

THE MAIN CHARACTER'S AMBITIONS LEADING  
TO HIS CONFLICTS IN HENRIK IBSEN'S  
*PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY*



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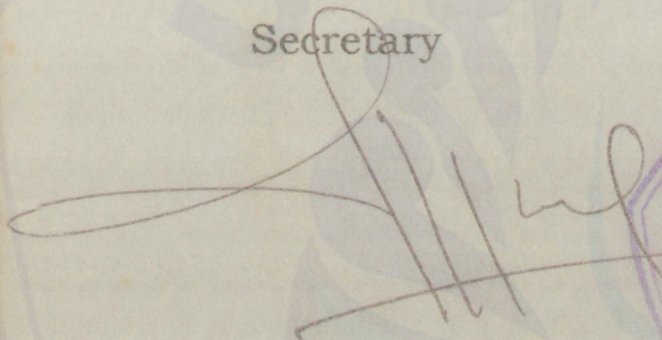
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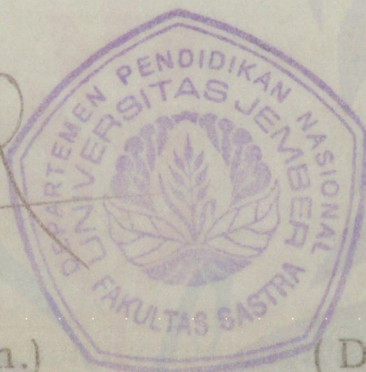
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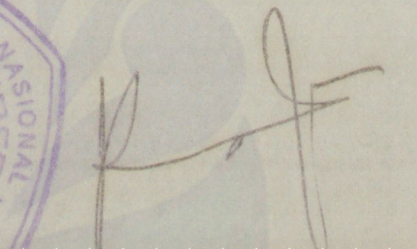
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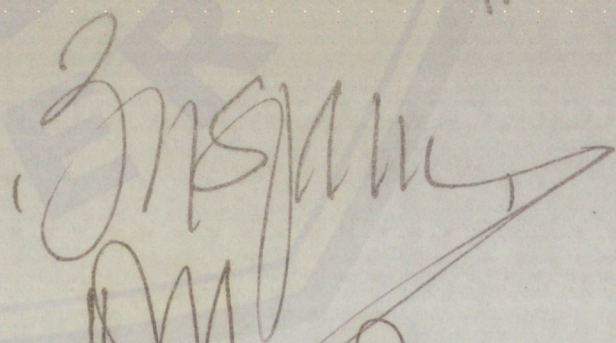
  
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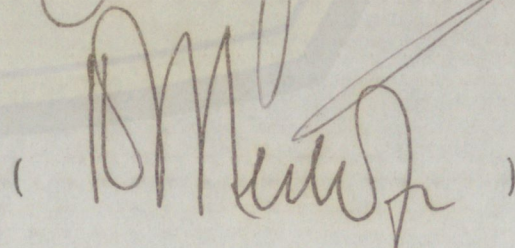
  
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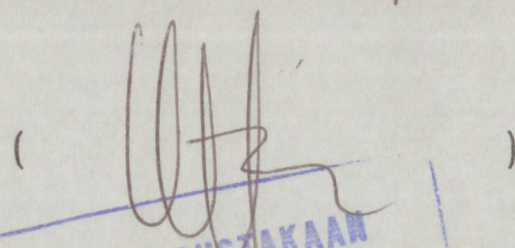
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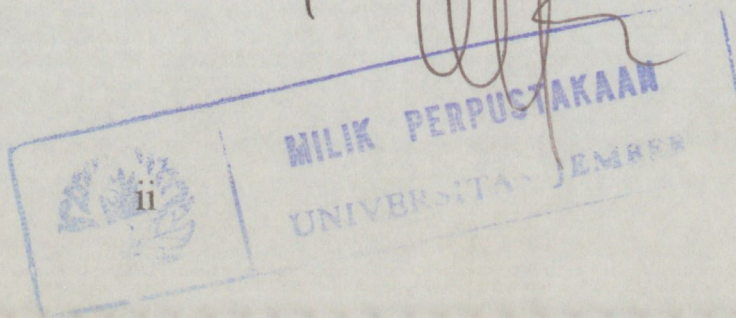


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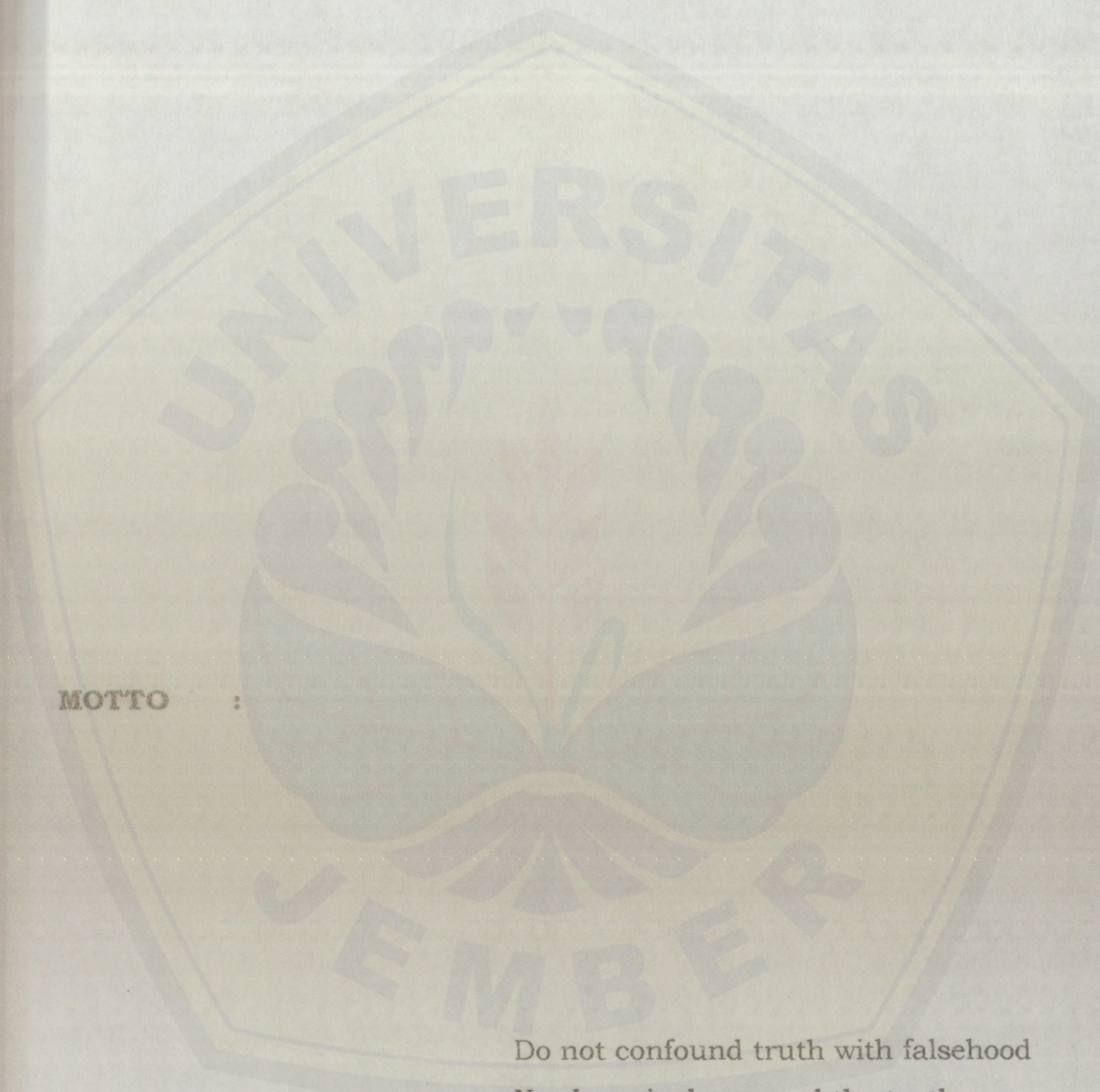


With love and gratitude,

This thesis is dedicated to :

- My beloved father, **Mulyono Asmadi**, a religious and democratic man who always supports me to do the best choice in life
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MOTTO :

Do not confound truth with falsehood  
Nor knowingly conceal the truth.  
( The Holy Quran, Al Baqarah : 42 )



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In writing this thesis, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my beloved father and mother for their love and prayers. I am also grateful to my brothers, who affectionately support and generously give me spirit.

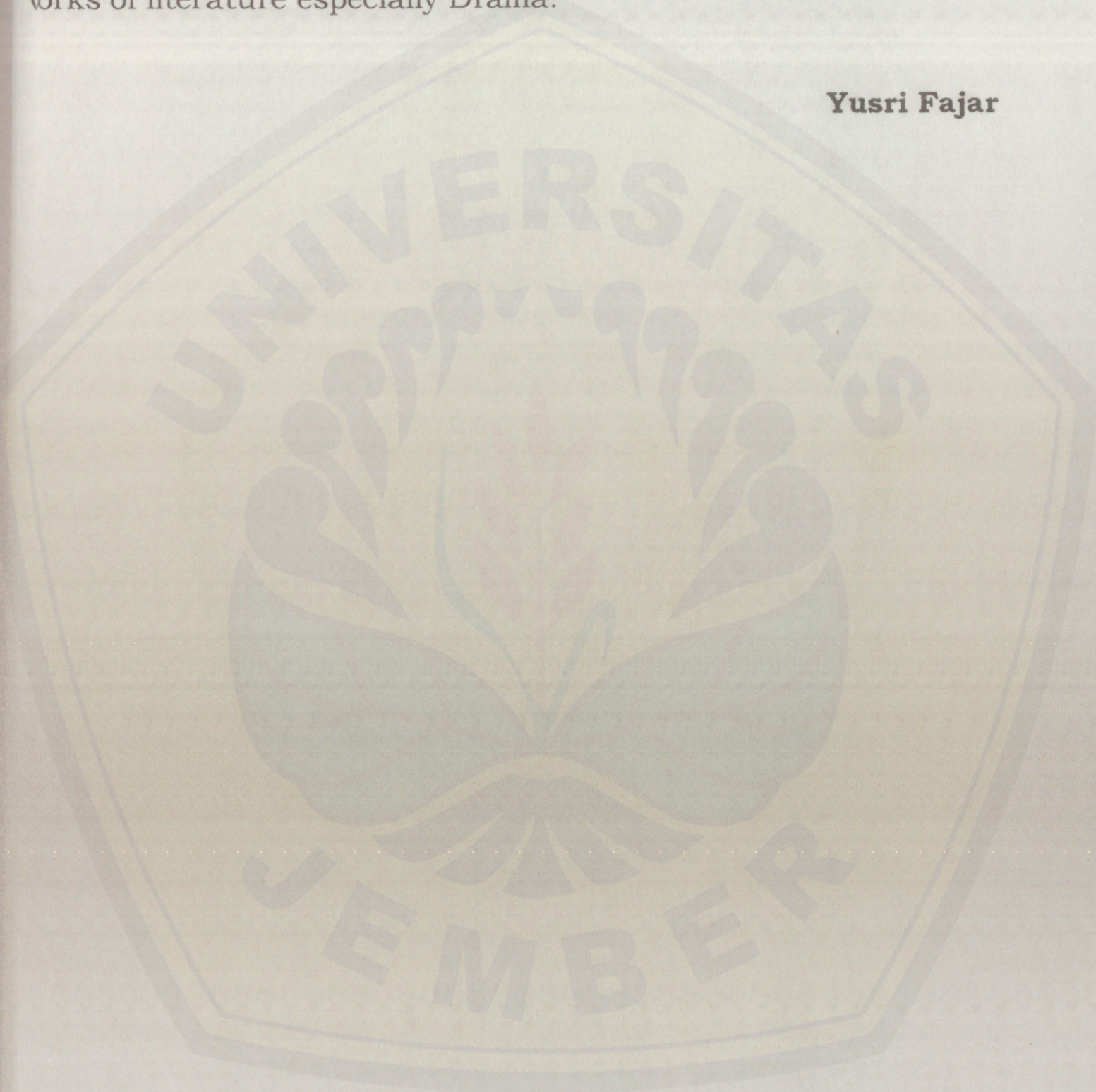
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**Yusri Fajar**





## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### 1. Rationale

Literature takes great part through human life. Like all arts, literature is one of the essential things that make human being man. In one way or another, everyone is touched by literature since it refers to human experience ( Roberts, 1977 : 13 ). Moreover, Addison states that :

“ Literature is fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language. It takes great part in human life for it is a vital record of what men have seen in life, of what they have experienced and of what they have felt and thought about these aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for human being.”  
( 1965 : 10)

In other word, literature is an imitation of human life. Whether it concerns joy or human miseries. By reading literary work we cannot only get entertainment but also some value and moral teaching in connection with the problem of our daily life.

Drama is one of literary works besides novel and poetry which imitates life and human activity by means of presenting various actions and dialogues among group of characters. It is designed for theatrical presentation. Reaske remarks that drama is furthermore designed for theatrical presentation that is although we speak of drama as literary work composition, we must never forget that drama is designed to be acted on the stage ( 1965 : 5 ). This definition explains clearly that drama offers some problems of life which often happen in daily life that expresses the various actions and dialogues.



Drama is also a means of communicating ideas as feeling and notion through dialogues and actions among the characters. Drama refers some problems of life, so that it must concern with human life and their activities. It means that in drama we can study human life through the actions and dialogues among the characters. Therefore, the writer prefers to discuss drama as the material of this thesis and the writer chooses one of Henrik Ibsen's great plays entitled *The Pillars Of The Community*.

*The Pillars Of The Community* is regarded as one of the masterpieces of Henrik Ibsen, the greatest Norwegian dramatist. This play talks about Karsten Bernick, the main character of the play as an ambitious man who has an eager desire to be a successful businessman and a reputable man in the community. He wants to become one of the pillars of the community who has power, influences and reputation. Therefore, he tries every possible efforts to make his ambitions come true although it arises the conflicts with others and himself. When his mother's firm goes bankrupt, he struggles very hard to sustain the reputation as a respectable and prestigious family. He renounces Lona, his first love and marries Betty for her money to save his mother's firm from bankruptcy. He also spreads rumor that Johan has stolen the money from his mother's firm. In fact, there is not any money that Johan has stolen from his mother's firm. It causes a quarrel with Johan because he wants Bernick to clean his name and reputation. As a businessman he wants to get profit by using every possible ways. He forces Aune, a foreman at the shipyard to use new machines in repairing the ship. This policy makes a conflict, because Aune does not agree to his policy. Bernick actually cannot accept his own reality, he does not want to lose his



high position in society as a reputable man and a successful businessman. The bad efforts that he used not only cause the social conflicts but also his internal conflict that finally lead to his honest confession to the public.

The main character's ambitions leading to his conflicts in Henrik Ibsen's *The Pillars Of The Community* chosen for the topic of the discussion because this thesis analyses about the main character's ambitions and his possible ways to make his big ambitions come true although he ignores the others' feelings that finally bring him to the conflicts with himself and others. The discussion of the topic is also interesting because it may happen in the real daily life so it can be a source of experiences in understanding the others' ambitions and also solving the problems related to the conflicts with others in the community .

## **.2 Problems to Discuss**

Karsten Bernick is the main character in *The Pillars of The Community*. He experiences conflicts because of his eager ambitions to get his own profit in business and to sustain his reputation as a respectable man. His efforts to reach his ambitions by ignoring the others' feelings lead to his conflicts. He has conflict with Aune, his foreman because of his ambition to be a successful and reputable businessman. As the owner of the large shipyard, he introduces new machines into the yards in repairing the ships at the first time, on the other hand, Aune does not agree to his policy to use machines because it means the loss of jobs for workmen who do not have any skills in using new machines. Obviously, Bernick's ambition causes a conflict with Aune. He also has conflict with Johan Tonessen because



of his ambition to sustain his reputation as a respectable and prestigious man in the community. He spreads rumor that Johan has stolen the money from his mother's firm and has done a scandal with Madame Dorf. In fact, Johan does not like what he has said. Actually he only borrows the reputation from Johan Tonessen. His conflict with Johan arises because he persists in rejecting public confession to clean Johan's name and reputation. He does not want to lose his high position as a reputable man in the community.

Moreover, Bernick also has conflict with his colleagues in business. His colleagues know that Bernick actually has the motive of self-interest for getting his own profit from the society because if he succeeds in building the branch of railway lines, he will be a millionaire and get his own profit. It makes his colleagues are very angry. Finally, Bernick also has internal conflict. He struggles against himself, his guilt about his lies and his position as the leader of the community. He also experiences terrible moment when bad stories in the past present in his mind. Therefore, the problem to discuss is all his ways in perceiving his reputation and ambitions as well as the results of them.

### **1.3 The Scope of The Study**

To avoid the discussion moving far away from the main point, it is important to limit the scope of study. The discussion of the thesis is emphasized on analyzing the main character's big ambitions to get profit in business and to sustain his reputation in order to be a successful businessman and a reputable prestigious man. The



discussion is also focused on the conflicts between the main character and Johan Tonnesen, Aune, and his colleagues because of his big ambitions.

#### 1.4 Hypothesis

In discussing of the thesis, there is hypothesis, that is, in *The Pillars Of The Community* Ibsen shows that someone will use every possible ways to reach his ambitions by ignoring the other people's feelings so that arise conflicts with others.

Therefore, the hypothesis of this thesis is whether or not the main character's ambitions lead to his internal and social conflicts in the play.

#### 1.5 The Approach to Use

The psychological and sociological approaches are used in analyzing this thesis. The psychological approach is used because it provides theory to analyze fictitious characters. As Scott says that "Psychology can be used to explain fictitious characters" (1962 : 72 ).

The application of psychological approach in the thesis is intended to observe the actions of the created character in the play whose name Karsten Bernick as the main character, in realizing his ambitions that leads the conflicts with others and himself.

The sociological approach is also used to analyze this thesis, as Scott says that "sociological critic is interested in understanding the social milieu and the extend to which and manner in which the artist respond to it"(1962 : 123). This approach is used to know the relationship between the main character and other characters in the



community. It is also applied to understand the main character's actions related to society that lead to the conflicts with others.

### 1.6 The Method of Analysis

The thesis is worked out through library research. The data and information supporting the topic are taken from some written sources and also from some references from the library. Moreover, the inductive method used in analyzing the data. " it analyses the data or facts from particular ideas to get general conclusion ". ( Hadi, 1995 : 42 ).

After reading *The Pillars of The Community*, it comes to the general statement that the main character has a big ambitions that lead to the conflicts with others. From this general statement, the writer explores the particular facts in the play to support the statement. Finally the conclusion is reached by reasoning from the main character's ambitions as the particular causes of his conflicts with others.

### 1.7 The Purpose of Study

First of all the purpose of writing the thesis is to give clear and deep description about the ambitious main character who uses various ways to reach the ambitions and also about the main character's internal conflict and social conflict.

Secondly, it also aims to comprehend Henrik Ibsen's plays, mainly *The Pillars Of The Community* in order to get some value and moral teaching and also to understand the virtues and vices which are expressed in the play.



Finally, it applies theories of literature acquired during the study, especially on drama. It is also hoped to give contribution to the readers who are interested in Ibsen's works especially *The Pillars Of The Community*.

### **1.8 The Organization of The Thesis**

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with rationale, problem to discuss, the scope of the study, the approach to use, the method to analysis, the purpose of study and the organization of the thesis. The author's biography and the synopsis of the play are in chapter two. In chapter three the meaning of the terms; main character, ambition, conflict is explained. The analysis of the main character's ambition leading to his conflicts discussed in chapter four. Finally all of the previous chapters are concluded in chapter five.



**CHAPTER II**  
**THE BIOGRAPHY OF HENRIK IBSEN AND**  
**THE SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY**

**2.1 The Biography of Henrik Ibsen**

Henrik Johan Ibsen was a famous Norwegian poet and dramatist. He was well-known as the father of modern drama because he introduces modern social problems into his plays in realistic way ( Squires, 1968:5 ). Ibsen was born in the little town of Skien on the Norwegian seacoast, some 60 miles southwest of Christiania (Oslo) on March 20, 1828, as the oldest surviving of Knud Ibsen.

Knud Ibsen, was a well-to-do merchant. He was extremely successful in his business, but the fortune did not always come to him. Because of speculation, his business failed. Then he found himself in increasing financial difficulties. This bankruptcy forced him to leave his town. Then Ibsen moved to a small farm outside Skien. Ibsen was very sad when he remembered how his friend ignored all connections with Ibsens as soon as they discovered that his father had gone bankrupt. So he did not like to play with the other children ( *Collier's Encyclopedia*, 1994 : 455 ).

Ibsen grew up to be a good painter but his family did not allow him to study art. They permit him when he decided to do medical profession. Next year, at fifteen, Ibsen gave up his home and his parents, and moved to Grimstand, a nearby seaport where he became a chemist's assistant. In spare hours he studied for his entrance examination at the university of Oslo and he also found time for writing. At that time he began to write poetry. **Resignation** is the title of his earliest poem. His first poem published in 1849 was **In the**



**Authum.** Ibsen experiences and memories of his boyhood were often found in his drama from *Peer Gynt* to *John Gabriel Borkman*. The members of his family also often served as models for his characters ( *Collier's Encyclopedia, 1994 : 455* ).

In April 1850, Ibsen left Grimstand and went to Christiania. Again, he prepared himself for University candidates, but he failed. After that he turned all of his attention to writing. That same year he wrote *Catiline*, a blank verse play about the failure of a conspiracy against Rome, under the Penname of Brynjolf Bjarne. The play was concerned with personal freedom and the conflict between individual aspirations and society. This play was privately printed by his friend, after being rejected for performance at the Christiania Theatre in September 1850.

In 1851, he met Ole Bull, the founder of the Bergen National Theatre. Ibsen was given a job as a stage assistant. He was in charge of stage management, arranged scenery and actor's movement, and he also wrote plays regularly for performance. He assisted in staging of 188 plays, five of them – *Midsummer Eve* ( 1853 ), *The Warrior's Barrow* ( 1854 ), *Lady Inger of Ostraat* ( 1855 ), *The feast at Solhaug* ( 1856 ), and *Olaf Liljekrans* ( 1857 )- are his ( *Mc Graw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984: 2* ). The typical production was the play of dramatic intrigue, which depended on a complicated plot, moving at high speed around certain stock scenes: the confidential document dropped in public; the abducted baby identified by secret talisman of birthmark; the poisoned goblet passing from hand to hand, and being drunk in the end by anyone but intended victim. Characters were similarly conventional : “ heavy father, innocence distressed, rough diamond, jealous husband,



faithful friend “. The play did not deal in nuances. Character and action were drawn in bold, theatrical lines : action was varied, complicated, and continuous in order to provide excitement, surprise, and suspense in the theatre; character were set in a single, simple, colourful mould, in order to provoke theatrical recognition ( Williams, 1993:27 ). The job gave him an important experiences to his later career as playwright.

Ibsen left Bergen to become the director of the Norwegian Theatre, a new playhouse established to protest the tyranny of Danish drama in the National Theatre, in 1857 in Christiania. In the following year he married Susanah Thoresen, the daughter of minister who bore him his only legitimate child, Sigurd, while he was living on loans with debts mounting on all sides. Ibsen's theatre could not compete with the long established Christiania Theatre. After many notable productions the theatre went bankrupt ( *McGraw- Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984 : 2* ).

In 1862 Ibsen wrote and published *Love's Comedy*, a commentary on conventional romantic love and marriage ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984:2* ). The following production was *The Pretender* as prose play with modern conflict in historical setting ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Word Drama, 1984:546* ). The play was a popular success, the government awarded him 400 dollars for foreign travel, and with it he went to Italy ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984:2* ). In Italy he wrote *Emperor and Galilean* ( 1864 ). It was unfinished, then completed and published in 1873 ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984:3* ). After that he wrote *Brand* ( 1865 ) a play about extreme idealism of young Vicar Brand who is willing to



sacrifice everything to achieve what he considers his God-given in life, then *Peer Gynt* ( 1867 ) is about amoral man, the exact opposite of Brand ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984:547* ). They established Ibsen's international fame. Then abandoning verse and turning to contemporary themes, Ibsen wrote *The League of Youth* ( 1869 ) and *The Pillars of Society* ( 1877 ). These drama based on the politic and society of provincial Norway ( *Encyclopedia Americana, 1977:695*).

His other plays were *A Doll House* ( 1879 ) was about women's emancipation, *Ghosts* ( 1881 ) dealing with the tragic effects of suppressing truth, *An Enemy of The People* ( 1882 ) explored the opposition between the individual and society, *The Wild Duck* (1884) , *Romersholtm* (1886), *The Lady From The Sea* ( 1888), *Hedda Gabler* ( 1891) were about family life and relation between man and woman ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984:5*). And the plays of Ibsen's last year include *The Master Builder* ( 1892), *Little Eyolf* (1894), *John Gabriel Borkman* (1896), and finally *When We Dead Awaken* ( 1899) were characterized by an emphasis on symbolic elements ( *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama, 1984:5*).

For his seventieth birthday in 1898, Ibsen was sent presents by a group of English admirers including G. B. Shaw, Thomas Hardy, Henry James and some others. In the Spring of 1900 he suffered a series of strokes that destroyed his memory for words and even the alphabet, and left him virtually helpless the rest of his life. He died in Christiania on May 23, 1906.

All his life Ibsen opposed every convention or tendency that denied the fulfillment of the individual. Not only he was the friend and



counsellor to modern man and woman, but his pioneering of psychological motivation in drama has had incalculable effect on all subsequent dramatic writing. Every modern playwright has gone to study to Henrik Ibsen (Squires, 1968:7 ).

## **2.2 The Synopsis of The Pillars of The Community**

Karsten Bernick is an important man. He is both a consul and leader of shipping firm. He comes from a well-to-do family, the House of Bernick. This family has a great role in business field. The family's richness passed on from generation to the following generation. This position makes Karsten Bernick a man in a high reputation in the community. As the leader he works and achieves a great deal, both for himself and for the society for many years. He presents the town the public garden. Even, he has laid on the town's gas and water. However, it is very hard for Karsten Bernick to live happily. He has been living on lies for many years. There are many spots in the sun of his happiness. It proves that the happiness of the family, his whole position as a citizen of the community, he tells Johan Tonessen, Betty Bernick's Younger brother.

Fifteen years before, Johan worked for old Bernick's office. At that time the business goes bankrupt. Johan decides to leave for America. He gets along with Karsten Bernick since he was in Paris and London. In those days, indeed, the old Bernick's business is in trouble. Since the Bernick's big firm gone bankrupt, he has to save his family property. Unfortunately, he takes the dishonourable ways to save the firm. He has to marry Betty Tonnesen since he has a lot of money, and Lona Hessel financially cannot help him. Karsten Bernick



says that Johan Tonnesen steals the money. He spreads this rumor to sustain his reputation as a respectable man.

Karsten Bernick also spreads rumor that Johan has a scandal with Mrs. Dorf, a famous actor's wife. The people in the town absolutely believe that Johan is the doer of the scandal happening to Mrs Dorf when her husband is occasionally away. Then, Mrs Dorf's husband leaves her and their only daughter, Dina. Martha, the sister of Karsten Bernick takes Dina Dorf into the House of Bernick when Mrs Dorf died. Since Johan does not do that wicked thing as it is rumored by Bernick, it ruins Johan's reputation. Johan really does not know anything about the rumor that Bernick said.

In the same time Karsten Bernick changes his mind about allowing a railroad project to build the branch of railway lines through the district of the community. Formely the proposed project will be competed with the shipping company. He realizes that a railway lines through the town will transport timbers and minerals to his shipyard. The railroad will be a good thing for Karsten Bernick because it is expected to give great profit to him. Bernick who is an ambitious man, wants to be famous and powerful in the society. He wants to be admired and becomes the only one who aids the society, the pillars of the community.

Lona Hessel and Johan Tonnesen who have lived in America for along time come to their home-town. The town revives the old gossips. Many people try to ignore the pair, but Lona Hessel refuses to be ignored. She feels no disgrace, nor does Johan Tonnsen. Johan homecoming makes Karsten Bernick, who needs perfect goodwill both from the town and the press, feels afraid that the truth comes to light. Karsten Bernick's position will be completely ruined if the truth turns



out to be true, of course, he will lose what he has struggled for a long time to reach his big ambitions. Johan tells Bernick that Lona knows the true story but she will not reveal the secret. Meanwhile, Johan is grateful to Martha, Bernick's sister for taking care of Dina Dorf. Martha has refused several offer of marriage in order to care for the young girl who has been so disgracefully orphaned. Martha is not married because she always loves Johan and has waited for him to return. In fact, Johan falls in love with Dina Dorf. Moreover, they are going to get married and going back to America.

Hence, Lona Hessel, a faithful and truthful woman reminds Karsten Bernick of the old scandal and she suggests him to confess publicly in order to save himself . Bernick is really in doubt. He is afraid that the cost of his confession is too great, and he does not want to lose his high position because if he succeeds in realizing the project of building a seacoast railway he will be a millionaire. In Addition, that project will fail if a whisper of his scandal is discovered. Since, the railway was to make Karsten Bernick a millionaire, it is clear that the project of building a sea-coast railway is not for the sake of the community.

Obviously, it is very hard for Karsten Bernick to confess all of his lies in the past. Moreover, Lona has forced him to confess to the public. Johan will also forgive the lies if Bernick tells the townspeople about the truth. Johan wants to marry Dina Dorf but he asks Bernick to clean his name and reputation. Bernick persists rejecting public confession to clean Johan's name and reputation because he does not want to lose his high position. Lona herself will not tell the true story because she still loves Bernick. Besides she thinks Bernick himself will tell the truth so that he will be whole again. Really Lona still takes



care of Bernick though he has married to her step-sister, Betty. Bernick is really in a dilematic choice. He wants to confess about all of his faults, and on the other hand, he does not want to lose his money and reputation.

At the end , it is told that Olaf, Bernick's only son has run away from home. He is so extremely confused to hear that news and directly blames his wife for no keeping an eye on Olaf. He tries to look for his son but Olaf has stowed away on the unseaworthy ship which is already out to sea. He is afraid of losing his only son and feels so sorry. Later, he is so glad to know that Betty has found the boy on board and brings him home before the ship sails. When people come in procession to honor Karsten Bernick, their leading citizen Johan Tonnesen proves that he is innocent. He promises that he will take care of Dina Dorf. He is going to marry her and go to America. At the same time, Karsten Bernick confesses to be the guilty man. He says that he has to reject the eulogy given by his citizens. He also says that he has ignored Johan's feeling and explains that himself and not Johan Tonnesen has been the guilty man. Karsten Bernick does not have to deserve to be the respectable man, since he has been a dishonest man for fifteen years. He says honestly that fifteen years before he had himself spreaded the rumor. He also promises that he will share the profits from the railroad. Lona is very happy to hear Bernick's confession. She tells Bernick that at last she has found the real pillars of community, the truth and freedom.



## CHAPTER III

### THE MEANING OF THE TERMS

It is necessary to understand the detailed explanation of the meaning of the terms related to the title of the thesis in order to get appropriate and complete meaning of the terms. It also enables the readers to avoid unexpected misunderstanding of certain ideas.

There are three terms will be defined, those are : main character, ambition, and conflict. There is hoped by clarifying the meaning of referring words, as they are the key words which lead readers to understand the analysis of the thesis.

#### 3.1 The Meaning of Main Character

In describing the meaning of the main character, firstly, it is important to know the meaning of character. *The Oxford Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* states that the word *character* has several meaning :

1. mental or moral nature, mental or moral qualities that make person, role, etc different from others;
2. person who is well known, person in the novel, play, etc.

( 1971 : 20-21 )

In *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, M.H. Abrams gives the meaning of the *character* as follows :

1. the character are literary genre; a short and usually witty, sketch in a prose of distinctive type of person;
2. characters are person in a dramatic or narrative work, endowed with moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say-the dialogue and by what they do- the action.

( 1971 : 20-21 )



Character explained also refers to an imagery person in a book or play and this meaning comes near to the correct meaning in literature. Characters always appear in each literary work and react to the circumstances in the story and also extend series of their reaction. Roberts expresses his idea about the character in his book **Writing Themes About Literature** as follows :

“ character in literature is the author’s creation, through the medium of words, of personality who takes on actions, thoughts, expressions, and attitudes unique and appropriate to that personality and consistent to it. Character might be thought of as reasonable facimile of human being, with all the qualities and vagaries of human being “ ( 1969 : 20 ).

Harry Shaw in **Dictionary of Literary Terms** says that :

“ character has several meanings, the most common of which is “ the aggregate of traits and features that form the nature of some person or animal. Character also refers to moral qualities and ethical standarts and principles. In literature, character has several other specific meaning, notably that a person represented in a story, novel, play etc” ( 1972 : 70 ).

Based on the above definitions, character means mental or moral qualities that from the individual nature of some person who is presented in literary work in which is interpreted by the readers through his dialogue and action.

Moreover, **The Lexicon Webster Dictionary** states that the meaning of the word “main” as “ an adjective is the same as the word chief of which meaning is the most important” ( 1977 : 575 ). By combining the above statement the meaning of the main character is referred to the most important and essential person potray in literary work with moral and dispositional qualities. Thus, the main character



is not meant to be the 'first', but it would rather be the 'chief' for the most function of character.

### 3.2 The Meaning of Ambition

Ambition has several meanings. In *American Heritage Dictionary of English Language*, *ambition* is explained as :

1. an eager or strong desire to achieve something, such as fame or fortune;
2. will to succeed.

( 1971 : 41 )

*The New Grolier Webster International Dictionary of the English Language*, the meaning of *ambitions* as :

1. an eager and sometime inordinate desire for honor, power, fame or whatever confers distinction;
2. aspiration toward an object;
3. desire to distinguish oneself among others;
4. determination to progress in one's business or other career.

*The Webster's Third International Dictionary* states that ambition :

1. an ardent desire for rank, fame, or power;
2. the will or desire to succeed or achieve a particular goal or end

( 1966 : 66 )

Another meaning of *ambition* in *Webster Third New International Dictionary of English Language* is " an ardent desire for rank, fame or power; the will or desire to succeed or achieve a particular goal or end; a desire to activity or exertion "( 1966 : 32 ).



Meanwhile, *The random House Dictionary of the English language* remarks that **ambition** is “ an earnest desire for some type of achievement or distinction, as power, fame, wealth, etc “ (1968:42 ).

From the above definitions **ambition** means a very enthusiastic desire to reach a certain goal or distinction such as honor, power, fame, wealth, progression in business or other career, etc.

### 3.3 The Meaning of Conflict

Conflict in literature becomes the important element. It builds the taste of story by exploiting any disagreements, uncomformity, of disharmony in the story flow before arriving at resolution. The existence of conflict in literature is necessary because literature itself tells about conflict which is experienced by the characters. The function of the conflict is to produce suspence which grows from the beginning and attains its highest point in the climax ( Jones, 1968 :30)

In *American College Dictionary*, it is stated that **conflict** is :

“.....defined as to come into collision or opposition clash, battle or struggle, controversy, discord or antagonism. “

( 1914 : 94 )

*Webster's New Colligate Dictionary* states that **conflict** is :

1. a. competitive or opposing action of incompatible antagonistic fate or action ( as of different ideas or person );  
b. mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes or external or internal demands;
2. Collision.



( 1981 : 235 )

Vander Zanden in ***Social Psychology*** states that :

“ Conflict is a form of interaction in which people ( individually or in groups ) perceive themselves as being involved in a struggle over resources or social values. People in conflict find themselves at odds; they feel separated by incompatible objectives. They see one another as competitors or threats, and thus their interaction is antagonistic. Rather than fitting their lines of action together to realize common ends, people contend against one another; their actions and counteractions are opposed.

( 1984 : 314 )

In ***Dictionary of Literary Terms***, conflict is defined as the opposition of person or forces upon which the action depends in drama and fiction ( Shaw, 1972 : 90-91).

The definitions above explain that conflict is resulting from opposing needs which makes people have less assurance. Their action are influenced by the situation surrounding them. Their action reflects their disagreement with people and situation which sometimes leads them to be better or worse.

Jones in ***Outlines of Literature*** divides conflict into three types. They are :

1. physical or elemental conflict;
2. social conflict and;
3. internal or psychological conflict.

Physical or elemental conflict usually happens when the man is in conflict with nature. In social conflict, that happening is dealing with person who struggles to one another. Meanwhile, internal or psychological conflict happens when the struggle is inside the man himself.

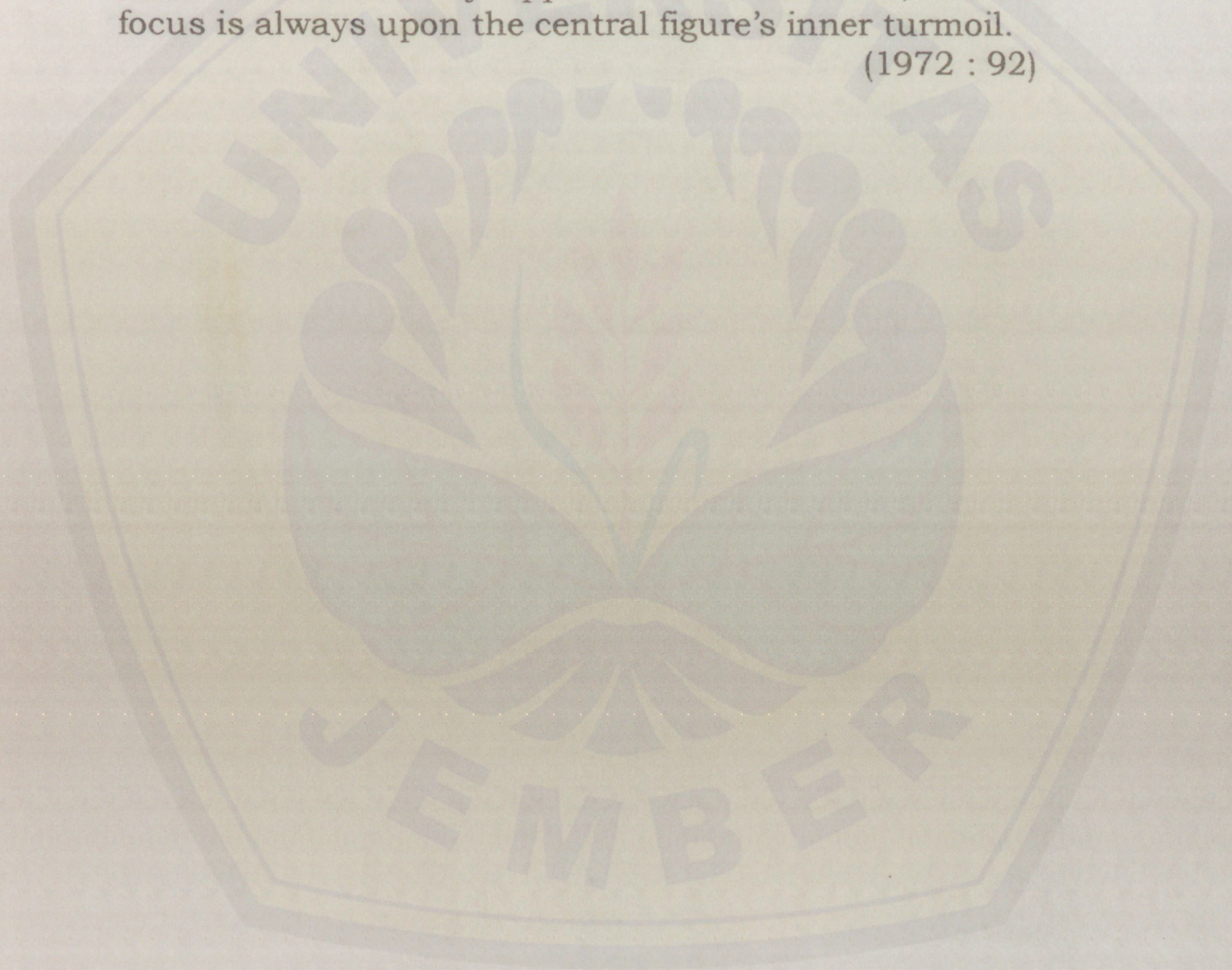
( 1968 : 30-31 )



Moreover, Shaw in *Dictionary of Literary Terms* also divides conflict into three types. They are :

one type of conflict is *elemental*, or *physical* : a struggle between man and the physical world. It represents man versus forces of nature. Another type of conflict is *social*: a struggle between man and man. A third kind of conflict is *internal*, or *psychological*: a struggle between desires within a person. External forces may be important and other characters may appear in the narrative, but the focus is always upon the central figure's inner turmoil.

(1972 : 92)





## CHAPTER IV

### THE MAIN CHARACTER'S AMBITIONS LEADING TO HIS CONFLICTS

#### 4.1 The Main Character's Ambitions

To achieve a successful future, everyone must have great attempts in his life which is full of challenges and competitions. Of course, one who has perfect and high quality, will have possibilities to gain his goals. In this case, an ambitious person will try using every available strategies to make his goals come true, because for him, power, influence and reputation are something absolute to reach for.

Karsten Bernick, the main character of the play, is also described as an ambitious man who has strong desire to be a reputable and successful man in the community. He tries every possible ways to realize his interests although sacrificing the others. He just thinks of himself without regard to the lives of other people around him.

This sub-chapter explains clearly about the main character's ambitions. In this discussion the main character's ambitions are divided into two kinds. They are the main character's ambition to get profit in business and the main character's ambition to sustain his reputation.

##### 4.1.1 The Main character's Ambition to Get Profit in Business

Everyone who works in a business institution always struggles very hard to get profit. There is not any businessman who does not care of getting money. An ambitious manager, for instance, will



succeed in making his firm bonafide, if he can increase the income of the firm. He will use every possible ways to reach his ambition comes true, because in a business competition there are only two choices, they are a financial loss or profits.

Karsten Bernick, who comes from a well-to-do family is an ambitious businessman. As the leader and owner of the large shipyard company which becomes the source of the most of the townspeople's income, he struggles very hard to reach his ambition to get profit. Consequently, his life is absorbed in his business enterprise.

Bernick : Oh my dear betty, you wouldn't have been able to grasp the real nature of business. Besides, I haven't spoken about it to a living person till today. But, now the decisive moment's come, we must; work openly and with all our strength. Yes, even if I have to risk everything I have, I'll put this business through.

( Act I : 44 ).

Bernick's statement above points out that he is an ambitious businessman who will do everything to achieve his goals. He has a high sense of business, thus he does not want the others even his wife to damage his interest.

The position of Bernick in the community as the head of the big firm makes him money- minded that everything he does is for the sake of getting profit. The following quotation gives an evidence about this statement:

Lona Hessel : To no profit you say ? Ah well; you're a businessman, of course you should understand what is to your profit.

( Act III : 96 )



Developing his business , he changes his policy about allowing a railroad project to build an extension of railway lines through the district of the community. Formerly, the proposed project will be competed with his shipping company. He realizes that a spurline through the town will transport ores and minerals to his shipyard. The railroad will be a good thing for Karsten Bernick, because it is expected to give great profit to him.

Bernick : The main point was that it would have done no good for community as a whole. Therefore, I opposed it and so the inland route was adopted.

Hilmar Tonnesen : Yes but that isn't going to touch the towns around here.

Bernick : It's going to touch our town, my dear Hilmar. Because we're going to run a branch line down here.

Hilmar Tonnesen : Aha ! Quite a new idea, then-

Bernick : Yes, I must confess that I too consider I was specially guided. I mad journey Up there on business this spring, and so by charce come into, valley where I'd never bean before. It struck me like a flash of lightining that this was the place to lay a branch-line to town.

( Act I : 43 )

If he succeeds in building a spurline in his account, he will be a millionaire. If he does not succeed in realizing that project, he will be bankrupt.

Bernick : It is I who have bought it all.

Lona Hessel : you ?

Johan Tonnesen : On your account ?

Bernick : On my account. If the branch lines goes through, I am a millionaire; if doesn't I'm ruined.

( Act III : 96 )



The quotation above shows that Bernick has strong desire to be a millionaire by building the branch of the railway. Herman J. Weigand In **The Modern Ibsen** explains the situation of business at that time is merely service and profit as their motto. The projected railway is a case of point. When the project of sea coast railway lines threatens the existence of shipyard companies, the owners of them fight against it, because it does not give profit to them, but their interests to exploits the natural resources of a hinterland make them change their policy about allowing sea coast railway lines to build an extension of railway lines to transport ores and timbers to the shipyard (1960 : 6 ).

The branch of railway through the town is useful for Karsten Bernick to reach an industrial development which will be a great income for him.

Bernick : I should think we do ! What a lift it will give to our whole community ! Just think of the huge tructs of forest it will be open up; think of all the rich deposits of ore that can be worked; think of the river, with one waterfall above another! The possibilities for industrial development there !

( Act I : 43 )

From the statement above it can concluded that to reach his ambition to get profit in his business, Bernick exploits ores and minerals. He will be able to make the industrial development if he succeeds in exploiting the natural resources in the town which will be transported to his shipyard. Moreover, **Weigand** gives us an explanation about cooperation among the shipping industry and the railway project in exploiting the natural resources.



“ The Shipping industry and the press have established contacts with the world of western civilization. The town itself has begun to take on modern character; the municipal water and gas plants, the park and the school, are fruits of industrial progress. And now the projected railway is on point of altering even more radically the life of the town.” ( 1960 : 5 )

The description above shows that there is a close relationship between the shipping industry and the railway project, because railway lines will be a great solution to transport the natural resources to the shipyard.

Karsten Bernick fundamentally has a commitment that his position in society, who is influenced by power and reputation becomes a legitimacy to reach his ambition by building a branch of railway.

Bernick : Yes, that's the crux. With the unsullied name I have borne up till now, I can take the whole of transaction on myself, carry it through and say to my fellow citizens, ' see I have risked this for the good of the community'.

( Act III : 96-97 )

It is clear that Bernick wants profit that he can get with his honorable reputation in the community. It is possible for him to buy a hinterland in the town where the railway will be built.



#### 4.1.2 The Main Character's Ambition to Sustain His Reputation.

One always struggles to get good reputation in the social field , because he absolutely wishes to be respected by other people, moreover if he is a leader and comes from a well-to-do family. To sustain his name and reputation, a leader must have an ability to keep his behavior in the society, because it is clear that one's reputation likewise depends upon both his personality and public opinion. It also happens to the main character of the play, Karsten Bernick. He has a big ambition of being a reputable man in the society. To realize that, he tries every possible ways to get good name and reputation.

Reputation as the synonym of good name or good position is an important thing to be cared for. **The Random House Dictionary of English Language** explains that reputation is the estimation in which person or thing generally held, the second one, reputation is the estimation or name of having, being done, something specified ( 1968 : 1121 ). However, in determining one's reputation people are much influenced by the environment where they live. One will get reputation, for instance, from others if he does something admirable. Even one can sometimes gain reputation by means of social status, wealth, attitudes towards others, and so forth.

Before going to discuss about the main character's ambition to preserve his reputation in society, it is necessary to know the background of Karsten Bernick 's life. It will give us information what makes him have big ambitions to sustain his reputation. During his childhood and youth he was given the best training that his community afforded. He grew to be a handsome young man, and



everyone admired him, not only for his own sake but also for his promise. The following quotation gives us a proof :

Mrs. Holt : Just think of her believing a thing like that !  
Bernick, a man of the world, young and charming, an exquisite gentleman- all the woman adoring him.

( Act I : 33 )

It is also well-known that Karsten Bernick comes from a rich and a well-to-do family. His mother is a widow who becomes the head of a big firm. The house of Bernicks attributes his high reputation as the rich and prestigious man.

Mrs. Rummel ( *with a glance to Rorlund*): I ? I really can't remember Mrs. Lyng. But I well remember all the gay social life that went on here.

Mrs. Holt : Yes, I actually know houses where they had two large dinner-parties a week.

( Act I : 33 ).

The above dialogue gives an impression that the Bernick is able to hold big parties once a week. It indicates that Karsten Bernick's family is very rich. Lyson in **Individu dan Masyarakat** says that a reputable man is one who has the character and talent which are different from those who belong to the others ( 1967 : 83 ). As a rich and gentleman, Bernick is in high reputation that is respected by the townspeople . After the death of his mother, Bernick becomes the only head of the big firm, with power, influence and good reputation. He works very hard to gain his ambition of being a reputable man in the community.

Bernick : In fifteen years, day by day, I have purchased some small right-by the conduct, of my life and by what I have worked for and achieved.



Miss Hessel : Yes, you have worked and achieved a great deal, both for yourself and for others. You are the richest man in the town. The daren't do anything but bow to your will. Any of them, because you pass for a man without a spot or flow. Your home passes for a model home, your life for model life.

( Act II : 81 )

Karsten Bernick's good reputation as a rich and respectable man makes him have strong ambitions to sustain his reputation in the community constantly. He struggles very hard to preserve his reputation because his bustle of being the leader of the company and as one of the pillars of the society. When his mother's firm goes bankrupt, he is fetched back from Paris in a hurry after finding that the business is practically in ruin. He is very distressed, so he attempts individually to save his mother's firm from bankruptcy because his family's reputation is threatened when his mother's firm is in serious trouble.

Bernick : Let me explain, coolly and quitely, what the position was as the moment. My mother, as you remember, was the head of the firm. But she had absolutely no business sense. I was fetched back from Paris in a hurry. The time were critical. I was expected to pull things straight. What did I find. I found-what had to be kept absolutely secret- a business practically ruined. Yes practically ruined, that old, respected house, that had stood for three generations. What I could I do, the son, the only son but look about me for some way of saving it ?

( act II : 78 )

His big ambition to sustain his reputation makes him use every possible ways to save it. He abandons Lona Hessel, his first lover who



really loves him, because she is a poor woman and marries Betty , a rich woman for her money only. He does not care about Lona's feeling and condition. The following dialogue gives an evidence about this statement :

Miss Hessel : Maybe, but then when Betty came home, blooming and lovely and worshipped by everybody, and when it become known that she'd get all Aunt's money and I shouldn't get anything-

Bernick : Now, there have it , Lona. And now you shall hear the plain truth. I didn't love betty at that time. I didn't break with you because of any attachment. It was simply for the sake of the money. I was driven to it. I had to make sure of the money.

( Act II : 78 )

Bernick also sustains his reputation by sacrificing, his brother-in-law, Johan Tonnesen. He spreads rumor that before going to America, Johan steals the money from his mother's firm, so that his mother's firm practically ruined. In fact, there is no money that is stolen by Johan Tonnesen. Because of this rumor the public justifies that obviously Johan does what Karsten Bernick said. The quotation below makes evidence that Bernick spreads rumor to the community.

Mrs. Lynge : And that was why he ran away to America ?

Mrs. Holt : Well, you can quite see that he had to.

Mrs Rummel : Because afterwards something came to light that was nearly as bad. Just fancy, he had made free with the firm's money.

Mrs Holt : But we don't know that for certain, Mrs. Rummel; it may have been only a rumor.



Mrs Rummel : Well now, I must say-! Wasn't it known all over the town? Didn't old Mrs. Bernick really go bankrupt just because of that? I have it from my husband himself. But far be it from me to.

( Act I : 36 )

Karsten Bernick saves his reputation at the expense of Johan's good name. He not only spreads rumor that Johan steals the money from his mother's firm, but also spreads gossip that Johan does a scandal with Madame Dorf, a beautiful wife of an actor of theatre company when her husband is occasionally away. Karsten Bernick, as the real doer of the scandal at Madame Dorf's house, pretends that he is innocent. The following dialogue proves the rumor that is spread by Karsten Bernick to the public.

Mrs. Rummel : Yes, that's just what I'm saying; he found the door locked. And, just imagine, the man who was inside had to jump out of the window.

Mrs Holt : From right up in the attic !

Mrs Lynge : And it was Mrs Bernick's brother !

( Act I : 36 )

It can be concluded that preserving his reputation, Karsten Bernick does hypocrisy to the public by spreading shameful rumors. He is willing to sacrifice Johan Tonnesen's life, in order to sustain his own reputation as a leader in the community. It means that to realize his strong ambition he uses notorious or villainous means which are contrary to the courage, honesty and faith in life. He does not want to lose his high position and reputation, so that his unremitting refusal to tell the truth is presented. If the truth comes to light, his reputation will be destroyed. Of course, he will lose what he has struggled for a long time to create happiness.



Johan Tonnesen : But I don't know these many 'people' and my life's happiness is at stake.

Bernick : The welfare of the place where you were born is also at stake. If anything comes out which casts a shadow on my former conduct, then all my opponents will join forces and fall upon me. A youth full indiscretion is never wiped out in our community. People will go over the whole of my subsequent life, bring up a thousand little incidents, read and interpret them in the light of what has been discovered; they will crush me under a load of rumors and slanders. I shall have to withdraw from the railway affair. If I take my hand off it, it will go to pieces. And there I lose, at one stroke, my fortune and my standing as a citizen.

( Act II : 98 )

The quotation above describes that Bernick cannot accept his own reality. He is afraid that his subsequent life will damage his good reputation in the community. The condition of Karsten Bernick is called *depressive neurosis*. In depressive neurosis, the person distorts reality in degrees rather than in kind such an individual reacts to a loss or threatened loss with greater sadness and for a long time than most people would- a vigil of eternal mourning ( Zimbardo and Ruch, 1977 : 435 )

The other ambitious efforts of sustaining his reputation is described when Bernick forces Aune, a foreman in his shipyard to finish the reparation of the American ' *Indian Girl*' ship immediately in order to reject the negative image from his customer service. If Bernick succeeds in getting ready to launch the ship in due time, his reputation as a reputable leader of the large shipyard will be preserved.



Bernick : Yes hear me; the day after tomorrow. At the same time as our own boat. Not an hour later. I have my own good reason for pressing the matter. Have you read the morning' paper ? Well, then you know that Americans have been making trouble again. This rowdy gang is upsetting the whole town; not against goes without fighting in the public houses and in the streets, Their abominable behavior in other ways I won't talk about.

Aune : Yes, it's true enough; they're bad lot.

Bernick : And who gets the blame for this nuisance ? I ! I do ! Yes, it all falls on me. The newspaper men are blaming us in their indirect way for using all our resources on the 'Palm Tree'. And I, whose purpose in life is to influence my fellow-citizens by my example, I have to let things like that be cast in my teeth. I can't stand it. I can't have my name besmirched like that.

( Act II : 56 )

From the statement above it is well understood that Bernick does not want to lose his good name, so that he presses Aune to finish the repair of 'Indian Girl' ship. He actually does not hope that newspaper justifies that he cannot repair the ship and automatically his good reputation is broken down.

Bernick admires deeply about a position which is attributed with good reputation that makes him easy to gain his goal in the community and fundamentally influences his personality in front of the public. The following statement supports this explanation :

Bernick : Now comes something that can be interpreted in different ways; a thing that, in our community, a man can only attempt if he can rely upon a spotless and honorable name.

( Act II : 96 )



His strong ambition to sustain his reputation causes him to undergo psychological conflict. **Jones** states that psychological conflict is a conflict that happens when the struggle is inside the man himself ( 1968 : 31 ). As it is noticed before that in preserving his good name he uses bad ways by sacrificing the other's reputation. In this respect, Karsten Bernick consequently faces the dilemma whether he ought to confess that he has told the untrue gossips or whether he should refuse admitting them. If he is willing to admit his crime, he will abandon his family's happiness and his position. On the other hand, Johan wants him to clean his reputation. This matter is the source of Bernick's doubt about his decision between sincerity and hypocrisy.

Bernick : Have you considered that, if I admit the one thing, it will mean admitting the other too ? You will say that I can prove, from our books, that there was dishonesty ? But I can't, our books were not kept very accurately at that time. And even if I could,, what would be gained by it ? Shouldn't I,, In any case, be exposed as the man who had once save himself by an untruth, and who, for fifteen years, had let that untruth and all that followed established itself without lifting a finger to stop it ? You don't know our society any longer, or you'd know that this would smash me to pieces.

( Act III : 95 )

The quotation above elaborates that Karsten Bernick gets inner conflict. He extremely has to confess his lies for fifteen years to the public honestly, but if he admits them , directly his honor will be in ruin. He anxiously feels ambivalent about what he has to do. This psychological conflict is called *approach- avoidance conflict*.



**Moskowits** in **General Psychology** explains that an individual in confronted with a situation that is both oversive and attractive; approach and avoidance response tendencies are simultaneously evoked ( 1969 : 316 ). It also happens to Karsten Bernick, the main character of the play, who is confused to choose a sincerity or hypocrisy.

Actually, Johan's homecoming causes his position to be threatened, whereas he needs perfect goodwill from the town and the press. His position will be completely damaged if the truth turns out to be clear. Of course, he will lose what he has struggled for a long time to realize his big ambitions. His incapability of handling his inner conflict causes him a fearful out-look on his reality. The following quotation which presents his statement to Johan Tonnesen gives an evidence objectively that Karsten Bernick is worried to be looked down by society that he is a dishonest man.

Bernick : Don't let's have any more of these reminiscences, I tell you. You don't know how you're tormenting me, raking up all this. ( *He paces up and down the room and then flings his stick away* ). That they should come home just now-now, When I need perfect goodwill both from the town and the press ! There will be letters to the newspapers all over the district. Whether I'm friendly to them or unfriendly, there will be gossips and insinuations. They'll rake up all this ancient history- just as you do in a community like ours ( *throwing his gloves on the table* ). And not a single person here I can talk to, or get any support from.

( Act II : 53 )

Moreover, what Bernick did at the past time is hypocrisy. He actually has to admit it in front of the public to deny shame and lies



in his life. His awareness infiltrates to his commitment to regain consciousness that he sacrifices Johan Tonnesen's life and reputation to get the great image from the townspeople.

Bernick : Don't you think I feel the injury I have done him deeply enough ? And don't you think I am prepared to make it good again ?

( Act III : 93 )

Bernick's statement above discloses that there is inner conflict in his mind because of his vices in sustaining his reputation by spreading shameful rumor to the community.

#### 4.2 The Main Character's Conflict

A man often undergoes conflict in his everyday life. It happens because of the opposing interest to achieve certain goals. The differences of tendencies usually the source of conflict. **Edward** states that the sources of conflict are as rich as the variety of motive- goal relationship of responses that can be in opposition. From the simple clash between responses to the same stimulus to the pattern of major decision in the course of one life, conflicts are likely to be part of daily behavior ( 1968 : 345 )

In **The Pillars of The Community**, Ibsen shows how strong the main character's ambitions are, and it leads to the conflict with others. The main character's conflicts happen because he does not regard the other's feeling in achieving his big ambition of being a successful and reputable businessman in the community.

This second sub-chapter explains the main character's conflict that is embodied into three parts. They are the main character's ambition leading to his conflicts with Aune, a foreman in his shipyard



and Johan Tonnesen, his brother-in-law and also his colleagues in business, Mr. Rummel, Mr. Videland, Mr. Standsad.

#### 4.2.1 His Conflict with Aune

Karsten Bernick is the unquestioned leader with his wealth and influence extending into every enterprise. As the leader and owner of the large shipyard company, he wants to introduce new machines to build an industrial technology. He wants his workers to use it in repairing ships at his shipyard. His conflict with Aune is caused by this policy.

Aune, an old foreman and the head of workers' association, that works for Bernick's sake does not agree to his concept. He is stirring up the workmen, because new machines mean the loss of jobs for those who do not have skills in using it. Bernick who is not wishing to have his authority questioned, threatens Aune with the loss of his job if he does not stop arguing against the machines. Aune looks at Bernick's idea to develop an industrial machinery from the opposite point of view, so that he still believes that the movement from manual into mechanized labor means the destruction of manual labor's lives. Opposing to the machines, he argues that it cannot be introduced until hand labors have been educated to use them.

Krap : Introduced me to tell you this ; you must stop these talks to the workmen on Saturdays

Aune : Must I ? I thought I could use my free time

Krap : You can't use your free time to make the men useless in work-time. Last Saturday you were talking about the harm and methods in the shipyard. Why do you do that ?

Aune : I do it in the interest of the community.

Krap : That's odd ! the chief says its disrupting the community.



Aune : My community is not the master's, Mr. Krap, as a head of the workers association I must.

Krap : You are first and foremost the head of Mr. Bernick's Shipyard. First and foremost comes your duty to the community known as Bernick and co. For that's where we all get our living well, now you know what the chief had to say to you.

( act I : 26 )

The dialogues above show the opposite opinion between Karsten Bernick who wants to introduce machines to the shipyard and Aune who believes that his disagreement to Bernick's policy is for the good of the community and also thinks that new machines cannot be introduced until the workers have skills to use them. This opposition makes a conflict between Aune that representing labor and Bernick as a capital.

Karsten Bernick 's ambition of being a reputable and successful businessman makes his conflict with Aune continue. When the owner of the 'Indian Girl' ship forces him to get her ready to sail immediately, he faces dilemma whether he ought to launch the ship in due time or not. Because of the repair of the 'Indian Girl' is too late, he pressures Aune to finish it as fast as possible. Bernick also judges that Aune and other workmen's incapability in using new machines , is the real cause the repair of the ship is too late. It is proved in the following quotation :

Bernick : At last ! But the American, the '*Indian Girl*' ; She's been lying here five weeks and.

Aune : The American ? I understood that we were to make every efforts to finish your own boat first.

Bernick : I have given you no reason to think that. You should have got as fast possible with the American, too. But you haven't.



Aune : The hull of the vessel's absolutely rotten, sir; the more we patch it the worse it gets.

Bernick : That not the real source of the trouble. Krap has told me that the whole truth. You don't understand how to work with the new machines I've installed- or rather, you won't work with them.

( Act II : 25 )

According to Aune, Bernick's policy to use new machines is not adaptable for workmen who do not have experiences to use it. Aune fights against industrial machieneries because it causes the manual labors lose their job ironically. Aune does not want to see one good workman losing his job because of the new machines. As a labor, he struggles very hard to gain his prosperity, safety and freedom against a capital. **Jorgensen** states that every machines that drives out workers who cannot be re-employed is the direct cause of tragedy. The labor has come; the struggle for the right of the producers has begun. Aune himself will use all the means at hand to guard his own position and the security of his fellow workers ( 1963 : 319 ).

Aune : Yes, I certainly am afraid, Mr Bernick; I am afraid for all the people the machines rob or their bread. You often speak, sir, of considering the community, but I think the community has its duties, too. How are science and capital set these new inventions to work before the community has educated that cab use them

Bernick : You read and think too much, Aune. You get no good profit. Its that makes you discontented with your position.

Aune : It isn't that, sir. But I can't bear to see one good workman arter another discharged losing his livelihood because this machines.

( Act II : 55-56 )



The quotation above becomes a description that there is a hostility between Karsten Bernick and Aune. Bernick wants Aune not to confront his policy in introducing new machines although the job of the workers is threatened. On the other hand, Aune wants Bernick to pay much attention to their fate by giving training before the new machines are introduced. Bernick as a person who has a big investment in the town does not care of the effects of the industrial machinery to manual workers. His big ambitions of being respected close his eyes and heart to the other people who live around him. He consistently uses human beings merely as tools as to gain his ambitions. In addition, he threatens to discharge Aune from his job if he does not follow his business' policy. The quotation below gives an obvious evidence about this statement:

Bernick : Quite possibly, so we won't do that. But if the Indian Girl isn't cleared the day after tomorrow, I shall discharge you.

Aune ( *with a start* ) : Me ? ( *laughing* ) Now you're joking, sir.

Bernick : You had better not rely on that.

Aune : You couldn't think of discharging me ? Me whose father and grandfather worked at the shipyard all their lives and I myself, too.

Bernick : Who's forcing me to it ?

Aune : You're asking impossibilities, sir.

Bernick : Oh ? 'Where there is a will there is a way'. Yes or no; answer me definitely, or you are discharged on the spot.

Aune ( *a step nearer* ). : Have you really thought sir, what means, to discharge an old workman ? You expect him to look for another job ? Well., of course, he can do that; but is that all there is to it ? You ought to be in the home of workman discharged like that, the evening he comes back and puts down his tool-chest.

( Act II : 57-58 )



Aune wants Bernick to see the real life of an old man like him, with a purpose to change Bernick's willingness to discharge him. As an old worker who has worked for a long time in the shipyard manually, Aune has subjective experiences as the base of his revolt to fight against Bernick's policy to build an industrial machinery. **Herbert** says that everyone who works towards a notion of other person by analogy, with themselves, they assume a comparability of subjective experience ( 1986 : 104 ).

Saying honestly his condition in daily life as a poor man, he does not hope to lose his job, but Karsten Bernick is still in his decision to discharge Aune if he cannot finish the repair of The Indian Girl ship immediately. The opposition between Bernick and Aune leads to the unfinished debate.

Bernick : well, if nothing else can be done, the lesser must give way to the greater; when all is said, the individual must be sacrificed to the majority. That the only answer I can give you, and that's the way things work in this world. But you are stiff-necked man, Aune ! You are opposing me, not because you don't want to prove the superiority of machines over hand - work.

Aune : And you're insisting on this, sir, because you know that if you turn me off you'll at least show the press your good intentions

Bernick : Well, What if I am ? you hear what it involves for me- on the one hand to have the whole press attacking me, and on the other to get it well- disposed towards me at the moment when I'm working for a great cause and the public benefit.

( Act II : 58 )



From the quotation above it can be concluded that Karsten Bernick is an ambitious man who has a strong desire to be a reputable and successful businessman in the community. He always proclaims his reasons to Aune to keep his argument without regard to Aune's wise argumentations. Unfortunately, his ambition leads to the conflict with Aune, an old poor worker who works for his business enterprise. Finally, Aune must sacrifice his interest to get his freedom in working in the shipyard and to care for the poor in the community. There is not any choice for him but has to do what Karsten Bernick has said, because as an old and poor worker he does not have any strong bargaining position and influence to balance Bernick's position.

Aune : then tomorrow I should have lost the position I hold in my home with the people who belong to me- lost my influence among the workmen- lost all chance of doing good among the poor and lowly in the community.

Bernick: Aune we're settled that point.

Aune : Yes, then The Indian Girl must sail. ( *short silence* )

Bernick: Listen to me, I can't have my eye on everything- can't be answerable for everything. You are prepared to assure me that the repairs are satisfactory carried out.

Aune : You give me very short time, sir

Bernick : But the repairs are all right, you say ?

Aune : The weather is good, and it is summer ( *Another silence* ).

Bernick : Have you anything more to say to me.

Aune : I don't know anything, sir.

Bernick : well, then- The Indian Girl sails.

Aune : Tomorrow ?.

Bernick : Yes.

Aune : Very good. ( He bows and goes out ).

( Act III : 100-101 )



The dialogue above discloses that Aune shall get the Indian Girl ship ready to sail. Being forced, finally he obeys Karsten Bernick's command to finish the repair of it immediately. If he does not finish repairing the ship, he will lose his position as a foreman in the shipyard.

#### **4.2.2 His Conflict With Johan Tonnesen**

Karsten Bernick's ambition to be a respectable man in the community also leads to his conflict with Johan Tonnesen, his brother-in-law. As it is explained before that Bernick preserves his reputation by sacrificing Johan's good name and reputation. He destroys Johan's good reputation by spreading gossips that Johan does a wicked thing with Madame Dorf when her husband is away. He also whispers a rumor that Johan steals the money that causes his mother's company go bankrupt. In fact, Johan Tonnesen extremely never does whatever Bernick has said.

A conflict between Johan Tonnesen and Karsten Bernick arises when Johan falls in love romantically with Dina Dorf, the only young beautiful daughter of Madame Dorf and he wants to marry her, he asks Bernick to clean his name and reputation publicly. On the other hand Bernick persists in rejecting public confession to clean vividly Johan's reputation because he does not want to lose his influential existence in the community.

Johan Tonnesen :Bernick : No need . I can grasp the situation quite, all right. The business was in tight place and so, as I was away, and you had my unprotected name and reputation in your hand. well I don't blame you overmuch; we were young and irresponsible in those days. But I need the truth and now you must speak.



Bernick : And just now I need my moral credit and so I cannot speak

Johan Tonnesen : I don't mind much about the fictions you have set going about me; it is the other thing you must take the blame for. Dina shall be my wife, and here, here in this town, I mean to live and build up a life with her.

( Act III: 94 )

The above quotation proves that Johan absolutely needs a good name and reputation before marrying Dina Dorf. In this case, he wants Bernick to give honest clarification in front of the public that he is really innocent, but as an ambitious man, Karsten Bernick who needs good quality in his efforts to develop community, refuses Johan's request flatly. Bernick has an absolute commitment that if he tells the truth, his position will break down. On the other hand, Johan Tonnesen fights against Bernick's decision to defend his position as a respectable leader in society. Besides that, Johan also thinks that allowing Bernick lies, means the destruction of his future to live happily with Dina Dorf.

Bernick : Have you considered that, if I admit the one thing, it will mean admitting the other too ? You will say that I can prove, from our books, that there was dishonesty ? But I can't, our books were not kept very accurately at that time. And even if I could, what would be gained by it ? Shouldn't I, in any case, be exposed as the man who had once saved himself by an untruth, and who, for fifteen years, had let that untruth and all that followed established itself without lifting a finger to stop it ? You don't know our society any longer, or you'd know that this would smash me to pieces.



Johan Tonnesen : I can only say that I will take Mrs. Dorf's daughter as my wife and live with her here in this town

Bernick ( *Wiping the sweat off his forehead* ) : Listen to me, Johan-and you too Lona- it's no ordinary position I am just at the moment, I am so situated that if you strike this below you will ruin me, and not only me, but also a great and happy future for the community- which after all, is your childhood home.

Johan Tonnesen : And if I don't strike, I shall ruin my own future happiness.

( Act III : 95 )

The dialogues above elaborates that Karsten Bernick gives a persuasive argument to Johan in order to make Johan's motive cool down but it cannot, because Johan is still in his commitment to live happily with his dearest lover, Dina Dorf. Bernick persuasively hopes that Johan not to remember all the gossips and not to speak anything about Bernick's hypocrisy. He recommends Johan to go away to America again and keeps silent forever. If Johan does what he has achieved, Bernick will give him money. It is understood, because Bernick has big ambition of being a reputable leader of the large shipyard who succeeds in realizing an industrial machinery by building the branch of railway lines and introducing machines in his shipyard. Deciding against Bernick's argumentations, he refuses the money resolutely.

Bernick : The welfare of the place where you were born is also at stake. If everything comes out which casts shadow on my former conduct, then all my opponents will join forces and fall upon me. A youthful indiscretion is never wiped out in our community. People will go over the whole of my subsequent life, bring up a thousand little incidents, read and interpret



them in the light of what has been discovered; they will crush me under a loans of rumors and slanders. I shall have to withdraw from railway business affairs, if I take my hand off it, it will go to pieces. And there I lose, at once stroke, my fortune and my standing as a citizens.

Miss. Heesel : Johan after you have just heard, you must go away and say nothing.

Bernick : Yes, yes, Johan you must !.

Johan Tonnesen : Very well, I will go away and I will say nothing, but I shall come back and then I shall speak.

Bernick : Stay over there, Johan. Don't say nothing and I will gladly share with you.

Johan Tonnesen : Keep your money and give me back my name and reputation.

( Act III : 98 )

The quotation above shows that Johan Tonnesen's spirit to tell the whole truth is unchangeable, but Bernick who is afraid of losing his position as a prestigious man who is respected by townspeople uses every available ways to make his good reputation and established authority save.

Johan Tonnesen's interest to tell the truth causes Bernick in desperation. He is confused to face the reality which threatens his power and reputation. Thus, he struggles hard to preserve it . To refuse Johan's honest confession later, he will give an explanation to the public that Johan's clarification is just a revenge and attempt to get money out of Bernick's company. There are not any ways without accepting whatever Johan will say, to create an image that he is actually 'a clean man' and one of the pillars of the community who is attributed with good name and reputation. The following emotional



debate between them will give us an evidence of Bernick's desperation and his attempts against Johan Tonnesen's pressure.

Bernick : You're making me desperate ! But if you speak, I shall deny it all ! I shall say it's a put against me, revenge. That you are come over here to get money out of me !

Miss. Hessel : For shame, Bernick !

Bernick : I'm desperate, I tell you. And Its my life I,m fighting for, I shall deny it all, all

( Act III : 99 )

The quarrel between Bernick and Johan can be solved, because Johan threatens to publish Bernick's two letters which describe all of his guilt to Johan. Directly, it makes Bernick's position in danger. If the two letters are released to the townspeople, Bernick will lose his position in society.

Johan Tonnesen : I have your letter. I found them in my box among my other papers. I read them through this morning. They are plain enough.

Bernick : And you will make them public ?

Johan Tonnesen : If necessary.

Bernick : And in two month you will be here again ?

Johan Tonnesen : I hope so. The wind is good. In these weeks I shall be in NewYork.

( Act III : 99 )

The quotation above points out that Johan pressures Bernick to clean his name and reputation. On the other hand, Karsten Bernick feels afraid of Johan's compulsion. It is impossible for Bernick to refuse his lies because there are his two letters that will be published by Johan to public.



### 4.2.3 His Conflict With His Colleagues

The main character's conflict with his colleagues starts when Karsten Bernick proclaims honestly that all efforts that he did, are for his own sake and profit. His colleagues in business, Mr. Rummel, Mr. Standsad and Mr. Vigeland, as professional honest businessmen are resentful after they know the ulterior motives of Karsten Bernick in getting his own big profit. They feel to be betrayed by Karsten Bernick's conspiracy to manipulate them in sharing the profit. It causes them to have self-awareness that actually Bernick just thinks of himself without thinking about their investment in the railway affairs.

Bernick : I must begin by rejecting the eulogy with which, as it customary on these occasions, you Mr. Rorlund have overwhelmed me. I do not deserve it; for until today, I have not been disinterested man. Even if I have not always striven for a money, nevertheless, as I am well aware now, a craving for power, influence and reputation has been I've driving force behind most of my actions.

Mr. Rummel ( Half- aloud ) : What a devil- ?

Bernick : But what I do charge myself with is this that I have often been weak enough to descend to crooked practies because I knew and feared the tendency of our community to suspect dishonest motives behind everything a man understakes, And now I come to case in point.

Mr. Rummel ( Uneasily ) : Hm-hm !

( Act IV : 131 )

Mr. Rummel's response above shows that there is a conflict between them that is caused by Bernick strong ambitions. Mr. Rummel speaks angrily because in fact, all that they have done



together to develop the town by building a branch of a railway is actually just for Bernick's profit and interests. The quotation above also elaborates that Bernick is a dishonest businessman, who never cares of his colleagues.

Karsten Bernick's conflict with his colleagues continues, because Bernick's colleagues in business do not have agreement with him about a hinterland which was bought by Bernick with his own account.

Bernick : It is at the moment in my hands, naturally I have confided in my colleagues, Mr. Rummel, Mr. Vigeland, Mr Standsad and me agree to.

Mr. Rummel : That's not true ! proof ! proof !

Mr. Vigeland : we agreed to nothing !

Mr. Standsad: Well, now I really must say.

( Act IV : 132 )

The disagreement between Karsten Bernick and his colleagues makes them quarrel. His colleagues are obviously aware that they have been manipulated and sacrificed by Bernick. Thus, they are disappointed of Bernick's interests to get his own power, influence and reputation. The purchase of a hinterland in the town, fundamentally is for their interest not just for Bernick.

Bernick : That is quite right, we have not yet agreed on the matter I was about to mention. But I am quite sure these three gentlemen will endorse me, when I say that I come this evening to an agreement with myself that these properties shall be thrown open to general subscription whoever may take shares in them.

Mr. Rummel : ( *to Bernick in a low voice* ) What a vile piece of treachery !

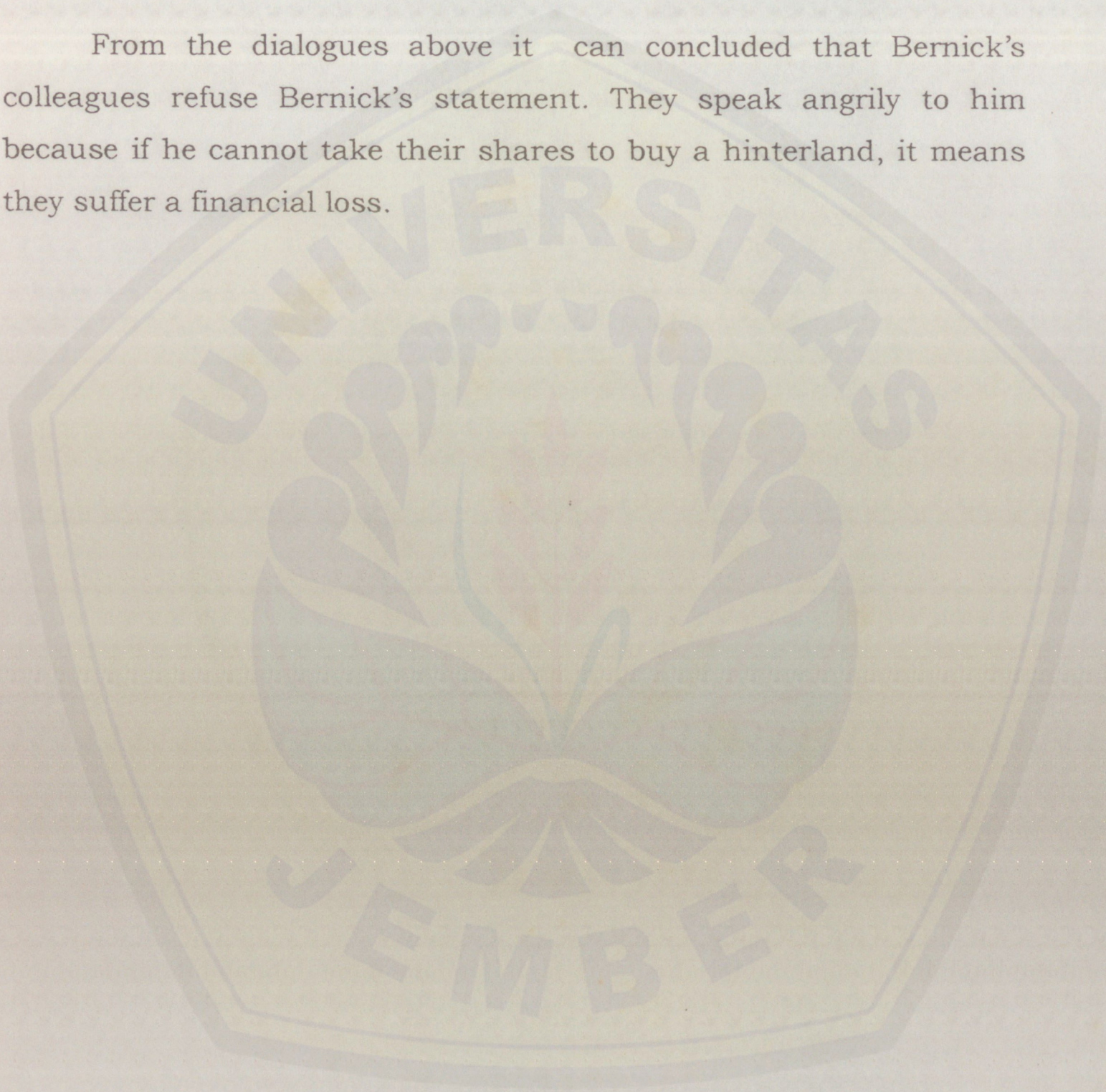
Mr. Standsad : ( *similarly* ) fold us them !



Mr. Vigeland : Now, I may the devil take-! Good heavens, what I'm saying.

( Act IV : 132 )

From the dialogues above it can be concluded that Bernick's colleagues refuse Bernick's statement. They speak angrily to him because if he cannot take their shares to buy a hinterland, it means they suffer a financial loss.





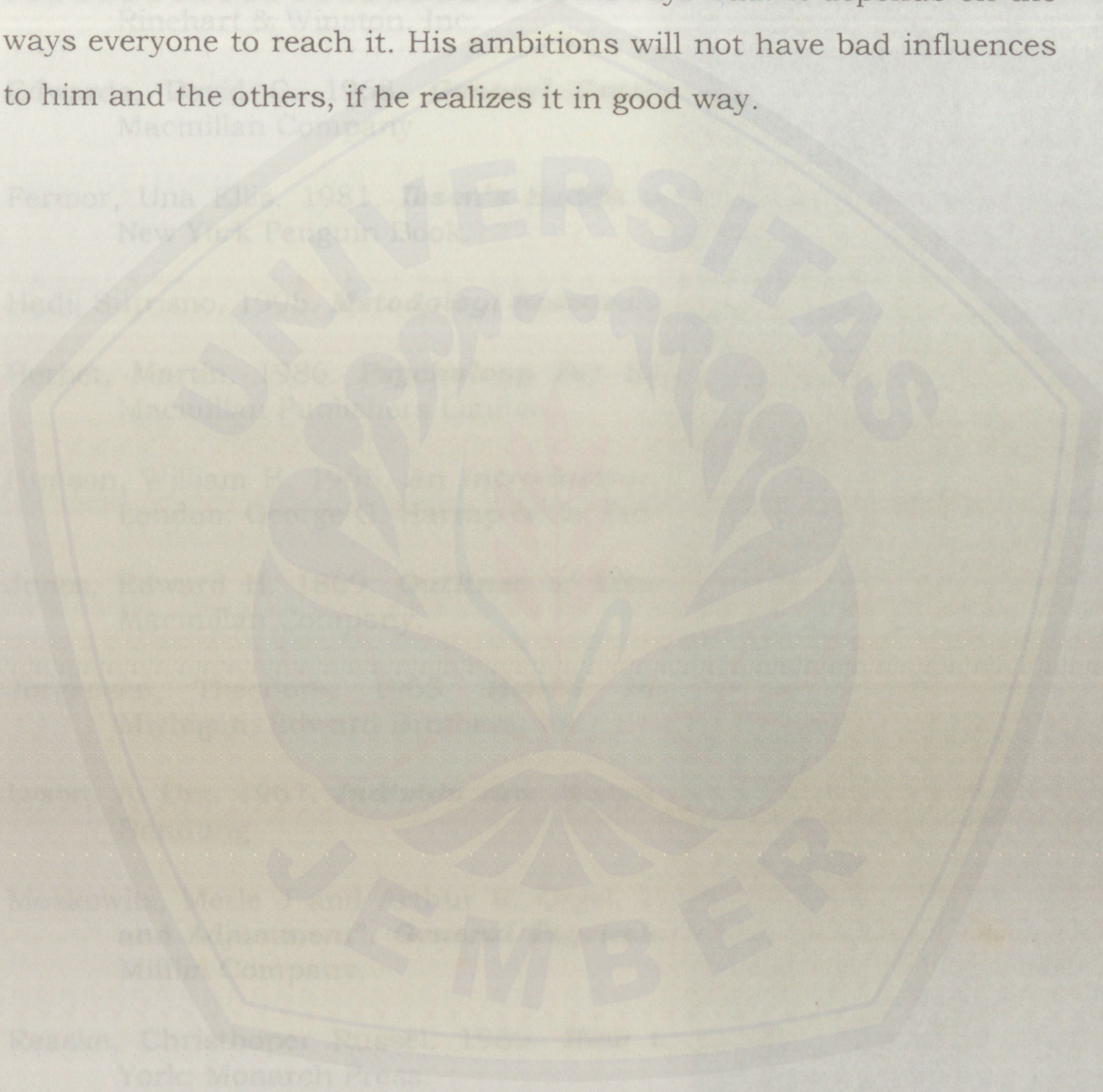
## CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

In **The Pillars Of The Community**, Henrik Ibsen discloses an ambitious man's attempts to achieve his goals. Karsten Bernick, the main character in this drama, is a man who has a strong and big desire to be a reputable and successful businessman. In this case, he tries to use every possible ways to gain his ambitions without regard to the others' feeling. To save his mother's firm from bankruptcy, he marries to Betty Tonnesen, a rich woman, only for her money and abandons his first love, Lona Hessel. He also sacrifices Johan Tonnesen's life to sustain his good name and reputation in the community. Moreover, to realize his desire to build an industrial machinery, he forces his manual workers to use new machines.

Consequently, his big ambitions cause the existence of conflicts with his brother-in-law, Johan Tonnesen and Aune, a foreman in his shipyard company and also with his colleagues in business. The policy changes from manual labor into mechanized labor is the cause of his conflict with Aune. Then, his conflict with Johan Tonnesen happens when Johan asks him to clean his good name and reputation, on the other hand, Bernick persists in rejecting Johan's request, because he is afraid of losing his high position in society. His conflict with his colleagues is caused by his lies. He says that the project of railway is for the sake of community, in fact, it is just for Bernick's own profit. Finally, his strong ambition to become a reputable man make him undergo inner conflict, because he faces the dilemma whether he ought to admit his lies or he should refuse to confess them.



Obviously, it is true, that Karsten Bernick's bad ways to reach his big and strong ambitions lead to the conflict with himself and the others, so that the moral teaching we can get from the discussion of this thesis is that an ambition is not always bad. It depends on the ways everyone to reach it. His ambitions will not have bad influences to him and the others, if he realizes it in good way.



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