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Use of Fantasy in *The Playboy of the Western World*:

A Critical Textual Analysis

By

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Letter of Approval

This thesis submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Tika Ram Paudyal titled “Use of Fantasy in *The Playboy of the Western World*: A critical Textual Analysis” has been approved by undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

J. M. Synge's drama, *The Playboy of the Western World* has been set in a small village of Ireland called Mayo. No special incidents occur among the people in there. They live a simple life but their simple lives run as per their dreams. That means they live in a dreamy world. All the characters in the play prefer the lives with fantasy to the lives with outer realities. They do not want the everyday realities because these realities for them are full of frustration and anxiety. All the characters in the drama are poor peasants and they are not well facilitated to live a happy life. Therefore, they have to live in a world full of anxieties. In order to forget the fearful and lonely nights, Pegeen Mike, the heroine of the drama, lives in the romantic world. She wishes to wed Shawn and he also wants to wed her. Similarly, Christopher Mahon, the hero of the play, flees away from his village after a patricide in the mercy of the people in the pub of Pegeen's father. Christy soon forgets the tension of killing his father immediately after he enters in the fantasy world of wealth as well as the world of romance. He lives in romantic fantasy when he gets chance to talk with the beautiful heroine of the drama about love, marriage and sexuality. He does not think of his dead father rather thinks only of his love with Pegeen. From that he gets full relaxation. Thus, fantasy is the source of pleasure in sad events of life.

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CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION

1.1 J. M. Synge's Life and His Works

J. M. Synge (1871-1909), the son of barrister and landlord of Dublin, had deeply studied the lives and works of Mayo peasants. He started studying the lives and works of Mayo peasants in 1896 on the request of W. B. Yeats because Synge, instead of doing something for his native land and its residents by depicting the real life situations, was making a living by writing book reviews and essays in Paris. Accepting Yeats' request as an encouragement, Synge produced many writings. Among them, *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) stood as his masterpiece. In this masterpiece, a three-act drama, he intended to reveal the nature and condition of the Mayo peasants where they lived in the world of fantasy romanticizing their lives. Synge's purpose of showing the romantic lives of the Mayo peasants in this drama was to show the way out of the frustrations the Mayo peasants were living with.

The Playboy was not the only play to popularize Synge; other plays also added perfume to gold for his popularity. He became popular worldwide through this writing because of his special technique called-realism. He produced most of his writings by drawing materials from the real life situations of Mayo people.

Synge did not draw his materials only from 'real life' but he drew the materials from old Celtic myth and Irish legend. *Deirdre of the Sorrows* (1910) (a three-act non-naturalist tragedy about a stoic fatality about death and its concomitants and beauty doomed to sorrow) had been taken from old Celtic myth and Irish legend. He

took materials from supernaturalism as in *The Well of the Saints* (1905) (a short comedy based on an old French story about longing to be blind again where the blind Douls, man and wife, who, their sight temporarily restored by a visiting saint, decide against permanent restoration when sight of the world horrifies and saddens them and live happily in the world of fantasy). He wrote the drama like *The Tinker's Wedding* (1909) being based on the story told to him by a herd in Wicklow. The drama, a two act rollicking farce, is about the way of life of the wandering craftsmen. The play tells the story of Sarah Casey's sudden passion to marry Michael Byrne, a tinker, although the latter hates the idea. *Riders to the Sea*, a one-act tragedy, based on real life situation in the lives of islanders among whom he had lived, tells the pathetic condition of Maurya, an old woman who had lost her husband, her husband's father, and six sons to the sea showing conflict between man and sea. Unlike *Riders*, *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903) centers around a folk-tale. The play, a one act bleak comedy, reveals Synge's extraordinary power of dramatizing a nation in his characters. In this play, there is an insult to the pure woman of Ireland showing loveless marriage of Irish peasant.

J. M. Synge wrote the six dramas of his short lifetime (He suffered from Hodgkin's disease – a form of cancer that was untreatable at the time. He died at the age of 38 leaving the widow to bring up five children). He wrote his first play *The Shadow of the Glen* in 1903 and he died in 1909 while he was writing *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, leaving it incomplete. The period of these six years was very much productive for him. The period was productive not only for dramas, but also for poems, translations and prose. His best-known prose writings are *The Aran Islands* (his travel book) and *In Wicklow, West Kerry, and Connemara*. However, a question may arise – all of these writings were Synge's own creative product?

To answer this question, F. L. Lucas' view may be the guideline. As per Lucas, "Synge indeed did not so much invent an imaginary world as remould to perfection matter drawn from the real life" (152). Synge drew materials for his writings from different sources and elaborated them adding his own ideas and imaginations. He seems to have followed one of the features of creativity that is recombination – rearrangements of new elements with old ones. This shows that, contrary to S. T. Coleridge's view on *Kubla Khan*, we cannot make a "dome" in the air; base is necessary. So, Synge takes the bases or backgrounds from myths, legends, folktales, supernaturalism, every day happenings, etc. Thus he seems to develop the imaginary world invented by some body else rather than to develop it. Similar case is with *The Playboy of the Western World*. Although the case is not only with this play, here the focus will be on it of this dissertation.

The Playboy is not hundred percent Synge's genius. He took the main idea from an "anecdote" told by an old man while Synge was living in Aran Island after returning from Paris. According to *The Aran Islands*, a connaught man who killed his father with the blow of a spade when he was in passion and fled to this island and threw himself on the mercy of some of the natives with whom he was said to be related. They hid him in a hole and kept him safe for weeks though the police came and searched for him, and he could hear their boots grinding on the stones over his head. Synge wrote the full-length drama *The Playboy* by modifying this story and adding his imagination through the technique of recombination. To make the play life-like, he had studied the lives and works of the Mayo peasants on the Aran Islands and he had just flavoured his imagination by mixing the lives and works of the Mayo peasants. If one reads this play, s/he will find it more realistic than fantastic.

However, my thesis is on fantasy rather than on realism. In the textual analysis in Chapter III, I shall study the use of fantasy in such realistic play where most of the characters live in the world of daydream or fantasy.

1.2 Statement of Problem

As I have already mentioned in the previous pages, J. M. Synge's comedy *The Playboy of the Western World* is a realistic play. It depicts the real picture of the people of Mayo culture. The language and the dictions used in this drama are also very realistic. The language is poetic one. Setting is very real. The play is directed toward the Mayo people and their culture; it tries to reveal the follies and shortcomings of these people through the use of irony so that they can improve their follies and short comings.

Many critics say that this drama is a realistic one. According to Martin Lamm and Basil Blackwell: “[In] Synge’s dramatic works we get a living picture of Irish peasant life” (304). Similarly, Allardyce Nicoll in his *British Drama* says: “*The Playboy* is a realistic work, so realistic that it aroused a wild storm of indignation from the patriotic camp when it first appeared” (432).

It is mysterious that in such a realistic play, Synge has used fantasies. Fantasy and realism are from two different poles. They are just opposite to each other but Synge, very artistically, mingles the two opposite poles, namely realism and fantasy. So, the statement of problem is what makes the dramatist use fantasies for a realistic work *The Playboy of the Western World*.

This dissertation will try to solve this problem by exploring the relationship between reality and fantasy. This is the hypothesis I have made.

1.3 Literature Review

The masterpiece of Edmund John Millington Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World* has received much critical appraisals from various perspectives since its publication in 1907. Many critics have analyzed this text from the perspective of realism. They have found this text life-like. Allardyce Nicoll in his *British Drama*

says; “*The Playboy* is a realistic work, so realistic that it aroused a wild storm of indignation from the patriotic camp when it first appeared” (432). Similar to Nicoll’s idea, Martin Lamm and Basil Blackwell say that this play is too real in the sense it is true depiction of Irish peasant life. They write in *Modern Drama*:

[In] Synge’s dramatic works we get a living picture of Irish peasant life [. . .].[His] dramas give an impression of the wordiness of the Irish peasantry [. . .] and he is above all careful to produce exactly the tone of peasant conversation. [. . .] The words and sequence of words are those of peasant speech but the melody of the sentences is Synge’s own. (304-5)

In the preface to *The Playboy of the Western World*, J.M. Synge himself says: “On the stage one must have reality, and one must have joy [. . .].” This shows that realism is the basic feature of this drama.

If we scan the text *The Playboy of the Western World*, we get that the text is full of satires. Many critics have criticized it through the perspective of satire. Most of the critics view that the satire mainly is on characters as Lynton Hudson says the “Satire [is] on the Irish character” (44). Another critic David Krause also sees satire in this drama. According to him: “[Synge’s] satire is invariably aimed at those people who are unwillingly or unable to accept the wonders and dangers of the world of nature” (259). People and their society have integral relationship. As per F. L. Lucas, the satire is on the society. He says; “[*The Playboy*] satirizes [. . .] human tendency to romanticize crime and violence” (210).

Critics have read this play not only through the perspective of satire but also through that of irony. In irony, one thing is said to mean the other. According to critics, Synge very artistically, has used ironies in his masterpiece *The Playboy of the*

Western World. One of the critics who has interpreted this drama from the perspective of irony is Una Ellis-Fermor. As per her, “It is Synge’s supreme skill in mixing the elements of comedy and tragic irony that leaves us at the end understanding not only how the hero myth has been created but why” (466). Monica Pace also sees the irony in the story itself. In her view, “In the primary ironic twist of the story, Christy’s dramatic tales of how he accomplished this deed win him the admiration rather than the disapproval of every villager he meets.”

The perspective of interpreting the text has been varying. Some critics have interpreted this text from the perspective of patriotism. Many critics find it unpatriotic. Among them, F. L. Lucas is one and for him; “[. . .] *The Playboy of the Western World* aroused such rancor in its audiences partly because they dimly felt in it an implied criticism of their own ideas of patriotic violence” (210). Similar type of criticism has been made by George Sampson in *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*. He states:

The patriots found in Synge’s characters and incidents an insult to the Irish nation, an attack upon Irish religion, a slander upon Irish men and an aspersion upon Irish women; and they expressed their disapproval in noisy violence that carried the author’s name far into the intelligent world outside. *The Playboy* is as much and as little of an insult to Ireland as *Don Quixote* is to Spain. (902)

Some of the critics have viewed this play from didactic perspective. In the view of Martin Lamm and Basil Blackwell, the play instructs the Irish people. They write:

The Playboy of the Western World is meant to do more than merely amuse for an hour or two. With all its farcical exaggeration, it

provides a brilliant insight into the Irish temperament, the case with which it flares up and as quickly dies down again and its inability to distinguish between right and wrong and between truth and falsehood. [. . .] [O]ne can not help feeling that it is a satire on a national character [. . .]. (312)

However, Harvey O' Brien looks this drama from another perspective, that is from psychoanalytical interpretation. For him it is more than a realistic play. It blows the psyche of Irish people. He writes: "The play was not entirely realistic in the first place. Its sense of ironies, hypocrisies and hidden darkness in the Irish psyche had more to do with dramatic exaggeration than documentary. [. . .] It sets the mind in action. It does not lull it into a stupor."

The critics cited above have interpreted text *The Playboy of the Western World* by J.M. Synge from various perspectives. But none of them has talked about the use of fantasies, neither the fantasies of characters nor the contextual fantasies in the text. This territory remains virgin to be explored. Thus, this thesis tries to study the use of fantasies in such a realistic play.

CHAPTER 2: FANTASY AND ITS ASSOCIATES: A DISCUSSION

2.1 Introduction to Fantasy

The word 'fantasy' had been derived from the Latin word Phantasia meaning 'making visible'. In other words, the word means the process of making an object of sense visible to the mind. With 'fancy,' fantasy became the term for the deliberate creation of an imaginary object.

Fantasy is a powerful aspect of adjustive technique. It helps in adjusting frustrated and tensed person with that of happy and satisfied. It helps in reducing tensions of need and anxiety because it settles mind to think mainly of ambitious and satisfactory desires. Cameron in his *The Psychology of Behaviour Disorders* defines fantasy in this way: "Fantasying is an habitual adjustive technique which reduces the tensions of need and anxiety by restricting behaviour to more or less stereotyped daydreams"(181). From this definition, it becomes clear that fantasy has complimentary relation with anxiety or tension.

Fantasy has complimentary relation with anxiety because a person with anxieties fantasizes to get rid of such anxieties. In other words, fantasy helps one in minimizing the anxieties s/he is living with. Sigmund Freud, in his essay "Creative Writers and Daydreaming" also shows the relation of fantasy with anxiety:

We may lay it down that a happy person never fantasies, only an unsatisfied one. The motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single fantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality. These motivating wishes are according to the sex, character, and circumstances of the person who is having the fantasy.

(713)

The crux of this quotation is a happy person never fantasizes. Everybody has wishes. The person who is satisfied with his\her wishes is a happy person. So the person, who has not fulfilled the desired wishes, fantasizes. In short fantasy is the wish fulfillment world.

In the same way, fantasy is an imaginative thinking. It is a very different type of thinking because the fantasizing person does not think what is happening in the world rather thinks what his desires, feelings and motives are. *Encyclopedia Americana* also defines fantasy as a “form of imaginative thinking” that is controlled more by the thinker’s “wishes, feelings and motives” than by conditions of the real world (14). In fantasy the individual does not communicate his ideas, thoughts, and desires to others, but is chiefly sending his messages to himself. From a practical point of view, this imaginative thinking plays an important role as an outlet for the frustrations of everyday life. The same book *Encyclopedia Americana* also mentions that fantasy helps in reducing tensions:

In fantasy, the frustrated man may depict himself as achieving desires actions, and in general overcoming obstacles and problems encountered in real life. In fantasy, the thinker can rescind some of the laws of the physical and social world and thus makes events appear as he wishes them to be. (14)

Fantasy is a mental product. It is due to thinking. Thinking is a natural process for every human being. When the mind produces fantasies, it fantasizes experiences that inflow on a receptive levels although the outlet of fantasies can be elicited. The direction and context of fantasies are influenced by conscious intensions, however, fantasies usually emerge unconsciously, determined by memories, by past and primarily current emotional states and by hopes and

expectations for the future. Therefore, in fantasy world the three times come together to form a mental mechanism although wishes and expectations are expected to be fulfilled in future.

Fantasy is a mental mechanism whereby a person substitutes imaginary satisfactions for real ones. The failures and frustrations of everyday life sometimes become too difficult to bear, and it is quite common for people to seek escape in self-created, fanciful worlds. Fantasy may be a very useful device in normal living because it reflects our wishes and frustrations, hopes and disappointments: “By a simple flight into phantasy we escape the hardships and unpleasant aspects of real life, compensate for some inadequacy, or gratify in our imagination some frustrated [. . .] ambition” (Morgan, 39).

Fantasy being a mental mechanism is related to psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis also describes fantasy as a compensatory world, produced by unconscious. In this unconscious process, the unconsciousness allows the individual to work over versions of the moments of loss of unity between the self and the other. This moment is “full of anxiety,” so the unconscious repeatedly attempts to “capture the bliss of lost undifferentiation” (Sullivan and White, 2).

Whether it is Sullivan and White or Morgan, Freud or Cameron, Encyclopedia or Dictionary, the definition of fantasy is more or less the same to all. So in short fantasy (interchangeably dream, daydream, phantasy, reverie etc.) is a mental mechanism as a form of imaginative thinking. The mind of fantasizer happens to think that things which are not occurring in every day reality but they are completely imaginative so that they can provide his/her frustrated mind a beam of relief and satisfaction at least for the time being. Fantasy designates the fantasizing ability as well as the product of that function. Fantasy holds the position between thinking and

perceiving: "[It] produces what is not, what some day might be, and what never has been" (Corsini and Auerbach, 342). It can merely distort reality, thus represents an imagined reality that is radically different in its nature and function from the world of experience. In this way, fantasy and realism are antonymous to each other.

Now is the time to talk about forms of fantasy for some time. There are mainly two forms of fantasy namely primary form, and secondary form. Primary form of fantasy appears spontaneously from the unconscious to the receptive subject whereas the secondary form of fantasy is initiated and pursued from the conscious level, being evoked intentionally for a specific purpose. Primary form of fantasy is a primitive, irrational mode of thought, which is distorted, condensed, rife with imagery and symbolism. On the other hand, the secondary form of fantasy is a mature, logical, problem-solving mode of thought. In the spontaneous fantasy, the sense of the unreal is often missing while the fantasy is in progress. Normally, in retrospective analysis, the non-reality status is really assigned to a fantasy. Fantasy can be, absorbing, rendering the fantasizing individual incapable of adequately attending to the demands of the environment.

After knowing what fantasy is, now let's see its brief history. Fantasy was widespread in Western literature until the Renaissance. Then, an emphasis on science and reason led to a rejection of fantasy forms. In the middle ages, writers and their audiences shared a belief in the real possibility of supernatural occurrences over time; this prior belief in the supernatural became less and less available to writers. The historical concept of fantasy being connected to the imagination developed through the writings of nineteenth-century poets, including Blake, Coleridge, Keats and Rossetti. Thus, the recreation of the fantasy genre in modern times reflects Romantic

ideas about the creative imagination rather than genuine belief in the supernatural.

(Hastings)

The recreation of fantasy genre is not only through nineteenth century Romantic ideas but also through nineteenth-century individualism. We are not only human beings but also unique individuals. Every individual has right to live in fantasy. This idea focused on the solution of individual tensions. This is the two-century-old idea.

But at the threshold of the twentieth-century, Sigmund Freud turned a harsh spotlight upon inner life, and upon fantasy in particular. Thus in the modern time, most discussions of fantasy began with the publication of his writing "On Sexuality." In it, he described fantasy as a constituent of the unconscious. Freud hypothesized nocturnal dreams to be fulfillments of desires, as were daydreams.

Despite the furor over Freud's theories and their dramatic impact upon clinical practice and society, the systematic study of fantasy found little place in American psychology before 1960. In the 1950s, a state of psycho physiological studies of rapid eye movement (REM), sleep and concomitant dream stimulated a resurgence of interest in inner experience. Within several years, sleep and dream laboratories were in operation all over the country, and dreams were being routinely dissected and analyzed. Imagery, imagination, and creativity became popular topics for psychological inquiry in Eastern philosophies.

In the subsequent decades, efforts have been made to integrate experimental findings in such diverse areas as dreams, daydreams, imaginative play, hallucination, and even hypnosis, in order to consider them under the broad umbrella of fantasy. Such efforts stress the continuity of inner life, and the possibility of identifying broad fantasy styles that transcend an individual's waking and sleeping fantasy productions.

Dreams and waking fantasies are said to lie along a continuum, and to blend into one another at the borders of sleep.

2.2 Associates of Fantasy

Imagination, Fancy, Daydreaming, Dreaming, Creativity, Realism are the terms of affinity with fantasy. The natures and features of these words are similar to that of fantasy. Therefore, these above mentioned terms are associates of fantasy.

These words in one-way or other are implicitly or explicitly related to fantasy. Brief introduction of each term is described below:

Imagination

In general, imagination is the power and process of producing mental images and ideas. Technically, the term is used in psychology for the process of reviving in the mind percepts of objects formerly given in sense perception. In “*Biographia Literaria*”, Coleridge also says imagination is the “prime agent of all human perception” (478). Psychologists describe sense perception as ‘imaging’ or ‘imagery.’ Imagined images are seen with the ‘mind eyes.’ Human imagination helps conscious beings to solve problems by the use of mental simulation.

The common use of the term imagination is for the process of forming in the mind new images, which have not been previously experienced. Fairy tales and fiction generally are the result of imagination. A form of very verisimilitude often invoked in fantasy invites readers to pretend such stories are true by referring to objects of the mind that do not exist apart from an imaginary world.

The ability to imagine one’s self in another person’s place is very important to social relations and understanding. One of the main purposes of imagination is to have personal pleasure: “A man of polite imagination is let into a great many

pleasures [. . .]” (Addison, 284). So, a man who wants pleasure for mind must have the power of imagination.

Imagination is very useful in practical affairs such as in the field of scientific hypothesis. Progress in scientific research is due largely to provisional explanations which are constructed by imagination, but such hypothesis must be framed in relation to previously ascertained facts and in accordance with the principles of the particular science.

The characteristic features of imagination such as usefulness in practical affairs through hypothesis, source of mental pleasure, creativity and so on are largely similar with the features of fantasy. To say in other words, there is a great affinity between imagination and fantasy: “Fantasy is a powerful imaginative force” (Sullivan and White 101).

Now let's talk about types of imaginations. There are, in general two types of imaginations namely Primary Imagination, and Secondary imagination. Primary imagination is the living power. To say in another way, it is great ordering principle. It is the “prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the external act of creation in the infinite” (Colendge, 478). Primary imagination is a power which helps us perceive something. All the people get this power. Most of the characters in *The Playboy* have this type of imagination.

But secondary imagination is the echo of primary imagination when primary imagination is put to use, secondary imagination is employed. In that sense, secondary imagination is more conscious than primary:

The secondary imagination [. . .] [is] an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the kind of its agency, and differing only in degree, and in the mode of its

operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to recreate; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. (478)

Some activities are done in primary imagination to proceed to secondary imagination. The latter type of imagination dissolves, diffuses and dissipates the former type of imagination in order to recreate something. Therefore, secondary imagination is more conscious than primary. Almost all the characters of *The Playboy* bear only primary imagination because they are less conscious about what they are doing.

Fancy

Fancy, like imagination, is one of the two distinct faculties of mind. Fancy is concerned with the mechanical operations of the mind. The mechanical operations or processes receive the elementary images and without altering the parts reassembles them into a different spatial and temporal order. Fancy follows the laws of association, and is related to memory:

Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space; while it is blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word choice. But equally with the ordinary memory the fancy must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association. (478)

Fancy is important since it is the storekeeper of the things we have perceived. It is the baseline for memory. So, memory and fancy are like two wheels of the same chariot.

Despite some similarities, fancy and imagination are distinct from each other in the sense that fancy is the passive receiver of the data and stores such data in the memory whereas imagination is the mysterious power which operates the data into constructive and inventive genius.

Although fancy and imagination are distinct to some extent, there is good relationship between fancy and fantasy. Both fancy and fantasy are mental processes, the latter invents ideas and the former stores these ideas in the memory that are useful for fantasy in creative works and in pleasure principle.

Daydreaming

Daydreaming is a form of fantasy which a person may use to escape his/her troubles. In other words daydreams are part of the stream of thoughts and images that occupy most of a person's waking hours. Daydreams are a period of thinking and feeling that is not bound by what is logical or likely to happen. They are not a sometime thing.

The definition of daydreaming is very vast and is not specific. The way you define it is different from the way I define it but the core is more or less the same, only words may differ. Researchers have defined daydream in at least three different ways, which seem to cover the core of all types of definitions that daydreams and thoughts are closely related:

I) as unrealistic fanciful thoughts [. . .]; II) as thoughts unrelated to the immediate environment or tasks one is performing [. . .] ; or III) as spontaneous, 'undirected' or 'respondent' thoughts that flit into and back out of consciousness unhidden with no apparent purpose [. . .].

(Kazdin, vol.2.437)

Daydreams are defined as either non-working or fanciful thoughts, whatever spontaneous or intentional. These are usually distractions from whatever the daydreamer is doing. Therefore, daydreams are more or less realistic although they are unintentional thoughts about the dreamer's real life. Most of us daydream many times each day. But question arises why we spend time in daydreams.

The answer is very difficult without psychological research. Many researchers have found that the main reason of spending time in daydreaming is to reduce the tensions and frustrations caused by people's unfulfilled needs and wishes. Sigmund Freud, an Austrian psychologist, also believed that daydreams reduced the tensions left by our unfulfilled needs and wishes: "What we cannot do in reality, we accomplish in the fantasy world of daydreams" (Lahey, 159). For example when X can not win race in race competition at school, s/he wins it in his/her daydream. That means when a person is in anxiety or tension, s/he daydreams. Although this theory is not 100 percent true since some daydreams are filled with regret, sorrow and guilt hence create tension rather than release, most researches and studies have shown that "we are most likely to daydream when we are in boring and routine situations" (159).

Daydreams are creative and productive as fantasies are. Daydreams perform important, even central, functions in human life although exceptions have no rules. When a person is continuously doing one task, he feels boring. He happens to think the past:

People gain knowledge by spontaneously reviewing their past experiences in daydreams and rehearsing for future situations.

Daydreams appear to generate creative solutions to difficult problems.

They are linked with greater empathy for others. They may be spontaneous but not entirely idle. (Kazdin, vol.2. 439)

Therefore, daydreaming is not only for the sake of daydreaming; it is for the sake of productivity. For instance, Thomas Edison was considered a daydreamer by his teachers but he was a creative constructive dreamer who patented more than eleven hundred inventions in his lifetime.

Who is most likely to daydream? The question arises. Again, the answer without ample studies is answerless. Many psychologists and researchers have proved that the person who is in tension daydreams most. But children are very reluctant to reveal the contents of their daydreams, which draw heavily on fairy tales and children's stories. During preadolescence, daydreams serve as a form of retreat from everyday reality. The most common theme of preadolescent daydream is the suffering hero who, maltreated by parents, teachers, or friends, finally triumphs in manner, such daydreams are self-piteous as well as hostile toward others and toward societal demands. This is like 'adding insult to injury'. This is the sign of personality maladjustment due to excessive daydreaming.

Being daydreaming a form of fantasy, it is not necessary to talk about the former in detail. To say in brief, daydream is "a form of compensatory fantasy" which generally fulfills the daydreamer's repressed or unconscious wishes (*Encyclopedia Americana*). Daydreaming resembles wishes. Typically, the daydreamer is the central figure of the fantasy.

Dreaming

Like daydreaming, dreaming is a form of fantasy which often gets its impetus from personal problems: "[. . .] dreams often reveal themselves without any disguise as fulfillment of wishes [. . .]." Like fantasy, dream is a wish-fulfilling device. Dream is also a guardian of sleep. Every dream is an attempt to put aside a disturbance of a wish fulfillment. (Freud, *Interpretation*, 201)

Psychoanalysts use dream analysis in seeking to discover the desires, frustrations, conflicts and anxieties of their patients: "[D]ream analysis is used both to diagnose and treat certain personality disorders" (Munn, 144). So, dream interpretation is used for clinical purposes too.

We can get meanings from dream interpretation. To interpret a dream means to get a meaning in our wishes and desires. In his *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Sigmund Freud views “every dream has a meaning” and is largely the product of infantile wishes and thought processes (201). According to him dreams are symbolic fulfillment of desires that can not be fulfilled because they have been repressed. Often these wishes can not even be expressed directly into consciousness because they are forbidden, so they come out in dreams.

Dreams play a fundamental role in the psychic economy. As it is the fulfillment of a wish; it is the origin of the remarkable and puzzling form in which the wish fulfillment is expressed. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud views: “Our first dream is the fulfillment of a wish; a second one might turn out to be a fulfilled fear, the content of a third might be reflection; while the fourth might merely produce a memory” (201).

Dream is a perfectly valid psychic phenomenon actually a wish fulfillment. It is built up by a highly complicated intellectual activity. It would seem that dreams and neuroses have perceived for us more of the physical antiquities than we suspected so that psychoanalysis may claim a high rank among these sciences which tries to reconstruct the oldest and the darkest phases of mankind for in every sense a dream has its own origin in the past. By representing a wish as fulfilled the dream certainly leads us into the future; but this future, which the dreamer accepts as his present, has been shaped in the likeness of the past by the indestructible wish.

Dreams, which can only be understood as fulfillments of wishes. Dreams bear their meanings upon their faces without disguise. The dream, part of normal and neurotic mental life, which most clearly reflects the contents and process of the

unconscious mind. In his *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud discusses dreams into two levels; latent content and manifest content.

Manifest content of the dream means what the dreamer reports as his dream. It is surface level dream. There is only the sequence of images that the dreamer experiences. In short, manifest content of the dream is “the dream as it appears to the dreamer” (Coleman et al, 637). On the other hand, latent content of the dream means “the alleged hidden, or true, meaning of the dream” (*Encyclopedia Americana*, vol.2. 14). Latent dreams are the dream thoughts arrived at by means of our procedure. In short, latent content of dream consists of “the actual motives that are seeking expression but are so painful or unacceptable that they are disguised” (Coleman et al, 637). The main difference between latent content of the dream and manifest content of it is that the former is of greater significance than the latter in interpretation. Similarly, manifest content of dream is “of the most distressing kind” whereas latent content of the dream is of pleasant kind (Freud, *Interpretation*, 215).

The process of transforming the latent thoughts into manifest content of a dream is called ‘dream work.’ Freud claims that the dream as recalled the manifest content is the starting point of the analysis whose goal is to disclose the latent content. For this the dream is broken down into its elements and the dreamer is asked to free associate to each element. From the free associations, the latent content or the dream thoughts are determined. The disguising of the wish constitutes a dream work.

The processes of dream work into manifest level are chief mechanisms that affect the disguises of unconscious wishes. Such processes, as per Freud, are condensation and displacement. Condensation means that a number of dream thoughts have been condensed to form a single dream image whereas displacement

refers to “the substitution for an unconscious object of desire by one that is acceptable to the conscious mind” (Abrams, 249).

In brief, dreams are defined as the mental activities of the sleeper in so far as he is asleep. Dreaming is a normal cognitive process, a response to autistic states relatively free from realistic determinants. Like fantasy, dream is a wish-fulfilling device. The wish in a dream can be fulfilled by interpretation either through displacement or through condensation. We cannot study fantasy properly without studying dream since the latter is one of the essential parts of the former one. The dream is: “Fantasy is autistic thinking when the person is awake, whereas dreams are autistic processes during sleep” (Vinacke, 334). At last, we should not forget the theory of dream that dreaming is the expression of strong intrinsic impulses. The Freudian theory of dream is based on principles of wish fulfillment and ego-defense, distinguishes between latent and manifest content, and evokes the operation of mechanisms of disguise.

Creativity

Creativity is a mental process involving the generation of new ideas or concepts or new associations between existing ideas or concepts. It is simply the act of making something new, in short. It is especially studied from the perspectives of behavioural psychology. Creativity is a central and powerful mode of human activity and thought. The person who indulges into the world of fantasy has the power of creativity. Such type of person, according to Freud is called a “creative writer.”

The creative writer creates a world of fantasy, which he takes very seriously – that is which he invests with large amounts of emotion while separating it sharply from reality. Imaginative flights of fantasy play a role in creative thinking. The creative thinker seeks to communicate his images, his fantasies, and feelings through

the vehicle of his particular skill - painting, poetry, music, fiction or invention. The creative thinker has the capacity to recognize the difference between his fantasy and reality.

Creative thinking lies between the extremes previously outlined as autistic and realistic. Creative thinking is the intimate interweaving of intrinsic activities and demands imposed by external conditions with characteristics both of problem solving and of fantasy. It resembles fantasy by calling on the free recognition of past experience and by being continuously influenced by inner need states. Yet, it differs from fantasy because it is under greater voluntary control and because it aims at externalization and eventually some tangible final product that, unlike a typical problem solution, is new or satisfying rather than correct in an objective sense.

Realism

Broadly speaking, realism is a term that can be applied to the accurate, detailed description of any literary work in everyday life. It represents human life and experience as it really is. Realistic writing gives the effect that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common reader, evoking the sense that its characters might in fact exist, and that such things might well happen. The realistic writers prefer commonplace and the everyday life, represented in minute detail such that done by J. M. Synge in his *The Playboy of the Western World*.

One of the basic characteristic features of realism is that its characters are from “middle and lower classes,” where they are the product of “social factors” and environment is the integral element in the dramatic complications (*Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2286).

Apart from character choice from lower and middle classes, another feature of ‘realism’ is that it rejects imaginative idealization of outward appearances:

“[R]ealism is a style that aims to keep imagination within bounds and to avoid embellishments, in order to keep faith with the way things really are, presenting common place events in the life of ordinary people” (Mautner, 359). In this sense realism and fantasy are also antonymous to each other. Only analogous thing between these two terms is that they are binaries. But Jacques Derrida views that there is no “hierarchy” or “binary opposition” such as that of day/night, male/female, speech/writing and so on in his essay “Sign and Play in the Discourse of Human Sciences.” It is because one term has no existence without the other. In the same way, ‘fantasy’ has no existence without ‘realism’ since fantasy and realism are so-called binaries. Therefore, fantasy and realism are two sides of the same coin.

Realism differs from romanticism particularly in its emphasis on an objective presentation of details and events rather than a subjective concentration on personal feelings, perceptions and imagining of various characters: “The romance [presents] life as we would have it be – more picturesque, fantastic, adventurous, or heroic than actuality [. . .]”(Abrams, 260). Romanticism is pleasure oriented; it forgets everyday reality which is serious and frustrated whereas realism seriously depicts the situations as they really are– whether romantic or frustrated.

Although realism and naturalism seem similar, they are different to each other. It is said that naturalism gives more accurate description of life than realism. But the former is not only, like realism, a special selection of subject matter and a special way of rendering those materials but also is a mode of fiction that was developed by a school of writers in accordance with a particular philosophical thesis. Naturalists view that all individual as being at the mercy of biological and socio-economic forces, whereas realists hold that humans have a certain degree of force that they can exercise to affect their situations. *A Doll House* by Henrik Ibsen, for

example, bears the characteristics of realism whereas *Miss Julie* by August Strindberg bears that of naturalism.

Variants of realism that have developed in the twentieth-century include magic realism and socialist realism. Magic realism mixes realistic and fantastic elements. In fact magic realists arguably use such hallmarks of realism as its emphasis on detail to make their presentations of the term like mythic or otherwise fantastic mere pleasurable to readers. Socialist realists, on the other hand, employ the techniques associated with 19th century realism but solely in the service of the proletarian cause. Early practitioners of socialist realism believed that in order to appeal to most readers, works should depict the lives of average working class citizens.

Realism in Theatre

Although realism was consciously adopted as an aesthetic programme since the publication of *Mercur Francais du XIX Siecle* in 1826, it was first used in novels and paintings between 1850 and 1880. But realism in theatre was a general movement in the later 19th century that steered theatrical texts and performance towards greater fidelity to real life. Here I want to talk only about realism in theatre particularly because the text I have chosen for my dissertation is a drama.

The realist dramatists Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), August Strindberg (1854-1900), Anton Chekhov (1860-1904), J. M. Synge (1871-1909), and others in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century rejected “complex and artificial plotting of the well-made play” instead they treated “themes and conflicts belonging to a real contemporary society” (*New Encyclopedia Britannica*, 974). They also rejected poetic language and extravagant diction but they used action and dialogue that looked

and sounded like “everyday behaviour and speech.” Realist dramas also used stage settings that accurately reproduced ordinary surroundings.

The realist tradition in drama had certain expressionist qualities, evident in symbolic actions in August Strindberg’s *Miss Julie* and romantic fantasies of Hedda in *Hedda Gabler*. But the surfaces of the plays appear realistic, consisting of sequence of events that we might imagine happening in real life.

But in the early to mid 20th century realistic drama took a new turn, in incorporating distortion of reality that border on the unreal or surreal. From the time of J. M. Synge in 1905 to Samuel Beckett in the 1950s, drama exploited the possibility of realism, anti-realism, and the poetic realism.

J. M. Synge was interested in the twin forces of myth and peasant dialects of everyday use. Most of his plays are not only realistic and mythic but also naturalistic and expressionistic in the use of unreal moments. *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), for example, is the best example of realism and expressionism.

2.3 Types of Fantasies

To get realities, we must have desires. Desires mean fantasies. The formers are unlimited. As many the desires, so many the types of fantasies. Desires differ from person to person. So, no one can exactly say the types of desires which are applicable to everybody: “For us, wishes and desires have become the traits or psychological properties of human monads [. . .]” (156). Fredric Jameson has mentioned this sentence in his famous book *The Political Unconscious*. The central message of this quotation is everybody has unlimited wishes and desires. According to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, the ultimate realities are desires. Thus, there are unlimited types of fantasies.

However, I broadly divide fantasies into two types. Only these types of fantasy will be applied in the textual analysis of *The Playboy of the Western World* for this dissertation in next chapter. The two types of fantasies are: fantasy of wealth (money) and romantic fantasy.

In this moneymaking world, wealthless person is countless. For this reason also, many people indulge into fantasy to get more money, either from this way or that. Almost everybody's fantasy is that money provides happiness in real life situation as in the case of Old Mahon in *The Playboy*.

Equally, important type of fantasy is romantic fantasy. It is pleasure oriented through love and relationship. It is more adventurous and exciting. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* defines romance as (1) "an exciting, usually short, relationship between two people who are in love with each other" and (2) "a feeling of excitement and adventure, especially connected to a particular place or activity." Both of these definitions are appropriate to the context of *The Playboy* because the situations and the characters of the play are in the fantasy world in order to have romance.

Romance is felt when hearts are broken in pains or loss. It is obtained from love or images of love, relationship (friendly, sexual or marital) and intimacy. We want to have reality-based romance that is meaningful, fulfilling, passionate and it can actually help to create a relationship we can trust and delight in. Romance can fill our soul with the feeling and knowledge that we are loved for who we are and it can inspire us to love deeply and fully in return.

'Love' is one of the main central themes of romantic fantasy. Imagination, need and desire create love. First of all let's look at the different views of the word 'romantic' from *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*: 1) "having no basis

in fact: being the product of invention or exaggeration”, IMAGINARY. 2) “having an inclination or desire for romance responsive to the appeal of the imaginative or emotional qualities of human experience (‘most people are romantic at 20, owing to lack of experience’ - E.M. Foster)”. 3) (a) “characterized by a strong personal sentiment, highly individualized feelings of affection or the love relationship (‘give the impression having married for romantic love’ - James Jones)” (b) “Marked chiefly by sexual passion or its gratification.” So, imagination, exaggeration, emotion, affection, love, marriage, sexual passion etc are the basic features of romantic fantasy. *The Playboy* revolves round these features. That means the play has ample characteristics of romantic fantasy as well as the fantasy of wealth. Therefore, I will look these two types of fantasy in the play in third chapter.

2.4 Theories of Fantasy

Fantasy occurs when the person’s contact with reality is reduced. Fantasy refers to well-defined sequences of thinking in which realistic forces from the environment are secondary to autistic forces from intrinsic states. As per Freud, in children, it is very much difficult to distinguish play from fantasy but in adults, play takes the form of games, with a strong goal and reality orientation. In fact, it is often difficult to separate play from problem solving. In general, fantasy for older person is similar to play for the child. The relationship between fantasy and play can be well understood through the study of theories of fantasy. If so, what are the theories of fantasy?

There are many theories of fantasy but more appropriately; we can divide the theories into four categories: i) Theory of relaxation, ii) Theory of wish-fulfillment, iii) Theory of escape and, iv) Theory of preparation for realistic thinking.

i) Theory of Relaxation

When people feel frustrated, they indulge into fantasy world. Instead of facing their problems, returning to harsh reality, they get satisfaction in a dream world. They stay in self-created world, withdrawing from reality:

When I was a small girl I lived in a neighborhood where there were no girls my age. I spent hours after school dreaming up stories about imaginary girl friends and adventures we would have. When someone interrupted these dreams I was very annoyed. (Kaplan and Baron, 324)

They have mentioned this example in their book *Mental Hygiene and Life*. What this quotation clearly shows is that the child indulges into fantasy in order to get rid of frustration caused by friendlessness so that she can have relaxation.

Not only this girl but also all human beings pass a considerable portion of their lives in fantastic thought, for it is the base line to which mental life returns whenever immediate concerns may be relaxed. Norman Cameron also has the same type of view regarding this theory:

Fantasy throughout life can be a fruitful source of relaxation and entertainment. We all go on telling ourselves fairy tales and bedtime stories, recalling the past and envisaging a future, or imagining a different present, [. . .] but simply in the way that satisfies us most. Many persons resort almost automatically to a favourable fantasy theme whenever they feel bored, lonely, insecure, frustrated or neglected. They use fantasizing as a child uses thumb-sucking, to comfort and relax themselves. (182)

On the other side, Sigmund Freud also emphasizes on daydreams, for they provide us relaxation reducing the tensions left by our unfulfilled needs and wishes. Benjamin B. Lahey takes Freudian theory of fantasy in his book *Psychology*. He says; "Freud's theory is the fact that most people feel quite relaxed during this type of daydreaming" (159). In nutshell, fantasy is the pleasurable source for relaxation caused by tensions and frustrations in real life situation: "Most daydreaming is harmless and can temporarily relieve frustration and provide mental relaxation" (Baltus, 174).

ii) Theory of Wish-fulfillment

The vicarious satisfaction of desires is called wish fulfillment. Sigmund Freud also regarded the fantasy or daydream as a wish-fulfilling device and thus provides satisfaction. Agreeing on Freud's theory of wish fulfillment, Benjamin Lahey also puts the similar idea. He says; "What we cannot do in reality we accomplish in the fantasy world of daydreams. While daydreaming we win the race, see our lust for love return, and build rustic home in the country with own hands" (159). When we cannot do something in reality, it becomes a great problem for us. This problem is easily solved in daydreaming since it is solving of problem not by action in reality but by words in imagination.

There are two common varieties of wish-fulfilling fantasy. They are "conquering hero" pattern and "suffering hero" pattern. In conquering hero pattern, one can picture oneself as "a great world leader, a courageous astronaut, a celebrated athlete, a famous movie or television star" or other renowned figure who performs "incredible feats" and wins the "admiration" of all. Such type of individual is considered "capable, powerful, and respected" (Coleman, Butcher, and Carson, 116-7).

On the other hand, in the suffering hero pattern, no admission of personal inferiority is necessary, since one is suffering from some dread disease, debilitating handicap, or visitation from unjust fate; "When others find out about such difficulties and realize the bravery and courage it took to carry on under such conditions, they will be sympathetic and admiring" (117). So, inferior performance or failures are explained away without any threat to one's feelings of adequacy and worth. Christy in *The Playboy* visits an unjust fate when his dead father arrives to search him in Pegeen's pub, for an instance.

iii) Theory of Escape

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English defines escapism as the "habit of trying to forget unpleasant realities by seeking entertainment, imagining oneself in an exciting situation etc." So, here escape means escape from tensions, disappointments, hardships, and unpleasant situations of everyday realities because "escape via fantasy is quite possible" (Vinacke, 324).

Dreams are nothing more than the reflection of our hopes, wishes, desires, tensions, frustrations, sad aspects of life etc. Morgan in his *Abnormal Psychology* regarding this theory has put similar type of view forward. He theorizes:

Daydreams reflect our wishes and frustrations, hopes and disappointments. By a simple flight into phantasy we escape the hardships and unpleasant aspects of real life, compensate for some inadequacy, or gratify in our imagination some frustrated or distant ambition. The dreamer is usually the central character. [. . .] [for example], the old man relives the happy and energetic days of his youth. (39-40)

In the same way, Kaplan and Baron also agree with Morgan's theory. They say; "The failures and frustrations of every day life sometimes become difficult to bear, and it is quite common for people to seek escape in self-created fanciful worlds. Fantasy may be very useful device in normal living" (324).

Fantasy becomes a very useful device in normal living because what is unsolvable in reality is quite solvable in fantasy world of imagination. If we see the view of Hilgard regarding this theory that is the theory of escape, we can see the similar type of view: "When problems become too much for us, we sometimes seek the 'solution' of escape into a dream world, a solution through fantasy rather than on a realistic level" (508). Thus, fantasy is a world of escaping difficulties.

iv) Theory of Preparation for Realistic Thinking

Here this actually means creativity out of fantasy. Creativity is the primary intention of fantasy, which develops what is not yet. According to Baltus:

Daydreaming, fantasy, as it is also called, can lead to creative thinking.

Thomas Edison was considered a daydreamer by his teachers but he was a creative constructive dreamer who patented more than 1,100 inventions in his life time. Daydreamers can also give a vision of self that may motivate actual achievement. (174)

Not only Thomas Edison but also Albert Einstein due to the "gift of fantasy" had meant "more to him than his talent for absorbing knowledge" (Kazdin, vol.3. 338). Kazdin in his *Encyclopedia of Psychology* (vol.2) says; " People gain knowledge by spontaneously reviewing their past experiences in daydreaming and rehearsing for future situations. Daydreams appear to generate creative solutions to difficult problems" (439). Daydreams generate creative solutions to difficult problems

because daydreaming helps in developing more new ideas which may help in solving the problems.

Encyclopedia American (vol.2) also links this theory of preparation for realistic thinking with creativity: “In fantasy the frustrated man may depict himself as achieving desired goals engaging in desired actions, and in general, overcoming obstacles and problems encounter[s] in real life” (14). To say in nutshell, according to Vinacke, the fantasy theory of preparation for realistic thinking can be best exemplified by “artistic creation, reworking of past experience, and planning for future” (334). This idea is strongly supported by *Encyclopedia Americana* (vol.8) saying; “[D]aydreams are sometimes creative, suggestive forms of behaviour leading to the attainment of actual goals.” Daydreaming helps people to be creative. The objectives of creative people are usually to express themselves to make life more interesting and to seek improvements in their surroundings.

2.5 Characteristics of Fantasy

Fantasy has certain characteristics that distinguish it from realistic thinking. The most outstanding features are mentioned below. The most important feature of fantasy is *Egocentrism*; here the daydreamer himself is the hero and / or his problems and needs occupy the central focus, although he may at times be an onlooker. Christopher Mahon in *The Playboy of the Western World* is an egocentric hero. Similarly, *anthropocentrism* is another feature of fantasy where fantasies deal with personal relationships and animals are likely to be anthropomorphized. In the same way *pleasurable emotional satisfaction*, except the exceptional cases, provides pleasure to satisfy emotions. The fourth feature of fantasy is *exaggeration*; it is extremely aggressive, emotionally idealized fantasy, or in imagining unlimited wealth such the case with Old Mahon in *The Playboy*. The fifth feature of fantasy is *free*

manipulation of time where past and future may be blended, events may quickly shift from one time to another, particular moments may be greatly prolonged, and so on. Likewise *Privacy and Secrecy* is another feature of fantasy where the imagined ideas are within the fantasizer and these ideas are not shared, thus are private and secret. The next feature is *reduction or even absence of contact with external stimuli* where the fantasies are hardly conscious, and the person is typically not aware that he is fantasizing. *Autonomy* is another feature of fantasy where fantasies appear and disappear without deliberate effort. Lastly, in *quasi-reality*, fantasy seems real.

CHAPTER –3 FANTASY IN *THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD*

Relationship between Fantasy and Realism

J. M. Synge's play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, has been able to attract the attention of not only its readers, but also its critics since its publication in 1907. Many critics have been analyzing it from various perspectives. I, for this dissertation, see it from the eye of fantasy. This research looks it from the perspective of fantasy because all the characters in the play prefer fantasy world to real one. They prefer to live in fantasy because it provides them relief and relaxation for their frustrated and sad minds. The characters cannot bear the sadness of their lives for a long period of time.

The setting of the play *The Playboy of the Western World* is placed in an untidy tavern of countryside. Similar to the place, the condition of the characters in the play is also not happy and satisfied in their real life. All are poor and all of them are peasants. They have different wishes and desires. They try to fulfill their wishes and desires in the world of fantasy. Whether these wishes and desires are fulfilled or not will be revealed below.

The characters in the play make many desires and wishes through the medium of fantasy. As the play begins a beautiful girl, Pegeen Mike, the heroine of the play is busy in writing a list of things such as: “[S]ix yards of stuff for to make a yellow gown. A pair of lace boots with lengthy heels on them and brassy eyes. A hat is suited for a wedding day. A fine tooth comb” (74). She is making the list of these goods because they help her indulge into fantasy. She is living in the world of romantic fantasy. Although her wedding day and wedding partner are not definite, she has already made the list of things needed for marriage. She runs the pub for her

father. Instead of thinking about the pub and things needed for it, she is thinking only of wedding that seems impossible at the moment in reality.

Michael James, the owner of the inn and guardian of the girl, is wandering with his colleagues, Philly Cullen and Jimmy Farrell, the small farmers. They all wander by drinking alcohol with full romance even in the nighttime. Michael leaves his daughter alone in the pub. He does not pay any attention for her and the pub. Instead of living in and being concerned with real life situation, he along with his friends lives in the fantasy world of romance. When real-life situation is boring, then these characters live fantasizing.

Another character of the play, Shawn Keogh, a young farmer, is in the pub talking with Pegeen about marriage at beginning of the play. The latter is complaining with the former that she is being alone the whole night. The night for her is too fearful in reality. When Shawn talks about marriage, she forgets the unpleasant situations and becomes happy:

Shawn (with awkward humour): If it is, when we're wedded in a short while you'll have no call to complain, for I've little will to be walking off to wakes or weddings in the darkness of the night.

Pegeen (with rather scornful good humour): You're making mighty certain, Shaneen, that I'll wed you now. (74)

Both of them are escaping into romantic fantasy by means of marriage. It helps them forget the sadness of real life.

When Pegeen thinks of and talks about wedding with Shawn in order to forget the fearful nights, her father, instead of being her partner in the night, convinces Shawn to be her night partner. Although Shawn is no longer willing to stay with her that night, Michael forces him to be her night partner. Between them, there is a small

tussle about it too. In the tussle, Shawn's coat happens to be put off and it goes to Michael's hand. At that time, Michael is not worried about the fight rather he becomes happy because there is the coat of a young lad, Shawn. The former's thinking is that when the latter comes to take his coat off, then Michael will get chance to marry him with his daughter so that she will need no one to be her company. Therefore, Michael says, "Well, there's the coat of a Christian man. Oh, there's sainted glory this day in the lonesome west; and by the will of God I've got you a decent man, Pegeen, you'll have no call to be spying after if you've a score of young girls, may be, wedding in your fields" (77).

Michael is very much romantic person and he indulges into romantic fantasy. He always talks of marriage and love. He wants others like Pegeen to be romantic. He is no more willing to stay with his daughter in the night, for he goes romancing with his friend by drinking. Instead he forces Shawn, the "Christian man," to be his daughter's company and have romance. Therefore, Michael is a romantic fellow; he takes romance in fantasizing so as to take relaxation.

He cannot persuade Shawn to be her daughter's company for the night due to the second one's cowardliness. But a young brave lad named Christopher Mahon , the hero of the play, arrives in the pub. According to him, he comes there after killing his own father. The way of killing makes Christy the bravest person not only for Pegeen but also for others in the pub. This is nothing more than a fantasy because in real life situation, no one can be brave as well as hero by killing his/her own father.

On the other hand, Pegeen escapes from all the miserable conditions after the arrival of the so-called brave hero and she indulges into the world of romantic fantasy thinking only of Christy and his bravery. When Pegeen and her father agree to employ the brave man-Chrity as their potboy, Shawn, the lover of Pegeen is a bit

jealous at Christy. Pegeen scolds Shawn by stopping him not to talk against her hero, Christy:

Shawn (coming forward uneasily): That'd be a queer kind to bring nto
a decent quiet household with the like of Pegeen Mike.

Pegeen (very sharply): Will you whisht? Who's speaking to you?

Shawn (retreating): A bloody-handed murder the like of . . .

Pegeen (Snapping at him): Whisht I am saying; we'll take no fooling
from your like at all. (To Christy with a honeyed voice.) And you,
young fellow, you'd have a right to stop, I'm thinking, for we'd do
our all and utmost to content your needs. (81)

She is climbing the ladder of romantic fantasy because her love with Christy is going into depth. To have him, she is ready "to content [his] needs" (81).

Another character Jimmy also lives in the world of fantasy. Like Pegeen and her father, he also takes relaxation at Christy's poetic way of telling the story about how he killed his father. Apart from this, he takes relaxation by wandering and drinking. He wants Pegeen, Christy and others to drink and have satisfaction. While talking to Michael, Jimmy utters, "Now by the grace of God, herself will be safe this night, with a man killed his father holding danger from the door, and let you came on, Michael James, or they'll have the best stuff drunk at the wake" (82). He is in deep fantasy because he thinks that the person who has killed his father gives security for a young girl, Pegeen, in the "night." Instead of thinking that the father-killer will terrorize the lonely girl in the night, he is sure that they will have romance by drinking and by having sexual pleasure too. Jimmy thinks so because his mind is not in reality.

Similarly, Christy Mahon is indulging into fantasy of romance. When he gets chance to talk with the beautiful girl, Pegeen, in a safe house, he is very much happy. He totally forgets the eleven pathetic days of walking, he forgets the laws of killing his father. Rather he tells her how he killed his father being very confident. Actually he was law-fearing man and was fearing to tell the story of killing his father before he came to Pegeen's pub. But when he meets Pegeen, the beautiful girl, he unfolds the secret of killing his father. He utters; "I've told my story no place till this night, Pegeen Mike [. . .]" (83). He is too happy to be her partner. He praises her character heartily. He says; "[. . .] you're decent people, I'm thinking, and yourself a kindly woman, the way I wasn't fearing you at all" (83). On the other hand, Pegeen also forgets the fearful and lonely night when she gets chance to talk to Christy. She is only thinking of him. She is worried whether he loves other young girls or not. She says; "[. . .] you have met a young girl on your way" (83). So, both of them are escaping the fearful and sad events of real life and are daydreaming to have relaxation.

As per the fantasy theory of escape, it is quite easy to escape from frustrations, tensions, disappointments and unpleasant situations of everyday reality when s/he is fantasizing. In such situation, one can get relaxation and even can fulfill the wish that was impossible in reality. For instance, when somebody wants to go abroad to earn money which is like 'If the sky falls we will catch the larks' in real life, can easily reach there in daydream. Both major and minor characters in *The Playboy* not only take entertainment but also try to fulfill their wishes in daydreaming.

Theories of escape and relaxation are best applied when there is at least love and sexual relationship. Pegeen and Christy are fascinating themselves toward each other. Their love relationship is proceeding toward marital relationship:

Christy (drawing a little nearer to her): You've a power of rings, God bless you, and would there be any offence. If I was asking are you single now?

Pegeen: What would I want wedding so young?

Christy (with relief): We're alike, so. (83)

Both Christy and Pegeen are in full indulgement in the fantasy world of romance by means of love and marriage. They are in full excitement. They are now free from any type of frustration and tension. Indirectly they are sexually attracted too. In short, psychologically they are happy due to love and sexual attraction.

The psychology of the characters in the play is more or less the same. Their psychology centers on the world of fantasy. One of the major characters in the play Widow Quin, a widow of about thirty is also very much attracted toward Christy whom Pegeen also loves. Instead of knowing the reality about him, the other characters of the play make him the hero and brave person and dance around his mind. The women in the play are too much attractive toward him. Widow Quin also, instead of knowing the realities, completely believes in Shawn's saying that there is a "curiosity man." Reality is in another world but she forgets her boring and lonely life and merges her thinking with the fantasy of others. She blindly takes Christy as a "curiosity man." After hearing these words about him, she goes to meet him in Pegeen's pub in the night so that she can have romance in the fantasy world. Peering at Christy, she says; "I'm after meeting Shawn Keogh and father Reilly below, who told me of your curiosity man, and they fearing by this time he was maybe roaring, romping on your hands with drink" (85). She, like Pegeen, is alone. If she gets Christy, she will get rid of her lonely and sad life. This is the reason why she wants to meet him in a great hurry.

Not only in this dialogue but also in other dialogues of Widow Quin, we can easily find romantic fantasy because there are ample hints of love, sexual attraction and hints for wedding. When she learns through Shawn and father Reilly that the curiosity man is with Pegeen, being too jealous, Widow Quin wants to break the relationship between Pegeen and Christy so that the latter will join with her. She wants him “to lodge with” her (85). Indirectly she is sexually attracted to Christy.

How much the widow is fascinated toward Christy can well be understood by the following lines too: “We’ll be walking surely when his supper’s done and you’ll find we’re great company, young fellow, when it’s of the like of you and me you’d hear the penny poet’s singing in an August Fair” (86). She utters these words when Pegeen is not allowing the former to stay there and talk to him. Despite it, Widow Quin tries to persuade him so that he will leave Pegeen and join with the former.

Widow Quin is in utmost fantasy of romance due to Christy:

Pegeen (breaking out into wild rage): And you’ll say that, Widow Quin, and you gasping with the rage you had racing the hill beyond to look on his face.

Widow Quin (laughing derisively): Me, is it? Well, Father Reilly has cuteness to divide you now. (She pulls Christy up.) There’s great temptation in a man did slay his da, and we’d best be going, young fellow; so rise up and come with me. (86)

The two women Pegeen and Window Quin fight for a single hero claiming that he is fit for each of them. In reality, he may not be suitable for none of them although they want to fulfill their wishes in fantasy. It looks like an irony. But due to utmost fantasy, both women are dreaming only of Christy. Because of this daydreaming, they are now escaping from the frustrated world.

Both Pegeen and Widow Quin are escaping from the frustrated world because their mind or/and thinking are only at Christy. Both have entirely forgotten the realities outside. They are taking amusement and relaxation on Christy. It is due to, as per Freud's theory of sexuality, the attraction to the opposite sex. So they are indulging into the romantic fantasy of sex. Because of it, they are pulling the same young man, Christy in their each side:

Widow Quin (with amusement): Do you hear her now, young fellow?

Do you hear the way she'll be rating at your own self when a week is by?

Pegeen (To Christy): Don't heed her. Tell her to go into her pigsty and not plague us here.

Widow Quin: I'm going but he'll come with me. (87)

Both of them are indulging into the romantic fantasy of sex. Christy becomes the medium of it. Is Christy only the medium? No, he is also in the depth of fantasy of romance between the two young girls. Now he has become very happy and has forgotten all of his frustrations and tensions. He is now thinking only of the young girls who are fighting for the like of him. But who will get him for romance? Whom does Christy choose for indulging into fantasy - Pegeen or Widow Quin?

All the three – Christy, Pegeen and Widow Quin are sexually attracted. From their wish of having sexual pleasure, they are making another wish of marital relationship. Both Widow Quin and Pegeen want to marry Christy but he wants to wed Pegeen. Widow Quin wishes to have the marital relationship between Pegeen and Shawn so that the widow will get chance to wed Christy:

Widow Quin [. . .] (To Christy): God bless you now, young fellow,
and let you be wary, or there's right torment will await you here if

you go romancing with her like, and she waiting only, as they bade me say, on a sheepskin parchment to be wed with Shawn Keogh of Killakeen.

Christy (going to Pegeen [. . .]): What's that she's after saying?

Pegeen: Lies and blather, [. . .].

Christy: And you're not wedding him at all?

Pegeen: I wouldn't wed him if a bishop came walking for to join us here. [. . .]

Christy: That God in glory may be thanked for that. (87)

They are in full indulgence of marriage. Here both Widow Quin and Pegeen are about to marry the same person, Christy in their imagination since it is only their fantasy – the romantic fantasy. On the other hand, Christy chooses Pegeen for wedding. So, he is also indulging into the romantic fantasy of marriage with Pegeen.

After taking much romance from and with Christy by talking and swimming into fantasy pool in her pub at night, Pegeen, at the closing of act I, allows Christy to go to bed made by her “two hands” (87). After that, she goes “into inner room” and shuts “the door behind her” (87). Here the action “shutt(ing) [of] the door behind her” is indicative of shutting of outer realities full of frustrations, tensions, disappointments etc. Now, in the world of fantasy, she is able to keep the sad events such as fearful and lonely nights, tiredness from her work and so on out of her mind. And “go[ing] into inner room” is indicative of her inner psychology. In other words, she goes into the fantasy world rather than in the outer realities. When she closes the door for outer realities and enters into the fantasy world, she escapes from difficult situations and does have immense satisfaction, especially in the romantic fantasy through the medium of marriage and sex.

On the other hand, Christy settles “his bed slowly, feeling the quilt with immense satisfaction.” Forgetting the unhappy realities, now in fantasy, he is full of satisfaction thinking only of Pegeen. So, here the fantasy theory of relaxation is applied. Act I of the play ends with the remarks of Christy where he is in utmost fantasy. He is in full romance when the two women fight for him. They make him a brave hero since he came in Pegeen’s pub by killing his father. Therefore, he remarks, “[. . .] Well, it’s a clean bed and soft with it, and it’s great luck and company I’ve won me in the end of time-two fine women fighting for the likes of me-till I’m thinking this night wasn’t I foolish fellow not to kill my father into the years gone by” (87-8).

One of the characteristic features of fantasy is egocentrism. Christy Mahon in this dialogue, too, is an egocentric character in the fantasy world where he claims himself as hero by killing his own father. It is ironical too.

A frustrated and sad man, Christy, at the beginning of the first act, is just the opposite in the very begging of the second act of the play. When he gets up in the brilliant morning the next day, he looks “bright and cheerful” (88). His wish is to be wealthy. In reality, he is too much poor. He is only a small farmer. But to forget his poverty, he indulges into the fantasy of wealth. Person with deep fantasy is bright and cheerful. In other words, fantasy provides pleasurable emotional satisfaction. It is also one of the features of fantasy.

Christy gets satisfaction not only through emotions but also through wealth the pub has. When he sees things like “jugs,” “cups,” etc, he indulges into the fantasy world- the fantasy of wealth. He says (To himself); “[. . .] Two plates. A power of glasses. Bottles, a school master’d be hard set to count, and enough in them I’m thinking, to drunken all the wealth and the wisdom of the County Clare [. . .]” (88).

A bad carpenter quarrels with his tools. This proverb is applied when a person self-praises. In reality, the person may not be appraisable because 'self-praise is no recommendation.' But in the world of fantasy self-praising has a meaning that is it provides immense satisfaction. We can prove it through the fantasy of Christy. He utters the words when he is talking to himself:

(He takes the looking-glass from the wall and puts it on the back of a chair; then sits down in front of it and begins watching the face.)

Didn't I know rightly I was handsome, though it was the devil's own mirror [. . .] would twist a squint across an angel's brow; and I'll be growing fine from this day, the way I'll have a soft lovely skin on me and won't be the like of the clumsy young fellows do be ploughing all times in the earth and dung [. . .]. (88)

Forgetting the actual realities, he is having the emotional satisfaction swimming into the pool of romantic fantasy. Here he escapes from the real world and its difficulties like "ploughing all times in the earth and dung." So the proverb 'A carpenter quarrels with his tools' is very much suitable in the fantasy world of thinking.

When the news of Christy's slaying his own da spreads, many people pay attention on him and make him a brave hero. Despite knowing the realities about him, they pray him not only as a brave hero but also as a Christian God. The young girls of the play Susan, Sara, Honor and Neily, after the news about Christy, come running to meet him the next morning to see and/or pray him. While praying, as we offer flowers to God, the girls offer many things like "a pat of butter," "a brace of duck's eggs," "a little cut of cake," and "a little laying pullet" respectively. All of them are happy to worship him by giving different presents. Then what's that? That is nothing more than the fantasy of romance.

Saras, Susan, Honor and Neily are daydreaming of Christy. There is Widow Quin too. Widow Quin as well as the other girls is daydreaming of Christy and he, on the other side, is daydreaming of Widow Quin. The women are curious toward him, are pleasing him, and vice versa. They are getting pleasure from the romantic fantasy.

The text has different types of fantasies. In the same line too, there is more than one type of fantasy. Widow Quin wants to seek the reason from Christy of cracking his father's skull; "And you went asking money of him, or making talk of getting a wife" (90). Instead of asking other causes, she asks only about "money" and "a wife." It is because her imagination and thinking centers around money, wedding and romance too. If we go through the text, we find these things occupying most of the space of it. Christy's answer also proves this very idea: "[. . .] [T]here I was , digging and digging, and 'you squinting idiot' says he, 'let you walk down now and tell the priest you'll wed the Widow Casey in a score of days' " (90-1). These words uttered by Christy prove that even the old man, Christy's father, is thinking of wedding. He also does not go to the reality world to analyze the consequences of marrying a widow by Christy. Widow Casey is not only a widow. As per Christy, she is "[a] walking terror from beyond the hills, and she two score and five years, and two hundred weights and five pounds the weighing scales, with a limping leg on her, and a blinded eye, and she a women of noted misbehaviour with the old and young" (91). But what's the main reason of choosing such a woman by Christy's father for the former to be married? The only reason is Widow Casey is rich:

Widow Quin: And what did he want driving you to wed with her? [. . .]

Christy (eating with growing satisfaction): He was letting on I was wanting a protector from the harshness of the world, and he

without a thought the whole while but how he'd have her hut to
live in and her gold to drink. (91)

Christy's father is swimming into two pools at the same time. One is the fantasy pool of romance by marriage and another is the fantasy pool of money. By swimming into these two pools, he wants his wish of being rich fulfilled which was impossible for him in reality. Here the main characteristic feature of fantasy- exaggeration is very appropriate because he is imagining unlimited wealth by being extremely aggressive.

Every character in the drama has at least one wish. The major wish of Widow Quin is to move Christy and marry with him. Since the day of killing her husband and burrying her children, she has been unable to get young lad for wedding. So indulging into the romantic fantasy, she wants him to be her life partner. For fulfilling her wish, she is helped by the young fantasizing girls too in order to persuade him:

Girls (Together): Well, you're a marvel ! Oh, God bless you! you're
the lad surely!

Susan: I'm thinking the lord God sent him this road to make a second
husband to the Widow Quin, and she with a great yearning to be
wedded, though all dread her here. Life him on her knee, Sara
Tansey. (91)

The only thing Widow Quin has in her mind is to have Christy for wedding. She always imagines or daydreams him. This type of daydreaming is called the romantic fantasy.

However, on the opposite pole, Christy has a wish to have Pegeen. He tries to fulfill his wish by flattering and admiring her:

Christy (with infinite admiration): How would a lovely handsome woman the like of you be lonesome when all men should be thronging around to hear the sweetness of your voice, and the little infant children should be persteryng your steps I'm thinking , and you walking the road.

Pegeen: I'm hard set to know what way a coaxing fellow the like of yourself should be lonesome either. (94)

To get his wish-fulfilled he indulges into the fantasy of romance by loving Pegeen. Or in other words, by being attracted to opposite sex, he wants his wish fulfilled: “[. . .] I was lonesome all the times, and born lonesome [. . .] (94). He “was” lonesome but now he is not, if we see the tense of his speech. Here his wish to be two is in he way to succeed if we analyze it in reality too.

Pegeen also heartily loves him. She always wants him to be with her, so does he. Love is one of the main characteristics of romantic fantasy. They are in deep love with each other means they are in depth of romantic fantasy.

In act one, the two girls-Pegeen and Widow Quin- were fighting for the same boy, Christy but in the second act, the two boys-Christy and Shawn are fighting for the same girl, Pegeen. Shawn requests Christy not to hinder his love with her because he is going to wed her; “ I'm a poor scholar with middling faculties to coin a lie, so I'll tell you the truth, Christy Mahon, I'm wedding with Pegeen beyond , and I won't think well of having a cleaver fearless man the like of you dwelling in her house” (96). They are indulging into romantic fantasy since they are longing for marital relationship. In order to have this wish fulfilled in reality, Shawn even asks for help with Widow Quin.

He not only asks for help with Widow Quin but also wants to give different things like “new hats,” “breeches,” “coat,” “blessing” and so on to Christy so that he will “quit” Pegeen for Shawn (95-6). Shawn’s thinking is that when he makes Christy indulge into the fantasy of wealth, the latter will forget Pegeen and the former will have her. The only desire of Shawn is to marry with Pegeen, though it is not easy to break the tight love bond between her and Christy. In order to fulfill his wish, Shawn says Christy that Pegeen is not a good girl to suit to the brave hero, Christy: “[Pegeen] wouldn’t suit you, and she with the devil’s own temper the way you’d be strangely one another in a score of days. It’s the like of me only that she’s fit for [. . .]” (96). Shawn says so thinking that Christy will quit Pegeen and Shawn will get chance to wed her.

Love is very mysterious. Shawn hates Christy but Widow Quin loves the latter. As I have already mentioned, her wish is to win the heart of Christy and make him her company:

Christy (swaggering): I’m going abroad on the hillside for to seek
Pegeen.

Widow Quin: You’ll have time and plenty for to seek Pegeen and you
heard me saying at the fall of night the two of us should be great
company. (97)

She wants to fulfill her wish of wedding and sleeping together with Christy through the romantic fantasy.

On the other hand, Christy’s wishes are to be loved by Pegeen, to be saved from police and to have basic needs for living from the very beginning of the play. He, to fulfill these wishes, indulges into romantic fantasy by means of love, sex, marriage etc and into fantasy of wealth. Now almost all his wishes are fulfilled in

reality too. But in order to fulfill her wish, Widow Quin requests him to join with her at the fall of night so that they can be great company the whole night, unexpectedly he denies it when he starts going abroad on the hillside to seek Pegeen:

From this out I'll have no want of company when all sorts is bringing me their food and clothing (he swaggers to the door, tightening his belt), the way they'd set their eyes upon a gallant orphan cleft his father with one blow to the breeches belt. (He opens door, then staggers back.) Saints of glory! Holy angles from the throne of light!
(97-8)

He has been getting food and clothes. He is safe in Pegeen's pub and is loved not only by her but also by all who are with him, especially by all the girls. He is having romance from the starting of the play. Pegeen is curious to have him and he too. Both of them want to be wedded soon.

Life is the sum of ups and downs not only for Christy but also for all. Problems once solved is not the solution forever. Once solved problems arise again for Christy. His desires once were fulfilled. Once supposed dead father of Christy comes in Pegeen's Pub in search of his son who had fled after blowing his own dad by a loy on the skull and burying him. Father's arrival returns Christy in the world of frustration, tensions and unpopularity. He became famous by his way of telling story of slaying his own father. For that he was made a courageous hero, a conquering hero. But now he is going to be a zero because of his father's arrival. Now the conquering hero is changing into the suffering hero. The reality makes him sad, because father's arrival is not a fantasy. In order to escape him from the frustrated life on one hand and on the other hand, to fulfill her desire by making him her life partner, Widow Quin tries to drive him into the fantasy world of love:

Widow Quin: I'm thinking, when I did destroy my man, for I'm
above many's the day [. . .].

Christy (interested): You're like me, so.

Widow Quin: I am your like, and it's for that I'm taking a fancy to
you, and I with my little houseen above where there'd be myself to
tend you, and none to ask were you a murderer or what at all.

Christy: And what would I be doing if I left Pegeen?

Widow Quin: I've nice jobs you could be doing, gathering shells to
make a whitewash for our hut within, building up a little goose
house, or stretching a new skin on an old curragh I have [. . .] and
it's there yourself and me will have great times whispering and
hugging . . . (100-1)

The widow loves Christy too much but he has been loving Pegeen. However, the words uttered by Christy; "And what would I be doing if I left Pegeen?" signifies that Widow Quin is going to fulfill her wish. On the other hand, Christy is also moving to fantasy world after the short time of reality world. If he is not loved by Pegeen, he seems ready to love the widow. Now in the fantasy, he is escaping from the frustration.

He has not completely escaped from the frustration. If one of his wishes is fulfilled, he can have utmost pleasure. The only wish not fulfilled in reality is that he has not entirely won Pegeen. On one pole, Christy tries to win Pegeen and on the other pole, Widow Quin tries to win him. He is paying less attention on Widow Quin, although he asks her to help him to win Pegeen: "Aid me for to win Pegeen. It's herself only that I'm seeking now." He is in the fantasy of love. He is in the depth of romantic and fantasy. Where there is love, there is romance because the former is one of the features of the latter.

The young girls of the play Sara, Susan, Honor-have been spending most of their time in romantic fantasy. They take much romance from Christy and share it with him. They are pleased to get chance to help him. They praise him:

Susan: Come on to the sports below. Pegeen says you're to come. [. . .]

Honor: Come on, will you?

Christy: I will then if Pegeen's beyond.

Sara Tansey: She's in the breen making game of Shaneen Keogh.

Christy: Then I'll be going to her now. (He runs out followed by the girls.)

Widow Quin: Well, it the worst comes in the end of all, it'll be great game to see there's none to pity him but a widow woman, the like of me, has burried her children and destroyed her man. (101-2)

These romantic girls are in love with Christy whereas the fantasizing Christy is imagining only of Pegeen. And Widow Quin is praising Christy since in her mind there is nothing other than the young lad, Christy –her only desire.

The third and last act of this play begins with romance. In the beginning of this act, Jimmy comes drinking with his friend Philly. Here drinking symbolizes fantasy especially the romantic fantasy. They wander here and there by drinking. They do not care where they are and what the reality is. They always fantasize to have romance.

Old Mahon, who has been walking long distance in search of his son, is tired and frustrated. To lessen his tiredness and to escape from frustration, he also, like Jimmy and Philly, drinks “a supeen” (103). He requests it with Widow Quin and she gives it to him saying; “There now is a drink for you, and may it be to your happiness and length of life” (103). Therefore, he also indulges into romantic fantasy.

Romance is a good source of pleasure in a sad mood. In other words, s/he indulges into romantic fantasy as do Jimmy, Philly, Widow Quin and Old Mahon in the play. They all take much romance from the sport-the mule race performed by the playboy of the western world, named Christopher Mahon:

Widow Quin: He's the champion of the world, I tell you, and there isn't a hop'orth isn't falling lucky to his hands to-day.

Philly (looking out, interested in the race): Look at that.

They're pressing him now. [. . .]

Widow Quin (shouting): Watch him taking the gate. There's riding.

Jimmy (cheering): More power to the young lad!

Mahon: He's passing the third.

Jimmy: He'll lick them yet!

Widow Quin: He'd lick them if he was running races with a score itself.

Mahon: Look at the mule he has, kicking the stars.

Widow Quin: There was a lep! (Catching hold of Mahon in he excitement.) He's fallen! He's mounted again! Faith, he's passing them all! [. . .]

Philly: And the mountain girls hooshing him on!

Jimmy: It's the last turn! The post's cleared for them now!

Mahon. Look at the narrow place. He'll be into the bogs! (With a yell.) Good rider! He's through it again. (105)

All of them are in the depth of romantic fantasy because they are taking romance from other's activities but they are not at least trying to find what is there in reality by going back into the real world from that of thinking and imagination.

But from the world of fantasy Christy now is in the world of reality. At the beginning of the play, he was very fearful and courageless. However, when he reaches to the Mayo coast after, in his own words, slaying his da, the people of Mayo regard him as a brave hero. He is admired and flattered there, especially by young girls. This helps him in self-praising and building confidence. He does these things during his fantasizing period. When Pegeen tells him to join the sports organized in the village, he participates in mule race. He wins it. It is nothing more than his creativity. The creative activities are done in reality but creative power has been built in fantasy or daydream. So, fantasy helps in creativity; fantasy helps in preparing for realistic thinking

The whole community is far from realistic thinking; it is daydreaming. The community makes Christy a hero and courageous fellow. The people of it, especially the girls, want to have him forever. Widow Quin and Pegeen even wish to marry with him. They pray his so-called courageousness. But in actuality, he is far from it. The people just make him so. Instead of analyzing his background and his past deeds, they worship him as a God. Can he, the father-killer, be a God? They make him God due to folk-fantasy. Through him, they all indulge into the romantic fantasy:

Voices: There you are! Good jumper! Grand lepper! Darlint boy!

He's the racer! Bear him on, will you! (Christy comes in, in Jockey's dress, with Pegeen Mike, Sara and other girls and men.)

[. . .].

Crowd: Here his prizes! A bagpipes! A fiddle was played by a poet in the years gone by! A flat and three-horned blackthorn would lick the scholars out of Dublin town! (107-8)

The Mayo people take much relaxation from Christy's creativity that is winning the mule race. They have no power of creativity in them but they take romance from the productivity of others like of Christy.

When Christy wins the race, gets prizes and he is admired by all; he again goes on fantasizing. He fantasizes to get his wish fulfilled that is to wed Pegeen in reality. For it, he forgets outside realities and thinks only of her. On the other hand, since her meeting with him, she is in the world of fantasy. She has forgotten all the realities-her pub, her fearful nights, her father and many more-but has remembered only Christy, his deeds and his courage. She, with real tenderness, asks Christy; "And what is it I have, Christy Mahon, to make me fitting entertainment for the like of you, that has such poet's talking, and such bravery of heart?" (108).

And as a reply, Christy says Pegeen that she is the nicest girl from all sectors; she is like "an angel's lamp" (108). Both of them are thinking of only about their love, their praising words to each other. They cannot think what is happening outside in the reality rather their fantasy of love is catching hold of another romance through fantasy of marriage:

Pegeen: If I was your wife, I'd belong with you those nights, Christy Mahon, the way you'd see I was a great hand at coaxing bailiffs, or coining funny nick-names for the stars of night. [. . .]

Christy (Putting his arm around her): It I wasn't a good Christian, it's on my naked knees I'd be saying my prayers and paters to every jackstraw you have roofing your head, and every stony pebble is paving the laneway to your door.

Pegeen (radiantly): If that's the truth, I'll be burning candles from this out to the miracles of God that have brought you from the south

today, and I, with my gowns bought ready, the way that I can wed you, and not wait at all. (108-9)

Both of them are in deep love, so they are in the depth of romantic fantasy. This fantasy is providing them relaxation as well as they are in the way to fulfill their wish that is wedding between them in reality.

Peegen's father, Michael James, did not show his head throughout the second act but comes in the half of the third act. He appears there by drinking. Drinking and going out are his habits, from it he has been getting entertainment and romance.

Being the member of the same community, he also shares the folk-fantasy that is he gives blessings to Christy, the father-killer or "a murderous gab" just for winning the mule race (98). This is a prize for criminal. Michael blesses Christy: "The blessing of God and the holy angels on your head, young fellow, I hear tell you're after winning all the sports below [. . .]" (110). Is this not a fantasy? More than that, on the request of Christy and Peegen, he abandons the idea of wedding his daughter with Shawn; Michael is ready to wed Christy with his daughter. He sets this idea because he is not in reality to know what type of person Christy is; Michael is having romantic fantasy. He, holding the hands of Christy and Peegen, blesses for their marriage; "It's the will of God [. . .]. (He joins their hands). A daring fellow is the jewel of the world, and a man did split his father's middle with a single clout, should have the bravery of ten, so may God and Mary and St. Patrick bless you, and increase you from this mortal day" (110-2). He is too happy to see the marital relationship between Christy and Peegen. He cannot think Christy is a bad person because the farmer's mind or thinking is not in reality but is in fantasy. Being unable to be in reality world, Michael is ready for marrying his decent daughter with such a murderer.

When a person's mind is in fantastic thinking, it is very difficult for him/her to accept the reality. The same is the case with Pegeen. Christy's father, who has been there in the pub to search for his son, rushes in and encounters with the latter. He knocks his son down and begins to beat in rage as a revenge. This is a reality. But in seeing it, Pegeen does not accept this reality rather defends Christy and allows Old Mahon to quit off the place who is in the reality. She says: "And to think of this coaxing glory we had given him, and he, after doing nothing but hitting a soft below and chasing northward in a sweat of fear. Quit off from this" (113).

If we see the case of Christy, he also rejects reality while he is in fantasy. He sees an old man amongst the people of Mayo biting the former with "a stick" (112). The old man is his father who is in reality. This is also a reality. But Christy who is in a depth of fantasy cannot recognize his own father. He says; "[. . .] He's not my father. He's a raving maniac would scare the world [. . .]" (112). But he can recognize others like Pegeen who are in fantasy.

Christy does not think and know his father. It has another possible meaning too. Being widely reputed in telling story of killing his own father, Christy, in order to keep his popularity alive, tells a lie there saying that the old man who is biting him is not his father. Having been popular in the story of killing his father can't be so if he tells the truth and be in reality. He is sure if he comes in reality by telling the truth, he will go "back into [his] torment" (113). So fantasy is the source of happiness for him. It helps him in escaping from torment and frustration.

Christy is in frustration when he is compelled to come to reality by recognizing his father. There is a fight between the son and the father. Christy hits his father the second time with a "loy" (114). The latter falls on the ground and he is supposed dead. This is also an actuality. Here Christy is in a great torture both

physically (he is beaten by his father) and mentally (his popularity is going to be destroyed). Thus for him the world of reality is the world of suffering however, he wants to return to fantasy. His fancy does not change. His fancy is to have Pegeen for wedding. In other words, he is in the romantic fantasy, wants wedding with her. Due to the consistent fantasy, he does not accept the proposal of Widow Quin:

Widow Quin: Come on and you'll be no worse than you were last night; and you with a double murder this night to be telling to the girls.

Christy: I'll not leave Pegeen Mike. (114)

He thinks only of Pegeen. Being Pegeen in his mind, his mind cannot think his father who is supposed dead due to the former's hitting.

The people of Mayo prepare to hang Christy for hitting his own father with a spade. They think hanging is an easy and speedy end to punish such a murderer. Nevertheless, the fantasizing girls, instead of punishing him by hanging, they pretend hanging him but their propaganda is to save him:

Sara (Runs in, pulling off one of her petticoats): They're going to hang him. (Holding out petticoat and shawl.) Fit these upon him, and let him run off to the east.

Widow Quin: He's raving now; but we'll fit them on him, and I'll take him, in the ferry, to the Achill boat. (115)

The widow wants to protect such a criminal from hanging because she wants to go with him and marry since she is in deep love with him. She is planning to escape him due to liking of him, for he has been made a hero.

On the other hand, the fantasizing Christy is too careless and indifferent about his punishment, that is hanging; instead he indulges into daydreaming longing only

for Pegeen. When Widow Quin says she will take Christy to the Achill boat he says no; “Leave me go, will you? When I’m thinking of my luck to-day, for [Pegeen] will wed me surely, and I a proven hero in the end of all” (115). He, with the romantic fantasy longing for marrying with Pegeen, wants to fulfill this wish soon. For it, he is determined.

Another fantasizing character, Shawn also fancies of Pegeen. To fulfill his wish, he has to accomplish a greater and more difficult problem. The problem is to cut the tightened love bond between Pegeen and Christy. Since while the latter is in the custody of people for punishment for murdering his father, Shawn is in a great relaxation because he is now sure that Christy and Pegeen are going to separate. When the latter leaves the former, then Shawn’s one of the desires will come to reality being fulfilled. His only wish to wed Pegeen becomes easy for fulfilling. So, he dreams of Pegeen. He, going to her, says that they are about to marry; “It’s a miracle Father Reilly can wed us in the end of all, and we’ll have none to trouble us when his vicious bite is healed” (118). He is confident that his wish will fulfill in reality too. When his wish fulfills, then he will go to the realities from romantic fantasy of love and marriage. Nevertheless, for him this fantasy is not a fantasy but a reality because quasi-reality is a feature of fantasy where fantasy seems real.

At the end of the play, Christy’s father is in reality. Therefore, he requests his son Christy to return his home. However, at this, Pegeen is very sad. She says; “[. . .] Oh my grief, I’ve lost the only playboy of the western world” (118). Here she has highly individualized feelings of affections toward Christy. In other words, she cannot erase the image and imagination of him, his heroic qualities and his brevity although he has been proved as a father-killer. So there is a lover- beloved

relationship between them. It is called romantic fantasy. It is very difficult for her to escape from the fantasy world into the world of reality.

On the other hand, Christy, at the very end of the play, is not willing to go the reality world from the world of fantasy. To say it in other words, he does not escape from fantasizing. At the end, although he is made ready to leave the Mayo coast, he gives blessing to the Mayo people. It is because from these people he learns fantasizing or romancing. Romance or fantasy gives and is giving him relaxation in torment. And it is the Mayo people who make him the hero and brave person. There, being a hero, he makes a wish to get Pegeen, the heroine as his own through fantasizing or daydreaming. Though, explicitly, he cannot fulfill this wish in reality, in place of this wish, he gets another thing, that is once very unhappy and frustrated character, he learns to fantasize or to take romance. Daydreaming makes him happy. His wish of getting Pegeen through daydreaming is to have relaxation. Better than this, in the absence of Pegeen too, he learns to get relaxation, and romance. So, indirectly, he fulfills his wish in reality. He says; “Ten thousand blessings upon all that’s here, for you’ve turned me a likely gaffer in the end of all, the way I’ll go romancing through a romping lifetime from this hour to the dawning of the judgment day. (He goes out)” (117). Therefore, he cannot go out of romantic fantasy.

For Pegeen's father, Michael too, it is very difficult to isolate himself fantasizing because in fantasy or daydream, he is getting pleasure and entertainment. As I have already mentioned in earlier pages of this chapter, drinking is his best source of romantic life. He is too much romantic fellow. He goes romancing with his peasant colleagues Philly and Jimmy, (Implicitly Philly and Jimmy are also keeping on fantasizing.) Drinking provides him pleasure: “By the will of God, we’ll have [. . .] our drinks. Will you draw the porter, Pegeen?” (117). So, he is in romantic fantasy.

Not only the characters of this play but also the characters of *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams live in the world of fantasy. Therefore, there is a good analogy between these plays on the basis of fantasy. In both plays, characters choose life with fantasy because realism for them is too difficult to live. In realism, they cannot overcome the frustrations, pains and hardships. But fantasy for them is a good source of hope, relaxation and satisfaction for unfulfilled desires. It helps them to forget hopelessness and pains of real life situation. For example, Amanda, the main character of *The Glass Menagerie* indulges into fantasy to keep her hopes alive to rescue Laura, her daughter, from a life of dependency. Laura also indulges into fantasy in order to forget her physical and psychological fragility. So do the characters in *The Playboy*.

So far, I have tried to interpret the text *The Playboy of the Western World* by J. M. Synge from the perspective of fantasy. I have interpreted the fantasies of characters taking only two types of fantasies, namely the fantasy of wealth and romantic fantasy. Here ahead I analyze the context in which the characters' fantasies are based on.

The Playboy is a triumphant consummation of the form which subsidaries events and takes for its main theme the growth of fantasy in a mind or a group of minds. In the play, the community blindly accepts the fantasy of a character. For example, when Pegeen says Christy is a brave hero for a parricide, all people believe so. All the women as well as the men love him for killing his own father. This is nothing more than a folk-fantasy.

For the play is not simply the fantasy of Christy Mahon, trailing the awesome and bogus glory of "a man has killed his da" with which Synge is concerned; but with

the fantasy of the whole community who are equal makers of his illusion. The society of Mayo considers imagination and daydream of Christy as a universal truth.

Henrik Ibsen satirizes the folk-fantasy of the Norwegians in much through his plays as the same mood as does Synge that of the Irish through his *The Playboy*. But Ibsen's satire operates at the level of conscious illustration. His is the background glance of the essential critic; Synge provides the thing itself. Although Old Mahon of this play is also one of the citizens of Ireland, he seems Synge's mouthpiece to satirize the folk-fantasy of Irish. At the end of the play when Old Mahon is ready to return his own house with his son, he says, "[My] son and myself will be going our own way, and we'll have great times from this out telling stories of the vally of Mayo, and the fools is here. (To Christy, [. . .]) Come on now" (177). He says the people of Mayo are foolish because they do not know what the realities are but only continue their lives on daydreaming.

The failure of the Mayo community to bring the past Eden into a Utopian future makes the boundary line of nationalist and romantic desire. The hero and the heroine fade into fantasy. The community remains more deeply stricken, more visibly decayed, society is not redeemed. Synge is not writing out the failure of heroism. He is registering its failure in regard to society or, conversely, society's failures in regard to it. To conclude this paragraph, fantasy is not reality.

All the things mentioned in this chapter are just the supporting ideas to the main idea of this chapter. Therefore, the main idea in nutshell is that there is an interesting relationship between fantasy and realism. To repeat it again, the relationship is interesting. It is interesting because these terms are just antonymous to each other, yet they are like the two sides of the same coin; when a person is in fantasy, he is not in reality and vice versa. But the person who is in frustration,

unpleasant realities, hardships of life and tension fantasizes in order to have relaxation at least for the time being. As my analysis show the characters of *The Playboy* escape into fantasy when they are in frustration, tension, etc. Therefore, fantasy or daydreaming is the best source of pleasure, entertainment and relaxation.

CHAPTER – 4 CONCLUSION

The central theory of fantasy is that it provides pleasure and relaxation from frustration, tension, hardship and boredom. It is also the wish fulfilling device and source of creativity. Therefore, fantasy does provide pleasure, relaxation and creativity to and fulfill the wishes and desires of the characters of *The Playboy of the Western World* by J. M. Synge.

The third chapter is an analysis of the drama *The Playboy of the Western World* by applying the theoretical tool – ‘fantasy.’ Fantasy is a broad and vast term. So the analysis of this drama is based on the two types of fantasies- fantasy of wealth and romantic fantasy, on the basis of its four theories: Theories of relaxation, theories of wish fulfillment, theories of escape, and theories of preparation for realistic thinking, that is creativity.

The text is full of fantasies. All the characters of this play are living in the world of fantasy because the world of reality for them is boring, frustrating and full of sorrows. In the case of Christy, the frustrated and painful hero in the beginning of the play is just the opposite from the middle to the end. When he indulges into the fantasy of romance, he gets pleasure in talking with Pegeen about marriage and other things, in loving her and in being loved by her and other members of the community and so on. On the other hand, Pegeen- the fearing, lonely and frustrated heroine in the beginning of the play becomes happy and delighted since she indulges into the fantasy world by making Christy a medium. While talking with him, she is too willing to wed him. In the time of indulgement into the world of fantasy, she completely forgets the frustrated realities and gets pleasure and relaxation. In the depth of fantasy, she is able to fulfill her wish to wed him many times. For them,

fantasy becomes the way to fulfill unfulfilled wishes and to escape from frustrated realities.

Not only these two main characters but also other major and minor characters get relaxation from the indulgence into fantasy and escape into it from the frustrated and sad realities of the outer world. In the case of Widow Quin, the widow, who has killed her husband and buried her children, is in search of a husband to make company for her lonely and boring life. When she hears that Christy is a brave man since he killed his father, she is too willing to wed him. She wants to wed such a person because she is in a deep fantasy. Being in fantasy she is unable to analyze the realities rather tries to move him; win his heart. She loves him; she becomes emotional; she is sexually passionate. Her romantic activities are directed to wed him that is her wish in fantasizing. Shawn, the cowardice fellow and previous lover of Pegeen in order to forget his coward nature and to win her heart for marriage, indulges into the same romantic fantasy. Similarly, Philly, Jimmy and Michael indulge into romantic fantasy by drinking which provides them relaxation and other characters also do follow the way of fantasy of romance to have relaxation and escape from frustrations.

Fantasy is not only the way to escape from frustrations and to have relaxation but also is a way of wish fulfillment. The wish that is impossible to be fulfilled in the world of reality can easily be fulfilled in fantasy world. For instance, Widow Quin cannot marry Christy in reality but ample images of wedding him successfully and easily are in her mind.

She fulfills her wish of wedding Christy through the fantasy of romance. If we go through the text, we can find many images of fulfillment of wishes of different characters. Christy fulfills his wish of wedding Pegeen and she too fulfills her wish

of wedding Christy not in reality but in fantasy. It is very easy to fulfill a wish in imagination that was unfulfilled in reality. So daydreaming is a wish-fulfilling world that is impossible to fulfill in reality.

Fantasy is a world of wish fulfillment. Along with this, it is a world of creativity, as in the case of Christy who learns the ways of creativity in the fantasy world and applies the ways in artistic production. By learning to be a hero and a courageous man in fantasy, he really becomes the hero and courageous man by winning the mule race for which he was incapable to do before indulging into fantasy.

Similarly, the text is full of fantasy of wealth. If we see, for example, the case of Old Mahon, he indulges into the world of fantasy of wealth. He wants to be a rich man overnight. He wants to be the rich man by getting marriage of his son, Christy with Widow Casey, a wealthy woman. In the fantasy world, Old Mahon fulfills his wish, but reality he is always poor. In order to forget the sadness caused by poverty, he indulges into the fantasy of wealth. The same is the case with Christy, Widow Quin, Shawn and others. Therefore, fantasy of wealth, like romantic fantasy, is the source of wish fulfillment and pleasure for life.

In the first chapter, there is the discussion and mentioning of the facts that the play is a real piece of literature but J. M. Synge uses fantasies in it. If any one goes through it and analyzes, he or she will find it more fantastic than realistic and so do I. Why is it so? Actually, this is the statement of problem of this dissertation. In addition, in my thesis proposal, I had made an answer for this question in title called 'hypothesis'. My hypothesis was to explore the relationship between reality and fantasy. In this dissertation, I have tried my best to prove this hypothesis. Here my answer is when a person is in fantasy is not in reality and vice versa. When the world of reality is too difficult and too boring to live in, s/he escapes into the world of

fantasy of any type so that s/he can easily and quickly have relaxation and solve difficult problem/s that was/were unsolvable in actuality. One returns to the world of reality when she fulfills the wish in fantasy and learns creativity. Thus the purpose of the thesis has been to look at / read the play from the point of view of fantasy and its associates like imagination, daydreaming, dreaming, creativity, realism and so on. Fantasy cannot be discussed without its associates, as a man cannot be a man without his bodily organs. The major purpose of the study has been to read the use of fantasy in such a realistic play *The Playboy of the Western World* where J. M. Synge expresses the frustrated minds of Irish peasants and the way out of their frustrations.

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