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The Recesses of the Unconscious in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*

Eugene O'Neill'in Uzun Bir Günden Geceye Yolculuk Oyununda Bilinçaltının Derinlikleri

Buket DOĞAN^{a*}

^a Lect. PhD, School of Foreign Languages, The Division of Modern Languages, Middle East Technical University, Ankara / TÜRKİYE
ORCID: 0000-0001-6847-645X

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ÖZ

Eugene O'Neill'in *Uzun Bir Günden Geceye Yolculuk* isimli oyununda, Tyrone ailesinin dört üyesi kariyerleri ve aile hayatları ile ilgili bazı tercihler yaparlar. Tyrone'ların uygulamaya koydukları bu tercihleri hayatlarının geri kalanını etkisi altına alır ve yaşamlarını bir nevi işkenceye dönüştürür. Ailenin babası James Tyrone en büyük amacının ailesini birlikte ve sağlıklı tutmak olduğunu sıklıkla dile getirir de iki erkek çocuğu Jamie ile Edmund ve eşi Mary çeşitli türde bağımlılıklarla baş etmeye çalışmakta, bir türlü kendilerini saygıdeğer bir çevrede konumlandıramamakta ve sağlıklı ilişkiler yürütememektelerdir. Oyun sabah 08:30'dan başlayan aynı günün gece yarısına kadar olan süreyi ele alır ve tıpkı günün geceye dönmesi gibi karakterlerin ruh durumları ve olayların akışı da kötüleşmekte ve her şey giderek daha da karanlık bir hal almaktadır. Bu ailedeki her bir karakterin trajedisi görünürdeki bilinçli tercihlerinde değil aslında Lacan'ın geliştirdiği içeriksel araçlar ışığında bilinç altındaki dürtülerinde izlenebilir. Bu makale Lacan'ın yapılanmasını dile benzettiği bilinçaltına ışık tutarak karakterlerin hareketlerinin altında yatan asıl sebepleri ve sözle ifade ettikleri ruh durumlarını açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu açıdan, bu çalışma Tyrone ailesinin hayatlarında bu denli mustarip olmalarının nedenlerini İmgesel ve Simgesel düzenler arasında gidip gelirken her birinin nasıl çeşitli bağımlılıkların etkisi altında kaldıklarını ve Simgesel düzende kendilerini aslında nasıl doğru şekilde konumlandıramadıklarını yeni bir yorumsal çerçevede açıklamayı hedeflemektedir.

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ABSTRACT

In Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, four members of the Tyrone family make some choices about their careers and family life. It is apparent that the adverse outcomes of Tyrone's respective decisions that they have reached hold sway and torment the rest of their lives. Although James Tyrone, the head of the family, announces his credo as keeping his family together and healthy, his two sons Jamie and Edmund and his wife Mary suffer from different types of addiction, from not being able to position themselves in a respectable environment and to develop healthy relationships. The play takes place on a single day, starting from 8.30 in the morning to midnight, which is quite parallel with the descending mood of the characters and events. Each of these characters' tragedies can be traced not only in their seemingly conscious choices but in their collective unconscious which can be anatomized with some Lacanian conceptual backcloths. This paper forms its basis on discovering the ulterior motives of the characters' actions and the way they speak language by scrutinizing their unconscious, which reveals itself in a structure of language in Lacanian outlook. Thus, this study aims to create a hermeneutical frame by laying the underlying reasons for why the Tyrone family suffer, which can be traced in how these family members fail to identify themselves with the symbolic father which is a functional metaphor for rules and regulations in the society and by highlighting what kind of master signifiers the Tyrone family keep using to substitute the Name-of-the-Father.

* Sorumlu yazar/Corresponding author.
e-posta: buketdogan@gmail.com

Introduction

The play starts early in the morning and lasts a day until midnight during which the lives of the characters deteriorate and as a family they dissolve. Gerardine Maney, similarly identifies that the dramatic action is “retrogressive rather than progressive” (1991, p. 206). Being a canonical play and having embodied the zeitgeist of 1950s America marked by the post-World War II boom, the dawn of the Cold War and the civil rights movement, *Long Day’s Journey into Night* has been analyzed from several viewpoints putting the emphasis on the historical and social context. The polysemic word “boom” insinuates a boom in economy, rise of the suburbs and other consumer goods; thus, America was then a dreamland for underachievers from many different places in the world. In the same vein, the Tyrone family of Irish descent may aspire to start their family in America. However, family as a metonymic extension of nation in America seems to be at stake in this play. Just as American dream fails to promote inclusiveness for hybrid groups on the macro level, American family type as a grand narrative cannot hold its members in one center either. In the microspace of the domestic sphere, “family” has been invalidated as a grand narrative and in trying to comply with the dictations of building a nation and/or a family as institutions, characters in this play get sick and torn apart in different ways like addiction to morphine and varying degrees to alcohol. The Tyrone family proves to be dysfunctional and there is a drama about family conflict at the heart of this play. The head of the family, James Tyrone is an aging and a failing actor. He is accused of having caused the suffering for the whole family as he chooses to invest his money in properties rather than spending it on his family’s needs. As an actor, he has been leading a mobile life; spending days in hotel rooms during the theatre season on Broadway and in a summer house for a few months during summer. This traveling lifestyle appears unsuitable for his wife Mary, with a sensitive disposition and raising healthy children in her eyes. After their first child dies of lack of care and being treated at the hands of cheap doctors, Mary’s psychology seems to deteriorate and, in the end, to relieve her pain, she becomes a morphine addict. James’ and Mary’s two sons Jamie and Edmund cannot also build healthy relationships and habits. Jamie, for instance, can neither have a proper or a stable job nor a steady relationship with women. Edmund, the younger one, has also misused his youth, and now he is physically ill and an alcoholic. To relieve themselves of their baggage each family member is observed to be in a constant verbal fight against each other and to hold one another accountable for their tragedies. The uneasiness each Tyrone experiences both as an individual and as a family can be analyzed in light of some conceptual tools that Lacan developed to understand how their unconscious is formed and makes them dysfunctional in 1950s America. Unveiling the power of unconscious over everyday actions and thoughts Lacan engages in how language and symbols shape human subjectivity and render the construction of the ego. So, language is highly related to the question of human subject and its place in society. As Lacan puts into words, “it is not only man who speaks, but that in man and through man *it* speaks” (as cited in Sarup, 1992, p. 12, emphasis in original). With this linguistic data, this play gives us the resources to practice linguistic profiling and to analyze their alter egos. Thus, this article aims to analyze how Tyrones struggle to mask their traumatic family relationships by studying their language which can be treated as a symptom for their unconscious.

The present troubling situation in the Tyrone family can be seen as the tip of an iceberg and the hidden chunk lays itself bare in the moments of revelations about their past in their family discussions. During these heated discussions, one thing is clear: each inflicts sufferings on the other, and they cannot break this cycle of accusations. In this vicious circle specifically, several implications reveal distinct problems in having a smooth transition to the Symbolic order which Lacan identifies as a realm of language, laws, and social structures. The three orders that Lacan names as the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic can be conceived as

different planes of existence and they are independent realities each of which is concerned with different functions, though they are at the same time interconnected. As Madan Sarup (1992) concludes, Lacan stresses at any moment each register may be implicated in the redefinition of the other (p. 84). For example, Imaginary register evolves out of the mirror phase but extends into the adult subject's relationship with others; in the same way Symbolic register also supports the process by initiating the subject with the societal codes. Once the subject is introduced with the language systems, they can put themselves and their pasts in question. In the same vein, subjects can restructure events after they have occurred. As Sarup highlights "it is well known that all of us are constantly rearranging our memories, histories, and identities" (p. 85). The Tyrone family in order to relieve themselves from the tragic effects of their painful past memories in each fight they restructure past events. They experience problems in being initiated into the Symbolic register and not being able to submit themselves to the authority of the Name-of-the-Father. Instead, they use master signifiers to substitute the sorrows over their loss.

In his line of thinking, Lacan juxtaposes the Subject's entry into language with its castration by submitting itself to the authority of the Law-of-the-Father. Alan Sheridan puts a note in his notes for the Name-of-the-Father translating Lacan's *Ecrits* (2006) as follows: "This concept derives, in a sense, from the mythical, symbolic father of Freud's *Totem and Taboo*. In terms of Lacan's three orders, it refers not to the real father, nor to the imaginary father (the paternal imago), but to the symbolic father" ("Translator's Note", 2001, xiii). The conclusion to be drawn from this note is that Lacan places the *phallus* within the Symbolic order and argues that it can be understood as a signifier only in the linguistic sense of the italicized term. The *phallus*, thus is a signifier, function or metaphor. That is why, Lacan highlights that the Symbolic order is "constitutive for the Subject" (2006, p. 7). This recognition gives an illusory wholeness and unity; thus, Lacan calls the Symbolic order "fictitious" not "in its essence that which deceives" (1992, p. 12), but that it is constructed by the ego in order to be initiated with the rules and regulations of the society they live in. The ego, as Lacan asserts, "represents the center of all resistances to the treatment of symptoms" (2006, p. 96). In other words, the Subject can only position itself in culture and by identifying itself with the regulations and principles of the Symbolic order (1991, p. 178). To give a more expository explanation about the role of the Symbolic Register, it is worth quoting at length from Madan Sarup (1992):

the human subject, as s/he acquires speech, is inserting her - or himself in a pre-existing Symbolic order and thereby submitting his or her desire to the systemic pressures of that order: in adopting language s/he allows his or her 'free' instinctual energies to be operated upon and organized. (pp. 105-6)

In other words, in Lacanian discourse "the Subject exists in the realm of the Symbolic" and "the Symbolic is the order in which the Subject, as distinct from the ego, comes into being" (Bailly, 2009, p. 97). For the Subject to enter into the realm of Symbolic register in which the individual can acquire "the *unconscious organization* of human society" the Subject should accept the Name-of-the-Father, and castration (Bailly, 2009, p. 94, emphasis in original). In order for the Subject to manage and overcome the sense of lack arose with the symbolic castration, the subject needs to acknowledge the master signifiers (Lacan, 1991, pp. 177-178). Lionel Bailly identifies the function of the master signifiers in his book titled *Lacan* (2009) as follows: "Their function is to redirect signifiers in a signifying chain painful to the speaker in such a way that a signifying chain with the opposite, bearable, or even comforting meaning emerges in conscious speech" (p. 63). Being "the backbone of the human Subject" the master signifiers are "in negative form, the stuff of negation" (p. 61). This latent disorder makes itself visible in the master signifiers the Tyrone family keep using in their talks and speeches. In this article, by shedding light on these linguistic master signifiers, how Tyrone's are in pursuit of tolerating their affliction will be seen with more precision.

The Tyrone Family's Traumatized Unconscious Speaks its Own Language

In the Tyrone family, for Jamie and Edmund, James Tyrone fails to be a source of authority or, in Lacanian terms, a representation of the Name-of-the-Father to introduce rules and social structures of the society they live in. He fails to take the active role in the process of castrating his sons to make them enter into the realm of the Symbolic. In the same vein, his wife Mary does not submit to Tyrone's authority or she is not moved with the so-called lure of American drama that he has been so much into. The decisions he has been taking are either seriously criticized or thought to appeal against the family's good. At the end of the day, Tyrone cannot create a shared spirit or make his wife and sons follow his authority as the metonymic extension of the Name-of-the-Father. The choices Tyrone offers for his family do not serve indeed for the benefit of the family. As the head of the family, he is mostly accused of having caused suffering for the whole family. Not feeling safe there in America as one of Irish descent, James Tyrone fails to spend money sensibly; that is, he chooses to save as much as possible by investing his money in any kind of property rather than spending it on his family's needs like providing a stable home or giving proper medical care by expert doctors. Being under the pressure of the precepts of American dream, like working hard or not wasting sources, Tyrone might take unwise decisions. Everyone in the family with such great stamina for heated discussions accuses Tyrone of being frugal to the family. Tyrone is always ready to defy accusations and explain himself with his upbringing:

It was at home I first learned the value of a dollar and the fear of the poorhouse. I've never been able to believe in my luck since. I've always feared it would change and everything I had would be taken away. (O'Neill, 1956, p. 146)

From his wording, it is understood that his actions are shaped by his childhood poverty; he has been brought up in a poor household and he cannot get rid of his financial fears, so his imagos are shaped according to beliefs in there. In the imaginary mode one's understanding of other people is shaped by one's own imagos; thus, the perceived other is actually a projection. As Sarup (1992) puts into words: "The imaginary is made up of imagos. An imago is an unconscious image or cliché which orients the way in which the subject apprehends other people" (p. 85). From the way Tyrone legitimizes his concerns about money, it can be inferred that he was not raised by a solid family by no means. The master signifiers he uses revolve around fear and lack of stability and as he buys land, he feels he achieves the requirements of being a family. Tyrone is reported to buy a lot of property but, ironically, no home, which annihilates the possibility of retaining a tranquil household. Thus, Mary is never content with their life spent on cheap hotels as she complains:

It was never a home. You've always preferred the Club or a barroom. And for me it's always been as lonely as a dirty room in a one-night stand hotel. In a real home one is never lonely. You forget I know from experience what a home is like. I gave up one to marry you – my father's home. (O'Neill, 1956, p. 72)

Kurt Eisen (1994) identifies this problem as: "[h]ome is ironically an absence at the centre of Tyrone family" (p. 128). Continuously recalling the racking poverty of his youth, Tyrone still continues investing much of his wealth in buying land, justifying himself that:

the more property you own, the safer you think you are. That may not be logical, but it's the way I have to feel. Banks fail, and your money's gone, but you think you can keep land beneath your feet. (O'Neill, 1956, p. 146)

Being preoccupied with maximizing his financial security, Tyrone has such bad reputation in the eyes of the family. When McGuire, the estate agent, calls Tyrone, Mary immediately infers that Tyrone is planning to buy another piece of land. She unburdens herself to her sons as Tyrone still tries to buy another property instead of providing his family with a stable home: "He must have another piece of property on his list that no one would think of buying except

your father” (O’Neill, 1956, p. 73). There is a strong indication that the properties Tyrone has been buying may turn out to be not lucrative at the end of the day, which is another revelation for not relying on Tyrone taking initiatives in the family. Mary sounds terribly hopeless about Tyrone being the right authority figure for them: “It doesn’t matter any more, but it’s always seemed to me your father could afford to keep on buying property but never to give me a home” (p. 73). What is more, the house they stay in in summers still lacks the warmth of home as Mary complains: “It was wrong from the start. Everything was done in the cheapest way” (p. 44). The imagos Mary has in her mind for a successful family is not aligned with the ones Tyrone has for a strong family.

That Tyrone cannot create a safe and pleasant home for his wife and children and that he is unable to take action according to his family’s needs is a symptom for Tyrone’s problematic initiation into the Symbolic. He is reported to be raised in a poor house and without the support and trust a family might give, Tyrone is obviously raised devoid of affection and confidence. There he might have not been initiated or introduced to the societal rules or codes about how to form a family. From a Lacanian perspective, he can be diagnosed as someone suffering from “half-castration” (Bailly, 2009, p. 84). The symptoms for this problem can be understood as seeing oneself as an authority about the things that they do not have expert knowledge, megalomania, or irrational belief in one’s abilities. Looking at Tyrone in this light one will notice how problematic his being in the Symbolic. From a Lacanian view, it can be said that he has not developed a full castration; to some degree he has an access to the Name-of-the-Father and grasps the function of the metaphor, but he is not aware of the fact that he is not eligible to make the law. He is a false authority figure in buying correct properties to be profitable investments in the long run. Still another unfavorable consequence arises because Tyrone sees himself as health authority and decides to get treatment for his wife and Edmund from cheap doctors. Tyrone simply ignores the symptoms of Edmund’s illness, such as coughing or losing weight, thinking that Edmund has caught a simple summer cold. When Edmund’s illness soon proves to be consumption, Tyrone still argues that his son should be treated by the same inadequate doctor. Jamie, his elder son blames his father for ignoring Edmund’s health by not consulting a better doctor due to Tyrone’s greed for money:

JAMIE: It might never have happened if you’d sent him to a real doctor when he first got sick.

TYRONE: What’s the matter with Hardy? He’s always been our doctor up here.

JAMIE: Everything’s the matter with him! Even in this thick burg he’s rated third class! He’s a cheap old quack!

TYRONE: That’s right! Run him down! Run down everybody! Everyone is a fake to you!

JAMIE: (*Contemptuously*) Hardy only charges a dollar. That’s what makes you think he’s a fine doctor! (O’Neill, 1956, p. 30)

Years ago, Tyrone displayed the same frugal attitude towards his wife when he sent for another cheap doctor for Edmund’s birth. When Mary experienced great difficulty in giving birth to Edmund, the doctor gave her morphine to relieve her pain after the birth. Unfortunately, Mary became addicted to the drug and Jamie blames his father for his mother’s addiction to morphine:

TYRONE: You damned fool! No one was to blame.

JAMIE: The bastard of a doctor was! From what Mama’s said, he was another cheap quack like Hardy! You wouldn’t pay for a first-rate. (O’Neill, 1956, p. 39)

Tyrone jeopardizes his wife’s and son’s health by economizing on their health care. Yet, his son suffers from tuberculosis and his wife turns out to be a morphine addict. Tyrone, in a way, obliterates the possibility of a healthy and peaceful family atmosphere.

Tyrone's frugal attitude causes unfortunate consequences for himself as well, which ruins his career. As a young man, he "was considered one of the three or four young actors with the greatest artistic promise in America" (O'Neill, 1956, p. 12), yet he sold "his soul for easy money" as Normand Berlin (1982) beautifully puts into words (p. 150). He chose to take part in a play which "made such a great money success" and it "ruined [him] with its promise of an easy fortune" (p. 150). When he realized that he was about to destroy his career, he noticed that he had already become "a slave to the damned thing and did try other plays, it was too late" (p. 150). He had already been identified with that one part by the audience; thus, he "had lost the great talent [he] once had through years of easy repetition, never learning a new part, never really working hard" (p. 151). Tyrone's frailty of giving importance to money more than anything else wrecks his acting career and so his happiness when he "buys worldly success by purchasing and starring in a lucrative though artistically ruinous play" (Eisen, 1994, p. 139). For the rest of his life, Tyrone cannot get rid of his sense of frustration due to his failure in his career. He feels tormented by his choice for the commercial play without much artistic value and his choices prevent him from becoming a great Shakespearean actor that he has always dreamt of. Although he seems to be full of with acting and theatre, Tyrone proves to take the wrong action in his career for not having the expert knowledge in his field.

Mary Tyrone is another character who is traumatized by her choices and she justifies herself by either accusing the others or appealing to pity rather than taking the responsibility for her actions. She has made some troubling choices and they turn out to bring forth consequences. She opts to get married to an actor admitting that she "fell in love with James Tyrone and was so happy for a time" (O'Neill, 1956, p. 176). The lifestyle of an actor; however, makes Mary unhappy and she never feels at home. When the theatre season starts, Mary laments about going "back to second-rate hotels and trains" which she hates (p. 72). On the other hand, she cannot regard the summer house as a permanent and stable home. She summarizes her marriage to Tyrone as "as lonely as a dirty room in a one-night stand hotel" (p. 72) and she keeps blaming "Tyrone's itinerant acting career for their lack of a true permanent home and her chronic sense of alienation" (Eisen, 1994, p. 128). Being unhappy with her married life, she devotes much of her time to nostalgic reminiscences of her life before marriage. She keeps referring to the time that she spent in her father's house and the Convent, comparing it to her life with Tyrone. She misses her previous life when she had a proper and happy home with friends and neighbours visiting one another. After her marriage to Tyrone, Mary has never felt at ease or content with the type of life that she leads with her husband.

Mary used to dream of being a nun before she got married to Tyrone, and; she is very nostalgic about her past when she used to have two career options before her; being a pianist or a nun. She seems to be preoccupied with her past; such as mistakes, wishes and decisions that she took and this mindset makes it impossible for her to focus on the present. Madan Sarup (1992) cites Antoine de Saint-Exupery's definition of nostalgia "as the desire for what cannot be defined" (p. 95); by still relating it to desire, yet Lacan has an extended explanation for nostalgia as follows:

desire is precisely the result of the primary repression and yields up a nostalgia beyond the drive to return, a desire constitutively unsatisfied and unsatisfiable because its 'object' simply cannot ever be defined. In short, primary repression is that part of needs which is left out in the articulation of demand, and which we experience as desire. (as cited in Sarup, 1992, p. 95)

As Mary cannot feel identified with James' authority as a metonymic extension of the Name-of-the-Father, she keeps having nostalgic returns to her primary desires like being a nun, which has a reference to another authority figure, God. She occasionally sheds light on her past in the presence of the maid of the summer house, Cathleen: "I had two dreams. To be a nun, that was the more beautiful one. To become a concert pianist, that was the other" (O'Neill, 1956, p. 104).

Confiding in the maid she is very much clear about her desire: “I even dreamed of becoming a nun. I’ve never had the slightest desire to be an actress” (p. 102). From what she reveals, one thing is clear she wants to identify herself with the *phallus*; the object that cannot be defined and which the child wishes to be in order to complete its mother, the symbolic complement of its own lack. Her husband obviously cannot satisfy this desire because in her eyes Tyrone is not the representative of the master signifier. That she wants to be a nun is another indication of her wish to substitute for the master signifier. Mary cannot achieve to enter the realm of the Name-of-the-Father with her husband as the representative of the master signifier or by God in the church as the Name-of-the-Father. The registers that are named Imaginary and Symbolic are not consecutive; rather, the self may experience the resonances of each register at times. As neither the patriarchal Father via Church nor her husband as the master signifier of the Name-of-the-Father cannot initiate her to experience the symbolic complement of her own lack, Mary cannot surrender herself to Tyrone’s authority or cannot lead Jamie and Edmund to be exposed to their father’s authority, as well; thus, the boys fail to act according to the dictations of society.

Mary has come to two more wrong decisions during her marriage. After she gave birth to her second child, Eugene, Tyrone insisted Mary attend an acting tour with him and leave Eugene to her parents’ care. Mary decided to accompany her husband on a tour. Yet, at that time Jamie had measles, a dangerous illness for babies, and contracted his baby brother with measles, which caused Eugene’s death. From then on, Mary accused herself of her son’s death and always regrets having left her baby: “It was my fault. I should have insisted on staying with Eugene and not have let you [Tyrone] persuade me to join you, just because I loved you” (O’Neill, 1956, p. 88). She has not been able to feel peaceful ever since Eugene’s death. She has promised then not to have another baby: “I blame only myself. I swore after Eugene died I would never have another baby. I was to blame for his death” (p. 87). However, another faulty decision followed the first one and she gave birth to Edmund. After giving birth to Edmund, Mary feels even much more regretful as they do not have a proper home and a family life to raise a child properly:

I knew from experience by then that children should have homes to be born in, if they are to be good children, and women need homes, if they are to be good mothers...I knew I’d proved by the way I’d left Eugene I wasn’t worthy to have another baby, and that God would punish me if I did. I never should have borne Edmund. (O’Neill, 1956, p. 88)

Mary feels a stronger pang of conscience at giving birth to Edmund when she notices that Edmund “has never been happy. He never will be. Nor healthy” (p. 88). She holds herself responsible for not providing him with a healthy and peaceful family life as she keeps repeating to herself: “He was born nervous and too sensitive, and that’s my fault” (p. 88). Her self-accusations torture her endlessly. These wrong decisions Mary has taken are taken under Tyrone’s bad false authority.

Mary carries the burden of her wrong choices throughout the play and she feels relief in using morphine. For her, morphine soon starts to act “as a tranquilizer, blurring problems and making reality seem a distant dream” (Coolidge, 1966, p. 31). Morphine offers her an escape as she cannot endure the conditions under which she happens to be living, and she feels foggy with morphine. Fog being an important symbol in the play, Mary accepts that she loves fog: “It wasn’t the fog I minded, Cathleen. I really love fog” (O’Neill, 1956, p. 98). What she hates is the foghorn which acts like a warning to call her back to reality: “It’s the foghorn I hate. It won’t let you alone. It keeps reminding you, and warning you, and calling you back” (p. 99). Mary enjoys being in the world of images but at the same time she feels anxious due to the fear of being swallowed by these images in the absence of the Name-of-the-Father. In other words, not having developed the mechanism to deal with difficulties or traumas in her life which is more related to the Symbolic, Mary seeks ways to evade the consequences of such bad

decisions. Without having the morphine, she goes into hysterics and she relapses into her ways of complaining about her current life:

I'm so sick and tired of pretending this is a home! You [Tyronne] won't help me! You won't put yourself out the least bit! You don't know how to act in a home! You don't really want one! You never have wanted one –never since the day we were married! (O'Neill, 1956, p. 67)

Once intoxicated by the morphine she keeps referring to her old past happy days, which serve as a refuge for her unhappiness and guilty conscience: “[a]t the Convent I had so many friends. Girls whose families lived in lovely homes. I used to visit them and they'd visit me in my father's home” (p. 86). Morphine generates a blissful and easy mood in her, which can only be activated and brought out into the open within her past reminiscences. Thus, “[o]nly the past when you were happy is real has become Mary's credo [and] Mary is addicted to morphine less than to the lost reality that the drug helps to revive for her” (Eisen, 1994, p. 134). In the wake of unpleasant and painful incidents in her life, Mary clung onto morphine, which has serious repercussions on her health and psychology as she “progresses deeper and deeper into the secluded world of a drug addict” (Tiusanen, 1968, p. 286). This world is obviously far from the social world characterized with rules and societal codes and with the morphine, she can take refuge into the world of resonances of images that Lacan names as the Imaginary.

In Lacanian thought the unconscious is the language or a structure by which the knowledge about truth is represented and generally the unconscious says what it knows but the subject may not know it. Bailly (2009) concludes that Lacan puts the emphasis on language as follows “[i]f language is what makes us human, then the fundamentals of the human psyche should be found in language” (p. 41). Mary's unconscious makes itself more visible in the language tics she utters unconsciously. Lacan talks about how unconscious makes itself visible in various ways:

[t]he unconscious is what the Subject represses, and by definition is therefore not consciously expressible by the Subject; however, it constantly manifests itself, quite without the Subject's intentions, in dreams, unsuccessful/self-defeating acts, slips of the tongue, and even pathological symptoms. (as cited in Bailly, 2009, p. 42)

These manifestations show themselves in the form of a language. As Sarup (1992) summarizes Lacan describes two types of speech; on the one hand there is the empty speech which takes its orders from the ego and is addressed to the other, the imaginary counterpart, through whom the subject is alienated (p. 86). On the other hand, there is full speech addressed to the Other, which is beyond the language ordered by the ego. The subject of this speech is the subject of the unconscious. Thus, Lacan can say: “the unconscious is the discourse of the Other” (as cited in Sarup, 1992, p. 86). It can be claimed that in this family, there is a lot of talk as they want to cure themselves. Full speech happens at some instances; they appear in the form of language tics or language slips, which we call master signifiers. Mary's unconscious can be traced in her language tics which are the master signifiers that she uses to substitute the Name-of-the-Father and that lay her conscious bare. When Mary sends Cathleen to the drugstore to take some morphine for Mary, Mary lies to her that she needs this medication for rheumatism in her hands. In explaining her pain to Cathleen, Mary has a slip of tongue, which reveals in what kind of pain she experiences: “I have to take it because there is no other that can stop the pain – all the pain – I mean, in my hands” (O'Neill, 1956, p. 103). Mary is observed to be involved with self-defeating gestures and actions throughout the play. Her uneasiness can easily be noticed on her first appearance in the stage direction; Mary is reported to be tense and self-conscious: “*What strikes one immediately is her extreme nervousness. Her hands are never still*” (p. 12, emphasis in original). Mary keeps looking at her image in the mirror and she is generally preoccupied with how she looks. Everyone in the house also makes comments about her appearance and in return Mary keeps questioning their looks. As it is suggested by the psychoanalytic thought ego

is formed on the basis of an imaginary relationship of the subject with his or her own body and the subject moves from fragmentation and insufficiency to illusory unity. Mary keeps retreating to the imaginary and acts self-conscious about her image.

Another discourse marker revealing the troubles in her unconscious is a set of master signifiers that Mary keeps using in the play. Lacan equated the master signifier with the Name-of-the-Father, which is hard for Mary to surrender. From this light, the master signifiers that replace the Name-of-the-Father will be of crucial importance. Mary finds it hard to accept Edmund's illness, that it is contraction and to tolerate this bitter reality she uses various master signifiers when she has to face symptoms. Tyrone is also observed to contribute to this self-delusion when they feel their ego as parents is at stake. This dialogue is very typical and ubiquitous at this house and it takes place among all the family members interchangeably at any time:

Mary: He needs to eat to keep up his strength. I keep telling him that but he says he simply has no appetite. Of course, there's nothing takes away your appetite like a bad summer cold.

Tyrone: Yes, it's only natural. So don't let yourself get worried –

Mary: *Quickly*. Oh, I'm not. I know he'll be all right in a few days if he takes care of himself. *As if she wanted to dismiss the subject but can't*. But it does seem a shame he should have to be sick right now.

Tyrone: Yes, it is bad luck. *He gives her a quick, worried look*. But you mustn't let it upset you, Mary. Remember, you've got to take care of yourself, too.

Mary: *Quickly*. I'm not upset. There's nothing to be upset about. What makes you think I'm upset?

Tyrone: Why, nothing, except you've seemed a bit high-strung the past few days.

Mary: *Forcing a smile*. I have? Nonsense, dear. It's your imagination. *With sudden tenseness*. You really must not watch me all the time, James. I mean, it makes me self-conscious. (O'Neill, 1956, p. 16-7)

The master signifiers Mary keeps using to tolerate the gravity of Edmund's health make her go on living and protect her ego. So, in Mary's case, we can identify the function of master signifiers as "to redirect signifiers in a signifying chain painful to the speaker in such a way that a signifying chain with the opposite, bearable, or even comforting meaning emerges in conscious speech" (Bailly, 2009, p. 63). What is more, Mary can camouflage the uncontrollable reactions that her body gives as a response to morphine addiction with the help of these master signifiers like pretending that the only problem is her hair or her outfits.

Having been raised in this household, Jamie and Edmund suffer from the consequences of not being initiated into the Symbolic realm. As their mother feels regretful getting married to Tyrone and does not yield to Tyrone's authority, the boys are also not introduced to the societal codes, norms, or rules with the help of their father. In other words, the mother does not lead her sons to follow and submit to the authority of the Law-of-the-Father. Literally, Jamie and Edmund are known not to have a permanent home partly due to the nature of their father's profession and partly because they cannot start a life on their own. Jamie, the elder son of the family, is known to be an alcoholic, involved with prostitutes and not to spend his money wisely. His father gripes about his corrupt habits: "You've thrown your salary away every week on whores and whiskey!" (O'Neill, 1956, p. 31). He seems to drown himself in alcohol as a result of feeling an outcast in the household. He has always been held responsible for Eugene's death from measles by his mother, that is, Mary thinks that Jamie contracted the illness to his brother intentionally. She makes Jamie feel like an outsider by repeating the same accusations which can be seen as Mary's language tics which are the symptoms of her lack of submission to the master signifiers: "I've always believed Jamie did it on purpose. He was jealous of the baby. He hated him...He'd been warned it might kill the baby. He knew. I've never been able to forgive him for that" (p. 87). Rather than taking the responsibility of such a grave incident, she feels relieved at least for some time by blaming Jamie as a child. Yet, though she yields to

these master signifiers like blaming Jamie, her unconscious speaks up at the moments of full speeches when she admits: “I blame only myself. I swore after Eugene died I would never have another baby. I was to blame for his death” (p. 87). Slavoj Žižek (2006) similarly explains how unconscious can be home for disturbances in the book titled *How to Read Lacan*: “The unconscious is not the preserve of wild drives that have to be tamed by the ego, but the site where a traumatic truth speaks out” (p. 3). In order to repress her traumatic unconscious to speak out, Mary has constantly blamed Jamie for his childhood mistake and that definitely annihilates an affectionate and a warm family atmosphere altogether.

In the face of all these accusations since his childhood, Jamie relapses into alcohol abuse and soon his “reputation stinks” in their neighbourhoods (O’Neill, 1956, p. 31). Being fully engaged with unfavorable practices, Jamie does not have a proper relationship with women or a decent life. As Jamie and Edmund fail to develop the mechanism to guide their unquenchable desire, they seem to enjoy in the margins, which is defined with the term *jouissance* by Lacan. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, *jouissance* refers to a complex term that includes both enjoyment and suffering. It goes beyond mere pleasure and pleasure then becomes pain, before this initial “painful principle” develops into what Lacan called *jouissance* (as cited in Evans, 2002, p. 93). It inherently contains the idea of excess, often associated with intense emotional experiences that can be both pleasurable and painful. Similarly, the Tyrone brothers unleash unconscious pleasure yet which becomes pain at the end. Castration inserts a limitation on the subject’s idea of a so-called unlimited *jouissance*, but capitalist discourse has rejected castration as Lacan stresses (2017). Brothers having fantasies with women in brothels gives them the illusion that their desire becomes possible and real, yet *jouissance* can only be a substitute to a loss to bridge up gaps not desire. In the play, Jamie and Edmund not being equipped with the skills to manage their desire, they turn themselves to the dark side of pleasure which shows itself in drinking too much alcohol or not being able to achieve intersubjectivity with women. It can be concluded that with the analysis of the unconscious Cartesian heritage that portrays the individual as a rational and conscious actor who could understand the basis of his or her actions is problematized. Mary; thus, laments that “no respectable parents will let their daughters to be seen with” him (O’Neill, 1956, p. 44).

Jamie being the elder brother to Edmund sets up a ruinous example for his brother, who is given birth in order to console his grieving mother for the loss of her son, Eugene. These two brothers not being positioned in the Symbolic Register are observed to fight for the attention of their mother, who inspires the emotional resonances in the Imaginary Register. As Norman Berlin (1982) analyzes Jamie’s “love for mother and his need for her affection feed his jealousy of the younger Edmund, ‘Mama’s baby’, as Jamie calls him” (p. 14). This jealousy causes Jamie to corrupt his brother, as his confession to Edmund at the end of the play makes it clear. His confession is filled with hatred and love: “You better take it seriously. 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” (O’Neill, 1956, p. 165). Travis Bogard’s (1988) assertion that “Jamie has tried possessing him in an almost demonic way” rings true when Jamie confesses his guilt to Edmund (p. 446). Although Jamie’s “wry confession” can be seen as “a glimpse of the self-loathing”, Jamie has tried to make his brother get used to drinking alcohol, which makes Edmund have an unsettled life, like Jamie’s (Bloom, 1984, p. 161). Jamie himself admits being a bad example to his brother due to jealousy and Lacan (1991) relates jealousy to *jouissance* as follows: “it is not an ordinary, it is the jealousy born in a subject in his relation to an other” (p. 237). In other words, it is not a more general aggression towards a rival, but a hatred directed towards the enjoyment of the other. The hatred is not about a particular *jouissance* attached to an object, but about a *jouissance* embodied by the other. Consequently, Jamie is again chastised by his parents due to his adverse influence on his brother. His father accuses Jamie of setting a bad example

for his brother: “You are more responsible than anyone! ... You’ve been the worst influence for him! If you ever gave him advice except in the ways of rottenness, I’ve never heard of it” (O’Neill, 1956, p. 34). Jamie, by setting a bad example for his brother generates his parents’ outcasting and furious attitude towards him.

Edmund is still another tragic character haunted by his unconscious in which one can see the traces of how he has not been introduced to the society and not achieving the critical stages Lacan names as Imaginary and Symbolic Registers. In the first place, Edmund has been conceived as a baby to replace for a lost one. In his relationship with his mother during the Imaginary period, he is felt to be the unwanted child in such a dysfunctional family, and he is not introduced the father’s authority for his benefit. What is more, he has to combat with his elder brother’s jealousy in earning his mother’s attention. Compared to other three members of the Tyrone family, Edmund’s negative characteristic is lightly touched. Yet, he has misused his youth and has ignored his health for a long time: “he’s deliberately ruined his health by the mad life he’s led ever since he was fired from college” (O’Neill, 1956, p. 33). Edmund has been to sea and has lived in the sewers of New York and Buenos Aires. He has attempted suicide and he is rather seen “to be the victim of the family, unwanted, betrayed, led astray by his brother and ... suffering under his father’s penuriousness” (Bogard, 1988, p. 437). Mary has always been full of remorse for having given birth to him. “Frantically babying Edmund does not prevent her from blaming him for being born ... Edmund is her scourge and should have never been born” (Bogard, 1988, p. 434). His mother’s hysterical attitude over him indubitably has induced unfavorable impact; that is, he feels alienated and isolated:

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 (O’Neill, 1956, p. 154).

As he cannot achieve intersubjectivity, he is not happy calling himself a man, a human being. Intersubjectivity can only take place only after the ego is formed by having performed in the Imaginary and the Symbolic registers as they organize and construct the relationship with the Other. Looking at the issue from this light, one can identify that the boys also cannot achieve intersubjectivity with respectable women as they suffer from the problem to be into the Symbolic order. In the end, Edmund like his brother becomes an alcoholic and gets involved with prostitutes like his brother does, lending himself to the dark side of pleasure.

Conclusion

O’Neill’s heroes are haunted by their past lives and collective unconscious as a family. The play moves chronologically from day in the early morning to the late at night. Starting from the early on the day, the leading characters one by one are subjected to such intense feelings that they cannot help disintegrating until late at night. In each crisis moment and philosophical terror, which employs itself in the form of incessant verbal fights, the Tyrones are exposed to their chaotic and primitive interior selves. All these repressed thoughts and traumas lay themselves bare within the language they speak. In the free rein, they work hard not to let them surface. Thus, it can be inferred that any analysis depending on cogito would be elusive; instead, Lacanian conceptual tools like Symbolic Register and master signifiers help to decode the language tics of the characters to see what lies in the unconscious. Master signifiers veiling their inability to have formed a link to the Symbolic order show themselves in the accusations they have directed to each other. With a trained ear, what we have understood is that Jamie and Edmund waste their lives and cannot experience a healthy ego formation period as they are not supported or perform in the Imaginary and Symbolic registers. As a result, their index of pleasure makes itself visible in *jouissance* or tension, where they can see the rules of the Symbolic order is at stake. James and Mary, as parents, cannot help falling apart at the end of the day seeing the images of their sons.

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