeping these realities in mind, one tends to think that, in an unintentional sort of way, O'Neill tries to live his emotional frustration, his discontentment, once more through his masterpiece, through his play of great prominence. This re-experiencing of Neill's, this parallelism with real life, has an instant impact on the doubling of the density, intensity, and extremity of a psychological analysis of family relationships.

Specifically, it is the Tyrones' struggle "for the dream, doomed to failure" by the "something" which exists in within; and, by his distinct way of re-creating and re-starting struggle, O'Neill confronts the task of facing and resolving the pain of his own life, his daily life (Alexander 2005, p. 68). The act of psychoanalyzing his individual self forced O'Neill to align, to put together, his conscious and subconscious so that he could feel and measure the real depth of his tragic character beyond the realm of any other convention. Related to these underlying details about the individual self, in *The Author as Oedipus [. . .]*, Richard F. Morton points out that O'Neill's play can be considered as the work where he presents certain truths "as they had been exposed by his . . . [personal] reflection" and his distinct "experience of psychoanalysis" (1991, p. 183). The abusive sort of relationships in his family are transferred and integrated into his dramatic work.

According to the psychoanalytic logic, human beings never actually grow up; and, due to not being able to completely leave their childhood urges behind, the desires in question take shelter in the unconscious mind and come back to haunt them in some other places, such as dreams, neurotic illnesses and instabilities, and sexual preferences. To illustrate, Jamie's inappropriate habit of hanging around with a prostitute has something to do with these facts. The Tyrones are such a dysfunctional family that Jamie's "final refuge is in lechery", however, "he can find satisfaction only in ugly, oversized women, the prostitutes" who are rejected by some other men, who "feed his self-hatred and his need for a mother-substitute" (Falk 1958, p. 171); and, his urgent need for the feminine mirror becomes quite clear when he, all of a sudden, says, "What is a man without a good woman's love? A God-damned hollow shell" (1956, p. 158). The moment the maternal mirror cracks, he decides to head to a brothel as he feels the pushing need to turn to a prostitute, the opposite extreme of femininity in patriarchy; and, since Mary, who lives in a world of nostalgia, has a "whorish morphine habit" (Hall 1993, p. 40), and cannot adequately provide her son with a mother's love, he treats the overweight prostitute, Fat Violet, like a mother.

Under such circumstances, Jamie cannot do anything apart from despairing, apart from uttering words of sorrow helplessly. *In Exile Without Remedy*, J. Dennis Rich points out that his loss is purely psychological, and that his suffering, the pain he feels deep inside, is "more personal than that of either his father or his mother." Being quite aware of the absurdity in his own directionless life, Jamie assumes and makes use of the mask

of the cynic. However, underneath this mask, and this skin, he is "a spiritual suicide". Continuously coming face to face with meaninglessness in his relations with the others and with himself, he has given up on life. As mentioned above, in his own words, he is 'a God-damned shell'. According to Rich, Jamie is the Tyrone who suffers the most serious "inner fragmentation"; he insists on "believ[ing] the worst of life [as] he wants to believe the best." He is the one who finds himself living the absurd comparison; and, as a consequence of this, his individual being is "defined by the 'divorce' of an existence envisioned and existence as it actually is" (in Floyd 1979, p. 260). The moment he quotes sardonically from Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Jamie provides a precise definition, a perfect description of himself: "Look into my face. My name is Might-Have-Been; / I am also called No More, Too Late, Farewell" (1956, p. 168).

Generally recognized is the Freudian impact on O'Neill, especially his view of the Oedipal attachment of boys to their mothers and sexual jealousy and hostility towards their fathers. Despite being a potential inner store of guilt in the younger son, the Tyrone family member whose behaviour most obviously shows a "latent Oedipal guilt" is the elder son. He wishes to find a surrogate mother in the midst of matronly prostitutes, and shows a really bitter jealousy towards Edmund, his rival for Mary's love, according to the Oedipal model drawn by Freud (Gale 2015, n.p.). In the obese Violet episode, Jamie seems satisfied with his deed of psychological roots: "Fat Violet's a good kid. Glad I stayed with her. . . . Hell of a good time" (1956, p. 161). When looked from the Freudian perspective, it is obvious that Jamie is a product of the Oedipus complex; and, his acute Oedipal repression, which searches leeway in the form of incestuous relationships with mistresses of his mother's age, is what strikes a great deal of attention. The Tyrones are "case studies" of the unavoidable "concentration of wealth in capitalism", the unavoidable "antagonism", rivalry, "between brothers and between father and sons in the Oedipal family" (Meaney 1991, p. 207).

Psychoanalytically speaking, what the Oedipus complex does is to introduce the sense of an external force or pressure, an external prohibition, under which infantile libido is definitively shaped. Needless to say, Violet is a good source of unconditional affection, something Jamie has never received from his own family, from the supposedly closest ones who gave him his life. His wild adventure with Violet was motivated not only by a sexual urge, but also by a quite natural desire for some

mocking and bawdy kind of conversation, for some kind of human interaction (Raleigh 1965, p. 121). Everything about Jamie's inappropriate habit of hanging around with a prostitute combines to signify the unconscious forces invading his psyche, and hence, creates the desired, intended, dramatic effect. What Jamie does reminds the audience of the behaviour of Holden Caulfield in Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*: Like Holden, Jamie wants to be a 'catcher in the rye'. Although he spends most of his life accompanied by whores and alcohol, he still desires to help others, and therefore, he chooses an obese prostitute, Fat Violet, who gets no customers at all. Jamie is eager to perform various acts of self-sacrifice for the improvement, for the betterment of others, which can be counted as one of his few good qualities. As all these indicate, the comic account of his maudlin evening with Violet has a psychic quality.

Doris V. Falk claims that Mary is "the inverse image of the Earth Mother" for whom Jamie and Edmund long like crazy, that her hair used to be "the same 'rare shade of reddish-brown'", and that this is an O'Neillian symbol of "prenatal freedom, security, and warmth" (Falk 1958, p. 183). However, Mary, who currently has white hair, is no longer capable of providing her sons with such kind of a feeling of peace and comfort. Being aware of the extent of her failure, she frequently stops to apologize for the whiteness and disorder of her hair: She asks whether her hair is coming down or not, that – now – it is "hard for [her] to do it up properly", and that her eyes are getting worse and worse (1956, p. 20). Her 'nervous' hands jerking to her hair, she asks what it is, what they are all staring at, and then, proceeds to ask another question: "Is my hair– ?" (p. 27). It represents not only her age but also guilt, as the time graying began coincides with the time she became addicted to morphine. Richard B. Sewall writes about the moment of insight at which Mary confesses her guilt and her lies to Edmund (1979-80, p. 450); she quite well knows that drug addiction has its consequences; and, the "it" she utters refers to her dependence on morphine: Mary asks herself how the rest of the Tyrones could believe her when she cannot even believe her own self; she admits that she has become a real liar. She says that she has to resort specifically to lies, to such creations of the mind, and that she has to keep on telling lies, "especially to [her]self". And, she concludes by saying that she has never understood anything about "it", 'her dependence on morphine', except that one day she found out she could no more "call [her] soul [her] own" (1956, p. 93).

Out of need, Jamie takes the, supposed, opportunity of turning to a prostitute. Despite the fact that his need is always right beside him, in Mary, he is unable to reach her; he cannot succeed in getting close, or closer, to her. "Like Tantalus, he has no refuge from desire. His is the howl of a soul lost in hell" (Bogard 1988, n.p.). Jamie's feelings manifest themselves in a pattern which is referred to as "the good girl/bad girl attitude", and it divides women into two categories in the psyche of the man who is influenced. They are good ones "like [the mother]" or they are bad ones who can simply be labelled as "disposable" (Tyson 1999, p. 19). When he senses an imbalance inside the Tyrone household, he considers the option of having careless affairs, outside the household. Just like Jamie, Edmund looks for an alternative solution, for an alternative mirror; however, he does not wish to look to another woman, to another female. Instead, he turns all his attention to the great symbolic mother: The sea. By way of travelling, he experiences the jubilant sense of the Lacanian mirror stage: Edmund, the sea, and the symbolic mother are all united as a single body, all acting in unison. For a while, he stands still exclaiming in delight, and thereby presenting the audience with his "epiphanic monologic reverie" (Maufort 1998, p. 134), his "poetic transcendentalism" (Murphy 2008, p. 192), his – philosophically – transcendental idealism, which can best be described as 'the central moment of the play for Edmund'.

According to Doris V. Falk, among O'Neill's characters, the sensitive, the easily-influenced ones alone are entirely alive, the sufferers and the creators. Because of the fact that the real order and justice of life are found in the tragic kind of tension between opposites, his finders confront and embrace this fate and destiny, and "discover the answer to disunity in the unity of process", in the organic continua where opposition is regarded as "the source of growth" (1958, p. 187). In his unique 'portrait of the artist as a young man', O'Neill makes Edmund –"a *Lear* reference" (Kushner 2004, p. 256) – one of these tormented finders. Edmund describes this stage of his development, when like his outcast namesake in *King Lear* – "Thou, nature, art my goddess" (Shakespeare 1999b, p. 888) – he cries, 'Thou nature, art my goddess!' If he is unable to find a home with his family or with the society in which he is condemned to live, he may at least be taken into the various processes of nature, most particularly those of the sea, where nature and the unconscious human mind – symbolically – combine and become a single whole.

O'Neill, who had a career as a sailor on commercial freighters, also enjoyed "hang[ing] about the waterfront"; he made friends with "sailors, stevedores, [and] the down-and-outs"; and, he frequently went to "the Sailor's Opera", a café, where the seamen talked about their adventures, and proudly boasted of their exploits to beautiful ladies (Clark 1947, pp. 14-15). Like O'Neill, Edmund has had a life of his own outside the family circle, a life which he voluntarily and enthusiastically pursued. Edmund's eloquent account of his own experiences of transcendence – which ends with a metaphor of illumination – reveals that the most beautiful moments of his life have been those when he completely lost himself in the vastness, in the infinity of existence (Walker 2009, p. 136):

> Like the veil of things as they seem drawn back by an unseen hand. For a second you see – and seeing the secret, are the secret. For a second there is meaning! Then the hand lets the veil fall and you are alone, lost in the fog again, and you stumble on toward nowhere, for no good reason! (1956, p. 153)

Nevertheless, after having supposedly experienced a moment of coherence, after having momentarily created the meaningfulness which actual life appears to deny, he comes to understand that the distinct image he draws in his brain is nothing other than an illusory and imaginary experience. Edmund is quite aware of the fact that a real life can never be built on transient revelations. Once more, hopes turn upside down; once more, he is disappointed; and, once more, the family psychology is negatively and permanently, and thus irrevocably affected. However, there is a Tyrone who, unlike the others, emerges from all these, having discovered something, seeing beyond the illusions by which he is surrounded. The negativity surrounding Edmund is not a defeat, but a pain resulting in illumination. Moreover, it is not hard to spot the various existential questions Edmund has in his mind, the problems that keep his tortured mind busy. At one point, he goes even further than the elder ones, his parents, and ends up saying,

> It was a great mistake, my being born a man, I would have been much more successful as a sea gull or a fish. As it is, I will always be a stranger who never feels at home, who does not really want and is not really wanted, who can never belong, who must always be a little in love with death! (1956, pp. 153-54)

His yearning to be just a sea creature shows the depth of his existential problems. He believes that his coming into existence led to his mother's tragedy; and, that is why he "curses" himself for having been born (Carpenter 1962, p. 88). In accordance with these, Jordan Y. Miller and Winifred L. Frazer underline the passive acceptance of death which can be thought of as a reward for and relief from suffering (1991, p. 92). Tragic protagonists never seek death consciously; and, they are never eager or pleased to die. However, the idea of final peaceful release in death, so obviously, runs in Edmund's 'being in love with death' speech.

Questions of existence come one after the other. It is such a nightmarish living environment that, even for Mary's addiction, Edmund seems to get the blame most of the time, just for being born, just for coming to the world out of his own will, just for his coming into existence: "I never should have borne Edmund" (1956, p. 88). It is as if Edmund lives in another dimension; he cannot live without philosophy and poetry, as they are his tools for survival. The group of authors that Edmund, the philosopher-poet, or possibly, a would-be poet, likes – Friedrich Nietzsche, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Oscar Wilde, and Karl Marx – is not philosophically uniform at all; but, they speak to his reason, rationality, dislike or distaste for the status quo, and willingness to know and move much beyond the mere appearances of things, much beyond what is on the surface. It is possible to find some clues, traces, of Nietzsche's concept of the 'übermensch' – an ideal form of man that dictates his own will and, at the end, goes beyond normal human existence – in his famous monologue.

Edmund's turning to such distant corners of life is, in fact, a result of the attitudes he is exposed to in the house. By way of striking out to sea by himself, Edmund detaches himself from the safe floor which human beings are familiar with; he willingly cuts himself off from the real world which surrounds him. By way of communing with nature, Edmund – who, heart and soul, struggles to dictate his personal life – becomes one with a god-like consciousness, which means that he has managed to transcend normal human experience and found a much deeper plane of existence. However, because the übermensch is nothing other than an ideal, he cannot succeed in maintaining a level of heightened existence. According to Jay L. Halio, as opposed to the common experience of the meaninglessness of life, its absurd nature, these specific times of "mystic insight" – man's being, and feeling, at home in the world – attract more attention (in Taylor 1968, p. 18). Edmund, who wants to exist in a different

reality, lacks the out-of-reach power to 'übermensch' it up forever, till the end. Once more, the two poles – the ideas of breathing and being breathless – come closer to each other, in the Freudian sense. Being beset with poor, wretched health and the unpleasant sense of unwantedness, Edmund's visions are not powerful enough to sustain him emotionally.

Owing to the fact that life has forced each character to be the way they are, one should not look for a villain in the play. Most of the pain is a result of failure rather than malice. For instance, one learns about Edmund's failed attempt at suicide in the past (1956, p. 147), Mary's starving for companionship, and the showering of her with compliments, Jamie's repressed jealousy of his brother being accompanied by his love, and so on. These all carry with themselves the quality of being so common in real life: They are all like excerpts, scenes, from real life. After all, "[d]rama is a mimesis of real life", and "[t]he theatre is a simulacrum . . . of the real world and real life" (Esslin 1988, p. 176). James and Jamie's confessions are very personal, emotionally devastating, saddening, admissions of pure failure. While Edmund's sea speech is moving, there is little of the pathos of personal pain and failure in it. One is struck, affected, not only by the way he describes his experiences, but also by the experiences themselves. Almost a set piece on the miseries, unhappiness, of any sensitive soul, it is not drawn from the torments of individual defeat as are the words of James and Jamie, and Mary's anguished ravings, the uncontrolled, or semi-controlled, statements flowing out of a deranged, disturbed, mind. What is obvious is that Edmund has not erred or suffered the same way the other Tyrones have.

As discussed earlier, the Oedipus complex seen in Jamie is closely associated with the pleasure principle, which is a uniform force of pain-avoidance, and which tends to keep intracerebral excitation at a constant and stable level. In spite of the fact that this is a very strong form of desire, it has the potential to tolerate a rhythm of willed frustration and release. Being firmly gripped by the autonomous force of the 'ego-instinct' – which is quite different from the sexual 'object-instinct' – the organism in question "will[s] a [specific] state" which can be referred to as "Nirvana". Having created his particular "notion of the nature of destructive forces in personality and the controversial death-instinct in sentient matter" from the "Nirvana principle" – a phrase he borrowed from Barbara Low's psychoanalysis – Freud took the matter further to an extreme. The Nirvana principle, unlike the pleasure principle, "seeks only rest, vacuity,

release from the cycle of existence into non-activity", and it is specifically this part which tells a lot about the psychological wanderings and leanings of Edmund. "The state of total rest 'begins' in a kind of mystical experience"; and, Edmund's speech in which he says he "lay on the bowsprit" best exemplifies the Nirvana part (Goldman 1967, pp. 48-50). Edmund describes the vision in details, talks about the time when, on an old square rigger bound for Buenos Aires, he temporarily lost himself:

> I was set free! I dissolved in the sea, became white sails and flying spray, became beauty and rhythm, became moonlight and the ship and the high dim-starred sky! I belonged, without past or future, within peace and unity and a wild joy, within something greater than my own life, or the life of Man, to Life itself! . . . . [W]hen I was swimming far out, or lying alone on a beach, I have had the same experience. (1956, p. 153)

Uttering such words of elation and exhilaration has something to do with the desire to escape from the current situation, the desire for a source of happiness, and the desire active in the unconscious. Edmund's description of his experience in euphoric terms is a sign of his long-waited freedom, and thus, the release, the coming-out of his – and O'Neill's – psychic components. All the 'sea and the ever-deepening fog' talk draws the audience's attention further and further, closer and closer to the various metaphorical references to the act of drowning, "whether in morphine, liquor, or forgetfulness" (Porter 1993, p. 108). The play – which, at certain stages, draws upon water imagery (Porter 2001, p. 81) – shows the psychological situation in which the characters find themselves; and, these mental states are the inevitable consequences of the unrest in their house.

In parallelism with Edmund's referring to the Tyrone family as 'fog people, what is problematic is a paralyzing entrapment. Just as the word 'pipe-dreamer' is, the 'fog person' is a conception surrounded by an ambivalence, by two opposing forces: "[T]he wanderer [is] lost between romance and reality, in the hell of this world." However, the person's "real element is an even peaceful, mistiness, beyond care and vexation" (Goldman 1967, p. 48). Stripping away all kinds of protective illusion, each and every Tyrone has to come face to face with himself/herself and the others. Although they have no other option other than losing hope, there is always a measure of tolerance and pity in the behaviours they show. When the 'pipe dream' – Mary's addiction and the Tyrone men's early hope that she has been cured – vanishes, the previously hidden

truth about the whole family emerges in anguished sequence, with each troubling confession, in turn, eliciting another troubling confession.

It is far from difficult to sense, to realize the involvement of the emotional variegation, the pattern of the different shades and tones, even at the outer limit of Mary's dope dream. What is ironic is that the 'supposed' escape provides no escape; and, her famous monologue, which ends the play, not only removes her entirely into her past, to which she is chained, but also robs her at the last of fantasy-gratification. What she remembers is the advice of Mother Elizabeth which precipitated her exposure to the world: That she leave the Convent for "a year or two" to put "to a test" her wish to become a nun (1956, p. 175). Mary's "barely submerged resentment preserves the troubled motion" of not only her speech, but also her mind till the end of the play (Goldman 1967, p. 31). The thing which is referred to as the 'dope' or 'pipe-dream' is nothing other than a metaphorical gathering, intersection, of hope, ideal, fantasy, and unconsciousness. Although these dreams are often mocked and ridiculed, although their value is – up to a certain extent – underestimated, there is always the suggestion that "life lives [only] by them", which means that, without them there can be no life at all. Nevertheless, there are some "cursed" ones, the self-tormentors, for whom the usual run of pipe-dreams is not satisfactory, and for them "only some final state of insentience, or 'Nirvana', can minister." The circumstances being so, there remains "one final turn of the screw." The wish, "the desire for insentience can turn out to be the biggest pipe-dream of all, and the one which gives, as a 'dream', least satisfaction to the holder" (p. 47).

If there is a fight, or an argument, to be had, Edmund does not shy away. Edmund, who comes face to face with the possibility of death, confronts this situation with a blend of fear and longing. According to Freud, the main tendency of mental life is the effort – the earnest and conscientious activity – to reduce, to lessen, "to keep constant or to remove internal tension due to stimuli", due to the Nirvana principle, a leaning which finds expression in the pleasure principle. And, the comprehension of that fact constitutes one of the strongest reasons, for human beings, for believing in the existence of death instincts (Freud 1989, p. 67). In this context, the way Edmund feels deserves emphasis. Edmund learns with infuriated disgust that James intends to economize on the cost of curing him by sending him to a moderately priced, state-supported sanatorium rather than to a private one. When James eventually crosses the

line by planning to send him to a second-class sanatorium, Edmund instantly yells; and, purposefully calling him "Jesus, Papa", he asks his father whether he has "any pride or shame". Without doubt, this is a harsh criticism; however, Edmund has valid enough reasons to do so. He goes mad – as is expected – because, even during the nagging ailment, James' mind is busy with saving "a few lousy dollars to buy more bum property with!" "[T]he rotten way" James treats him is not important for Edmund; he does not care much about this, as he himself has treated his father "rottenly, in [his] [own] way, more than once." Edmund – who refers to his family as "damned", and who calls his father "a stinking old tightwad" and "[a] stinking old miser" (1956, p. 145) – wanders around, as he is in between rage and understanding for his family.

According to what J. Dennis Rich says in his piece of criticism entitled *Exile Without Remedy*, in Edmund, the absurd progression of consciousness reaches its most complex and complicated interpretation. He obviously "suffers on a metaphysical plane what Albert Camus calls 'that divorce between the mind that disappoints'" (in Floyd 1979, p. 260). Edmund is the person who experiences the crisis of the absurd at its highest, at its most extreme, because he is forced to confront the possibility of his own death. He is the one who recognizes that life is not that meaningful; and, formerly, he "stopped to think too long" (1956, p. 147) whether or not to commit 'that' act, and then, with thoughts dangling in his mind, tried to kill himself. Believing that life is "damned crazy" (p. 151), having convinced himself of the inevitable return to the feeling of nothingness, he considered taking his own life. However, now, being a victim of the circumstances which are beyond his control, he revolts against the idea of death and the absurd. Edmund no longer wants to die; and, instead of seeking integration and harmony, he seeks moments of insight and understanding. During the course of an accusing kind of conversation with James, he mentions these particular moments, the accompanying feelings, and how that "ecstatic freedom came" (p. 153).

In Edmund's case, there is the death desire, the death wish, which goes back to Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Life stands over against its opposite, that is death. Here, Freud's point of debate – "the aim of all life is death" (1989, p. 46) – should deserve the utmost attention, as the idea is crystal clear in Edmund's utterance, in his confession. His death wish is actually a direct manifestation of a physical compulsion which is normally present in every human being. This ever-present desire – and tendency – to turn back to a diffuse, inanimate, and inorganic state grows and extends

to the whole body of the victimized person, to the whole living organism (p. 48), as is the case with the victimized Edmund. However, in the position in which Edmund finds himself, there is also "a positive extinction of 'ecstatic freedom' . . . [because] the spectrum adumbrates the climate of the Buddhist 'Nirvana'". Although Nirvana, which represents an ultimate release from the antinomies of existence, may seem a nihilistic conception at first, it counts as a soothing force for the human soul, and thus, for Edmund's soul. Using R. L. Slater's *Paradox and Nirvana* as a source of reference, Arnold Goldman writes about O'Neill's use of the word 'Nirvana' in *Hughie*, and his intention for "associat[ing] it directly with 'hope'" (1967, p. 49). In *Hughie*, O'Neill devotes a special part to the link, to the connection between 'hope' – a desire for the future to be as good as one wants it to be – and 'Nirvana':

> The Clerk's mind remains in the street to greet the noise of a far-off El train. Its approach is pleasantly like a memory of hope; then it roars and rocks and rattles past the nearby corner, and the noise pleasantly deafens memory; then it recedes and dies, and there is something melancholy about that. But there is hope. Only so many El trains pass in one night, and each one passing leaves one less to pass, so the night recedes, too, until at last it must die and join all the other long nights in Nirvana, the Big Night of Nights. And that's life. (O'Neill cited in Goldman 1967, p. 49)

Gerardine Meaney draws a beautiful, and also memorable, parallelism between the work of Artaud and the actions undertaken by the Tyrones. Artaud, who – in *The Theater and its Double* – used a very similar imagery to the Tyrones, is of the opinion that a gifted, talented, actor instinctively, subconsciously, knows how to tap, reflect, and radiate some particular powers; and, to be able to do this, he has to think of 'man' as a double, like the Kha of the Egyptian mummies, like an eternal, forever, ghost that radiates a number of affective powers. In this case, the actor – James, Jamie, and Edmund – that is, the physical human being, becomes a kind of double, an empty signifier which refers to a reality somewhere else, a more-than-real entity that is not human at all, but a 'Mummy', not breathing, not living, but an abstraction from the human. He turns into a ghost, a sort of pointer which always points away from himself, towards the 'other' which is elusive, the reference that will give his particular role some kind of meaning (1991, p. 209). And, since the Tyrones are 'doubles', they have counterparts in real life, people in real life conditions; and, therefore, the disintegration

of the family in O'Neill's play shows the anguish of Americans in general, and how they can survive, if there ever is such a thing.

Due to continuously clashing over conflicting psychic expectations, the characters in the play cannot succeed in getting back on their feet. Past traumas, which the family has to visit and revisit, affect the characters in undeniable ways; and, as time goes by, the family members are estranged from each other more and more. Hardship clouds the daily routines and all kinds of actions, reactions, and interactions; and, mutual understanding seems to be lost in most cases. At times, past weighs on the individuals who desperately look for ways to survive. To make things even worse, events change directions; what is hopeful turns into hopeless; what is homely turns into unhomely; and, while waiting for a beacon of hope, it is hope itself which fades into the background.

3. THE TATES IN *CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS*

3.1 Beneath the Surface: Home as the Venue of Violence

Shepard chooses to focus on the topic of the disintegration of America, the America about all its citizens, the American Dream that has been subsequently betrayed, the unstable and inconsistent American hero whose quest has, unfortunately, become perverted, the American land that has become barren, infertile and sterile, and the American familial unit that is incapable of nurturing its children, its youngers (Auerbach 1984, p. 1). In *The Theatre of Sam Shepard*, Stephen J. Bottoms says that *Curse of the Starving Class* seems concerned with the "tortured question[s] of why the family is a family at all, with what a family actually is and how it holds together (if indeed it does) in a world stripped of old consequences and certainties" (cited in Crank 2012, pp. 36-37). The Tate family members cease to understand each other; they interact just because of a sense of habit, responsibility, or just because they can find no other alternative.

Beneath the surface of the play is the decay of the Western ideal. Shepard is critical of the rampant materialism and the soullessness of much of American life. The American Dream – the belief that anybody, no matter where he/she was born or what class he/she was born into, can attain his/her own version of success, wealth, and happiness in a society in which upward mobility is possible for all citizens – has been betrayed. And, people – seemingly, in an irreversible way – have lost touch with their roots. In a widely-known interview with Matthew Roudané, Shepard mentions his bleak view of the myth of the American Dream and its inevitable consequences: He asks what exactly the American Dream means; he asks whether it is proposed by Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln or Martin Luther King. Saying that he does not know what it is, and that it never works, he puts forward his view that it has resulted in "[an] extraordinary [kind of] havoc" which he thinks will be their ultimate end, that is, "[their] demise", their painful existence resulting in death. Shepard finds the idea of "trac[ing] back" the above-mentioned "European imperialism" somehow interesting. The "European imperialism" which he talks about

specifically refers to the notion that they are given the continent of 'America' by God, that they are entitled to do whatever they desire to do with it – without considering the results and the nearing negativities – and reap all possible fortunes out of the wide area of soil, "much to the detriment of everybody 'below' [that] rampant, puritanical class of European colonialism" (Shepard, in Antón-Pacheco 2006, p. 110).

Emerging from World War II with an unshakeable belief in progress and "a renewed sense of the possibilities of the American Dream", America continued to rely on its power, for some more years. This sense of security was eventually shattered by the social upheavals of the 1960s and the political disillusionment that came with the Watergate scandal and the Vietnam War. Regarding the other parts of the world, changes came one after the other. With World War II, there came an air of disillusionment which hung over Europe and Britain; and, this climate had an immediate impact on theatre as well. The theatre of those times, most particularly, questioned the very meaning of both individual and social existence (Saddik 2007, pp. 35-36). Together with the Watergate scandal, the Vietnam War led to a public distrust of the U.S. government. The Vietnam War, also known as the Second Indochina War, brought with itself ethnic differentials, and was a divisive conflict which had an unavoidable impact upon families. E. James Lieberman explains the realities behind this long 'conflict' that led to unrest in military family life, and, by extension, to resocialization of veterans, the difficulty of Vietnam veterans' attempts to readjust to American society and cope specifically with war-trauma. And, he draws attention to the countless injuries and deaths, and to the families desperately trying to get over those bereavements, losses. Due to the father's long periods of absence, sex roles had to change, and thus, women had to do jobs which were formerly done by patriarchs. And, the inability in understanding the gravity, the seriousness, of the situation, and the impaired empathy within the family, at times, marched towards familial disintegration (Lieberman 1971, p. 711).

It was the age of alienation; and, with nothing else left to do, many young Americans, who were alienated from American society in general, started to challenge the established values. With the assassination of the 35th U.S. President, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, on 22 November 1963, Americans found themselves asking how such a thing could happen in the greatest democracy in the world. The JFK assassination, which took place during the Cold War, evoked reactions worldwide. In the U.S., the

mortal shooting, by Lee Harvey Oswald, dissolved differences among the majority of the Americans, bringing them together in the dual theme of 'shock and sadness'. The event led to an atmosphere of unhappiness, which in turn was reflected in society in general. As a result of the more-than-upsetting incident, the mood in the U.S. altogether changed.

The Cold War was another event which had an inevitable impact on society, and thus, on the institution of the family. It was a time of ideological and geopolitical tension between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and their respective allies, the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc, after World War II. The war was so called, as there was no large-scale fighting between the two superpowers of the globe. The struggle for dominance, the open but restricted rivalry, was expressed by indirect means; for example, by way of psychological warfare, by way of propaganda campaigns, by way of espionage or embargoes. Although the Cold War never affected the U.S.' status as a superpower, it left deep psychological scars in the U.S., while much of Indochina became communist, validating the 'domino theory', the particular theory which refers to a well-known Cold War policy, the particular idea that a communist government in one nation would immediately result in communist takeovers in neighbouring states, each of them – inevitably – falling like an aligned row of dominoes. Needless to say, the overall chaos affected the social institutions of society. The other issues which came to the forefront were the "riots" in cities, a rising tide of "crime" and dependence on "drugs", and "mass protests" against America's involvement in the Vietnam War (Shiach 2007, p. 39). In addition to these changes in the structure of society, the majority of American youth seemed to be in open revolt against their parents, their elders; and, that rebellion directly manifested itself in the use of illegal drugs. There was "[t]he lively urban cultural life . . . , rock music, pop festivals, and the 'underground' culture" which seemingly permitted "pleasure and sexuality" (Wandor 1993, p. 11).

To be able to set the scene, one also needs to take a closer look at the Baby Boomer Generation, 'baby boomers', which means members of the demographically large generation born between the end of World War II and the mid-1960s, roughly between the years 1946 and 1964. These individuals – who are mostly independent, self-confident, self-reliant, self-assured, and goal-oriented – strive to make a difference, and influence the culture of the nation. Because of the fact that they grew up, and were raised, with the idea of the American Dream, they are determined to reach their goals.

Baby boomers witnessed the effects of two big conflicts; they witnessed not only the Korean War, but also the rising tension in Vietnam. Many of them served their country in the Vietnam War; and, some of them participated in the anti-war movement. They grew up during the height of the civil rights movement, which aimed at promoting legal equality, and which – at the end – led to greater tolerance. And, many of them were influenced by the civil rights activists, by the main figures who took an active part in the movement. Many of them saw almost the entirety of the Cold War; they were born during a period of high tension between the U.S. and Russia. They witnessed the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961, and its destruction in November 1989. In the 1960s, certain things started to change. For instance, changes in norms about gender roles, individualism, and sexuality led to a rise in divorce, re-marriage, cohabitation, and multiple-partner fertility. And, as Emily M. Agree states, with these came a number of consequences: Family bonds became "weaker", more "diffuse", and more "ambiguous" (2017, p. 65).

In Shepard's words, in the 1960s, "[i]t felt like everything was going to get blown up sky-high" (in Almereyda, n.d., n.p.). The chaos of the 1960s did not only affect that particular period, and found its way into the next two decades, into the 1970s and 1980s. Crimes were committed; alcohol and drugs were used for pleasure; the formerly hidden sexuality became something allowed, something 'permitted'; and, younger family members, sons and daughters, 'openly revolted' against the mother figure and the father figure. What aroused such negative feelings in individuals was partly the general distress in the world. Events of great destruction affected the way how individuals felt; and, as a consequence of this, they turned to absurdity.

The theatre of Shepard never includes static elements; there is movement; there is action and counter-action; there is dominance and violence. At every possible moment, aggressive attitudes are shown; and, "[t]he hand that would caress", sooner or later, "balls into a fist". The way they behave is a valid enough reason to label the characters as "neurotically hypersensitive". Whatever they have in their interior and exterior lives, they are all "magnified, [and] amplified" (Bigsby 2000b, pp. 172-73). It is a theatre which comes out of the unconscious human mind; it is a theatre of the unexpected and the unpredictable. What is significant is that there is equilibrium, since the internal, mental, factors affecting the family members are as important as the external ones. In his works and talks, Shepard quite frequently, concentrates on the

origins of domestic problems, and attracts attention to the role of the women, who suffer due to being exposed to scenes of violence, under chaotic circumstances. According to him, Midwestern women – who had to totally ignore, selectively tolerate, or bravely, courageously, endure all aggressiveness – suffered an unbelievable psychological attack, mostly by men who were frustrated in a way that they never could understand. Shepard says that these men were the ones who returned from the war and had to settle down and raise a family of their own. According to what Shepard says, these men just could not handle it; and, women, on the other hand, had to remain silent: They "took it on the nose, and it wasn't like they said, Hey Jack, you know, down the road, I'm leaving. They sat there and took it." In these women, Shepard sees a sort of "heroism". Attracting attention to their toughness and selflessness, he talks about how they had to sacrifice so many things "at the hands of those [alcoholic] maniacs" (Shepard, in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.).

The play, which is under scrutiny, was born out of Shepard's conscious desire to piece together his own identity from his adolescence memories; he aimed at confronting and embracing his origins, rather than avoiding them; and, much of the exploration of his identity resulted in leading him back to his father. "Shepard's change of name to the one that 'would be the name [he would] die with'" was nothing other than "a declaration of independence" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 176); and, in the play, the audience is introduced to a family, the members of which want to declare their independence, though in strikingly different ways. Theirs have nothing to do with names; they want to create a new world – of their own – where they can feel themselves free, where they will no longer have to perform the role of the one in captivity, and where they will possibly have established identities. There is no doubt that, for Shepard himself, the play became a way of acknowledging the deep emotional marks left behind by his family life, and a real attempt to piece together how those wounds affected his identity. In short, there is one thing which is clear enough: The dramatic work directly comes from the playwright's own anxiety over his own identity.

As watchers, the audience is not unfamiliar with Shepard's problematizing of the father figure; it is the father's absence which leads to the deteriorating state of the environment. Familial marks are hard to delete; they are permanent; because once they take hold of the unconscious, they stick there, and never let it go. Some aspects of the play's insistent exploration of the familial institution might be connected with

Shepard's own blossoming experiences with his father. In the mid 1970s, Shepard started to receive what Shewey – the Shepard biographer – referred to as "Hi, Steve" (1997, p. 108) letters from his father; and, this was an upsetting kind of correspondence which centered on requests for money and various emotional confessions. It is likely that the new contact brought up the old demons – and therefore, the sorrows of the past – for Shepard; and, his dangling thoughts immediately turned to the distinct ways in which family can affect human identity forever.

Financial issues are always in the background. Being in the grips of a personal misery, and, on the other hand, being so proud of his son's success in the writing profession, Shepard's father asked, and re-asked, for money, and then "apologiz[ed] for not writing sooner" to express how glad and grateful he was for all that his son had done. Although the possibility of getting a loan from his son was a relaxation for his usually-troubled soul, the situation of knowing where he could get a loan made him feel really ashamed. Always boozing, and never eating enough food, his elbow – which was badly injured – got an infection; and, what is saddening is that he could not even afford to go to a doctor. What is more, financial problems were not the only problems he had. Don Shewey writes about how he suffered from loneliness, of isolation, of having no company: His was such a painful existence that – for a while – he took a construction worker in "like a stray cat"; and, after Sandy and Roxanne – his visiting daughters – left, he felt much more miserable than before (1997, p. 108).

Being unable to cope with his alcoholism, Shepard's father had abandoned his family; therefore, Weston and Ella's separate intentions of selling the property and abandoning the institution of the family, are not surprising at all. This does not mean that the actions of the play directly come from Shepard's life, but a parallelism can be drawn between his life and the events unfolding in his play. In other words, during the course of analyzing the play, the life of the playwright may be taken as a point of departure. As a boy, Shepard had never been praised or appreciated by his father; and, in the play, there is an enormous emotional space between the members of the Tate family; in the house they are condemned to live, they have lost touch with each other. Christopher Bigsby states that Shepard's theatre responds to a sense of 'paranoia' – an anxiety which expresses itself in fragmentary images – and that it has something in common with the fractured world which he observes around him (in Chénetier 1986, p. 209).

Shepard himself lived in a "[f]arm country – you know, hay, horses, cattle" (Shepard cited in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.); he lived with cats, dogs, and a "canary" whose name was "Bing" (Shewey 1997, p. 107); so it is not surprising that he knows much about rural life. The desert-like land the Tates live on was once used to grow avocados; and, Weston and Wesley frequently reference their dwindling 'orchard' and their endless hope to witness its producing fruit again. In our case, the idea of setting the play on a dried-up ranch is what we need to concentrate on; and, only Shepard's own words can shed light on this very specific point: He says that "[his] [d]ad lives" in solitude, by himself, on a "desert"-like land, and that he – as he himself says – does not "fit with people" of normal standards (Shepard cited in Shewey 1997, p. 108). The situation of being, or living, on a desert has various connotations: It implies hardship and loneliness; it implies lack of 'opportunities' that are usually associated with city life; it implies hopes of earning and saving money, and financial difficulties.

Shepard's father was not the only person who lived in such kind of a place; Shepard also lived on a desert; and, living on a desert is in itself a valid enough reason to be isolated from the society. Hoping for a beautiful and fertile 'orchard' definitely refers to an unconscious desire to get rid of the estrangement from which they suffered. Unconscious wishes force the individuals to be the way they are. Shepard, whose troubled psyche apparently gives him pain, goes on talking about 'desert' issues, saying that he "lived on the edge of the Mojave Desert", a place which was formerly a farm country. He talks about the stands with fresh "avocados and date palms", about how much money one had to pay for "a dozen artichokes", and about how these areas in the countryside are currently being erased out, "wiped out" of existence (in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.). Likewise, the feeling of loneliness, financial considerations, and matters of 'areas of land' permeate the play.

The distinct family portrait Shepard lays in front of one's eyes is a disturbing one; what goes on is a struggle for control of the run-down Californian farm; and, there is a futile search not only for freedom and security, but also for some kind of meaning in life. Being in the grips of something like an epidemic, it seems that the family members are unable to rise and stand on their feet. At this exact point, it will definitely be appropriate to paint a further, and a more memorable, picture of the stifling of the human spirit. In the play, the audience is introduced to an absurdly disjointed and

unharmonious family: Weston, the broken-down drunk, ragged and mostly absent "come-and-go father" (Shewey 1997, p. 109); Ella, the audacious and frowzy slattern; Wesley, the emotionally numb, sullen, and deranged idealist; and, Emma, the vibrant, vociferous, and rebellious pubescent tomboy, the spitfire daughter, who frequently shows erratic attitudes and has mood swings. The scatterbrained mother, Ella, thinks that she is keeping house; however, she is oblivious to her children's needs. Weston, who should actually be the ethical guardian of the family, is incapable of holding a job; he is a profoundly unstable man who is controlled by the amount of alcohol running in his system. The head of the family being like this, not much can be expected in the house which is literally and metaphorically in ruins, and which is, in Wesley's words, "infested with termites" (1986, p. 146). The struggle – and thereby, the strenuous effort – to maintain one's identity, stability and sanity eventually results in dramatic situations; and, the bonds between the family members simultaneously alleviate and aggravate their accumulating problems while they are trying to find a balance, and harmony, between dedication to oneself and devotion to the family.

There are other factors as well. Alcoholism, without doubt, has its consequences, but it is not the only familial problem which causes a house to transform into a place like hell. The wandering characters are all obsessed with the emptiness of the refrigerator, the door of which they slam, after idly looking in, and thus, repeating the usual, familiar ritual. In Peter DuBois' production, which marks the 30th anniversary of the play's American premiere, the Tate family members, one after the other, stare – mindlessly – into the refrigerator as though "it were an existential expanse, waiting, wanting, wishing to find some sustenance there" (D'Souza 2008, n.p.). From the beginning till the end, the refrigerator door is – at intervals – opened and shut rhythmically, "in vain hope that it has been miraculously stocked" with every kind of fruits, veggies, and so on, and perhaps, with the best and the most delicious food one can imagine. The Tate family members try to thrive; however, nothing gets done, nothing takes the right course, because they suffer from a spiritual malnutrition as well as a physical malnutrition (Demastes 1987, p. 234). The empty refrigerator, which the Tates stare into with ritual regularity, also shows the extent, the degree, of the emotional, cultural, and moral starvation which, in a way, plagues the whole family.

Although they continuously counterattack the idea that they are part of the starving class, they are always hungry; their search for food never stops. Ella empties giant

sacks of groceries into the refrigerator, but it is always half empty; she pulls out a frying pan from one of the drawers, "*lights one of the burners on the stove and starts cooking the bacon*" (1986, p. 137); and, another stage, she cooks the chicken which Emma was saving for a 4-H club demonstration. And, the iron determination – which colors Emma's blowout, sudden burst, over her 4-H chicken – is one of the most memorable moments of aggression in the play; and, the aggression can even be understood from Shepard's preference of using capital letters. She accuses her mother of boiling her chicken, and of having "[no consideration for the labor]" and effort involved in the 'feeding and killing' task. She says that Ella has boiled the chicken which she raised "[from the incubator to the grave]", that her mother has boiled it "[like it was any old frozen hunk of flesh]", that she had to feed it "[crushed corn]" each and every morning for twelve months, that she had to kill it brutally "[with an ax]", that she "[had to spill its guts out]", and that she had to "[pluck]" every single "[feather]" on its tiny body (1986, pp. 140-41).

Later in the play, Weston returns from the 'desert land' with an armload of artichokes, which boil on the stove throughout most of Act II. Weston's choice of coming home with artichokes causes needless problems for the family, as it immediately becomes a source of verbal fight. And, they argue over whose responsibility it is to "replenish the empty larder" (1986, p. 157). At another point, Weston prepares a huge, double "breakfast of ham and eggs" (p. 185), which he devours like crazy, after swearing off alcohol. In the play, where there is "a gnawing hunger, but not for food", not for something to eat, the characters "are starved for some modest level" of fulfillment, for only the chance at peace, happiness and joy, self-understanding, self-definition or self-esteem (Berkowitz 1992, p. 185). The centrality of the refrigerator – to which the inhabitants of the Tate household go countless times, looking for nourishment which will satisfy, which will abate their appetite – is one of the highlights of the play. The fridge is not only a failed source of nourishment, but also the repository for the inadequate nourishment Ella and Weston provide for their individual selves and their two children, Emma and Wesley. They even stoop, and pick scraps of food up off the floor, just like the way animals do. Filling their physical bodies with some amount of food does not contribute to the task of changing their identities. The Tate family may have enough to eat, but not enough to satisfy the hidden hungers which bedevil them psychologically. The figurative kind of hunger cannot be satiated even if tons of food

are eaten; it is a metaphorical hunger, a spiritual starvation, which causes them to be dissatisfied with their position in the family and their social class; they are not happy with the place they occupy in the social structure. They stare at whatever is in the fridge; and, it is as if they are trying to affirm their social status through the amount of food in the rectangular box. On the other hand, the mother foolishly believes she can rise above her social class by selling the house and the farm. In fact, the actual hunger is the one which is repressed in the unconscious; and, it directly comes out and shows itself in the form of partly absurd actions and revelations.

Even the materialistic, money-oriented, mentality of the particular century, of the capitalist times, matches with the conditions under which the Tate family lives. This also injects an element of cruelty and violence into the play, and adds gravity to the everyday life of the family that lives in a farm house on an avocado ranch in Southern California. Real estate developers, greedy mindsets, people thirsty for land are everywhere; they – in a way – conquer the continent. In *America and Americans*, in the chapter entitled *Americans and the Land*, John Steinbeck paints a picture of migration, the flood of people, and the craze for land. Although the Americans portrayed in Steinbeck's piece of writing may not be necessarily people alike – to be specific, problematic families – it still shows the American way of life, echoing the series, the chain, of events, the desire for getting more and more money, in Shepard's play: Steinbeck writes about how the trickle of migrating people "became a stream" , and how these crowds of people "began to [go] westward", in hopes of not "grab[bing] and leav[ing]", but "settl[ing] and liv[ing]". He also writes about how these people "went land-mad", how they all forgot about such values as fairness and politeness, how they left "their knowledge of kindness" to the land, how stubbornly they aimed at "maintain[ing] its usefulness", how violently they "cropped out a piece" of land and greedily jumped on to others, and how they "rap[ed]" the whole country just like the way invaders do. According to what Steinbeck says, "the new Americans moved like locusts across the continent" till "the western sea put a boundary to their movements" and capitalist involvements (1968, p. 146). These details all imply that, in the westward exodus to the supposed Eden, people with capitalist mentalities show signs of inhumanity; their eyes see nothing else apart from land. In Shepard's play, such issues of money cause problems for the Tates, and push them towards familial disintegration.

With his play, Shepard actually plumbs the bleeding wounds of the American psyche; he tries to discover the depth of those wounds; and, with these intentions in mind, he focuses on issues ranging from the fractured bones of family life and relationships to the pitiless invasion of real estate developers that eat up the wide open spaces, just like the way 'locusts' do. There are speculators who purposefully make the land prices higher and higher, swindle – deceive by overcharging – the folks, and bury the areas of land in malls, long highways, and seemingly never-ending mind-numbing 'sprawl', which means 'untidily' covering large areas of land with buildings constructed at different times. This desolate, unattractive, patch of terrain is what capitalism favours. And, when such kind of 'money' issues become the subject matter of much of the talk, the Tates, altogether, march towards an angry manner of speaking.

In Jonathan Cott's interview with the playwright – which was published in *Rolling Stone*, December 18, 1986 - January 1, 1987 – Shepard says that a number of things which occur within the familial unit usually leave scars on one's emotional life, and that these are much stronger than fantasy itself. According to him, the thing that is most commonly called 'fantasy' is only a sort of rumination on the deep scars, a manifestation – a kind of resurfacing – of two different elements, one being the emotional elements, and the other, the psychological elements. Shepard emphasizes the need to see it; instead of avoiding the point altogether, one should see that it really exists (Shepard, in Crank 2012, pp. 39-40).

Most conditions of Shepard's life had something to do not with the permanent, but with the temporary, with departure, desolation, division, and separation. Owing to the fact that he and his family continuously had to move from one place to another, the existence of Sam Shepard Rogers III and his immigrating family was an unsettled one. In an unfortunate sort of way, his perceptions are all shaped by various factors related to his personal life: A continually changing home, parental divorce, an unusual lifestyle which resulted in a succession of personal relationships, and so on. As a matter of fact, his mind cannot escape the risk of being influenced by the negativities which keep coming up in his life; and, this, in turn, might have led to his interest in themes revolving around the institution of the family. As time goes by, the familial unit becomes one of the points on which he focuses in his plays. As he himself says, "*Curse*" is the very first time he has dealt with the "nuclear family", something which he has always been frightened of. He thinks that, if an individual can comprehend the

thing behind that, if he/she can grasp and make sense of "the chemistry" and "the reactions" which are in progress there, he/she can understand much more complicated things (Shepard, in Shewey 1997, p. 107).

The birth of Shepard's first son, Jesse Mojo Shepard, marked one of the turning points in his life, because thoughts of his boyhood shifted into thoughts on the role of the father. In the play, the father-son relationship is a problematic one, as Weston forgets all about his duties and responsibilities as a father. On the other hand, just before he started writing the play, Shepard moved from London to California, the land of his boyhood and adolescence; and, it was a move which was absolutely rooted in family. When he returned to the U.S. in 1974 and settled on a ranch in Marin County, California, perhaps inevitably, his work gravitated towards the family unit, in the plays like *Curse of the Starving Class*, *Buried Child*, *True West*, and *A Lie of the Mind* (Shewey 1997, p. 7). In California, the focus of Shepard's plays switched – from drugs, jazz, theatre, and rock 'n' roll – to the institution of the family and thoughts of home; and, he concentrated on the extremely destructive family traits which repeat themselves down the generations. Having been posed the particular question "Have you drawn a lot from your own family?", Shepard links the issue to the drug-ridden madness, a problem which made him think a lot about what it meant to be an American: He asserts that most parts come from his father's side of the family, who, he says, are a "bizarre, [alcoholic], bunch" that "go[es] back to the original colonies." He draws special attention to the extent, to the degree, of the consumption of alcoholic beverages, by saying that it goes right back to earlier and earlier generations. And, he concludes by mentioning the unlikely possibility – most probably, impossibility – of having "a sober, [unanaesthetized], grandfather" (in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.).

An aura of mystery and misery-like events surround the Tate family, from all sides, leaving it as an entity in itself, having its own independent existence. Weston drives his family deep into debt; and, the guilt he feels – because of the crushing mountain of debt – follows him wherever he goes. Like a rock embedded in soil, the unpleasant feeling is fixed firmly in his psyche. Ella seeks solace outside her marriage and thinks of going to exotic places; dreams evaporate; and, the curse plagues the whole family. The plans do not become realities, but Wesley's dream of going "to Alaska (the last frontier)" (Shewey 1997, p. 109) deserves special attention, since the place he has

chosen is an extreme. Alaska, a state which is located in the northwest extremity – northernmost and westernmost – of North America, and which was bought from Russia in the second half of the 19th century, in 1867, by paying millions of dollars, has a freezing cold climate. His choosing the most frigid place possible, the most wintry place there can ever be, may show that he is used to living in cold environments. After all, even if metaphorically, the Tate household is not warm at all. Though it occupies the biggest area in the U.S.A., there is no population explosion in Alaska. Because of the fact that it is not densely populated, Wesley's preference points at his intense desire for isolation and desolation. Furthermore, preferring a purchased piece of land might have something to do with the worthless piece of desert property Weston has bought – by being overcharged – and the investments or deals depicted in the play, and thus, might refer to the materialistic mentality of the Americans of the time. The "desert land" – which, at times, constitutes the subject matter of much of the conversation, and becomes a point of debate in the house – is one sign of Weston's interest in buying lands and making profits. From time to time, he is accused of purchasing a useless piece of land: It is a barren area, "[a] real piece of shit. Just a bunch of strings on sticks, with the lizards blowing across it. . . . No way to even get water to the goddamn place. No way to even set a trailer on it" (1986, pp. 158-59). Talks revolving around this particular land result in nothing, but domestic unrest. And, quite naturally, all these add up and lead to an unhealthy, paralysed, state of mind.

As time goes through the funnel of their fingers, human beings may quite well experience distinct moments of desperation when suffering becomes inevitable. All of a sudden, in the middle of a vicious world, they may have to stand weaponless, and pure violence – a threat directed against individual freedom – is what comes to the forefront. In the play, the violence is evident in both the verbal assaults and the physical actions. The rhythms of Wesley's speech – about his father's drunken attempt to break into the house – "reenact the crescendo and diminuendo of a violence refracted through his sensibility" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 182). The unique language Shepard uses in his play, the form of expression, which is placed under strain, "puts you inside the pounding chest of that boy who [is] so familiar with the sounds of domestic violence [that] he can recognize every nuance" (Shewey 1997, p. 109). The reactions to the external threat are magnified; the sensibilities are heightened; and, the language Wesley – the open receiver, the observing 'self' – uses in his extended, loopy, sensory-specific

monologue, and the way he recounts the previous night's events directly reflect a sensibility which is under pressure. The terror, fear, of knowing he is vulnerable to the same kind of violence makes the situation even worse. The whole of his being is invaded not only physically, but also emotionally by his father's terrorizing and violence:

> My heart was pounding. Just from my Dad coming back. . . . Then I hear the door of the Packard open. A pop of metal. . . . Door slams. . . . Feet coming. . . . Foot kicking door. . . . Foot kicking harder. Wood splitting. . . . Bottle crashing. Glass breaking. Fist through door. Man cursing. . . . Head smashing. . . . Shoulder smashing. Whole body crashing. . . . Mom screaming for police. Man throwing wood. . . . Dad crashing away. Back down driveway. Car door slamming. Ignition grinding. . . . First gear grinding. Wheels screaming off down hill. Packard disappearing. . . . Heart still pounding. (1986, p. 138)

The wars which rage in man's inner psychic apparatus all involve a kind of battle between the wish to instantly fulfill desires and the particular realization that this is sometimes impossible. Regarding this aspect, Weston seems to fulfill his desires at every possible moment. There is no humanity, wisdom or altruism. After having kicked the wooden door furiously, Weston gets on his Packard which is then seen on the horizon, and is, within seconds or minutes, out of sight. Weston does all these out of the unendurable pain he feels in his psyche; and, in order not to confront the ache which he thinks torments his soul, he prefers the dual action of boozing and driving. Despite the attempts on the contrary, the Tates cannot help replicating the tensions and contradictions.

Coincidentally, like James O'Neill, Shepard's father – a man of disorder and disunity whose personal life was marked by quarrels and escapes – was struck by a vehicle late in his life; he was run over by an automobile after fishing and spending a considerable length of time with a woman from Mexico. In the play, Weston drives like crazy; and, it is again a car incident which puts the final full stop. The family car is blown up, but the sad thing is that it has to take Emma with it. Apart from this explosion, there is the explosion of emotions which come spilling out. Here, the point which needs to be emphasized is the mentality of the father figure. A problem in the patriarch, sooner or later, leads to disasters, the consequences of which affect the whole familial unit.

With the war came a series of, a chain of problems, one of them being the widespread use of alcohol and drugs. In the 20th century, drug 'abuse' was a big problem, with not only crack cocaine but also heroin becoming a kind of trap or disease, an inner-city affliction and kind of disaster. And, marijuana was used almost in every part of America, most commonly among younger adults. What is more, people gatherings like MADD – Mothers Against Drunk Driving – helped to stiffen punishments, for driving while being drunken (Gale 2015, n.p.). With these real life events in the background, the characters – and thereby, Weston – took on the same mode. There being no use of drugs in the play does not make the situation – the disintegration of the family – less serious, because violence is always there; it is never somewhere far away. Loneliness leads to alcoholism; and alcoholism, in turn, leads to violence. As mentioned earlier in the study, loneliness was Shepard's father's essential nature; he loved wild and barren deserts and rifles just like the way Shepard does; and, he distanced and removed himself from his family due to not only his alcoholism but also his bad temper. Likewise, Weston has the same inclinations, and is – unconsciously – forced and pushed towards acting that way. And, the violent atmosphere in the house, in the play, most of the time results from the consumption of alcohol, and the angry mood that is his indispensable nature.

Throughout the particular century, alcoholism had always been a cause of the disintegration of family. In the 1910s, by way of stricter and stricter laws that govern drug abuse and the militant success of the Anti-Saloon League and the Women's Christian Temperance Union, America looked for ways to stop, to put an end to drug addiction and alcohol abuse, and subsequently achieved prohibition with the ratification, with the agreement and approval, of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919. In the 1940s and 50s, with the prohibition repealed – with the prohibition losing its legal force – in 1933, America returned to drinking, to consuming alcohol, and eventually created another post-World War II problem, which was namely "the drunk driver" (Gale 2015, n.p.). And, this latter part, without doubt, calls to mind Weston's old Packard and his driving. To make things even worse, morphine was what was preferred by crowds in America; it was commonly used as a painkiller. The Beat Generation, by which Shepard was heavily influenced, brought mind-expanding sort of drugs like marijuana closer and closer to the mainstream; middle-class America had to turn to tranquillizers with the sole intention of coping with depression; and, the

commonly-used hard drugs began to plague the inner cities (Gale 2015, n.p.). Even though there is no use of such drugs in Shepard's play, it reveals a lot about the climate of those times, about how individuals are pulled towards extremes, and how family members – in their helplessness – tend to transfer these unacceptable behaviours into the domestic arena.

The sense of the 'I' – which stems, which springs out of the unconscious life of human beings, and which gives direction to the course of their deeds and behaviours – is obvious in the actions undertaken by the characters. This 'ego-consciousness' pushes individuals towards particular forms of actions. Even if the audience does not see Weston for a while, he/she can feel that he is everywhere in the run-down home, or everywhere that aggression and destruction have been seen, including his wife's and son's mind and consciousness. Weston's only way of being – and feeling himself like – a father is to forcefully exert the patriarch's privileges, supposed advantages, some of which are causing damage and trouble, wreaking havoc, sucking up the life energy of Ella, Emma and Wesley, killing the glimmer of hope, and wasting and squandering the future.

Weston is nothing other than an amalgam, a blend, of brutal force and regret, and that is the only single inheritance that Wesley will ever have (Als 2019, n.p.). Weston drives, being drunken and ragged; and, even this situation has a counterpart in Shepard's life. Weston's alcoholism, for sure, says something about the climate of those times, about how people turned to alcohol to forget about their problems; and, Shepard's own words can sufficiently explain the whole situation: He underlines the fact that his interest in booze and boozing goes right back to his high school years, the particular time when people turned to Benzedrine. Shepard, who used to resort to "bennies and . . . ripple wine", was made, was forced to be omnipotent, due to the simultaneous acts of "[s]peed[ing] and booz[ing]." Not feeling even the slightest of pain, he found himself in a number of "car wrecks"; and, even Shepard himself cannot understand how he managed to survive, unhurt (Shepard, in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.).

Cultural, social, legal, economic, and 'etiquette' – the chain of rules or customs which control accepted-kind-of-behaviour in some specific social groups and social situations – practices put man in the dominant position in the family structure, and transform this 'supposed authority' into the visitor that is served, his wife into a servant

mistress, and the home into a "residential hotel". And, when the understanding which underlies this interactional pattern is destroyed, violence is observed in the domestic scene (Denzin 1984, p. 486). A new day in the Tates' farm house brings with itself nothing, but just another turn on the wheel of disappointment and disillusionment. Weston – who breaks the door of the house, which had been locked against him by Ella, just before the opening scene of the play – is a character who seems to have trodden the very edge of the land of insanity. Although he, in that particular scene, seems to be a borderline psychotic, his insanity lies in the fact that he is obsessive.

The play, which is based on deep feelings and emotional reactions rather than on reason and thought, is overloaded with a sense of the unexpected. Behind the visceral quality, there is physical menace, a nearly sadistic revelling in conflict, and a battle for dominance; however, the actual violence is "an internal pressure which threatens to implode character, disassemble it along lines of primitive fears, needs and desires" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 166) Being under a lot of stress, the characters tend to simplify. Just "[l]ike a computer [that] fac[es] overload", the Tate family members "revert to primary function, refuse extraneous data." It seems that they have no peripheral vision; and, they can be referred to as "neurasthenically sensitive" (p. 167).

It was his destructive father who first introduced Shepard to the work of the pianist Federico Garcia Lorca, and who first aroused his interest in jazz; and, "[f]or Shepard himself there was a way of drawing on that double inheritance without succumbing to it – music: 'Rock and Roll is violence manifest without hurting no one'" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 175). Here, the violence and 'the desire for violence' part – though not identical in form – directly calls to mind Weston's drunken rage during which he kicks the door as hard as he can, curses, and goes insane. This is how inhumanity – which originates from the life of the playwright – is shown in the play. In Shepard's psyche, the experience takes its place among the other psychic influences. Under normal circumstances, the impossible-to-forget kind of moments have roots in the unconscious; and, Weston's behaviour is an exemplification of his – pitiless and relentless – tendency towards 'aggression', which is a Freudian element of the unconscious human mind.

Shepard, who was the son of a World War II combat veteran, was quite conscious of the many adverse sequelae, the aftermath, of battle exposure, which mental health professionals specifically call 'post-traumatic stress disorder'. Among the symptoms

are estrangement from the people around, distress, depression, varying degrees of substance abuse, and rage reactions. Shepard was of the opinion that his father lived outside of the Shepard family while living within it; and, needless to say, this simultaneous situation led to many complications within the family structure. In the play, the situation of the Tate family patriarch is the same. One established inheritance is that Weston's father preferred living apart – from the other members of his family – although he was right among them. What is significant is that Weston's drinking habit allows the same kind of behaviour in the younger generation of the Tates. Each member of the Tate family lives apart despite the fact that they are surrounded by each other. To be able to protect themselves psychologically, they need distance; they give the impression that they are frightened of being engulfed.

To a certain extent, Shepard blamed the negativity on his father's extreme machismo, that is, on his very tough pride in behaving in a ferocious and forceful way that is considered, that is regarded as typically man-like. Shepard inherited this negative quality from his father, which was somehow unavoidable. In parallelism with this inheritance issue, Wesley follows in the footsteps of his father. Weston has been poisoned by his father before him; and, because the inheritance chain is something irresistible, Wesley – quite consciously – feels himself becoming like Weston. The Tate family members can all sense that their fate is biologically and psychologically predetermined. The reproduction of characteristics through the generations shows the extent to which each single character has – from birth or childhood – been given a pre-existing role and mission.

Shepard remembers how his father, once upon a time, forced upon him an apparently more-than-macho masculinity. Shepard himself knows, quite well, about this version of masculinity; he is quite familiar with it, as he was victimized by it, as it was a portion of his earlier life. According to what he says, "[his] [O]ld [M]an" insistently, in a stubborn fashion, forced on him a particular conception and perception of "what it was to be a 'man'" (Shepard cited in McDonough 1995, p. 66). After a certain length of time, Shepard's father developed a debilitating, weakening, drinking problem; and, in the play, this is quite traceable in Weston's pernicious alcoholism. Male identity is shown as a dangerous thing that has to be aggressively enacted and aggressively protected if it is to exist at all. Wesley has no other alternative apart from inheriting a violent image of male identity from Weston, a drunkard wallowing in his self-

destruction. The play shows the dichotomous patterns that are seen in families immersed in alcoholism. Being caught in the web of this pattern, the Tate family often cycles between two states, two interactional modes; the first one is directly associated with intoxication, and the second with sobriety.

At a point in the play, the tone changes into a frightening macabre note, and the son's manic monologue – "a trademark Shepard soliloquy . . . with strong visual images and a syncopal intonation" (Sparr, Erstling & Boehnlein 1990, p. 565) – speaks of killing and deadness, of lifelessness and soullessness, of some stock cars squealing down the highway, of dog-like wild animals, North American coyotes, crying in the desert-like land, of American World War II planes that are in a duel with the planes of the enemies. The mention of "Messerschmitt", a German World War II fighter aircraft, is another detail which adds gravity to the whole account (1986, p. 137). There is the fear of invasion, something unusual, something strange and foreign, stepping and entering into the body, taking away the human soul; and, subsequently, "[e]ven [the] 'listening' becomes 'afraid'" (Tucker 1992, p. 125). It is the outside world which inevitably bears in and determines the actions, reactions, and interactions in the household. Wesley's famous 'interior monologue' – one of which Shepard referred to as 'arias' – in the very first pages of the first act actually shows one's position in front of the others, and even in front of the enemies around:

> I was looking straight up at the ceiling at all my model airplanes hanging by all their thin metal wires. Floating. Swaying very quietly like they were being blown by someone's breath. Cobwebs moving with them. Dust laying on their wings. Decals peeling off their wings. My P-39. My Messerschmitt. My Jap Zero. I could feel myself lying far below them on my bed like I was on the ocean and overhead they were on reconnaissance. Scouting me. Floating. Taking pictures of the enemy. Me, the enemy. I could feel the space around me like a big, black world. (1986, p. 137)

Shepard, who had to bounce from place to place because of his father's 'active' job, once said that his Dad worked as a pilot in the air force (in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.); and, this is a point which calls to mind the above-mentioned reverie which Wesley goes into. Lying on his back, he looks at the ceiling at his model airplanes hanging by their metal-strings; he goes into details about the planes, giving their specific names; so, it is clear that Shepard's father's occupation – and, by

extension, extremity – is transferred into the play. The guns which the Germans used during World War II are mentioned; it is as if one is watching a scene from the battle itself; and, the prevailing sense is one of violence.

In the play, there is symbiosis, a relationship of dependence between two animals in which each provides for the other the conditions necessary for its continued existence. The symbiotic nightmare of the family, that is, its "mutually destructive dependency" on each other (Hart 1987, p. 73), is figuratively conveyed in the violent, self-destructive image of the creatures – a cat dugging its claws into an eagle's body, and then being snatched in talons – and, it "became a tableau of symbiosis: neither can live with the other, nor live if one of the other dies." This is the curse under which the mother lives. It is impossible for her to flee from her husband; the idea of leaving her husband behind is out of consideration, because "she is a part of his traditional world and of the society into which they were born." As this implies, in the arduous journey of life, the matriarch and the patriarch are equally and simultaneously trapped (Tucker 1992, p. 129).

According to Benedict Nightingale, the family is less a haven than a trap, a net, which "seduces", and the origins and conventions of this unit can appropriately be interpreted, or viewed, as "its curse", an inescapable, previously-determined, handing-over of loss from one generation to the following generation (cited in Hart 1987, p. 73). The father's own memories of his wartime exploits as a B-49 bomber is what triggers in him a really powerful identification with the eagle; and, he cheers together with the eagle's daredevil tactics and antics. Ella, Emma and Wesley are dependent upon Weston, whose flight from responsibility carries the rest, the remaining, of the Tates with him to destruction. There is no other alternative apart from clinging to him in their helplessness and unhappiness; however, "their clutching destroys him" and eventually "all of them tumble down together fatally bound to each other by biological chance, their destinies determined by their interdependence in a bond . . . [which] cannot be broken" (Hart 1987, p. 74). So, it will never be fair if one lets certain issues – heritage, fatalism, etc. – fade into the background.

Being a rather violent alcoholic, his father – Sam Sr. – "represented an incipient anarchy." It was only by way of joining Bishop's Company Repertory Players – a travelling group – that young Shepard could escape from California to New York; however, still, "[t]he vertiginous threat of violence was never far away" (Bigsby

2000b, p. 175). After his move, though Shepard was not 'physically' together with his father any longer, the presence of his father continued to 'mentally' haunt the familial atmosphere of some of his dramatic works, one of which is *Curse of the Starving Class*. Weston is very much feared; even when he is physically out of the house, the particular knowledge – that he is alive or only around – arouses an indescribable fear that hangs over the Tate household. Related to his rancorous relationship with his domineering father, Shepard once made comments; and, his comments echo Weston's relationship with his family: Drawing atttention to his father's "maniac" nature, he says that they could not get on well with each other, that they had "falling-out[s]" with each other, that they were, at all times, "butting up against" one another, that they did not prefer seeing each other "eye-to-eye", and that the whole thing – that is, the problematic father-son relationship – transformed into an incredibly violent situation as he grew up to be an adult (in Howe, McCulloch & Simpson 1997, n.p.).

Like Shepard's 'incipient-anarchy-representing' father, Weston – the father figure in the play – is famous for his moments of fury. For Shepard himself, the fear was always with him; and, the very same thing is true for the Tate family. It is not only the father's ghost who does not wish to pass away, but also a curse surrounding the family from all sides, an inherited sort of predisposition towards cruelty and violence. There is the inexorable power of inheritance; the blood curse, which is transmitted from one generation to the next one by 'tiny cells and genes', is a power which imposes itself upon the helpless characters without their consent, regardless of their desire. And, as a matter of fact, it turns one member against the other member; and, therefore, they are forever, eternally, "locked in [a] battle", locked in a violent struggle, "clinging to each other for life", but on the other hand, inevitably, "fighting to the death" (DeRose 1992, pp. 91-92).

The characters all inhabit a very different world in which the "myths of masculine independence and existential truth" have altogether collapsed into states of "anomie, psychosis and a destabilising violence" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 167). Durkheim states that even the most bizarre, the most unusual, or the cruellest rites and the weirdest myths translate some sort of human need and some specific features of life, social or personal, and that a particular human institution can never depend on, can never be based on errors and lies (in Gofman 2019, p. 28). So, it will be right to say that the 'myths of masculine independence' hint at some basic 'needs' of the male sex, to be specific,

Weston's endless, unfathomably deep, pathological desire for personal freedom and for the power to dominate the ones around him.

Weston, who violently strikes out at inanimate objects, is unable to understand even his own emotions and motives. Like the other male characters of Shepard, and like the other members of the Tate family, Weston, with no hesitation, chooses to take the inside route, rides on the intensity of his feelings, and ends up showing undesirable behaviours. Something is missing from his inner world, most particularly a rational control to hold him back. Weston exists on the psychological plane, as he, most of the time, lives by instinct. And, because he lives by instinct – by the knowledge and ability which allows him naturally to act in particular ways without having to think – his change of behaviour is far from easy. The subconscious becomes the conscious; what is in the subconscious comes to the surface, and, as it becomes the action itself, it becomes something visible, noticeable, and observable. What is buried is disinterred; and, according to Weston's train of thought, what is felt has to be – immediately – enacted.

Shepard's play is all about invasion. It includes images of violation by some kind of crushing forces. It is about the pitiless invasion of a ranching community by the suburban sprawl of housing developments, buildings, constructions, highways, and superhighways. It is about the corruption of a person's physical being by more-than-harmful curses such as genetic factors, microscopic germs, bloodlines, and cruelty. It is about the invasion of the socioeconomic facts which are impossible to control; it is about the forces that are pushed towards the familial institution. It is about an alcoholic father who, in an intoxicated rage, breaks down, smashes down, the door – the barrier, the barricade, which normally insulates families from the ever-present threat and menace of the outside world – leaving the house and the Tates vulnerable to even further violation. It is about "a 'zombie invasion'" of land by the greedy buyers, by the capitalist mentalities and mindsets (DeRose 1992, pp. 92-93).

The play starts with the son cleaning up the debris left by the threatening intruder that is his father, with his stacking an old wheelbarrow with the shattered remains, fragments of the battered-down door. With the door having been demolished, leaving them open to invasions from the external world, Ella admonishes Wesley for attempting to clean up the wreckage: The gate between the familial unit and the world outside has been destroyed; and, even in this situation, Wesley is not allowed to restore

it (1986, p. 135). There is doubt; there is something shadowy about who is in the family and who is out of the family, and who is performing what roles and tasks within the Tate family structure. Limits are exceeded; boundaries are crossed; and, boundary diffusion is clearly shown in Wesley's to-the-point comment, "[l]ike any second something could invade me. Some foreigner" (p. 137). Because of the fact that one's search for some kind of identity centers mainly on his/her personal sense of place, territorial possession directly becomes synonymous with existence itself. The compulsion to possess and protect such kind of a place comes from within one's self; it is innate; it is not something learnt in advance. Due to transcending the physical plane, the territory, the realm, can become pure verbality. And, this verbality, in turn, leads to unnecessary arguments within the boundaries of the Tate household.

The Tates, who do not relate to society, are unable to see beyond their own psychic states; and, what is observable – in their behaviours – is that they react more than they interact. Ella and Wesley cannot help conveying their pain, their suffering, and their ambivalence, towards Weston's power over them. Ella has called the cops because her spouse, openly, threatened to murder her. Wesley is more-than-upset because of the fact that Ella has summoned 'unhomely' outside forces to their house: He says that it is so "humiliating" to have the police come, that it "[m]akes [him] feel like" they are somebody else, and that it "[m]akes [him] feel [really] lonely" (1986, pp. 136-37). It is the son himself who "strives to untangle the constrictive cords . . . [which] at once bind the family together and threaten to cut off the lifeblood of the individuals" (Hart 1987, p. 69). Wesley's ties, connections, and curses bind him to his patriarchal responsibilities and duties inherited from his father.

The specific notion of inheritance from the father is brought up a number of times throughout the play. For example, Ella questions why Wesley is not like her father, his – Wesley's – maternal grandfather. She openly asks her son, why he is not as "sensitive" as "[his] Grandfather" (1986, p. 143). According to what has been said, Wesley is not like his maternal grandfather, as his inheritance does not come from the mother's side of the family, but from the father's: "His [Weston's] father was just like him. And his father before him. Wesley is just like Pop, too" (p. 152). What strikes attention is the legacy from father to son. When Ella confronts her husband with the tragic news of Emma's arrest, Weston – who never considers forgetting about the past – takes great pride in her moody daughter's embarrassing criminal trespasses, since,

in his opinion, they affirm her link with the 'bloodline' – since they tell something about her connection with the elder Tates – in the best possible way. When Ella informs her husband about Emma's crime – which includes illegal "[p]ossession of firearms", "[m]alicious vandalism", acts of "[b]reaking and entering", a series of violent "[a]ssault[s]", and "[v]iolation of equestrian regulations" – Weston answers by saying that she has always been a "fireball". And, when Ella confronts her husband with the question of whether it is a "[p]art of the inheritance", Weston's answer makes everything clear, and removes all doubt: "Right. Direct descendant" (1986, p. 188).

In Shepard's plays, a sense of a buried past presses on present behaviours and subject matters. Just like the way it is in *Buried Child* – a play which also "pivots around a spiritually and physically dejected Midwestern farm family" (Mir & Vijaya 2017, p. 612) – past lives in the present. Similar to the way Halie – the mother figure in *Buried Child*, who frequently praises her dead son, Ansel, referring to him as "[a] genuine hero" (1979, p. 14) – does, Ella, from time to time, marches towards the past. At a point in the play, one comes across with an affirmation of Ella's where she talks about her "family line", and says that "[her] grandfather was a pharmacist" (1986, p. 188). This can be counted as one of the few good things about the family. Apart from this positive detail, the audience also learns that some of the family members have a highly explosive element, a substance in their blood. And, this substance influences the way they behave, pushing them to aggression and acts of violence.

The Tate family members – in Herman Melville's terms, 'isolatos' – some of whom are revealed to have "[n]itroglycerine", a very powerful liquid which may burst, in their blood, suffer from an indescribable sense of incompleteness. According to what Emma says, with his "terrible temper", with his attempt at "kill[ing] one guy he caught [Ella] with", Weston is someone who one should avoid talking to. He is a profoundly unstable man who is controlled by the alcoholic beverage which runs through his veins; and, her daughter's words can adequately summarize the extent of the intoxication: She talks about the "short fuse" that keeps running in the family. She says that it is something "[l]ike [a] liquid dynamite", that it is "chemical", that it is "the same thing" which pushes him towards the act of boozing, that it is "[s]omething in the blood", and that it is nothing, but something "[h]ereditary" (1986, p. 152).

When he finds a lamb in the kitchen, Weston cannot help reacting with his to-the-point, biting words; he ponders aloud the lack of the dividing line, the lack of

differentiation, between the interior and the exterior: He, immediately, asks whether that place – the place he is in – is the "inside" or the "outside" (1986, p. 156). Outside, there is the inhospitable world; and, like all human beings, the characters can be thought as living in the midst of a hostile ocean of existence. Although the son – quite willingly – builds a new door in an act symbolic of his strong wish to keep the Tates intact, intrusive and criminal-like strangers walk straight onto the stage and stroll into the 'kitchen', supposedly, the warmest part of any house. A cast of gangsters and con men complement the starving household; and, these alien and disruptive appearances, in fact, signal at the lack of safety within the boundaries of the house. Those strangers, who are completely irrelevant and foreign to the domestic setting, appear as the result of the parents' individual attempts to sell the property without informing each other about their plans.

Ella has been spending time with Taylor, a slick attorney that has made her own sexual seduction a portion of their business transaction. Weston has cut a deal with a sleazy – socially unacceptable – bar owner, Ellis, who wants to turn the Tates' house into a steak house. Trying to turn a family residence into a such kind of a house – just for financial considerations – is in itself something worthy of questioning. What catches most of the attention is that Ella's actions constitute not confrontation, but withdrawal. Her distinguishable efforts seem so minimal; and, that is probably due to Weston's character and personality. Eventually trying to cut her losses from a really bad marriage, she purposefully works out a deal with the attorney to sell the whole land just for future development. She does not want to cling hopelessly to an abusive kind of relationship any more; and, by this way, she – consciously – attempts at breaking one of the cycles of the Tate family dysfunction.

What is more, the entrance of two other figures, the coming of two moronic hired thugs – Slater and Emerson, two Mafioso-types, sinister and almost sub-human hit men who are ruthlessly extorting money from Weston – makes everything even more bizarre. And, the threat – and thus, the danger – reaches its climax when the sound of the "godalmighty bang", the "*off stage*" explosion of Weston's car, with Emma in it, is heard (1986, p. 197). With the blowing up of the family car by Slater, the curse once more plagues the whole family. Despite the fact that it is not confirmed, the audience is led to believe that she is killed by the bomb which is intended for Weston; presumably she is incinerated. The interpretation may be that she was trying to run

away, trying to escape by the patriarchal inheritance laid out for her. The Tate family members cling to each other regardless of all their contradicting world views, and their downfall comes in the form of a tragic incident: The explosion of the car with Emma in it.

The play is based on Shepard's own experience as a young person in Duarte, California. The crooked lawyers and thugs – a series of malevolent outsiders – in the play stand for the "developers and real-estate hustlers" that used "Los Angeles's postwar population boom" to their own advantage. Exploiting that boom, quite consciously, they literally erased the small farming communities which were in the east part of the city, most particularly the ones in the Central Valley. Superfreeways and mass housing developments started to spread into the farmland; but, on the other hand, small communities like the one which Shepard grew up in were literally wiped out of existence. Apartments, more modern blocks of buildings were erected; and, streets, roads, avenues and boulevards were constructed, one after the other. With the usurpation of the land by real-estate developers, America came face to face with the danger of becoming a sprawling suburb full of meaningless shopping opportunities and hideous housing developments. Postmodern America, with its big shopping centres and fast-food restaurants, quickly and suddenly "made the rural life-style of Shepard's 'starving class' family obsolete" (DeRose 1992, p. 94).

The roots of the problem lay in the disintegration of the American family, the crumbling of the formerly-respected values into bits and pieces, and the ascendancy, controlling power, of a consumer society that is specifically conditioned to give more importance to material goods, and less importance to land and people. In the chaotic environment where the individuals are condemned to live with the "invisible [and hostile] zombies who rape the land and stomp on anybody who tries to get in their way" (Shewey 1997, p. 109), the Tate family tears itself apart from the inside. With his carefully-drawn picture of a dysfunctional family, Shepard seems to be critical of the numbness and "soullessness of much of American life" (Shiach 2007, p. 45). Quoting Shepard in between his words, Rush Rehm summarizes the American context, and points at the force under which the Tates are – metaphorically – left breathless: There is suffering and tragedy; there is pathos and the feeling of sadness – especially because of sympathy – in Shepard's world. And, these emotions are not only "bred out of the blood ('My old man's poison . . . in my body')", but also aggravated – made

worse – by an incredibly "soulless economic and social system", an America possessed by zombies that are not visible, an America that is meticulously constructed by zombies "for the use and convenience of all other zombies" (1986, p. 218).

According to Unwin, the institution of the family changed from being the narrowly, simply defined basic unit of society into the multi-formed, multi-dimensional, and diverse thing it is in the 20th century. Related to the system of belief and worship, the holy religion lost its formerly privileged position. The liberation movements of the 1960s legitimized different kinds of personal expression, especially in matters of sexuality. The liberation movement of the female sex, without doubt, challenged the traditional values; and, women struggled to have equal rights under the law and "to have equal access to education and the job market" (Shiach 2007, p. 40). Emily M. Agree also draws attention to how the women's "educational attainment" and "labor-force participation" rose near the end of the 20th century (2017, p. 65). In Shepard's play, the mother figure wants to step out of the metaphorical cage; and, she dreams about taking the matters in her hands, by selling the farm and going ahead.

Women's position – where they stay in society, where they stand in the social structure – was altogether transformed, not only as a result of the alterations in the employment type, but also as a result of "contraception" and the requirements of feminism (in Unwin & Woddis, 2001, p. ix). Parallel with these changes in direction, what can be seen in the play is a "streak" of disobedience and "independence" in struggling to arrange a life apart from, far away from, the husband (McDonough 1997, p. 51). Ella, the 'supposed' mother, is someone who can be referred to as a drifter or a seeker. She tries to find 'that' truth in which she herself can no longer believe. So frequently, she reaches out a hand, with the sole intention and hope of finding some kind of momentary consolation, but she – in an unfortunate sort of way – can reach nowhere, because "that passion carries" nothing, but "its own virus of violence and despair" with itself (Bigsby 2000b, p. 167).

With her almost insatiable entrepreneurial kind of spirit, Ella wants to take control of the whole situation, and puts the house up for sale without informing her husband about her intentions. Because she so desperately wants to go after her dreams, she tries to sell the property – the house in the middle of a run-down farm – and abandon the Tate family which exists more in name than in reality. What is saddening about these efforts – in trying to mount the life steps – is that both husband and wife have

independently made deals; they have tried separately to sell the property, the old homestead. Ella has a contract with a shady, apparently dishonest, real estate speculator, while Weston sells the deed to a bartender to pay off some gambling debts. All these factors combine to cast a shadow over the relationships in the house, and subsequently lead to domestic unrest from which it is almost impossible to emerge unhurt or unwounded.

The characters are strained within their respected slots for very deep-seated reasons; they are unable to dominate the succession of forces which they cannot understand. The inhabitants of the house, at times, find themselves in the middle of nowhere; they are lost in a world which is too big for them to live in. There is a seemingly endless supply of shattered dreams; and, the fathers, mothers, and siblings are forced to become the slaves of the boiling cauldron of urges. Angry accusations, mean-spirited vituperation, condemnation, rebuke, and mocking retorts all hint at the excessively active problems of psychological sorts. Regarding their personal characteristics, the youngers, the children, are no better than the elders, their parents, since 'the apple never falls far from the tree'. The play, which has a schematic organization, divides up its violent language among four problematic characters in a symmetrical scheme – Weston-Wesley and Ella-Emma – in which the younger replicates the older (Lyons 1990, p. 30). The children are like the "versions" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 183) of their parents: More or less, they show the same attitudes; and, the moment the audience is introduced to one of them, he/she knows that someone problematic is about to appear on the stage.

The lamb with "[m]aggots" (1986, p. 182) – the suffering animal which Wesley tries to save from an infestation – is symbolic of the situation of the family: It is as though they are all afflicted with a virus, and they cannot rise once again despite their never-ending endeavours. All characters are infected like the lamb with maggots; and, Ella thinks that the family is infected by a curse which is slowly ruining them. Weston is infected by alcohol; and, although it is a normal physiological function for the female ones, Emma's first period, menstruation, is shown as something infecting and staining her, because of the fact that the family members keep mentioning it when they are forced to explain the reason behind her erratic attitudes: According to what Ella says, Emma will think that "something drastic has gone wrong with [her] insides", that 'that bleeding' may cause her to "bleed to death" (pp. 138-39). At another stage, she says

that she is not old enough to leave; and, she directly ties her particular 'erratic attitude' of leaving at that age, to menstruation, saying that "[s]he [is] only just now having her first period" (p. 142).

In connection with the issue of blood and bleeding, the ideas of Simone de Beauvoir will be a good starting point to explain Emma's situation: According to what she writes in her monumental treatise, *Le Deuxième Sexe (The Second Sex)*, the fact that women are capable of getting pregnant and menstruating can never be a valid reason or explanation to refer to them as the 'second sex', even though "Anglo-Saxons call menstruation 'the curse'" of womanhood (2011, p. 62). Another important point is to raise the particular question of whether men and women are essentially different because of biological realities, or are socially constructed as different. In Shepard's play, a parallelism is drawn between the family curse and the curse of menstruation; and, such blood is represented as something staining, as something which spoils such important and preferable things as beauty and purity. Not only Weston's blood is blamed for being the cause of the curse and the incapability to love, but also there is the implication that the female, this way or that way, contributes to this disease within the house of the Tates. Emma, who embodies the voice of the active tomboy not yet restricted by sexual stereotyping, is – day by day, step by step – absorbing the female 'curse' of menstruation which 'supposedly' will affect her future actions and shape her destiny.

The general atmosphere in the house is always one of protest. To give a few examples to support this point, Wesley quite consciously urinates on Emma's poster as a result of which his sister goes crazy (1986, p. 142). His courageous and outrageous acts of nudity and urination are just two of the things which cannot be tolerated within the boundaries of a house. Physical nudity – exposing his genitals to urinate or coming in naked – is a complete message in itself: The moment Wesley takes off all his clothes, he sheds the illusion of personality and character. On the other hand, Ella symbolically usurps Weston's control by throwing out the desert artichokes which he brings home; the flying veggies, for sure, tells a lot about the degree of aggression. And, near the end of the play, Wesley reacts to his mother's usurpation of his father's position as the head of the house. There is not even a single moment of happiness; it is a cycle of familial disasters, calamities, whatever one may specifically call it. In this totally

naturalistic living environment, each member goes crazy, taking turns to victimize the other, and this vicious circle goes on and on.

Much can be said about the above-mentioned 'flying veggies' part. Even, the particular act of giving or withholding food, within itself, includes the direct exercise of power, ways of taking advantage, or showing approval/appreciation or dislike/disdain. On the other hand, a plenitude, an abundance, of food and drink implies love, security, acceptance, and a sort of order. Here, what needs to be highlighted is that, in the play, there is no example for the latter case, as their troubled psyche never leaves the Tates unattended; the family members are constantly under the effect, under the firm grip, of their unconscious mind, that is, wishes, desires, fears, and so on. Everyone is – this way or that way – guilty, as guilt/immorality is something deeply embedded in one's human essence; and, each and every person inherits this evil nature, as the direct consequence of an existential destiny. At the end of his endeavours to understand this nature, Shepard comes to the conclusion that even if time flows fast, and ages and generations continuously change, actually, everything remains the same. Nothing changes; no one changes. What is seen as changing is nothing other than an illusion.

3.2 Psychic Issues and Identity Crises

In Shepard's work, there is the feeling of "regression" for the men, because they clearly "entertain childish whimsies and primal yearnings" which they ought to, currently, have outgrown. The domestic arena, in fact, functions as a kind of storehouse which awaits exploration; and, the excavation process, which is far from easy, has something to do with the Freudian assumptions. What Shepard wishes is to perform an act of cruelty, a violent action, on the traditions of the American theatre, which is obviously "symbolized by the American home". And, to accomplish this, he deliberately and insistently shocks and scandalizes the audience, by way of exaggeration and grossly-inflated manners. He specifically chooses the familiar nature of the domestic realism, turns it upside down, on its head, just to show the real capacity beneath the surface (Creedon 2015, p. 51).

Due to the polarised relationships in the house, one can sense the fractured sensibility and the divided and fragmented self in Ella. Her husband is such an aggressive person that he is liable to set fire, literally or symbolically, to their very few belongings,

possessions. Her oblivious husband, at any time, can walk out into the desert-like land, away from the pain and burden of relationship and being. Like the other members of the family, Ella does not want to let herself feel disappointed with the doubtful consolation. And, that is why, she, at times, resorts to defense mechanisms. Ella is an incredibly dysfunctional person with no apparent potential to cope with Weston's compulsion of alcoholism, an insidious disease creeping up on him. She generally changes topics when she feels it in her best interest; and, she – purposefully, with an intention in mind – shows special efforts to ignore the things that are going on around her. Ella, who has quite incredible plans to turn the family around, prefers being an inhabitant of a fantasy world, which she has created for herself, and which has a slightly soothing effect on her. Being in the middle of a vicious world in reality, she tries to be positive, as she feels obliged to move on in life, this way or that way.

In a patriarchal society, man is the subject, the one who defines meaning, the one who is superior. On the other hand, woman is the object, whose existence is determined by the male; she is the subordinate, incomplete, the one not privileged. Being confined within the borders of the patriarchal society, Ella feels the presence of a kind of bondage; she does not want her identity to be defined exclusively in relation to the dominant, repressive male character, Weston. Ella dreams of leaving her bitter existence behind, and imagines escaping, and thereby, getting rid of the squalor, the immorality, the negativity of her existence. She desires to go abroad to Europe, where she thinks one can live happily forever, and where she thinks the height of wealth is joyfully celebrated. She believes, there, she can find whatever she wants, whatever she yearns for. She implies that Europeans have access to every positive thing in life, and that they have the best of everything. She shows such wide-ranging examples as "[h]igh art", "[p]aintings", "[c]astles", "[b]uildings", and "[f]ancy food" (1986, p. 143). Dealing with such issues of extravagance is good consolation to Ella, because fantasies provide comfort – or, at least, a state of semi-comfort – for the human soul. When the characters turn around to find a world bereft of love and hope, they naturally can do nothing, but suffer from the consequences psychologically. Maintaining hopes is a sort of defense, and, as in the Tate family's situation, is always beneficial for mental health.

Shepard, frequently, looked for his seemingly long-lost roots; he "look[ed] west, to the frontier, the wilderness, the territories" in hopes of finding "in the midst of the

unknown" a certain thing which he could recognize as home, a certain thing which he could recognize as himself (Shewey 1997, p. 5). Likewise, having landed in the midst of a nightmarish house, the children dream of ways to escape from their unhealthy home life; they fantasize about going away, Emma to Mexico – like "[t]hat guy who wrote *Treasure of Sierra Madre*" (1986, p. 149) – and Wesley to Alaska. As partly mentioned earlier in the study, Wesley's dream of heading towards the furthest possible place, in fact, expresses the intensity of his desire to escape from his current stressful situation. And, Emma's perky-nosed hopefulness, liveliness, energy, and enthusiasm soon turns as hard as cement; like the grey powder becoming solid, her desire becomes frozen in her mind.

In a long speech of hers, Emma paints a memorable picture of her desires that tend towards some traditionally masculine ideals and pursuits; and, at the core of the fantasies lies the power – and possibly, the freedom – she believes would accompany their eventual realization. Like a male, she imagines herself as an auto mechanic in "a small beat-up, [one-pump], gas station" in Los Cerritos, the only person "in the whole town" who is capable of repairing the broken-down car which limps into the station carrying Ella and Taylor, who she knows are planning to escape together. She, quite cleverly, takes advantage of their ignorance and carefree attitude, in her dream, by replacing the car's original engine with "a rebuilt Volkswagen block" and "charg[ing] them double for labor." Even if she knows that it is just "the rotor inside the distributor" that is broken, she will tell people that "it needs an entire new generator, a new coil, points and plugs, and some slight adjustments to the carburator" (1986, pp. 161-62). Her delight in this fantasy – of overcharging and deceiving others – is mainly, basically, due to the reversal of roles in which she inflicts upon her mother her own feelings of isolation, alienation, hopelessness, and abandonment. Emma, who has ulterior motives, wants to be a car mechanic who can fix everyone's car, so that they will have no chariot worries on their journeys to happiness and joy; possibly, she wants to be a mechanic on life's vehicles.

The marital relationship that is portrayed in the play is disturbing to the human senses, and is minimally existent. The relationship in question is characterized by aggressiveness, hostile treatments, and gradually increasing undermining. There is even no sense – and thus, no idea – of marital sanctity; the holiness and the respectability of the institution of the family have gone away, or perhaps, has never

existed. Con men are invited by Weston and Ella, just to conspire against the other one. The marital partners are hardly ever on stage together in a conscious mental state; and, the only moment the son and the daughter unite is in joint escape, running-away, fantasies. The seemingly irreparable breakdown of the dialogue between the family members, in fact, shows the inability to sustain 'healthy' interpersonal relationships.

While Ella seeks solace outside her marriage, and dreams of going to exotic places, Emma also dreams of an escape, but she goes off on an escapade that will land her in nowhere, but jail. She rides the horse into Ellis's, the greedy charlatan's, bar – "the 'Alibi Club'" (1986, p. 174) – and, shoots the place full of holes. And, having been arrested, she succeeds in getting her freedom back, by way of offering sexual bribes to the sheriff. Emma talks about how she combined her "ingenuity" with her "innate criminal intelligence" to get rid of the sheriff's punishment, sort of imprisonment. She talks about her ways, to be specific, about how she started to make "sexual overtures to the sergeant" (p. 196). Emma's story calls to mind the cowboy mythos, something quite common among Shepard's male characters. And, her behaviours link her more obviously to Weston than to Ella. Another point which attracts attention is that the Jungian 'animus' – the masculine in the female – is traceable in what Emma does. She shows such violent behaviours that it is sometimes impossible – for the audience – to believe that she is 'female'.

Like the majority of the American youth of the time, Emma has the tendency to be in open revolt against her elders, and thus, her parents. This inclination towards impoliteness and rudeness causes fissures and fractures in the American nuclear family and society. Durkheim points out that even the people who are – this way or that way – the agents and initiators of innovations, by themselves, represent a society or a group, and that even the criminals, who intend to violate the established, conventional, traditional social norms can be thought of as innovators, because of the fact that they help to bring other – previously, non-existent – norms, social as well, but "in *status nascendi*", emerging, but not yet fully formed or shaped. Therefore; even a criminal innovator, who opposes himself/herself to a particular society, can follow the norms of this very society; however, future norms, the coming or the likely-to-come ones, are not yet established and not completely understood, comprehended, by society itself (Durkheim, in Gofman 2019, p. 36). In Shepard's play, Emma can be considered as an

innovator, in the Durkheimian sense; but, hers is an innovation which casts a shadow over the peace and the coziness of the institution of the family.

Beneath the surface of Emma's preferences and behaviours, much is buried: Unwanted activities, against which families should normally take precautions, are sometimes considered trendy by mistaken mentalities. For example, a new consumer group – that consisted mainly of young people – wanted its "own pleasures, its own culture", and above all, "its own lifestyles" (Wandor 2001, p. 29). Misdeeds spring from mind-related issues; and, mistaken mentalities tend to abuse. Each member of the Tate family chooses to live in his/her private dream world; and, what is interesting is that, they – heart and soul – hope that one day, in the future, the other Tates will become part of the fantasy. However, each of them – in various forms – resists the efforts of the others to incorporate them consciously into their plans. At the end, no one can get what he/she wants; dreams all evaporate, and go into air.

Even though there is familial disintegration in the house of the Tates, and even though they resort to every imaginable way to get rid of each other, they cannot leave each other. At every single attempt at escape, one has to step back, because family is something which one cannot easily leave behind. According to Freud, the more closely the members of a family are tied to each other, "the more often do they tend to cut themselves off from others" in society, and the less easier is it for them to "enter into the [much] wider circle" of the life around. The phylogenetically older mode of life – that is, the only mode of life which exists during childhood – never lets itself be "superseded" by the newly-acquired cultural mode of life. Detaching himself/herself from his/her family becomes a challenging task which every young person confronts, and society generally assists him/her in solving it, by way of puberty and initiation rites. One gets the impression that these are difficulties which are inherent in all psychical, in all organic development (1962, p. 50). In the play, they all try to acquire a new 'cultural mode of life'; however, they all fail, despite all efforts.

In the play, in a strange kind of reversal of normal roles, while Weston and Ella regress into the roles of their children, Wesley and Emma become the sites of authority in the Tate household. Shepard signals a noticeable change in the roles when Wesley enters "*completely naked*" (1986, p. 189), and takes the lamb offstage in order to slaughter it. In a similar fashion, when Emma returns, "she comes back as a fierce gunfighter, an Annie Oakley figure [that] boil[s] with the potential for violence" (Crank 2012, p. 55).

These all show the functioning of the defense mechanisms, the coping strategies, of the characters; they are all trying to protect themselves from the frustrations they are likely to face; not resorting to defense mechanisms is equivalent to the explosion of the unconscious part of the psyche. There is always a valid reason and explanation for the absurd behaviours, for the actions which are inappropriate on the surface. But, beneath lies the more real and vital part.

Shepard's unique, one of a kind, exploration of the idea of the 'curse' of identity through the image of the diseased lamb, which is infected with "[m]aggots" (1986, p. 182), keeps one alert while trying to understand the exact nature of the Tates. Wesley's ultimate decision to cure the lamb in the kitchen has something to do with the kitchen's being the warmest part of the house; and this, in fact, shows the unconscious desire for a kind of warmth, for a kind of source of positivity. This is what the psyche persistently yearns for. In addition to these details, placing the lamb in the middle of the family's – supposedly private – space provides an apt and expressive objective correlative for the curse of the family itself: It immediately violates the sense of the traditional ideas – peace, harmony, comfort, safety, etc. – associated with family. The unending problems continuously heap up in the psyche. Even though Wesley signals that he killed the lamb to feast off, Shepard manifestly suggests that the lamb itself is a sacrificial slaughter, and that it shows Wesley's wild attempt, his strong and irresistible desire to cure himself of his semi-serious soul sickness.

At this stage, in order to explain the Lacanian way of looking at things clearly, a return to the Freudian understanding may be quite helpful. According to what Freud argues in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, by way of discharge, the human mind seeks the lowest possible level of tension. In a way, it tries to get closer and closer to the comfort zone; therefore, the least of tension is what it favours. However, 'jouissance' is something which transgresses, which breaks, which disregards this law, and it is this aspect that marks it as something 'beyond the pleasure principle'. In the play, the characters try to make themselves numb to escape from the torture-like life, but to no avail, as nothing can assist them in sustaining the fleeting moments of the Lacanian 'jouissance'. Apart from a few real and probable – sexual kind of – encounters and exceptions, it is only during the consumption of food and drinks when there is a sort of wholeness. Lacan, who places great emphasis on various related points in *Écrits*, refers to the phallus as "the privileged signifier" (Lacan 2004, p. 318). Related to the

latter part, Weston tries to hold all power in his hands; and, in order to get what he wants, he chooses the alternative of becoming violent.

Sartre's *No Exit* – which was performed in Paris, just prior to the liberation of Paris – took much of its power and dramatic effect from the desperation of an 'occupied' France, most particularly from the unpleasant feeling itself. Its vision of characters, who are altogether trapped in a version of hell, call to mind not only Sartre's philosophical inclinations, but also the political climate and social atmosphere of the time. Likewise, the characters in Shepard's play are squeezed into a small, derelict farm house. Around, there is no beautiful fertile valley; theirs is a farm which is damned, which is 'cursed'. The needless problems the Tates cause for each other take the family further and further from the ideal family picture; and, ultimately, they cannot escape the risk of being on the verge of familial disintegration.

Human beings are continuously threatened by the existence, by the presence of other human beings; and, according to what Robert Harvey says about Sartre's *No Exit*, "freedom is the most precarious given of human existence" (in Makaryk 1995, p. 464). There is no exit for the Tate family; and, as in Sartre's play, their hell is not a fiery furnace, but a hell of their imprisoning mind. While Weston's mind is occupied with dreams of a new start in Mexico, Ella follows the empty words and promises of a trickster and is eventually cheated, as expected. Everyone in the family suffers from a sense of incompleteness, which Wesley blames on the faceless 'they' who continue to run the world. Weston identifies them more explicitly with the institutions of American capitalism: "I figured that's why everyone wants you to buy things. . . . They all want you to borrow anyhow. Banks, car lots, investors. . . . So I figured if that's the case, why not take advantage of it? Why not go in debt . . . ?" (1986, pp. 193-94).

Emma's fantasized life of crime is doomed, as it is nothing other than a further commitment to capitalism, the economic, political and social system which depends on private ownership of property, business, and industry, and which aims at making the highest possible profits, and which is, in Emma's words, "the perfect self-employment." According to what she says, nothing is needed for "[c]rime": No qualifications, "[n]o credentials", "[n]o diplomas", "[n]o overhead", "[n]o upkeep". All that matters is "straight profit"; and, if one can make that profit, that means he/she will go to the "top" right away (1986, p. 197). Here, she speaks her mind to Wesley, and tells him of her latest choice of careers, that is, crime. Emma's insistent exploration

of possible lifestyles and her apparent capability to choose her route stand in stark contrast to Wesley, whose sole thoughts and allegiances are to maintaining the family farm. The son "seem[s] to wish to regain a sense of the traditional family", while the old man, Weston, is "most obstinately anti-family" (O'Grady 2008, p. 22). Wesley can never imagine his life as anything other than what it is at present. He acts and speaks as though totally "bewitched" by the awful aspect, by the unchanging, static quality; what is significant is that, his existence is – in an unfortunate sort of way – "a Daddy-dominated dream" (Als 2019, n.p.).

Under the chaotic circumstances in the household of the Tates, the one and only faint and ultimately chimerical hope seems to lie nowhere, but in a reintegration with tradition and the area of land. Weston explains how a return to the family farm gave him back his sense of his own self. He, once more, remembered that "[he] actually was the owner". "[W]alking on . . . [the] land", which belongs to him, filled him with a "great", with an indescribable feeling (1986, p. 185). However, Weston has to run away again, in order to get rid of his creditors, the debt collectors who are close behind. On the other hand, the only way Wesley can remain is by putting on his father's clothes and identity: According to what Wesley says, "every time [he] put one thing on it seemed like a part of [Weston] was growing on [him]". He says that "[he] could feel [Weston] taking over [him]", that "[h]e could feel [him]self retreating", and that "[h]e could feel [Weston] coming in and [himself] going out. Wesley put on Weston's clothes so that he could feel his own essence slipping out of him, and his father's essence could come into him. Wesley continues to see himself as compelled to reenact his father for reasons he is unable to fathom: "I didn't do a thing. . . . I just grew up here" (p. 196). In this case, identity is something which is mainly based on appropriating the surrounding images.

After Weston's departure, Wesley tries to become the man of the hopeless house; however, his decision – of putting on his father's old clothes – is not only whimsical, but also superficial. William E. Kleb argues that, although Wesley purposefully puts on Weston's clothes, although he dresses in his father's clothes and intentionally masquerades as him, "the reversal . . . is an illusion . . . the transformation is a mirage, a masquerade, the latest and greatest of Weston's delusionary dreams" (cited in Crank 2012, p. 56); because Wesley can achieve absolutely nothing from his attempt to become his father through the act of wearing his clothes. These are done just for the

sake of providing a sort of comfort for the psyche; and, Wesley – whose existence is geared to either dependence or dominance – is pushed into doing these by psychological factors. Contemplation, with no doubt, brings either a dangerous vitality or a restraining apathy. To be able to establish an identity, Wesley resorts to such kind of a solution, and pretends to be the head of the family.

Wesley struggles – in his own way – to escape his 'predetermined' fate, but is unsuccessful, as expected. Weston tells Wesley, who is bruised and battered, to carefully follow in his footsteps: To put on some other clothes. He assures and makes the boy believe that he will feel the same connection – to his own identity and the family – which Weston himself has experienced. Following this advice, Wesley considers making a change, by wearing the patriarch's clothes; and, this action undertaken by the son is actually an indication of their shared characteristics. After all, he turns into a version of his father; and, the inconsistency of his behaviours resembles his father's. On the other hand, Emma hangs around just like her mother does. Although Ella is married to Weston, she spends a considerable amount of time outside with a land developer named Taylor, taking refuge behind an excuse. Likewise, Emma goes out too frequently; she prefers being outdoors to being indoors. And, as mentioned earlier in the study, she even goes so far as to confess that she escaped juvenile detention by making sexual overtures to a sergeant.

In spite of the fact that Ella wishes Wesley would be more like her own father, the badly-inclined boy becomes "the spitting image of Weston" (Crank 2012, p. 47). Ella asserts that Wesley has the potential to be "sensitive" like her father was, but that he has turned mean, like Weston. At one point, her perspective on masculinity connects a man's emotional life to purely physical characteristics – "I always thought you were just like him, but you're not, are you?", "Why aren't you? You're circumcized just like him. It's almost identical in fact" (1986, pp. 143-44); but an emphasis on similarity is still a similarity. And, as the focus is on the phallus, it is obvious that the audience is within the borders of the Freudian and Lacanian territory. On purpose, Weston tries to instill his viewpoint in Wesley: "You're growing up. I never saw my old man's poison until I was much older than you . . . And then you know how I recognized it?", "I saw myself infected with it . . . I saw me carrying it around. His poison in my body" (p. 167). Here, Shepard's choice of using the phallic imagery is actually a reminder of the shared physical characteristics of the father and the son, and the disconnection between

their emotional lives; and, masculinity is shown as a 'disease' infecting not only Weston, but also Wesley. The similarity between the man and the boy is once more underlined, even in this gender context.

Hell is not just one thing, but a lot of things in Shepard's play. It is obviously a hell of the psyche; it is the 'other people' who prepare the necessary conditions for a living environment which resembles hell. In the several definitions of hell Sartre and his characters propose, a pattern shows itself: Hell is intrinsically tied to existence and to a person's idea of himself/herself; and therefore, the most significant characteristic of hell in Sartre's play is the lack of "mirrors" (n.d.b, p. 2) or reflective surfaces. The characters have no other alternative apart from relying on each other to form their identities; thus, Estelle asks Inez to describe how beautiful she is, while Inez begs Estelle to love her, and Garcin wants Inez to tell him that he is not a coward. Despite the fact that they at first wanted to be alone, the characters definitely need each other; and, the play is essentially a map of their thwarted desires, of their perverted wishes, of their incapability to control their personal image, their own picture. It is exactly this lack of ability which paves the way for the climactic paradox. When at last free to leave, Garcin does not want to leave; and, according to what he says, he has to stay just because of Inez. Unable to live with each other and unable to live without each other, the characters are trapped not only physically, but also emotionally and morally. Without doubt, these 'existential' points all echo the famous story at the end of Shepard's play.

The story with which the play concludes is so telling, as the tableau reflects the usual events going on in the house of the Tates. It is the story of an unwinnable fight between a feline tom cat and an eagle, a mortal combat, a relentless struggle to death: Picking up the cat in his sharp nails, sinking its talons into the cat, the eagle carries him screaming off into "the middle of the sky" where "[t]hey fight like crazy". For a while, the cat and the eagle fight in air, with the cat clawing out the eagle's body, and the eagle trying to drop it. Nevertheless, the cat does not consider letting go due to the fact that it will only result in death, so it chooses to bring the eagle down, even if it means doom for the poor cat as well. The eagle, whose chest is torn apart in midair, helplessly tries to free himself from the cat, but the cat does not want to leave the eagle, as he is also helpless. And, finally, "they come crashing down to the earth", inextricably intertwined. The warring parties "come crashing down. Like one whole thing" (1986,

p. 200). This story is one of the most significant highlights of the play, as it reflects the relationships within the Tate family. Regardless of what they do, regardless of how eagerly they fantasize about going away, they cannot easily leave each other; and, a mistake made by one member effects the other. So, they also come 'crashing down', not as separate 'things', but as 'one thing'. Going back, remembering a time when he was out in the fields, Weston reminisces about how – while he was emasculating the lambs one by one – a tremendous eagle would swoop down from the limitless sky, almost as if it were taunting him. While the image of a determined eagle lifting a poor cat into the sky hints at the essence of the familial relationships in the play, turning back to a – unique – past moment shows that the past is always with individuals. Whichever place human beings choose to go, they have to carry this gripping thing – the inhabitant of the psyche – with them.

In spite of his new-found, recently-found way of looking at life, Weston cannot succeed in escaping his past; and, with apparent regret, he comes to understand that, while he was drinking and gambling, and searching for a nearby door to escape, what he really wanted was his family. He mentions how desperately he looked for it in some other places, in places apart from the house, in places outside, in places that are far away. But now, he understands that it has always been "right inside" their house (1986, p. 194). At the end, not being able to stand on the land he owns, he flees to Mexico for the sole purpose of getting rid of his disturbing demons. Even if he chooses to go far away, the past is never far away; it will not leave him unattended. Thomas Mann points out that "the well of the past" is unbelievably deep. When 'thinking' human beings go deep down into the "lower world of the past", they find out that "the earliest foundations of humanity, its history and culture, reveal themselves unfathomable" (Mann cited in Mitchell & Black 1995, p. 1). Although these words of Mann emphasize the impossibility of understanding the humanity in the olden times, it is never impossible to make sense of some underlying points, since psychoanalysis provides the audience with powerful explanations to approach the whole matter. In *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist*, in the part entitled *The Authority of the Past*, Philip Rieff writes: "Individual violence, in real life and in fantasy, points back to historical violence" (1961, p. 213). The house of the Tates, to which the audience is invited, is more like a battleground. The father is violent; and – most probably – the whole

‘family line’ is violent. Each generation constitutes a model for the next generation, so cruelty brings cruelty.

Hell is both within them and outside of them, and either way, there is no exit. If Wesley has become his father, the opposing, counterattacking, forces which have become a single thing, ‘one whole thing’, then he is destined to follow in his father’s footsteps, and end up being in ruins. And, this inevitable crash landing as ‘one whole thing’ can also be explained by referring to Jung’s terms: The ‘anima’, the feminine in the male; and the ‘animus’, the masculine in the female. The male ones show the characteristics of a female; and, the female ones show the characteristics of a male. Patriarchal roles and matriarchal roles are somehow reversed; Weston does the housework (1986, p. 186) while Ella hangs around with Taylor, hoping and believing that her plans will work.

The death of a daughter, which, under normal circumstances, comes as a terrible blow to parents, leads to long-term psychological unrest in the house. However, in the house of the Tates, there are no noticeable emotional reactions. Even the loan sharks’ detonation of the automobile, with Emma inside, does not produce a normal effect. No staging of melodramatic mourning, no lament, no tears, no single meaningful mention or acceptable reaction, but just a shocking and un-understandable gap, and an unfeeling – and from now on, totally abandoned – pair standing on the stage: A physically present, but psychologically – and therefore, mentally – absent mother and son. Even though they share the same space, even though they are together squeezed into a small living environment, they do not share any kind of connection.

As a good enough parable about masculinity itself, Weston’s story adds another layer of meaning to the play, since it includes a compact message within itself: The feeling he gets from watching the eagle attack mercilessly and swallow and devour the site of masculinity in the lamb’s genitals is, in fact, a celebration of his own masculine identity. Thinking of the very specific issue of his masculinity gives Weston an indescribable sense of strength; it makes him glad, since phallus means power itself, in Freudian psychology. It is a matter of need, Weston’s pathological need to cling to something in which he can find solace. The determined eagle, which was flying close to the ground trying to steal the organs of the lambs that he was castrating, picked up a cat which came to sniff around in the entrails and testes, “[t]hose fresh little remnants of manlihood” (1986, p. 183). This may also have something to do with Weston’s

shows of manliness through violence. At this exact point, a parallelism can be drawn between Shepard's father and Weston: What catches attention is "a bewildered guide to a son who fears above all that he will metamorphose." With the situation being so, no one can go anywhere, so each one, in his/her ways, tries to find something to hold on to. Regardless of what the individual does, he/she cannot really get away from the family. In Shepard's work, the family is "an image of a fate as inescapable as one's DNA" (Bigsby 2000b, p. 169).

Strangely enough, and though momentarily, doing all the laundry connects Weston to his family: Weston walked around the house and found all the piled-up dirty, filthy, clothing items. Every time he picked up someone's clothes, he could sense that Tate family member like he/she was right beside him. He felt as if the clothes and their owners were stuck together; he felt as if the other Tates were all with him; he instinctively sensed the indescribable feeling of being attached to his spouse Ella, to his son Wesley, and to her daughter Emma; he felt "the flesh and blood"; he felt their beings in his own being. And, he came to the conclusion that the unifying quality of 'family bonds' cannot be disregarded, that this is something out of consideration, and that family is an inescapable thing, an undeniable social unit which has to stand by itself, as a single whole (1986, p. 186). Weston's experience shows that the family is not only the source of pain, but also the source of consolation.

Metaphorically speaking, human beings, the neurotic animals, carry that monster-like thing in their 'DNA', in the deoxyribonucleic acid, in the chemical at the center of the cells of men that controls the structure and purpose of each cell and that carries genetic information during reproduction. The monster grows simultaneously with him; and, when he grows old enough to attack and destroy, he begins to give harm to the ones around him. At the end, Weston comes to such a remote point that he can even bury his own offspring under the ground. Because human beings – and thus, family members – are genetically similar, certain actions are repeated; certain parts are re-enacted again and again.

It is in the act of doing the laundry that Weston has an epiphany, a sudden realization, which cures him of his desire to escape the suffocating family life. With his profound and intuitive perception into the essential meaning of the institution of the family, he tries taking the other track, the one which he did not use to take. Something flashes in his mind; and, he comes to the conclusion that family is something one cannot leave.

He talks about how good it is "to be connected by blood"; and, he underlines the fact that a family is not only "a social thing", but also "an animal thing". And, subsequently, he comes to a conclusion: "It was a reason of nature that we were all together under the same roof. Not that we had to be but that we were supposed to be". These all show that returning to one's family is an instinctual thing; it is not something taught in advance; human beings are born with these instincts, fully equipped since the moment of their birth. Weston, who comes to an understanding, starts feeling happy about being a part of his family; and, it is this particular realization which eventually fills him with nothing, but "hope" (1986, p. 186). Despite being in the midst of obstacles, Weston opposes the idea of too much comfort; and, when he sees his wife stretching out on the table, he starts talking about the disadvantages of comfort, the negativities it may bring along with itself: He talks about the problematic side of "too much comfort", about how and why it may constitute a problem for a person. According to Weston's train of thought, it "[m]akes [people] forget where [they] come from", it "[m]akes [them] lose touch". People wrongly think that they are "making headway"; however, they are losing every time they do that. He says that they are gradually "falling behind", that they are going into a sort of "trance" from which they will not "come back", regardless of what they do. He says that they are being somehow "hypnotized", that their physical bodies are being somehow "mesmerized", and that they end up "go[ing] into a coma". And, he shows all these as reasons for a certain thing: According to him, that is why people "need a hard table . . . to bring [them] back" to life, to real life, to life as it is (pp. 189-90).

What the family actually starves for is an emotional link or tie, a feeling of connectedness and togetherness, a sense of identity, and a sense of aim, which – by extension – means some meaning in life. The Tates hardly ever function as a familial unit; they hardly ever function as a social group, except for a 'shelter-like' place to sleep and eat something; and, even those most primary human functions, most basic and essential needs, of the family can no more be counted on. The act of sleeping occurs in an extremely disorganized, unusual, fashion – in the car, on the table (1986, p. 193) – and eating occurs with no normal, acceptable or predictable pattern. Most of the actions "reify the psychic starvation" of the family, in spite of their continuous and insistent denial of membership in the 'starving' class (Hart 1987, p. 71).

Wesley slaughters, "butcher[s]", dismembers the lamb just for food; and, immediately after that, he gorges himself on unprepared food which he "*ravenously*" eats directly out of the refrigerator, leaving bits and pieces of meat littering the floor as "*half-eaten*" morsels fall from his overstuffed mouth (1986, pp. 191-92). Like the coyote which eats the strychnine, the poisoned entrails of the lamb, Wesley has come to carry the curse of the male sex – the inevitable result of being a son – that is, Weston's poisonous, utterly destructive curse. The hungry aggression has obviously been transferred from Weston to Wesley. This particular scene dramatizes the son's inner, psychic, struggle "with the antagonist of Eros in Freud's . . . theory, the self-preservation instinct, colloquially 'hunger'" (Hart 1987, p. 73).

Though non-permanently, temporarily, Weston succeeds in cleansing himself of the poison through some ritualistic-like actions. He has been reborn while "walking around in the orchard", regaining his sense of communion with the land which he owns, and becoming quite aware of the physical bond, the flesh and blood which binds the Tate family together. He narrates an action of exhibitionism, at the end of which he refreshes and purifies himself in a cleansing bath: He strips himself of his old and dirty clothes; in a self-conscious reconstitution of his identity, he walks around the house completely naked, takes a hot bath, and then a cold bath. He shaves, puts on clean clothes, and undergoes a real transformation (1986, p. 185). Wesley, after a while, tries the same method only to reappear in Weston's old, discarded clothes, garments which have been "thrown-up in, pissed in" (p. 191). Wesley says that he has "tried [his father's] remedy", and that it did not work. Although he was expecting something to happen, nothing changed, "[n]othing happened". And, he is left there standing, feeling disillusioned (p. 195). While Weston was undergoing this rebirth, while he was kind of coming to existence once again, Wesley was inheriting the damned thing, the curse of the father. Weston's experience can appropriately be referred to as 'a renewal', but Wesley's imitation of the rite-of-purification ends in total failure. As opposed to Weston, Wesley can gain nothing from his attempt at transformation.

Clinically speaking, the ignorance – or suppression – of unconscious needs and desires results in psychoses and neuroses, the latter referring to mental states resulting in very high levels of anxiety, unreasonable fears and behaviours, and generally, a need to repeat certain actions unnecessarily. The Tates try not to ignore their needs and desires;

they do not try to hide their feelings; whatever is felt is acted out openly. Psychic events represent a build-up of energy in the 'nervous system', the main function of which is carrying information between the brain – the conductor of the bodily orchestra – and other parts of the body, through fibres. And, the energy, which accumulates and increases in amount, has to be discharged in appropriate reactions, in order to keep the level of excitation constant. When the border is crossed, when the maximum limits are ignored or disregarded, unacceptable behaviours are sure to follow. For example, in a fit of temper, the Tates hurl veggies, artichokes, across the kitchen. At times, they even hurl abuse and insults at each other; and, as it is obvious in Wesley's attempt to become his father, they try to take on new identities.

The moment Wesley dresses in the filthy "baseball cap, [the] tennis shoes, [and] [the] overcoat", which were discarded by Weston (1986, p. 196), "the incipient Oedipal configuration posed in the father/son/mother triad achieves full resonance" (Hart 1987, p. 72). What can be seen on the surface is the son's transformation into the role of the father. The eventual usurpation of the father's role is significant; and, the son's transformation is so complete that even Ella, the mother figure, can no more distinguish between her son and her husband. Wesley finds his individual self deeply trapped into repeating his father's damned role, accepting the infecting and poisoning chemical circulating in his father's body, accepting the situation as it is, and metamorphosing into his father to such a point that Ella refers to him by his father's name, 'Weston'.

Weston lives the exact life of a wanderer and loner; he is quite aware of the poison which circulates in the blood of his line; he knows that it is the poison in the veins which dooms the line to extinction; and, under such circumstances, the only inheritance he can bequeath to his family is guilt, isolation, loneliness, fear, and fury. Throughout the play, he, in fact, searches for ways to soothe his troubled psyche. And, at the end of the play, all he can do is to "succumb to the survival strategy of the loner" (Schlatter 1990, p. 68). He leaves his family behind; he heads out for Mexico after selling the farm to a developer who is planning to build a 'road-side steak house', which is nothing other than the fruit of the capitalist mind. Even though it is probably a hopelessly lost cause, Wesley chooses to stay there, at the family farm, and fight – heart and soul – for what is rightfully his. However; whether he runs away or not, he must eventually stand by himself; he must learn to stand alone.

Related to the 'Oedipal' part, there are further points to highlight. The play – which does not end with hopeful epiphany, but with Weston's absence – is a highly psychological piece. Finally, Wesley and Ella are left alone, without any idea of how to go ahead without Weston, who is forced to flee for Mexico to hide from the loan sharks. The audience witnesses an Oedipal situation; the son, getting rid of the father and sister, remains as the only male at home with the mother, and this situation calls to mind an incestuous affair. What is more, as Lynda Hart points out, the well-known Oedipal myth "resonates in the play's final image." The eagle, which greedily devours the testes of the castrated lambs, catches and then carries away the tom cat which "demands a share in the feast"; however, to be able to harm or destroy the eagle, "the cat must sacrifice himself" (1987, p. 75).

In the play, which ends with Oedipal triumph, "[t]he son . . . takes the father's place with his mother, perhaps on the edge of a new, incestuous Eden" (Hall 1993, p. 94). The psychoanalytic scholar Jay Greenberg puts forward his view that the Oedipus complex is an analytic invention, and that it is a "framework for conceptualizing" not only "family dynamics", but also "their residue" in the mental life of the child (cited in Mitchell & Black 1995, p. 16). The son having been purified, he is left alone with his mother to carry on their depleted life. Wesley has perhaps symbolically destroyed his father by becoming him for a while and successfully passing through the particular stage to assert his own identity. Even though there is no sign, no implication, no indication that Wesley desires his mother as his partner, the Oedipal theme informs the audience about the father-son relationship.

Something beneath the surface lurks, and instills a need for violence: The terror and fear of inferiority – and, by extension, inferiority complex – is linked, in the male psyche of the play, to the feminine as the thing which is thought to threaten the, mostly powerful, male identity. Weston – heart and soul – labors under the conception of himself as beset by a series of challenges to his manhood. The way of performing – in other words, the mood of the performance – implies that a man – Weston – might, and had better, take as his first priority issues of his own identity, but a woman's – Ella's – first priority should be to her husband and her children. When Weston leaves or abuses his family – either physically or emotionally – the audience is led to believe that he has a purpose in mind; he/she is encouraged not only by Weston's stories, but also by the politics of the performance to view him a bit sympathetically. The fact that

Wesley faces away from Ella – at the end of the play – while she is talking to him indicates the extent of their disconnection: "*They stay like that with [the son] looking off upstage, his back to [the mother], and [the mother] downstage, looking at the lamb. Lights fade very slowly to black*" (1986, p. 200). The son – a sacrificial lamb of a son – becomes the father, which says something about the domestic problems to come. There are indicators that domestic problems will accumulate during the father's absence; his absenteeism will probably take the extent of the familial disintegration to further, and thus, more serious dimensions.

Various reasons of crisis lead to the distorted relationships between the members of the family, and to the fragmentation of the family, as well. And, this is what takes the Tate family members to the point of separation, and, if not separation, a desire for separation. By focusing on the identity crises and masculinity crises, by pointing at the lack of the sense of belonging, and the search for roots, and by concentrating on the pungent – very strongly felt and expressed – gloomy, and horrifying legacy that one generation passes to the other, Shepard, in fact, gives something about the common portrait of the familial institution. A likely, potential, mother-son relationship, an upcoming possibility of the act of incest, can only destroy a family to the core, and lead the remaining characters, Ella and Wesley, towards different sorts of crises, not only at personal or individual level, but also within the 'small' family in question.

Just like the way it is in O'Neill's play, it is as if there is a plague-like curse present in *Curse of the Starving Class*, "the [first] in [Shepard's] trilogy of family plays" (Opipari 2010, p. 123), which is another exploration of the family psyche. The curse, which has an insidious control over the Tates, represents a power which is beyond any control, predetermined and inevitable; it is an abstract force which invades and surrounds them. The curse, which is handed down from generation to generation, is pattern from which it is impossible to escape. What needs to be highlighted is that this factor combines with the above-mentioned factors, and consumes the family. Such things as the order of existence and life, and even such diverse things as the biological past and fate can be sought in the unconscious forces that are at work in the human psyche. At this stage of the study, turning to the Jungian system of thought will be quite helpful for the explanation of the 'biological past' part, in other words, the 'heritage' part. Jung is of the opinion that one's problems, attitudes, and actions spring not only from his personal unconscious mind, but from a collective unconscious that is shared by the

human race as a whole, manifesting itself in archetypal symbols and patterns that are latent – present but needing some particular conditions to become observable – in the minds of all human beings. Like everyone else, the Tate family is a part of the human race, and thus, all members act according to the dictates of their unconscious mind. *APA Dictionary of Psychology* explains how Jung, with his understanding of the "racial memory", embraces the concept of a phylogenetic heritage, and how he links some very specific psychological issues to phylogeny, "the evolutionary origin and development of a . . . group of organisms" (2020, n.p.).

With family characteristics repeating themselves throughout generations, Shepard intends to explore the possibility of escaping from the emotional inheritance of the parents. However, the influence of the past is indisputable; uncontrollable features going on and on are obvious enough. The thing which Jung refers to as 'racial memory' includes all feelings, all patterns of thought, and all bits and pieces of experience which have been transmitted from one generation to the next in all human beings and have influenced the mind and behaviour. The burned-out mother, Ella, links the curse to the onset of menstruation, and reminds the audience of the weight and burden of the original sin. She ties the power of the microscopic presences to the old and widely-known curse of destiny and heredity which condemns the Tates to countless self-destructive and violent actions. Her words absolutely reveal a lot in this respect: She starts by asking whether they know what that is; and then, she answers her own question, and labels that particular thing as "a curse". According to what she says, it is not visible, but it is there, at all times. It is something which a human being cannot stop; even if a person resorts to every imaginable way to stop it, it keeps coming. It goes back to the smallest "cells", to the smallest organisms that are surrounded by a membrane, to "genes", "[t]o atoms", to very small "swimming things" that have the potential to "mak[e] up their [own] minds". She says that it is something "[p]lotting in the [mother's] womb", and even "[b]efore" this earliest kind/dimension/level of existence. She says that it is "[i]n the air", that it is something which surrounds them, that they all live by "spread[ing]" it, that they inevitably "pass it on" from one generation to the other generation, that it is something not learnt but "inherit[ed]", and that "[i]t goes on and on" in a circular fashion, regardless of what is being done on the contrary (1986, pp. 173-74).

Shepard adds some mythic dimensions to the lives of the Tate family members, by way of injecting the idea of 'biological fatalism' into the play; and, the fatalism in question is determined by forces which are not only uncontrollable, but also uncombatable. The curse controls not only from within, but also from without; it is not only an "internal biological and psychological structure", but also a dangerous "invader" that moves into the Tate family's enclosure (Hart 1987, p. 71). And, as a matter of fact, the family becomes a closed system which replicates its tensions, contradictions, and obsessions; and, quite naturally, the prevailing sense can only be claustrophobia. The family members, who are trapped inside their shells, are caught in a biological trap that condemns them to enactment, re-enactment, and then another re-enactment. What is more, they are also trapped in the meaninglessness and absurdity of relationships on which they – ironically – rely for some kind of meaning and survival but which are equally the cause of their suffering. According to Shepard's way of thinking, a person can harm his/her family in spite of his/her being far, far away; and, this is one of Shepard's most famous theses. Needless to say, behind this view lurks the inherited traits. In spite of the fact that his father is not with Shepard any longer, he acts just like his father, as his father has left the curse behind. This curse passes onto the other men in the family; and – without doubt – not only Shepard himself, but also his male characters belong to this 'other men' category.

The resultant decaying and crumbling Tate household is a rather fitting metaphor for the failure of the pursuit of the American Dream, and for the eventual collapse of the familial institution, as well. The idea of the American Dream – the aspirational belief in the U.S. that all citizens are entitled to the opportunity for success, wealth, happiness, and upward social mobility – no longer satisfies the individuals. The Tate family actually hints at the much wider phenomenon of the dysfunctional American society; and this, in turn, hints at the fact that American people have no choice other than accepting their roots, their origins. These points all support the fact that, even if one chooses to go somewhere far away from his/her family, he/she – in some way – has to come back, back to his/her family, that is his/her flesh and blood.

Freud believes that the literary text is the outward manifestation of the author's suppressed, repressed, wish, and that it must be analyzed like a person's dream; and, according to Richard W. Noland, the literary text, the written document, just like the dream, is a "compromise formation" between unconscious and conscious desire (in

Makaryk 1995, p. 321). Throughout the play, two of the most significant points which attract attention are, how Shepard's own life experiences are reflected in the play, and how these experiences can be at the roots of the familial disintegration. The Tates come face to face with countless problems, the cause of which is nothing apart from their inner selves. Instead of being a source of love and mutual support to each other, the characters find themselves in grotesque fights for power and authority. Because of being constantly at odds, they move further and further from the ideal family picture. As the play progresses, new information comes to light, and the fragmentation of the American nuclear family is what can be seen on the surface.

4. THE MALE WASTELAND IN *THE HOMECOMING*

4.1 A Self-Perpetuating Family: Looking at the Herd Through Critical Lenses

Pinter, the son of a Jewish tailor, grew up as a boy in wartime Britain. Having grown up with the war raging in the background, his early years were quite irregular and incohesive. For a while, he had to lead an unsettled life; and, there was even a period of wanderings, a period of vagabondage (Evans 1965, p. 202). He was among the group that "suffered under the barely concealed prejudice against Jews", which in the 1930s and 40s usually "erupted into open hostility" and violence (Elsom 1979, p. 107). In *The Homecoming* – which is a taut, stretched and extended work on "pauperism and impotence with sharply drawn and sharp-set characters" (Leech 1968, p. 31) – there is also a kind of 'open hostility'; and, it is as if the characters have inherited some of their personal characteristics from Pinter, who, according to his own words, is described among some circles "as . . . 'enigmatic, taciturn, terse, prickly, explosive and forbidding'" (Pinter 2005, p. xii).

To get rid of the pain of victimization, the characters in *The Homecoming* find themselves in nothing, but a fight against each other. They try to victimize each other in order not to be the sufferer. To state in a different way, they choose to cause suffering for the others in order not to suffer. To escape the risk of being victimized, they look for a place to hold on to, or a person, or sometimes both. They do whatever they can; they resort to every imaginable way, in order to get rid of the victimization of the 'other'. And, quite often, this 'other' also occurs as the past, as the olden times, or possibly, as the individual 'self' itself. The very special weapons which they use in the process are the power of words and silences, memories, physical and verbal violence, and wit. "The struggle of victimization between the [ones] inside and the [ones] outside" calls to mind "the victimization and succession rituals of the primordial times" (Öndül 1997, pp. 50-51).

Although there is bickering between the family members – Max, a lyrical, mothering, domineering, intemperate, lecherous, querulous, contemptuous, and foul-mouthed former butcher; Sam, the butt and rival of Max, a limo driver, a pliant and virtuous

chauffeur, who drives around the town peddling prostitutes; Lenny, a sleek and professional dockside pimp who is vicious in fantasy and language, who is a rather manipulative personality, and who represents the pinnacle of masculinity; and Joey, a mawkishly affectionate, little-brained, slow-witted, and brawny demolition worker who has taken up boxing as an outlet for his pent-up viciousness – it is a unit which must be protected, regardless of the chain of the extreme circumstances.

Due to the fact that most linguistic intercourse is prompted by self-interest, communication usually fails. What keeps the family together – as a unit – is "a warlock of antagonism, a sense of threat" which is especially sustained by "verbal assault". There is more-than-enough "introspection", more-than-enough "self-searching to have any communication" (Deleon 1994, p. 60). However, according to what Peter Raby writes in his article, "[o]ut of the hard city culture of control and exploitation, where everything has its [own] price . . . emerges a realignment, or at least a resting place . . . [that] momentarily stills the relentless [everyday] struggle for survival" (2001, p. 69). Though the atypical family desperately wants to survive and thrive, though the members can feel this necessity within, they cannot succeed in doing things in an amicable and communal way.

Home, which is supposed to be a territory where one is glad and content, and which is normally described in terms of its connotations of comfort, protection, and the proverbial, takes on the opposite characteristics, and turns into an environment that is not only claustrophobic, but also surreptitious. A character may be consumed with both love and hate at the same time; therefore, he/she can speak in the languages of both tenderness and violence. The reality underlying the stark juxtaposition of brutal fighting and tender times deserves attention, as this is a direct illustration of the sharpness in abuse. One abuses the other; one opts for taking the advantage of mistreating the other.

In *The Homecoming*, violence expressed usually returns directly upon the inventor's head. When Joey dismisses Max by saying that he is "an old man", his father responds with a powerful blow; he punches Joey in the stomach with all his might. As Joey falls, Max himself collapses, with the exertion of the terrible blow, managing nonetheless to hit Sam. He strikes Sam across the head with his walking stick (1997, p. 50), and then, turns to Teddy, and says, "Why don't we have a nice cuddle and kiss?" (p. 51). Max's speaking in a language of tenderness and intimacy is dramatically at odds with the

violence which has come before. The cuddle and kiss he insists upon – the jaunty, edgy challenge of Max to Teddy – has nothing to do with compassionate feelings. In this 'cuddle and kiss' scene, there is a sentimental, strained, ironic, and savage emotionalism. The accommodation of the woman's, the female's, role and status is displayed by a half-hearted display of filial affection. Arnold P. Hinchliffe interprets Teddy's reaction as "offering to punch" Max "if he does come for that kiss and cuddle!" (1967, p. 149): "Come on, then. . . . Come on, then. . . . Come on. . . . Come on, Dad" (1997, pp. 51-52). Another important thing about the latter part is that the audience is, once more, confronted with repetition as a sort of hell.

Depictions of anger in the play may be inspired by the real facts of the playwright's life. Pinter was known with his occasional rages and sudden outbursts of terrifying fury; and, his wife's, Antonia Fraser's, words can adequately explain the darker side of her spouse's personality. She describes how his eyes "go milky" when he is furious; she describes how his voice becomes a "brutal weapon" which is "virtually without content"; and, she describes how "violently" he speaks: "His voice is like a fist driving into you" (cited in Spencer 2010, n.p.). A parallelism can be drawn between these facts and *The Homecoming*. The audience, at intervals, witnesses Max and Lenny "display[ing] their spitting hatred" for each other (Berlin 2008, p. 388). The man who tells the best story, throws the best punch, or has better, or the best, memory, gains momentary control. As an erstwhile boxer and a demolition worker, Joey appears to have the physical means at hand to dominate all of them; however, a certain slowness – of sorts – prevents him from taking the opportunities that are available to him. A sort of slow-wittedness stops him before he turns around to act; it stops him before he moves to action. Related to Joey's having the 'physical means', Arthur Ganz states that the dull and brutish Joey "function[s] almost entirely in terms of the physical" (1969, p. 182). This special emphasis on the human body – the physicality which is associated with Joey – is suggested in the very first words which he speaks in the play: "Feel a bit hungry" (1997, p. 24).

Pinter "was subject to debilitating bouts of depression", which may have quite well influenced his mood, and thus, his writing. On the other hand, his son "moved further and further from a relationship with his father" (See 2010, n.p.); and, in *The Homecoming*, the audience encounters a group of sons who similarly turn away from their father, Max. Related to these eloquent points, in 2008, Michael Billington wrote

– in *The Guardian* – about Pinter's "estrangement from his son, Daniel, by his first marriage to Vivien Merchant" (n.p.); and, in 2010, he wrote about Pinter's second wife's, Antonia Fraser's, book about her life with the 'angry' Harold Pinter (n.p.). This makes it clear that Pinter's real life experiences are transferred into the play, since thoughts about the familial institution always lurk in mind, giving no priority to other considerations. In addition to these striking points, like Shepard's, Pinter's early life was disrupted by the war; he had to evacuate from a safe and familiar living environment into an unsafe and unfamiliar living environment; and, in his play, the audience comes face to face with a dialogue revolving around the issue of war. Being so intent on employing physical violence, Max, the degenerate patriarch, "brags of the fear his strength and fighting prowess used to inspire" (Dukore 1990, p. 24). Max equates manhood with murder, and taunts Sam, when the latter declares that he fought in the "bloody war": Max says that Sam "did [not] even fight" there; and, when Sam – in a swift reflex response – says that "[he] did!", Max asks a further question which is full of the feeling of aggression, and thus, has extremely violent connotations: "Who did you kill?" (1997, p. 56).

When Max feels threatened by the accomplishments of Sam outside the house, he makes it clear that he carries a big stick. Lenny deactivates Max as a man by labelling him as the female support for the family; and then, he discounts Max's ability to even play that role by telling him that he is a bad cook. Lenny bolsters his power by playing the role of a frightened little boy: "Oh, Daddy, you're not going to use your stick on me, are you? Eh? Don't use your stick on me Daddy" (1997, p. 19). Because Lenny has in effect castrated Max, it is unlikely that his fear is genuine. Pinter, symbolically, undercuts Max's aspirations to power by way of depicting him as a man with a withered stick. According to Hedwig Bock, the walking stick on which Max exerts his strong grip can be interpreted as "a phallic symbol of old age and impotence" (1981, p. 179).

All characters employ verbal violence upon each other; and, in *Harold Pinter's Theatre of Cruelty*, Martin Esslin writes about the fierce, brutal, and deadly verbal duels going on in the loveless world of Pinter's play. According to him, "[t]he milieu of [the play] is the world of terrorist organizations like the IRA or the SS, the world of gas chambers and the nuclear menace projected into a domestic setting." The last tableau – with Sam lying motionless, lifeless, on the floor, and Max "vainly begging

for recognition of his status as a man" – clearly illustrates this point. On the other hand, Lenny, quite obviously, derives erotic pleasure from causing suffering for the others; he exists simply by inflicting pain and seeing others suffer; and, "[t]he prostitution ring [he] is running is . . . another version of the Mafia organization, with [all] its torturers and executioners" (Esslin, in Burkman & Kundert-Gibbs 1993, p. 33).

All violence is transferred into the house; both verbal and physical torture reign there; the father – the supposed, the so-called role model for the sons – holds an iron rod in his hand, and is at the roots of the cruelty which permeates the whole play. The fiendish father, who – in Simon Trussler's words – has a "repertoire of curses" (in Scott 1986, p. 184), threatens his sons, his own flesh and blood. The to-and-fro shifts of language, Max's speaking of Mac – his best friend – in a laudatory and Jessie in a derogatory tone, the schizoid-like changes "from the language of celebration to verbal defecation (and the other way round)" (Kennedy 1975, p. 185), the "retroactive curses", and the "transformation of the home into a family brothel" (p. 186) all show the psychological state of the family, as they all come out of the unconscious mind. In the house, the echoes of both voice and noise can be heard. Despite the chain of negativities, there are memorable moments at which love and affection generously pour in.

The main matrix of the humour in the play is contradiction; and, the bald irony is the effort shown during the particular process of what one may call 'familyzation'. The family becomes simultaneously a natural group and an artificial apparatus for some shows of dominance. Disdain and affection are brought together; after an insult comes a praise and a sacred memory, or vice versa. To exemplify, while Ruth is in the middle of the act of rolling off the couch with Joey, Max refers to her as a woman of "quality" and "feeling" (1997, p. 68). However, when he first sees her, he cannot help calling her a "whore", a harlot (p. 50). The changes in attitude, without doubt, is due to the functioning of the human psyche; to keep the mind away from too much tension, the characters resort to some strategies.

In the father's world, there is no stability, or hope for stability. He "at turns eulogize[s] and heap[s] abuse on his dead wife . . . and then administer[s] similar treatment to [another]" (Buse 2001, p. 36). Things change in such a swift way that, at times, it becomes impossible for the audience to follow the course of his speech. What is valid, all of a sudden, in the next minute, turns into something that is not valid at all. Max is "likely to summon up idealistic homilies about the family and express violent feelings

towards his family within the same breath" (p. 39). Max's praise of his dead spouse is not only grudging, but also weighted with pure malice. Referring to her, he says, "Mind you, she wasn't such a bad woman. Even though it made me sick just to look at her rotten stinking face, she wasn't such a bad bitch" (1997, p. 17). Later, he switches to another language, refers to her as "a slutbitch of a wife" (p. 55), says that she taught her sons – Teddy, Lenny, and Joey – "all the morality they know" (p. 62), and starts speaking of her in glowing terms. Needless to say, his latter statement is ironically double-edged; it is absolutely an ambiguous compliment because of the fact that Lenny and Joey have the morality of pimps and rapists.

Max's ambivalence about Jessie, whom he praises – as an ideal wife – to the sky at one point and then calls a 'slutbitch', is what attracts attention. The circumstances being like this, the forces, the arch rivals, in Pinter's mind might have led to these two extremes in his play. Since the individuals are within the borders of the psychological territory, keeping emotions under control is definitely out of consideration. Ruth encounters males who clearly divide women into two 'defining' categories: Good wife or bad wife/slutbitch. However, she chooses to use "the stereotypes of desire for the socialization of power" (Postlewait 1981, p. 204). According to Jacques Lacan's point of view, men generally get tired of their women, but instead of evaluating their own dependency and need for these women, for these love objects, they consistently move on to other women (Hall 1993, p. 64). The fickleness of the masculine desire, the tendency towards changing opinions and feelings suddenly and without a good reason, and the fact that Max's 'oscillating' description of Jessie shifts from an ordinary wife to a 'stinking whore' show the extent of his desire to bolster his own sense of identity. Depending on his own desires, depending on how he wants to feel, his memories of her tend to change, at breakneck speed, from Madonna to whore; his statements march towards ambivalence, towards a point of crisis. And, at times, he plays the role of the female for the sole purpose of gaining power, an existential act which brings about male fulfillment.

To be able to describe his characters, Pinter opts for employing a recognizable animal imagery. Max calls some characters bitches; and, Lenny calls him "a dog cook" whose meals are fit for dogs (1997, p. 19). By way of calling Max 'a dog cook', by way of saying that he cooks 'for a lot of dogs', Lenny – slyly – says something about the family's animality, about their inability to say 'no' to their sexual instincts. What is

more, Max calls Sam "a maggot" (p. 27); and, at the end of the play, he 'prophesies' that Ruth will make animals of them. To state it in another way, his statement tells what is going to happen in the near future: He says that "she [will] do the dirty on [them]", that "[s]he [will] use [them]", that "she [will] make use of [them]", and that "[he] can smell it" (p. 89). What is significant is that all these point at the Freudian pleasure principle; there is a clash between their psychic components; and, this comes to the surface in the form of utterances in which they use the names of some animals.

The family – which is associated or identified with animals and insects; to be specific, horses, dogs, maggots, and ticks – calls for psychological help. It is something which one may call a 'menagerie', which means a collection of wild animals which are kept privately or to show to the public. It is bounded by the social institution of family values; and, the resultant mode of behaviour is an ineffectual obeying of a ludicrous code of propriety. Due to being inseparable from each other, the prim and the primitive co-exist; and, they generally exist through socially-sanctioned and institutionalized forms of violence. What is remarkable is that the characters answer to nothing, but their instincts; and consequently, they – in a way – act, react, and interact just like the way animals do. However, they are unlike animals in that they also have human qualities and inclinations; and, this makes them devoid of pack loyalty, and forces them to be concerned mainly with the satisfaction of their own needs and appetites.

It is a family the members of which are all animals. Their brutal side, which can be interpreted as 'unusual' and 'unnatural' at first, is shown to be the norm. Here, what is significant is that this feature shows the real nature of the bigger system in which they are condemned to live; it is a standard, a common characteristic. In other words, this is the situation of the society in question; nothing is concealed. So, in this sense, the family that is portrayed is not an extraordinary one. Freud, with his distinct definition of 'human civilization', means all the "respects in which human life has raised itself above its animal status and differs from the life of beasts"; and, by doing so, he draws special attention to the differences, to the dividing line, between human beings and animals (2010, p. 4418). In *The Homecoming*, because the characters are caught in the web of animalistic properties which rule them, they – regardless of what they do, or try to do on the contrary – create an atmosphere of domestic unrest. And, because they all carry the characteristics of the 'herd instinct' – the tendency to act like everyone

else without considering the reason why – they are altogether dragged into a world of cruelty and violence.

Within the format of excessive decorum, the idiom is assertion and aggression. In the intensely chaotic atmosphere of the play, one can hear the males using unkind and unpleasant words. In their sexually chaotic living environment, the members of the family separately desire to dominate, fiercely calling each other 'bitch' and 'tit', because the family can only maintain its integrity and unity, its wholeness, by such kind of perverted readjustment. As Lenny's words prove – "We do make up a unit, you're an integral part of it" (1997, p. 53) – they never consider leaving each other in spite of the arguments they have. This unusual tangle of identities, desires, duties, and responsibilities is the normal course of events that can be seen in the house; it is their sui generis kind of order and clarity; it is their own weird kind of domesticity.

In *A Room and Some Views: Harold Pinter*, John Russell Taylor claims that the play is about the war between intellect/thought and instinct/action (1969, p. 354). The visiting son is the thinker of the family, whereas Lenny, Joey, and the nominal head Max are in a relentless competition, being completely ruled by their pure instincts. Irrationality – and therefore, appetite – precedes rationality; it is a void of animalistic struggle. Max keeps on commanding, and demands a grudging respect from his family; what pushes him towards action is, in fact, the strength of his affirmation of the passional life over economic or rational values; and, what he tells Lenny is an illustration of this: He says that Lenny mostly concentrates on the "economic considerations", and that "[t]here are other considerations", the "human considerations", which people should never "forget", which they should always remember (1997, p. 79).

Teddy, the emotionally and intellectually detached philosophy professor, the bright son, the family's stateside representative, comes allegedly from America, with his wife, to visit his family – two pairs of brothers a generation apart – in England (1997, p. 27). This situation – the desire to introduce his wife to his family – which is far from being extraordinary is gradually transformed into a dark comedy which exposes the tensions and conflicts which, under normal circumstances, remain concealed behind a façade of family unity. Instead of greeting and treating the newcomers in a friendly way, the family – the members of which are all vocationally Teddy's inferiors – shows an unusual attitude. The moment a female one lands into this homosocial kind of arena,

"the classic familial positions become sharpened" (Shepherd 2009, p. 154). With their coming, nothing positive adds to the domestic setting. Instead, with their coming, the conflicts which already exist in the household intensify. And, what is even worse is the fact that Teddy and his wife pile up several of theirs on the heap of conflicts. It is like opening up Pandora's box.

Having got away from his horrible family and built up his own life, his own family, Teddy comes back to meet his past on its own ground, hoping to win this time in his own terms, and finds that nothing has changed. Teddy, whose titular homecoming it presumably is, goes through the returnee's expected motions by checking whether or not his room is as he left it. The unchanging nature even shows itself in the physical environment: "Shall I go up and see if my room's still there? . . . . I'll just go up . . . have a look. . . . It's still there. My room. Empty. The bed's there." In the latter part, there is emphasis on the current state of what was supposedly once heimlich to him. Teddy, for whom the homecoming is a test of strength, "*goes up the stairs, stealthily*" (1997, pp. 28-29). "Stealth" – a movement that is quiet and careful in order not to be seen or heard, or secret – can only be appropriate for someone who does not belong, or who at the very least wishes to keep his actions secret, hidden. And, that is hardly the disposition, the character, of someone at home (Buse 2001, p. 38).

Usual formal trappings of the homecoming are not there: Teddy enters the house with his own key, and feels happy when he sees that the key works and that "[t]hey have [not] changed the lock" (1997, pp. 27-28). And then, when Ruth wants to leave for a stroll, he gives it to her (p. 32). This particular transaction is quite significant, as the simple object, the key, hints at 'belonging', as it has something to do with the sense of belonging. Nevertheless, after these minor positivities, negativities come one after the other. For each and every clichéd and sentimental assertion of family values, there is an image, or a conversation, that directly contradicts it. In accordance with Freud's definitions of heimlich and unheimlich, where the meanings of the two tend towards ambivalence, in *The Homecoming*, everything to do with the house and with the familiar combines and heads towards what is unhomely, alien, and unfamiliar (Buse 2001, p. 39). At the end, leaving his audacious spouse, his mysteriously cool yet sensual wife, Ruth, behind, Teddy is sent back to the "land of rock, sand and insects, to the less real, campus life of the soft intellectual" (Raby 2001, p. 68). Teddy's, the imperturbable academic's, the prodigal son's, return to the fall semester is shocking in

that Ruth is left there to live with his vile and violent family, a crowd of men who offer her nothing, but a life of prostitution. Joseph Hynes underlines the fact that Teddy makes no fuss when Ruth and his family attempt at separating Ruth from Teddy and the three children, "to set up a business and domicile of their own" (1992, p. 742). Regarding these aspects, the link between the actions and the instincts – and therefore, the unconscious – is a highly essential point to focus on.

The play is also an important written document in that broad movement which is labelled 'existentialism' (Warner 1970, p. 341). In rejecting Teddy, "whose province is words", and in staying with the all-male family, Ruth seeks not only "promiscuous pleasure", but also a "greater existential wholeness" (p. 351). While talking about America, the land that she left behind, Ruth says that "[i]t [is] all rock" and "sand", and that "there [are] [a lot] . . . of insects there" (1997, p. 61). The frequently repeated insect image in the play hints at a much deeper revulsion, a much deeper disgust than an ordinary insect can inspire, because it symbolizes a well of discontents: It is, in fact, the sum of the inward discontents which motivate Ruth. Even the 'insect talk' leads to unrest in the living environment, and thus, in the psyche.

The actual mother of the house – whom Max, at one stage, at an attempt to paint a picture of domestic bliss, calls the 'backbone of the family' – passed away some years ago; and, the fact which has been openly stated just before the first stage direction, just before the opening of the play – "The back wall . . . [that] contained the door, [has been ripped down], has been removed" (1997, p. 14) – actually implies the passing away of the mother, and thus, the absence of the mother figure in the house. Later in the play, Teddy makes it clear when he says, "Actually there was a wall, across there . . . We knocked it down . . . years ago . . . to make an open living area. The structure wasn't affected, you see. My mother was dead" (p. 29). In symbolic terms, the demolishing of the wall is associated with the death of the mother. The architectural, structural, alteration took place when the mother died. The missing wall, the ugly renovation, shows the absence of the mother figure, a loss which has actually affected the whole structure of the family negatively, creating, in a number of realms, a vacuum, a void, a gap, which Ruth will be invited to fill.

Gene Fendt claims that the house itself is the mind of the animalistic man, that – formerly – there were walls and doors which put a limit to the movement of the id, but that those walls, barriers, were knocked down some years ago, and that the id has

moved downstairs to live forever, to exist eternally (1994, p. 55). Teddy – who can be referred to as 'Freud's ghostly ego' – associates the wall and its door with his dead mother; and, this calls to mind a work on which Freud makes comments in *Civilization and its Discontents*, namely *The Future of an Illusion* (Freud 1962, p. 41): Teddy's words about knocking the wall 'to make an open living area' mimics and reflects Freud's remark that human beings become neurotic, as they are unable to tolerate the degree of privation – the lack of the basic things – which society imposes on them in virtue of its cultural ideals, especially, religion. They think that a return to greater possibilities, chances, of happiness and joy will follow provided that these standards are forgotten, on condition that these standards are left behind. Teddy's special emphasis on 'the structure not being affected' might only hint at wishful thinking, in other words, a sort of defense mechanism.

With Jessie having deserted years before, the house is womanless, hence unbalanced, out of phase. It has lost something from its potential of giving that feeling of warmth and security. Instead of the woman they need, they have a memory of Max's dead wife. The simultaneous elimination of the mother and the wall indicates that the men have attempted to eliminate gender division from the household. Without the wall and without Jessie, there is no disruptive feminine presence, and no anxiety of castration. Through this particular attempt to repress the mother and the feminine, however, they have in effect created another hole, a symbolic reminder of castration. Each tries, symbolically, to castrate the other males to be able to create an oppressed term by which they can gain a sense of autonomy, and thus, identity. What is significant is that violence and verbal abuse construct the existential mirror (Hall 1993, p. 62).

With an open-plan living, with a large cavernous area, with a naked door-arch which frames the action, the fracture is even reflected in the set. The loss of the mother resulted in the radical confusion of roles, both within and between the generations. The womanless void, and the personality of the dead mother pervades the play. Max's inadequacy – or supposed inadequacy – as a cook is the most telling symbol of this state of affairs in the house. Related to his role 'as a cook', he says that "[t]hey walk in[to] [the kitchen] every time of the day and night", just like the way "bloody animals" do. Out of anger, he orders them to "go and find" a mother for themselves (1997, p. 24). Jung argues that an inherited collective image of woman exists in a man's unconscious, and that it assists him in his endeavours to apprehend the nature of the

female sex. And, he concludes by saying that this image is one of the most important sources for the femininity of the soul (1990a, p. 190). It is Max who tries to play the role of the mother, functioning as a surrogate mother, cooking for the family and, at the same time, 'dandling the kids'. So often, it is the lack of the mother figure which gives rise to familial problems. The lack of a 'real' mother gives rise to unnecessary talks and arguments.

Max's lack of gender-identity becomes quite apparent when he says that he has given birth to "three grown men" (1997, p. 48). This manic slip of the tongue, by itself, tells a lot. In Max's words, it is "[a] crippled family, three bastard sons, a slutbitch of a wife." According to what he says, he cannot stand hearing talks "about the pain of childbirth"; he says that he "suffered the pain", and that "[he] [has] still got the pangs" (p. 55). He has clearly invested himself with the combined roles of husband, wife, father, and mother. He can play a woman, and by way of playing a woman, he plays a lack. And, his continuous oscillation from male to female roles shows that he uses such roles to gain power, to uphold his illusions about his individual self. He is usually in control of the role he is playing; and, he immediately dissociates, detaches, himself from either male or female categories depending on the context and on whether he is attacking or defending. He believes he has access to all roles, regardless of how contradictory they are. And, he uses each and every one of them to establish his power in the house.

Having been confined to purely domestic functions, Max's gender role is completely reversed. Such sort of a reversal, without doubt, endangers his position within the male homosocial circle; and, it is this quality which is thought to lie at the roots of his impotence not only by himself, but also by the other members. As opposed to Max, the others – Lenny, Joey, and Sam – are dressed in street clothes; they have their own jobs and professions; and, they walk in and out of the house freely, independently, conforming to an important role, which is – to be specific – the 'male breadwinner role'. Being dressed in a chauffeur's uniform, Sam instantly manifests the sort of expertise which Max pathetically lacks; the kind of clothes which Sam wears makes it obvious that he has an established function, a clearly-defined role, in the world outside; and, Max's sense of inadequacy in this particular 'manly' sphere can be shown as one of the causes which push him towards acts of violence. Max's attempts at reasserting his patriarchal authority take different forms and shapes, including his nostalgic

evocation of his own father, and his appropriating the special power to 'give birth', thus sending away the mother figure from the scene in the ultimate male homosocial fantasy, dream, in which males beget – become fathers of – males.

Since the family was cuckolded by Jessie, women – the female sex – have been anathema, something which is greatly disliked and disapproved of. Women are strongly criticized, and constantly reviled as "diseased" (1997, p. 39), "pox-ridden" whores (p. 49). Under these circumstances, Ruth's entrance can be described as an explicit, overt challenge. She, all of a sudden, becomes the "[Q]ueen of the zoo", and "takes her rightful place in the restored matriarchy" (Morris 1966, p. 186). She is always ready without a second thought to do what her body tells her; and, she, as a female, thinks with her physical body and manages better that way than the male ones do with their brains. Instinctively and intuitively, she knows all about the rules and laws of the tribe, and how to manipulate them successfully. On the other hand, Teddy remains passive; the numbness in his personality makes him unable to react. With all his education and university degrees, he has never managed to acquire the basic survival kit in his life. It is the female who subsequently survives.

In the 1960s, people were told that all they needed was love; and, they were often "encouraged to see it as a way of opposing war" (Nicholson 2012, p. 3). One of the most popular newspapers in the world – namely, *The Guardian* – "launche[d] a women's section which 'deal[t] frankly with topics that otherwise . . . [got] wrapped up in cosy euphemisms' and 'treat[ed] them as free and independent equals of men'". Some of the most significant political energy of the 1960s came to fruition in the following decade, which saw the "[1st] national meeting of the [W]omen's [L]iberation [M]ovement, the passing of the Equal Pay Act", the eventual "publication of Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*", and the sudden "disruption of the annual and televised Miss World Beauty Contest" by some violent protesters who were "armed with flour, stink-bombs and water pistols" (p. 7). The events and leanings – the social and political climate – in the 1960s can be sensed in *The Homecoming*. The provocative event is Teddy bringing his 'very independent' wife, Ruth, into the shabby, run-down Victorian house in North London, where she instantly takes the position of the matriarch.

One cannot lead a balanced and happy life if he/she tries to suppress, keep in or repress, all aspects of his/her individuality but one; his/her fantasies have to be acted out along

with his/her conscious desires. However, this is a critical point, because serious problems – which were not there at first place – may arise. If fantasies get the upper hand and tumble the individuals headlong into schizophrenia, the situation may be irreversible. After all, worse than an illusion destroyed is an illusion that is incorporated into reality. Human beings are ambivalent creatures who have to recognize, learn to accept, and control not only their social selves, but also their instinctive selves (Deleon 1994, p. 56). In the play under scrutiny, fantasies are acted out; and, instinctive selves, at times, show themselves. A very sterile condition eventually degenerates into vulnerability, and exposes itself to complete destruction.

In *Writing for Myself* – a piece which is based on a dialogue with Richard Findlater – Pinter says that he "start[s] off with people, . . . [that] come into a particular situation" (in Pinter 1996a, p. viii). And, this is what he does in *The Homecoming*; a woman, an outsider, lands into a hostile environment which makes an effect on her ways and attitudes; there, she experiments with such a tough test of strength that she gains power, and eventually, transforms into a winner. In *Writing for the Theatre*, Pinter points out that the professional theatre is a world, a combination, of "false climaxes", tensions which are calculated in advance, some instances of hysteria, and a "good deal of inefficiency" (in Pinter 1996b, p. viii). And, related to this aspect, the audience is never far away from sensing the tensions which ultimately lead to domestic violence. The characters resort to every possible and imaginable way to create an atmosphere of tension; everything is calculated, meticulously planned, beforehand.

4.2 Mental and Existential Manoeuvres

Existential adjustment – which can simply be defined as 'the efforts made while trying to come to terms with one's individual self' – "precedes" and "predetermines" one's reaction to the society around, to the "politics", and to certain "general ideas". Pinter's attitude – which, at particular instances, is that of an existentialist – shows that "the mode of a man's being determines his thinking." In his theatre, Pinter adopts the existentialist approach; and, his existential fear is mainly "based on the [frightening] experience of a Jewish boy in the East End of London", "of a Jew" in the Europe of Adolf Hitler (Esslin 1970, pp. 34-35). In *The Homecoming*, issues of existentialism – Sartre's modern system of belief in which the universe is meaningless and each individual is alone and totally responsible for their own course of actions, by which

they make their own personality and character – are at work. For instance, Teddy – an intellectual who is holding a Ph.D in philosophy – has, out of his own free will, chosen to roam the corners and fringes of a bitter existence.

Teddy apparently ran away from his home in London, just because he did not like the family's way of life at all; however, he is conversant with it. He opts for remaining aloof, listening to the dictates of his inner voice or conscience, deliberately coating himself in defense, and not volunteering to become involved in the hectic sort of life around him. Being cerebral at all times, he is on the side of careful reasoning and mental effort; and, the ego-consciousness – the sense of the 'I' – which springs out of unconscious life is what is distinguishable in Teddy. He feels that – to survive, to go on with his life – he needs to find a shelter for himself. On condition that he spots a particular resting place, things will be fine, or partly fine, for him.

In *A Note on Shakespeare*, a manuscript which probably "date[s] back to Pinter's late teens or early twenties", Pinter "prophetically" writes about the dramatists' act of creation (Esslin 1970, p. 54). In *The Homecoming*, each character tries to hold the power in his/her hands; each tries to exist in his/her way; existential anguish makes itself clear; and, out of the painful 'wound' of existential anguish spurts Pinter's attempt, his effort to come to terms with the real world and its mystery, its misery, its pain and suffering, its bewildering complexity, and its complicated multiplicity. Pinter's play is about life, about the thing which everyone suffers from, about the thing which leads to unrest:

> The wound, the playwright's eye, his perception of the world, is open: that is why all the world enters into it. The wound is the world. And the world is the wound. And – because the world's suffering and anguish is the anguish and the suffering of other people as well as of the mind behind the open eye, the open wound – the wound *is* peopled. (Esslin 1970, p. 55)

Clearly implying that the questions posed are outside his field, Teddy detaches himself as quickly as possible. His mind is geared to avoid involvement in the subjective world; he, intentionally, refuses to become involved in the life around him, simply because life is outside his area of specialization. And, at one stage, he openly says that he "operate[s] on things and not in things." On purpose, he distances himself from the metaphorically barking 'animals', the other members of the family. His well-arranged

world, which is completely different from the majority's, is the reverse side of the medal. His serious talk – the academic jargon he uses – is suggestive of a real academic than a real impostor, as he talks about "the points of reference", his "critical works", and "intellectual equilibrium" (1997, pp. 69-70); and, it is only in this way that he can protect himself in the hostile environment which surrounds him.

The ego is the one and only power which is able to measure correctly, and which is able to write 'critical works'; and, it is continuously tempted by the id and the pleasure principle to get lost in its battles and lusts, as Teddy comes face to face with the risk of losing himself to it. Being confronted with the crushing demands, and the distinct duties of reality, the ego – and thus, in a metaphorical sense, Teddy – is able to see objects, and develops in himself the potential not only to see, but also to be able to 'operate on things, not in things'. This is nothing other than the reality principle; and, out of this principle springs such things as clean and clear "[swimming] pool[s]" (1997, p. 62), science, the particular concentration area of 'philosophy', and the Freudian psychoanalytic theory. Freud suggests that, in the battle between civilization and the absolutely "id-ic" pleasure principle, there are some advantages that accrue to civilization: "[U]seless beauties", which include "parks", "gardens", "playgrounds", "air reservoirs", and "signs of cleanliness" (1962, p. 33). In his clumsy attempt to win his wife back, Teddy appeals to such kinds of things; he says that it is that time of the day when the sons would be at the 'pool'; and, finishes his words by saying, "It's so clean there" (1997, p. 62). The place where Teddy belongs and the place where he feels himself belonging to stand in stark contrast to the place where the herd lives. As opposed to the 'beauties' of civilization, all there is in the male wasteland is filth.

The 'intellectual equilibrium' which Teddy talks about is not the result of a balanced capacity – potential – to perceive reality; it is the rationalizing, reasoning, defense mechanism of a person who is so much afraid of subjective involvement. A New York psychoanalyst suggests that Teddy is an example of a "totally withdrawn libido" that is totally troubled by an animosity for the female sex and an inclination towards homosexuality, and that is why he replaces a proper sex life by 'intellectual equilibrium' (in States 1968, p. 475). Far from being the emancipated, liberated, observer he would like to be, far from being socially independent, he is quite deeply involved with the others around him; and, under such circumstances, he has no

alternative apart from resorting to a defense mechanism: "[H]e has to escape to avoid being crushed" (Dobrez 1986, p. 350).

Since operating 'on' things creates a materially rewarding scientific technology, America – at this stage of the play – becomes the symbol of a country given over to such kind of a technology. However, America's material riches – the abundance and wealth – do not lead to a better or greater liberality of spirit. And, these, in turn, hint at the interpretation that Teddy is a loser forever. Michael Craig – who, in one production, played the role of Teddy – claims that Teddy is the most violent one among the brothers, "a veritable 'Eichmann' underneath" who has purposefully 'rationalized' whatever aggression he has (States 1968, p. 475). Teddy declares his personal position – the place where he stands, and where he sees himself standing – as the controlling subject supposed to know, the possessor of the particular look, not the possessor of the gaze (Hall 1993, pp. 70-71). As a character, he is too arrogant and pathetic to attract any real sympathy. In a fumbling attempt to assert his own superiority, he says that he is the one who is able to see, that the others are "just objects", and that he can see "what [they] [are] [all] do[ing]." He says that they are actually doing the same things as him, but that there is one major difference. According to what Teddy says, the only difference between them is that they are all "lost in it", whereas he is not. He openly says that he will never be 'lost in it' (1997, p. 70). Quite interestingly, although the family repels the audience, the man who will not be 'lost in it' is less sympathetic than those who are stubbornly in it; the particular 'it' can be interpreted as something which is basic to human nature: Primitive, sexual, shadowy, and perhaps even dark.

Teddy, who does not have an identity crisis like the other members, is concerned with the correct, proper, approach to truth: To see, and to be able to see. He is so preoccupied with vision that it makes him vulnerable in the eyes, in their ability and faculty of seeing the reality. In order to exist, Teddy chooses to lead a life which is quite different from the others'; and, being marginal actually provides him with opportunities. On the other hand, Ruth, in Hugh Nelson's words, chooses the option of "los[ing] herself and, like the Biblical prodigal, is found [afterwards]. Or, rather, she finds herself", as a mother, as a whore, as a manageress, as a cook, as a housekeeper, and as a brood mare (in Brown 1968, p. 148).

Earlier in the play, Max had mentioned his "instinctive understanding of animals", and how he dealt with horses, "also a sex symbol" (Bock 1981, p. 179). He mentions his

ways with animals, most particularly, with the fillies. He says that, to be able to "tell a good filly", he would stand before her and "look her straight in the eye." Max, who sees the act itself as a sort of "hypnotism", also talks about his special ability in "tell[ing] whether [the filly] was a stayer or not": "It was a gift. I had a gift" (1997, p. 18). Related to all these, at the end, Max tries to fathom, tries to understand, the Ruth they have helped to bring back to life; and, sadly, he finds out that his 'gift' has deserted him, leaving him alone with his desires. It is obvious that a kind of hypnosis is imposed upon Ruth by the naked wills of the men; and, the 'hypnosis' part reminds the audience of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, where Cressida specifically uses hypnosis as an excuse for her inevitable freedom, her unavoidable wantonness, her lewd and lascivious ways:

> Troilus, farewell! one eye looks on thee,
> But with my heart the other eye doth see.
> Ah, poor our sex! this fault in us I find,
> The error of our eye directs our mind:
> What error leads must err; O, then conclude
> Minds sway'd by eyes are full of turpitude. (Shakespeare 1999c, p. 747)

According to Hugh Nelson, "Cressida among the Greeks, Ruth among the Israelites, and the heroine of *The Homecoming* among her husband's family" are all directionless, not exactly knowing where to go, not exactly knowing which turn to take. They are, more than anything, "wanderers who, to borrow a phrase from [the British Romantic] [John] Keats, stand 'in tears amid the alien corn'" (in Brown 1968, p. 159). On the other hand, Teddy, as an academician, he has to publish; otherwise, he is sure to perish. This expert existence, this perpetually detached specialist existence, crumbles before the brutal vitality of the family, the herd, which purposefully chooses Ruth's physical body over Teddy's thinking mind. Though his isolation becomes also physical, Teddy draws no sympathy. Ignorant of individuality as he is, Teddy 'never' did belong in society. When confronted with the task of considering Ruth's last words to Teddy – "Don't become a stranger" (1997, p. 88) – one may label it as inessential, or categorize it as an irrelevant utterance, since Teddy has always been a stranger. Perhaps, this part can be interpreted as "the moral crux of the play", because "[b]ecoming a stranger from one's family . . . almost becomes" an essential behaviour, an incredibly

"necessary and heroic" reaction when the familial unit in question "has so little to redeem itself" (Hinchliffe 1967, p. 157).

A further dimension which has to be dealt with within the framework of psychology – and, by extension, archetypal criticism – is the character and personality types, most prominently, the victim and victimizer kind of characters, plus the actual victors who, sometimes unexpectedly, triumph at the end. Jak Deleon argues that the moment man rids himself of the limits and confinements of his defining social roles, he sees that he is the sum of, the combination of, "so many reflections"; and, he goes on to say that personality is something other than "a set block of cement", that "it is fluid", and that "[a] woman can [possibly] be a whore in a hotel room" and a demure – quiet and well behaved – wife who happily plays with her kitten at home and remain the same – one and the same – woman (1994, p. 56). Echoing all these, for instance, Ruth – the intruder – leaves behind a much more respectable position as a housewife, and chooses the option of becoming a prostitute; however, she is the one and only person who succeeds in emerging as the victor in the final act. As a desired object, she is capable of "harness[ing] the libidinous and domineering impulses of the [men] . . . as tools to wield", as tools to use against them (Batty 2005, p. 44).

In spite of all his education, his prosperity, his other – settled – life, Teddy is unable to act within the pleased and charmed circle of the family. His elegant ways and his civilized irony have no noticeable effect on anyone; "he is a liberal humanist preparing to sit down in protest while the storm-troopers move in and kick him out of the way or, worse still, regard him as too insignificant even to be worth moving" (Taylor 1969, p. 354). On the other hand, Ruth's presence is something which is highly appreciated. Despite her former enigmatism, Ruth ends in a position of supremacy; she comes to terms with a self which she had suppressed for so long; and, due to being exposed to an atmosphere suitable for that self to flourish, the way she behaves deserves attention. What she desires is power; she does not like shackles; she dislikes anything that prevents her from doing what she wants to do; therefore, she chooses to assert herself instead of struggling to live vicariously through the others.

Regarding the social climate of the times, the changes in society were acknowledged by various debates about not only sexuality, but also the institution of the family and the individual choice. In 1974, the *Finer Report* commented on a number of previous, past, issues: It drew attention on how the 1950s and 60s witnessed the "cumulative

removal of customary and legal [restrictions]", forceful limits, on some forms of sexual behaviour; it mentioned their public portrayal in print, by the visual arts, and even for commercial purposes. It gave place to some other details as well: Legal restraints, limitations, on the independence – relaxed ways – of married couples to get rid of the ties that used to be supported as necessary safeguards for the harmony of monogamous marriage have been loosened and relaxed; and, moreover, the sexual freedom of the male sex and the female sex has been enlarged (in Wandor 2001, p. 30). Under such circumstances, the society had to transform. Thus, the mentality and the inclinations of Pinter's 1965 play, and Ruth's shocking sexual freedom can be interpreted within the framework of the social background of the 1960s.

During the 1960s, the symptoms of the continuously growing female discontent with the contradictions of women's situation began to come to the surface as well. In America, Betty Friedan wrote a book – entitled *The Feminine Mystique*, and published in 1962 – and, identified what she labelled as 'the problem with no name'. Focusing on the experiences of suburban housewives, she dissected and discussed the American domestic dream; and, she pinpointed and identified the signs of what she interpreted as a big identity crisis for women. On the other hand, in Britain, Hannah Gavron, a sociologist, carried out a research on mothers, the results of which were published in 1966, under the title *The Captive Wife*. The book – which explored the boredom, the loneliness, the isolation, and the frustration women felt in their cocoons – reflects the situation of the female sex in the 60s (Wandor 2001, pp. 30-31). With all these issues in the background, Ruth's deeds and behaviours are far from surprising.

Michael Hinden points out that Ruth is capable of assessing and evaluating the proposition that has been put to her, and that she explores the valences of her fluctuating individual self, the particular elements of her real identity which combine and then alter in the presence of the other males. He goes on to say that she bears the characteristics of a "logical positivist investigator", that she is empirical and hostile to all kinds of predetermined suppositions, that she is charged by the delicate and intricate nuances of discovery, and that she is so determined about each and every element which composes her context (1982, p. 33). Ruth soon begins to take control of the game that the men have intentionally built around her, eventually dominating the rest by making up the rules and regulations. By the end of the play, her reversal is so complete that she becomes 'the only person who is capable of controlling the family'.

Having been set up as their joint mistress, she is a mutual partner, someone ruled by pure instincts. While going through a process of self-discovery, Ruth weighs the needs and desires of her husband against those of the herd, and makes an amoral but logical choice. According to Hugh Nelson, the group of men – Max, Lenny, and Joey – "may have a certain hypnotic effect upon her", but it is definitely a hypnosis which she heartily, and so willingly, chooses to undergo (in Brown 1968, p. 148). Concerning the power struggle going on in the house, Teddy can never be effective. And, on the other hand, Joey is incapable of "ris[ing] above the stereotyped flatness" of the dull and dumb warrior; he is unable to rise above the level "of the stupid prizefighter" (Free 1969, p. 4).

Although philosophy lurks as Teddy's educational background, and – by extension – as his concentration area in the arena of life, he seems to be philosophical only in the contemptible, despicable sense of the word. Interestingly, the person who speculates mostly and effectively is Lenny. What catches attention is that Lenny – who is quite skillful at drawing his own conclusions – becomes desensitized only when illogical demands are made on him. According to what Gene Fendt says about the Freudian understanding, the moment unreasonable demands are made, the id tends to use its motor end – which can either be fists or the phallus – in the "id-ic" fashion. Joey – whose name seems to be a perversion of the noun 'joy' – is the "id's apparatus personified" (1994, p. 54). As a demolition worker, Lenny is in demolition during the day, and boxing and 'having' by the time it gets dark; and, needless to say, these points have sexual connotations. The pleasure, the Freudian oceanic feeling of oneness with the universe, is what Lenny wants.

Lenny distracts, disturbs, Teddy by baiting and annoying him with a pastiche of theological and philosophical rhetoric – "Do you detect a certain logical incoherence in the central affirmations of Christian theism?" (1997, p. 59) – and insists and persists in his mockery of things which are utterly cerebral. Being an existential quester, being a proverbial armchair philosopher who likes sitting around the Ritz Bar having a few liqueurs, Lenny concentrates on an intricate web of issues, and the "business of being and not-being" (p. 60). "[T]he wider-ranging questions" and the multi-dimensional "ideas of the more Existentialist Lenny" (Hinchliffe 1967, p. 160) deserve emphasis, as they combine to create an atmosphere of argument and aggressiveness in the play. As opposed to Lenny's freewheeling pursuit – search – of philosophical inquiry,

Teddy, the professional philosopher with a Ph.D, can only make a stiffly-worded speech, and say that such kind of questions do not "fall within [his] province" (1997, p. 59). Gene Fendt claims that Teddy is a nickname, and that the name is a shortened form of 'Theodore', which specifically means 'God's gift'. He goes on to say that the 'central affirmation of Christian theism' which Lenny talks about is precisely what Teddy's name means, and what Teddy himself specifically figures: That God finally became man, and dwelt among human beings, that the eternal God married himself to mankind, in a wedding, in a special ceremony, no one could have been present at, that he gave himself for the others' redemption (1994, p. 49).

According to what Austin E. Quigley says, Max – who apparently lacks the physical ability, capability, capacity, to exert his individual will on Lenny – makes use of "psychological manoeuvres" that change, that flip-flop between sudden "attempts to compete with Lenny" and sudden "attempts to excuse himself for being unable to do so" (1975, p. 180). This is a sort of morale booster for Max. Being left with no other alternative, with nothing else left to do, he defends himself against his own inability, incapability, incapacity, by way of making fun of the pugilistic, boxing, abilities of Joey. He aims at boosting his personal image not only by claiming expertise, but also by saying that Joey has problems as a sportsman (1997, pp. 25-26). By trying to give a different impression, he wishes to calm his soul down. Actually, it is no one, but Max who has to defend himself.

Using his own version of a defense mechanism, and turning everything the other way around, Max consoles himself, by saying that Joey does not have the skills to fight with his fists. According to what Max says, Joey does not "know how to defend [him]self", and "how to attack." He says that "[t]hat" is the problem with him, "as a boxer." And, he concludes by saying that, if he "master[s] [these] arts", if he becomes proficient in that 'fighting' profession, it will be possible for him to "go straight to the top" (1997, pp. 25-26). Such mental creations are Max's one and only weapon, the only balm to his tortured mind, the only road to a slightly happier form of, or plane of, existence. If one takes the sport 'boxing' "as a metaphor for the verbal and psychological fighting among the characters", Max's detailed "analysis of Joey's deficiencies as a boxer. . . . suggests Joey's, Lenny's, Sam's, and his own deficiencies" in that particular game, and "Ruth's and probably Teddy's proficiency (Dukore 1976,

p. 38). All these views support the idea that the play is all about a never-ending power struggle.

Lenny's prolonged probing of the problems of existence, his questioning of the essence of his existence, his curiosity about how he came to be in his mother's womb, and the subconscious desire to reverse the ever-flowing time all the way back to the womb are points that are worthy of analyzing from the psychological perspective. In *Being and Nothingness*, mapping out his branch of existentialism, and prioritizing existence over essence, Sartre points out that life has no meaning beyond the goals one chooses for himself/herself. According to him, the freedom of man in a godless world leads to anxiety; and, the reason why individuals all suffer is that they cannot make up their minds due to an existential fear (n.d.a, p. 345). The existential fear which is at the core of the play is neither an abstraction, nor a surreal sort of 'phantasmagoria'; it has nothing to do with a fast-changing and confused group of real or imagined 'images', one following the other as in a dream. Instead, it is something real, usual, "ordinary and acceptable as an everyday occurrence." Unlike Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett, Pinter does not "mov[e] in a surreal world of acknowledged phantasy and dream"; he wants to be within the borders of the safer-looking land of the everyday happenings; he chooses to be "on the firm, [static] ground of everyday reality" (Esslin 1970, p. 36). When he wants the true facts about his conception, and when he makes an effort to assert his dignity, Lenny shows his genuine interest in the Sartrean topic. He openly asks his father how he came into existence in his mother's womb; he wants to know, in so many silent words, the reason why, echoing Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, most particularly, Vladimir and Estragon's obsession with the progenitor who orders, who ordains the irreversible act of birth. What Lenny says reminds the audience of that person who first thinks of something and causes it to happen (1997, p. 44).

Jak Deleon says that "[o]nce out of the . . . supposedly peaceful canopy of the womb", human beings find themselves forced to cling to a certain place which "offers safety and identity in a basically hostile world" (1997, p. 86). Lenny, who is in search of something to hold on to, apparently sees the female parent as a sexual object. When he, quite curiously, asks his father about the moment of his own conception, when he baits his father with existential questions concerning his birth, the act of sexual intercourse which gave him life, he is not only thinking of his 'Mama' in that erotic sort of context, but also linking the sexual and the maternal. Lenny, verbally, attacks

Max on the subject of his conception; he, insistently, wants to know whether he was intended to be conceived or not. He asks about that specific night "with Mum", "the night [they] got [him]"; he asks about the realities "about [his] background". Out of curiosity, he even asks whether "[they] had [him] in mind all the time" or not; he asks whether "[he] was the last thing [they] had in mind" or not. And, he goes on to say that many people of his age – sometimes alone, sometimes accompanied by some others – cannot help thinking about, "ruminat[ing] . . . about", the realities behind the night in question (1997, p. 44).

The play revolves around the power relations which structure the familial unit, the issues of sexuality and gender roles, and the instability and imbalance of male homosocial desire, which necessitates the involvement of the female figure as well (Sastre 1994, pp. 17-18). According to Freud's theory, children seeking information about their origins, kids asking the particular question 'Where do babies come from?' are, in a way, obliged to come face to face with a potentially alarming and disturbing fact – the idea that they, once upon a time, did not physically exist in the world, that before they were themselves individual people, they came – originally – from the 'nowhere' of their female parent's physical bodies (Thurschwell 2001, p. 119).

Lenny's absolutely violent antagonism of Max is also triggered – in a way, stimulated – by the intense pain and suffering it causes him to think of Jessie in Max's embraces: "[I]n that . . . [specific] scene, Lenny is a Hamlet figure" (Esslin 1970, p. 153). There is the omnipresence of the subconscious desire to go back to the womb; and, this desire is self-tormenting, due to the fact that it is accompanied by the knowledge of the irreversibility of time. Confronted with this existential question of his, paralysed with this more-than-challenging question, Lenny is unable to find a way out; he instinctively suffers; and, his words reflect the degree, the extent, the intensity of his mental discomfort. According to what he says, it cannot be called "a dream", as it is "not exactly a dream." "[S]omething" – which he cannot name – "keeps waking [him] up." He, vaguely, calls the indescribable thing "[s]ome kind of tick": "Well, if it's the clock I'd better do something about it, Stifle it in some way, or something" (1997, p. 33).

When the sucking maelstrom of daylight activity is over and night falls, human beings are left alone to face the darkness and the emptiness of the universe in which they are trapped, hence the darkness and the emptiness of their own soul (Deleon 1994, p. 61).

When it gets dark, one is accompanied by silence, which may sometimes be even disturbing to the senses. As human beings are by themselves, they tend to sit ruminating about their life and the events going on. Having been deprived of all energy, the flood – of thoughts – in the psyche forces individuals to make an evaluation of their life; and, this sort of review, which is usually meticulously done, has the potential to take the individual to the point of mental exhaustion, which may be defined as a state of extreme fatigue. And, this is the situation in which Lenny finds himself. While thinking deeply about the nature of existence, he comes closer and closer to tiredness. At this exact point, further interpretations can be provided for Lenny's 'tick' speech: Ruth breaks the glass of female objectification into pieces; and, she can be viewed as a "tick in the night", constituting a real problem in the particular phallic economy (Hall 1993, p. 66). Lenny explains his whole experience, making a clear-cut distinction between daytime and night-time: He, quite purposefully, draws attention to the number of things, to the kinds of objects, that tick during the night, during the dark time. What he underlines is the fact that 'this tick' makes no sense during daytime. Provided that there is light, it is regarded as something common, as it does not constitute – a minor or a major – problem. However, according to what he says, when night comes, these very quiet things – things that are "as quiet as mice" – turn out to be things capable of "letting out . . . tick[s]" (1997, p. 36).

The family consists of members who, at intervals, come out from their 'personal' rooms; and, their alien, strange, nature is specifically shown by the land itself – that is, America – and the Ph.D Teddy holds (Hinchliffe 1967, p. 153). It is as if Teddy avoids interacting with the others. According to what Sartre says in *Being and Nothingness*, human beings should separate themselves from the things that surround them, just to be able to give those particular things some kind of meaning. In order for something to make sense, individuals should alienate themselves; so, in this context, solitude can be thought of as a 'prerequisite' for understanding oneself. To state in a different way, something has to exist or happen before something else can exist or happen. At the end of the whole thing, it is up to individuals, their selves, to form some kind of meaning in their life; one cannot look for it in such conceptions and perceptions of God, or in Immanuel Kant's, the central Enlightenment thinker's, moral imperative (Sartre n.d.a, p. 411). Teddy is a man equipped to deal only with abstractions, and nothing else. And, that is why he can only 'operate on things'. For him, language is a form of

noncommunication, as he is enigmatically aloof. For Teddy, the return to the London home shows not only how far he has moved to the periphery – the outer edge – of the family circle, but also how unused he is to participating in the herd's psychological games of strength (Wertheim 1985, p. 157).

Violence – which is shown as a means by which control is obtained – is what permeates the play. Even if it is not there physically, it is between the lines. The male characters all use violence in their professional realms, in their occupations; and, it is the distinct way they use to display their masculinity. Joey's boxing is the most explicit, the most overt, sign and symptom of violence; and, Max's violence as a butcher, someone who dismembers and prepares joints of meat, has something to do with his constant emphasis on blood, and the way he uses verbal violence in the form of insults and threats. As an extension of this, he, at times, resorts to put-downs, unkind remarks, which make the other man seem stupid and foolish. At one point, he even says, "I'll chop your spine off, you talk to me like that!" (1997, p. 17); he threatens one of his sons – one of his own flesh and blood – by saying he will cut his spine into small pieces, if he goes on talking in the similar fashion. And, throughout the play, Max's shows of dominance and tendency towards savagery can never escape attention.

The moment Pinter's characters start contradicting each other, the tone of their language, the intonation, immediately changes. When there is disagreement among them, they start – "literally" – "attack[ing] each other verbally, if not physically". However, this – the lack of physical attack – makes no difference, as the violence loses nothing from its degree and extent, as the intensity, the extremity, of the verbal attack is "more than the intensity of the would-be physical attack". Just like animals, when people – and thereby, the herd of men in the play – sense a threat, when they sense the possibility of some kind of danger, they instantly develop defense tactics, with the dual intention of protecting themselves, and counterattacking the assault coming from the other side (Çıkıgil 1997, p. 2). Asserting individuality and identity, and exerting superiority, they try to soothe their – troubled – soul down a bit. And, this is what is done by the characters in *The Homecoming*.

In the play, savagery is even recognizable in the professions; there is the butcher-talk; there is the boxer-talk; and, Lenny's stories are all about "women whom he has struck" (Dukore 1976, p. 37). Freud is of the opinion that aggressive energy must come out of the unconscious somehow. If this energy is repressed within the recesses of the human

mind, it continues to build up and produce some kind of illnesses. Unexpressed emotions come together and build up pressure; and, they must be – this way, or that way – expressed to relieve that pressure. Freud's famous notion – in which the comparison, the analogy is to water pressure that builds up in a container – is characterized as a hydraulic theory; and, it can be used to shed new light on the psychological states of the characters in the play. If aggressive, or sexual, energy is not released, it will, for sure, lead to some kind of explosion. According to the Freudian theory, society performs a critical and crucial function in regulating these violent instincts and in helping individuals to sublimate them. This involves turning the specific energy into acceptable, or useful, forms of behaviour. For instance, Freud supports the view that the energy behind artistic creation or the innovations, alterations, which create – for example – railroads are sublimation of aggressive, or sexual, energy (Aronson, Wilson & Akert 2002, p. 418). In this sense, Max's professional realm – his being nothing else, but a 'bloody' butcher – may have something to do with the 'coming out' of the Freudian aggressive energy, the 'coming out' of his destructive side, in the guise of an 'acceptable' occupation.

Beneath the surface of the father's job, there is much to explore. According to Freud's theory, people may find an unconscious, mental, outlet for sexual frustration in the particular act of building bridges or cathedrals; and, it is by such kind of sublimation that human civilization itself is created. Cultural history itself is formed and shaped by switching and harnessing instincts, inner feelings, to these much higher goals. One way in which people cope with desires – which they are unable to fulfill – is by sublimating them, that is, by directing them towards a much more socially-valued, socially-preferable, socially-desirable end; and, this situation is perfectly exemplified, illustrated, in Max's aggression and profession.

In the play – where one continuously comes face to face with the men's snarls and paws at each other in an effort to have a kind of dominance within the pack – the male spectator has the power to control the female object; and, this optical ability is parallel with Freud's and Lacan's theories on patriarchy. In the objectifying process which Lacan calls the 'gaze', the seeing male subject is given a certain sense of mastery; and, in the play, there is the frequent usage of the male look. Max and the others use their look, as well as their control of memories and narratives, to be able to objectify female counterparts. However, as partly mentioned earlier in the study, Ruth's shattering of

the glass of female objectification is obvious. Her sexual identity is so robust and unshakeable that she can manage to escape male classification; she remains elusively dominant; and, she not only reflects, but also subverts whatever is projected upon her by the herd of men. The particular manner in which femininity is defined by men, in fact, has something to do with their unavoidable need to satisfy their desires and insecurities.

In her monumental doctoral thesis entitled *Speculum of the Other Woman*, Luce Irigaray focuses on how male thinkers from Plato on have shown women as fixed and passive with their elaborations, explanations, of a logic/rationale of similarity, comparability. The famous metaphor of the speculum points at the problem, at the issue of the invisible quality of the female sexuality in Western system of thought, the masculine 'gaze' which has objectified women, and the particular question of representation. Irigaray states that patriarchal oppression of the female sex is founded on the form of negative constructions, ideas, that are associated with Freud's psychoanalytic theory of female sexuality. The concept of 'penis envy' is based upon a view of woman as man's Other; she lacks the phallus that he has. "She is not viewed as existing at all except as a negative mirror-image of a man" (Selden, Widdowson & Brooker 1997, p. 145). Under such circumstances, women have to resort to some sort of strategies, mostly defense mechanisms, because they want to erase that negative image associated with themselves, with the female sex in general. And, accordingly, Ruth searches for ways to gain an identity; and, she wants to have that integrity as an individual.

In the play, though Ruth's lecture on appearance and reality – her sexually charged speech about her moving legs and lips – does not explicitly refer to the female genitalia, it is obvious that it is related to Irigaray's ideas on the constantly touching female genitalia: "Look at me. I . . . move my leg. . . . It's a leg . . . moving. My lips move. Why don't you restrict . . . your observations to that?" (1997, pp. 60-61). In her speech, in which she draws attention to her physical presence, she courts the male look, which generally counts as the optical means of female objectification. Simultaneous with her courting, she disrupts it, creating the Lacanian 'gaze' (Hall 1993, p. 69). Prostitution perfectly fits her, for the role of maternal provider, in the dual sense of 'economic', as well as 'emotional' supporter of the all-male family. What she does – that is, prostitution – serves two different functions. Her suitability, her

appropriateness, for the role she assumes is strikingly "demonstrated by her instinctive comprehension of this principle" (Innes 2002, p. 345).

The lips touch each other in a gesture of unlimited 'jouissance', Lacan's term which refers to a time of joy, terror or yearning/craving which springs from the unconscious mind, and reminds the audience of perfect wholeness. It is Lacan's conceptualization, his statement about the dynamics of absence, which Irigaray carries forward; and, it is this sine qua non which theoretically shows itself in the play. So often, Pinter's male characters derive peculiar – unusual and strange – pleasure from watching females cross and uncross their legs (Anderson 1976, p. 113). And, that is why, Ruth attracts attention to such points, to such sources of pleasure: "I wear . . . underwear . . . which moves with me . . . it . . . captures your attention. Perhaps you misinterpret" (1997, pp. 60-61). Ruth's speech about 'her legs' also reminds the audience of *Troilus and Cressida*, where Ulysees describes such kind of a language to Cressida in similar terms:

> There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,
> Nay, her foot speaks; her wanton spirits look out
> At every joint and motive of her body. (Shakespeare 1999c, p. 741)

Human body becomes the subject matter of much of the talk. It, in a way, becomes the sine qua non of everyday conversation; and, by extension, the subject matter moves towards the phallus and its lack. Irigaray harshly criticizes the phallus as restrictive, monolithic, singular and fixed; and, she resists such a fixity, sameness, of meaning that phallogocentrism implies. Instead of the singular phallus, Irigaray argues that women have the benefit of multiple sexual organs. It is the absurdity, nonsense, of patriarchy to define women according to their lack of the phallus; therefore, it is equally wrong, misleading, to define their language, their existence under the symbolic system, according to the widely-known masculine model. Irigaray points out that the masculine fails to adequately represent woman. Her tactic is to write the feminine into the masculine text by subverting traditional rhetorical methods, and by putting a playful female body in the place of the much more serious male body. Throughout *The Homecoming*, all these ideas show themselves; and, these psychic issues are all interconnected.

According to Lacan's theory, "[a]ll human culture" – and, the entirety of "life in society" – is controlled and "dominated by the [s]ymbolic [o]rder, and thus by the phallus as the sign of lack." The subject might or might not like this established order of things; however, it has no other alternative. "[T]o remain in the [i]maginary" means "becoming psychotic", which, by extension, means "[being] incapable of living in . . . society" (Moi 1999, p. 100). In the dramatic work under scrutiny, the male spectators have been endowed with the so-called power to control the female objects; and, this optical ability is parallel with Lacan's theories on patriarchy. In the objectifying process which Lacan calls the 'gaze', the seeing male subject is given a certain sense of mastery; and in the play, it is impossible to ignore the frequent usage of the male look. According to Lacan, "[i]f beyond appearance there is nothing in itself, there is the gaze" (cited in McDonald 1979, p. 343). This conditional sentence uttered by Lacan has the potential to constitute the point of departure while highlighting the significance of the gaze in the wasteland-like atmosphere of the play. It is such an extraordinary situation that it is as though even the words of Samuel Beckett – the leading absurdist – can shed a previously non-existent light on this particular point: "Am I as much as . . . being seen?" (cited in McDonald 1979, p. 343). Ruth starts as the victim of the herd of men; however, she ends up being the victor.

Home is the womb; and, the mother's womb is the very special place where human beings remain 'supposedly peacefully' before their lives as individuals begin. Instantly associated with the death of the individual self, this 'heimlich' plus 'unheimlich' doubling of ambivalent connotations around the female genitalia, suddenly, takes the audience – of course, in fantasy – to a formerly cosy and relaxing, but simultaneously cold and frightening prenatal state. The situation being like this, the womb, which is the earliest home of us all, can logically – and, directly – count as a death-like place that is terrifying, and that predates man's existence. Being faced with the tough task of interpreting and making comments on this contradiction-like point, Freud's own words, about the delicate web of the uncanny, can be the one and only illuminating source or reference; therefore, while drawing the line between the 'homely' and the 'unhomely' instances in the play, it, for sure, serves a much significant function, as a great deal of Lenny's talk centers around his desire of going back to the mother's womb, somewhere with connotations of both 'cosy' and 'cold'. Freud underlines neurotic men's particular way of thinking, to be specific, their ideas regarding the

uncanniness of the female genital organs: This place which can appropriately be referred to as 'unheimlich' is, in fact, the door to the previous 'heim' – that is, home – of all individuals; it is the door which leads to the very special place where each and every human being lived formerly (Freud, in Thurschwell 2001, pp. 118-19).

In the play under the spotlight, the family members are all driven, are all ruled by the characteristic requirements of the three-layered – or triple of – Freudian formulation. In Freud's segregation of the human mind, the id, which demands immediate gratification, is unaffected by any kind of logic or reasoning. The ego, which acts in contrary to the dictations of the irrational id, is the part in charge of reason, and thus, the reality principle. The superego, the main function of which is to control the impulses of the id, includes the values and morals of the society; it enables individuals to make moral judgments; and, it consists of attributes such as personal conscience and ideal self. According to what Jennifer Church says in *Morality and the Internalized Other*, the latter one is "an inner critic and ideal" (in Neu 1998, p. 219). It is these three constituents of the psyche which determine not only the behaviour, but also the attitude of an individual towards himself/herself, towards the other members of his/her family, and towards the society in which he/she is condemned to live.

The functioning of the id – the primitive, animalistic and instinctual elements of libidinal and aggressive energies in need of urgent gratification – is what makes the provocative event of Ruth's coming far more complicated. The all-male family aims at trying to take the advantage of the occasion of Ruth's coming, revealing their inner selves, and thus, the thoughts lurking at the remote corners of their psyche. The presence of Ruth – in Pinter's own words, "the nearest to a free woman that I've ever written – a free and independent mind" (in Gussow 1996, p. 71) – takes the family to the point of a sexual intercourse. As expected, Pinter does not damage the consistency of the family members by injecting – into the last act – a kind of remedy or apology for their non-exemplary attitudes and actions. Inserting an explicit, recognizable, moral tag near the end of the play would only seem dishonest, as what is shown throughout the play is nothing other than the human condition itself.

In the play, the darkest wishes, secret desires, repressed hungers, and intense fears of the characters all find their ways out, as nothing can be concealed within selves. In their article entitled *Strangers to Ourselves: Psychoanalysis*, Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan define the unconscious human mind as a storehouse, as "a repository of repressed

desires, feelings, memories, and instinctual drives, many of which, according to Freud, have to do with sexuality and violence" (2004, p. 389). And, according to Freud, the unconscious is the storehouse of the two basic instincts: The sexual instinct/eros/libido and the destructive/aggressive instinct. And, in close connection with this, his famous notion – that the malaise in modern society is due to the repression of instinctive, unconscious, and archetypal drives – constitutes another point of departure while defining the limits of the psychological drama. In the play, instincts and desires come to the forefront as elements, and factors, determining action. For instance, Ruth completely changes the course of the actions in the house, as she cannot stop her feelings from resurfacing. Being a "licentious woman" (Prentice 1980, p. 458), being in the grips of 'nymphomania' – "[a] psychological condition of women" which is "characterized by uncontrollable sexual desire and an inability to have lasting sexual relationships" (Colman 2002, p. 499) – Ruth must have caused her husband a lot of embarrassment on the university campus if she was unable to adjust herself to a life of respectability in America.

Research regarding the topic of sexuality has become rapidly more abundant since there has been a growing interest in themes revolving around the issue of the intimacy between the two sexes. The representation of sexuality as subject matter was eventually liberated in the 1960s; and, in the real 'social' world, women began to "claim their identity" as competent social beings (Wandor 1993, p. 10). In this regard, the play – with Ruth's confidence in expressing herself, and with her insistence on unburying her desires – is so representative. One member of the herd begins to dance with the woman, "a declaration of physicality" which leads to another "embracing her"; and, at the end, it is the woman who "gain[s] the upper hand", and goes on sitting, "as if on a throne" (Nicholson 2012, pp. 171-72). She snugly fits in with this crowd of men.

The capitalist way of thinking lies at the roots of some dialogues. The audience gets the impression that love is a commodity that can be bartered or sold; and, within the structure of the play, some characters are treated as products, rather than as individuals. Any kind of business contract or relationship is a bargain, is an agreement between pimps and prostitutes; and, the audience is led to believe that this is the only type of transaction that can possibly be made. What strikes attention is the man's "dethronement as head of the house" and the woman's "enthronement as Queen Bee"

(Elsom 1979, p. 110). Even though the woman is the object of the all-male family's sexual consumption and abuse, even though she is treated "as an object of business negotiation", she never shows the characteristics of a weak, or shy, woman. Ruth, who rules the men in the hive, is both whore and mother "in a family structure . . . [that] is simultaneously a centre of brutality and yet the loving 'Home'" (Shepherd 2009, p. 154). She "becomes the apotheosis of [Pinter's] tripartite representation of woman as mother, wife, and whore" (Peacock 1997, p. 84). Having accomplished her seduction of Lenny and Joey, Ruth holds the power in her hands, shows her self-confident ways, and orders the two slave-like men to bring her food and drink:

> I'd like something to eat . . . I'd like a drink. Did you get any drink?. . . . I'd like one, please. . . Whisky. . . . Well, get it. . . . I want something to eat. . . . What's this glass? I can't drink out of this. Haven't you got a tumbler?. . . . Well, put it in a tumbler. (1997, pp. 68-69)

Pinter "add[s] a powerful ingredient to his concoctions, that of sexuality" (Styan 1996, p. 135); and, the play deals with areas of the normal human condition which, if done in a gratuitous manner, comes closer and closer to pornography. Ruth, who has a dubious background, used to work as "[a] [nude] photographic model for the body" (1997, p. 65); and, this is something which is widely known as a euphemism for a prostitute. And, this fact, in turn, means that the mother is replaced by the sexual object. Ruth, peacefully, recounts her – lively, and thus, colourful – memory of the country house with a lake; and, the house which she so lovingly remembers as the setting for her nude posing by the lake, and where there were some drinks and "a cold buffet" sounds like the well-known scene of orgies, which means occasions when a group of people behave in a wild uncontrolled way, especially when sexual activity is involved. The scene reminds the audience of the scene of orgies rather than a venue for photography. It is an image which has something to do with her urban, London, life; and, her wistful recollection, which passes almost unnoticed, has sexual connotations. She tells Lenny that she "walked from the station to the gate", that she "walked up the drive", that "[t]here were lights on", that she "stood in the drive", and that "the house was very light" (pp. 65-66).

The nostalgic memory of Ruth's pre-marital work, the lyrical evocation of her independence and freedom, a time of peace and pleasure that is a sort of 'bye-bye' – a sort of farewell – to her previous life, is also her open invitation to Lenny, a sign that

she is free; and, this can be interpreted as the verbal equivalent to the 'glass of water'. Ruth having been told of Lenny's potential for humiliating innocent women, for being brutal to guilt'less' women, and having taken it all in, explicitly challenges him – sexually – by telling him that "[she]'ll take [him]" "[i]f [he] take[s] the glass". Ruth instantly inverts the patriarchal system by taking on the role of the male. With great self-confidence, she asserts her immediate and effort'less' superiority. Moving towards Lenny with a glass in her hand, she offers to pour water down his throat; and, this makes it clear that it is she who owns the life fluid. She will not mirror male desires, because she leaves behind an empty glass. She goes on to offer Lenny a drink from her water-glass: "Have a sip. Go on. Have a sip from my glass. . . . Take a long cool sip" (1997, p. 42).

Gene Fendt underlines Pinter's taking and moving Freud's symbolology from the degree and level of archetypes of the unconscious to that of a myth about the troubled human soul, and draws special attention to the story of the "radical evil" (1994, p. 58). The audience is forced to see and sense the utter horror; he/she confronts a situation in which he/she makes an assessment of how serious and harmful the evil in the human soul is. In her above-quoted and mentioned 'sip from my glass' speech, Ruth's own passions, which are altogether enshrouded in darkness, are quite clear. The audience does not see symbols of themselves on stage; instead, he/she sees the very same dark choices, and the self-binding passions. And, the existence and reign of such feelings under the roof of the male wasteland is somehow disturbing to the human senses.

The actions revolving around the issue of the inconsequential glass of water is, in fact, a battle which Ruth sexualizes and which she – so willingly – turns to her advantage. And, her insistence on pushing Lenny to drink it may also be a distortion of the Jewish marriage rite. What is more, the particular offering – pouring water down his throat – is the one and only moment in the play when Lenny loses his sang froid, that is, his ability to remain calm. Here, at this stage, Ruth has apparently adopted Lenny's scheme and stratagem; and, she has usurped his privilege, his perogative. She has discovered that content can be made subordinate – inferior – to context, that words and objects can be made to function as special codes, as symbolic ciphers. What is significant is that her water glass becomes a more potent article, a more worthy belonging, than Lenny's impossible-to-move "iron mangle" (1997, p. 40).

One of the characteristics of the city dweller, the apartment inhabitant, is his/her apparent confidence in expressing himself/herself verbally, as exemplified in the situation of Ruth. Because city life requires such kind of a way of living, the person has to move from context to context, from confusion to confusion, and even from chaos to chaos. The languages of class, race, and social occupation are there not only for consideration and evaluation, but also for imitation by the others. Inherently, there is a potential mobility that gives some kind of strength to the ones who want to exploit it pitilessly. Lenny destroys the "thieving" Teddy, who has devoured, who has secretly and deliberately eaten his "cheese-roll" (1997, p. 71), "by his parody of 'America' values" (Raby 2001, p. 68): "[T]ons of iced water, all the comfort of those Bermuda shorts and all that, on the old campus, no time of the day or night you can't get a cup of coffee or a Dutch gin . . ." (1997, p. 72).

A great deal of meaning remains hidden behind the cheese-roll devouring part. Once again, disorder, discomfort, and distaste – which usually come up with food imagery – combine to create a hell-like living environment for the characters. Teddy's act of stealing, and then eating, the cheese roll – which Lenny prepared with loving care for himself – is a seemingly trivial contest which masks and conceals a complex and complicated power struggle (Roy 2007, p. 343). Seemingly trivial struggles – just because of the desire to get the food or drink – mask hatred, contempt, antipathy, barely concealed battles for dominance, and even revenge and vengeance. The academician's "petty", apparently "unmotivated theft" not only "deflects his resentful loss of Ruth's love upon his brother", but also "pays Lenny back" for posing "embarrassing philosophical questions" (p. 345). Another point which needs to be highlighted is that, in the Pinteresque universe, the scarcity of food – or the situation of having no food or drink at all – is linked to lovelessness, and to a total loss of psychological support/reinforcement, and social inequilibrium and unsteadiness. The consumption of 'food' – and, in this case, the cheese-roll that has been swallowed – can be referred to as a special metaphor for a kind of flaw, for a kind of lack of integrity, to be specific, for a kind of moral incompleteness and blankness.

Teddy, who has broken away from his family, is unable to reintegrate himself; the characters have all forgotten about the blood tie; they send Teddy away; because, in Hugh Nelson's words, "the family has no 'need' for a Ph.D" (in Brown 1968, p. 161). The family members are under the command of their growing instincts; they cannot

say ‘no’ to the yearnings of the unconscious mind, as nothing can compete with the instinctual forces. Teddy, returning to civilization, leaves “on a prehistoric scene”: “[T]he goading lioness” is surrounded by a group of “snarling, courting males” (Deleon 1994, p. 60). Ruth becomes erotically involved with Lenny and Joey, who, in turn, succeed not only in subdueing their father, but also in their ambition to sleep with their mother, Ruth, a duplicate of the mother, the mother substitute who stands in for Jessie. What is uncanny about Ruth’s repetition of Jessie’s role is not the “recurrence of something frightening”; instead, it is the “recurrence of something quotidian”, something quite common, “something everyday” (Buse 2001, p. 42). The vagueness and ambiguousness surrounding her former job, which is euphemistically and simply described as a ‘model for the body’, has assisted her in her adaptation to her new role, to her new mission. She never falls; she never stumbles during the process of changing to suit different conditions. The job she did previously was something like a rehearsal for her.

As an unusual patriarch, Max hopes to enjoy the part-time sexual services of someone who is not married to him. His grovelling in front of Ruth – being reduced to pleading and begging for some scraps of her sexual favour – completes the sons’ Oedipal dream. Another detail which strikes attention at this stage is the dreamlike ease with which the sons’ desire is fulfilled. According to Martin Esslin, in the context of fantasy and wish-fulfillment, the play “represent[s] the sons’ dream of the sexual conquest of the mother” and the “discomfiture”, the mental discomfort, of the father. Because of the fact that Teddy is ‘the eldest brother’ – the person whom society generally sees as a father substitute – he is one of the two aspects of the father figure, the other being Max. However, it is crucial to make a distinction between what these two father figures symbolize. To be specific, Max represents the “more ridiculous aspects of senile old-age” whereas Teddy, with his professional realm being philosophy, represents the “superior intellectual claims of the father” (2004, p. 256).

Just like the way it is in the *Oedipus* of Sophocles, the events are not only true on a level of real, particular individuals, but also can be considered as dreams, nightmares of guilt, pain and suffering. The realistic action – which is a metaphor of human wishes, ambitions and hopes, a myth, a dream image, a projection of archetypal anxieties, horrors and desires – is nothing other than the human condition itself. With Teddy being in self-exile, the play, at the end, goes much beyond the realistic level,

and becomes an archetypal image. Lenny's proposition to Ruth, her husband's complacency, his cool acceptance of the new situation, and his placid admission – apparent approval – of her as a whore are all shocking details. According to Martin Esslin, Ruth is a prostitute masquerading as a Madonna, so her choice to remain with the men is quite natural (in Hall 1993, p. 59). Her confident expressions of female desire overturns the traditional patriarchal hierarchy.

The symbolic murder of Max is what attracts most of the attention in the final tableau of the dramatic work; and, by extension, the dream of sexual union with the mother is realized. M. W. Rowe sees the play as a perfect illustration – in other words, as one of the best exemplifications – of the psychoanalytic thesis put forward and defended by Freud: According to Rowe, Lenny's predilection, preference, for unusual and abnormal rather than real and genuine sexual object choice and Teddy's total capitulation – bowing and yielding – to his family's proposals are indicative of neurosis on the part of both characters. This neurosis can specifically be traced back to certain repeated, chain-like, structures within the family's history. After this clear-enough diagnosis, Rowe suggests a solution, and even prescribes a course of action that is designed to ensure a much more 'healthy' sexuality for the deserted husband, Teddy (Buse 2001, pp. 36-37). Ruth chooses the all-male family's animal aggressiveness over Teddy's helplessness; she chooses to stay after a "rather torrid mélange" before the eyes of her spouse (Fendt 1994, p. 48).

Bert O. States draws attention to the Jungian points, and thereby, the 'archetypal' – the innate prototypes for ideas, universal patterns, archaic symbols and images which derive from the collective unconscious. He points out that these lurk beneath the Freudian points. The father-sons "contest", the rivalry, the "fertility rite" on the couch of the male wasteland, the Earth Mother "sacrifice", the tribal sharing of the woman's physical body – which, without doubt, is a "Sparagmos" – and the cyclical "return" are all psychological issues which take the domestic unrest to unprecedented heights (1968, p. 476). The 'Sparagmos' part – which refers to the dismemberment of a victim, to the 'tearing to pieces' of a victim in Dionysian rites – is, by itself, a valid enough reason to label the family as violent. The use of archetypes – the psychic counterpart of instincts – reveals a lot about the psychological state of the herd of men, and the nature of the domestic violence.

Max's indignant sort of outburst when he first sees Teddy's wife deserves real consideration. Immediately assuming that she is a tart, and ironically linking whore, wife, and mother as a triangular aspect, he says, "I've never had a whore under this roof before. Ever since your mother died. My word of honour" (1997, p. 50). The information that Ruth is a mother – to three boys – pacifies Max; but, his statement, without doubt, has a double meaning. This might well mean that Jessie had been a whore; and, if this is true, then Max and Lenny's final proposition to Ruth – which is made casually and received casually by her husband – can be referred to as 'the most natural thing in the world'. Christopher Innes points out that the characters' physical, observable, actions "contradict the socially acceptable platitudes" – clichés – uttered, until by the end the stark contrast turns into "black farce" (2002, p. 345).

The action is a straight struggle for power without appeal to any kind of authority outside the wills of the ones who are involved. There is absolutely no ethical structure by which what happens may be judged or assessed; the characters hardly ever care about morality; and, it is just according to the speaker's whim of the moment. Jessie can be referred to as a whore or an angel from one breath to the next, or from one second to the next, but it is nothing other than a way, a manner, of speaking; and, it does not pre-suppose a kind of obedience to any hierarchy, to any order, in which prostitutes are inferior to angels, or indeed recognizably different. Actually, at this stage, the privileged status of man in the male/female binary opposition, and the depictions of women as angels, demons, saints or whores have to be questioned once more. In the seemingly never-ending struggle for power, the physical body defeats the speculating psyche. The distinct weapons used by Teddy and Sam are too feeble to hurt or wound the other members of the family. However, there is an extraordinary situation regarding the events that take place: John Russell Taylor claims that the men, even when ruled completely by their muscular body, by their instincts, are no match for Ruth, because she does not make any practical distinction between the body and the mind (1969, p. 355).

Sam – who eulogizes Jessie's qualities not only as a lady, but also as a companion – collapses at the moment when the situation about which he has felt embarrassed and guilty throughout his life is restored. The last-minute revelation – which he utters just "in one breath" – seems to have provoked his decease: "MacGregor [Max's best friend] had Jessie in the back of my cab as I drove them along" (1997, p. 86). This may

count as another Freudian point; to be specific, this may be an illustrative example of F. W. J. Schelling's definition of the Freudian uncanny, because something "that ought to have remained hidden and secret . . . [has come] to light" (Freud 1919, p. 4). For Freud, the 'uncanny' – which conjoins not only paradoxical emotions, but also a sense of déjà vu – occurs when a repressed memory exerts itself, generally unexpectedly. It is something which should have been kept as a secret, and is nonetheless revealed. In other words, one can talk about the 'unhomely' aspect if and only if a phenomenon which is often obscured is, all of a sudden, exhibited before eyes. Sam's doubtful intervention, by which he reveals that Jessie was unfaithful with MacGregor, is interpreted – by the others – as the by-product of "[a] diseased imagination"; and, his sudden collapse – which may have been caused by an earlier blow to the head by Max – is totally ignored by the ones near him (1997, p. 86).

Dismissing the particular idea as the by-product of a sick mind is, for sure, another symptom of family dysfunction, and by extension, of domestic unrest. The emergence of Jessie's sexual history – so shortly after the business-like negotiations with Ruth are complete – is indicative of the depth of the psychological problems in which the family seems to be lost. The carefully concealed fact and the delayed exposition are actually of no importance, and never were of any importance. The characters have all made their 'dark' decisions on the basis of what each wishes to remember of the old days, what each wants to see in the present, what each needs, desires, and fears; and, regardless of what is done on the contrary, that decision is inevitable and irrevocable. For his tormenting trouble, Sam can only get an abbreviated sort of eulogy:

> MAX: . . . You know what that man had?
> LENNY: Has.
> MAX: Has! A diseased imagination. (1997, p. 86)

Teddy's "voyeurish connivance at [Ruth's] imagined, [supposed], prostitution" (Kennedy 1975, pp. 187-88) also gives a compact message about the psychological state of the family, as such kind of cool reactions can only come out of the unconscious mind. According to Simon Trussler, Teddy can be interpreted "as a sort of contemporised Oedipus, who's been sleeping with his mother-substitute but loses her to the father he hasn't got the guts to kill" (in Scott 1986, p. 183). It is nothing other than the psychic functioning which takes the family under its strict control. Echoing the Biblical Ruth's words to Boaz – "thou art a near kinsman" (cited in Hugh Nelson,

in Brown 1968, p. 155) – Ruth is welcomed into the tribe by Max's words "you're kin", "[y]ou're kith" (1997, p. 83), while Teddy is immediately rejected from both of the circles. Here, once again, the Freudian pleasure principle shows its full strength. The play exposes the psychic manoeuvres and the very specific machinery of fantasy. Because of the fact that his fantasies are remote – and thus, in a way, out of reach, – Teddy cannot be the winner; and, under such circumstances, he ends up being the loser.

Issues of sexual origins are never far away. Earlier in the play, in Act I, Sam and Max had taunted each other about fornication in Sam's car: In that particular scene, Max impugns Sam's masculinity, accuses him of being a lecherous person, a secret lecher, of "banging away at . . . lady customers", of "having a few crafty reefs in a layby" – "[i]n the back of the [Humber Super] Snipe" – and, of "having a good bang on the back seat"; and, Sam defends himself by saying that he does not "mess up [his] car", or "[his] boss's car", "[l]ike other people" do (1997, pp. 22-23). In Act II, Sam accuses Max's wife and best friend of having committed adultery in that car. Sam – who is generally disregarded by the others, and is less capable of offering direct resistance – loses consciousness immediately after blurting out that Jessie was together with MacGregor, in the back of his cab. Sam's collapse immediately after his revelation would appear to confirm its very serious nature; however, the spiritless negotiations leading up to it, and the disinterested response of the rest to his fainting fit – leaving his prostrate body to remain stretched on the floor – obviate its effect. Ann C. Hall asserts that the body on the carpet is an obvious remnant of the phallic economy which views female sexuality and desire as one of the life-threatening kind of incidents (1993, p. 71).

Max's reaction to Sam's collapse, his "[d]ropp[ing] dead", is one of the most soulless moments in the play. With Sam being reduced to not even 'someone', but 'something', an animate object, that must be "[c]lear[ed] . . . out of [there]", Max exclaims, "He's not even dead!" (1997, p. 86); and, these words are all uttered "as if to live signified effeminacy" (Dukore 1976, p. 38). 'Effeminate', which is an adjective with a disapproving kind of meaning, is used to refer to a man behaving or appearing in a way which is similar to a woman, that is, an effeminate one is a man paradoxically lacking in manly qualities. Despite being treated like this, Sam is the one who knows what is right or wrong; he is the inner critic of the familial unit, and the ideal individual. He is a follower of traditional values and morality; and, this makes it clear that he is

the conscience of the family, and thus, its superego. The work – which presents the audience with the naked animal, previously taking refuge behind a conventional mask – even has a character who is a follower of ideal values, who is the moral leader of the family. And, these are all valid enough reasons to tag Sam as 'the family's superego'.

In the Old Testament story, Ruth was a Moabite and the widow of Mahlon; she was a Gentile who returned to Israel with her mother-in-law, Naomi, saying, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (cited in Hugh Nelson, in Brown 1968, p. 155). Even this, particularly the relevance of her statement to the action of Pinter's play, ought to alert the audience to the possible significance of the parallel. In the Biblical narrative, when she goes back to Bethlehem with Naomi, Ruth directly goes into the field, with the intention of working; and, there, she meets someone named 'Boaz', who is a kinsman of her dead husband, and who speaks really kindly to her. According to the requirements and the obligations of the Israelite law, the brother-in-law of a childless widow, or the next nearest of kin, had to marry her in order to ensure and guarantee the perpetuation, the continuation, of the family line. Ruth went to the threshing floor where Boaz worked, and – while he was sleeping – lied down at his feet, and asserted her individual claim to him, by way of a very old custom: "I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman" (cited in Hugh Nelson, in Brown 1968, p. 155).

At the end, Boaz and Ruth get married, and Boaz says: "Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, and the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place" (cited in Hugh Nelson, in Brown 1968, p. 156). In terms of the family structure and functioning, the Ruth of *The Homecoming* is like the Biblical Ruth, a Gentile and a heathen, by definition unclean and contaminated. What is significant is that the family unit acts not only as a secure haven, but also as a threat from deep within; and, it asserts its claim upon the inhabitants of the house, most frequently, with violence.

Resembling the ways of Troilus in *Troilus and Cressida*, Teddy is forced to witness some scenes which probably curdles his blood, some scenes in which the woman he refers to as 'wife' is pawed, kissed, prostituted, and profaned. Like Shakespeare's Cressida, Ruth is no one other than "a Trojan" who is "among the Greeks (again the 'lien' theme), and a Trojan who makes herself a Greek" by way of using her sex as a

kind of bait (Hugh Nelson, in Brown 1968, p. 158). At the end of the play, she is relegated to Greek Street; and, this is exactly what happened to Cressida. And, the scene in *The Homecoming*, so clearly, reminds the audience of Cressida's welcome to the Greek camp as a sort of prisoner, as a hostage:

> *Agamemnon*: Most dearly welcome to the Greeks, sweet lady.
> *Nestor*: Our general doth salute you with a kiss.
> *Ulysses*: Yet is the kindness but particular; 'Twere better she were kist in general. (Shakespeare 1999c, p. 741)

In accordance with Ulysses' suggestion about the overt act of kissing, Ruth is passed from one Greek to the other Greek; and, each wants a kiss, each demands a sign of affection from her. Ruth, as a hostage of Teddy's all-male family, undergoes a similar treatment and initiation; and, the degree of the eagerness, the willingness, is absolutely the same. Furthermore, in Shakespeare's work, Troilus and Ulysses spy on Cressida while she is flirting with the Greek, Diomedes, with the omnipresent Thersites providing something like an ironic commentary on what is going on (Shakespeare 1999c, pp. 745-46). In Pinter's play, such kind of scenes can be found; and, in these scenes, the sexual urge is exposed in an extremely cruel and unromantic light. One example is Lenny's response to Max's pair of questions: "Where's the whore? Still in bed? She'll make us all animals." "The girl's a tease" (1997, p. 76). Later, at another point, they even go further than that: This time, Lenny suggests himself, aloud, to "take [Ruth] up with [him] to Greek Street". Max – who likes the idea very much – first asks his son whether they will "put her on the game" or not, and then asks whether she will be able to "earn the money herself – on her back" or not, to which Lenny gives a quite simple and short answer: "Yes" (p. 80).

In *The Homecoming*, all the men keep on telling tall tales; however, it is not a play which operates at a level of facts and realities. What the characters say is often to the point in that it shows more and more what they fear, imagine, expect, desire, cherish, and value. In this context, it does not matter whether what they say is true or not. An invented, unreal, past can be as telling as a true one; therefore, it makes little or no difference whether Ruth was or was not 'a photographic model for the body', or whether she was or was not a prostitute when Teddy chose her as his wife. It makes little or no difference whether the dead mother did or did not sleep with another man, whether Lenny's long stories of his violence towards women are highly exaggerated

or complete fabrications, or whether Teddy and Ruth have three sons or not. There is always one thing for sure: The audience is exposed to a step-by-step expanding knowledge of the mental, psychic, lives of the characters.

Pinter, whose vision of human interactions and relationships is basically dialectical or semi-dialectical, gives place to some contradictions, opposing points, which pave the way for new syntheses, and these mixtures, in turn, may also break or fall apart. While the family is talking about Ruth's newly-assigned position and her allocated place in the family structure, and making future plans for an advertising campaign to put the special product across, Teddy instantly comes up with a statement – a reservation – which is so telling in that sense: When he says that she would "get old" too "quickly", Max answers by saying that what his son says is no longer possible "in [that] day and age", by saying that "[w]ith [all] the health service" and so on, 'it' – getting "[o]ld" – is not that possible, by saying that it is something far from possible (1997, p. 82).

Perhaps aware of the threat which Ruth poses, Lenny – a manipulator who, from the beginning till the end, sparks the dissolution of a relationship – attempts to intimidate her by telling her sadistic, slut stories. Lenny launches into long and lurid stories, lengthy tales, about physical assaults on women, stories which concern women whom he has struck cruelly. His narrations, his boasting, and his violence are, in fact, his means of showing off to Ruth and telling her, at least, something about his personality, something about himself. The audience can never be sure whether the tales in question are mere facts or simply invented on the spur of the moment. Very dispassionately and coolly, Lenny tells Ruth about a 'sexuality and fear evoking' lady, who was making certain propositions to him, someone whom he could have killed, but merely beaten up brutally, pitilessly, when he came face to face with her in a lonely spot, somewhere "by the docks" (1997, p. 38). Post-war Europe and the remains of London 'outside the house' – in the background – are all suitable figures of a universe which has, in a way, become Lenny's sort of playground.

The society lady that took liberties with Lenny down 'by the docks' was – in Lenny's words – "diseased"; she was an infected whore (1997, p. 39). Here, in fact, he tells the audience not only about his connections with the unpleasant world of prostitutes and gangsters, but also about the men's tendency to control women by labelling them as 'diseased'. It is true that typical men, heart and soul, try to construct a sympathetic version of identity; however, when women do not cooperate or fulfill their irresistible

desires, men come to the conclusion that there is something wrong, something unusual and unnatural about women. And, the important thing in our case is that all this violence is transferred into the domestic arena, with each member of the family relentlessly creating a sort of hell for the other.

In his second narrative, Lenny tells how he opted for doing some "snow-clearing for the Borough Council", and how much he liked the clearing work early in the morning, in the newly fallen snow, in the midst of heaps of snowflakes. According to his story, on one occasion, an old lady asked him to assist her in moving a very heavy "iron mangle" (1997, p. 40). Lenny had consented to help; however, when he saw that the mangle was very heavy, and the old lady herself showed no sign of "giv[ing] . . . a helping hand" with the job, "not even lift[ed] a little finger", he got angry. The careless attitude of the elderly woman, which got on his nerves, triggered – stimulated and prompted – his violent impulses, namely, his instincts of aggression. This is how Lenny's 'boiling cauldron'-like mind functions; and, this is, definitely, where some instances of the domestic unrest take its source from. Bernard F. Dukore highlights the ambiguity which surrounds the name of 'Lenny', and points out that he might not be "as strong as a lion (the meaning of Leonard)" (1981, p. 174), because there is contradiction in the stories he tells: According to what he says, he is quite proficient in exerting physical violence on women, but, on the other hand, he admits that he lacked the physical strength to move the lady's iron mangle from its place. All these are indicators of Lenny's desire to establish an identity, and his intention of going straight to the top, holding the power in his hands. And, it is these feelings of aggression which he brings, with himself, to the house.

Being quite familiar with the tactics and strategies used by Lenny, being accustomed to his ways, and being able to maintain a façade of isolation and detachment, Ruth shows no sign of the distress, annoyance, surprise, shock, or insecurity her brother-in-law, so willingly, tries to produce. The kind of attitude she generally displays is pure indifference. When Lenny talks of hitting and kicking the syphilitic woman, Ruth responds calmly by asking a simple, but meaning'full', question: "How did you know she was diseased?" (1997, p. 39). Here, the obvious thing is that the lady's disease is not something simply to be scientifically or objectively verified. Needless to say, it is a reality that is imparted by his own mind. What impresses and attracts Ruth is not his callous cruelty or savage brutality, but this crystal clear capacity, potential, for

"subjective awareness" in contrast to, as opposed to, Teddy's "apparently sterile objectivity" (Warner 1970, p. 345).

When he abruptly changes the subject at the end of his latter story – "I just have her a short-arm jab to the belly and jumped on a bus outside. Excuse me, shall I take this ashtray out of your way?" – Ruth, again, responds calmly, taking no risks, leaving nothing to chances, giving no ground: "It's not in my way" (1997, p. 41). Being quite proficient at this struggle which might be referred to as 'indirect boxing', Ruth emerges as the dominant party, the successful side. With an ordinary, a rather commonplace, query and enquiry, she apparently succeeds in castrating Lenny; she does this by cutting his tale short, intentionally disrupting his linguistic mastery. Moreover, the narration of a savage assault on an old lady can directly be linked to the apparently trivial question about the ashtray. Ruth never accuses Lenny of lying; she never inverts the patriarchal hierarchy by establishing her position as the subject that is supposed to know. Instead, she forces Lenny to expose his imaginary status, his role as a storyteller, a creator of male fantasies, male desires.

At another stage, Ruth challenges Lenny on a linguistic level, and chooses to adopt a maternal persona in calling him "Leonard", which is his birth name, "the name [his] mother gave [him]" (1997, p. 41); and thus, she asserts her dominance on what one may call 'the most immediate level'. Eagerly and immediately aligning herself not with the patriarchal, but the matriarchal, Ruth promotes to the position of 'the authority' in the house, which, in turn, changes the course of the actions, reactions, and interactions in the play. What is more, by way of choosing to give Lenny a different name, she altogether "violates the Western tradition of men naming women when heterosexual relationships are established through marriage" (Hall 1993, p. 68). Related to the nomenclature theme, in *The Homecoming*, when Ruth calls Lenny 'Leonard', he immediately reacts by saying that it is the name his mother chose to give him; and, this makes it clear that Ruth is to replace the mother. Near the end of the play, the aloof husband, Teddy, is on the verge of departure when Ruth calls out to him: "Eddie. . . . Don't become a stranger" (1997, p. 88). This hitherto unspoken private name – which differs only slightly from his actual name – suddenly opens up a separate universe of unsuspected intimacy between the wife and the husband. As these details all show, a great deal is buried even under the usage of the names. It is

such a violent living environment that arguments may even result from the pronunciation of names, from such minor details.

Memories serve an important function in the play, so they cannot be left there to dangle. In *Harold Pinter: The Metamorphosis of Memory*, Albert R. Braunmuller asserts that Jessie is introduced "through the survivors' memories of her", and that "[t]hey remember her everywhere", in the kitchen, in the cab, "in the very structure of the house" (1981, p. 164). The memories – which reproduce the past – function as dream substitutes for the puppet-like characters; and, Sam's recalling of his great pleasure at driving Jessie around in his cab shows how strong the hold of the past is. Furthermore, D. Keith Peacock writes about the tableau with which *The Homecoming* ends: "Its arrangement of still, [fixed], figures retrieves a past in which Jessie was the adulterous wife/mother/whore by replacing her with the similarly adulterous wife/mother/whore Ruth" (1997, p. 87). Ruth returns into the family as Jessie's reincarnation; Max comes to such a point that he wonders whether Jessie has been recreated; therefore, it is impossible to separate the present states of the men from their past states. The immorality summarizes the mentality: It is 'a family with a past'.

The thing that is referred to as 'the past' never fades away; it never goes away. In *The Stages of Life*, Jung points out that "[t]here is nothing in the psyche that is old; nothing that can really, definitively die away" (1933, p. 102). In accordance with this view, in *The Homecoming*, Max and Sam only talk about the past when they are in each other's presence; the past and the present are so interwoven that it seems impossible to make comments without considering the other half. A sense of a partly-secret past affects the present behaviours. Freud is also of the opinion that the past is never lost; it is never irretrievable. However, when the past issues become the subject matter of the talk, the characters tend to show soulless behaviours, as in the case of Sam's collapse. In his piece of writing entitled *Harold Pinter: Journey to the Interior*, a work on the anger and detachment theme, Michael Anderson asserts that Pinter is fascinated with "the secret world of the remembered past" (1976, p. 95), that his "dramaturgy marches towards the interior" (p. 98), and that he is "a Janus-headed dramatist, looking forward and back" at the same time, that he can look both ways simultaneously (p. 108). Whether true or false, the past has less importance for its own sake, because of the fact that it becomes the vital material of a character's present existence. The memory of

the dead mother, Jessie, pervades the acts. In the very first pages of Act II, Max talks about his dead wife, using the simple past tense:

> Mind you, she taught those boys everything they know. She taught them all the morality they know. . . . Every single bit of the moral code they live by – was taught to them by their mother. . . . That woman was the backbone to this family. . . . I left a woman at home with a will of iron, a heart of gold and a mind. (1997, pp. 53-54)

Gene Fendt defines Max – the once-powerful-father-figure that made his way with sharp axes and in flowing blood – as "a brittle super-ego", and asserts that he cannot manage to reach the ego or the id, but can just helplessly assault the various devices of the latter one. He causes his son – Joey – momentary incapacity, stubbornly calls attention to the previous defeats at his gripping hands, and hits Sam both literally and figuratively, playing the leading role in a show of kicks and sticks. According to what Fendt says, the two people that stand still, the two people that are there in the final part of *The Homecoming*, Lenny and Ruth, are nothing other than 'the id and the object', or as Arthur Schopenhauer, one of Freud's well-known mentors, would have it, "will and representation", which is the actual world. All the others, all the remaining ones – for instance, the ego, the superego, civilization, fists, and the phallus – have gone out of sight, or possibly collapsed, because they were just epiphenomenal, just an insubstantial, unimportant, and weak pageant – show or ceremony – bodied forth by the two main powers, that can now be seen beside each other, side by side (1994, p. 56).

At this stage, Gene Fendt argues, the Freudian analogy seems to head towards, seems to march towards the religious one. If the playwright dramatizes the old archaic rite of the sacrifice of the ritual king and the mating of the fertility goddess with the new conqueror, it is not primarily the butcher-father that is the displaced king. Freud's association of the original killing with the driving force of the incest taboo clearly shows that Teddy is the king in this contradictory, paradoxical retelling (1994, p. 56). Needless to say, Max does not lose any power, as he has none, as he does not have the slightest of strength, regarding the aspects mentioned. Teddy, God's gift, is the king that is rejected without a second thought, metaphorically kicked out of the circle, driven out of the London house, and forced to "go up the road to the Underground", accompanied by no one (1997, p. 87).

The play is not only a study of the corrupt bourgeois domestic values, but also an exploration and inquiry of the violent male attitudes towards the mother-whore and the equally forceful and effective female desire to play the two-sided role. Not only the well-known Pinter hypothesis, but also the structure and the skeletal outline of the play are crystal clear. In Pinter's plays, a human being sitting in a room, in one corner of a house, sooner or later, this way or that way, receives a guest, a visitor. And, the human being in the room – who receives a certain visit – is either illuminated/enlightened or horrified/shocked by it. Whatever the result, in terms of movement and destination, the former condition in which a human being sat by himself/herself in a room is subjected to some changes. And, it is these newly-formed things, these shady developments, which create an atmosphere which is quite suitable for abuse.

5. CONCLUSION

Eugene O'Neill, Sam Shepard and Harold Pinter – who all have connections with the theatre of the absurd – have chosen the theme of 'disintegration of family' in their plays, for the sole purpose of displaying the 20th century family, as stripped of, as devoid of a mask, which points at the fact that they lay bare everything, before the eyes of the audience. To state it in a different way, what these playwrights show is life itself; they show life as it is. They do not look – or try to look – through tinted lenses, but try to show the realities about the 20th century family. O'Neill with *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Shepard with *Curse of the Starving Class*, and Pinter with *The Homecoming* show how pressure from the outside world affects the realm, the territory, of the family, and how it results in the disintegration of the basic social unit, which is delicately defined by Émile Durkheim. The quite noticeable deviation from the ideal balance of relationships, the general atmosphere of depravity, helplessness and hopelessness in the living environments, the depiction of nightmare realities which have the potential of afflicting family life, the bleak kind of downfall into the category of 'families with disintegrated dynamics', and there being no breadwinner-father and homemaking-mother all point at the social, moral, psychological, and existential issues and processes which are at work.

In all three plays, the individuals are left with no other alternative apart from falling back on distortion, doubt, and hope to make the distressing reality somehow bearable. The more they strive, try, and fail, the more disillusioned, dispossessed, and disorganized they become. Behind the words lies their heart and soul struggle for recognition, acceptance, and 'fitting in', which involves the task of finding a place – for themselves – within the crowd they are trapped and condemned to live in. What is more, the trivia and the clichés used within the structure of the family plays, in fact, expose deep states of unrest, noncommunication, boredom, resentment, and regret; and, due to the psychic war going on in the playwrights' mind, the subtexts are more loaded than what can be seen on the surface. Like an iceberg, the unseen part constitutes the more important part, the more complicated part, and thus, the widely analyzed part. As the psychoanalytic and existentialist explanations, provided in the

chapters, all show, the similarities – the instances of violence and the familial fragmentation – make it possible to weave the plays together. Due to the similar nature of the conflicts, due to the similarity in the origination point of the conflicts, the families have been analyzed from the same point of view. Nevertheless, the minor diversities in the family structures– which have been identified during the course of analysis – also deserve equal attention.

5.1 Intersection Points

Beneath the surface of the behaviours in the family dramas, there is, without doubt, a profoundly deep psychological portrait of the inner workings of the families. One gets the message that the inhabitants of a home can never manage to escape its dysfunction, its 'curse'; and, to be able to move forward, and to understand how one has arrived at his/her current situation, it is more-than-necessary to return to the exact point of origination, to revert back to what he/she learnt and knew first. When things are tough, human beings tend to return to the dynamics established by the familial unit. The plays show why human beings are unable to completely leave their surroundings and environments behind, how they instinctually cling to others, and how their ancestral instincts guide them in times of momentary confusion and distraction.

This study mainly focuses on how social, moral, psychological, and existential factors ultimately lead to domestic unrest, and how the resulting unrest takes the family to the point of collapse and fragmentation, that is, how the situation results in the disintegration of the familial unit. The plays, with themselves, bring questions about how a family should function, how it should be structured, how the institution of the family has lost its sense of purpose and organization, and how alienated the family members become when commitment and love are – in some sense – undervalued. The formerly acceptable patterns – which used to aid members' development and sense of self-worth – have all been lost. What attracts attention is the obstruction of the gateways to understanding.

It is a well-known fact that violence is not only a pervasive, but also a permanent feature of capitalist societies. The endless capacity for violent – or non-violent – thought and action cannot be separated from the behavioural repertoires of both socialized and unsocialized individuals. With the situation being so, the occurrence of violence in the families, in the plays, appears to show the common features and

characteristics of family organization that can be seen in every part, in every corner, of the society. What is clear is that familial relationships have become corrupted as a result of industrialization, consumerism, and capitalism. The money-oriented mentality of the wealthy minority – the lust to get money – caused the majority to lead pitiful lives. Social, political, and economic spheres of the 20th century aimed at transforming the materialistic – and somehow conservative – society, the members of which wanted to liberate themselves, to detach themselves, from their entrapping past. Throughout those times, society was in search of ways to restore the disillusionment that was triggered by World War II.

The Tyrone, the Tate, and the 'all-male' family members – the families in O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class*, and Pinter's *The Homecoming* respectively – pay little or no regard to the world beyond themselves; and, this shows that there is a kind of autism about them. The attitude they generally show towards life brings more and more problems to their house; and, they become nothing other than alternative versions of themselves, doomed to enactment, re-enactment, and then, another re-enactment. Both the current conditions and the past conditions give way to internal violence between the members of the family. Children cannot help becoming violent towards each other; and, this is their unique reaction to the violence which they witness, which they see and sense all around them. Showing non-exemplary behaviours in varying degrees, the characters persist and persevere in an unstable, unsmooth, rough field of negative, violent emotionality.

The British and American families are all on the verge of becoming wastelands with no identifiable social purpose; and, all the by-products of 'geographic mobility' – the capacity/facility of people to move from one region to another – and increased technological specialization give rise to nothing, but arguments and aggressive attitudes within the familial unit. Individuals who are no longer happy with their social standing tend to go to other lands, either to the land of the past, or to far-away 'dream' lands on the map. And, with the coming of technology, and technological advances, individuals have lost their feelings, and ended up being soulless figures. Moreover, the family members in the plays give the impression that they are watching out for some kind of fault in the others; the plays which are under the spotlight are all extreme examples for the Lacanian 'gaze', since the watchers are also being watched: The centres of attention also attract attention. The one who can be referred to as 'the other'

holds the power – in himself/herself – to freeze the person into a being that he/she is not. The gaze of 'the other' – or 'others' – exposes him/her, makes him/her fragile and vulnerable, and transforms him/her into a subject.

On the psychological plane, violence leads to a distortion of the individual selves; and, each member – in his/her own way – is angry about the changes which they have experienced as a consequence of the actions taken by the other, or others, towards them. Each member, progressively, becomes less and less able to take the emotional attitude of the other one in the interactional situation. Living in a chaotic world where there is nothing much left for them, human beings – and thus, the characters in the plays – feel the irresistible urge to search for satisfying values. When they feel the weight of the world on their shoulders, they try to find a refuge, a haven, in order to cope with the pain; and, their desperate experience is a clear sign of the world pressing on their shoulders. For sure, a battle has to be fought in order to prevent the possibility of becoming an irrelevant cog in the machinery of an indifferent society and an uncaring city. Then, if it is not God, human beings should cling to another source of power, for the sole purpose of coping with the O'Neillian 'sickness of today'. And, when the characters are lost in this search, that is, when they cannot find anything to hold on to, they become aggressive, as a result of which they move towards violence.

One of the causes of familial disintegration, in the 20th century, is the failure of materialism, science and technology to provide a satisfactory substitute. And, religion – which had formerly been a structure which encircled human beings' life, and provided them with an organized system of images and symbols by which they could express their aspirations, and desires, towards psychic wholeness – has lost its force; and, with the loss of this unifying framework, human beings became not only dispossessed beings, but also fragmentary beings. Pipe dreams and the escape from reality, at times, seem to be the only way out; they are the only things that are left – for human beings – to make life more bearable, more tolerable, after the Nietzschean 'death of the god'. In the plays under scrutiny, there is no religious source of consolation. Nietzsche, the German existentialist philosopher, argues that Christianity's constant emphasis on the afterlife makes its believers less and less able to cope with earthly life. The tragedy comes out of the complete loss of faith and the 'vain' attempt at substituting an escape by way of lies, compulsions like alcoholism, and even drug – morphine – addiction, as exemplified in the situation of Mary, the

mother figure in O'Neill's play. Characters tend to weave a fabric of lies to hide themselves from having done a certain thing, from having performed an action which they currently regret; and thus, they are, in a way, forced to resort to 'defense mechanisms', unconscious reaction patterns that are employed by the ego to protect itself from the worry that arises directly from some form of mental conflict.

Each character is forced to come face to face with a past which no more has any clear-cut, sharply outlined, referents; they are all hurled into the past, as a result of the state of general inwardness. All three playwrights acknowledge the power of past generations on current family behaviours. At times, the only way to find a resting point is to retreat further and further into the distant past, into a kind of comfort zone which is so remote that one can organize and reorganize it according to his/her own liking. However, when this backwards journey – this journey into the past – becomes the subject matter of much of the talk, distress starts to reign in the living environments, and this, in turn, leads to violence of varying degrees, either verbal or physical.

No character is in Elysium, or the Elysian fields. No one experiences a state of great happiness. The father figures are not selfless, but selfish; they never consider things from the mother's perspective. Because of not considering things from their point of view, they cause needless problems for the mother figures. For instance, the father figure in Shepard's play believes in the need to discredit, wipe out, and even erase the woman, whether within or outside of himself, and aims at asserting a macho identity which the Shepardesque frontier/cowboy mythos privileges as being truly manly, and which – according to Shepard himself – is really, is truly American. The stories, or tall tales, the men tell the audience usually seek to rationalize their violent actions and abusive behaviours. They all imply that the men are just confused or are in search of something that they desperately need – freedom, independence, control of their lives and of their family, authority, etc. – and rightfully deserve. This study also focuses on the reverse side of the medal, that is, how the mothers try to get rid of the undesirable domestic situation. The women that leave, or desire to leave, the male space of the stage are often treated by the patriarchs as selfish betrayers of the familial unit, most particularly, of their spouses. Moreover, this betrayal is established, according to the male story of events, as the source, as the origination point of the violence, destruction, and death the male ones repeatedly enact on stage. The patriarchs – who are so intent on blaming the matriarchs – resort to this strategy, defense mechanism, for the sole

purpose of eluding the responsibility, the duty, they owe their family as head of the household.

The character types O'Neill, Shepard and Pinter depict in their plays are victims, victimizers, or victors. The women in the plays are all victims of demands which are seemingly at odds with themselves; and, they are no longer representatives of such preferable things as purity, order, and serenity. As opposed to the gentle, submissive and naïve 19th century women – who were guardians of home fires, angel-like presences at the hearth, and perfect pillars for men to lean on – 20th century women, out of dissatisfaction and unhappiness, forcefully tried to establish their identities in a number of spheres of life, tried to get away from their families, or hopelessly turned to drugs and isolation. All three playwrights make it clear that, in an increasingly industrialised society, the position of women in the social structure has changed. Like Ruth in Pinter's play, the 20th century women asserted and re-asserted themselves, trying to get the power in their hands. Like Ella Tate in Shepard's play, they looked for ways to free themselves from their families, their domestic duties and responsibilities. Or, like Mary Tyrone in O'Neill's play, women – frustrated by the expected tasks of womanhood – became hysterical. However, hysteria – which signalled an unconscious kind of protest not only against the conflicting expectations for women, but also against the lack of career and educational opportunities that are available to them – became a functional, double-edged, sword for the women: This particular sickness of the mind gave her 'freedom and attention' which was not often hers for the asking. But, on the other hand, it increased her dependency, made her a slave to physicians, cures and treatments, and made her suspect as a kind of complainer, whiner, malingerer.

All three playwrights direct the attention of the audience to the situation of the children who are squeezed into a shared living area. When the mother fails in the domestic management and in her duties as a mother, the children can find no other alternative apart from looking for a mother substitute. In O'Neill's play, one of the siblings turns all his attention to a prostitute, and the other finds the contentment and the maternal qualities in the sea, the symbolic mother, and experiences a moment of transcendentalism, at the end of which he feels some sort of unity; and, his situation is an exemplification of Freud's 'Nirvana principle', a phrase which he borrowed from Barbara Low's psychoanalysis, a phrase which means something 'beyond the pleasure

principle', something which seeks rest, vacuity, and an ultimate release from the antinomies, contradictions, of existence, from the cycle of existence into a state of non-activity. On the other hand, in Shepard's play, the brother and sister fantasize about going to far-away lands; and, in Pinter's play, the all-male family members, in the midst of violence, turn their guest into a trio of 'wife/mother/whore'.

Another point which deserves emphasis, in the context of violence, is the Oedipus complex: The erotic feelings of the son towards the female parent, the feelings that are accompanied by rivalry and hostility towards the male parent, during the phallic stage of psychosexual development. In O'Neill's play, the elder brother is a product of the Oedipus complex; in Shepard's play, there is the possibility of an upcoming Oedipal attachment; and, in Pinter's play, the Oedipal situation reaches its climax, its peak, giving harm to the balance of the familial relationships. All three playwrights underline the consequences of the distance between sons and fathers, and the violent behaviours that set the scene for the above-mentioned complex.

The Tyrone, the Tate, and the 'all-male' family members are all under the influence of a number of Freudian forces. Freud is of the opinion that human beings are torn by a fundamental, essential, kind of rift, battle, between animal-like motives and civilized demeanour, that is, between an animal nature and some forms of cultural aspirations. And, the particular process of socialization involves not only alienating oneself, but also hiding the truth from oneself. Human beings – and thus, the characters in the plays – are all pushed towards the act of looking for, searching for pleasure, in a rapacious, ravenous, vulturous, and single-minded fashion. To become acceptable, both to others and to themselves, they have to hide these animalistic motives. The moment these purely hedonic motives come to the surface, the moment the borders are crossed, violence spurts out. And, the resultant mode is a power struggle, a situation in which the family members compete for control in a particular sphere. In all three plays, there are characters who are under the firm grip of their unconscious mind. The ego not only represses, but also regulates, arranges, bestial impulses in the id, just to be able to maintain a state of safety in a world of other people. The minds of the characters in the plays are full of secrets, desires, and disavowed impulses, sexual and aggressive.

A person's unconscious enhouses all the accumulated patterns of life and behaviour that are inherited from his/her ancestors. Every kid, prior to consciousness, is possessed of a potential system of adapted mental functioning; and, this unconscious,

instinctive functioning – which is always present, and active, in the conscious life of a person who has become an adult – is one of the factors effecting the course of the actions undertaken by the characters in the plays. The patterns, which are handed down by some generations of man, have an influence on the way individuals behave. In this context, the Jungian 'racial memory' has been taken into consideration, at some points, in the study. Two other Jungian aspects that have been referred to in the analysis part are, the 'anima', the feminine in the male, and the 'animus', the masculine in the female. At some specific points in the plays, men behave like women, or vice versa. And, this changes the balance of the relationships within the family, and leads to unrest, and eventually, to disintegration.

The living environments in the plays are like hell, in the Sartrean sense. As mentioned earlier in the study, in *Huis Clos (No Exit)*, Jean Paul Sartre puts forward the idea that hell is not so much about a particular place, but a state of mind in which the person finds himself/herself. In his play, he creates the desired dramatic effect by postponing the explanation of where the particular drawing room is. Furthermore, by way of using 'Second Empire' furniture, he makes the idea of hell something that is accessible to his contemporary audience in France; and, he also implies that hell exists in the world, in this planet. As in Sartre, the concept of 'the Other' occupies a central place in the plays that have been analyzed. The stark reality delineated is the division between the conscious and the unconscious human mind; and, this is one of the primary sources of pain and suffering in the living environments. Human consciousness – which does not stand by itself, which is never alone in the world – has to accommodate itself with other minds that are also struggling to exist. Otherwise, problems are sure to come one after the other. And, it is such kind of existential problems which keep piling up in the plays. The characters all contribute to the task of creating a hell-like atmosphere for each other. And, it is the crushing realization that drives the families to further and further unrest.

The idea behind Sartre's words – "HELL IS – OTHER PEOPLE!" (Sartre n.d.b, p. 47) – is present in all three plays. As mentioned and explained in details earlier in the study, the full version of the quote is a perfect illustration of Sartre's existential philosophy. The plays that have been analyzed have something in common with *No Exit*, a play which depicts the arrival of three characters in hell, which happens to be a drawing room. As the characters try to understand what or which sin has landed them

into hell, and what their punishment may turn out to be, they see that there is no torturer, executioner, or flames to burn their troubled souls eternally. It is just the three characters, who are trapped in a deadlock, in a situation in which agreement cannot be reached, regardless of what is being done on the contrary. What is significant is that the other characters in the room count as the punishment. Just like Sartre's play does, the chosen plays create a similar effect; and, they perfectly illustrate the utterly difficult coexistence of people.

'Others' – and their gaze – is what alienates and locks individuals in a particular kind of being; it is this situation which, subsequently, deprives them of their freedom; and, this is exactly what is experienced by the characters in the plays. One becomes the other's torturer; and, the one and only defense that is left at one's disposal, the only defense that is not out of reach, not out of consideration, is to transform the others, to turn them into a sort of object for one's own consciousness, and, specifically, with one's own characterization. Regarding these Sartrean aspects, one has to rid himself/herself of others, just to escape and to reclaim, get back, oneself and the freedom that the Other's gaze is stripping, depriving, him/her of. All these existential problems are meticulously described – in the context of family relationships – by O'Neill, Shepard and Pinter.

Being caught in the above-mentioned vicious circle, the characters in the plays suffer, as a threat is posed to their existence in this world; and, all three playwrights give place to this very specific idea. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre puts forward his view that the 'other' constitutes a problem for the existence of another. If there is an 'other', if there is the presence of an 'other', whoever he/she may be, whatever may be his/her relations with the other person, and without his/her acting upon this person in any way except by the pure rise, pure growth, pure upsurge, of his/her being, then this person has an outside, then this person has an essence. Thus, the characters in the plays are sort of captives, prisoners, who have to endure the presence and the fixating gaze of the other.

O'Neill, Shepard and Pinter draw attention to identity issues which result in violence, and which are never far away from the living environments and family situations. 'Identity' refers not only to a series of affiliations and social roles, but also to a person's sense of individual self – defined by a set of physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics – which is not wholly shared with any other person. The characters in

the plays try to bolster their identities; and, during the process, they choose to exert power and pressure on the others, either verbally or physically. And, by extension, one of the causes of the familial disintegration seen in the plays is 'identity crisis', which means a particular period/episode of psychological distress, when a person searches for a better sense of individual self and an acceptable role in the society in which he/she is condemned to live. This situation specifically refers to the psychosocial state/condition of disorientation and perplexity, and the role confusion which occurs as a result of some contradicting, warring, internal and external experiences, expectations, and crushing sort of pressures. In the plays, the acute anxiety produced by all these factors leads to nothing, but violence.

This study shows a panorama of not one thing, but so many things. There is tension, dispossession, and self-deception: The characters, who are under presssure, are in search of something to hold on to; and, when they feel the need to establish an identity, or when they try to soothe their soul, they resort to defense mechanisms, and desire to escape from reality, from the actual world surrounding them. There are the instinctive impulses, personal and interpersonal dilemmas, obstacles, and obsessions: Desires push the characters towards certain actions, most of which lead to either verbal or physical violence. When the characters – who are lost in unreasonable thoughts and desires – cannot make up their mind, they are left in between two things. Or, there is a contradiction between what they say or do. And, it is as if something stops them before they move on to acceptable kind of actions. There is the state of emotional burnout: As a result of the excessive, prolonged, and unresolved stress in their family life, the characters feel worn-out mentally; they feel overwhelmed, and emotionally drained; and, they cannot meet constant demands due to the mental exhaustion they experience. The fragmented and disordered selves, the toxic and narcissistic family members in the plays, hopelessly, try to overcome the trauma of the non-functioning unit. However, they cannot succeed in doing that, regardless of what they do to get rid of the undesirable situation. Parental neglect and ineffectiveness, the cycle of intergenerational transmission and legacies, the revelation of unpleasant truths, and the ethical values which turn upside down are all related factors which take the families to the point of disintegration.

In the existential context, the 'in vain' struggle for adaptation to the world around, and the seemingly never-ending questions of existence attract attention. When the

characters cannot find meaning in life, when they are dissatisfied with the things they have, they turn to the remote corners of life, searching for integration, unity and harmony. In the economic context, the financial considerations and difficulties push the characters to such hopeless situations that they forget all about their familial responsibilities and duties. The sugar-coated announcements are also telling, since they foreshadow the upcoming violence and the point of no return. And, further points which deserve emphasis are the 'supposed' dominance of men in almost every sphere, and the 'sui generis' counterattack, self-assertion, of the female sex.

5.2 Dissimilar Points

As explained in the main chapters of the study, in the dramatic works, there are characters who cannot leave their living environments behind; there are characters who, out of some instinctual forces, hold on to the others, for some sort of consolation, for some sort of relaxation for their soul. Among the three plays, only in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, the family members are not – physically – hurled into separate locations, at the end. In *Curse of the Starving Class*, in spite of the father figure's absence, the story at the end of the play may count as an implication of the patriarch's future return, his future arrival. However, in *The Homecoming*, the patriarch and the matriarch – without a second thought – leave each other; and, there is no hint of an upcoming, future, union. In this context, by comparison, Pinter's play can be interpreted as a more serious case of familial fragmentation. The nature of the husband-wife separation is closely related to the woman's gaining of power. Leaving aside her former enigmatism, she asserts herself quite determinedly. Instead of suppressing her individual self, she ends in a position of supremacy, turning the patriarchal order – the supposed superiority of patriarchy – upside down.

As opposed to the idea of the 'law of the father' in O'Neill's play, as opposed to James saying that Mary's virginal past is just a pipe dream, and that she was, in reality, a flirt (Hall 1993, p. 39), in Pinter's play, the male – who owns the symbol of power, the phallus – is no longer in the position of the lawgiver. Due to the changes in the structure of society, due to being exposed to an atmosphere suitable for her individual self to flourish, the 20th century woman – like Pinter's female character – may look for ways to become the dominant side in the male-female relationship. Women who struggle to avoid the sense of disappointment, women who dislike anything that prevents her from

doing what she wants to do, may, quite well, choose to listen to the dictates of her mind, and behave accordingly, even if that means forgetting all about her own family.

In the 20th century, women were often shunned by men as a result of which she lacked a sense of self-hood. However, in Britain, certain conventions – including power relations between the sexes – have turned upside down, as exemplified in Pinter's female figure, who has tried to break the conventions down. In accordance with the above-mentioned points, the study has also shown that the change of behaviour in women does not always have something to do with sexuality. As illustrated in the situation of the mother in O'Neill's play, the woman – due to being dissatisfied with family life – turns further and further to her inner self, and ultimately becomes hysterical, and is ruled by uncontrollable, extreme emotions. She falls into a mental, hallucinogenic, state in which she is unable to differentiate between the distant past and the traumatic present. Unable to recognize her own family, unable to hear anything or anyone, she comes to a state which unconsciously pushes her towards intense vulnerability. And, it is the pressure of psychic forces – secrets, desires, and disavowed impulses – in the return of the repressed that leads to the tension and the symptomatic signs of neurosis. When too much is demanded of individuals, their mental condition begins to deteriorate; and, at this stage, the form of sickness, which is known as neurosis, shows itself, as exemplified in the situation of the mother in O'Neill's play.

In post-war society, the woman was – most of the time – isolated, and thus, forced to suffer from solitude, at the centre of her individual family; they were pushed towards the act of seeking some sort of companionship; and, these led to a raise in women's voice in the 1960s, which means approximately two decades after O'Neill wrote his play. In accordance with this change in the social standing of women, in Shepard's and Pinter's chosen plays, the mother figures have more freedom, both social and sexual. They are confident and determined enough to search for alternative lifestyles outside the house, outside the domestic arena. They do not choose to turn to their inner selves; therefore, there are no situations/mental states which can be labelled as 'hysteria', 'neurosis' or 'hallucination'.

The study has also shown that the mother in O'Neill's play – who praises her father and her father's home to the sky – is under the influence of the Electra complex; and, this has also led to a number of conflicts in the Tyrone household. On the other hand, in Shepard's and Pinter's plays, there is no implication related to that psychoanalytic

issue. As Pamela Thurschwell mentions in her work, and as explained earlier in this study, in the Oedipus myth, Freud found a form of a tragedy which can be seen in every family, even though "on a less dramatic scale" (2001, p. 47). It is true that Oedipal situations, within the structure of the plays, attract attention. However, the extent, or degree, of this complex varies from one play to the other. The Oedipal situations in O'Neill's and Shepard's plays are not as sharp or sharply-defined as the one in Pinter's play. *The Homecoming* presents an extreme, as all social interaction crumbles, taking with it all that can be referred to as 'traditional morality'. Archetypal Oedipal desires are revealed; the mother has obviously become a sexual partner; and, the father has been defeated and, eventually, reduced to nothing, but animal docility. The animal imagery also adds another dimension to the play, as it hints at the family's animality, to their inability to say 'no' to their sexual 'instincts' – their energetic, bodily drives to certain sorts of action – by which they are all controlled. Here, another related point – about the Oedipal scene – is that, after the mid-century, women were no longer as inevitably tied to child-bearing roles as their elders had been. The 'Swinging Sixties' made it quite possible for women to have more sexual freedom than they used to have, and therefore, more sexual power. With the coming of the 1960s, sexuality was viewed not only as a biological reality, but also as a social reality for the female sex.

In spite of the fact that they all lack the quality of selflessness, only the father figure in O'Neill's play arouses feelings of sympathy. Behind his intentions and decisions lies 'financial considerations', a problem which came with World War II and took families towards the point of disintegration. James who is driven by the American Dream – the belief that anybody, no matter where he/she was born or what class he/she was born into, can attain his/her own version of success, wealth, and happiness in a society in which upward mobility is possible for all citizens – does nothing out of ill purpose; he is just troubled by the idea of the 'possibility of poverty'. In this context, he is much more innocent than Weston and Max. Despite being quite materialistic in action, James is actually the contrary through his intention. As Grant H. Redford mentions in his work, and as explained earlier in this study, devotion to material things corrupts, and James is corrupted in this sense (1964, p. 529). In O'Neill's play, the idea of the American Dream – the U.S. ideal which says that equality of opportunity allows all Americans to aspire – is between the lines, whereas, in Shepard's play, it is

obvious that 'that Dream' has lost its force, as it has been betrayed. And, this loss leads to unrest, and then, to the disintegration of the family.

As opposed to the father figure in O'Neill's play, the father figure in Shepard's play is not a person whom one can trust: James' verbal assaults are nothing when compared to Weston's shows of aggression and violence, with 'bottles crashing' and 'glasses breaking'. And, Weston's shows of physical violence may be tagged as 'less severe' when compared to the violence Max resorts to. The difference is that Weston strikes at objects, at inanimate things – like the wooden door of the house – whereas Max angrily attacks his own family members, using his 'walking stick', which has been interpreted as 'a phallic symbol' during the course of analysis, in the fourth chapter. Another difference is that James' attitude, his course of action, has nothing to do with the Freudian 'sexual' instincts. As far as those instincts of pleasure and sexuality are concerned, Pinter's play is a more loaded – and thus, more complicated – piece of dramatic work.

It is true that the fathers in the plays all cause needless problems for their families; it is true that they all create the Sartrean, hell-like, living environment at times. Trapped in between life and lifelessness, being presented with an existential problem which cannot be solved, coming face to face with such a paradox, they are all, in a way, obliged to confront their inner demons as well, and thus, their own sort of hell. However, the hell-like conditions which James prepares for the rest of the Tyrones is more humane, as he does not punch anything or anyone with all his might. Unlike Max, he does not equate manhood with murder; his hand does not ball into a fist; all he can stage before the audience is verbal violence of some sorts; physical violence is something out of his professional realm. As Gene Fendt mentions in his work, and as explained earlier in this study, the moment unreasonable demands are made, the id tends to use its motor end – which can either be fists or the phallus – in the "id-ic" fashion (1994, p. 54). Shepard's father figure uses his fists; Pinter's father figure uses both his fists and the phallus; and, O'Neill's father figure uses none of the two, and opts for a semi-violent language, as his weapon.

With the resultant 'overall chaos' of the wars – World War II, the Vietnam War/the Second Indochina War, or the Cold War – in the background, with the shock and sadness brought to Americans by the JFK assassination, with the independent, self-confident, self-reliant, self-assured and goal-oriented Baby Boomers on the stage, with

the Civil Rights Movement which aimed at promoting legal equality, with individuals who desire to make a difference and influence the culture of the nation, with the reversal of the sex roles, with the rising tide of crime and dependence on drugs, with the youth being in open revolt against their parents, and with the society getting more and more industrialised, the structure and the balance of the family relationships have changed. When one or more of these factors combine with the domestic setting, situations march – or tend to march – towards the point of violence. And, as highlighted throughout the main chapters of this study, they affect the behavioural modes of the familial unit in undeniable ways, and are reflected in the plays, in varying ways, tones and degrees.

In the light of all the crucial points which have been taken into consideration so far, it is right to assert that the idea of a family not sticking together is what gives rise to ongoing difficulties. The three plays that have been under the spotlight in this study reflect the tragedy of disunited families through various reasons. The unbreakable chain holds the dramatic aspects, the Freudian, Jungian and Lacanian psychoanalysis, and the Sartrean existentialism together, and, subsequently, succeeds in weaving them together. It is true that life alternates between savage victory and abject defeat; domestic unrest that leads to familial disintegration adds gravity to the situation; and, the idea of an ideal family, the iron determination and perseverance all fade into the background. Within the structure of the plays, there is no example of an action that can be referred to as ‘a selfless sacrifice’. The zig-zagging of emotions are all indicative of thoughts taking refuge in the psyche. Home is where the hurt is…

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