

Impact Of Fear And Anxiety On Ego: A Psychoanalytic Study Of Julian Barnes' The Noise Of Time

Dr. Javed Khan¹, Dr. Khalid Usman²

¹Assistant Professor of English Government Degree College No 2 (M) Dera Ismail Khan (Department, HED, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

²Associate Professor of English Government Degree College Serai Naurang (Department, HED, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

Abstract

This research paper explores fear and anxiety from psychoanalytic perspective in Julian Barnes' The Noise of Time. The analysis of the targeted novel is carried out by using Sigmund Freud's model of psychoanalysis regarding fear and anxiety. The analysis focuses on the psyche of the main character, Shostakovich who suffers from psychic conflict. The paper aims to find out how psychic conflict is created and how soul is destroyed and what defense mechanism is adopted to safeguard the life of an individual. It is found out that fear and anxiety are closely linked to each other and have both positive and negative impact on human life. The paper argues that anxiety is not completely negative as viewed by existential theorists. It finds out that Shostakovich is stuck between the opposing demands of the Id and the Superego and his ego finally fails to cope with the situation. And as result his self is split; his soul is collapsed. It is argued that both unresolved fear and anxiety result in an immense tragedy as Barnes has illustrated through the character of the protagonist in The Noise of Time.

Key Words: Fear and Anxiety, Freud, Psychoanalysis, Ego, Superego, Id, Barnes, The Noise of Time.

Introduction

Julian Patrick Barnes is a contemporary English novelist, short story author, essayist and a critic. He is the author of twenty books including his thirteen novels. He has won the Booker Prize for The Sense of an Ending. The recently published novel, The

Noise of Time is regarded as his masterpiece. No doubt, Barnes' *The Noise of Time* is set in the Soviet Union during Stalin's reign and after his death. but the interest and grandeur of the text lies in the psychic conflict of the main character, Shostakovich. The novel has been divided into three episodes and each part describes the crisis of Shostakovich's life when his self is split and soul crushed. He portrays the Shostakovich's battle with his conscience in an environment where speaking truth is not without danger. Whoever tries to speak the truth, he is summoned, interrogated, imprisoned or executed. Many are imprisoned and many are put to death. Barnes presents what are the responsibilities of an artist in such a society. The paper focuses on how Shostakovich deals with the harsh and unavoidable shadow of Stalinism, with all the fear, anxiety, shame and humiliation. The story ends not with his death but he is allowed to live to the point when life becomes worse than death, when life brings no joy but sorrows and worries. This paper is concerned with the psyche conflict of the main character, Shostakovich during Stalin's regime when "a vast catalogue of little farces adding up to an immense tragedy" of Shostakovich (172). Freud's model is utilized as a tool to analyze the psychic conflict of the main fictional character, Shostakovich, in the text under consideration.

Problem Statement

Both fear and anxiety are two psychological problems. In today's world, psychic conflict which arises out of fear and anxiety is felt everywhere. This paper aims to explore the concept of fear and anxiety from psychoanalytic point of view. It explores how self is split and soul is crushed by unresolved fear and anxiety as exemplified by fictional character, Shostakovich, by Barnes in *The Noise of Time*. Freud's model regarding fear and anxiety is utilized to examine what defense mechanisms is adopted by ego to save itself.

Research Objectives

1. To analyze the psychological impact of fear and anxiety on the life of an individual.
2. To explore what defense mechanisms Shostakovich adopts to deal with his psychic conflict caused by his id and superego.

Research Questions

1. What role do fear and anxiety play in the life of an individual as portrayed by Julian Barnes in *The Noise of Time*?
2. What defense mechanism does Shostakovich adopt to safeguard his life?

Literature Review Related to Fear and Anxiety

Freud is regarded as a pioneer of psychoanalytic theory of anxiety. His views about anxiety are changed throughout his career. He develops two theories of anxiety. In the first phase, he conceives anxiety as a libidinal impulse and it deals with repression which causes anxiety. But later on, he rejects this theory and he develops his second theory of anxiety, stating that it is anxiety that causes repression and not the vice versa. About the origination of fear and anxiety, he argues that anxiety is a reaction to the situation of danger. Anxiety also emerges as a signal to ego that something unpleasant is about to happen and the ego tries to prevent such a situation from occurring. Freud mentions three different kinds of anxieties: realistic anxiety, neurotic anxiety and moral anxiety. Realistic anxiety is termed as fear because it is about real and known danger. Neurotic anxiety is the unconscious worry about an unknown and instinctual danger. It is felt when an individual is overwhelmed by the desires of the Id. Here, the ego depends on the id because the feeling of neurotic anxiety inhabits in the ego, originally comes from impulses in the id. Thus, neurotic anxiety is a fear of unknown danger. The third type of anxiety is moral anxiety which is an anxiety when the ego is challenged by the threats of the superego. Moral anxiety involves a fear of violating moral principles.

According to Freud, psyche has three parts: the id, the ego and the superego. Ego is that part of personality which works according to the reality principle. Id works on pleasure principle and wants to satisfy all desires. Superego represents society and works on the principle of morality. Superego controls Id and directs Ego to behave in a moral way. Ego which works as a mediator, tries to cope with the conflicting demands of the id and the superego. When ego is stuck between the opposing demands of the id and the superego, anxiety is created. Then the ego has to defend itself by blocking the impulses or distorting them into a more acceptable form or making them less threatening. Such techniques are called the ego defense mechanisms. This

defensive action is considered by psychoanalyst Charles Rycroft as an inwardly directed form of vigilance. Freud believes that defense mechanisms help safeguard the ego against the psychic conflict created by the id and the superego. But, if the conflict is severe enough to collapse the ego, then the ego is unable to employ a defense mechanism. According to him, the ego has to serve three masters and to face three dangers: the danger from the external world, the danger from the libido of the id and the danger from the severity of the superego.

Emanuel posits that anxiety as a signal or warning that something really overwhelmingly awful is just about to happen. The individual must do something in order to safeguard himself both physically and mentally. Existential therapist, May argues that fear is a reaction to a danger which is specific, whereas anxiety is a reaction to danger which is unspecific, undefined and objectless (p. 191). Kierkegaard regards anxiety as the intermediate determinant between possibility and actuality. According to him in case of fear one moves in one direction away from the feared object. But in case of anxiety, a persistent inner conflict is involved, so one has “an ambivalent relation to object” (33). Epstein regards anxiety as an unresolved fear while fear is related to coping behavior, particularly escape and avoidance (311). According to Hopkins, anxiety is experienced throughout life when we come across with a hostile environment or we face withdrawal or loss of our attachment figure (54). Barlow conceives fear is an alarm in response to imminent threat whereas anxiety is a future oriented emotion, characterized by feelings of uncontrollability and unpredictability over upcoming negative events (104). Sweeney and Pine claim that “anxiety typically refers to emotional states that are analogous to fear” and argue that they “facilitate the survival of a species” [and] “have a central role in evolution and natural selection” (52). Scott Stossel regards anxiety as a spur as well as a barrier to achievement (12). Mental Health Foundation’s survey echoes the same views that anxiety is a natural state which helps us cope with the challenges of life and motivates us to respond to danger in ‘fight or flight’ mode. Strongman argues that in case of fear the object is external, real and known while in case of anxiety, the object is unknown and uncertain. Rachman states that fear is an emotional response to a specific danger, whereas, “anxiety is diffuse, objectless, unpleasant and persistent” (3). Moreover, “fear is episodic” and when the feared object is removed or

individual withdraws from it, fear ceases. On the other hand, anxiety is “unpredictable and uncontrollable” (3). Thus, danger or threat located in space and time evokes fear, whereas an anticipated danger or threat causes anxiety.

The postmodern notion of fear is that “fear is socially constructed” (Altheide 24). Furedi argues that meaning and experience of fear are shaped by cultural as well as by historical factors (4). Theorists like Elias, Altheide and Twenge explore socio-culture nature of fear and anxiety. According to these theorists, fear and anxiety are social construct. Twenge explores anxiety from socio-cultural point of view. He argues that lack of social connectivity and high degree of environmental threat are the two main causes of anxiety. Lamia argues that both fear and anxiety are created as a response to real or anticipated threat. Fear is a reaction to danger at hand whereas anxiety is a general state of distress that lasts longer than fear and is produced by something that is not definite. She opines when a person is helpless and does not avoid the situation, it results in anxiety (1-2). This literature review points out that Freud’s model focuses on fearful subject, a person who experiences fear and anxiety and not on the object, the source of threat and fear. Therefore, Freudian concept is used to analyze the targeted text, *The Noise of Time*.

Literature Review Related to *The Noise of Time*

Preston considers *The Noise of Time* a masterpiece of Julian Barnes. He argues that in this novel Shostakovich’s battle with his conscience is portrayed in a magnificent fictionalized retelling of the composer’s life under Stalin. It is a compact novel that traces the life long struggle of one man’s conscience with the unbearable exigency of totalitarianism. McAlpin believes that the noise of time cannot drown out Shostakovich. Like his Booker Prize winning *The Sense of an Ending*, *The Noise of Time* is another thought provoking novel which presents the costs of compromise and explores how much confrontation and concession a man and his conscience can endure. McAlpin depicts one simple fact of Soviet Union: that it is not possible to tell the truth here without being imprisoned or executed. Lothar argues that *The Noise of Time* is a critical and well-designed novel which explores the life of protagonist who is victim of inner conflict. According to her, Shostakovich is a complex character. He yields to power and is able to compose great works. She

argues that *The Noise of Time* deals with the relationship between art and politics, between art and conscience, between courage and survival. Jones claims that Shostakovich is doubly victimized of Barthesian misfortune: on one hand his music is interpreted in biological terms, on the other hand, he is the victim of Soviet history from which he wants to escape. He argues that this novel throws light on the moral responsibilities of an artist to society. According to Jones, the protagonist is an “anachronistic figure” who believes in art for art sake (129). Jones further argues that Barnes is mainly concerned with deconstructing the figure of the artist and *The Noise of Time* “presents Shostakovich a Nabokovian character in an Orwellian world” (131).

Research Methodology

This research paper explores the effect of fear and anxiety on the life of an individual. Freud’s model has been applied as a parameter to examine the psyche of the main character, Shostakovich in *The Noise of Time*. This paper is mainly concerned with the inner self of the subject, Shostakovich. It is only through psychoanalytic approach that one can find a way to the inner self of an individual and to see how his thoughts and actions are shaped and how his life is influenced by fear and anxiety. Therefore, psychoanalytic approach is used to examine the protagonist’s actions, behavior, thoughts, words, phrases and sentences of the text under consideration to explore the effect of fear and anxiety on his life.

Discussion and Analysis

The Noise of Time is a story of a well-known historical composer, Shostakovich. He is regarded as the hero of the novel. The novel has been divided into three parts: On the Landing, On the Plane and In the Car. Each part begins with the remarks, “this was the worse time” (Barnes 7). Analysis focuses on how Shostakovich’s ego copes with the situation, danger-situation, libidinal impulses and an anticipated danger-situation. Barnes states that a soul can be destroyed in one of the three ways: “by what others did to you; by what others made you do to yourself; and by what you voluntarily chose to do to yourself” (166). He posits that any single method is sufficient to destroy the soul. But if all three are present, the outcome will be irresistible. Shostakovich’s soul is

destroyed by all these three means. Therefore, he is unable to safeguard his soul or self.

On the Landing

The first part of the novel deals with Shostakovich's first crisis of his life and describes what is done to him. When the novel opens, we meet with Shostakovich standing by the lift with a case in his hand, waiting to be arrested and taken away. He has been waiting by the lift for three hours because he has been called to the Big House to be interrogated. He knows whoever is summoned to the Big House and interrogated; he is either imprisoned or executed. Standing by the lift, he is thinking that a composer is first denounced and humiliated. Later on, he is arrested and shot just because he is an artist. Shostakovich feels that those who are in power are busy in sharpening their claws on his soul. He is worried about what will happen to his wife and children after his death. His mind is noisy and promiscuous and can be compared to a bluebottle. Thus standing by the lift, he is "filled only with fear" (8).

Shostakovich, in his childhood, used to be afraid of the dead, but now he feels the cruel grabbing hands of the living as a great threat to his life, to his music, to his family and to all around him he loves. "The harder the times, the grabbier the hands", says Barnes (13). But at the same time, he falls prey to the opposite fear, the fear of slipping from the loving hands that take care of him. Shostakovich is fifteen years old when his father, Dmitri Boleslavovich, dies. He shoulders the responsibilities for which he is too young to face them. His mother, Sofya Vasilyevna, is an authoritative figure by temperament and by necessity. Thus with the death of his father, his anxiety is doubled. He is in his mother's grip and like his father, he is helpless before her. "In truth, he [is] a neurotic, ... a mother's boy" (33). He is introvert. He is a person who feels strong emotions but he is not good at expressing them. It is because of the fact that he leads his life under the authority figure of his mother and under the supremacy of Stalin. He knows that speaking truth is impossible in Russia and whoever will speak the truth, he is put to death. Being an artist he cannot tell a lie. Therefore, his ego tries to repress most of the feelings rather than express them. And it is these repressed impulses and desires that make him obsessional neurotic, being engrossed in thinking and suffering from psychic conflict.

As a lover, Shostakovich is indecisive. He believes in Free Love and wants to satisfy his libidinal desires. For him, the act of sex is just like drinking a glass of water and this is called glass of water theory. He loves Tanya. She and he are of the same age and are born for each other. Both are nineteen and they believe in Free Love by throwing away off the fossilized dictates of church, of society and of family. But his mother warns him against this unknown girl. When his mother warns him against the relationship with Tanya, he threatens his mother with "Suicide" and "Marriage" (23). His mother threatens him back, "My son will have to step over my corpse" (23). Thus, he is caught between the opposing demands of the id and the superego externalized and symbolized by his mother and societal norms. He wants to enjoy his life by sleeping in the arms of pleasure principles without paying any heed to societal norms or to the threats of his mother. But at the same time, he fears that he will lose her mother's love. Caught in the conflicting desires of the id and the superego, his ego tries to negotiate between them. First, this sixteen years old Shostakovich tries to convince his mother by explaining to her the principles of Free Love, but when he comes to know that she and the societal norms are the main hurdles in his way. Therefore, his ego tries to make the desires of the id flexible and acceptable to the world. Though he is against the institution of marriage, he is ready to marry whom he loves. He loves Tanya and wants to marry her. He describes his flirtations with other women in order to evoke her jealousy. But this makes her angry rather than jealous. Then he threatens her that he is going to commit suicide. He also tells her that he has married a ballet dancer. Unfortunately, she gets married to another person and this makes Shostakovich love her madly. He implores her to get divorced or else he will commit suicide. But Tanya laughs it all off. Thus dejected in love with Tanya, he is emotionally and psychologically disturbed.

Frustrated in love affair with Tanya, Shostakovich falls in love with Rozelya, a professional prostitute. He wants to marry her in spite of the fact that he knows she is a whore. How does his ego manage to resolve the matter? Here moral anxiety, the fear of losing the love of the superego saves his reputation otherwise his id desires would make him marry the whore. He runs away from her on the day of their marriage. Similarly, he loves Nita badly, but his mother is against it. How does his ego manage to please the id's desires and to satisfy the dictates of superego too? The

only possible solution that his ego foresees is to marry Nita secretly. Therefore, he marries Nita secretly so that the joy of their marriage may not be disturbed. After three months of their marriage, he visits her mother and informs her about his marriage. In this way, his ego negotiates between the desires of the id and the moral principles of the superego. This is a positive aspect of fear and anxiety which help an individual resolve the psychic conflict and behave in a civilized way, otherwise his id desires will make him behave in a wild and unethical way. His wild and unbridled passions would make him mad.

Shostakovich is a composer. He works hard to be a great composer and soon earns money enough to support his mother and sisters. Marshal Tukhachevsky is his patron who wants Shostakovich to develop his career. For this purpose, he wants to take Shostakovich to Moscow, but his mother, Sofya Vasilyevna, is against it. She argues that her son is too fragile and too delicate to live without her support. Though Marshal has power, the influence and financial resources, but her mother has the key to her son's soul. Her will prevails and Shostakovich remains in Leningrad.

Shostakovich is not yet thirty when the first crisis of his life begins in Arkhangelsk. On the 26th of January, 1936, his opera, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* is played on the stage in the presence of Comrade Stalin. An article, "Muddle Instead of Music" published in Pravda probably penned by Stalin himself, bitterly attacks his opera. His music is condemned and banned on the grounds that it lacks artistic grandeur and ideological principles. In other words, it is against the policies of the state. This article Muddle Instead of Music denounces him as the enemy of the people. He is an artist who knows what to do and what his music requires from him. He wants to uphold his personal honesty as well as his artistic honesty. He wants to exercise his free will and imagination in composing the music, but he is expected to approve Stalin's regime through his music. He believes in apolitical and redemptive power of music, but he is supposed to have a political purpose in his mind while composing the music. In simple words, he wants to do one thing while his superego, symbolized and externalized in the form of Stalin, wants him to do the opposite. But being a composer, Shostakovich is not ready to submit to the demands of Soviet bureaucracy. In the process, his soul is crushed by the severity of the superego.

Barnes describes this conflict symbolically as Shostakovich smokes Kazbeki while those in power are enjoying Belomor. Belomor symbolizes the oppressors while Kazbeki symbolizes the oppressed, the artists. These cigarettes symbolize the conflict between the artists and those who are in power. Shostakovich is an artist he cannot be the oppressor to follow Stalin's orders. Power offers him Belomor and wants him to be the oppressor, but he cannot accept it because it is against his very nature. In other words, Shostakovich as a composer wants to compose music with his artistic honesty but Power wants him to propagate the policies of the State. He cannot oppose Power openly. At the same, his artistic honesty does not allow him to succumb to Power. This realistic anxiety which arises out of a real danger-situation results in his physical helplessness. His Ego realizes the fact that he cannot question the Pravda editorial; cannot repudiate a policy statement of the highest level. Therefore, he gives up an idea of writing a defense article and getting it published in the Pravda in order to save himself and his music. It is this realization that makes him save life or else he would be put to death at thirty because open contradiction with Power caused early death.

Moreover, he is expected to apologize publically, recant his errors and to promise that he will not repeat his foolish mistakes in future. Such demands of the superego are against his nature. His ego cannot negotiate right now and it adopts a defense mechanism of silence. Therefore, he does not apologize for what he has done. He withdraws his Fourth Symphony because he fears that Power will denounce it as quacks, grunts and growls not music. His ego decides not to oppose the Power, but to remain calm and silent for the time being. This is his defense mechanism of the ego against the threat of the superego.

Shostakovich is summoned to the Big House where his First Conversation with Power takes place in 1937. He thinks that the days of his life is about to run out. Power interrogates him about his friend, Marshal Tukhachevsky and about the plot of assassination against Comrade Stalin. What does Shostakovich know about the plot of assassination against Stalin? Moreover, he is told that Zakrevsky knows the truth. His questions terrify Shostakovich who feels that his life is in danger. He thinks that they will have arrested Marshal Tukhachevsky and will have killed him by then. Now all his friends will be arrested and murdered one by one. Now it is his turn, therefore, they have summoned

him to the Big House. But he is given forty-eight hours to recall every detail of the plot of assassination. Then his excuses of knowing nothing, will not be accepted. These two days' interval is more alarming and embarrassing. He thinks that they have already killed him by banning his music. What more do they want from him? He thinks that they need him no more. So during this interval of two days, he drinks to sleep. His ego comes to the conclusion that if he is asked whether that person is involved in the plot of assassination, he will answer, yes. His "No" will be changed into "Yes" (). His condition is pathetic and pitiful. On the appointed Monday morning, he kisses his wife, embraces his daughter as though it were his last day of his life. He does not know whether he will be able to breathe any more or will be executed. But at the gate of the Big House, he is ordered to go home because his interrogator is not present to receive him. Later on, he comes to know that his interrogator has been arrested.

Even though he returns home, his anxiety does not let him live with peace. He thinks that it is a trick of Power. Power does not want to kill him but rather torture him. He thinks that this world is full of Zakrevskys, insanity and nonsense. He thinks it as a bureaucratic delay and after sometime, a new Zakrevsky will be appointed who will summon him again to the Big House. That is why he spends night after night by the lift, waiting to be arrested and taken away. Each night he evacuates his bowels, kisses his sleeping daughter, kisses his wakeful wife and takes the small bag from her hands. He follows this routine even for ten days. All these actions: waiting and standing by the lift, smoking cigarette, holding a case in his hand, thinking about the past and fearing for the future show his unconscious fear, worry and anxiety. But soon, he becomes fed up with waiting and standing by the lift. He gives up such routine. He begins to lie down on bed fully clothed with his wife and his packed case near his bed.

On the Plane

This part deals with second crisis of Shostakovich's life. He is confronted with Power again and he is made to make a public recantation and to repudiate his *Lady Macbeth Mtsensk*. Here the superego imposes its will over the Shostakovich's ego and thus his soul is cracked. He is made to do what he does not want to do. Barnes claims that one fear drives out another. It drives out all other emotions except shame. Now Shostakovich falls

prey to fear and shame. He is tormented by the memory of the past. He wants to forget what has happened. He drinks a lot to block out the memory. He has no longer a light head of the younger days. Shostakovich is a Russian and to be a Russian is to be pessimistic. But to be Soviet is to be optimistic. Power wants him to scrub and wash away all old Russianness and apply the paint of Sovietness to him. But being an artist, he is pessimistic and neurotic. It means that they do not want him to be an artist. But Power does not know that he will remain a Russian in spite of how much Power scrubs him. Power wants to engineer human souls and decides that Shostakovich's soul needs to be engineered too.

Those who are in power think that if they get enough of population killed and the rest of the population is fed with a diet of propaganda and terror, then they will be able to achieve optimism. Therefore, Power wants to control all arts and use it as a political propaganda. Being a composer, Shostakovich is supposed to support the policies of the State in his music. But he lacks the taste of licking rubber boots. He does not know when to conspire against the innocent. It is not in his nature to betray his friends. Shostakovich fears if he violates the dictates of the superego— Stalin's policies— this will make superego despise him. He cannot openly contradict with Power because he knows that this will cause his untimely death but he cannot fulfill the demands of the superego. How does he satisfy the hypocritical cries of the superego externalized and symbolized by Stalin? His ego decides to be careful in composing the music. He has to do his job but in disguise. And his disguise is irony. He has to speak the truth that must be clothed in irony. It is argued that fear and anxiety make him understand the situation of danger and help him cope with it and he is able to save his life and his family. It is in this sense that fear and anxiety are positive.

Though Shostakovich's life is full of fear and anxiety, he tries his best to make his children comfortable. Therefore, he never punishes his children for their mistakes but lights cigarette after cigarette and paces up and down. He considers this dumb show of anguish as a chastisement enough for his children. He considers the whole country just like a punishment cell. Why does he introduce a child so early to punishment which it has to face enough in its lifetime span? He cannot tolerate the sight of one beating another. But Power makes him the torturer, thus being tortured. He is made to be the oppressor, thus being

oppressed. Even though others are distracted by the sounds of normal life, he is impervious to noise. He is determined to work, regardless of the chaos and discomfort. This is his defense strategy against the noise of time. He is able to write his Seventh Symphony, a message of anti-Fascism, he achieves forgiveness. On the 5th of January 1948, another leap year after twelve years, Stalin is once again at Bolshi to witness Muradeli's *The Great Friendship*. Muradeli, the chairman of the Soviet Music Fund, is denounced as a formalist. What does he do to save himself? He explains that he has been misled, misguided and put on wrong track by Shostakovich and especially by his *Lady Macbeth Mtsensk*. Then the Central committee which criticizes Muradeli's opera proclaims that the tenets of Pravda editorial 1936 are still applicable. Shostakovich has been directed to attend the meeting of the Union of Composers. He does not want to attend it, so he makes many excuses. But his excuses are not accepted and he is made to attend the meeting where he is humiliated. His Eighth Symphony is bitterly criticized and his music is denounced as a piercing road drill. For all these, committee declares him a pessimist indulged in unhealthy individualism. So, again there is contradiction between his wishes and the policies of the State. He decides not to make any public apology for what he has done. But he is made to make a public. He makes a promise that he will follow the instructions of the Party in composing the music. The fear of violating the directives of the superego results in anxiety. He is between the devil and the deep sea. What tactic does his ego adopt to deal with such a situation? How will he be able to lull the dictates of the superego without sacrificing his own artistic honesty?

His Second Conversation with Power takes place on the 16th of March 1949. This time Stalin himself talks to him on the phone. Shostakovich is made to attend the forthcoming Congress for World Peace which is going to be held in New York. Shostakovich makes many excuses. But his excuses are not accepted. He will be the spokesperson of Stalin. Even though he agrees to attend the Congress, his mind is still not at ease because he despises the policies of the State. Thus he is made to do what he himself despises to do. The will of the superego symbolized by Stalin is imposed on his ego. What does his ego do to handle the situation? He decides not to be silent this time, but continue to compose music which will not openly contradict the policies of the State. He knows if he remains silent; it will make him neurotic

and even mad. In order to save himself from neurosis and insanity, his ego decides to compose music. Shostakovich does not want to give up his artistic honesty at any cost. He does not to tell a lie in his music. But he knows it too that truth-speaking leads to immediate death. Therefore, truth needs to be disguised. He knows that truth's disguise is irony. So, he employs irony as defense mechanism against Power in order to save himself, his music, his family and his love.

Shostakovich used to threaten his mother and his wife with suicide, but he never committed it. But when he is humiliated at Congress for World Peace held in New York, he returns home feeling nothing, but self-contempt. This self-disgust is the result of moral anxiety and persecutory guilt as explained by Klein. Freudian notion of moral anxiety is analogous to Klein's persecutory guilt which according to Freud leads to self-contempt and even self-persecution. Now Shostakovich decides not to threaten any one with suicide. He knows that he has lost the self-respect which suicide requires. He realizes that they take his life and will steal his story and then expose a false story to the world which they have invented. His ego decides not to commit suicide, but face the situation. It is this realization on the part of his ego which saves his life. He will not let them steal his story and rewrite it. How does his ego accommodate so that he can go on being himself and compose his own music? His ego decides not to sacrifice his artistic honesty. He decides to compose such music that it will be music for those who have ears to hear, but it will be muddle not music for those with asses' ears. He used to wear amulets of garlic to keep off the prostitutes, now he will use irony as a defense mechanism against Power. Apparently, his music shows that he is following the instructions of the authority, but actually he is doing his own work. But very soon, he is disillusioned and convinced that tyranny will destroy his love too. He feels the impending danger from the superego, so his ego agrees to Power for the time being to thwart the imminent danger.

In the Car

In this last section, Shostakovich is convinced to join the Party. His soul is destroyed by what he voluntarily chooses to do to himself. He loses his free will, his integrity and even his artistic honesty. With the death of Stalin, Shostakovich's worries and anxiety become unbearable. In Stalin's time, Shostakovich used

to drink vodka but now even vodka gives him no pleasure. Shostakovich wonders and thinks why he is spared while so many others are being shot. With the death of Stalin, the agony of the wait by the lift and the fear of the bullet to the back of the head which Power uses to terrify the people, such things become things of the past. During Stalin's regime, he considers death preferable to life but now he is afraid of life. Now Power wants to play a new trick with him. Power decides to put his ideological soul to test to win it thoroughly. They strike him with smiling faces and glasses of vodka in their hands, but their attacks are unbearable and his soul is mercilessly crushed. That is why this section begins with the remarks that this is "the worst time of all" (115).

Now his conversations with Power affect his soul badly. But at first he fails to recognize it. He considers his situation like that of Sibelius who feels self-contempt. Shostakovich feels that this is the connection between self-contempt and alcohol, one incites the other. That is why he takes solace from vodka whenever he feels anxious and sad. He drinks a lot to forget the past for the time being, but there is no escape from memory. Sometimes, he wishes he were dead. He realizes that life is cat that drags the parrot downstairs by its tail; his head bangs every step.

Shostakovich is appointed as a chairman of the Union of Composers. He makes many excuses but he is convinced to join the Party by following the policy of giving something and taking something in return. His ego is made to commit a blunder and his conscience pricks him much for it. He is driven to madness. His nerves are shattered. He knows that his broken nerves cannot be restored. He feels that he has committed moral suicide. But they are not satisfied and they demand his soul as well as his physical suicide. His ego response is that he flees from the danger-situation and takes refuge with his sister. He thinks that living with his sister, he may not be available to them. But he is informed that the official announcement will be made in his presence. His condition is that of a terrified rabbit. There in the Conference, he is given a written speech and he tells the audience that he has applied to join the Party and his petition has been granted. This lie makes him weep just like the death of his wife made him weep. By joining the Part, he loses his free will, his integrity and artistic honesty. "Integrity is like virginity: once lost, never recoverable" (Barnes 163). Under the pressure of Power and under the influence of unresolved fear and endless

anxiety, Shostakovich's soul is crushed, his self is split and his nerves are broken and he is helpless in restoring what he has lost. This is the tragedy which the life plots for him. He is driven to madness. Life becomes unbearable. He is bitterly tormented by the memory of the past. Shostakovich has hoped that irony will save his life, his family and even his music. But now he realizes that irony made him ready for a great tragedy of life. The little farces of his life add up to his tragedy. He is reduced to such an extent that he even begins to hate the being of himself. He realizes the trick of irony: instead of killing him, they let him live, and by allowing him to live they succeed in killing him. He realizes that smoking, drinking, playing games, enjoying free love and even irony which he uses as defense mechanisms are all useless.

Conclusion

This paper argues that *The Noise of Time* is a novel of terror, fear, anxiety, shame, humiliation and guilt. It examines the impact of fear and anxiety on the Ego of a tortured artist whose music outlasts the State that seeks to silence him. Barnes' Shostakovich is the perfect example whose self is cracked and split under harshness and severity of the superego, symbolized by Stalin and Power. The story ends not with the death of Shostakovich but he is allowed to live to the point when life becomes worse than death. This paper argues that fear and anxiety have both positive and negative impact on the life of an individual. They are not completely negative. But in case of extreme fear and anxiety, ego is damaged to the extent that it is not able to safeguard either itself or the soul as illustrated by portraying the life of Shostakovich in *The Noise of Time*. This paper argues that it is music—pure and strong and music that is inside us, the music of our being—that can be put against the noise of time. Shostakovich accommodates to the situation to write his music of his own and he is able to do so. He may perish, but his music will remain music for ever for those who will have ears to hear. This is his real success.

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