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From Loyalty to Betrayal: A Comparative Psychological Analysis of Internal Conflicts of Brutus in 'Julius Caesar' and Bimala in 'the Home and the World'

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Abstract: ***Betrayal and loyalty often serve as powerful drivers of plot and character development. This study aims to conduct a comparative psychological analysis of the internal conflicts experienced by Brutus in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar and Bimala in Rabindranath Tagore's The Home and the World by applying Kurt Lewin's internal conflict theory that includes approach-approach, approach-avoidance, and avoidance-avoidance decision-making theories. The study uses a qualitative method, with primary data from texts and secondary data from journals, articles, books, and web sources. The study finds out that both Bimala and Brutus experienced approach-avoidance and avoidance-avoidance conflict in their decision-making. They both faced approach-avoidance before their respective betrayals- Brutus between his loyalty to Caesar and his duty to Rome, and Bimala between her attraction to Sandip's nationalist fervor and her loyalty to her husband, Nikhil. After the betrayal, they face avoidance-avoidance conflicts: Brutus must choose between continuing a damaging civil war or facing dishonor, while Bimala must decide between abandoning her newfound purpose or remaining loyal to a tainted cause. The analysis reveals how these conflicts highlight the themes of honor, loyalty, and political ethics in Brutus's case, personal integrity, nationalism, and the clash between modernity and tradition in Bimala's journey. Both characters' struggles ultimately render them tragic figures. So, this research will enrich our understanding of internal conflicts in literature which will contribute to further research on related factors.***

Keywords: ***Approach-Approach, Approach-Avoidance, Betrayal, Brutus, Bimala, Internal Conflict.***

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1. INTRODUCTION

The human psyche is a labyrinth of complex emotions, where loyalty and betrayal often engage in a delicate dance. This research depicts the internal conflicts that arise when these two forces collide by focusing on the literary characters of Brutus from Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" and Bimala from Tagore's "The Home and the World." Brutus in Julias Caeser is a complex character who has always been considered honorable and noble. He has strict moral and ethical beliefs that guide his life and his desire to protect the people of Rome, but he appears hypocritical when he becomes involved in the plot to commit murder. Caesar's faithful confidant, Brutus, struggles to decide between his friend's undying loyalty and Rome's alleged greater good. On the other hand, Bimala, the heroine of the novel “The Home and the World”, is a devoted worshiper of her husband until Sandip appears. She realizes she is bored of her husband and is easily seduced by the passionate Sandip though she consistently feels shame for this and occasionally longs to feel the way she once did about her husband. As nationalism grows, Bimala, caught up in the turbulent wave of India's quest for independence, finds her family's loyalties challenged. This study explores the motivations and thought processes behind characters' betrayals, and examines their internal struggles. It reveals the factors leading to loyalty's erosion and betrayal, providing deeper insights into both literary characters and the complexities of the human condition.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have been conducted from different perspectives. D. J. Palmer demonstrated the ethical and psychological dimensions of the characters' decisions in Julias Caeser. Palmer highlights Shakespeare's emphasis on internal motivations and mental processes over political themes. He suggests that Brutus' “nobility sets him apart, yet his susceptibility to delusion connects him to common humanity, underscoring the play's exploration of reason and passion.” (Palmer402) Putri analyzed the internal conflicts of Brutus and their effects on Brutus’ life through the theory, Human Psycho Zone by Freud. The study revealed that id dominated Brutus’s every action, especially in dealing with conflicts within himself. “Brutus fails to understand that murder, even for a just cause, is wrong. His id distorts his superego, making him a victim of his flawed judgment of the situation.” (Putri 73) Paolucci demonstrated Brutus as the true tragic hero of the play. She argued that he is a noble yet flawed character, whose mistaken idealization of Caesar leads to his downfall. Paolucci concluded that Brutus embodies the tragic hero archetype through his internal conflict and ultimate realization of his errors. (Paolucci 333) Gary M. Weier applied Kenneth Burke's notions of form and perspectivism to Shakespeare's play. The study argues that form and perspectivism reveal how competing character perspectives create and fulfill audience desires, transforming spectators into participants in the rhetorical appeal of the drama. According to Gary, Brutus “highlights that the conspirators' disagreement stems from Caesar's character rather than any of his deeds.” (Gary253) Ernest Schanzer's 1955 paper explored the dual psychological and ethical dilemmas posed by Shakespeare's play. Schanzer argues that the central issues revolve around the true nature of Caesar and the moral justification of his assassination. He highlights the complexity of Brutus, whose moral choices reflect the broader tension between personal relationships and

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political ideals. (Schanzer 307) Farhana Malik conducted a comparative analysis of Portia and Calpurnia of Rome, and Cleopatra of Egypt - in Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra, respectively. Making use of sociological and feminist approaches, the study claimed that the struggles of the female characters are intrinsically concerned with the two plays and extrinsically relate to the condition of women in Ancient Rome and Egypt. According to the study, "Cleopatra showed strong feminist behavior, while Portia and Calpurnia displayed mild feminist nature." Fatima H. Aziz concentrated on Mark Antony's funeral speech in Julius Caesar, highlighting his use of persuasive techniques. She found that Antony employs "alliteration, rhetorical questions, repetition, irony, metaphor, hyperbole, and diction to enhance his persuasiveness. Persuasion in this context is both a social and political maneuver." (Aziz) Muhammad Jamshed discusses Tagore's cosmopolitan vision as a means to promote world peace and understanding, highlighting Bimala's journey towards moral regeneration and spiritual elevation (Jamshed198) Dhanwni looked at how Tagore portrayed the idea of Swadeshi through the persona of Nikhil and the effects the movement had on both the general public and specific people. The paper argues, "Bimala's passion for Sandip and her love for Swadeshi is confusing" (Dhanwni118) SREERAMULU stated, "Sandip exploits Bimala's belief as the "Sakti of motherland," using flattery to trap her, contrasting Nikhil's perceived timid stance." (SREERAMULU 58) Pam mentioned that Bimala fails to embody "the ideal woman of national tradition. Sandip sees her as an "agent," affirming his extreme masculinity and tyranny in a male-dominated nation, where men dictate a woman's role as either the home or the world."(Pam312)Mondal emphasizes the model of contesting modernity that deals with conceptual issues more than the significance of reason and science in his paper. He argues that modernity offers women "ample room and new angles of womanhood." Bimala's theft of Nikhil's money, due to her lack of financial decision-making skills, questions women's freedom. However, Bimala finds a new identity when Sandip promises her sexual independence and occasionally seeks her opinion on political matters. Yet, the new world is still ruled by men like Sandip, where Bimala is expected to reason and align with Sandip's views. (Mondal 37) Barnana Guha Thakurta approached the novel through a gendered lens, highlighting the cultural distinctions of middle-class Bengali families. She argues that while Bimala was initially inspired by Sandip's nationalism, her dedication to the cause was genuine and unquestionable. (Thakurta 49) She added, "Her dual personality has been brought forth by her inner conflicts." (Thakurta 49) Vibhuti Wadhawan suggested that the novel examined the opposing modernism and nationalist ideals in pre-independence India through Nikhil and Sandip to illustrate two different viewpoints. While Sandip symbolizes a strong, exclusive nationalism that draws from traditionalism and religious fervor, Nikhil stands for a progressive, humanitarian approach that combines anti-colonial sentiments with reformist ideas. Yanggi Mertania and Dina Amelia used Homi K. Bhabha's hybrid identity theory and the post-colonial method. They commented that "Nikhil's hybrid identity affects more than just himself as a member of a colonized society. For example, Nikhil introduces and educates his wife with a British education in an attempt to put his modern ideas into practice. (Mertania and Amelia10) Previous studies have explored themes like form, perspectivism, the portrayal of female characters, rhetorical strategies, and the ethical and psychological dimensions of Brutus's character. Similarly, Tagore's work has been examined through lenses such as nationalism, feminism, modernity, and hybrid identity. However, a direct comparative study of the internal

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psychological conflicts of Brutus and Bimala remains underexplored, particularly using decision-making theories. Addressing this gap is crucial, as understanding these internal conflicts through a psychological framework can shed light on the motivations and development of these characters.

Research Objective

The main objective is to compare the internal conflicts experienced by Brutus and Bimala utilizing approach-approach, approach-avoidance, and avoidance-avoidance decision-making theories. Besides this there are two secondary Objectives:

1. To identify the specific types of internal conflict faced by Brutus and Bimala by analyzing the characters' motivations, desires, and the challenges they face.
2. To explore how the characters' internal conflicts contribute to the overall themes and plot development.

Research Question

1. What types of internal conflicts does Brutus face in the play "Julius Caesar"?
2. What types of internal conflicts does Bimala face in the novel "The Home and the World"?
3. How do these internal conflicts contribute to the overall themes and plot development in each play?

Theoretical framework

Internal conflict or mental conflict occurs when a character struggles between the heart and mind. According to Kurt Lewin, a fundamental conflict happens when an individual is impacted by two opposing forces. Kurt Lewin's theory of conflict, which includes approach-approach, approach-avoidance, and avoidance-avoidance conflicts, provides a useful framework for analyzing these psychological struggles.

1. Approach-Approach Conflict**:** It occurs when an individual faces two desirable options but can choose only one, with no negative consequences regardless of the choice. For instance, someone desires to travel. He wants to visit Australia and Switzerland. He finds both beautiful, but he must choose only one. Approach-Approach conflict is the term for this type of internal conflict when an individual finds both options attractive.

2. Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict: It occurs when an individual is presented with two undesirable alternatives. A person will feel uncomfortable in this kind of conflict. For instance, a girl who is ill has an exam tomorrow. She will perform poorly on her exam if she rests. She will become more ill if she makes preparations without thinking about her health. In this case, neither choice is preferable. But She has to choose one. So, her internal conflict is Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict.

3. Approach-Avoidance Conflict: This conflict arises when an individual faces a decision with both positive and negative aspects. It involves competing forces from the same goal, requiring a choice between desirable and undesirable elements. Such as, someone is thinking about going on a roller coaster. He is excited because it looks fun and thrilling, but also scared of heights and worried that he might get nervous or sick. He wants to go on the ride, but he is also afraid, creating that push-pull feeling of approach avoidance.

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3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a qualitative comparative analysis to understand the complexities of the internal conflicts faced by Brutus and Bimala. The comparative approach allows for the identification of similarities and differences in the psychological dimensions of both characters which provide insights into their cognitive processes, emotional responses, and decision-making patterns.

The data for this research is derived from two primary sources: the texts of Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare and The Home and the World by Rabindranath Tagore. Relevant excerpts that depict the inner thoughts, dialogues, and actions of Brutus and Bimala are carefully selected and analyzed to trace their psychological conflicts and transformations. Secondary data are derived from academic books, Scholarly articles, Journals, Websites, online databases, etc. These secondary sources provide additional context and support for the analysis, helping to frame the primary data within broader literary and psychological discussions.

The analytical framework of this study is grounded in Lewin's internal conflict theory which examines the psychological struggles individuals face when torn between conflicting desires, values, or duties. Through this theory, the study systematically compares the internal conflicts of Brutus and Bimala and highlights how their dilemmas reflect broader socio-political concerns. The analysis is supported by a close reading of the texts, drawing from critical interpretations and scholarly commentary to contextualize the findings within their respective historical and cultural backgrounds.

The analysis proceeds by:

1. Identifying Key Conflict Situations: Extracting passages from the texts where the internal conflicts of Brutus and Bimala are most evident.
2. Psychological Dissection: Applying the approach-avoidance and avoidance-avoidance conflict theories to dissect the psychological states of the characters in these passages.
3. Contextual Comparison**:** Evaluating the socio-political and cultural contexts that shape these internal conflicts and how they influence the characters' decisions and transformations.

   This research methodology enables a comprehensive exploration of the character's internal conflicts and contributes to our knowledge of psychological dynamics in both Indian and Western literary traditions.

4. DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Brutus's Internal Conflict Before the Assassination of Julius Caesar

Brutus first reveals his inner conflict when Cassius begins to persuade him to join the conspiracy against Caesar. Brutus admits that he loves Caesar but fears that Caesar's ambition may lead to tyranny. He struggles with the idea of killing Caesar, who is both his friend and a potential threat to Rome. He is torn between his friendship with Caesar and his concern for the well-being of Rome. He expresses his fear of choosing “Caesar as their king.”(Shakespeare,1, 2) This is the first indication that Brutus is contemplating whether Caesar's death might be necessary for the greater good of the Republic. So, he has to choose either his loyalty to Caesar or his sense of duty to the Republic.

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In the Orchard scene, Brutus has a soliloquy in which he rationalizes his decision to join the conspiracy. He argues that Caesar must be killed not for what he has done, but for what he might do if he becomes king. (Shakespeare,2, 1) This moment marks Brutus's final decision to betray his friend for what he believes is the greater good, but it is clear that he is deeply troubled by this decision. He claims that he "loves Rome more than Caeser." (Shakespeare,2, 1) When the other conspirators arrive at Brutus's house, he again shows signs of internal conflict. Brutus insists that they do not need to swear an oath to their cause, arguing that the nobility of their mission should be enough to bind them together. (Shakespeare, 2,1) This insistence reveals his desire to maintain a sense of honor and morality, even as he prepares to commit an immoral act. He is also opposed to killing Mark Antony, fearing that their cause would seem too bloody and dishonorable. Brutus experiences an approach-avoidance conflict regarding the conspiracy against Caesar.

After Caesar is stabbed, Brutus delivers the final blow. The moment is fraught with tension for Brutus, who has just killed his friend in cold blood. Brutus is clearly aware of the advantages and disadvantages of his goal or decision. All the time, he is embodied with the psychological conflict which Lewin termed as approach-avoidance.

Brutus's Internal Conflict After the Assassination of Julius Caesar

Brutus's internal conflict continues after Caesar's death. Act 5, Scene 1, before the final battle, Brutus reflects on the ghost of Caesar, who has appeared to him as a bad omen. Brutus is troubled by the idea that he may be doomed for his role in Caesar's death. His internal conflict is evident as he prepares to face the consequences of his actions, both in the battle and in his conscience. Brutus must choose between two unattractive outcomes. After Caesar's assassination, Brutus faces an avoidance-avoidance conflict. He must choose between continuing to fight a civil war against Antony and Octavius or surrendering and facing potential disgrace and death. Brutus discusses the dire situation with Cassius, recognizing that they are in a desperate situation. Brutus told Cassius that if they were to "meet again, they would smile; but if they did not, then this parting had been made appropriately." (Shakespeare 4, 3)

The tension and gravity of their situation reflect the grim choices Brutus must navigate as the conflict unfolds. An avoidance-avoidance conflict involves choosing between two undesirable options, and Brutus faces such a conflict, particularly in Act 4, Scene 3. In this scene, Brutus is confronted with two unpleasant choices: continuing the civil war against Antony and Octavius, which means further bloodshed and potential defeat, or surrendering and facing dishonor, loss of liberty, and the failure of his republican ideals. This conflict is most evident in Brutus's conversation with Cassius when they discuss their dwindling prospects and the hardships they face. Brutus remarked that the enemy was growing stronger every day, while they, being at their peak, were on the verge of decline. He reflected on how there is a tide in the affairs of men which, if seized at its highest point, leads to success; but if missed, it results in a life bound by difficulties and miseries. He observed that they were currently on such a high tide and emphasized the necessity of taking advantage of it, or else they would lose their opportunities. (Shakespeare 4, 3) This indicates, that Brutus is weighing the bleak reality of continuing the war against the dishonorable option of surrender or inaction. Neither choice is desirable. Continuing the war involves more fighting, the possibility of defeat, further loss of

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life, and continued hardship for himself and his soldiers. The toll of the ongoing conflict has already been significant, and the future looks grim.

Surrender or Inaction means dishonor, the failure of his principles, and likely severe personal consequences, including the loss of freedom or life under the rule of Antony and Octavius. Ultimately, Brutus resolves to continue the fight, showing his determination to uphold his principles despite the grim prospects. This decision represents the depth of his commitment to the republican cause and his willingness to endure great personal sacrifice rather than face dishonor or the failure of his ideals. Brutus's decision of suicide is the result of avoidance-avoidance conflict. Brutus decides to take his own life rather than be captured. His suicide can be seen as the ultimate resolution of his internal conflict. He believes that by dying on his terms, he can atone for his actions and maintain some semblance of honor. The avoidance-avoidance conflict here highlights Brutus's tragic dedication to a cause that demands the ultimate price.

Internal Conflicts in Bimala Regarding Betrayal to Nikhil

Bimala experiences significant internal conflict throughout the story. She is torn between her loyalty to her husband and her attraction to the charismatic nationalist leader. Bimala begins as a devoted wife, finding her identity and purpose within her household, wholly focused on her husband. She expresses this deep devotion, stating that “her sight and mind were occupied with him alone, and no place held as much charm as the one with her husband” (Tagore). Nikhil represents a stable, moral force in Bimala's life. His approach is rational and patient, with respect for Bimala's independence as he speaks, "I would have my wife be free. I would rather have my love consigned to oblivion than be a woman enslaved."(Tagore) As she becomes influenced by Sandip, she starts to embrace the ideals of the Swadeshi movement, symbolizing modernity and a break from tradition, "Sandip's words aroused no mere echo in my heart. They went deeper, into the very substance of my being. He lit up the whole country, every town and every village."(Tagore) So, Bimala faces an approach-avoidance conflict regarding attraction to Sandip and loyalty to Nikhil. Sandip represents excitement, power, and a sense of purpose that she has not experienced in her traditional role as a wife. At the same time, Bimala is deeply aware of her loyalty and duty to Nikhil. Her attraction to Sandip causes her to feel guilty and conflicted because it contradicts the values she has held dear. She is torn between the thrill of her attraction to Sandip and her sense of marital obligation.

Bimala is inspired by Sandip's fiery speeches and the idea of contributing to the nationalist cause. She admits, "When Sandip Babu talks, it is as if he has fire flowing from his tongue. It sweeps over my heart, setting it alight." (Tagore)She feels a sense of empowerment and purpose by becoming involved in the Swadeshi movement, which seems to offer her a chance to break free from the confines of her domestic life. However, Bimala is uncomfortable with the extreme and often unethical methods that Sandip advocates to achieve their goals. She is also troubled by the potential harm that the movement could bring to her husband's business and the broader community. Her participation in the movement directly conflicts with her moral values and her husband's more moderate, ethical approach to nationalism.

Approach-avoidance conflict arises regarding the intensity of Sandip's influence on Bimala, contrasting with Nikhil's calm rationality. Her attraction to Sandip and loyalty to Nikhil pull her in opposite directions as she asserts, "There was a deep sense of hurt, of wrong, of loss. But there was no remedy, no redemption, no going back."(Tagore)This reflects the inner conflict

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and emotional pain Bimala experiences. The conflict leads Bimala to question her identity and role in the world, pushing her toward self-discovery and personal growth. "Who am I, what is my true being? "(Tagore)This highlights her struggle with identity as she tries to reconcile her traditional role with new ideals. Influenced by Sandip, Bimala faces moral dilemmas, illustrated by her awareness of her duty versus her attraction to Sandip, “I was being drawn to Sandip like a moth to a flame” (Tagore).

Bimala experiences internal conflict about stealing money for Sandip. She is persuaded by Sandip to steal money from Nikhil to support the Swadeshi cause. She justified her actions for the greater good of the country. The act of stealing gives her a sense of agency and power, a noble and exhilarating endeavor. She finds “new meaning, a new fulfillment, being part of a larger cause.” (Tagore). At the same time, Bimala is acutely aware of the moral and ethical implications of her actions. Her guilt and fear of losing Nikhil’s trust and love are palpable, "The dread of losing Nikhil’s love and the shame of my deceit was gnawing at my heart." (Tagore). This demonstrates the strong repellent aspect of her action, rooted in her conscience and the values instilled in her by Nikhil." She stood there for a moment, her heart beating wildly. Shame, fear, and a thrill of desperate resolve all fought within her." ((Tagore) This highlights the internal battle between shame of stealing, fear of Nikhil's reaction. Bimala justifies her action," She tried to reason with herself, saying, 'It is not stealing, a sacrifice I am making for my religion'" (Tagore). This means, she knows stealing is wrong but tries to find a moral justification. So, she experiences an approach-avoidance conflict.

Internal Conflict in Bimala After Betrayal

Confronting the reality of Sandip’s selfishness and recognizing that he is using her for his own gain is a painful realization for Bimala. This would force her to admit that she has been manipulated and that her feelings for Sandip were based on false ideals. It would also mean accepting the moral consequences of her actions under his influence. Also, continuing to idealize Sandip would mean living in denial, clinging to an illusion that she knows deep down is false. This would prevent her from seeing the truth and lead her further down a path of moral compromise and disillusionment. It would also mean distancing herself from Nikhil’s love and the ethical values he represents.

So, Bimala faces an avoidance-avoidance conflict when she realizes that following Sandip might lead to personal and familial ruin while rejecting his ideas could mean suppressing her awakened sense of self and patriotism. Bimala's growing disillusionment with Sandip and the destructive path he represents leads to an avoidance-avoidance conflict, “My illusions had fallen away from me. I had come to see how this nationalist excitement was but a new dress for the same old desires, and I was not deceived any longer by Sandip's words.” (Tagore)She must choose between continuing to follow Sandip, which she now sees as wrong, or stepping away, which feels like a betrayal of the cause she once believed in passionately. Bimala's avoidance-avoidance conflict is highlighted by her reflections on the irreconcilable nature of her choices when she utters, "I was divided between my love for Sandip's voice and my hatred for Sandip's methods." (Tagore). This quote succinctly captures Bimala's internal division and the pain of having to choose between two deeply unattractive paths, each leading to significant personal loss and moral compromise.

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A Comparative Analysis

The internal conflicts of Brutus and Bimala indeed render them tragic figures, evoking a deep sense of pity and sorrow in their respective narratives. Both Brutus and Bimala betray their friends or allies because of something doing something greater. This has happened in political or ideological conflicts where loyalty to a cause outweighs loyalty to individuals. Both face significant internal conflicts, but their struggles differ in motivation, relationship dynamics, and resolution. Brutus's approach-avoidance conflict arises from his loyalty to Caesar versus his duty to the Roman Republic, leading to a tragic choice between friendship and political ideals. His avoidance-avoidance conflict after Caesar's assassination forces him to choose between continuing a damaging civil war or surrendering and facing dishonor. In contrast, Bimala's approach-avoidance conflict involves her admiration for Sandip's nationalist fervor against the ethical dilemma of betraying her husband, Nikhil, by stealing for the cause. Her avoidance-avoidance conflict surfaces as she realizes Sandip's moral corruption and must choose between abandoning her newfound purpose or staying loyal to a tainted cause. Brutus's conflicts highlight themes of honor, loyalty, and political ethics, driving the plot of "Julius Caesar" towards his tragic end, while Bimala's struggles emphasize personal integrity, nationalism, and the clash between modernity and tradition in "The Home and the World," leading to her moral awakening and personal growth. It is evident that is both Bimala and Brutus experienced approach -avoidance and avoidance -avoidance conflict in their decision-making. Before the betrayal they both faced approach-avoidance and after the betrayal they experienced avoidance-avoidance conflict.

5. CONCLUSION

Both Brutus and Bimala experience internal conflicts in their tragic journeys. Their approach-avoidance conflicts, driven by the tension between personal loyalty and a higher cause, lead them to betray those closest to them. These decisions, made in pursuit of what they perceive as greater goods, eventually trap them in avoidance-avoidance conflicts, forcing them to choose between two equally undesirable outcomes. Brutus's struggle emphasizes the themes of political ethics and personal honor, culminating in his tragic demise, while Bimala's journey highlights the moral complexities of nationalism and the clash between tradition and modernity, leading to her eventual moral awakening. Both characters' experiences illustrate the painful consequences of betrayal when personal desires and ideologies clash with deeper, ethical commitments. This paper enables us to understand the complexities of human psychology and the ways that literature can act as a mirror for our inner conflicts as a result of this examination. Through the application of Kurt Lewin's conflict theory to their struggles, this study reveals the significant influence that psychological upheaval had on their choices and actions.

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