

**FRAGMENTATION AS GENDER TRAP:
A FEMINIST READING OF SELECTED DRAMAS
BY HENRIK IBSEN AND GEORGE BERNARD
SHAW**

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**UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA
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By

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**FRAGMENTASI SEBAGAI PERANGKAP GENDER: SATU BACAAN
FEMINIS DRAMA TERPILIH HENRIK IBSEN DAN GEORGE BERNARD
SHAW**

ABSTRAK

Henrik Ibsen dan George Bernard Shaw sering dianggap sebagai individu yang memperjuangkan hak wanita. Drama mereka banyak berkisar tentang masalah sosial, dan idea yang sering diulang-ulang adalah berkaitan dengan hak wanita. Justeru, berdasarkan drama-drama tersebut, dapat dibuat analisis dari perspektif feminis, terutamanya dari sudut ketidaksetaraan gender. Oleh itu, tesis ini menumpukan secara khusus kepada mekanisme ketidaksetaraan gender yang menyebabkan penyerpihan atau fragmentasi elemen manusia dalam watak wanita. Kajian terdahulu tidak menganalisis watak wanita secara menyeluruh yang dapat menggambarkan keadaan wanita yang terserpih. Dalam kajian ini, lima teori digabungkan menggunakan pendekatan yang bersahaja, dengan teori gender Butler sebagai titik rujukan. Empat teori lain yang diambil kira adalah feminisme eksistensial de Beauvoir, teori politik gender Millett, teori keperluan asas manusia oleh Maslow dan teori kuasa Foucault. Analisis yang berasingan tentang elemen minda, badan, dan jiwa manusia turut dijalankan untuk menunjukkan fragmentasi yang menjadi punca di sebalik masalah gender wanita. Dua buah drama karya Ibsen, iaitu *The Lady from the Sea* dan *When We Dead Awaken* serta dua buah drama karya Shaw, iaitu *Mrs. Warren's Profession* dan *Pygmalion* dijadikan bahan kajian. Analisis drama tersebut menunjukkan mekanisme ketidaksetaraan gender yang bersandarkan persepsi stereotaip terhadap wanita sebagai gender kelas bawahan. Ini secara tidak langsung mengekalkan unsur

pengawal seliaan serta perlakuan performatif yang menguatkan fragmentasi elemen manusia pada watak wanita tersebut. Justeru, kajian ini mampu menyumbang terhadap pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang mekanisme ketidaksamaan gender, yang meletakkan wanita sebagai golongan subordinat. Diharapkan bahawa kesedaran tentang proses fragmentasi ini dapat mendorong golongan wanita agar terus berjuang menentang mekanisme ketidaksamaan gender lantas mengelakkan daripada diri mereka berterusan dikelaskan sebagai golongan subordinat.

**FRAGMENTATION AS GENDER TRAP: A FEMINIST READING OF
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ABSTRACT

Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw have often been regarded as advocates of women's rights. Their dramas frequently target social ills, and a recurring dominant theme is the idea of women's rights. Thus, their dramatic works lend themselves well to analyses from the feminist perspective, particularly from the angle of gender inequality. This thesis therefore focuses on revealing the mechanisms of gender inequality that result in the fragmentation of women as human beings. Previous studies have not comprehensively analyzed women characters in literary texts to present an insight into the women's state of fragmentation. Five theories are combined in this study in a playful pluralist approach, with Butler's theory of gender as the reference point; the other four theories considered are Beauvoir's existentialist feminism, Millett's politics of gender, Maslow's human basic needs and Foucault's theory of power. Separate analyses of the human elements of mind, body, and soul are carried out to demonstrate the fragmentation which lies at the heart of women's gender problems. Two dramas by Ibsen, *The Lady from the Sea* and *When We Dead Awaken* are studied and two by Shaw: *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *Pygmalion*. The analysis of these dramas unveils the workings of gender inequality via the stereotypical perception of women as the inferior gender and as such, the maintaining of regulatory norms and performative acts that reinforce the fragmentation of women as human beings. This study thus contributes towards a better understanding of the mechanism of gender inequality through which women are subordinated. By

understanding the fragmentation process it is hoped that women will challenge gender inequality to prevent subordination and subsequently a sub-human status.

DEDICATION

*To my two daughters,
Worood & Maryam*

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

“If I am a certain gender, will I still be regarded as part of the human?”
(Butler, *Undoing Gender*, 2)

1.0 Overview

It has never been a world of equality for the two genders; men and women. It has always been, and is devotionally sustained as a world of man. Oppressed, exploited, enslaved, tortured or even sanctified and worshipped, the woman is an object man has always been manipulating and utilizing in his patriarchal world. Gender has been a tool of segregation whereby men and women are scaled into classes of humans, less than humans, or even non-human (Butler, *Undoing Gender 2*). Hence, comes this study, which is launched in search of the human woman in the light of Butler’s theory of gender with a consideration of selected realist social drama of Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw as a field for searching.

The reality of women’s secondary and relative status has been reflected in literary works, be they realistic, critical, fictional, or other genres authored by men and women. Among those who best manifested the struggle of woman within the patriarchal boundaries of the woman gender were Henrik Ibsen (1828 – 1906) and George Bernard Shaw (1856 - 1950). Many studies have taken into analysis and criticism the relationship between those playwrights’ texts and feminism and the issue of gender inequality. Templeton’s “The Doll House Backlash: Criticism, Feminism, and Ibsen” is one of the

most comprehensive essays that brings together the most controversial interpretations of Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and its female protagonist; Nora. However, the current study attempts at providing a new reading of two plays of Ibsen that are less exposed to criticism and gender studies than *A Doll's House*. In fact, Ibsen's idea that "[a] woman cannot be herself in the society of the present day, which is an exclusively masculine society, with laws framed by men and with a judicial system that judges feminine conduct from a masculine point of view" (Meyer, 1974) can be found applicable to all the female characters in his plays. In a similar understanding to woman's situation, Simone De Beauvoir (1989) indicates that the "[r]epresentation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth." (43) Hence, all humans; men and women are defined as humans because they possess the human characteristics and human elements. Yet, man has long dominated and monopolized the human status pushing woman into a marginal position. She is enforced into a status of inferiority which creates a sub-human from her deserved human status. This is well stated by Sayers (1990) as: "the tragedy of being a woman consisted in not only having one's life and choices impoverished and limited, but also in the fact that to be a good woman was to be a second-rate human being." (Sayers 220-221)

In this scenario, women have to be re-born into humanity by embracing a challenge to gender roles. They have to go through a new transformation to acquire the characteristics of a human beyond the regulatory norms of gender. They have to learn to see, hear, and voice out. They have to try to control their lives in a way that recreates the matrix of the subject forming zone that Butler explains in her *Bodies that Matter* (1993).

Women's secondary status mainly comes from their acceptance to identify themselves within the limits of their sexed bodies in order to claim a subject status of identification and acceptance by society where they surrender to "the normative force of performativity" (Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 188). However, while that subject status associated with the female body saves them from the "'unlivable' and 'uninhabitable' zones of social life" (3), it keeps them in a marginalized and secondary position compared to man.

In the light of the above mentioned, it seems clear that woman's dilemma is anchored in her gender, where the social construction of gender ascribes all negative and less than human to the woman gender. For this reason, the current study ventures into exploring how that inferior status has its mechanism working on fragmenting woman as a human depriving her an integration of mind, body, and soul in order for woman to claim an equal human status to that of man. The current study is an attempt to realize the woman's situation which appears to be anchored in fragmentation that women are unable to pull themselves together, having been trained to think and live in fragments. This fragmentation training in the patriarchal world works through the iteration of performative acts that enforce the gender normative.

1.1 Statement of Problem

Traditionally, women have been under the circumstance of oppression, prejudice and often violence in the patriarchal world. Feminists have tried to improve the woman's situation and pave the way towards empowerment of women. However, due to the fact that women are affected by men's dominance on the abstract and the physical world,

they still use the tools devised by men and think to some degree through the terms set by men. Among the theories devised by feminists to scrutinize and make sense of the women's situation in a manner that offers a possibility of making a difference is the theory of gender. The study of gender relations and power relations based on gender disparities has clarified the bases and mechanisms implied within the gender relations system. Judith Butler's theory of gender with postmodern orientation not only explicates the mechanism of gender structure but also provides counterpart mechanisms to subvert that gender construction. In her *Undoing Gender* (2004), Butler explains how gender construction makes the norm for a human being limited to the gender of man leaving behind the woman gender as relative. This relativeness of woman leaves her with the options of either to comply with the norms of that social construction of gender and accept a second class human status or to be an honorary man by breaking off the feminine sphere. Butler's theory of gender as explicated in *Bodies that Matter* (1993) and *Gender Trouble* (1997) is among the theories considered for the current study.

Based on the understanding of the gender normative acts that discriminate between men and women in terms of human status, this study attempts at providing a new comprehensive reading in selected social dramas of Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw. This study highlights the fact that the true predicament of women as represented by the two dramatists is that of women's less than a human status as imposed on the woman gender. Through the new reading provided in this study, the researcher attempts to expose how patriarchy empowers man to decide "who qualifies as the recognizably human and who does not" (Butler, *Undoing Gender*, 2) within the system of gender relations.

This status of the fragmented woman gender has become the reality of the woman's situation. Men and women become used to conceiving women as a fragmented human; a sexual/reproductive body, a crippled mind/psyche, or a needing soul. As such, whether it was a mindfully devised mechanism to subjugate woman by patriarchy or a byproduct of its continuous oppression and marginalization, the fragmentation of woman is an effective mechanism which needs a careful reading not only in literary texts but also in real life. It is important to note in this context that the status of fragmentation investigated in the current study is not only the fragmentation of identity discussed in Butler's theory of gender but also inclusive of it. The fragmented identity explicated by Butler is a result of the identification or misidentification with the sexed body that results in an ambiguous perception of the self for woman. This is because woman's identification with the female body results in a salvation from the 'abject' but an anchoring into the marginal. On the other hand, the rejection of the socially livable and acceptable life is then an identification with the 'abject' that falls in the zone of the unlivable and unthinkable (Butler, *Bodies that Matter*).

In fact, from reading different literary texts and investigating real life situations, the researcher has identified that women seem to be living in an inevitable status of fragmentation where all aspects of life seem to enforce on her an identification through the female body alone. As is explained in the definition of key terms in this study, humans are identified as an integration of mind, body, and soul. These three elements are the main elements that compose our human being. Men and women are virtually supposed to have the three elements integrated that they are humans. However, the reality of gender trouble reveals that there is discrimination between the two genders of

men and women with regards to the human elements. At the time men are given all opportunities in the patriarchal world to have the three elements of mind, body, and soul integrated, women are sieged with the only possibility to identify themselves through their female bodies. A woman in the patriarchal world is expected to be a female sexual body and a female reproductive body only. In both cases of identification through the body, she is a passive body that is controlled and manipulated by man. As for her human development regarding the mind element, she is given the least chance for just because she is a woman. Women are stuck at some stage of unfulfilled basic human need such as that of security, love, or self-esteem. There are women who are even stuck at a chronological lack of satisfaction of their physiological needs. This is brought about by the male dominance physically, economically, and on the abstract level through norms, traditions and even the law. Thus, when a woman cannot have control on her mind element, she is in a status of fragmentation that eventually render her a fragmented human or a less than human. The same is true when a woman attempts at controlling her soul element. The power relations and the total dominance of patriarchy would stand in her way that she is left with no right or power to free will or making choices. What happens in this case that a woman lives a soulless body that is absolutely made a tool for man to utilize. It is a clear status of fragmentation of the human elements.

From the above, it is obvious that the fragmentation of woman is case specific to the woman gender. It is only the woman gender that lacks the ability and power to reach an integration status as a human. Women who are led and manipulated by patriarchy into living by the fragmented element of the body are in a way or another identified as less than humans. Thus, fragmentation is the gender trap that women need to comprehend

and escape in order to retain their human status and reach into an equal human status to that of man.

The researcher embarked on this research with the assumption that a more integrated humanistic approach to reading the woman's situation may yield positive results in finding an answer to how women can escape that situation. This study stands out because it adopts an eclectic approach to provide a new reading that analyzes and contextualizes how Ibsen and Shaw portray the mechanisms operated by patriarchy to fragment women and how they both portray the consciousness of their women's characters' conditions reflected within the cultural and gender-oriented experiences of their communities through a realistic lens. This research also provides a critical interpretation of the textual manner in which consciousness of occupying a sub-human status influences how Ibsen and Shaw treat their motifs, themes, characters and settings in the selected plays. This is accomplished through the analysis of Ibsen's *The Lady from the sea* and *When We Dead Awaken* and Shaw's *Mrs Warens' Profession* and *Pygmalion*.

The social construction of gender imposes certain gender roles on women which may reflect surface freedom and some independence, but ultimately still deny women the essence of true freedom. This occurs through the social construction of a male dominated society which gives priority to men over women. Sally Haslanger (2006) in "Gender and Social Construction: Who? What? When? Where? How?" emphasizes this idea when she states that "[h]uman beings are social beings in the sense that we are deeply responsive to our social context and become the physical and psychological beings we become through interaction with others." (Haslanger 22) This social shaping

of individuals is so much vivid in the social dramas of Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw where they reveal the restricted existence, the stereotyped image, and the limited space of healthy human development which women have in a patriarchal society. This, in fact, serves as clear manifestation of gender inequality. By analyzing female characters in selected social dramas of Ibsen and Shaw, the researcher aims at comprehending the mechanisms and techniques which patriarchal societies use within man-woman power relations in order to subordinate women and subjugate them. It is true that women understand the fact that they are being oppressed and used but they need to understand how that is applied to them so that they can subvert the oppression, stereotyping, and objectification in order to break through the imprisonment of unequal power relations.

The analysis contains a comprehensive analysis using Maslow's theory of psychology interrelated with feminism supported by two key feminist figures, Simone De Beauvoir as the pioneer in feminist movement and Judith Butler as a contemporary thinker in gender and identity. In addition there is the utilization of Kate Millett's theory of Sexual Politics along with concepts of the lived body, subjectivity and gendered body experience from De Beauvoir's theory and Foucault's concept of the relation of body, soul, and power. The whole study, though utilizes a number of concepts from different theories, keeps its theoretical framework within Butler's theory of gender due to the fact that the main issue investigated in this study is gender based.

1.2 Objectives:

The current study aims at meeting Four interrelated objectives. These objectives work collectively to reflect a new comprehensive realistic and more humanistic reading of the dramas of Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw. The objectives are:

1. To scrutinize the females' gendered body and its functions as a fragment of the fragmented woman characters presented in the selected texts. It aims to find out how women live the fragment of their bodies and how much control they have on their bodies as reflected in the examined texts.
2. To examine the development of woman's psyche as a human being and, thus, how women struggle in the patriarchal world to have control over the mind fragment as human beings.
3. To investigate the dimensions and formation of woman's self and identity within the gendered social construction of the male and female soul.
4. To demonstrate how the fragmentation of woman's human elements of mind, body, and soul is a mechanism operated by patriarchy to subjugate women and how women can escape the status of the second rate citizen by obtaining the integrity of their human elements.

1.3 Significance of the Study:

The significance of the current study lies mainly in its practice of a new feminist reading in dramatic texts. What adds to the significance of this reading is its applicability not only in literary criticism but also in real life. Activist feminists willing to diagnose

mechanisms that disempower women and thus facilitate their subjugation may hopefully be able to use the reading offered in this thesis to read the individual situation of each woman case and thus be able discover which aspect of woman's human elements is oppressed by patriarchy and thus work their efforts to empower women to restore their integrated human status. The detailed readings provided in the analysis chapters may provide examples of how patriarchal mechanisms that fragment woman deny her empowerment and thus, agency. It also provides examples of how conscious realization of such a situation may be the first step to change and thus work on the reintegration that can lead to empowerment. Hence, this study ultimately attempts to prove the potentiality of an equal-to-man human woman. This is intended to provide women with evidence that they should have agency that help them subvert their sub-human status into a full human one that should not be affected by the biological differences between the two genders.

The current study derives its significance from the fact that it is a feminist dramatic criticism that is based on a multidisciplinary background. It is both collective and integrative. Patricia R. Schroeder in "American Drama, Feminist Discourse, and Dramatic Form: In Defense of Critical Pluralism" (1993) discusses the importance of the fact that feminist critics need to accept the 'playful pluralism' suggested by Annette Kolodny in her "Dancing through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice and Politics of a Feminist Literary Criticism" (1980). The researcher attempts in this study to exercise 'playful pluralism' where concepts of three theories are used to fulfill the criticism task in the current study. The current study does not deny the efforts of other feminist critics nor claim them inauthentic rather than work at adding to them.

The insistence of some feminist studies to decide on what is politically correct or not causes some feminists to deny the efforts of others, as indicated by Patricia R Schroeder in her essay "American Drama, Feminist Discourse, and Dramatic Form: In Defense of Critical Pluralism." Based on the aforementioned, the researcher does not claim that other feminist dramatic criticism have been wrong or unrepresentative of feminist approach.

This study offers an approach in feminist dramatic criticism that combines many concepts of feminist criticism and yet is an innovative feminist approach to reading dramatic texts. Here, the researcher is working as a resisting reader. Moreover, the inclusion of a non-feminist theory of humanistic psychology in the analysis of female characters underscores the importance of human needs and equal psychological development for both men and women.

In order to demolish gender inequality which cultivates women as second-rated individuals leaving them to be the most unfortunate beings due to their destiny of gender, there is a need to understand how it operates. There is no doubt that there are so obvious differences especially biological, between the male and female sexes, but this fact should not be used to abuse and oppress the female sex through gender inequality. There is more room for improvement in women's rights especially in the Middle East. Thus, the researcher hopes this study will offer a unique contribution to towards understanding the practice of gender inequality and provides piece of women's potentiality to challenge and break through that gender inequality.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study:

The current study analyzes two social dramas by Ibsen and two by Shaw. The selection is made based on the realistic characterization of the female protagonists in these plays as well as the validity of Ibsen and Shaw as advocates of social reform with special emphasis on the situation of women. The selection of Ibsen and Shaw is justified by the fact that they have presented real human female characters as will be seen in the chapters of analysis. Each of the selected characters is so carefully constructed by the playwright that her inner and surface sides are harmoniously integrated and realistically presented. In addition, the researcher is investigating the situation of the woman gender as social construct which is best investigated in texts that have social backgrounds such as the texts selected from Ibsen and Shaw's plays.

Ibsen's social dramas in this study are *The Lady from the Sea* (1888) and *When We Dead Awaken* (1899). Shaw's dramas selected for the purpose in this thesis are *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1898) and *Pygmalion* (1913).

The selection of plays for this study is mainly limited to social drama or drama with social themes such as the dilemma of the woman gender is in the conceptions of a patriarchal society about gender and gender roles. Whether the woman's situation is presented in a tragedy as in Ibsen's drama or a comedy as in Shaw's drama, the tragic situation is the same. The female characters are trapped in a tragic situation related to their woman gender which is created by the patriarchal society that leaves them in a status of fragmentation.

Limitations considered for the current study include an exclusion of queer orientation in Butler's theory of gender as it does not apply to the selected texts. This is due to the fact that the characters presented by Ibsen and Shaw represent the sex-gender fixity of female-woman. Another limitation is in the selection of texts. The most recognizable texts by Ibsen are excluded from the current study due to their being overdone with feminist themes of criticism and studies while the study of less scrutinized texts does not seem to yield any less significant results.

It may be important to note that the analysis of characters in the plays by Bernard Shaw does not occupy as much space as that of Ibsen. The reason beyond that is that Shaw's plays, especially *Mrs. Warren's Profession* are shorter as texts, have a quite good part of the text spent in preaching in the prologue and epilogue and the fact that they are comedy they do not have the space allowed for an in depth explanation on stage of inner feelings and struggles of the characters.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

This section offers the definition of key terms in this study. Nevertheless, there are many terms that appear within the body of the thesis, which the researcher finds more suitable to define and explain in their context as they emerge to avoid an unnecessary long list of terms.

1.5.1 Playful Pluralism

Playful pluralism is a term coined by Annette Kolodny in her article “Dancing Through the Minefield: Some Observations on the Theory, Practice, and Politics of a Feminist Literary Criticism” (1980) where she suggests a better solution for feminist criticism to comprehend the multi-facial woman situation through the use of multiple approaches. She declares:

our task is to initiate nothing less than a playful pluralism, responsive to the possibilities of multiple critical schools and methods, but captive of none, recognizing that the many tools needed for our analysis will necessarily be largely inherited and only partly of our own making. Only by employing a plurality of methods will we protect ourselves from the temptation of so oversimplifying any text-and especially those particularly offensive to us. (19)

Kolodny justifies this suggested method of feminist criticism by indicating that “[a]ny text we deem worthy of our critical attention is usually, after all, a locus of many and varied kinds of (personal, thematic, stylistic, structural, rhetorical, etc.) relationships” (19).

1.5.2 Three Elements of Human Beings (Soul, body, and mind)

In this study, there is an adaptation to the concept that a human being is integrity of the elements of body, mind, and soul which are different but interrelated. In *Primordial Truth and Postmodern Theology* (1989), Griffin and Smith distinguish between the human elements of body, mind, and soul adding a fourth element of spirit which they indicate to be external to the unity of the three elements of body, mind, and soul. Similar beliefs regarding body, mind, soul, and spirit is found in *Beyond the Post-modern Mind*

(1989) by Huston Smith. The current study adapts the definition of the three elements of mind, body, and soul as stated in *Primordial Truth and Postmodern Theology*.

The three elements of mind, body and soul also appear in other philosophical resources rather than the two above mentioned, yet with a similar content. Among ten central propositions in the Humanist philosophy which he identifies, Corliss Lamont (1997) claims that:

Humanism, drawing especially upon the laws and facts of science, believes that we human beings are an evolutionary product of the Nature of which we are a part; that the mind is indivisibly conjoined with the functioning of the brain; and that as an inseparable unity of body and personality we can have no conscious survival after death. (14-15)

In the same book, *The Philosophy of Humanism* (1997), Lamont differentiates between mind and soul (36). He also believes in the unity of body and personality which includes mind and soul. He relates moral standards to mind, and personality traits to soul. He also indicates that “there is also an indissoluble connection between the body-mind-personality, that is, the whole person, and the sustaining and conditioning environment, both human and nonhuman” (97).

Thus, the present study, based on the resources mentioned above, identifies that a human being has the three elements of soul, body, and mind which are integrated and interrelated in the human being. The loss of control of any of the three elements would lead an individual to a status lower than that of a human.

1.5.3 Fragmentation

The concept of fragmentation has been applied differently in different previous studies. Postmodernists including Judith Butler “posit the fragmentation of the subject as a

strategy of resistance and/or a guarantee of indeterminacy, especially gender indeterminacy.” (Layton 107) However, at the time the postmodernist cultural criticism celebrates gender indeterminacy as an outcome of the subject’s gender identity fragmentation, “the pain of this fragmented subject is forgotten or bracketed and she is rather figured as able to subvert the system by enjoying, rearranging, and playing with her fragments.” (Layton 107) Yet, the female characters in the realist plays examined in this study do not seem to be suffering a different type of fragmentation other than the gender identity one. Although their fragmentation is gender related but it actually is a fragmentation of the human elements of woman of mind, body, and soul. It is a fragmentation imposed on the woman gender where man in patriarchal society enjoys an integration of these elements that guarantees his human status and enforces woman into a marginalized zone inhabited by her fragmented human elements.

In the light of the above mentioned, this study discusses the fragmentation of woman on a different level from that of Butler. However, the current study can still utilize Butler’s theory to a great extent to investigate the gender trouble of women in the patriarchal society.

There are different representations of a person’s fragmentation in literature including that of the Marx theory. “A feature of the Marx’s theory of alienation is the *fragmentation* of the human person(“Feminist Perspectives on Objectification”). The fragmentation here is that between the human person and his/her human functions “[w]hen workers lose control of the products of their labor or of their own productive activity.” (Bartky 43) In fact, Bartky (1990) finds that fragmentation of the Marx theory applicable to women as workers. Nevertheless, she indicates that “Women undergo a special sort of fragmentation and loss of being as women” (34). Bartly also explicates

that “sexual objectification is a form of fragmentation and thus an impoverishment of the objectified individual” (36). This is when the individual is identified through his/her sexual capacities where sexual activity becomes the only product expected from the individual and is thus fragmented and alienated from that same product which is no more a human product. According to Bartly, “Woman has lost control of the production of her image, lost control to those whose production of these images is neither innocent nor benevolent, but obedient to imperatives which are both capitalist and phallogentric. (42) Thus, the produced sexual image of woman is alien to her which leaves her live a fragmented self.

While the fragmentation discussed in this study is still about women and is investigated within the effect of the gender issue, it, however, is a fragmentation of the human elements that reveal the mechanism used by patriarchy to keep the woman gender fragmented that it remains a secondary, incomplete and dependent gender. Women may have been found struggling of fragmentation within the identity scope, but the current study reveals another level of fragmentation which women need to comprehend and thus may be able to conquer, otherwise they remain within the domain of the marginal as well as the dependent.

To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, one study in literary criticism has discussed the elements of mind, body and soul of female characters in literary texts. The combination of mind, body, and soul is found in a PhD Dissertation by Renae Ruth Applegate House (2008). Yet, the researcher in her study investigates the shift in the novelist’s intention from body to mind to soul throughout the years of her writing of novels with female protagonists. The soul in that study, however, is seen as a more religious connotation than personal traits and representation of self. House indicates that

the author's first novels revealed an identification of female character through the body. In a later stage, the female characters are identified through the mind and their intellectual abilities. A more advanced stage in the novels of

Gail Godwin, explains House, shows a more integrated character identity with a body, mind and soul with more focus on the spiritual life of the female characters in the novels studied. As such, the current study is not the only feminist reading in literary texts that brings together the elements of human of mind, body and soul. However, this study differs from House's in that it indicates that without the integration of the three elements of mind, body, and soul, women cannot live a normal human life that celebrates their being females equal as humans to males.

In conclusion, the fragmentation discussed in the current study is the fragmentation of the three elements of mind, body, and soul without the integration of which a woman is unable to claim an equal human status to that of man.

1.5.4 Gender Inequality

Due to the fact that there is no direct definition of 'gender inequality', the definition considered for this study is based on a collection of 'gender equality' definitions and 'gender inequality' implications and discussions as detailed below.

Rosemary Hennessy in "Class" which appears as a book chapter in *A Concise Companion to Feminist theory* indicates that Marxist feminists found that gender inequality is maintained by capitalism that allows a continuous power and possession to man despite the fact that gender inequality itself preceded capitalism. (Hennessy 61-67) However, Engels who developed a theory of women's oppression with Marx has

indicated in his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1951) that economic oppression of woman following discrimination against and preference of male gender over female based on religious claims then natural ones all led to the gender inequality in which woman is the underprivileged gender (Engels). On the other hand, Michelle Rosaldo is reported to have defined inequality as

a state where women are universally subordinated to men; where men are dominant due to their participation in public life and their relegation of women to the domestic sphere. The differential participation of men and women in public life gives rise not only to universal male authority over women but to a higher valuation of male over female roles. (Humm 103)

Henry L. Tischler in *Introduction to Sociology* (2011) discusses the origins of gender inequality from two different points of view. He indicates that functionalists find that gender inequality is necessitated by the need of societies to develop, thus, there is distribution of roles where women were required to take care of the helpless infants and, consequently, the house and children. That, according to functionalists, causes women to be dependent on men who assume the role of breadwinning and that situation brought about gender inequality. As for the conflict theorists' point of view, discusses Tischler, "males dominate females because of their superior power and control over key resources" (Tischler 255) He also reports that the conflict theory finds economic inequality between men and women as being the main reason behind gender inequality and that "economic advantage leads to power and prestige. If men have an economic advantage in society, that advantage will produce a superior social position in both society and the family" (Tischler 255). He further details on the conflict theory point of view that "as long as the dominant group benefits from the existing relationship, it has

little incentive to change it” (Tischler 255). For this reason, women who lack power are continuously dominated by men.

Gender Equality, on the other fold, is defined, based on UN sources as a status where:

women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society. Gender equality starts with equal valuing of girls and boys. ("Faq's / Useful Definitions (UN Sources)")

Thus, Gender equality requires an equal opportunity to both women and men albeit their differences. That is why for the United Nations, “[e]quality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development” (“Concepts and Definitions”). Yet, in “Gender Stereotypes and the Socialization Process”, Jivka Marinova (2003) claims that there is a big hindrance to achieving gender equality. She justifies this claim by indicating:

The stereotypes concerning both genders are so deeply enshrined in our minds that sometimes even the strongest advocates for gender equality are stepping back unconsciously and are paying tribute to their stereotypical thinking. This is maybe the reason why the gender equality cause was perceived only as a “women’s” cause and men were more or less isolated from this process. (Marinova 2)

From the above discussion, the research infers that both men and women are supposed to enjoy similar rights though that does not make them similar. Gender inequality may have been necessitated by some conditions in the past but it does not need to persist because it has changed from a necessity to oppression with the change of conditions and development of humanity. The researcher concludes from the above illustration that

gender inequality is, basically, generated from economic subordination of woman to man and that that economic dominance of man is connected to stereotypical gender roles and social status and is manifested in masculine power over feminine dependence.

In the current study, gender inequality is perceived as the umbrella of the unequal treatment of men and women as humans that is practiced through the politics of gender, sexuality, and power relations which are, in turn, manifested in stereotyping, objectification, and oppression respectively.

1.5.5 Patriarchy

There are different definitions of patriarchy. Though some keep it to the limited family domain with the father and brother dominance over the females in the family, other feminists, more dominantly, prefer to take the definition to broader limits (Andermahr, Lovell, and Wolkowitz 159-160). However, in *The Dictionary of Feminist Theory*, patriarchy is defined as: “A system of male authority which oppresses women through its social, political and economic institutions.” (Humm 159) Not much different from Humm’s definition is that of Heidi Hartmann where “she looks at patriarchy as a material base which has always kept women under control.” (Kausar 63) Finally, with the changes that are taking place consistently in the social, political and other life aspects, Silvia Walby indicates that “That there are new forms of social relations is not in doubt, but these are new forms of patriarchy” (Walby 200).

The researcher then takes patriarchy in its broader meaning which is the dominance of man over woman in any kind of relation. It is the big umbrella under which women are stereotyped, objectified, and oppressed.

1.5.6 The ‘self’

The term ‘self’ in the context of this thesis is utilized as a synonym to the term ‘soul’ as explained and detailed in the definition of the latter. It is treated from the point of view of the monistic theory of psychology where in agreement with the point of view of the Naturalism, Materialism, and Humanism as is detailed by Corliss Lamont (1997) in *The Philosophy of Humanism*. It refers to the personality that dwells within the human body and is affected by and effective on as explicates Simone De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1989) where these personality traits are related to freedom and free choice. Beauvoir explains that women in the patriarchal society lack access to and control over such personality traits.

1.5.7 Identity

According to the *Encyclopedia of Women and Gender* (2001), Identity is defined as “the sense one has of who one is and what one should be doing with one’s life.” And that “identity formation is the process of deciding on, or committing oneself to, a specific identity” (43). However, identity is directly affected by gender. This due to the fact that identity is formed partially through the roles we play and it cannot be forgotten that each gender plays different gender roles. This is due to the social organization that imposes

different gender roles through norms and traditions. Thus, due to the fact that “socialization shapes individuals’ self-perceptions, identity formation, goals, and values, men and women should acquire different self-concepts, different patterns of expectations for success across various activities, and different values and goals through the processes associated with gender-role socialization” (50). In this sense, ‘identity’ as a term utilized in this thesis refers to how women perceive themselves within the gender restrictions imposed on the woman gender. A more explicated definition of the term ‘identity’ can be understood through the effects of sex, politics, race, nature, and other identity formation factors as detailed by Linda Nicholson (2008) in *Identity before Identity Politics*. According to Judith Butler, we all act the identity that we chose to reflect through the re-iteration of normative acts imposed by the socially acceptable gender roles. This concept of acted identity is detailed in Butler’s *Gender Trouble* (1993) and *Bodies that Matter* (1999).

1.5.8 The ‘Male Gaze’

The term of the “male gaze’ is basically derived, in this thesis, from Kate Millet’s Theory of Patriarchy in her book *Sexual Politics* (1970) which is to a high degree similar to Beauvoir’s concept of the male gaze in her *The Second Sex* (1989) where the male gaze works on objectifying woman as a female body to be utilized by man. However, the male gaze has taken great interest by many scholars such as William Rothman, Carol Clover, *Women, and Chainsaws*, Tania Modleski, Alfred Hitchcock, Linda Williams, and Stanley Cavell. Yet, most focus in such studies has been placed on woman presentation in the film industry.

In the current study, the male gaze, based on both Millett and Beauvoir's theories is seen to be limiting woman into a sexual female body that is an object for the satisfaction of male's desire. Thus, the male gaze works as a patriarchal powerful tool on controlling woman's body.

1.6 Organization of Thesis

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter One offers an introduction to the study with an overview, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

Chapter Two is meant to provide a literature review of past scholarly texts about the social drama of Ibsen and Shaw. The focus of literature review in this regard is laid on feminist and gender lenses of criticism. This chapter is also devoted to situating the current study. It highlights the important role of Ibsen and Shaw in providing a realistic presentation of social life. It covers the social drama of Ibsen and Shaw as well as the feminist dramatic criticism.

Chapter Three covers the concepts selected from different feminist and non-feminist theories for the theoretical framework of the current study. This chapter also explains the qualitative critical method in this study. There is, as well, a detailed account of how the methodology is applied in conducting this study.

Chapter Four is allocated to the discussion of Ibsen's selected two dramas. Chapter Five is allocated to the discussion of Shaw's selected two dramas. Chapter Six