

**The Objectification of Self
in Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler***

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Abstract

Objectification is the conduct of turning into or treating as a thing, something that is truly not a thing. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is the first philosopher who created and was interested in the concept of objectification. He accentuates that it leads to depersonalization and considering people a tool of others' purposes. This paper explains the hurtful results of the objectification of self in Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* from a psycho-feminist approach. It elaborates on how a person loses some of their human features such as: freedom, humanity, dignity, and power. Ibsen, in this play, tries to emancipate women from the idea of being treated as an object. He indicates that objectification is the source of evil not only in the western culture but also in all world cultures. Moreover, he shows the mental and the moral effects of objectification on the characters of the play as he portrays *Hedda Gabler* as a microcosm of this experience. The paper aims at the prospect of happening objectification with males and females simultaneously by self-objectifying and/or by objectifying others. It touches on solipsism as, utterly, a counter idea of the objectification through the events of the play. Finally, it takes into account the role played by silence in creating the subjectivity-denial for the heroine all her marital life.

Keywords: Objectification, Depersonalization, *Hedda Gabler*, Solipsism, Silence.

تشبيء الذات في مسرحية هنرك إبسن (هيدا جابلر)

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الخلاصة

التشبيء هو الإقدام على معاملة الفرد كشيء رغم أنه في الواقع هو ليس كذلك. إيمانويل كانت (1724-1804) هو أول فيلسوف ابتكر فكرة التشبيء وأبدى إهتمامه بها، مؤكداً على أنها تؤدي إلى التجريد من الإنسانية وإعتبار الناس كأداة لتلبية إحتياجات الآخرين. يبين هذا البحث النتائج المؤلمة لتشبيء الذات في مسرحية هنرك إبسن (هيدا جابلر) طبقاً للنهج النسوي- النفسي. كما يتناول البحث بدقة كيف أن المرء يفقد بعضاً من صفاته البشرية مثل الحرية والإنسانية والكرامة والقوة بسبب التشبيء. يحاول إبسن في هذه المسرحية أن يحرر النساء من فكرة معاملتهن كأشياء، مشيراً إلى إن التشبيء هو مصدر الشر ليس في الثقافة الغربية فحسب، ولكن في ثقافات العالم أجمع. علاوة على ذلك يوضح إبسن تأثيرات التشبيء الأخلاقية والعقلية على شخصيات المسرحية عند وصفه لمسرحية (هيدا جابلر) على أنها عالم مصغر لهذه التجربة. كما يهدف البحث إلى إحصالية حدوث التشبيء مع الذكور والإناث معاً عن طريق تشبيء الذات أو عن طريق تشبيء الآخرين. يتطرق البحث أيضاً إلى السولبسية على أنها فكرة مضادة تماماً للتشبيء خلال أحداث المسرحية. وأخيراً، يأخذ البحث بنظر الأعتبار الدور الذي يلعبه الصمت في خلق حالة محو الذات لدى بطلة المسرحية طيلة حياتها الزوجية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التشبيء، التجريد من الإنسانية، مسرحية (هيدا جابلر)، السولبسية، الصمت.

1-Introduction

In spite of his shyness, Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906) advocates in his plays the most essential issues relating to women of his time. He calls for their freedom and rights since he started writing drama. For him, this fact reflects his great concern over the woman's status in society in 19th century. He wrote *Hedda Gabler* in 1890, a play which shows the difference between two groups of society, bourgeois and aristocratic. The background of this play emerges from the fight between these two groups (Ellis-Fermor in Baldick, et al. 13). It is a play that shows the

inconsistency between love and marriage as Ibsen has a sense of not belonging to the world of romantic love (Lall 3-5). Psychologically, the deepest influence of objectifying dealings urges the females to take on a distinct concept of self. Theory of objectification believes that the cultural periphery of objectification duties is to make females interact with others and regard themselves as objects for the sake of being observed and estimated (Fredrickson and Roberts 177). Gervais, et al. in an essay entitled "Toward a Unified Theory of Objectification and Dehumanization" point out that the growth of objectification theory aims at explaining the opposite psychological outcomes for women who are treated as objects rather than human beings (3).

Generally speaking, objectification is a behavior of treating someone as a thing or an object rather than a human being. Martha C. Nussbaum specifies seven characteristics for the idea of objectification: when people are seen as they need vigor (immobility), as if they are replaceable with other things (interchangeability), as if they need safety and security so that they could be attacked (vulnerability), as if they are enslaved (possession), as if their senses and emotions are ignored (refusal of subjectivity), as if they are deemed as an implement (means), and as if they lack independence (renunciation of freedom). These features indicate the management of something, not someone (Goldenberg in Gervais 74). Calogero believes that belittling a human being to the position of only a tool in favor of a forceful person, puts women in a state of being attackable and oppressed (42). Kant, Mackinnon, and Dworkin stand against the idea of treating people as instruments and they consider it ethically a complex matter if it were void of being humane (Nussbaum 289).

Paasonen, et al. point out that Martha Nussbaum believes that all people can be objectified when they seem to be prevented from their freedom and will, and when they are used as a tool for the sake of others as in bondage (38). Objects are contrary to subjects in their disability to control how people can see and treat them. Not only women can be objectified, but men can also be objectified (1-5). In act IX, Ibsen makes clear that Tesman is objectified by Hedda as well. He proves that truth through Tesman's belief that Hedda doesn't love him at all: "*Hedda! Oh, is this true? But—but-- I never knew you show your love like that before.*"

Fancy that!”¹ (IX. 161). Loughnan and his colleagues say that some writers, such as Kozak, Frankenhauser, and Roberts, view that males may also be objectified and dehumanized by others (712). This proves that both males and females dehumanize the objectified people. Loughnan and his colleagues conclude that objectification has a tantamount influence on both men and women and not limited to females only (715). Lovborg, in *Hedda Gabler*, is objectified by Hedda twice: 1- when she burns the drifts of his manuscript as she neglects his feelings and 2- when she gives him a pistol and asks him to commit suicide nicely as she denies his personhood.

In an essay titled “Operationalizing Self-Objectification: Assessment and Related Methodological Issues,” Rachel M. Calogero illustrates that Self-Objectification Questionnaire (SOQ) not only is employed to assess the objectification of self and objectification of other in females but also in males as well. That is, measuring the level at which females and males objectify other females and males by categorizing the features of others from the most significant to the least significant. The SOQ shows that the outcome, between self-objectification on one side and other men-objectification as well as other women-objectification on the other side, is the same. That measure enhances the objectification theory which leads to the following consequence: Females are objectified by males more than males are objectified by other males, and females objectify other females or males less than males objectify females. In a nutshell, males are the first wrongdoers and females are the first victims (27-28).

Objectification occupies an important place in immortalization of evil. Moreover, panic and narcissism also provoke people to objectify others in order to assert the self-perpetuation. Dehumanization in turn is the psychological aspect of regarding others as those who are devoid of human origin. They are believed to be as less than humans (Rector 5-10). With reference to the play, Hedda fears Lovborg’s having the post of professorship at university when she asks him to kill himself in a beautiful way by her pistol:

“Hedda: Take it- and do you use it now.”

¹ All quotations from *Hedda Gabler* are taken from Henrik Ibsen’s play *Hedda Gabler: In a New Version by Brian Friel*. Introduced by William Archer. Translated by Edmund Gosse & William Archer. New York: Dramatists Play Service INC., 2009. Further references will be to the act and page number.

"Lovborg: Thanks!"

"Hedda: And beautifully, Eilert Lovborg. Promise me that!" (III. 152-53)

Objectification can disorganize and change women's engagement in all ideas and missions by drawing their attention to their appearance. When a woman continuously observes her appearance and compares it with its cultural norm, thus, she self-objectifies. Theoretically, the self-objectification happens by considering how others assess and judge one's appearance (Quinn, et al. 119-129). Loughnan, et al. also mention that Heflick and Goldenberg reckon that when human beings are judged by their appearance, they will be viewed as less human. This thought shows that objectification brings about a diminishing of apprehended personhood (709-10). Objectification theory can be viable to females through a wide extent of life. The growth of self-objectification exists in women who suffer from dejected mood that makes them feel ashamed of their appearance (Tiggemann in Calogero, et al. 142-48). In act I, Ibsen shows that Miss Tesman (Julia) self-objectifies through her conversation with Tesman when she wants her appearance to be evaluated by the observer's view (Hedda's view):

"Tesman: Why, what a gorgeous bonnet you've been investing in!"

"Miss Tesman: I bought it on Hedda's account."

"Tesman: On Hedda's account? Eh?"

"Miss Tesman (Julia): Yes, so that Hedda needn't be ashamed of me if we happened to go out together." (I. 7)

For this reason, Mary Beard suggests that females are yet regarded as followers to the external authority (42). In an essay titled "Feminism in Epistemology: Exclusion and Objectification," Rae Langton describes objectification as the way of forming the social world by comprehension, disposition, and faith. It is the way by which women are seen as objects due to men's grasp, tendency, and belief (282). According to the feminist belief, males' objectification of females is deemed a focal issue in women's daily lives and resisting it is a priority for feminists. So Catharine Mackinnon sees that female objectification produces a milieu in which women are only able to comprehend self as an object. She also argues that the female objectification is rejected as it separates women

from their self-defense, from self-governing, and from their personhood (Nussbaum 250)

2-The Objectification of Self in Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*

Hedda Gabler begins with two spouses Mr. Tesman and Hedda who have recently arrived in town from a honeymoon trip for six months. Miss Tesman (Julia), who is Mr. Tesman's aunt, visits them but she was treated unkindly by Hedda. Mrs. Elvsted, Hedda's schoolmate, arrives as she was searching for Eilert Lovborg who is Mr. Tesman's rival of a post at university and the tutor of Mr. Elvsted's children. Brack is the judge who brings news to the group. After coming back from Brack's stag party, Lovborg loses the manuscript of his book, on which he is working, as he was drunk. Mrs. Elvsted is concerned with the problems of losing the manuscript and Lovborg's returning into drinking alcohol. When Tesman returns back from the party, he tells Hedda that he found the manuscript and he intends to give it back to Lovborg. She refuses and burns it down. Lovborg arrives and tells Mrs. Elvsted that he tore it, but privately informs Hedda that he lost it and he plans to commit suicide. Hedda gives him a pistol and requests him to do that nicely. Miss Tesman's (Julia's) sister, Miss Rina, is sick and she died after being looked after by Julia for some time. After that, Mrs. Elvsted comes to announce that Lovborg is residing in the hospital but Brack informs that he also died because a wound in his chest. Finally, Brack tells Hedda that he knows the owner of the pistol trying to blackmail her. She feels afraid of scandal and commits suicide at the end of the play.

William Archer mentions that Ibsen's intention of choosing the title of this play is to refer to Hedda's personality as to be considered her father's daughter rather than her husband's wife. The aim of Ibsen's choice is to portray human fates and feelings by depending on some of the social circumstances and rules of the present time. Archer adds that world does not provide Hedda a chance to control it at the expense of other's indignity and self-objectification (Introduction I-XII). Through her talk to Hedda, Mrs. Elvsted expresses that she is objectified as she is deprived of having a home and she only wishes to have it: "*Oh, if I only had a home! But I haven't any; I have never had a home*" (I. 37). She shows Hedda that her tiredness is the reason of bringing Eilert Lovborg to Sheriff Elvsted's house in order to teach his children as Mrs. Elvsted

cannot manage that herself: *"For in the long run I couldn't manage it all myself"* (I. 39). She complains of her husband's rudeness and there is not any kind of intimacy between them that makes her hate him so much:

"Everything about him is repellent to me! We have not a thought in common. We have no single point of sympathy—he and I.

.....

I think he regards me simply as a useful property. And then it doesn't cost much to keep me. I am not expensive." (I. 40)

She continues explaining her suffering where she stayed at home alone whereas her husband was travelling. She tried her best to make amends for her husband's sympathy through her accordance with Mr. Lovborg. She informs Hedda that Mr. Lovborg taught her the way of thinking and perceiving many things. If someone objectifies means that they consider "as an object what is really not an object, what is, in fact, a human being" (qtd. in Gervais, et al. 1). On that ground, neglecting and ignoring the feelings are among the main reasons that caused suffering and torture for Hedda and Mrs. Elvsted. They bear their husbands' carelessness which led them to feel loneliness and lack of love and care. Mr. Tesman and Sheriff Elvsted were always away from their home which resulted in their wives' boredom. Ibsen marks that Mrs. Elvsted and Hedda share the same objectification as their affections are disregarded by their husbands. They discuss that both husbands are the same as they are careless about their wives. Over the course of the play, they stay watching and waiting till four o'clock in the morning but no one has come from Brack's stag party:

"Hedda: Think of our watching and waiting here till four in the morning--"

"Mrs. Elvsted: Well well—we might have spared ourselves the trouble." (III. 120)

.....

"Hedda: And then, you see, Tesman hasn't cared to come home and ring us up in the middle of the night. Perhaps he wasn't inclined to show himself either immediately after jollification."

"Mrs. Elvsted: But in that case—where can he have gone?"

"Hedda: Of course he has gone to his aunts' and slept there. They have his old room ready for him." (III. 121)

Through the speech between Tesman and his aunt Julia, one can say that the latter is objectified by her nephew and she is neglected in spite of the fact that she loves him a lot. The speech proves that Tesman didn't give her even a seat in the carriage on their way back home from the pier; *"We were so sorry we couldn't give you a seat in the carriage"* (I. 5). Miss Tesman (Julia), on the other hand, suffers from alienation as well when her sister Rina died. So the three women, Miss Tesman, Hedda, and Mrs. Elvsted, share the same tragic life. Mrs. Elvsted is objectified as a result of her poorness as well as class-discrimination between her and her husband. For this reason she looks for another illegal love with Eilert Lovborg as a result of being neglected and ignored by her husband. She was originally a maidservant in Sheriff Elvsted's house and she was a child-keeper that produced a kind of classism between the couple. Her low social rank leads her to be powerless and depressed.

Hedda is susceptible to mechanistic dehumanization. She is deprived of her human nature such as emotional awareness, love, and power. She also suffers from safety-anxiety when she is threatened by Judge Brack to divulge the secret of her involvement in Lovborg's death: *"Brack: Well, fortunately, there is no danger, so long as I say nothing"* (IX. 183). Allen, et al. see that the impacts of objectification on females are softened by power at the time that powerlessness could strengthen the passive influences of objectification on them (Gervais 15). Mrs. Elvsted is powerless and that makes her lose her *Self* (emphasis added) and she stayed marginalized.

The instrumentality could be seen in Mrs. Elvsted as she is stripped of her personhood. She is used as a tool by her husband to raise his children only. She also tells Hedda that her husband sees her as his own possession: *"I think he regards me simply as a useful property. And then it doesn't cost much to keep me. I am not expensive"* (I. 40). As a normal wife, Hedda alike feels that she lost her *Self* when Mr. Tesman keeps her emotions and feelings aside. She suffers from neglect by Tesman on their honeymoon trip. Tesman tells Julia that he spent his time researching and reading books on the trip: *"Well, for me it has been a sort of tour of research as well. I have had to do so much grubbing among old records—and to read no end of books too, Auntie."* (I. 8). David Boaz dogmatizes that it is impossible for a group of people to oblige another

group to relinquish some periods of their life. He believes that when people are used as instruments leads one to realize that the free precept of person's dignity is abused (Brittan in Haldane 8).

Hedda complains of Tesman's indifference to her when she informs Brack that her husband is only concerned with how people are able to secure their living: "*Tesman is for ever worrying about how people are to make their living*" (I. 52). Ibsen points out through the events of the play that Mrs. Elvsted was oppressed by Hedda when they were schoolfellows: "*Yes dreadfully. For when we met on the stairs you used to pull my hair*" (I. 35).

In act III, when Mrs. Elvsted talks to Berta about Hedda, Berta sympathies with Hedda. They speak softly and Berta refers to Hedda's suffering from being objectified: *No, no—let her sleep, poor thing* (III. 119). Berta indicates the usual absence of Mr. Tesman till morning through his joining in Brack's bachelor party. Her speech expresses that Hedda is neglected by her husband. At the end of the same act, Mrs. Elvsted once again encounters another kind of her feelings' objectification. When Lovborg comes back from Brack's bachelor party, he pretends that he has torn the manuscript of his and Mrs. Elvsted's book into pieces. He says that: "*Thea's pure soul was in the book*" (III. 151). Over and above, when Miss Rina passes away; Miss Tesman (Julia) didn't let Hedda help her in preparing Miss Rina for her rest. In so doing, Miss Tesman objectifies herself and regards it as inferior. Ibsen here hints at Hedda's belonging to the aristocratic class and when she offers her help; Miss Tesman says: "*Oh, you must not think of it! Hedda Tesman must have no hand in such mournful work. Nor let her thought dwell on it either—not at this time*" (IX. 155). Through the conversation between Tesman and Hedda, Ibsen shows that Tesman is objectified all his conjugal life. On that ground, Tesman feels so happy when Hedda informs him that she burnt Lovborg's manuscript for Tesman's sake. He couldn't believe that fact, so he starts behaving and speaking strangely:

"Tesman: No, no, not yet! But I must certainly tell Aunt Julia. And then that you have begun to call me George too! Fancy that! Oh, Aunt Julia will be so happy—so happy!"

"Hedda: When she hears I have burnt Eilert Lovborg's manuscript—for your sake?"

“Tesman: No, by-the-by—that affair of the manuscript—of course nobody must know about that. But that you love me so much, Hedda—Aunt Julia must really share my joy in that! I wonder, now, whether this sort of thing is usual in young wives? Eh?” (IX. 163)

Ibsen represents the concept of objectification by using pistols twice in the play. On the one hand, Hedda uses one of them to get rid of Lovborg and prevents him from competing with her husband. She gives it to Lovborg and succeeds to let him commit suicide. On the other hand, she uses another pistol against herself and she commits suicide as well. She kills herself by the pistol when she feels that Brack is threatening her by reporting the police of the owner of these pistols and consequently she will be under his control. Refusing the submission makes Hedda shoot herself as she is frightened of the scandal of being brought before the court because it is a shame on a woman who belongs to aristocratic family. She rejects to enter the second stage of suffering when she refuses to be under Judge Brack’s hegemony. She prefers death upon living as a humiliated woman:

“Brack: Well, fortunately, there is no danger, so long as I say nothing” (IX. 183)

.....
“Hedda: I am in your power none the less. Subject to your will and your demands. A slave, a slave then! No, I cannot endure the thought of that! Never!” (IX. 184)

In her book review of Rae Langton’s book *Sexual Solipsism: Philosophical Essays on Pornography and Objectification*, Catherine E. Hundleby points out that to deal with a thing as if it were a human and consider it as a mindful is one of the extents of solipsism which is the opposite aspect of objectification (224-225). In act three, Ibsen explains, through the dialogue between Mrs. Elvsted and Lovborg, that she regards Lovborg’s behavior of tearing the book as if he committed a murder of killing a little boy:

"Mrs. Elvsted: Do you know, Lovborg, that what you have done with the book—I shall think of it to my dying day as though you had killed a little child."

"Lovborg: yes, you are right. It is a sort of child-murder." (III. 148)

Tesman, on his part, treats the manuscript of Lovborg's book as a big deal *"And so, my dear Mrs. Elvsted, we will give our whole minds to it"* (IX. 174).

Ibsen portrays Tesman as he treats Hedda as a means for gaining a position of being a professor at university because she is a member of a high-class family. Their marriage was not based on love but on some benefit and it is traditional as there is no mutual love between the couple. Thus, Tesman objectifies himself and his emotions when he chooses to marry Hedda, the woman whom didn't love. Hedda, on the other hand, also objectifies herself when she agrees to marry Tesman as she thinks that he will get the position of professorship. She expresses her regret to Brack but she can do nothing now. She believes that what is done is done: *"I had positively danced myself tired, my dear Judge. My day was done"* (II. 67). As she defines objectification, Rae Langton argues that it has both ethic and epistemological meanings. The ethical meaning depends on Immanuel Kant's thought that one should "treat humanity ... always ... as an end, and never merely as a means" (qtd. in Langton 10). Kant, too, sees that ethics is the main point of human life since it leads to the permanent recognition of others' personhood. When people deal with one another like tools toward the intended end does not cause a problem. But the moral problem lies in the treatment of others only as a means of the intended end against their desire. Thus, feminists typify objectification as the way of diminishing the dignity of others (Rector 15).

The psychological essence of objectification is invented by negation of the two elements of personhood, i.e. mind and ethical position. So, human beings are assumed to be depersonalized when they are treated in objectified way (Loughnan, etal. 710). Hedda has no means that can take her out of herself. She neither has mental interest nor ethical zeal (Archer, Introduction XII). Her character is not a survey of mind's advancement towards self-detection because her mind stays as it is from the start till the end of the play. She objects to find out herself in the play that results in her suffering and fatality (Ellis-Fermor in Baldick, etal. 13-14). She does not have the ingredients of richness in herself which in turn makes her

look for it in the others (Lall 16). In addition to people, Ibsen alludes to things as they are also objectified in the play. In act I, when Tesman asks Hedda *"Is there anything the matter with you, Hedda? Eh?"* She answers: *"I'm only looking at my old piano. It doesn't go at all well with all the other things"* (I. 24). In such a case, Ibsen confirms that the old piano is neglected as well. Further, Mrs. Elvsted's hair is also objectified by Hedda twice in the play: firstly, when she describes Mrs. Elvsted to Tesman saying: *"The girl with the irritating hair, that was always showing off"* (I. 25). Secondly, through the dialogue between Hedda and Mrs. Elvsted when they were recalling their school days:

"Mrs. Elvsted: Oh, how dreadfully afraid of you I was then!"

"Hedda: Afraid of me?"

"Mrs. Elvsted: "Yes, dreadfully. For when met on the stairs you used always to pull my hair."

"Hedda: Did I, really?"

"Mrs. Elvsted: Yes, and once you said you would burn it off my head."
(I. 35-36)

Ibsen presents the idea of silence in the play as one of the main aspects of objectification in the character of Hedda who bears the subjectivity-denial by her husband. Tesman disregards Hedda's feelings when he spends much of his time at his aunt's home as well as accompanying friends and Elvsted. However, Hedda stays almost silent. Perhaps, Hedda's dignity, as she belongs to aristocratic family, prevents her from complaining against the concept of being objectified. MacKinnon once said that "Objects do not speak" (qtd. in Langton 10). In an essay called "Autonomy-Denial in Objectification," Langton adds another feature which gives a signal to objectification as well. It is the feature of silencing when one treats a person as a silent object and lacking the ability of speaking. Langton also considers speech as a distinguished ability of human beings since it expresses liberation and self-determination. Moreover, speech is significant to feminists because they believe that the main reason of women's objectification is their being silenced (229).

Steve Loughnan, et al. focus on Kant's and Nussbaum's belief that objectification is characterized by two traits: Firstly, using others as tools

and disavowal of their humanity. Secondly, the loss of their individuality. In addition, the objectification of self reduces the personal prosperity and promotes the somber features of persons. The philosophical perspective of objectification centers on disclaiming the humanity and subjectivity (709). In an introduction to her book *Hedda Gabler and Other Plays*, Una Ellis-Fermor sees that *Hedda Gabler* talks about the causes of subjective and social morality in which Ibsen is engaged excessively. She also thinks that this play deals with the issues of the individual as an incorporeal creature and not as a person of community (10-13). It is a play about individuals and relationship among people (Lall 4). Gray and Wegner show that the denial of others' ethical rank is thought that they are less impressionable to ache (Loughnan et al. 713). Consequently, Hedda is among those people who are less sensitive of being objectified by her husband and the soreness of committing suicide.

At the end of the play, Ibsen refers that Tesman again objectifies Hedda when he ignores her feelings as a wife and spends time sitting with Mrs. Elvsted at Tesman's home and reorganizing the manuscript of Eilert Lovborg's book after his committing suicide. He wants Hedda to spend time sitting with Brack. When she comes to speak with him and Mrs. Elvsted, Tesman requests her to go and sit with Brack ignoring her need for him because she feels afraid of scandal of being in charge of Lovborg's death as Brack told her. She does not only feel objectified but also she feels that she will be lonely when Tesman asked Mrs. Elvsted to take Miss Rina's room at Julia's home and he will come to her every day in order to get on their work: "*Tesman: It's not good for her to see us at this distressing work. I'll tell you that, Mrs. Elvsted,-- You shall take the empty room at Julia's, and then I will come over in the evenings, and we can sit and work there—eh?*" (IX. 186). In so doing, Hedda feels that she is objectified and her relation with her husband worsened more and more and she feels jealous:

"Hedda: I hear what you are saying, Tesman. But how am I to get through the evenings out here?"

Tesman: Oh, I daresay Judge Brack will be so kind as to look in now and then, even though I am out." (IX. 186)

As a woman and a wife, Hedda is in need of care and esteem from which she is prevented all her marital life. She is no longer standing the situation that makes her break her silence at the end of the play.

3-Conclusion

Ibsen hopes to retrieve the main characteristics of human beings, especially for women. In *Hedda Gabler*, he restores the self-security and self-confidence to feminist world during the difficult circumstances in nineteenth century. He guides readers to the point that if people were treated as objects they would be dehumanized and repudiated intellectual states as well as an ethical position. He shows that objectification is associated with all kinds of evil such as subjectivity-denial, egoism, oppression, neglect, and feelings' suppression. He makes clear that objectification can be applied to men and women. It can be seen between: males and females, males/females and themselves, females and females, and males and males. When people objectify others by regarding them as *it* instead of *You*, they commit the evil. Therefore, the objectification of self and others are linked to each other. The more a person objectifies himself/herself the more s/he objectifies others. As a representative of women, Hedda refuses to self-actualize in the play and fails to develop her mind as her thinking remains immobile over the course of events. She lacks potential so she searched for it in others which made her self-objectify by shooting herself.

To sum up, Ibsen strives to attract world's attention to the amount of women's sufferings at his age. He affirms that there are missing links of Abraham Maslow's hierarchical order of needs (i.e. security, love, esteem) in the play which prevented women from self-actualization.

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