



‘Tracing Plato’s concept of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play, *The Glass Menagerie*.’

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Abstract

Plato’s theory of form or idea, is one of the most prominent theories which is used in literary theory and criticism. Among the critical approaches to Literature, his theory has been one of the most controversial and least appreciated by the readers. However, I find his concept of imagination interesting subject which could be broadened with respect to any genre and examined carefully. Therefore, the study

“Tracing Plato’s concept of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*” lays emphasis on Plato’s concept of imagination and falsehood as for him, literature is doubly removed from the reality and his concepts can be traced easily in Tennessee Williams memory play *The Glass Menagerie*, which provided ample of instances as to why we cannot believe on what we see in a play and how is the audience presented with the quoted and non realistic elements in the play. The analysis of the study rests on Plato’s theory of form and Tennessee’s play being a non realistic one.

Keywords: *Plato, Aristotle, Tennessee William, Imagination, falsehood, theory of form, The Glass Menagerie, illusion, memory, characters, setting.*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Plato's theory of ' imagination and falsehood' –

In chapter X of Plato's book, *The Republic*, there are various concepts that he talks about. Some of them talked in his Book X are- the idea of why he despises poetry, the concept of imagination and falsehood, why literature has fewer followers, why philosophy is better than literature, why Socrates had banished the poets, and also why humans should be logical and sublime in their thoughts. My area of research focuses on Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood only. According to him, literature was pretentious and false as it offers lies only and a literary text is just an act of falsehood. Plato said that in an ideal human republic, there is no place for poets because the things they talk about are all fictitious and lie and the physical world is the copy of ideas of the ideal world. Plato, being a philosopher, believed that only the ideals created by God were true in themselves, and the literature is doubly removed from reality. Doubly removed from reality because- literary writers copy the physical world which itself is a copy of the ideal world. He gives many reasons as to why literature is falsehood, a few of them are-

- All the incidents in the literature are false.

- The real world is the copy of original ideas created by God.

- A copy of literary work makes it incomplete, so the concepts are partially conveyed.

In chapter X of this book, Plato gives an example of a painter to support his theory. He explains that the artists try to create things, but they end up creating something which is merely a copy of the forms and truths. An artist's painting of a bed is a copy because it is a specific instance of a bed, not the ideal bed. This, the painting is thrice times removed from the ideal form of a bed. A carpenter creates a bed that is doubly removed from the ideal form of the bed. Plato says that- Consequently, if he does not construct what really exists, must we not say that he does not construct a real thing, but only something like the reality, but still unreal? (Plato, 22)

Being a philosopher, Plato disapproved of poetry as it was based on falsehood. The physical world we live in, according to him was an unreal world that is an imitation of the metaphysical world or the world of forms and ideas. The poet imitates the object of the physical world and by doing so, he imitates what already is an imitation, which is why the literature is doubly removed from reality.

Plato very well started that-

The imitative art, then, is, I conceive, completely divorced from the truth ; and, apparently, it is enabled to effect so much, because it only seizes upon an object in a small part of its extent, and that small part is unsubstantial. (Plato, 339).

Thus, an artist/poet takes man away from reality rather than towards it, so they deal in an illusion.

1.2. Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie* –

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams, written in the year 1944, is a memory play. It is a juncture of three characters living in three different planes- Amanda, who keeps reminiscing about her past, Tom, who is trying to gauge a better future by escaping reality, and Laura, who has woven a world of her own, alive in her imagination. The commonality in the circumstance of all these characters is the literal absence of all that they live their life for. The play was written during the phase of

America when people were chasing 'the Great American Dream', and therefore it does not surprise us that Amanda wanted the same for her children. The great economic crash of 1929 left countless people shattered and it is therefore important to locate the play in the Depression period since it is semi-autobiographical. Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental and not realistic. Missing from this set of characters is the father of the family, Mr. Wingfield. He is not present live on the stage, but he is very much present. Tom says he is in the form of a

“larger-than-life-size photograph over the mantel”. Mr. Springfield left the family but his memory still looms over the family. There is a striking contrast between Amanda’s utilitarianism and Laura’s sensitivity. Amanda, “as she vacillates between hope and distress, aggression and desperation”, the audience disconnects with her through Tom’s interpretations. Amanda has been betrayed by the system of marriage, but she still tries to force her children into the same system. While Amanda tries to fight their state and constantly pushes Tom and Laura towards success, Laura remains confined to her menagerie and explores life within a static but more romantic construct. The collection of the “glass menagerie” in the play comes to signify the individual growth of Laura, that is forever arrested, as with delicate creatures in her glass collection, she remains frozen in time. Similar is the case of Tom, who is expected to fill his father’s shoes, but while trying to do so, he is unable to fulfill himself. While trying to reincarnate Mr. Wingfield and failing to do so, he somewhere does become just like his father. Thus, in trying to imitate the photograph, he becomes the person in it.

In the middle of all of this, Jim is the embodiment of the “Great American Dream”. He believes in the future of the radio and works towards a capitalist dream. He brings hope to the Wingfield family at the time when middle-class America was fed up with the idea of “hard work leads to success”. There is a sense of hope in the arrival of Jim, and his departure causes more damage than good. Here, Tom is unable to fulfill

Amanda’s dream to get Laura and Jim engaged, as they later discover that Jim is already engaged to someone else.

While Laura is a nurturer in her world, she needs to be taken care of in the real world– “*What is unreal to the surroundings, where she lies imprisoned is in-fact more real to her*” (Williams, VII).

By taking Laura to dance with him, Jim leads her out of the door from her imaginary world, and thus, breaks the ‘unicorn’, which indicates that she is no longer extraordinary. This slight presence of a misguided hope to Laura, breaks her heart and kills her intense fragility. Jim therefore, is no different from Amanda, and brings

Laura into a world that aligns with Amanda’s. In the opening monologue, Tom provides an important clue to the audience. He explains the play to be a memory play, it is sentimental and not realistic. In other words, the play is far from conveying the real and we as the audience, witness Tom’s colored memories. We see what Tom remembers, which does not guarantee the reality to us. Throughout the play, Tennessee Williams uses subtle and creative means to remind us of what are to see is just a memory and not reality. For instance, in Scene IV, Tom arrives home at five in the morning. When the scene opens, we hear a “church tolling the hour of five”. Tom arrives home and has a brief discussion with his sister, Laura, who scolds him about his coming home drunk. Suddenly, we hear the clock strike six, but the whole scene is even not five

minutes. Amanda, their mother, calls out “Rise and Shine”, Tom wakes up and Laura says “Tom! It’s nearly seven” (Williams, IV). This whole scene very well explains to us that Laura cannot tell the time properly and Tennessee Williams messed up his writing, but we see what Tom offers to us.

Another way that tells us that the script is not realistic, is how the play is structured. *The Glass Menagerie* does not stick with well-made which consists of the unity of time, place, and action, nor does it follows the rules of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century's well-made play which contains three acts and the action is continuous.

Instead, Tennessee Williams gave his play a structure of “seven independent” scenes of increasing length. This, the scenes are not an objective rendition of reality, but what Tom shows us.

1.3. Literature Survey:

Below are some of the major research works done on Plato’s theory of imagination and falsehood, what is meant by drama, and Tennessee William’s play ‘The Glass Menageries’ in order of their publication.

Impelled by Plato’s contribution to the literary field, I found a few books and lectures compelling to work over. My work area incorporates a few of the many works which made a humongous contribution to the field of literary theory and also helped me put up the base for my paper.

In the year 1971, an essay *On Nature And Purpose Of The Drama* was printed in the USA and released by Oxford University Press. I have come in terms of the little nuances in drama and how my topic for the thesis relates to it. The chapter ‘Drama, Literature, And Representational Art’ starts with a major question, i.e., what is meant by ‘drama’? The word ‘drama’ is derived from a Greek word that means ‘things done’, therefore drama is considered to make-believe in things or a kind of play-acting performed by children. When we see an actor performing on the stage, he/she believes to be someone else other than self just like a child does or how adults still do. Drama helps us to create a parallel world that is more charmed. There is a kind of enactment related to the drama. Therefore, drama is not just a form of literature, but also a play or action which is made out of words. It prefers to be acted out rather than being narrated. Drama is known to be a Representational art form, it needs imagination from the side of the audience too. Now this point here, proves my thesis topic very well that a dramatist creates something which is doubly removed from reality and promotes falsehood amongst its audience. While we say drama is to be performed, the very word ‘perform’ is an existing form of imitation itself which again is not the absolute reality. The performance is an interpretation of a play or an act that should be put together. Drama mostly uses the narrative technique and the most obvious form of story telling

occurs at the beginning of plays, known as 'exposition'. In this way, interaction and narration go hand in hand where one purpose serves the other. Another technique used by the dramatist is- retrospection, where the character looks back and survey important events which occurred in the past. Drama is an act of persuasion and means the assertion of ideas. We all are aware of the fact that a dramatist never speaks for himself or about his personal space in the framework of the play. In the persuasive play, the superiority of one idea or attitude over the other is demonstrated. The audience is more interested in the ideas espoused by the characters. Drama, itself does not offers the literal copy of reality because it does not depend upon reproducing the world exactly as it is, which again makes it twice or thrice times removed from reality. We opine that drama is like a mirror to society because its mode of imitation is selective and intensive. Therefore, the drama presents before it's audience a false notion of reality that is twisted and presented according to what we want to see, not what reality offers us.

In the year 2006 Patricia Waugh published a book, *Literary theory and Criticism* consists of various sections about literary criticism and theory. One such important area covered by her in this books is *Mimesis: Ancient Greek literary theory* (Andrea Nightingale) . In this particular chapter, the focus is arrayed on the concept of 'Mimesis' and 'Fiction and Falsehood'. Plato, an Athenian philosopher, was the one who articulated questions like- Can fiction tell truth? How does fictional representation differ from real world? How does an artwork influence the audience? And many more such questions. Plato claimed that the Greek texts presented a particular view of the world and inscribed specific set of values. An individual was categorized as good/bad, wise/foolish based on these texts. Thus, according to him, the famous authors or poets tell the truth to the world but they lack the actual authority and end up conveying falsehood as the truth. This is how the reader or the audience grabs these false realities and then re-enact them in their routine. The concept of 'Mimesis' was introduced by Plato. The Greek word 'Mimesis' means 'miming' or 'acting like' someone. There are various annotations to this word but Plato ascribed philosophical meaning to it, i.e., the artistic representation(visual or verbal) of the events happening in the world. He avers that literature does not represent reality of its objects, but portrays the way they appear. It is because reality and fiction are ontologically unequivocal. For Plato, true reality exists in the metaphysical and the divine sphere which is above the human space. The physical world in which we live is just an 'appearance' or 'becoming', therefore the things apprehended by our senses are not really true they are just the appearance. Human world looks like reality but fall short of it because the divine sphere is superior to our world. The metaphysical world is the center of ethical values like real 'goodness'. According to Plato, 'Mimesis' represents the world as mere appearance and not as a reality where the literary

author's are unaware about the divine space and deal only with the physical world. They represent the events in realm of appearance and the verbal representation is just an 'image' or 'copy' of things in the physical world. He explains this concept with help of Painting as an example, where just like the painting, literature also imitates the surface of things. Thus, there is a wide gap between mimesis and reality. The world of appearance is one step removed from reality, whereas 'mimesis' is several times removed from the reality. Literature offers nothing but fantasy and illusion to its audience. Here, Plato also gave the concept of 'fiction and falsehood'. According to Plato, good literature is the one which has the knowledge about the divine and metaphysical reality and identifies human nature with respect to that reality. He says that the tragic text is contrary to the philosophical one's because here the wise man falls from state of happiness to the state of misery because of the hamartia. In his opinion, a tragic text does not convey the truth because it does not possess any knowledge and convey falsehood. Plato claims that the literary text have low status because the authors of those texts have no knowledge of the truth, so they set forth falsehood in persuasive manner to their audience. The chapter concludes with the statement that Plato demanded literature to tell the truth and he attacked the authors for promoting lie and falsehood.

In year 2008 a book *A History of English Criticism and Theory (From Plato to the Present)*, was published by **M.A.R. Habib**. First chapter of the book, i.e., *Ancient Greek Criticism*, talks of how Plato laid the foundation for Western philosophy. In his very works like the *Apology*, *Ion*, *Lysis*, *Charmides* and *The Republic*, are devoted in defining the actual meaning of virtue, honor, justice, piety. It is often noticed that Plato does not deal directly with the issues, rather uses Socrates as the main speaker of his work. It is because, both rationalize the same concepts, that of rejecting the incoherent vision of universe which was disordered, unpredictable and at the whims of God. Plato uses Socrates to present his own expositions in a lengthy exposition. I do believe that Plato's reaction was not just against the ordered vision of the world, but also laid equal emphasis on the skepticism of thinkers who rejected the notion of metaphysical world as the real world. In his *Republic*, Plato puts across his '**Theory of Form**' which states that the things that we perceive from our surrounding are not self-sufficient, so we cannot call it a real world. He explains better that the objects in the physical world are dependent on the metaphysical world which engrains **Forms** or **Ideas**. He further explains beautifully the relationship between the two worlds in which the objects in physical world are the appearances of ideal forms derived from divine sphere/metaphysical world. For instance, a peacock in the physical world is mesmerizing because it is derived from the idea of beauty in other world. Plato uses mathematics as an exemplar of human inquest, so his idea can be best understood in those terms only. The

connection between two worlds can be drawn with the help of an example where any geometric shapes drawn with the help of physical instrument is almost perfect, but not exactly the same. The reason being that the figure can be approximate to the ideal geometric figure but not same because the ideal figure is not an object, but a concept, an idea or a form. Thus we create a copy of it. Much of the

Plato's emphasis lies in the fact that the metaphysical world constitutes of reality. His theory of forms undies the groups of objects or the concept in the world, referring them back to its common essence. It also attempts to presents before us the reality of an objective foundation which transcends mere subjective opinion. Nowadays, modern science relies more on accurate observation of a phenomenon and we, humans are trained to perceive what is before us as real. But Plato was unknown to these concepts for whom the reality lies in the universal, rather than in influenced theology or philosophy. In his book, *Republic*, we notice a clear difference between reality and appearance, between more immediate or proximate ends of the worldly activities. In book X of the *Republic*, Plato talks about poetic imitation which violates the principle of singularity if function because it is to be believed, what poet imitates is the appearance, not the real world, he reproduces what already exists in the nature. By taking a very famous example of Plato's triad I will make the concept of his clear. Let's say a bed is found to be of three types in the nature- one which exist in nature that is made by God, one which is created by the carpenter and another which is the creation of a painter or a poet. Therefore, the carpenter already imitates the real bed and the painter copies the physical bed. Thus, a poet's work is 'imitation of an imitation'. Plato uses this ground work to explain that imitation is '**removed from the reality**'. According to him, a poet or an imitator knows only how to imitate, thus deceiving the audience and the spectators. The Chapter 2 of this book, *Aristotle (384-322 BC)*, provides the general view of Aristotle's idea about imitation. Like Plato, Aristotle too believed that poetry is a mode of imitation but, in a different sense altogether. For Plato, imitation meant a step away from reality because it was a copy of the ideal form, however Aristotle believed that imitation is a basic human instinct and helps us to gain truth and knowledge. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle claims that since childhood humans tend to have an instinct for imitation and this is what distinguishes it from other animals.

Aristotle puts forward a point that the work of art aims not to present things as it is, but the way it should be. His work presents before us the dilemma because according to him, the moral purpose of imitation is of prior importance than the realistic set set-out refers to the situation "as it should be" as "better than actually" (*Poetics*, XXV). The dilemma lies in the connection between the two is not clear: is realism related to moral aims? Are two functions different? Thus, Aristotle does not provide a clear answer to any of these.

In the year 2018, one of the finest research paper on the topic *A Psychoanalytic Study of Tennessee Williams The Glass Menagerie* was written by Dr. Subhash Chander, Assistant Professor in the Department of English, University of Jammu. The paper talks about the play being set up on the backdrop of the greatest depression period in America and the play by Tennessee is a rendering of frustrations and anxieties of a poor family, the Wingfields. The family finds an escape from the reality in their fantasy world. Amanda, the mother, finds escape into her past where she thinks of the beautiful days when she was chased by gentlemen callers, Tom, her son and the narrator of the story, finds an escape in alcoholism and late night movies, whereas Laura, her daughter, finds an escape in the world of glass animals with whom she identifies herself as a Unicorn. The paper talks of how the memories are a kind of existence for the humans where our mind works on fixing the realities of life.

Tennessee Williams coined a term 'memory play' which helped to describe the non- realistic form of a play where the past is introduced to the audience by the narrator. In the play, we find that the family of Wingfields deal with the problem of neurosis, which presents the states of mind which is full of fear, depression and triggered by the anxiety. This state of mind occurs due low self esteem or one's inability to socialize. We notice in the play that the entire family is unable to come in terms with the reality of life and they even lack communication so this makes them a loner, despite being together. The psychoanalytic study of the play *The Glass Menagerie* helps us to know the insight of the characters like Amanda, Tom and Laura. Amanda Wingfield, is the mother of Tom and Laura, she has preserved the past in her mind and whenever she feels that the present is not moving as per his wish, she finds an escape into her past and starts narrating incidents to her children. Laura Wingfield, the daughter, finds an escape in the world of glass animals because she is as fragile as a glass. She fails to come in terms with the real world due to her crippled body. Tom, the narrator is a juxtaposition to Tennessee himself, he finds an escape in alcoholism because his present job does not offer him the satisfaction he derived from writing poems. Therefore, the character in this play use various means to escape reality and the very beginning of the play starts with the memory of the past which is narrated by Tom Wingfield about his family, tells us about a serious issue that we, humans often find an escape in one thing or the other because the world we live in, offers nothing but false hopes, dreams, and desires.

1.4. Gap area-

Though, many works have been done over years on the theories of Plato and his disciples and many plays of Tennessee Williams. What my thesis aims at is to trace

Plato's theory of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*, which is till now not taken up by anybody. There is a gap area when it comes to apply the rules

of literary theory in the field of dramatics. In order to fulfill this gap, I will trace down one of the most prominent theory of Plato which talks about the concept imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*. Plato's theory is based on the pre- supposition that God created the world and we, humans are just the imitators. This concept of imitation and falsehood can be widely seen in Williams play. Thus, many people have talked about works of Plato and Tennessee separately, but no one has made a fusion of their concepts which is a whole new sight for us.

1.5. Objective-

To bring to light Plato's theory of 'imagination and falsehood' in Tennessee Williams play, *The Glass Menagerie*. My moto for this thesis work is to talk at length about one of the theories of Plato, i.e. imitation and falsehood, and to track down his theory in a play by Tennessee Williams. Plato has talked about forms and ideas at a stretch in his book X of *The Republic*, he gives the perfect example of a painter to support his argument as to why literature offers falsehood to us. For example, the painter paints a table, but is his idea of table original? No it is already an imitation of form created by God which the carpenter has copied, and now the painter imitates what already is an imitation. Similarly, in the play, the author clearly states that it is a memory play, which gives a upper hand to us because it is not real. Also, the events in the play are all colored memories of the narrator which we view from his point of view, and not what actually is true.

Therefore, I look forward to work in an area where literary theory and drama fuse together, though they are talked about now and then, but isn't it interesting and intriguing to see what the fusion of two different genres offers to us?

1.6. Methodology-

Though, Plato has talked about so many theories in his book X of *The Republic*, but I would specifically use his theory of imagination and falsehood in my thesis. The work 'Tracing down Plato's theory of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams *The Glass Menagerie*' is purely for literary purpose. There are five chapter divisions in this work of mine.

Chapter 1 consists of six major divisions which lays the foundation for the entire work.

The first part of this chapter talks about Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood, as to why he considers literature to be doubly removed from reality. It also talks about the play of Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*, which is a memory-based play and non-realistic. I choose this play explicitly because it is a memory play, which means it is a non-realistic play as

well. The events in the play are seen from the narrator's perspective and not what is real. Thus my aim to trace Plato's theory of imagination and falsehood in this play becomes much more easier and evident. The second part of this chapter talks about all the literary surveys I have done to put this work in its place. There is a variety of research done on the theory of imagination and falsehood. My research consists of an essay *On Nature And Purpose Of The Drama*, released by the Oxford University Press. The essay talks about the non-realistic portrayal of drama and the kind of falsehood it offers to the audience. The second survey was taken on Patricia Waugh's book *Literary theory and Criticism*, which consists of a section- *Mimesis: Ancient Greek literary theory*. This chapter in the book talks about the concept of mimesis and how according to Plato, 'Mimesis' represents the world as mere appearance and not as a reality where the literary author's are unaware about the divine space and deal only with the physical world. Furthermore, the next researcher is done on M.A.R. Habib's book *A History of English Criticism and Theory (From Plato to the Present)*, which consists of chapter *Ancient Greek Criticism*. Here, Habib talked about Plato's theory of Form and Ideas. Whereas chapter 2 of this book, *Aristotle*, which puts forward a point that the work of art aims not to present things as it is, but the way it should be. The last work of research is taken from a research paper *A Psychoanalytic Study of Tennessee Williams The Glass Menagerie*, by Dr. Su hash Chander. The paper focuses on the psychoanalytical study of Tennessee Williams play, *The Glass Menagerie*. The third part in this chapter talks about the gap area. With the ongoing research of mine in this field, I also got to know what others have already talked about but nobody has taken up this unique fusion of Plato's concept to the theater work. The fourth part of this chapter talks about my objective towards the thesis I have written, i.e. To trace Plato's theory of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*.

Chapter 2 of this paper, talks at length about Plato's theory of imagination and falsehood in his book X of *The Republic*. Though there are many things that Plato has talked about in his book, I would take only his theory of forms and ideas. It is not possible to not talk about Aristotle when we talk of Plato, so yes this chapter would also include Aristotle's defense to Plato's theory of imitation and my take on it. Chapter 3 of this paper gives a peek into the life of Tennessee Williams and draws a parallel with the narrator of the play, Tom Wingfield, as the play is an autobiographical one. I would also talk about the entire play as to how it is a non-realistic one and why do I choose to take this play for my thesis work.

In Chapter 4, I will clearly articulate my topic for the thesis, thereby tracing down Plato's theory of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*. The Major idea is to track the events from the play which would staunchly support Plato's theory of forms and ideas and justify my argument for the same.

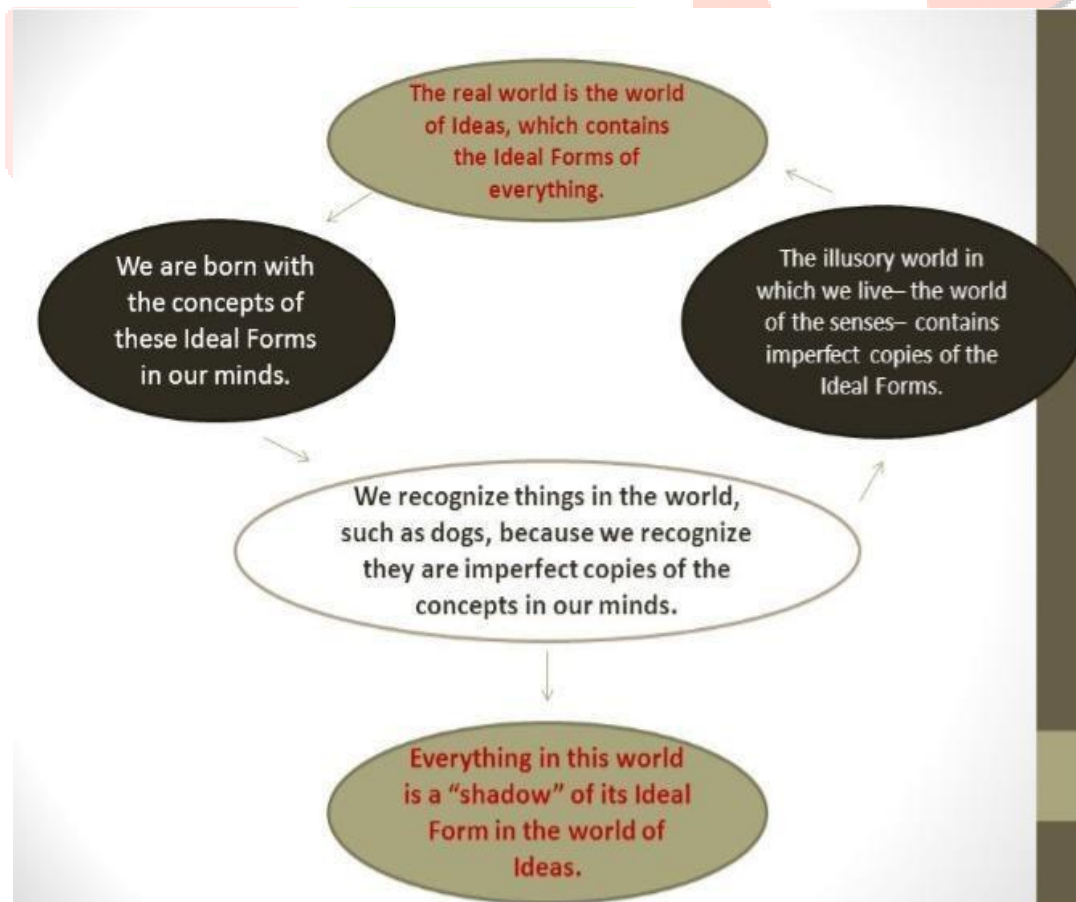
Chapter 5 is the part where I would conclude my paper, talking about the limitations of my paper, the scope of improvement in it, therefore opening my paper for further discussion and research in this field.

Chapter 2

Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood and Aristotle's resentment to it.

2.1. Plato-

Plato was a thinker, a critic, a philosopher and a teacher who had worked towards establishing an ideal community. He was a powerful Unitarian mind in the ideal republic. Plato, in his *Republic*, dealt with various concepts like- why he had banished poets from the State, theory of form and idea, why philosophy is better than poetry, myth of Er, etc. but this thesis focuses on just the concept of imagination and falsehood and tracing it into a piece of literary work, i.e. *The Glass Menagerie*, by Tennessee Williams.



Plato saw mimesis as a deceitful and dangerous thing, whereas Aristotle saw it as cleansing and educational method. In Book X of *Republic*, Plato uses Socrates and Glucagon as the artifact's for contemplation of the idea of 'imitation'. Plato's charge was that poetry is an imitation of an imitation, thus twice removed from the reality and the poet beguiles us with the lies. He condemned poetry on the ground that in the very nature of things, poets have no idea of truth. In the dialogue, Plato makes it clear from the beginning that he has negative predisposition on the imitative form of art. In art, 'mimesis' has a different function. Aesthetically, 'mimesis' refers to misrepresentation, thus, reality and truth can only be understood through reason. The artist works with inspiration and imagination. The two faculties don't give us the true image of reality, and the end of tragedy is always a partial loss of moral identity He believed that imitative arts are just a copy and twice removed from the reality, so there is no place for this form of art in his state Republic. He defines imitation as the 'mimicry' or 'copy of something', as he said that "Poetry is mother of lies". Plato argued that the production of both, an artist and the poet are imitations of life of senses. Therefore, an artist imitates only the appearances of the things, instead of the reality. Being a philosopher, Plato's dismisses poetry because it is based on the falsehood because the poet deals with what appears to him/her, which is a mere illusion. In this book, Socrates criticizes the artist. He distinguishes three levels of reality, instancing the ideal bed, the bed we sleep on, and the image of a bed in a picture. Now there is hierarchical way of representing the three agents of production.

Before a thing takes any practical shape, it is conceived as an 'idea' or 'form'. So, the 'idea' is the original and the 'thing' is the copy of that idea. The craftsman's bed is the result of the idea of bed in his mind, so the physical bed made by him is once removed from the reality. The artist functions at the lowest level, he only portrays the actual and not the ideal bed. He imitates the craftsman's idea of bed which is already removed from the reality, so it is twice removed from the reality. Thus, according to Plato, an artist/poet takes us away from the reality rather than towards it, therefore, there is deception in it. Plato believes that by deceiving people like this, the imitative form of art corrupts the soul of humans, so it should be banned from the State.

In the beginning of Book X of his *Republic*, Plato describes the relationship of artistic production, i.e. imitation (mimesis), to the truth/reality. He distinguishes three basic types of producers/ agents of creation-

- God- The divine
- Craftsman- The person who works with raw materials and creates something which is thought of as a real thing.
- Artist- The person who creates something which is not quite real, but it is an imitation.

Each one of the agent makes something that has certain kind of 'being'. Plato explains further that imitation doesn't just takes place in terms of an artist, craftsman or the depiction of things, but it also takes place in terms of the things created by the craftsman out of the raw material or already formed material and the 'form' or 'idea' of the thing itself. He thinks, what is most real are the forms or ideas, which is a unity. As opposed to whole bunch of let's say, beds created by the craftsman, form is the

unity as it remains same always and it is the most real thing. Form has a greater kind of being. According to Plato, if a craftsman makes something like bed, they look for a model or a kind of pattern (idea). The idea is what gives the identity to the thing created by the craftsman as what it is and also allows us to identify the intelligibility to it. So, the craftsman is already an imitative artist in certain respect. The artist too is engaged in an imitation, but they do not imitate the ideal form of material objects. For instance, an artist portraying a bed, chair, etc. are the things produced by the craftsman). The portrait of a bed is removed from the reality in truth from that of which is the imitation. The artist is working with the 'copy of a copy' which is removed away from the truth. This means that the dramatic arts, imitative arts (poetry, drama, painting, etc.) is a falling away from what is true or real. Plato articulates that God or the divine are the generative of the 'forms'.

Therefore, Plato's objection to imitation may also interpreted as a reaction to the sophisticated thinking which aims at the production of images that we regard as real, and all of which take place in the world of phenomena. Image, thought, and opinion combines into a world of appearance which is characterized by the nonbeing. Thus, as long as illusion and reality are not distinguished, science, ignorance, and appearance merge.

2.2. Aristotle-

Aristotle was the disciple of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great. He is one of greatest Greek thinkers in the history of western science and philosophy. Together with Plato and Socrates, he laid much of the groundwork for our modern way of thinking. Though he was influenced by Plato, but he rebelled to most of the opinions of his master and dedicated a theory which may approach competency. Even though Aristotle is not the originator of the term 'imitation', but he definitely provides a new dimension to the word in his work *Poetics*. Aristotle states that all human actions are mimetic and that men learn through imitation.

In the *Poetics*, Aristotle agrees with Plato in calling the poet as an imitator and creative art, as an imitation. The poet imitates one of the three things.

- Things as they are.
- Things as they are thought to be.
- Things as they ought to be.

Therefore, he imitates what is past or present, what is commonly believed and what is ideal. Aristotle believes that there is a natural pleasure in the imitation, which is inborn instinct in the men. It is this pleasure in imitation which lets a child to grab his early lessons in speech and conduct from those around him, because there is a pleasure in doing so. For Plato, 'idea' was the truth or reality and the physical world is a mere appearance of the reality. Whereas, according to Aristotle, the principle of

imitation helps us to unite poetry with other form of arts, he equates poetry with music, unlike Plato. As, poetry is no longer a depiction of the appearance of things, but becomes the representation of emotions of humans which are imitated by music. The poet imitates not just the upper surface of the things, but he goes underneath it in order to find the reality. Aristotle asserts that imitation is a creative process and there lies a difference between the mode of imitation in that of a artist and a poet.

2.2.1. Medium of imitation:

- Painters medium of imitation is color.
- Poet's medium of imitation are rhythm and harmony.
- Musicians medium of imitation is harmony.

Poetry and music have same medium of imitation, but they are different in their manner and object of imitation.

2.2.2. Object of imitation:

- Objects to the represented can be better than the real (Epic and Tragedy).
- They can be worse than the real (comedy).
- Same as real.

2.2.3. Manners of imitation:

- Objects which are to be imitated, are presented either in narrative (as in epic) or in dramatic (as in tragedy) or comedy. Thus, poetry should be written based on the laws of probability and necessity and also a process of making particular to universal.

Therefore, Aristotle demur against his master Plato in the thought that a poet's imitation is twice removed from the reality and hence, it is an unreal thing or the illusion of the truth at least. To prove his statement, he compares poetry with history. The poet and the historian differ not just by their medium, but the true difference is lies in the fact that the historian with what has happened, what is happening and what ought to happen. He argues that each area of knowledge is an imitation because, as humans beings, all of us learn and prosper through imitation only. For instance, Aristotle affirms that the art and philosophy deal with different kinds of truth. Philosophy deals with concrete and an absolute reality, whereas art deals with the aesthetic and universal reality. Art, unlike science or math's, does not conceptualize universal form, it rather imitates the form of individual things and amalgamates the separate parts by presenting what is universal and particular. Therefore, the function of poetry is to depict what may have happened in rapport with the principle of probability and necessity.

Aristotle gave few points in favor of why imitation is a harmless process when concerned with art-

- For Aristotle, art is not useless because it is natural. Natural, because it is natural for humans to imitate and any human society which is healthy will be a society where there is an imitative form of art. Art production and training is a necessary part of any education because it makes use of and encourages the imaginative and manipulation of ideas.
- He says that art is not deceptive, unlike Plato, according to whom art promotes falsehood amongst the audience. The artist must accurately portray the psychological reality in order to make the characters believable and their actions should be understandable. It introduces us with the concept of 'organic unity', the idea that in any good work of art each of the parts must work collectively.

Aristotle's mimesis is not equal to the imitation, it is more like a rendering. He develops a consistent theory of art upon the concept of imitation. He dwells in the pleasure that men take in learning and argues that the tragedy discharges the feelings and the audience leaves the theatre in state of calmness and free of passion. Aristotle's mimesis is defined by the 'mythos' and 'praxis' which gets the concept of unity of time and action, unlike Platonic mimesis which relates to the imagination and imitation.

2.3. Difference between Plato and Aristotle-

Both Plato and Aristotle have one essence, art is an imitation. With Plato, art is an imitation too, but on the contrary of Aristotle, it is not innate, it is a contemporary inspiration. It refers to what a man does when he is in the state of ecstasy or frenzy. The poet does not possess his tools, infact he is the tool in the hands of great essence. Whereas, Aristotle thinks that we must discover the meaning attached to imitation of aesthetic term. The poet draws the material from the outside world and makes something out of it. The way the term imitation functions for Aristotle is different from that of Platonic view. In the poetics, as in Platonic dialogue, the term applies that the work of art is constructed according to the prior models in the nature of things. Plato, in his idea of imitation talks about three realms.

- Realm of eternal and unchanging ideas.
- The world of senses, natural or artificial.
- Comprises of things like shadow, images in water and mirrors of fine arts.

While, Aristotle is dismissive about the real of eternal ideas, he accepts the world of senses and the world of art, but according to Plato, if craftsman copies an eternal model in his work, it will be useful to humanity. For him, a good craftsman is the carpenter who makes an actual bed taking the model from the form of the bed present from metaphysical world and the bad type is the painter who produces only the appearance of a thing which is not really and thrice removed from the reality. Plato

rejected art as irrational, coward, illusion and useless, while Aristotle placed it as the best of the human activity. Plato observed that a poet cannot completely elevate himself in order to deal with the absolute values. They concentrate on the inferior part of human emotions, so he would banish them from his ideal republic. Whereas, Aristotle's tragedy cannot be defined without its proper effect on the audience, i.e. catharsis or purgation, which enables the audience to leave the theatre in a calm state of mind. This is why Plato thought of art as trivial, harmful and useless, while Aristotle considered it as true, serious and useful.

Plato	Aristotle
Plato considered imitation merely as the mimicry, service or a copy of nature.	Aristotle interpreted imitation as a creative process.
He compares poetry to the painting.	He compares poetry to the music
Poetry represents a copy of nature as it is. It is twice removed from reality and often known as 'shadow Of shadow'.	Poetry may imitate means which are better or idealized version of the reality.
Plato says that philosophy is better than poetry.	Aristotle brings out the superiority of poetry than others.

Thus we can say that both Plato and Aristotle has some kind of similar objective, i.e. to release of human emotions or catharsis. Aristotle becomes the defender of imitation against Plato and develops a theory of art with reference to imitation. He claims that mimetic art is superior to philosophy and history. Plato's charges against the poet's have successfully been refuted by Aristotle in his book *Poetics*. His theory of imitation shows that it not a mere procedure of copying things, but a creative process which requires high imitative powers. Hence, it cannot be called duplicating things. Howbeit, Plato was of the view that the world had been created from an idea and the idea was an original thing, thus the world was it's copy.

Chapter 3

Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*

3.1. Tennessee Williams and Tom Wingfield-

The Glass Menagerie was initially based on Tennessee's short portrait, *Portrait of a Girl in the Glass*, and his rejected film script, *The Gentleman Caller*. The play is mostly about his life which he dramatizes with the parallel drawn from his true to life experiences. The play is mostly related to his own family and their experience in St. Louis, also it is illustrative of Tennessee's troubled memory which is acted out on the stage and he is forced to seek much of the relief from the pain in the memory fusing it with realism. Although memory plays an important role in the lives of the characters in the play, but *The Glass Menagerie* is a memory play in another sense too. Many of the critics have often pointed out that this play of Tennessee is the most autobiographical play ever where the characters and events resembles to the person and occurrences in William's own life. There are various similarities between the play and Tennessee's life. This propounds that the play is not much of the fate of a fictional character and his family, but more of the authors life instead.

Though the play relies on Tennessee's own memories, it as , as Tom warns in the beginning monologue, a sentimental and not 'realistic'. The play is considered to be Tennessee's most transparently autobiographical work because it appears as a mirror in many aspects to his early adult life, featuring characters based on his mother, sister and himself. Edwina Dakin Williams, Tennessee's mother, played an important role in his fostering because his father worked as a salesman and spent much of his time on road.

In the fullness of time, Edwina became responsible for the up keeping of her kids. Edwina was the daughter of a strict minister as she grew up in the South. When her family moved to St. Louis, Edwina became much responsible in maintaining the traditional southern values similar to how Amanda, Tom's mother, hangs onto her past and southern roots. Just like Amanda, Edwina made the mistake of marrying the wrong man despite being a southern belle. At a stretch of time, Tennessee spent most of his time with his mother while growing up because his father, Cornelius Coffin Williams, stayed absent from their life. For the fact that he was a travelling salesman, Cornelius expressed his deep anguish and frustration for being tied down to his family. Although Tom's father, Mr. Wingfield, in the play goes so far as to abandon his family, Amanda, Tom and Laura, Tennessee's father , Cornelius never acted on his anxiety to this much extents.

All through his life, Tennessee had a close relationship with his sister, Rose. Contrary to Laura, Rose was a popular teenager in her school, at least for time being, as Tennessee recalls in his memoir. Rose and Tennessee grew older and Rose began to exhibit some kind of anxious and erratic

behavior. In St. Louis, Rose attended the Soldan High School, the same school attended by Laura in the play. Just like Laura, Rose too dropped out of school and Edwina sent her to a boarding school. While away at school, Rose began to struggle a lot with her mental health. Amidst ten years of her schooling, she suffered from various breakdown and was diagnosed with Schizophrenia. Before the diagnosis, Rose fell in love with a man who did not reciprocate her feelings, similar to what happened with Laura when she had a liking for Jim. Soon after the rejection Rose's health began to deteriorate and she was admitted to St Vincent's Catholic Sanitarium in St. Louis. Few months after her treatment, Tennessee began to picture out the first draft of how *The Glass Menagerie* would be like. While Laura was not suffering the same way Rose did, Tennessee subsumed his sister's struggle and sense of isolation from the world into Laura's character.

The greatest parallel between Tennessee and Tom is the fact that both of them feel guilty for deserting their sister. Tom and Tennessee even share their names as Tennessee Williams given name was Tom Lanier Williams. Tom is a frustrated writer who works for long hours in a shoe factory in order to provide for his family. He used to write poetry whenever he had free time for it and his interest in poetry and writing led to his name as 'Shakespeare'. Tom also has yearning for adventure and travelling similar to Tennessee as he travelled his whole life in search of inspiration for writing all throughout his twenties and thirties. The final resemblance between Tom and Tennessee, is their habit of running away. What is the reason for Tennessee to run away is not known exactly, but the words 'fugitive from justice' surely suggests that for some reason Tennessee felt haunted just like Tom in the play.

3.2. Historical background of the play *The Glass Menagerie*-

When Tennessee Williams was of the same age, as of Tom's in the play, the United States of America was going through a period of changes and contradictions. The Wall Street Crash plunged the country into the depression and numerous people in the country suffered from poverty, yet the individual entrepreneurs were able to become rich if they had proper enterprising ideas. Most of the industries floundered, yet the cinema flourished. Mass unemployment meant that more people were out the work , so the women in the house started heading out into the workplace in greater force than ever.

3.2.1 Great depression-

The great depression began with the dramatic crash of the stock market on Black Thursday, 24 October, 1929, when Sixteen million share stocks were quickly sold by panicking the investors who lost faith in the American economy. Businesses closed their doors, factories shut down, banks failed and many people lost their jobs and

savings. Depression was at its peak during 1933 when 25% of the nation's total work force, i.e. 12,830,000 people, were unemployed. Wages for the workers fell almost between 43% between 1929- 1933. It was seen as the worst economic disaster in the American history. Despite all the efforts by the government, depression hung on until 1941, when America's involvement in the Second World War resulted in the drafting of young men into military services and creation of millions of more jobs in defense and war industries.

3.2.2 *The Glass Menagerie* began as a short story in 1941-

At the age of 30, Tennessee Williams wrote a short story 'Portrait of a Girl in Glass', which centered on the glass figure loving Laura, rather than her brother Tom. She was presented as a desperately shy and young woman with a fearsome mother who went unnamed in this early incarnation. By 1943, Tennessee was in Hollywood, so he transformed the short story into spec script called 'The Gentleman Caller'. After MGM Studio's passed on the script, Tennessee reconceived it as the stage play in 1944.

3.2.3 American theatre and domestic realism –

The Glass Menagerie exists within the post war period of domestic realism where the families, being the representative of American society are portrayed as one disintegrated or as a failed institution. Tennessee revamped the genre adding a poetic layer to it. In the light of Tennessee's career and tradition of American theatre *The Glass Menagerie* expanded the boundaries theatrically itself. In his career as a playwright, his combination of lyricism, poetic language and experimentalism transformed American drama in the post World War II era. The original nature of his theatrical vision gave Tennessee central role in American theatre and together with Edward Albee and Arthur Miller, he became the most prominent American dramatist of the second half of twentieth century.

3.2.4 Eight years in the making of the play-

Tennessee had written a slew of plays ahead of *The Glass Menagerie's* debut in Chicago in December 1944. This was first time that the play earned a widespread notice. In the *Chicago* Tribune, theatre critic Claudia Cassidy declared that the play as 'vividly written', 'superbly acted' and 'paradoxically a dream'. Rave review sparked much interest in Tennessee's personal play by March 31, 1945. The production was transferred to Broadway where it won a New York Drama Critics Circle Award, just two weeks after reopening. It went onto run for 563 performances and made Tennessee a rising star in American theatre.

3.3. Short summary-

Scene I-

“ I will give you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion.” (Williams, 1.70)

The narrator, Tom explains directly to us that the scenes are ‘memory’, therefore nonrealistic. Memory omits the details and exaggerates them according to the value of the memory. Memory, as he explains, rests mainly in the heart. We learn from the narrator that the gentleman caller is the most realistic character because he is from the world of reality and symbolizes the ‘expected something’ that we live for. The photographer that hangs on the wall of the house, is of the father who abandoned the Wingfield family a long time ago. Amanda begins talking and describing all her gentleman callers from her southern Blue Mountain days. Laura tells her mother that none of those callers are coming for her.

Scene II-

Amanda comes home and says “deceptions”. She tells Laura that she visited Laura’s business College and now she knows that Laura has been lying to her. Instead, Laura explains, she has been walking all day because she threw up when she went to typing class was too embarrassed and afraid to go back. Amanda whines to her daughter about her terror of what will happen to two of them if Laura remains untrained for work. She decides that Laura will have to marry. Laura again tries to tell the truth to her mother and says it will never happen because she is “crippled”. Amanda answers Laura by warning her never to call herself by this name and insists that Laura will just have to be more charming.

Scene III-

After the fiasco of the business College, the idea of a gentleman caller for Laura becomes an obsession with Amanda. Tom and Amanda quarrel after she sent back his library books without telling him. She accuses Tom of doing things that he is ashamed of and she doesn’t believe that he is going to the movies every night. He tells her how he hates working in the warehouse, how he yearns to leave the house.

Tom dashes the door, struggles with his coat and finally flings it across the room into the glass menagerie. He stops, bends to the shelf of glass, collects the pieces but couldn’t speak.

Scene IV-

Tom appears drunk and loses his key at the door in the middle of the night. Laura comes to him and begs him to make up with their mother and talk to her. The next morning at the breakfast table, Tom speaks to Amanda and apologizes to her. Amanda declares her devotion to the children and starts giving him instructions again on how to eat. She makes him promise not to become a drunkard and then asks him about how he feels about his life in the apartment. She says that they have to make plans and provisions for Laura and that, once Laura has a husband, Tom can leave. Until then, she demands that he does not think only about self and he should ask someone at work to be a gentleman caller for Laura.

Scene V-

Amanda is seen giving instructions to Tom as usual and tells him that he smokes too much. Tom becomes the narrator in memory once again, and talks about the Paradise Dance Hall across the alley from them, and how couples were caught up in their private lives while in Spain there was Guernica (Civil War) and in Europe 'the world was waiting'. Tom then turns back to Amanda and tells her that they are, at least, going to have a gentleman caller. He explains that he has asked someone from his workplace to come over for dinner next night. Amanda must now rush around in excitement and make the necessary preparations. Tom, meanwhile, is worried about Laura being different and peculiar. Amanda brushes that topic aside, and the scene ends with Amanda asking Laura to make a wish on the moon, a wish for happiness and good fortune.

Scene VI-

The Wingfield apartment is ready for the gentleman caller, Jim O'Connor who was the famous and ' likely to succeed' person from his high school he attended with Tom. Him likes to be around Tom at workplace because Tom reminds him of the glory of his high school days. Amanda puts on a lovely dress from her old days which she wore when she met Mr. Wingfield. When Laura finds out that the "caller" might be the same boy she had crush on in her high school, she refuses to answer the door and menaces not to come by the dinner table to eat. When Jim arrives, Amanda manifests her southern charm on him by talking non-stop. Tom apprises him secretly that he bought a seaman ticket with the money he had for the light bill, that was to be deposited. Laura realizes that the caller is the young man she knew from her high school, she hides in the kitchen, becomes faint and l'll with fever after knowing that it was Jim O'Connor, the one she had a crush on.

Scene VII-

The lights of the apartment goes out and Amanda says that they are lucky to have candles on the table, soon after she realizes that Tom had not paid the light bill. She maintains her southern charm and punishes Tom by making him come with her into the kitchen and do the dishes. Jim and Laura are left alone in the living room in order to spend some alone time. Jim puts the candles on the floor and asked Laura to sit on the floor with him. He immediately tells Laura that she is an old fashioned girl. Laura asks him whether he continues to sing or not and it is at that moment Jim realizes that he knows Laura from high school and he used to call her 'blue- roses' because she had been ill with pleurisy. Both of them take a glance at their high school yearbook together and Jim tries to cheer up Laura. He tells her that, if she gets disappointed with her life, she should not be discouraged. Laura tells him about the greater interest in her life, i.e. the collection of glass animals. She shows Jim her 'unicorn' and Jim places the glass unicorn on the coffee table. He asks Laura for a dance to the music coming from across the alley. Laura let's herself go and whirls around and just at that moment, they knock the table, thus breaking the horn of the unicorn. Jim feels terrible, but Laura tells him that it was alright because now the unicorn is more like the others in her glass collection and it will feel more comfortable among them. Jim tells Laura that she is really pretty and confesses that he won't be coming back for another visit because he is engaged and about to get married. His fiancée was out of town, so he accepted Tom's invitation for the dinner. Laura feels broken and hands over her broken unicorn to Jim because she wants him to have it as a souvenir. Amanda finds out the truth about Jim being engaged and starts to fight with Tom after Jim leaves the apartment. Tom runs out the house and then he turns towards the audience. We rarely see Amanda comforting Laura because she is always critical of her. Tom tells of how far and fast he has kept moving and trying to leave Laura's image behind. In his word's, he asks Laura to blow out the candles and she leans towards them and there is darkness all over the theatre.

The play ends..

3.4. Tennessee Williams *The Glass Menagerie*-

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee William was first staged on 26th December, 1944, in Chicago's Civic Theatre. Despite the brilliant performance of the entire cast of the play, the audiences were only half filled in the theatre and continued till longer period of time. The plan for bringing the play to New York were cancelled because the play did not do well for more than few weeks in Chicago, however, it was sparked by extremely positive remarks by the Chicago drama critics. The audience

were interested in the play, so their number increased in theaters. When *The Glass Menagerie* staged in New York in March 1945, the play was received with considerable amount of love and enthusiasm, as it received in Chicago. The play established Tennessee's reputation as a dramatist.

“Without a doubt, *The Glass Menagerie* also helped Williams attain his long lasting position in the canon of American drama” (Bloom, 2007)

The play was set forth in St. Louis, United States of America in the 1930s, during the Depression period. The play is formed of-

- Seven scenes
- Five main characters- Amanda, Laura, Tom, Jim O'Connor and Mr. Wingfield

It is about the tragic story of three-membered family which is dysfunctional because the father, Mr. Wingfield, left the home long ago and his portrait is the only thing that reminds us about his presence in the family. The play falls into three parts-

- Preparation for gentleman caller.
- Visit of a gentleman caller.
- Now and the past.

Of all the plays of Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie* seems to be the most famous dramatic creation. The two prominent terms visible in this play are- memory play and illusion. The term 'memory' refers to the record of past incidents. All the characters of the play are introduced through memory only and all of them feel haunted with the shackles of memory which haunts their present situation. Tennessee uses memory as a medium to escape from the reality and generates the impression that his characters live under unfavorable conditions. Memory is by far the most dominant theme in this seven act play. “ Being a memory play, *The Glass Menagerie* can be presented with unusual freedom of convention.” (Williams, 1945)

Followed by delicacy and result of turmoil in the Wingfield family, the play depicts the destruction of American culture. The narrative consists of the protagonist, Tom Wingfield, who is the rebellious son and a daydreamer. He loves to stay out late night and go to movies, but Tom fails to abandon his sense of guilt and supports financially his mother, Amanda and his sister, Laura. Tom's sister, Laura is a recluse who likes to spend most of her time cleaning and admiring her glass animals which are a perfect portrayal of her frail mind and vast imagination. Together, the three of them consist of the epitome of broken, regretful and forgotten American's. The play is not realistic in any sense as Tennessee commented that- “ The lighting in the play is not realistic”. (Williams, 1945)

The lighting of the play follows a trajectory of memory by laying the emphasis upon certain objects or actors to focus the pole of light on while turning other poles dim in order to single out and focus on the pristine clarity. The dim lighting was a product of Tom's mind and how dreamy it truly is. In the opening monologue, Tom presents before us the clear picture that the play is sentimental and not a realistic one. He says that- " The scene is memory and is therefore non-realistic" (Williams, Line no. 30) . The play does not depict us objective truth and what really happened in the past, it rather makes us the witness of a person's colored memories and what we see throughout the play is what Tom remembers.

The play tells the story of a family which lives in illusion which is used by them in order to escape from the real world. All the characters in the play have a finger of illusion versus reality. 'Illusion' is often considered as a weak defense against the harsh reality of life. People are lured into the world of illusion and fantasy which is a kind of falsehood and escapism that helps them to run away from the momentarily situation. The characters of the play sway between illusion and reality. Tennessee, through the conflict between illusion and reality, draws a dark world in the society. He makes us understand that exploitation, violation, dehumanized passion for power, all of them leads to the depression, rootlessness and alienation and then we sneak into the world of illusion. Each character in the play lives in their world of illusion.

3.4.1 Amanda Wingfield's illusion-

" She is not paranoiac, but her life is paranoiac" (Williams, 1945)

Amanda Wingfield celebrates several illusions in order to avoid the displeasing truth and situation of her family. The time in 1930 when there was Great Depression, Amanda was still trapped in the illusion of her genteel old Southern upbringing. She thought that a woman always needs a man to make her life settle and this is the reason why she always insists her daughter, Laura to be more presentable. She faces lot of tragedy in her life, but one such tragedy of her life is that her husband runs out of the family and leaves her to fend for herself. She always had an illusion that soon a gentleman would come and marry Laura. She is a proud and vivacious women who claims to the memories of a vanished past. Her greatest relief is believing and living in illusion that she is still beautiful and charming like she used to be back as a young girl in Blue Mountain, where she had received seventeen gentleman callers. She constantly nags at Tom and refuse to accept and understand Laura, for who she really is. She inflicts these illusions and reality on her children, insisting that if Tom finds a husband for Laura, it will take care of all their problems. The idea that Tom can solve all their problems with a replacement, is itself an illusion, one that is quickly eradicated by the reality once he brings a caller for Laura. On the other hand, she is willing to make a sacrifice for her

loved one's which is, in many ways unparalleled in the play. Without voicing any complaints, Amanda takes up the job of selling magazine subscription in order to improve financial condition of the family. This in turn, will improve Laura's marriage prospect. Her flaws are centrally responsible for the tragedy, comedy and theatrical flair of her character. Like her children, Amanda too, withdraws from the reality into the world of illusion and fantasy.

3.4.2 The world of illusions of Laura-

Amanda failed to establish a balance between reality and illusion but, Laura's situation is even grave. She has a childhood illness as one of her legs is slightly shorter than the other, so she is held in a brace. In the midst, she becomes introvert and withdraws herself from the society. From her school days itself, she lives in her own world of illusions. She felt embarrassed due to her crippled legs and often got late to school chorus and the slumping sound of brace was like a thundering for her. She framed a self opinion about herself, moreover, Jim O'Connor used to call her 'pleurisy' but she misheard that as 'Blue Roses'. She fails to relate herself to the outside world in the school and her business College. Even though Jim encourages her to think of love and marriage, but the revelation of truth about him, sends her back to the world of illusion which is broken, just like the broken unicorn. Feeling unattractive, Laura gets frightened by a situation in which this attractiveness is directly tested by entertaining a man. Self centered for too long, Laura couldn't participate in human relationships and chooses to be unhappy in the real world. Laura lives in her world of illusions around the glass menageries. The glass menagerie symbolizes the closed lifestyle of Laura. Just like the animals which were closed in the menagerie and their movement is limited too, the same thing happened to her too. The world outside is as susceptible to her illusions as the animals themselves. She always found alienated in the outer world so, she retract herself into the shell of glass menagerie. Her lack of adaptability is the result of her own illusions about herself. Just as the glass menagerie is fragile and tender, similarly the nature of Laura is soft and fragile too.

3.4.3 Tom's illusion-

The play starts with Tom as he says, " I am the narrator of the play and a character in it". (Williams, 1.10)

Tom lives in a world full of illusion which consists of movies, clubs and luxuries. Whenever he had an argument with his mother Amanda, he prefers to walk to movies late night. This behavior of his is justified as he too, is a victim of his illusions. His job in the shoe warehouse is so frustrating, so the movies and shows are the only outlet for him. This questioned the prevailing idea of the American dream because his longing to become a poet is not recognized

by anyone. Tom's one of the biggest illusion is that if he joins the merchant marine and sails to all the parts of the world, it will be a kind of escape for him from the hollowness in his life. He finds life at his own house intolerable because he feels alienated there and the outer world as well. His mother, Amanda is the biggest hurdle on his way to become what he wants to be, so he believed in escapism. The gentle man caller, Jim, turns out to be a wrong man for his sister. Depressed Tom, leaves home and joins the merchant marine in order to seek adventure on the high seas and new cities. But even this thing turns out to be an illusion as he moves from one place to another and finally turns back to his life at St. Louis, feeling homesick. Towards the end, Tom, as a narrator, has lost his illusions. He, now from the experiences learnt, that no amount of travel and adventure can shake the demon within him.

3.4.4 Jim O'Connor's illusion-

Jim O'Connor can be seen in the second part of the play 'The Gentleman Caller'. According to Tom, Jim is the most realistic character in the play. He is the only flawless character in the play and a popular student in his school, but he is also affected and ruled by illusions. He had not reached to that level of success as it was expected out of him from his school days because he landed up working in the same show warehouse where Tom works. He takes the night school course in public speaking and thereby gaining social poise. Jim is quite confident with his abilities and utilization of brain, he will be fitted for an executive position. He is also in an illusion that by taking a course in the radio engineering, he will be able to gain a foothold in the upcoming television industry and will attain success. He had a firm belief that he is someone special and will do some great things in future. Jim's illusion is the American dream. Tennessee shows us clearly that the various illusions of the character have, are the means of coping up with the facts of their lives. The characters of the play attempt to create an aura of illusions in order to either forget the unpleasant reality of human existence or to avoid certain experiences of the past. Such illusions serve as an escape for them and enables them to remain disguised in a make-believe world.

3.5. Escape from reality-

In the play, the characters have difficulty in accepting and relating to the reality. Each member of the family withdraws into a private world of their own creation where he/she finds comfort and meaning. Laura lies in a private world which is dominated by the glass animals. These animals are as delicate as Laura's inner life. She is afraid to dance the outer world because of her "crippled" legs. She feels that she will not be accepted for this physical disability of her's. Tom, on the other hand, is capable

of functioning in the real world and facing the reality of his life, yet he prefers to retreat into the fantasies provided by literature and movies. He also likes to drink in order to forget his responsibilities towards his mother and sister. Amanda too, escapes from the reality and clings to the memories of her past when she was a popular southern belle who had many suitors. She does not constantly accept that Laura is peculiar and Tom is not very successful at his work. Her retreat into illusion, is more pathetic than her children because it is not an imaginative construction, but a distortion of reality. Even Jim O'Connor is successful at his present job as he was expected to be when he was in high school. It is an illusion till he attains his objective and wishes to go into public speaking and the television and radio industries.

Therefore, according to me, the script of the play by Tennessee Williams, makes it clear that the play is not realistic due to the manner in which it is structured. The play *The Glass Menagerie*, does not stick with the Aristotelian unities of time, place and action. Nor does it follow the rules of Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries well-made play which comprises of a three act play where the action is continuous. Instead, Tennessee gave his play a structure of seven independent scenes of increasing length. Memories and dreams are a kind of 'desire gratification' for the characters in the play because their present seems to be hopeless. Thus, they slip into a surreal life of dreams and fantasies. Symbolically, 'the glass menagerie represents Laura's multi-faceted personality like she is fragile, imaginative and exotic just like her glass animals. Laura's favorite 'unicorn' is representative of her peculiarities, loneliness and her deviation from the modern world.

Chapter 4

Tracing Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood in Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie*

"Imitation pleases, because it affords matter for inquiring into the truth or falsehood of imitation, by comparing it's likeness of unlikeness with the original." (Dryden, 323)

The major area of research for my thesis lays emphasis on Plato's theory of form and ideas. To enunciate plainly, I do not support or oppose the theory proposed by Plato, but my motive is to trace his theory in the field of drama. *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams, is the unerring example to trace Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood. While going through Plato's *Republic*, Book X, what really enchanted me, is the blending of Plato's idea's into some other genre than 'Literary theory and criticism'. The *Republic*, deals explicitly with the topic of imitation and falsehood

promoted by a poet, an artist and the craftsman. The treatment of the Greek word 'mimesis' presents some kind of problem.

Mimesis can be translated multifariously as 'imitation', 'representation' or 'impersonation', depending on the context. It is said that no English term can modestly convey the meaning and the range of the Greek word. In Plato's canon, the term mimesis undergoes a prodigious variety of applications, yet remains constant in its definition, i.e. the word denotes consistently the relation of one object to other which is more real in some sense. In book X of the Republic, Plato uses mimesis in its lowest and the most pejorative sense in order to condemn the poet's. His doctrine of form and ideas is one of the first principle of metaphysics of transcendental reality. Plato was an idealist, so he was a firm believer of the fact that form and ideas are the only truth and reality, rest others are the earthly things which are mere copy of ideas. Again, not to support the thesis laid by him, but I really feel that drama is all about imitation, and imitation is of some object, characters, surrounding which came from somewhere else. So we cannot really claim drama to represent reality before us because it asks for the willing suspension of disbelief. Now, as an audience, if we are aware of the certitude of something as not real and we still believe it, this is only because we know for the fact that the play is not real, and just the appearance of the reality.

Rendering an example from our mundane life, the students in schools and universities study their textbooks. Are they really studying something which is true in its form? Do they believe in all that they read? Not really, the textbooks written by an author is also a copy of ideas that he/she might have gained from the ideologies read from some other textbook. So, an author too copies the ideologies which are prevalent in his/her surrounding. Or let's say, when we witness a play of Shakespeare, Arthur Miller, Henrik Ibsen, G.B. Shaw, Tennessee Williams, etc., the play has so many techniques, devices, sound effects, characters which makes it a non-realistic one. The characters in a play are not ideal, but taken from someone's life or experience. The lighting on the stage provides the idea of illusion. So, can we really say that what we see is the only truth or reality? Or the characters are the ideal characters? These questions about a play by the playwright, is an imitation and does not deal in truth, makes us question the authenticity of his work, just like Plato questions the authenticity of a poet. This is why, the dramatic representation is considered to be a form of imitation. Mostly what we see in a play, is the nostalgia, illusion and desire of the playwright which he picks up from his/her surroundings, but can we swear by what we see in a play? I decamp you with this question to render upon, but my findings convinces best that illusion is not the truth, rather it is far removed from the reality. There is no such thing as a logical event or realistic occurrence in a play. Instead, it focuses on a human being who is trapped in a meaningless and impossible world and desperately trying to get through the illogical and absurd situations he is faced with.

Patricia Waugh, a literary critic, said that Plato focused on the texts based on Greek tradition and he claimed these texts as representative of a particular set of values and views about the world. He even went to the extent of picking a quarrel with the poet's because they do not possess knowledge of the real world and thus end up passing falsehood as truth to the audience. Waugh goes on to explain Plato's concept of mimesis as he used this term in several ways. Since the Greek word 'mimesis' means 'miming' or 'acting like someone' in speech or in action. It is often translated as 'imitation'. Plato puts forth the idea that the literature does not depict the reality of its objects, rather portrays the way they appear. The very clear idea which we can easily receive from Plato's concept about literature is that the things in the physical world resemble, but fall short of, true reality. Although they look like real thing, but it is just an appearance. The literary author's or the dramatists do not represent the real because they know nothing about it and they only deal with the physical world they live in. Hence, there is a vast gap between mimesis and true reality. In Book X of his the *Republic*, Plato explains his theory of form and idea with reference to the painter and the craftsman. Let us understand his concept with little clarity. Suppose there are many tables in the world, but all of them have one idea or form. When a craftsman makes a table, he produces a mere semblance of this idea about the tables that is the only real thing. If an artist is to make a portrayal of this table crafted by the craftsman, the picture he makes, is a copy of something which itself is a shadow of the real object. Thus, the artifact is twice removed from the reality. Akin to what Plato thinks of a poet, we too can say that a playwright imitates reality without understanding it, similar to what an artist imitates is what he sees and knows to make use of what he sees.

Therefore, I feel that all the plays performed in the theatre by the artist, is a mere imitation of the real thing, and not the reality. When I say all the theatrical performances, I palpably talk of all the fields of dramatics. This thesis takes the example of just one play of Tennessee Williams, i.e. *The Glass Menagerie*, in order to trace Plato's idea of imitation and falsehood in the theatre. Tennessee Williams, an American playwright of Twentieth century, wrote his play *The Glass Menagerie*, as a memory play because he wanted to challenge the conventions of naturalistic theatre. This play of Tennessee provides ample of instances to trace Plato's concept of idea or form. Tennessee used music, screen projections and lighting effects in order to create haunting and dream like surrounding which is relevant for a memory play. Does this not bother you that how can we call any play real if it uses external forces like music, lighting, etc., to keep the audience intact and have willing suspension of disbelief? In the author's production note, Tennessee clearly stated that, " Being a 'memory play', *The Glass Menagerie* can be presented with the usual freedom of convention" (Williams, 750).

The lines stated above, Tennessee clearly shows that the play would not follow the conventions of a realistic theatre.

4.1. It is said that in drama, realism exists in the form of imitation of the real life. But what kind of real life are we talking about here, is the main concern? Are we talking of the metaphysical world? Or are we considering the physical world as the only real thing? Also to raise here a question of what is the difference between a drama and a play? Most of us don't find any difference between the two terms and use it interchanging, but there is a difference between a drama and a play. A play usually refers to a literary piece which consists of dialogues between various characters, epilogue, monologue, prologue and an end, whereas, a drama is the setup of a play which includes the theatre, the hall, the accessories, the green room, costumes, music, etc. To make a point here, Plato said that we copy the forms of the metaphysical world and make something out of just like the craftsman did, and the an artist copies what already is a copy, i.e. the creation of a craftsman. Uniformly, a play, which is already copied from the ideas of divine world, is now copied in order to make it a visual representation, i.e. a drama. Thus, we can rely on Plato's theory of form and idea here and clearly notice that the dramatis and the playwright imitates what is already a copy of the ideal form, so it is removed from the reality and also creates a false impression in the audience. Tennessee Williams play *The Glass Menagerie* was opened on Broadway in the Playhouse Theatre on March 31, 1945 and continued to play there until June 29, 1946. The drama was directed by Eddie Dowling and Margo Jones. Thus, the play by Tennessee, was taken up by Eddie and made into a visual representation, thereby adding few more things to it. Thus, the reality and authenticity is totally lost because now it because copy of the appearance and promotes falsehood amongst the audience by fooling the with the illusionary world of Tom Wingfield.

4.2. Characters-

Tom Wingfield, the narrator and the character in the play, breaks the conceptual 'fourth wall' because in his opening monologue, he talks to the audience directly. Tom: The play is memory. Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic.

In memory everything seems to happen to music that explains the fiddle in the wings.

I am the narrator of the play, and also a

Character in it. (Williams, I.753)

The use of characters in the play makes it evident for us that the play is not realistic because the characters are taken from the idea or form about certain kind of human who is there in Tennessee's surrounding. The characters- Tom Winfield, Amanda Wingfield, Laura Wingfield, Mr. Wingfield and

Jim O'Connor, are not the realistic characters. To explain my point of view further, let us take an example of fiction writing where an author has certain concept of how to categorize people as good or bad. This is because the idea of good and bad which is fixed in his/her surrounding, then he/she chalks out the type of characters he wants to connect his audience with. The chosen characters are not one of a kind, but the embodiment of little somethings which an author picks out from the personality of different people he met in his daily life. He adds certain new traits to the personality of his characters with the one's he knows and this is how the characters in his/her work emerges out. To recommence with the focal point of the thesis, if we talk about a play which is to be performed in the theatre. The same plan for character mapping goes down with the playwrights as well. The characters in the play are imagined wisely. Tennessee Williams characters of the play *The Glass Menagerie*, are doubly removed from the reality. Similar to Plato's parallel between an artist and the craftsman, the characters of the play are twice removed from what ideal characteristics of human beings because-

- They are the imagined fabrication of the playwrights. Analogous to Plato's example of a craftsman and an artist, the playwright too takes the characteristics of his characters from his mundane life, then he outlines the things he wants his characters to have and add it on their imagined category.
- The characters of the play *The Glass Menagerie*, are not real characters, but we see them from the narrator, Tom Wingfield's point of view, as he narrates them in his memory.
- Even though they are narrated from Tom Winfield's point of view, the characters of Tom, Laura, Amanda and Mr. Wingfield take the help of illusion in order to escape from the world they live in. Their escapism is the proof that they are thrice times removed from the ideal human beings.

Thence, illusion, escapism are all the manners in which they are secluded from the real world. Illusionary world is lot different from the real world because it is dreamy and nonrealistic. Almost all the characters in the play use illusion as a defense against the harsh reality of the life they lived. It provided the notion of happiness while life was surrounded by bitter facts. People are lured to the world of illusion that is kind of falsehood and escapism which helps that stay away from their current situations. The character of Laura which is influenced by Tennessee's real life sister, Rose, lives in a world of illusion which is concocted with the help of 'glass menagerie'. She fails miserably to relate herself to the outer world. Even when Amanda sent her to a business school, Laura withdrew into a world of her own. Her physically challenged condition is allusive of her isolation. The gentleman caller, Jim O'Connor encourages her to ponder about love and marriage, but soon he breaks her

trust by telling him about his engagement with his fiancée. This revelation of truth send Laura back to the world of illusion which is shattered, just like her broken unicorn.

JIM: You'll never forgive me. I bet that that was your favorite piece of glass.

LAURA: I don't have favorites much. It's no tragedy, Freckles. Glass breaks so easily. No matter how careful you are. The traffic jars, the shelves and things fall off them.

JIM: Still I'm awfully sorry that I was the cause.

LAURA [*Smiling*]: I'll just imagine he had an operation. The horn was removed to make him feel less—freakish! [*They both laugh*]. Now he will feel more at home with the other horses, the one's that don't have horns. (Williams, VII.780)

Tom Winfield, the narrator of the play, also lives in the world of illusion and fantasy which is based on the movies, clubs and luxuries he find at late night. He is the embodiment of Tennessee Williams himself, who finds escape in writing fiction works. Tom feels frustrated in his present job at a shoe warehouse, so late night shows are an outlet for him.

AMANDA: But, why- why, Tom – are you always so restless? Where do you go to , nights?

TOM: I- go to movies

AMANDA: Why do you go to movies so much, Tom?

TOM: I go to movies because- I like adventure. Adventure is something I don't have much of at work, so I go to the movies. (Williams, IV.763.1-8)

The character of Amanda, inspired by Tennessee's real life mother, Edwina Dakin Williams, finds that her son is not working hard enough to feed the family well, even her daughter, Laura is crippled and suffers from inferiority complex. The present reality is not satisfying to her in any ways and being unable to face the bitter reality of her present life, she tries to live in past when many gentleman callers used to visit her. She tells the stories from her past and imposes her dreams and wishes on them, but it is just an illusion of her's. When she comes to know that Jim O'Connor will not marry Laura, she feels horrible because the artificial world of her dreams has broken down and she enacts a drama in order to show that there is no tension. Amanda tries to hide behind the façade of illusions to hide her sorrows and problems.

AMANDA: One Sunday afternoon in Blue Mountain- your mother received- seventeen- gentleman callers! Why, sometimes there weren't chairs enough to accommodate them all. We had to send the bigger over to bring in folding chairs from the parish house.

TOM: [*Remaining at portieres*] How did you entertain those gentleman callers?

AMANDA: I understood the art of conversation! (Williams, I.754)

In the play, Tennessee clearly depicts the various illusions of the characters which they use as means of coping up with the facts of their lives. The Wingfield family of the play, tries to escape from the reality into the world of fantasies, dreams and imagination in order to mitigate their pains and suffering. Thus, how can we say that the characters living in the world of fantasy are realistic? First of all, they are not the idealistic form because they are borrowed from the physical world, so it makes them pure imagination of the playwright. Secondly, the characters of the play are seen colored memories of the narrator of the play, not in physical world, just like an artist who paints the chair made by the craftsman, which itself is a copy. Henceforth, Plato's theory of form is applicable here, as the characters as the copy of a copy, i.e. taken from physical world which itself is a copy of the real ideas.

4.3. Play is sentimental, not realistic-

The setting of the play makes it a non-realistic play in every manner. For instance, The Wingfield apartment is not a happy place. There is a symmetry between the uneasy peace of the time period when the play was written and the uneasy peace which is visible in the Wingfield house. There is a chaos in the minds of the characters which was the result of Great Depression in America before the World War II. Just like America stirred restlessly with certain unease before the second World War, the character of Tom also needs to escape his house and go into the outside world.

The most unrealistic aspect in the setting of the play is, the Paradise Dance Hall which is evident in scene V. The outside world in the play, is just as susceptible to illusion as the Wingfield apartment. The young people at the Paradise Dance Hall dance under the short term illusion which is created by the glass ball (another version of Laura's glass animals). "Paradise" is an allusion to the list Garden of Eden and in the play, this allusion puts forward the America in thirties as the period of innocence before the second World War. The dance hall, being described in the memory of Tom Wingfield, creates a sense of loss due to the time period in which it is being told. Therefore, through the convention of stage, the dance hall is not a reality because it is out of the reach of the audience. We can hear the music and see bit of lights, hear characters description of the place, but the Paradise Dance Hall is only visible indirectly, just like it is out of reach for Tom, Amanda and Laura. So, being the spectator of a play, can we trust the authenticity of the play if something is not visible to us and seen through the perspective of other characters only? I believe that the ideals created by the divine, are surpassed to the human beings, and they take up those ideas and create something out of, just the way a craftsman makes bed or a chair out of the idea derived from the metaphysical world. The physical world is a mere imitation of the metaphysical world.

Throughout the play, Tennessee makes use of savvy and visionary means for letting us know that the play we are witnessing, is indeed a memory and not the truth. The various scenes in the play helps us to bring to light Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood. In the play, a scene worth noticing in this respect is scene IV, where Tom arrives home at five in the morning. When the scene opens, we get to hear " a church bell tolling the hour of five". Tom arrives home and makes a short discussion with his sister, Laura. Laura chides him about coming drunk to the home and then, all of the sudden, we hear the clock bell striking six. The amusement to this scene is the fact that the audience does not stay for more than five minutes into this scene and Amanda shouts "Rise and shine". Tom gets up hurrying and Laura says that "Tom! It's nearly seven."

Scene Dims Out

[*Immediately following: The church bell is heard striking six. At the sixth stroke the alarm clock goes off in AMANDA'S room, and after a few moments we hear her calling: " Rise and Shine' Rise and Shine' Laura, go tell your brother to rise and shine!"]*

TOM [*Sitting up slowly*]: I'll rise- but I won't shine.

[*The light increases*]

AMANDA: Laura, tell your brother his coffee is ready.

[*Laura slips into front room*]

LAURA: Tom!- It's nearly seven. Don't make mother nervous. [*He stares at her stupidly, beseechingly*] Tom, speak to mother this morning. Make up with her, apologize, speak to her! (Williams, IV.761)

The scene has various implications like Laura could read the time properly or Tennessee messed up with his writing and we can also see it as the play is seen from narrators perspective, so we get to know about the things when Tom is awake and apparently, between the time difference mentioned in the scene, Tom is asleep. This shows is that the playwright tries to fool the audience with his misconceptions and forgetful nature, so the play does not promote any kind of great values, rather it gives the false narrative to its audience.

4.4. The play by Tennessee, is far from being a reality because it includes several elements like dream, memory, illusion, escape which makes it a non-realistic play. For instance, the scenes of the play are memory and therefore non-realistic. Memory, in the play, takes a lot of poetic license as it omits out some details, few of the are exaggerated. Scene I takes place in the memory of Tom where he recalls his family. Tennessee puts that,

“He divides the portieres and enters the upstage area. AMANDA and LAURA are seated at a drop-leaf table. Eating is indicated by gestures without food or utensils. AMANDA faces the audience Tom and Laura are seated in profile. The interior has lit up softly and through the scrim we see Amanda and Laura seated at the table in the upstage area”.

(Williams, I.753)

The music in the play comes from outside and only the audience can hear it. Dim colored lighting and symbolic music creates the unrealistic setting for the memory play. In the opening monologue of the narrator, Tom Wingfield, he says that,

“ Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic. In memory everything seems to happen to music. That explains the fiddle in the wings.”(Williams,I.753)

Therefore, the use of music, lighting, glass animals, etc., in the play makes it borrowed version of the ideas taken from the divine world of how a human should be, how things take place, and even the consequences of Great Depression in America during the time play was written, is copied in the play which makes it removed from reality. In literature, although a play takes an important place, but it does not justify the truth and idea in which Plato believed. This brings my paper to rest with drawing the parallel between Plato’s theory of form and his idea of falsehood to Tennessee’s play *The Glass Menagerie*. Not just Tennessee’s play but most of the play’s and drama’s which are performed in the theatre are just an imitation of something which is already an imitation of the real object/thing.

Chapter 5

5.1. Conclusion-

The study helps us to trace Plato’s concept of imagination and falsehood in not just Tennessee’s play, but to look at all the plays through the point of view of a literary critic like Plato. The paper focuses mainly on tracing Plato’s theory of form and concept of falsehood in Tennessee’s Twentieth century play, *The Glass Menagerie*. For the analysis of any play, it is necessary to know the backdrop of it, the theory we want to apply to it and also the events that help us locate our point of view easily. In this research paper, going through various book, research papers of the literary critics, YouTube video’s, the script of the play and the book of Plato, made me believe that anything and everything we do in the physical world is an imitation of the ideas derived from the metaphysical world. But the focus of the paper does not lie on supporting or opposing Plato, rather it focuses on tracing his concept in the play. Plato, in his theory of mimesis, said that all the forms of art are mimetic in nature and art is an imitation of life. Plato was a believer that the ‘idea’ or ‘form’ is the ultimate reality which

is created by a superior being. Art imitates those ideas, so it becomes the imitation of a reality, and not the reality. Plato in his book X of the *Republic*, took the example of a craftsman and an artist in order to validate his point. He says that the idea of 'chair' first came in the mind of a craftsman and he gave a physical shape to his idea and then created a chair of it. An artist, in picture, imitates the chair which was already created by the craftsman. Thus, the chair created by an artist is twice removed from the reality. Therefore, Plato believed that art is twice removed from the reality and does not teach something valuable to us, thereby promoting falsehood. Now, in order to track down all the teachings of Plato in his book the *Republic*, we need to look at various aspects of a play. The first thing that we need to do is distinguish between a play and a drama because half of our understanding about Plato's concept starts pacing from there. We certainly know the fact that a play is the literary piece which is written down as a script by the playwright, but a drama is the enactment of the play which is scripted. Therefore, in creating a drama out of a play, we are imitating something which itself is an imitation. Tennessee, while writing the play took the characters from his real life, which means he copied the idea and the characters often try to be something that they are not in order to escape their real world just like Laura tries to behave like her collection of glass animals, Amanda tries to act like the southern belle she used to be and Tom behaves as a responsible man of the house, which he certainly is not. Therefore, the playwright imitates in the way he creates his characters and then the director of the play makes some addition to the characters which are already taken up from the physical world. Thus, the imitation doubles up here.

Also use of external forces like music, lighting, memory and illusion in the play makes it a non-realistic play because these things influence the actions of the characters and makes the play false and adulterated because it only creates dream like world for the audience, which does not really exist in reality. The concept is mimesis of Plato can very much be traced in not just a play, but in any kind of the genre because all the human beings are born to imitate the 'idea' created by the superior being for the proper working of the life.

5.2. Limitation-

Although the paper offers something new to its readers because it fuses the field of literary theory and criticism with drama, but there are various limitations to it too. The study focuses on single concept of Plato's while he talked about lot of things in book X of his the *Republic*. Plato talked about various concepts like concept of imagination, how literature is twice removed from the reality, falsehood promoted by literature, why philosophy is superior to any other form of art, the Myth of Er, the faculty of mind humans should use. All these concepts are well know world's of Plato in the field of literary theory and criticism, but in order to fulfil the needs of the topic for this study, only one aspect of his works is taken up, i.e. Plato's concept of imagination and falsehood. Also, genre of

drama is vast, so it need to be studied at length. Tennessee Williams play has various techniques, forms, devices, themes, motifs, stage directions, etc. which can be looked at while study of his play, but in this research work, only few elements of his play *The Glass Menagerie* like characters, memory, music, setting is taken up in order to satisfy with the topic that has been taken up for the study.

Owing to the fact that the topic is new for interpretation, it leaves various loopholes for the reader's like- the use of words, figurative language, length of work. Hence, the paper lacks in some of the ways .

5.3. Scope of improvement-

There is further scope of study in the fusion of literary theory and criticism with dramatics which is not covered in the study but, can be taken up in the future. This study opens up new grounds for further research work. Further studies can address the following issues to have more insights on the subject.

- Taking up Plato's rest of the concepts into consideration while working in this area.
- The researcher can choose the sides whether to agree or disagree with the critics they study.
- Aristotle's concept of imitation can be given more preference than Plato's concept of imagination.

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