

Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to make an inquiry into the economical and psychological effects that cause illusion and disillusion of the three protagonists in Tennessee Williams' works, namely, Tom Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), Chance Wayne in *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959), and Brick in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955).

The Glass Menagerie is a memory play set in St. Louis during the Great Depression, and it deals with the relationship among a strong Amanda Wingfield, a crippled daughter, Laura, and an imaginative son, Tom Wingfield. Tom Wingfield desires to have an adventurous life, but he is forced by economical need to work in a warehouse to support his mother and sister. *Sweet Bird of Youth* begins with the protagonist, Chance Wayne, who returns to St. Cloud as a gigolo to a faded film star Princess Kosmonopolis. However, he was once a fine, handsome young man, but was rejected by Boss Finley to marry his daughter, Heavenly. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* focuses on the chaotic relationship among Big Daddy, Big Mama, and their two sons and two daughters-in-law. Brick is the younger son, who turns from football hero to an alcoholic, because his wife has once seduced his friend and later his friend committed suicide.

Tennessee Williams' strength lies in his ability to create his characters interesting and realistic. Also, he often finishes his play with a humanistic touch to uphold the human dignity. In extreme predicaments, Tom, Chance, and Brick are forced to abandon their illusions. They still struggle to achieve more than their life can offer. However, at the end, Tom left home to be a merchant marine, but his thought never leaves the two women he loves. Chance left Princess and he chooses to stay in St. Cloud to face the callous world and to be near Heavenly. Brick gives up drinking,

and his wife is trying to seduce him in the hope of producing an heir for Brick and for Big Daddy's fortune.

I used the economical and psychological approaches to analyze this play.

Richard Schmitt's *Introduction to Marx and Engels: a critical reconstruction*

(published in 1997) offers helpful economical and psychological information about

the society in the 19th and 20th centuries. In psychology, I use Sigmund Freud's

(1856-1939) theory to explain the inner motives of their choices and actions in the

plays. His *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) is especially helpful to explain how

the unconscious mind influenced by the depressed desires can lead a character to act

in a particular way.



摘要

本文用經濟學家施密特(Richard Schmitt)和心理學家佛洛伊德(Sigmund Freud)的學說來探討田納西·威廉斯之《玻璃動物園》、《熱鐵皮屋頂上的貓》和《青春之鳥》裡的三位男主角分別為湯姆、錢斯以及布雷克。我們可以從這三本戲劇不同的時代背景中發覺三個年輕男主角開始對他們對人生都充滿著幻想，結果因為現實生活而造成幻想的破滅。

《玻璃動物園》故事發生在三十年代的美國，當時美國隨著工業社會的興起，社會起了變化，悠閒的生活被效率取代。湯姆為了要維持家中的開銷而不能實現他心目中的夢想，為了滿足他的夢想所以他經常在電影院中往返，因此他母親亞曼達常責備他的行為不當，他下定決心選擇離家出走去尋找自由冒險的生活。貧窮的錢斯因為他女朋友海芬尼的爸爸反對他們結婚，使他的幻想破滅，在為了追求成功和財富中其中遇到挫折，最後他當一個老牌女星普林斯的小白臉。布雷克出生於富裕之家，他本可以繼承他父親龐大家產，但是由於他發現他妻子和他的好朋友有一段不尋常的過去，變成一個只會酗酒且對人漠不關心的丈夫及兒子。田納西·威廉斯能把他筆下的人物刻畫得很寫實及很有人情味，更寫出人性特有在艱難的環境下，湯姆，錢斯以及布雷克不得不放棄他們心中的理想，但是他們仍然不停的去奮鬥。三劇本結束時，雖然湯姆離開家去當水手，但是他還是關懷著他無依無靠的母親和妹妹。錢斯為了能更接近海芬尼而離開有錢女星普林斯而留在聖塔克萊誠實的去面對不接納他殘酷的世界。布雷克的妻子也試著讓

布雷克能夠接受他，希望可以由布雷克的繼承者來繼承家產，同時布雷克決定放棄酗酒，重新做人。

在參考許多理論的書籍中，有二本書值得提出，因為這二本書提供心理及經濟方面的理論，第一本是佛洛伊德的《夢的解析》，他是精神分析學的始祖，在本書中分析「潛意識」，人如何因潛意識而影響目前的一切行動，慢慢的發掘人在早先前的記憶，第二本是施密特有關經濟的理論的馬克斯主義，他指出說明資本主義是建立在資本家對無產階級的剝削，因此造成社會蕭條，人民意氣消沈。

