

Tribhuvan University

Marriage as a Choice: A Study in J. M. Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled, “Marriage as a Choice: A Study in J. M. Synge’s *The Playboy of the Western World*” is my original work carried out as a Master’s student at the Department of English at Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus except to the extent that assistance from others in presentation style, and linguistic expression are duly acknowledged.

All sources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no material which led to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree at Tribhuvan University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement made in the thesis.

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Letter of Approval

This Thesis entitled “Marriage as a Choice: A Study in J. M. Synge’s *The Playboy of the Western World*” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus, by Deepa Thapa, has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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Abstract

The Playboy of the Western World is about the conflict between Pegeen Mike and her relation to some male characters such as Shawn Keogh, Christy, her father Michael James, etc. Through the research work, the researcher proves that a girl who does not want to submit herself to the person, who does not respect her, highlights women's freedom and choices in marriage. In the beginning, Pegeen does not realize this but later as she knows about the people how they treat her. Pegeen thinks that she should be protected as her father asks Shawn to be with her in the pub. Moreover, modern feminism is unlike traditional feminism in which it focuses on the humanity as a basic given fact of life as well. Women are humans, so they enjoy equal human rights/feelings like respect and love. In the name of reserving their rights, if they forget their humanist manner, then it can be destructive.

The play presents Pegeen as a weak girl in the beginning who needs someone to protect her, slowly she understands how she is kept under illusion that she is weak. And she emboldens her position. First Shawn gives her hint that he cannot stay together with her during the night because of religious restrictions. She then transfers to Christy Mahon and praises him until she knows his reality. Then she hates him calling him a playboy of the western world. At last, she realizes that women should define themselves not allow anyone to define them, opening the way to define their own position in society.

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Chapter I

Introduction: J. M. Synge and His Plays

John Millington Synge (1871-1909), is regarded as the most influential Irish dramatist of the twentieth century, burst on to the scene in 1903 when his first play, *The Shadow of the Glen*, caused a stir among audiences and critics alike during its opening run in Dublin. P. J. Mathews states that he has left many footprints in dramatic world inspiring young people. Mathews highlights: “Despite the relatively small corpus of work he left behind, Synge’s stature has continued to grow steadily among audiences, readers and critics since his early death over a century ago” (3). It means whoever read or watch his plays get many ideas.

Mathews argues that Synge’s stature as a dramatist of international importance was assured early on and continues to grow. Synge’s works have been studied through different perspectives of nationalist, liberal humanist, formalist, feminist, Marxist, historical revisionist and postcolonial critical agendas. Born with firm roots in the landed aristocracy of County Wicklow and into a resolutely conservative Anglo-Irish family, Synge not only witnessed the decline of the ascendancy but also contributed to the demise of Anglo-Irish privilege. His involvement in the turbulent early years of Ireland’s national theatre – the Abbey Theatre – was crucial to its success in securing a foothold at the center of Irish cultural life and debate. Mathews adds: “With his unique perspectives on both the decline of the ascendancy and the rising trajectory of nationalist cultural revival, Synge was well placed to diagnose the ills of Irish society and culture” (6).

Synge started his education in Dublin, and after graduating from Trinity College, he left his native land and went to Germany with the intent of becoming a professional musician. His fondness of music took him to Europe and this allowed

him to develop a musical ear. About Synge Ann Saddlemyer says that his interest in literature started from his childhood as he was a boy. Saddlemyer postulates: "His fascination with literature grew as much as much out of his musicianship as from his boyhood studies of nature (60). Robin Skelton comments that music was of prime importance for him, and he could even 15 make words function like music. He also draws an analogy between music and drama in terms of their goals. Furthermore, he studied at the Sorbonne in Paris and read extensively in European literature. William Butler Yeats, who is regarded as the leader of the Irish Renaissance, encountered Synge in Paris in 1896.

The research work is about Pegeen, the main character of *The Playboy of the Western World* who gets lesson from the male characters especially who are very close to her. In the beginning of the play, she is presented as dependent girl who trusts her father to choose a right person for her. She is with Shawn Keogh in the pub but he is very shy to stay with her. Then her attitude changes and transforms to Christy Mahon until she knows his reality. The thesis focuses on the various aspects of the play how J. M. Synge depicts the characters, mainly females. In the beginning of the twentieth century, women could not decide their position rightly. On the one hand, they wanted to follow their parents for the selection of their husbands. On the other hand, they wanted to get freedom for their choices. The play gives hints of such limbo for the protagonist, Pegeen.

The thesis studies the depiction the pictures of a girl who does not want to submit herself to the person who does not respect her. It makes an argument that marriage is not the matter of sacrifice, it has to be a choice of a woman. In the beginning, Pegeen does not realize this but later as she knows about the people close to her treats her, she comes to know everything. Pegeen thinks that she should be

protected as her father asks Shawn to be with her in the pub. When Shawn rejects to be with her, she thinks that he is timid and coward then she happens to see Christy. She presumes that he is nice person.

With the passage of time, she comes to know that he is actually a bad person killing his own father. Pegeen decides to forget about them and wishes to lead her life in her own way. She does not show interest to get married because she realizes that marriage is merely a transformation towards being dominated. Despite his crime, Pegeen likes him when he decides to accompany her whole night. However, another woman likes him. Her name is Widow Quin. Widow Quin tells Christy that Pegeen has relationship with Shawn. Yet, she assures him that Pegeen likes to married to Christy. Widow Quin tells the story that Christy killed his father because of the conflict over the discussion about the marriage between Christy and Quin. Christy does not want to marry her but his father forces him to do so. The story takes turning point when Old Mahon appears being bandaged in the head. It means he is still alive. Christy proposes marriage with Pegeen and she accepts despite the fact that Michael James insists she will marry Shawn. Pegeen defies her father and announces her intention to marry Christy, and Michael encourages Shawn to fight Christy for her. When Shawn cowardly refuses, Michael decides to bless Christy and Pegeen's match. Then Pegeen hates him and burns him with a hot rod. Shawn comes to her and asks her hand but she does not accept him being cowardice. At the end of the play, Pegeen laments that she has lost the only Playboy of the Western World.

Thus, the play deals with the conflict between Pegeen Mike and her relation to some male characters such as Shawn Keogh, Christy, her father Michael James, etc. Pegeen is at a pub and there is darkness outside. She stays alone there as her father asks Shawn Keogh to be with her, as he has to attend a wake. Shawn rejects the

proposal because he thinks that it is bad thing to be with her alone before marriage though they are about to get married soon. At the meantime, Christy Mahon enters the pub. It is revealed that he has escaped from the police for the accusation of killing his father.

Likewise, the play raises the voices of women in new way. The play was written at the beginning of the twentieth century when women were about to be conscious of their position. Pegeen is aware now that she wants to decide about her life herself. She does not want to listen to her father for the choice of her future husband. She thinks that marriage is a kind of sacrifice to a man because of unequal relationship between husband and wife. As it is the beginning period of feminism, Pegeen is not much clear about her position. She cannot decide what is right and wrong. However, she does not feel regret as she cannot make her future husband either of the prospective. She merely says that she has only lost the play of the western world. It is because of her rising freedom under the influence of feminism. Different critics analyse the play in various ways:

Michael Billington says that J. M. Synge has attacked on Iris mythmaking. Billington articulates that there is no match between story and the real deed in which Pegeen was in illusion in the beginning:

There is still fun to be had from Synge's comic invention and attack on the Irish propensity for myth-making: as the publican's daughter, Pegeen Mike, finally tells Christy, 'There's a great gap between a gallows story and a dirty deed.' But, even in its own day, Synge's play was outshone by Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island*, which offers a far more subversive satire on Irish role-playing. Synge's ideas have also been absorbed, and pushed to wilder extremes. (1)

Billington, therefore, alleges that the play represents the Irish culture that reality and idealism are different in the country because of which women are in illusion.

Charles Spencer analyzes the play and says that there is misunderstanding between Christy Mahon's action and local people's attitudes towards him. Spencer opposes what locals consider him as a hero. He alleges:

The action turns on the character of Christy Mahon, who turns up at a rural pub and announces that he is on the run after murdering his bullying father. Instead of condemning his action the locals fete him as a hero, and watching the play it is impossible not to think of those apparently respectable citizens on both sides of the sectarian divide who covertly supported the vile actions of terrorists during the Troubles. (2)

Therefore, according to Spencer, the play depicts the attitudes of people towards characters. Christy is a bad character but he is taken as a hero. He questions the power of justice of locals that they do not evaluate rightly to Christy because he is bad but he gets praise from them.

Another critic Daniella Cugini postulates that the play covers several themes representing Irish people and their attitudes. Cugini seems to suggest that people understand the meaning different from what Synge wishes to convey. Common people believe in the surface nature of human beings as it is manifested through Christy whom everyone loves as a hero. Cugini states:

Christy Mahon has killed his tyrannical father with a loy. Stumbling dishevelled into Michael Flaherty's tavern on the west coast of Ireland, his story seems less to frighten the locals than make him the new town hero; the men think him bold, and the town's women come in droves

even Flaherty's daughter, the barmaid Pegeen, falls in love with him.

(2)

Apart from the theme, the musicality of the play attracts the readers and the audience in the play according to Cugini.

Similarly, modern feminism goes beyond the traditional definition of the term. Traditionally, women were dominated by patriarchy. They did not have any say to their desire before and after marriage. They just followed males' orders. They felt themselves inferior to males physically and psychologically. However, modern women do not feel themselves weak and inferior rather strong and dominant. Mari Jo Buhle argues that women have tried to come out of the traditional way of confining themselves to marriage because it is a way of exploiting women. Buhle postulates:

Female desire was finally emerging from the shadows, and this epochal event signified much more than what Michel Foucault later termed 'a veritable discursive explosion'. The gynecologist Clelia Mosher had surveyed her clients born between 1850 and 1880 and found that while the majority usually enjoyed . . . with their husbands they preferred to engage in moderation. Women born closer to the turn of the century appeared considerably more enthusiastic and, at the same time, less willing to confine their ecstasy to marriage. (25-26)

In this way, feminism is attached to psychology how women consider themselves.

There is nothing like absolute meaning or definition of something about the term. To make their position, they should rise above their psychological thought they are inferior, according to Buhle.

Various critics have analyzed the psycho-feminism in multiple ways. Mari Jo Buhle says that now feminism is not only the voice for equality with men but also

their marriage, career, motherhood. They have started thinking in terms of their attitude towards the sex. She says: “At best, feminism signaled a woman’s desire to combine a career with marriage and motherhood; at worst, in its most ‘militant’ form, feminism represented a sublimation of women’s sex drive into careers. But to most Americans feminism seemed merely passe” (89-90). Thus, they want to go beyond marriage for their life enhancement unlike traditional women.

Similarly, Susan Speer says that feminism is only a discourse in which people define it what they understand. Speer argues that when feminism is taken to discourse, it becomes more normative than specific. Spur states:

When we use discourse to communicate we ‘naturalize’ and perpetuate oppressive understandings of gender and ‘gender role behaviour’ - that is, we present them as timeless, rational and natural. These understandings become deeply ingrained in our commonsense views about the world, and become regarded as normative and expectable. (1)

Spur implies that discourse leads women to naturalizing them they are inferior to men.

Modern women do not consider themselves only exploited and dominated by patriarchy but they also regard how they think about sexuality through Freudian theory. Mahri Jo Buhle argues that feminism should be studied in respect to psychology because women are suffering from sexual repression. It comes from the cultural norms and values. Buhle expresses:

Freud’s studies of anxiety neurosis and neurasthenia not only vividly document the baneful consequences of sexual repression but offer an irrefutable case for honesty in sexual relations The architect of the libido theory thus took his place as the leading expert on the dangers of prudery. Feminists, however, placed a distinctive spin on Freudianism

by declaring it a handmaiden to women's sexual emancipation. (22)

Buhle, therefore, comments that Freudian concept is wrong to put women in a subordinate position. Feminism has advanced so much because without understanding their psychological phenomena, the study is incomplete.

Moreover, Helen Cixous says that women have started to speak aloud about their problems. They open their mouth whenever they think that males dominate them. Cixous expresses: "Every woman has known the torture of beginning to speak aloud, heart beating as if to break, occasionally falling into loss of language, ground, and language slipping out from under her, because for woman speaking- even just opening her mouth – in public is something rash, a transgression" (233).

The modern feminism does not only study the women's plight in one way but it looks at the other scenarios such as changing positions of women. Unlike traditional feminism, it studies how women's perspectives change from time to time according to the situation they face.

Chapter II

Theoretical Perspective: Modern Feminism and Female Identity

Modern feminism is related to multiple aspects of feminism. Unlike traditional feminism, it studies wide areas of women's studies. Kate Soper postulates that modern feminism has many scopes in society. She provides suggestion to women and says that the women should not forget that they are human. In the name of reserving their rights, if they forget their humanist manner, then it can be destructive. She advises women: "Feminism should be both humanist and feminist – for the paradox of the poststructuralist collapse of the feminine and the move to 'in-difference' is that it reintroduces something not entirely dissimilar from the old humanistic goal of sexual parity and reconciliation" (292).

Julia Kristeva focuses on the psychoanalytic perspective of feminism and says that the western knowledge that is established throughout the history is deceptive because it distinguishes between civilized and uncivilized in terms of what they follow patriarchy or not. Kristeva poses:

The psychoanalytic intervention within western knowledge has a fundamentally deceptive effect. Psychoanalysis, critical and dissolvent, cuts through political illusions, fantasies and beliefs to the extent that they consist in providing only one meaning, an uncivilizable ultimate meaning, to human behavior. Is such a situation can lead to despair within the polis, we must not forget that it is also a source of lucidity and ethics. (229)

Thus, there are many aspects to understand the cultures using feminist approach. Patriarchy dominates women psychologically so that women assimilate everything what men make the system.

Talking about the child parent relationship, a part of psychoanalytic study, Bertrand Russel asserts that society has given unnecessary interpretation to the child parent relationship. Referring to Malinowski, Russel says that it is not necessary to have oedipal relationship when a parent loves her/his child. He says that son father relationship is more harmonious than mother and son. He writes:

Indeed, it is very bad manners to suggest a resemblance between a brother and sister, or between a child and its mother, and even the most obvious resemblances are fiercely denied He found the relation of father and son a more harmonious and affectionate one than it often is among civilised people, and, as might have been expected, he found no trace of the Oedipus complex. (12)

From the psychological perspective, there are baseless interpretations about child parent relation. Father is more passionate to his son than it is expected.

While talking about father's interest in children, Russel argues that a child is the outcome of father's ego. So father wants to manipulate his child and wants to make him/her whatever he wishes. Father seems to be selfish and jealous with the children if they do not follow him. It is because of the reasons, daughters are supposed to do everything what he wishes for. According to Russell:

A legitimate child is a continuation of a man's ego, and his affection for the child is a form of egoism. If, on the other hand, the child is not legitimate, the putative father is tricked into lavishing care upon a child with whom he has no biological connection. Hence the discovery of fatherhood led to the subjection of woman as the only means of securing their virtue – a subjection first physical and then mental. (14)

Russell talks about the legitimate child, which is the continuation of his ego. It shows

that men might have relationship with multiple women. Whatever the case it, the supposed father or real father, in all cases father is responsible for the child. There is mixture of physical and mental attachment to the child.

Russell also talks about marriage and says that marriage is a sacrifice for a woman because once she is attached to a man it is quite difficult for her to get separation both physically and psychologically. Although divorce takes place, the effect is quite different between man and woman. Man can easily settle with a new family while a woman cannot. He expresses:

Many wives and children form a valuable property, and will therefore enhance the already privileged position of their owners. Thus, the primary function of a wife comes to be that of a lucrative domestic animal, and her sexual function becomes subordinated. At this level of civilization, it is as a rule easy for a man to divorce his wife, though he must in that case restore to her family any dowry that she may have brought. It is, however, in general impossible for a wife to divorce her husband. (50)

From the statement, it is obvious that traditionally marriage is taken as only selling women into the hands of men. Men are in the privileged position while women are subordinated. The children also come in the same position as the wives. Patriarchy has tricked women in such a way that women cannot feel free even after divorce.

Likewise, James J. Ponzetti says that the difference between boys and girls are not natural but cultural because boys are taught to be strong and girls are weak and to be protected. When they grow, their psychology remains same and they expect the same. In marriage, naturally, women are sought who are beautiful and cute while men are sought who can protect, love, and care the wives. If men are searching equality

with women, they the men can be called sissy or women like. Let's consider the lines:

Boys are taught to be strong and brave, not to show weakness, to maneuver effectively within the social system, and to treat visitors with due hospitality. They are also taught their obligations to preserve the family honor, by guarding their sisters and by undertaking blood vengeance when so required. Although boys are given more responsibility than girls, the rules governing their behavior are more flexible. (146)

As Ponzetti says, there is difference between girl and boy in terms of rearing them. Boys are not only strong from the point of view of physical power but also from psychological point of view as they grown in society. conversely, women's homely behaviors are transferred to their habits later as they grow and married. Not only the boys feel proud of their power but also the girls feel themselves submissive in front of them. Their psychology is formed to be submissive and weak. Sometimes, they are not written or told what to do, but the women automatically understand to do according to the rules set by patriarchy.

Elaine Showalter has identified three phases of modern women's literary development: the *feminine* phase (1840-80), during which women writers imitated the dominant male traditions; the *feminist* phase (1880-1920), when women advocated for their rights; and the *female* phase (1920- present), when dependency upon opposition- that is, on uncovering misogyny in male texts- is replaced by the rediscovery of women's texts and women. Women's literature is "an imaginative continuum [of] certain patterns, themes, problems, and images, from generation to generation" ("Feminist Criticism" 11). Within the present or "female" phase, Showalter describes four current models of difference taken up by many feminists around the world:

biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and cultural.

Showalter's biological model is the most problematic: if the text can be said in some way to mirror the body, then does that reduce women writers merely to bodies? Yet Showalter praises the often shocking frankness of women writers who related the intimacies of the female experience of the female body.

Showalter's linguistic model asserts that women are speaking men's language as a foreign tongue; purging language of 'sexism' is not going far enough. Still, feminist critics see the very act of speaking- and of having a language- as a victory for women within a silencing patriarchal culture. Tillie Olsen demands to hear women's voices despite impediments to creativity encountered by women; in her 1978 work *Silences* she cites "those mute inglorious Miltons: those whose working hours are all struggle for existence; the barely educated; the illiterate; women. Their silence is the silence of the centuries as to how life was, is for most of humanity" (327). Silences arise from "circumstances" of being born "into the wrong class, race or sex, being denied education, becoming numbed by economic struggle, muzzled by censorship or distracted or impeded by the demands of nurturing" (Guerin 225). But women's deployment of silence can also be "resistance to the dominant discourse," Olsen notes, such as Emily Dickinson's "slant truths" or the inner dialogues of such "quiet" characters as Charlotte Brontë's *Janes Eyre* or Virginia Woolf's *Lily Briscoe* (5).

Likewise, Showalter's psychoanalytic model identifies gender difference in the psyche and also in the artistic process. Her cultural model places feminist concerns in social contexts, acknowledging class, racial, national, and historical differences and determinants among women. It also offers a collective experience that unites women over time and space- a "binding force" (186-88). Today it seems that two general tendencies, one emphasizing Showalter's biological, linguistic, and psychoanalytical

models, and the other emphasizing Showalter's cultural model, account for most feminist theories. On the one hand, certain theories may be said to have an essentialist argument for inherent feminine traits- whether from biology, language, or psychology- that have been undervalued, misunderstood, or exploited by a patriarchal culture because the genders are quite different. These theories focus on sexual difference and sexual politics and are often aimed at defining or establishing a feminist literary canon or re-interpreting and re-visioning literature (and culture and history and so forth) from a less patriarchal slant.

Feminism is not a limited term now that is only about normative women across the world, but it has become individual. Feminists study the women in particular such as how their experiences are different from one culture to another. In a research article, Mary E. John argues that issues of sexuality are main movements of women in future. According to her, prostitution and sex work have drawn the public in modern time. They are related to cultures as well. John claims:

It is at such a moment of considerable self-questioning about the future direction of feminist struggles that issues of sexuality in particular - of sexual orientation and choice, the stigmatisation of sexual minorities and debates around prostitution and sex-work - have forced fresh struggles, debates and controversies into the public domain. Moreover, this is happening at a time when globalisation and liberalisation are also contributing to vast changes in our public and private cultures, as new desires and modes of sexualisation are on their way to becoming normative. (714)

Thus, women's next struggle is to position women how they are defining their roles publicly and privately. As the modern technologies are being invented their new

desires and modes of sexualization are increasing.

Moreover, in *The Dialectics of Sex*, Shulamith Firestone claims that patriarchy- the systematic subordination of women- is rooted in the biological inequality of the sexes. Her argument is bound to trouble the orthodox Marxist, for she considers relations of reproduction rather than of production to be the driving force in history. If we want to understand why women are subordinate to men, we require a biological, not an economic, explanation. Firestone explains that we should attribute the inequality between the sexes not to the observable, biological differences between them. According to Firestone: “But to the fact that men's and women's differing reproductive roles led to the first division of labor at the origins of class, as well as furnishing the paradigm of caste discrimination based on biological characteristics “ (73).

Firestone believes that when women and men stop playing substantially different roles in the reproductive drama, it will be possible to eliminate all sexual roles. She is convinced that these roles have been imposed upon people in order to shore up the biological family. When technology is able to perfect artificial ways for people to reproduce, the need for the biological family will disappear and, with it, the need to impose genital heterosexuality as a means of ensuring human reproduction.

Firestone and Piercy postulate that motherhood is the cause of oppression, which has been challenged by many feminists. They insist that it is a mistake for women to give up biological motherhood for ex utero child gestation because women's oppression is not likely to end. Azizah al-Hibri observe that women give up the only source of men's dependence on them:

Technological reproduction does not equalize the natural reproductive power structure- it inverts it. It appropriates the reproductive power

from the women and places it in the hands of men who now control both the sperm and the reproductive technology that could make it indispensable. . . . It 'liberates' them from their "humiliating dependency" on women in order to propagate. (al-Hibri qtd in Tong 78)

Far from liberating women, reproductive technology will further consolidate men's power over women. Therefore, some feminists argue, no woman should, in an act of unreflective defiance against patriarchy, deprive herself of the satisfaction that comes from not only bearing a child but also playing a major role in his or her personal development.

Similarly, in her *Sexual Politics* (1970), Millet argues that sex is political primarily because the male-female relationship is the paradigm for all power relationships. Patriarchal ideology, according to Millet, exaggerates biological differences between men and women, making certain that men always have the dominant, or 'masculine', roles and that women always have the subordinate or 'feminine', ones. This ideology is particularly powerful because through conditioning, men usually secure the apparent consent of the very women they oppress. They do this through institutions such as the academy, the church, and the family, each of which justifies and reinforces women's subordination to men with the result that most women internalize a sense of inferiority to men. Should a woman refuse to accept patriarchal ideology and should she manifest her mistrust by casting off her femininity- that is, her submissiveness / subordination- men will use coercion to accomplish what conditioning has failed to achieve. Intimidation, observed Millet, is everywhere in patriarchy. The streetwise woman realizes that if she wants to survive in patriarchy, she had better act 'feminine', or else she may be subjected to 'a very of

cruelties and barbarities' (96).

Because male control of the public and private worlds is what constitutes patriarchy, male control must be eliminated if women are to be liberated. To eliminate male control, men and women have to eliminate gender- specifically, sexual status, role, and temperament- as it has been constructed under patriarchy.

Similarly, with the advent of third wave feminism, there are multiple outlooks looking at women unlike first and second wave feminism. They include ego-cultural feminists, the radicals, the liberals, and the electoral, academic, ecofeminists and so on. The main issues women raise today were prefaced by the work done by the previous waves of women. The new women are still working to subjugate the disparities in male and female pay and the reproductive rights of women. The new women are working to end violence against women in their nation as well as others. They say that they are still fighting for acceptance and a true understanding of the term 'feminism,' it should be noted that women have made tremendous progress since the first wave.

At the end of the twentieth century, the feminism has multitude perspective to understand women. The developing process is going on and finding out new definition about feminism. Shelley Budgeon argues that the areas of feminism are expanding in many sectors after the introduction of third wave feminism. Budgeon postulates:

Since the early 1990s a set of literatures which identifies a 'third wave' of feminism has been developing, often provoking lively debates about where feminism has been and where it is going. The concerns examined in this literature and the problems that are identified are linked to the second wave of Western feminism associated with the

1970s and 1980s. . . . Third wave feminist assessments of the state of feminism therefore aim to offer a corrective to established tenets, so that feminism may have greater resonance with women's lives today.

(1-2)

She says that third wave feminism is not completely separate from second wave feminism. It is in the process of developing new ideas. It does not remain constant in any established ideas but it goes on searching new ideas on it.

Budgeon says that the structure and meanings of feminism are changing day by day. There are many questions raised for the position of women because there is no equal role of women all over the world. The modern feminism thus does not satisfy with the things the women have. The factors of changing definition may include economy, society, cultural diversity, information technology and so on. Budgeon further expresses:

The contemporary context is one in which the structure and meaning of gender relations are undergoing substantial questioning, due in part to advancements achieved by women; societal changes brought about by the restructuring of economies; increased cultural diversity; the proliferation of techno culture and the expansion of information technologies; the dynamics of globalization and the rise of global capitalism; crises of environmental degradation; diversifying sexualities and intimate practices; changing demographics; and declining economic vitality (4).

It means it is accepted that feminism itself is characterized by diversity, fragmentation, and a series of internal contestations. One response to the uncertainty resulting from all of these developments is to declare that feminism and the study of

gender has reached a state of crisis in which there is little agreement about why the study of gender is still relevant and how best to proceed with the project of feminism.

Thus, feminism is a study of women in different phases. Unlike traditional women, the meanings of feminism have been changing as women get experience in patriarchal society. Previously, women were considered weak and dominated but now the situation has changed. Women have become aware and they can decide themselves about their lives. With the advent of third wave feminism, the normative study of women is once upon a time story. Nowadays, women focus on individual experiences, which are different from one woman to another.

Chapter III

Marriage as a Choice: A Study in *The Playboy of the Western World*

The thesis focuses on the study of feminism related to modern feminism and third wave feminism. Unlike traditional feminism, modern feminism stresses on the multiple aspects of women's position in society. *The Playboy of the Western World* revolves around Pegeen, the protagonist, who is waiting in a shop in the darkness and her to-be-husband Shawn is requested to accompany her. Pegeen is not a traditional girl who has enough ability to make decision about her life. She believes in the freedom of women and she does not force Shawn either to stay with her. From her conversation it is revealed that she is modern girl: “[PEGEEN] (taking up the defense of her property): What right have you to be making game of a poor fellow for minding the priest, when it's your own the fault is, not paying a penny pot- boy to stand along with me and give me courage in the doing of my work” (1.1.172-76)? Here Pegeen advises her father Michael not to force Shawn to stay there because Shawn regards that being together with a girl before marriage is a crime or sin, according to the law of religion.

The play is based on the lives of the inhabitants of the Aran Islands off the western coast of Ireland. The play has been presented realistically in such a way that the readers feel they are directly talking to the real people. The play focuses on the reception given to Christy Mahon as he wanders into a small Irish village, declaring that he has just murdered his father. The villagers initially embrace Christy, determining that his courageous act has made him the playboy of the western world. The good manner and courageous nature of Christy changes as the story develops. In the process of interaction between Christy and the villagers there is test on their judgemental power and they regard him bad at last. The play depicts the power of

Pegeen whether she is capable of choosing right person or not.

Pegeen is aware of her position and maintains that Michael should accompany her. She is not afraid of men like traditional women. She expresses her desires very clearly and confidently. Although she feels alone, she does not hesitate to ask for help with him, which is the feature of modern feminism. Moreover, she is assertive and courageous who makes her own decision on her own. As she hears that Christy killed his father she gives her argument and explains about it in her own way:

PEGEEN (coming from counter). He's done nothing, so. (To

CHRISTY.) If you didn't commit murder or a bad, nasty thing; or false coining, or robbery, or butchery, or the like of them, there isn't anything that would be worth your troubling for to run from now. You did nothing at all (1.1.278-83).

She tries to protect him from being punished because she thinks that he is an innocent person.

Pegeen's psychological trait is very strong. She provides suggestions to Christy and guides him indirectly. She is daring and courageous girl who has self-decisive power. She does not believe other people say but she listens to herself about Christy. These lines prove: "PEGEEN (very kindly and persuasively). Let you stop a short while anyhow. Aren't you destroyed walking with your feet in bleeding blisters, and your whole skin needing washing like a Wicklow sheep" (1.1.407-11). She likes to take care of him and gives proper advice as he needs.

There is conflict between Pegeen and other characters regarding Christy's murder to his father. Despite the fact that there is high possibility of murdering his own father, Pegeen is not ready to believe them. She is of the strong belief that he did not kill his own father against the interpretations people are making about him.

Pegeen attempts to prove that father and son relationship is not bad as much as people are taking it. However, other people such as Philly and Jimmy do not think positively: They respectively state:

PHILLY. The peelers is fearing him, and if you'd that lad in the house there isn't one of them would come smelling around if the dogs itself were lapping poteen from the dung-pit of the yard.

JIMMY. Bravery's a treasure in a lonesome place, and a lad would kill his father, I'm thinking, would face a foxy devil with a pitchpike on the flags of hell. (1.1.366-72)

Even Philly and Jimmy are not ready to believe that Christy killed his father. They are of the strong belief that there are many misinterpretations regarding their relationship.

Pegeen is a modern girl who is confident about her life. She advises Christy to follow his needs as he discloses that he is hiding from law. Traditional women were not confident like her but she can make her decision alone. Pegeen states:

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.

CHRISTY (overcome with wonder). And I'd be safe this place from the searching law? (1.1.384-90)

From the conversation it is revealed that Pegeen is assertive and confident to analyze what is right and wrong. She is a modern girl.

Pegeen opposes traditional thought of following superstitious beliefs as Shawn does. Shawn believes that it is not good idea to stay together with Pegeen when there is no one else before marriage. However, Pegeen takes it negatively as she believes

that they can stay together and he can guard her in darkness. The lines read:

SHAWN. There'd be no harm staying now, I'm thinking, and himself
in it too.

PEGEEN. You wouldn't stay when there was need for you, and let you
step off nimble this time when there's none.

SHAWN. Didn't I say it was Father Reilly...

PEGEEN. Go on, then, to Father Reilly (in a jeering tone), and let him
put you in the holy brotherhoods, and leave that lad to me. (1.1.425-
32)

From the exchange of conversation, it is interpreted that Pegeen is courageous girl who goes beyond the traditional rules and regulations and decides about herself. She does not agree with Shawn's ideas that they should follow Father Reilly.

Pegeen and Christy have long conversation and Pegeen praises him so much that he may belong to high class. She has simple logic that he has little and small feet and quality name. She thinks that outer appearance determines the inner personality. She might praise him compassionately so that they can continue their life for a long time. Christy also praises in the same way. From the conversation, the position of the boy and the girl is same. There is no disparity between them in the context of gender. They express:

PEGEEN (standing beside him, watching him with delight). You
should have had great people in your family, I'm thinking, with the
little, small feet you have, and you with a kind of a quality name,
the like of what you'd find on the great powers and potentates of
France and Spain.

CHRISTY (with pride). We were great, surely, with wide and windy

acres of rich Munster land. PEGEEN. Wasn't I telling you, and you a fine, handsome young fellow with a noble brow? (1.1. 446-54)

The third wave feminism puts both sexes in the same position. It says that patriarchy society does not have exploiting nature to dominate women. Women are aware and they understand their position.

However, the girl does not find any negativity when she knows that Christy killed his own father. It is matter of great offence that one person kills his/her father. It means she still believes in the power of males that is greater than females. Although she does not realize that she is weak and dependent, her psychology says so. She says that she is afraid of such activity while he is brave. Thus, it can be deduced that Christy is brave when he can carry out such criminal activities. She asserts:

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.

PEGEEN (she puts sack on settle and beats it up). I never killed my
 father. I'd be afeard to do that, except I was the like of yourself
 with blind rages tearing me within, for I'm thinking you should
 have had great tussling when the end was come. (1.1. 490-99)

It means she does not take it negatively; rather she thinks that it should be great tussle that caused him to kill his father.

There is long conversation between Pegeen and Christy and they have different views on father child relationship. Christy is supposed to have killed his

father while Pegeen respects her father. She believes that to blame father is a bad thing while Christy treats his father badly. They express:

CHRISTY. The divil a one, though he'd sons and daughters walking all great states and territories of the world, and not a one of them, to this day, but would say their seven curses on him, and they rousing up to let a cough or sneeze, maybe, in the deadness of the night.

PEGEEN (nodding her head). Well, you should have been a queer lot. I never cursed my father the like of that, though I'm twenty and more years of age. (1.1.501-08)

There is a great difference between Christy and Pegeen while they talk about their respective fathers. Pegeen has attachment with her father while Christy is not. It is because of psychological aspect. Freudian thinkers believe that there is oedipal relationship between a child and a parent of opposite sex while conflict between a child and a parent of same sex. Same thing happens in the relationship. From another perspective, it can be interpreted that Pegeen needs her father to guide and protect. This sense of dependency transfers to her husband, as she gets married. Thus, she is searching for a strong and protective husband like Christy who can stay and accompany her until she knows the reality.

When Pegeen and Christy are talking, the spectators (readers) can guess that there is vast difference between men and women. Men are to struggle, suffer and learn so many things from difficulty while women are not for the purpose. As Christy tells his story how he roamed here and there for many days, it is surprising for Pegeen. Pegeen feels herself timid and coward while it is very common for Christy. In other words, if we want to bring about any change in society claiming that men and women should be equal, first, everyone should change mentally and psychologically. Women

should think that they are as capable was men in every manner. When she praises him despite his crime, it indicates that she regards herself weak and coward. Christy postulates:

CHRISTY. I did, God help me, and there I'd be as happy as the
 sunshine of St. Martin's Day, watching the light passing the north
 or the patches of fog, till I'd hear a rabbit starting to screech and
 I'd go running in the furze. Then, when I'd my full share, I'd
 come walking down where you'd see the ducks and geese
 stretched sleeping on the highway of the road, and before I'd pass
 the dunghill, I'd hear himself snoring out—a loud, lonesome snore
 he'd be making all times, the while he was sleeping; and he a
 man'd be raging all times, the while he was waking, like a gaudy
 officer you'd hear cursing and damning and swearing oaths.

(1.1.520-28)

Here, he is clarifying how he has to finish his father. She listens to him very carefully. She does not have any kind of aggression with him. It may be because of her anger with her father and Shawn who regard her weak and dependent. She does not like her father because he does not trust her. She does not like Shawn because he is coward and does not accompany her in the night. Christy is, thus, her special person from whom she manifests her unfulfilled desire due to her father.

There is competition between Widow Quin and Pegeen to get love from Christy. They try to seduce him using their skills. Both of them do not worry for the murder of his own father. Instead, he gets respect from them until he realizes that he should have killed him long before. From this attitude, it is clear that women need men to protect them as they regard themselves incomplete without men. Thus, even if

Pegeen attempts to be a modern girl, her psychological trait does not allow to feel free. The lines read:

PEGEEN. Wait till morning, Christy Mahon. Wait till you lay eyes on her leaky thatch is growing more pasture for her buck goat than her square of fields, and she without a tramp itself to keep in order her place at all.

WIDOW QUIN. When you see me contriving in my little gardens, Christy Mahon, you'll swear the Lord God formed me to be living lone, and that there isn't my match in Mayo for thatching, or mowing, or shearing a sheep. (1.1.532-40)

Pegeen and Widow Quin point out each other's problems to win the love of Christy. He is forgiven for any murder he committed. Pegeen is ready to forget her to-be-married man Shawn calling him coward while she likes Pegeen very much. In this way, men's criminal activities are overshadowed in comparison their strength over women.

Christy feels proud of being given respect and care from two young ladies. He knows that he has killed his father but he does not feel regret for the crime. He thinks that he is lucky to be served by Pegeen who gives all her power to provide him comfort. This uneven relationship can lead the readers to think that women are relatively more dominated than men. Christy expresses:

CHRISTY (as she goes to inner room). May God and Mary and St. Patrick bless you and reward you for your kindly talk. (She shuts the door behind her. He settles his bed slowly, feeling the quilt with immense satisfaction.) 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 a foolish fellow not to kill my father in the years gone by. (1.1.581-89)

Christy is happy and delighted as he is provided caress from his short-timed lover. Pegeen needs a person for giving her protection. For this, she is ready to accept anyone regardless his moral ground.

Pegeen is a modern girl and wants to decide about her life. She believes that she can choose a right person for her life partner. She does not like Shawn thinking that he is a coward and does not go beyond the traditional values and norms. Yet, her psychological trait is still inherent that she follows her father and she accepts whatever he decides about her. She share her problems or lonesome with Christy. However, Christy coaxes her saying that she is very beautiful and attractive. He might have said so because he knows that she can be easily swayed by his sycophancy. The dialogues state:

PEGEEN. I'm not odd, and I'm my whole life with my father only.

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 pestering your steps, I'm thinking, and you walking the roads. (2.1.327-32)

She replies to him that she is always with her father. It means she is attached with him physically and psychologically. Christy, in reverse, clarifies that she is not alone. He implies that she can be easily coaxed by his oily words.

Pegeen is still passionate with Christy Mahon even if he reveals that he killed his father. She says that he is so fine person. It can be interpreted that she is focusing

on his high personality and outer appearance rather than his inner quality. It may be because of her contact with bad people only in her society. Synge is very conscious about such kind of language. He gives the significance of Irish culture. Because of war or modern thinking, people have lost their morality. They are no more good models for the society. They perform badly. Among them Christy may be better. She expresses:

PEGEEN (puzzled by his talk). Well, it's a story I'm not understanding at all why you'd be worse than another, Christy Mahon, and you a fine lad with the great savagery to destroy your da.

CHRISTY. It's little I'm understanding myself, saving only that my heart's scalded this day, and I going off stretching out the earth between us, the way I'll not be waking near you another dawn of the year till the two of us do arise to hope or judgment with the saints of God, and now I'd best be going with my wattle in my hand, for hanging is a poor thing (turning to go), and it's little welcome only is left me in this house today. (2.1.343-52)

The language Christy uses is very impressive. He is attempting to coax her. He belongs to patriarchy so thinks that the oily words can entrap her into his magical trick so that he can make his wife. It his hidden desire to show power using words.

The rise of feminism is not able to make people feel that women are equally capable of choosing their lives in their own way. Males think that they can possess women at their disposal. The conversation between Christy and Shawn prove this.

SHAWN (looking to the WIDOW for help). 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 don't think well of

having a clever, fearless man the like of you dwelling in her house.
 CHRISTY (almost pugnaciously). And you'd be using bribery for to
 banish me? SHAWN (in an imploring voice). Let you not take it
 badly, mister honey; isn't beyond the best place for you, where
 you'll have golden chains and shiny coats and you riding upon
 hunters with the ladies of the land. (2.1.402-08)

There is such conversation between Christy and Shawn. They are trying to impress Pegeen as if it is their property and they can use her in any way they like. Thus, although feminism has risen and women are becoming conscious, still their unconscious thought proves that they regard themselves superior.

To talk about the history of feminism, it started in in the 1830s and ended in the early 1900s as the first wave feminism. The first wave feminism mainly focused on equal contract and property rights of women. The women of the period realized that they should get political power to bring about change in the condition of women. Their political agenda expanded to issues concerning sexual, reproductive and economic matters. The seed was planted that women have the potential to contribute just as much if not more than men. They argued that women are equal to men in every aspect but they have to do through protest and revolution.

Likewise, the second wave feminism lasted for about 20 years from the 1960s to the 1980s expanding the role of women in the world. As the women experience Second World War closely, they brought change in their thought as well. The second wave feminism focused on the workplace, sexuality, family and reproductive rights. The second wave feminism incorporated various kinds of women from all over the world such as Black Civil Rights Movement, Anti-Vietnam Movement, Chicano Rights Movement, Asian-American Civil Rights Movement, Gay and Lesbian

Movement and many other groups fighting for equality. Many of the women supporters of the groups felt their voices were not being heard and felt that in order to gain respect in co-ed organizations they first needed to address gender equality concerns.

The third wave started in the 1990's and it is going on till the present. With the advent of third wave feminism, there are multiple outlooks looking at women unlike first and second wave feminism. They include ego-cultural feminists, the radicals, the liberals, the electoral, academic, ecofeminists and so on. The main issues women raise today were prefaced by the work done by the previous waves of women. The new women are still working to subjugate the disparities in male and female pay and the reproductive rights of women. The new women are working to end violence against women in their nation as well as others. They say that they are still fighting for acceptance and a true understanding of the term 'feminism,' it should be noted that women have made tremendous progress since the first wave.

Shawn further heightens the situation by saying that Pegeen does not suit him. She wants someone Shawn has made in his mind. It means males decide what kind of people are appropriate for girls. They think that men choose for them.

SHAWN (in terrified earnest). She wouldn't suit you, and she with the devil's own temper the way you'd be strangling one another in a score of days. (He makes the movement of strangling with his hands.) It's the like of me only that she's fit for; a quiet simple fellow wouldn't raise a hand upon her if she scratched itself.

WIDOW QUIN (putting SHAWN'S hat on CHRISTY). Fit them clothes on you anyhow, young fellow, and he'd maybe loan them to you for the sports. (Pushing him towards inner door.) Fit them

on and you can give your answer when you have them tried. (2.1.453-60)

Not only men but also other women try to trick other women. They like to sway others using various methods. Widow Quin does so as she is attracted to Christy. Thus, she seems to support Shawn. However, her hidden purpose is different.

Moreover, Widow Quin and Christy are talking about their crime to their husband and father respectively. It is a kind of aggression to them and Widow soothes him that whatever he did it was not a bad thing. It shows that she is still aggressive with her dead husband. She wants to project her vengeance through Christy. Christy and Widow Quin talk:

WIDOW QUIN. You'll be doing like myself, I'm thinking, when I did destroy my man, for I'm above many's the day, odd times in great spirits, abroad in the sunshine, darning a stocking or stitching a shift; and odd times again looking out on the schooners, hookers, trawlers is sailing the sea, and I thinking on the gallant hairy fellows are drifting beyond, and myself long years living alone.

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.

(2.1.632-43)

They are criminal and they find themselves to be matched for marriage. Directly or indirectly, they are aggressive with their respective people. But the way of aggression is different. Widow Quin believes that crime is not a great mistake for her to get married because of her own mistake.

As Pegeen understands Christy's nature and motive, she changes her mind.

She does not want to be close to him anymore. She gives him the name ‘playboy of the western world. This activity can be interpreted as the growing consciousness of women. Perhaps, Synge wants to bring this theme in the play. He means to say that nothing remains same, it changes from time to time. If we consider anyone weak, tomorrow he will be strong. Now Christy feels very bad when he realizes that she cannot be his. On the other hand, Widow becomes very happy that she has left him. She assures him that she will provide good job to him. She speaks:

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 white-wash for our hut within, building up a little goosehouse, or stretching a new skin on an old curagh I have, and if my hut is far from all sides, it’s there you’ll meet the wisest old men, I tell you, at the corner of my wheel, and it’s there yourself and me will have great times whispering and hugging. (2.1.633-40)

It shows the surprising relationship among people. There is conflict among various people but almost all are driven by selfishness. They do not think nicely about others but only themselves. Women have learned bad attitudes from men and they are trying to entrap each other using various negative ideas.

When Michael says something to his daughter, it reveals that he used her as his own possession. Having his daughter means he has right to manipulate her, he thinks. It show the supriority of men over women. He is representative character of patriarchy. He is not alone there are innumerable people in the society where women’s position is undermined. He speaks:

PEGEEN. Aye. Wouldn’t it be a bitter thing for a girl to go marrying

the like of Shaneen, and he a middling kind of a scarecrow, with no savagery or fine words in him at all?

MICHAEL (gasping and sinking on a chair). Oh, aren't you a heathen daughter to go shaking the fat of my heart, and I swamped and drowned with the weight of drink? Would you have them turning on me the way that I'd be roaring to the dawn of day with the wind upon my heart? Have you not a word to aid me, Shaneen? Are you not jealous at all? (3.1. 250-59)

The conversation reveals that Pegeen is now aware that she does not want to be dominated by anyone including her father. She does not believe him because he cannot play appropriate role for her. She puts all men in on boat having the same thought about women. Thus, in one glimpse, males seem wrong but they are good in reality because they have taught a good lesson to women like Pegeen.

Slowly Pegeen starts showing hatred towards Christy as she notices that he is a bad person. She attempts to be away with him perhaps because of his aggressive manner and dirty work. Previously she hated Shawn calling him coward later she realizes that he is daring but bad. She regards him like a playboy of the western world. Her row with him is clearly seen in the dialogue: "PEGEEN (backing away from him). You've right daring to go ask me that, when all knows you'll be starting to some girl in your own townland, when your father's rotten in four months, or five" (3.1.277-81). This is the expression of aggression as she has conflict with him.

Many critics say that when deployed critically, however, personal theorizing encourages a deconstructive view of experience, which supports an analysis of how gendered subjects are produced through particular experiences. Budgeon argues for the over-focused individualism in the third world feminism. She says

To understand the significance of the feminist claim that the personal is political is to understand that women's distinctive experience as women occurs within that sphere that has been socially lived as the personal private, emotional, interiorized, particular, individuated, intimate so that what it is to know the politics of women's situation is to know women's personal lives. (78)

So, the attention given to women's experiences has provided an important starting point for developing innovative theoretical frameworks that not only critique dominant forms of knowledge and facilitate social critique, but promote the development of distinctly feminist theories of knowledge, subjectivity and power. Harde and Harde say that main thrust of third wave feminism focuses on the individual expression. In this respect, the third wave feminism is similar to post-structuralism or post-modernism:

I believe that the emphasis on individual expression makes the third wave inviting and effective. Even though I have never declared myself a feminist, I realize that as a third waver, there is no need for radical action or strategy to support the movement. Militant action is not needed to promote the third wave; instead, the experiences of young women construct the third wave. (119)

It implies that the collection of individual experiences of woman forms the third wave feminism. This is the main point of departure between second wave feminism and third wave feminism. The second wave focuses on the normative study of women while third wave focuses on the individual experiences.

At the end, Pegeen is very strong psychologically and mentally. She has learned many things from the experiences she got while conversing with several

people including Shawn, Widow Quin and Christy. She believes that all people are bad though they seem good in the first glimpse. Even if Shawn requests her to get married with the grace of god, she is not ready to accept it because she wants to lead her life in her own way. In the beginning, she thought that marrying a person of her father's choice is good but as she observes and studies them, she finds opposite:

SHAWN (going up to her). 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.

PEGEEN (hitting him a box on the ear). Quit my sight. (Putting her shawl over her head and breaking out into wild lamentations.) Oh, my grief, I've lost him surely. I've lost the only Playboy of the Western World. (3.1.720-27)

She does not regret for the loss of her prospective husbands as they have become her only part of study to identify them.

Thus, the thesis deals with the psychological and mental growth of Pegeen as comes into contact with several people. When she studies them minutely in her own way, she finds different from what she had expected. In the beginning of the play, she is very innocent and dependent on her father to make decision about her. As her father leaves her alone and does not believe her and puts another person with him, she realizes that she is treated weak by him. She gets more knowledge when Shawn does not want to stay together but leaves her alone giving false logic that they cannot sit together before marriage. She gradually understands that she should do herself for her identity and position. Noman can help her bloom her desires and power. She is herself to tell herself that who she is.

Christy Mahon tells her so many things. For some reasons, she is attracted to

him and praises him even if she knows that he is criminal. She is helped by her neighbors as well as they regard Christy a good person. They praise him as a hero who was able to kill his father. However, at the end of the play, it is revealed that his father is alive though he was injured. Thus, Pegeen changes her mind and says that she does not trust anyone. She feels that all men are equal attempting to use women in one way or another.

Chapter IV

Conclusion: Marriage as a Way of Choice

The thesis deals with marriage as a choice of people as it is the combination of two hearts through J. M. Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*. Although the western countries do not take marriage as a means of exploitation, there are still examples of marriage as domination especially women. Marriage is a psychological and physical bond between male and female. In the play, Pegeen, the main character suffers from lack of trust of male characters who are supposed to be future husbands. Pegeen thinks that she is weak and she needs someone to look after, as she is alone at a hotel. Even her father underestimates her and requests Shawn Keogh to be with her so that she does not have any danger during night.

As Shawn believes in religious rules restrictions, he does not want to stay with her before marriage. Pegeen calls him a coward and she likes another boy Christy Mahon who is ready to company as well as marry her. As they talk for long time, it is revealed that he is not a good person as he claims that he killed his own father. Despite his crime, she accepts him as a future husband. Even the villagers do not take it negatively. Thus, there is the question to Pegeen and the villagers. It can be interpreted that women are kept in illusion that strength is better than morality for protecting women. The play, therefore, deals with the conflict between Pegeen Mike and her relation to some male characters such as Shawn Keogh, Christy, her father Michael James, etc.

To add the importance of male characters, Widow Quin, a woman who likes Christy, tells Christy that Pegeen has relationship with Shawn so that she can get married to him. Widow Quin tells the story that Christy killed his father because of the conflict over the discussion about the marriage between Christy and Quin. Christy

does not want to marry her but his father forces him to do so. The story takes turning point when Old Mahon, Christy's father, appears unexpectedly, being bandaged in the head. It means he is still alive.

Women's studies are not limited to one area but multiple aspects. According to the theory, women should not forget that they are humans before they are females. The theory focuses also on the psychoanalytic perspective of feminism and argues that western feminism is deceptive as it demarcates between civilized and uncivilized people. Related to modern feminism, it is also interpreted that child parent relationship is natural. It is not necessary to highlight it. Moreover, the difference between boys and girls are not natural but cultural because boys are taught to be strong and girls are weak and to be protected. When they grow, their psychology remains same and they expect the same. In marriage, naturally, women are sought who are beautiful and cute while men are sought who can protect, love, and care the wives.

The thesis questions the established rules of the villagers who embrace Christy as a courageous boy. Pegeen believes that she likes him and wants to get married. While talking about the child parent relationship, the researcher analyzes that Pegeen and her father have good relationship though he regards her weak and dependent. In contrast, Christy and his father have aggressive relationship. Thus, males are not taught good culture. What is more, the play raises the voices of women in new way. When the play was written women were not aware as much as they are now. Pegeen is a modern and revolutionary character who is more conscious now that she wants to decide about her life herself. She thinks that her life should be chosen by herself. So, she does not want to listen to her father for the choice of her future husband. She thinks that marriage is a kind of sacrifice to a man because of unequal

relationship between husband and wife. Pegeen decides to forget about them and wishes to lead her life in her own way. At the end of the play, she does not show interest to get married because she realizes that marriage is merely a transformation towards being dominated. She does not accept to be exploited in the hands of the play of the western world, Pegeen, who is deceptive and criminal.

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