

# (Un)resolved Oedipus Complex: A Socio-Pscho Analysis of Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim of the Study:** This study aims to delve into the patriarchal implications of the (un)resolved Oedipus complex in the characters of Milan Kundera's novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.

**Methodology:** Using the theoretical lens of patriarchy and psychoanalysis, this study analyzes the selected text in an eclectic approach.

**Findings:** Textual analysis shows that having a (un)resolved Oedipus complex, the female characters of the novel are suppressed and the male characters exploit women sexually as well as psychologically. Having the potential to control the psyche of the characters, (un)resolved Oedipus shapes the patriarchal behavior of males.

**Conclusion:** The interlacing of social and psychological forms of oppression makes men think of themselves as having masculine perfection and superiority and consider females as imperfect and inferior subjects.

**Keywords:** Oedipus complex, Milan Kundera, Patriarchy, Suppression, Eclectic approach.

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## Introduction

Milan Kundera's presence is felt in every story and he puts his memories, personality, and experiences in it (Kahraman, 2020). His works always represent some garnish of musical notes of the famous musicians from his time and those musical references are embedded into the text just like a spider weaved his net in a dexterous manner. He is also greatly influenced by the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. Milan Kundera is a kind of personality that gained attention and popularity in the West for his actions and proper influence on the liberal reforms that were demanded throughout Prague and this pursuit of becoming a voice for liberal views made his list of friends and foes grow large in number (Koliopoulos, 2020). The very first novel of Milan Kundera is "*The Joke*" which is a satire on communism and its functionalities. Rayner & Ross (1991) criticized *The Joke* for the sexism that prevailed in Western society stating that the novel is the celebration of sex for hatred and revenge on the innocent and unknowing women and it is a variety of rape that is made legitimate by the males of the society. The sexual superiority is not only confined to Ludvik but is "endemic" to the novel; almost all the male characters are

there to ridicule the women and the author is also involved whether in the unconscious attempt but it is a fact that the novel is presented in four narrations and one of them is women only to contribute sixteen of 267 pages. In France during exile, the novel that Kundera published was *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* which explores the themes of the harsh political scenario of Czechoslovakia at that time, when the author published this novel with the harsh critique of communism, he was deprived of the citizenship of his homeland (Mccauley et al., 2016).

Literary texts have been studied under the scope of psychological theories since the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Classical psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Jacques Lacan were ripe in their intellectual thoughts then. The pioneer of psychoanalysis was Sigmund Freud who wrote extensively about his patients and the methods that were used to cure them in various books. He invented many new terms in the field of psychology and presented a controversial yet trend-setting theory of “psychoanalysis”. The most contentious concept of psychoanalysis is the Oedipus complex. It is said that through the Oedipus complex men discover the masculine perfection and superiority of the males and the imperfection and inferiority of females and in this way, Sigmund Freud has presented interlacing of social and psychological forms of oppression (Chodorow 1989). This domination of males is termed “patriarchy” and the meaning of patriarchy is the rule or the domination of the father in the family. It represents the family system in which the head of the family is the “father” and he has the authority to manipulate every member of the family including males and females but nowadays the subordination and manipulation of women is the key meaning of patriarchy.

The main aim of psychological research is to understand the actions of the literary characters and the main psychological problems that are behind any act (Hossain, 2017). The consequences of the actions of a character on other characters and the psychological sufferings of the other characters are seldom discussed. In this research, the main aim is to discuss the psychological problems of one of the main characters in Milan Kundera’s novel through answering the following questions:

1. What is the link between patriarchy and the (un)resolved Oedipus complex of the male characters shown in the novel?
2. How is patriarchy represented in the novel?

### ***The Unequal Social Ladder***

Feminist critics consider the main hurdle in the advancement of women in society is patriarchy due to which they are unable to compete with the males which manipulate some basic human rights of the females. The definition of the term has also got some serious issues and according to critics while defining patriarchy its implications must be kept in mind. Walby (1990) defines patriarchy as “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women”. The term “social structure” is used because many advocates of feminism define patriarchy in the term of “biological determinism” but according to Walby, it is a social structure, not a biological fact or reality. Patriarchy is the social system that assigns the authority, privileges, and control of all the institutions to its male members who manipulate the women according to their own will and satisfaction. This is not the first or only form of inequality in society or the social system but the social institutions or the social structures produce or recreate inequalities based on color, sex, religion, or class, for example, many people around Europe or America think that they are superior due to color named as white men superiority and these discourses are produced in the society to meet the desired needs or to give importance to certain strata of people. So, society produces a dynamic relationship of control and fear among its people and these relationships also drive and fuel the system of patriarchy. Overall various structures of patriarchy can be detected in any society ranging from state to sexuality in which sexual double standards are compulsory and heterosexuality is forced upon the females in the society (Walby, 1990).

Patriarchy and the Oedipus complex are interrelated and the Oedipus complex is very important in every era Greenberg (1991), concluded that there is much evidence that the Oedipus complex is prevalent in

every era and has universalistic importance but it must be revised and reinvigorated according to the society and new developments. Keeping in mind that it has a universal value, according to Eagleton (1996), there is a collective prejudice in all societies for women, which considers that women are inferior to men and this marginalization is inbuilt or has a connection with the early familial and sexual development so the field of psychoanalysis has attracted many feminists.

There is a very strong link between psychology and feminism because according to the Freudian concept of psychology, society is denoted as “phallogocentric” which is driven by the concept of a phallus which means penis. The term also denotes one of the psychological developmental stages given by Freud as the “phallic stage”. Nonetheless, patriarchy is the main and major structure of traditional societies because it is a system of differentiation or stratification based on sex or gender providing material gains and financially higher status to the male members of the society and hindering the role of the females in almost every field of the society. The men in the patriarchal societies are assigned various qualities which prove their superiority over the females. These qualities represent the strength and vigor of the male members of the society so that weakness is automatically associated with the females and through literature, the practice and establishment of the patriarchal practices are observed and it is concluded that it is the ancient process to making women feel inferior (Asiyanbola, 2005).

So, Patriarchy is the basic hurdle in the life of almost all of the women to get success but the application and the consequences of patriarchy are not the same everywhere. According to Sultana (2012), it is very important to understand the basic structure of patriarchy in a society to understand the marginalization of women in society. The previous studies of patriarchy considered it as a social system but recent studies extended the term and formed a new term “socio-political” system. The term political is used because it is the contest of power between men and women. So, patriarchy constructs binaries between the genders, for example, masculinity and femininity and according to critics, this binary is synonymous with freedom and subjection. It means that social and political institutions work collaboratively to exercise patriarchy in society (Facio, 2013). Through the system of patriarchy, men try to seek security, a certain status in society, and other privileges by asserting control, and also, they try to create fear among the other men who are unconscious rivals to them. But this competition among men often ends in the subordination or subjugation of women in society due to their lame dependent situation (Becker, 2015).

As far as the interlink of psychology especially psychoanalysis and feminism is concerned both at first have many differences and feminists used to criticize the beliefs and tenets of psychoanalysis. But in the last few decades psychoanalysis and feminism both gained prestige because psychoanalysis can shake the belief of feminism because of rating patriarchy based on tradition and social structure whereas feminism shakes the belief of psychology which is considered apolitical as it sets substantive rationale to define the behavior of males and females based on power. Psychoanalysis and feminist criticism can be lethal if they collaborate because each of them tends to unfold a mindset of the society and together it will present a new perspective on social problems (Zeynepnur, 2019).

The novels of Milan Kundera represent many facets of patriarchy ranging from the psychological suppression of females to the contempt of the female character, physical violence, and sexual abuse of women. In the novel, *The Joke* Kundera represents a fatal example of sexism in the communist society. The protagonist Ludvik whose life becomes uncertain and ugly due to a lame joke sent by him to his girlfriend and he creates hostility against women in certain and in general. The novel presents the degradation of women in general which is strictly criticized by feminists. The novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* was published in 1984 since then many studies have been done on the novel. The main focus of the various studies is the philosophies that are represented at the start of the novel and the paradox in the lives of the characters. Many studies are directed at the exile of the characters and pessimism in their life. Some studies also explain the behavior of the characters according to Lacanian perspective and explain the Oedipus in the characters. However, none of the studies have a focus on the patriarchy represented by Kundera in the novel concerning the (un)resolved Oedipus complex and other

psychological problems. In other words, the relationship between patriarchy and psychoanalysis is missing and therefore needs to be researched according to the proper method.

### **Theoretical and Methodological Underpinnings**

Punch (2013) states that qualitative research is a kind of research in social sciences that collects non-numerical data to make us understand the meaning of a particular situation, place, or piece of literature. This kind of research tends to concentrate on the words rather than the numbers and it pays attention to the phenomenon in its natural settings to interpret situations of daily life (Walia, 2015). According to Mohajan (2018), the main aim of qualitative research in literature is to provide a detailed understanding of human behavior, attitudes, experiences, and emotions. So, in this research, the psyche of characters is analyzed to understand the behavior, attitude, and emotions of the characters.

One of the very first instinctual sexual desires is related to the family or the parent of the opposite sex which is known as the Oedipus complex. According to Freud (1974), all the persons who become psychoneurotic are because of their parents, who play an important part in their infantile psychology. Aversion toward one parent and love toward the other is the permanent thing that happens in the life of a child and all people have a significant amount of impact of this amorous relation with their parents on their psychology. Freud analyzes the greatest tragedies in his book like "*Oedipus Rex*" and "*Hamlet*" based on his terminology of the Oedipus complex. According to Freud the reason that the audience still enjoys the tragedy of Sophocles is due to the same hidden relationship in the mind of the people and because people see Oedipus as having made their wish successful in a materialistic way (by marrying his mother) and in "*Hamlet*" the indecisiveness of Prince to take the revenge is only plausible if seen in the context of Oedipus complex because to murder his father was a hidden wish of Hamlet so that's why he is not able to do anything to his uncle (pp. 85-86). Many researchers gave both parents a belligerent force in determining the behavior and other interpersonal relationships (Sobral et al., 2015), so the hatred toward one parent and affection toward the other parent plays an important role in building the psyche of people. Other core issues are fear of abandonment, low self-esteem, oedipal fixation, etc. But core issues define our being in various and fundamental ways because they stay with the individual for a lifetime unless or until properly addressed (Tyson, 2006). The implications of the Oedipus complex are explained by Lois Tyson in his book "*Critical Theory Today*". According to Tyson (2006)

A common way in which men replay unresolved oedipal attachments involves what is often called the "good-girl/bad-girl" attitude toward women. If I remain in competition (usually unconscious) with my father for my mother's love, I am very liable to deal with my guilt by categorizing women as either "like Mom" ("good girls") or "not like Mom" ("bad girls") and then by being able to enjoy sex only with women who are "not like Mom" (pp.14-15).

So, the Oedipus complex which is often (un)resolved in men makes them divides girls into two categories: like the mother and unlike the mother. While spending time with a girl like their mother men often feel "guilty" and "dirty" and this makes them leave those women. Their associations with the bad girls make them think that they are not worthy of their attention hence sooner or later leave them. So, men with (un)resolved Oedipus complex would go on a womanizing spree in the seduce-abandon relationships and often ridicule and exploit women mentally, physically, and sexually.

Sylvia Walby in her book "*Theorizing Patriarchy*" enlisted the observations of several critics about the link of psychological development of a person with gender oppression. Chodorow (1978), draws her theory of early childhood development of a child with the behavior of adulthood. She focused on the influence of mothering on the development of the psyche of a child because in their childhood women are brought up and identify themselves with their mothers but unlike men who identify themselves with their fathers who are the key to the oppression of the women. Gender identification in childhood is very different in girls and boys because while the girls continue to identify themselves with their mother, the boys break their relationship with their mother shift their focus, and mimic their father to become more

masculine like them due to the presence of phallus. So, as a consequence, women tend to be more nurturing than men who are more aggressive and active. This analysis proves that social change can affect psychological change and society has a main role in shaping the psyche of human beings. According to Tyson (2006), psychoanalytical criticism helps the critics to understand the workings of patriarchy as well as the effects of patriarchy on the social, political, and psychological paradigms of females but in the psychoanalysis, the females are not analyzed as groups but analyzed as an individual because of their different background because our psyche is largely dependent of our family (p, 13). Marshal (1999) divided psychological abuse into two groups: one is “overt” which is monitoring or constantly checking the partner’s routine, dominating through verbal abuse and tone, indifference or ignoring the partner’s physical or emotional well-being, and discrediting or telling others about her vices and the second is “subtle” which include undermining her ‘making her believe that she has a problem or she is not able to take care of herself’ make her make feel guilty, isolation or making her alone, away from the family or friends and discounting or discouraging actively or passively from pursuing her dreams, pretending that her actions are void, do not care her and then at the end getting angry.

In this research, the main aim is to find the reasons for the patriarchal behavior of the male characters in the novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. As it is evident from the above discussion there is an impulsive connection between the dominating behavior of males with the Oedipus complex and their repressed desires. So, in this research, the dominance of male characters is linked with the psychological problems of their childhood, especially the effects of the Oedipus complex. The behavior is also shaped by the repressive desires of the characters so the defensive techniques used by the characters will be highlighted accordingly and the core problems of the characters are analyzed.

### **Patriarchy and the (Un)resolved Oedipus Complex**

The analysis shows that Tomas is a womanizer and “He lacked the strength to control his taste for other women”(Kundera 1984, p.9) and this “seduce-and-abandon” relationship of Tomas with different women tells us that he has an (un)resolved Oedipus complex because of the feeling of association of the sexual desires with mother makes men feel dirty and they get the pleasure of sex with the “bad girls”( which is also an outcome of (un)resolved Oedipus complex) who are themselves guilty and not mom-like so the abandonment of “bad girl” after the sexual encounter is also a part of this cycle because they are not worthy of getting much attention of the man (Tyson, 2006). He was unable to give his rendezvous with other women due to the presence of the Oedipus complex in his unconscious. Even though he once hated himself for his infidelities but got drunk before mating with other women “he had been unable to make love to other women without alcohol” (Kundera, 1984). Due to the (un)resolved Oedipus complex, Tomas became a womanizer. In this state women do not appear to them as human beings rather they are treated as “sexual objects” and this environment of sexual objectification makes the status of women low, gives them less importance, and comes under the umbrella of patriarchy (Szymanski et al., 2011). The life of Tomas and his taste of women endorsed the theory that Tomas has an (un)resolved Oedipus complex.

Patriarchy is not just physical abuse but also a psychological abuse of women and the domination of males “creates the subordination and then sustains the existence of abuse within it” (Fitri & Supari, 2017.). Due to the (un)resolved Oedipus complex, the behavior of Tomas is very cruel and unkind toward women, especially Tereza. Psychological violence is faced by Tereza at almost every moment of her life after coming into the relationship with Tomas and discovering his infidelities. She was so depressed by the infidelities of Tomas that she once tried to commit suicide “She was pouring something from a medicine bottle down her throat, and her hand shook so badly the glass bottle clicked against her teeth” (Kundera, 1984). But Tomas is seen imbued in the pursuance of his impulsive desires. Even the worse condition of Tereza would not make him digress from his set path. Instead of giving up his encounters with different women, he justified them “, he argued that his polygamous way of life did not in the least run counter to his love for her. He was inconsistent: first he disavowed his infidelities, then he tried to justify them” (p.7). In male dominance, the rules that are defined by the males are the set patterns and the subordinated ones, the females have to follow those set standards. So, in the world of Tomas Tereza and

Tomas' other mistresses have to live with the infidelities of Tomas without any complaint. Though monogamy is the norm of Western heterosexual societies and polygamy is one of the biggest offenses in Western societies when it comes to male dominance it will no longer remain a crime its acceptance is the least the women can do.

The basic definition of patriarchy is a gendered power system in which men dominate and control women by power (Kalabamu, 2006). The word "control" is very important here because in patriarchy men try to regulate women according to their wishes and to create a servant-master relationship. Tomas' relations with her mistresses and other women represent a true picture of patriarchy because he loves to control and dominate. Even his romantic encounters portray a war that he waged on women only just to take control of them. During his sexual encounters, he used to give the command "strip" to women for taking their clothes off. But on a blind date, he faced a strong woman who reneged to comply "When he gave her his standard Strip! command, she not only failed to comply but counter-commanded, No, you first!" (Kundera, 1984, p. 76 ). He was quite offended by the reply "Unaccustomed to such a response, he was somewhat taken aback" (Kundera, 1984, p.76) and decided to dominate the women by force just to retain his dominance and control.

To overcome his embarrassment, he forced her down on the bed. So, precipitous was his move that he caught her off guard. As her towering frame fell on its back, he caught among the red blotches on her face the frightened expression of equilibrium lost. Now that he was standing over her, he grabbed her under the knees and lifted her slightly parted legs in the air, so that they suddenly looked like the raised arms of a soldier surrendering to a gun pointed at him (p.76)

This behavior of Tomas depicts a sub-category of violence against women: Intimate Partner Violence or IPV which is physical, psychological aggression, or violent behavior during intimacy just to maintain the over other partners (Ademiluka, 2018). So to maintain his power over the woman he maltreated her. The vituperation and maltreatment of women make him excited and cordial in the sexual interaction "He made love to her for a very long time, constantly scanning her red-blotched face for that frightened expression of a woman whom someone has tripped and who is falling, the inimitable expression that moments earlier had conveyed excitement to his brain." (Kundera 1984 p.76). Tomas wanted to exploit women just to satisfy his inner anger and eternal hatred against them. He aims to explore the sexuality of every woman and to conquer it just to get a feeling of a conqueror.

*The Unbearable Lightness of Being* portrays the malevolence in the characters of males who are under the influence of their (un)resolved Oedipus complex. The above discussion summed up the character of Tomas but there is another character named Franz who also shows almost the same psychological level as Tomas does. Kundera discussed some of his past life just to connect with his patriarchal behavior because according to Hazan and Shaver (1987), the romantic affairs of an individual and the process of attachment are influenced by his history, especially the relationship with his parents. Franz has a great amount of respect for his mother and his relationship with his mother determines his romantic pursuits. Franz had seen the sufferings that her mother had when his father left her.

The day his father left, Franz and his mother went into town together, and as they left home Franz noticed that her shoes did not match. He was in a quandary: he wanted to point out her mistake but was afraid he would hurt her. So, during the two hours they spent walking through the city together he kept his eyes fixed on her feet. It was then he had his first inkling of what it means to suffer (Kundera 1984, p 33).

The incident greatly affected Franz and the scene can be interpreted into two possible explanations: social and psychological. As Walby (1990), elucidates the conventions about genders are a part of the socialization process and it is well-thought-out that this process is learned in childhood, and during this process, children learn suitable and appropriate behavior for their sex. The process of socialization also inculcates the gender-specific attributes in the children and different qualities are assigned to every

gender which is considered usual and acceptable in society (Belotti, 1975). So, from his childhood, Franz had an image of a woman who was soft, fragile, and delicate just like his mother. During his whole life, he has been attracted to women who had qualities that matched with his mother's because what he had perceived from society is the reality for him and anything or any person against that comprehended notion is unusual, hence intimidating for him. The psychoanalytic lens makes us view Franz's association with his mother and the influence of that bond on his personality and behavior. Because the rivalry with one parent and love for the other will long last in the unconscious and have a proper effect on the present relations of a person (Tyson, 2006). As Tyson explicated in his book in the (un)resolved Oedipus complex men classify women so, Franz labels women into two main strands: good women and bad women, women who are like his mother having the proper quality of womanhood in them and women who are not his mom-like. In light of both theories, one can explain the dominating behavior of Franz with women.

Marie Claude, wife of Franz, deliberately affronted Sabina in front of everyone in an insolent manner. As explained above in patriarchal societies women are considered to have a soft nature that is not vulnerable to anyone and the "mantra of passivity" and disempowerment exist (Mansoor, 2016) as a common element in them. As a result of this aggression Marie Claude's perception of Franz who considered her a woman like her mother shattered "Her aggressiveness—invulnerable, noisy, and full of vitality—relieved him of the burden of goodness he had patiently borne all twenty-three years of their marriage" (Kundera, 1984 p.42). The belief of Franz in the woman inside his wife was gone because of her unusual behavior like males and in the world of patriarchy, her raucous behavior was not acceptable. Another cause of hatred toward Marie Claude is the relegation of her into the category of "bad woman" (which is a creation of (un)resolved Oedipus complex) or the woman who is not like the mother of Franz, hence she is unworthy of being classified with his mother and inept of his love and care "His mother, sad and wounded, his mother, wearing unmatched shoes, had departed from Marie-Claude—or perhaps not, she had never been inside Marie-Claude at all. The whole thing came to him in a flash of hatred" (p.43).

The image of his deceased mother was so deeply rooted in the memory of Franz that he could not accept the opposite of it and he was unable to get out of that image from his unconscious "For twenty years he had seen his mother—a poor, weak creature who needed his protection—in his wife. This image was deeply rooted in him, and he could not rid himself of it in two days" (p. 44). The instinctual homage to his mother indicates his Oedipus complex and his rude behavior and divorce after twenty-three years of marriage shows the reigning patriarchy in the society where women do not have the authority to complement anybody or to give their opinion about something.

The infatuation of Franz with Sabina is also very interesting and intriguing. As comprehended by his early childhood experience that women are fragile, weak, and can be easily molested by men, Franz tried to assert the right code of conduct for women in Sabina just to mold her behavior so that Franz could easily assault her. For this ambition, he used to tell the stories of her mother's assault and molestation by her father to Sabina so that she could comply with the patriarchal structure. Franz was of the view that the subordination of women makes them attractive, desirable and qualities like fidelity are only extended to females which will make them more attractive in the patriarchal society "Franz often spoke about his mother to Sabina, perhaps even with a certain unconscious ulterior motive: he assumed that Sabina would be charmed by his ability to be faithful, that it would win her over" (Kundera 1984, p 33). This approach of Franz toward women can also be explained in terms of the ideology of phallocentrism which states that the lack of phallus in women will make them inferior and this constitutes the patriarchy in the society (Rine, 2010).

The wretched dilemma of women in the novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is portrayed by Kundera and it is significant that due to psychological and social pressure, the women in the novel are unable to live according to their own free will. Gender inequality in the novel is luminously evident as we see women being continuously ridiculed, psychologically, and physically molested by men. The novel starts with the arrival of Tereza in the apartment of Tomas who asks her to leave the apartment after

quenching his sexual thirst with her. As Kundera exposes the past life of Tereza, her Oedipal anxiety comes out which explains her behavior in the present. According to Freud the first object of love for both boys and girls is a mother and later girls can turn toward their father because according to Freud the girls consider their mother as the basic reason for their lack of phallus but they remain attached to their mothers because that was their first emotional investment field (Joana, 2014). The diversion of love from mother to father is caused by the feeling of avoiding something in women and this blackness becomes the basic cause of an inferiority complex in the phallogocentric society (Cixous & Clement, 1996). The powerlessness of Tereza in the male-dominated world is portrayed in the novel with the etiological reason of womanhood's loss of virility because men are the norm and women are 'other' in a phallogocentric society where a penis has exceptional importance in the unconscious life making dichotomy of superior and inferior (Irene, 1996) a driving force in the society. The inculcation of the ideology of patriarchy in the family is beefed up by the process of socialization (Sharma, 2007).

It is also noted that mothers are the key influencers of indoctrinating patriarchy into daughters because they are the direct victims of patriarchy and make their daughters fragile and submissive who are already psychologically repressed (Habiba, Ali, & Ashfaq, 2016). Tereza is shown repressed and trained to conform to the patriarchal structure from her childhood. It is her mother who always likes to vituperate her just to get her more repressed in the presence of her stepfather who plays the role of seducer as explained by Helene Cixous and Catherine Clement in the book *The Newly Born Woman*. Tereza's mother is a perfect example of how patriarchy is transferred from one generation to another "Tereza's mother never stopped reminding her that being a mother meant sacrificing everything. Her words had the ring of truth, backed as they were by the experience of a woman who had lost everything because of her child" (Kundera, 1984 p,16). To survive in the patriarchal society Tereza had to sacrifice everything just like her mother did so she left the school (though she was the brightest in her class), did the job of the waitress, and did, all the chores of her house. All these activities made her become a member of the secrete pact of women to give in to their desires in the male-dominated world and the mother of Tereza played a crucial role in instilling the patriarchy in her because mothering plays a central role in the construction of the male dominance (Roberts, 1993).

## Conclusion

It is concluded that the major characters of the novel are facing some serious psychological problems like the (un)resolved Oedipus complex. The characters are facing psychological problems from their childhood and their behavior is still designed and controlled by their fears and childhood experiences. Tomas and Franz are the main male protagonists of the novel and both are facing (un)resolved Oedipus complex: Tomas exploits women and has many extramarital affairs pursuing good women/bad women (implication of Oedipus complex as described by Lois Tyson) behavior and has fear of women which is bequeathed in him by (un)resolved Oedipus complex and his past experiences. Franz also emanates the same sort of behavior as Tomas Because of having alike experiences in childhood.

While the characters of the novel are facing psychological problems and their behavior is completely controlled and dominated by those problems, the impact of their behavior on society especially with women is very interesting to note. Due to the psychological problems and childhood experiences, the males in the novel are exploiting women in every possible way. Women are exploited and dominated physically and mentally by Tomas and Franz in the novel. Tomas is afraid to get infatuated with any women because he fears and hates women so he sexually assaults women and dominates them mentally and physically in a fierce way. Due to the (un)resolved Oedipus complex and Oedipal fixation, Franz is unable to continue the relationship with his wife because she is harsh and brash, unlike his mother who was very soft and easily dominated by her father. So, bearing the concept of an ideal woman in his mother he divorced his wife and later left Sabina with whom he had a brief extra-marital affair.



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