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An Investigation of the "Green World Escape" in Three Victorian Plays

A B S T R A C T

Urban gardens, parks, and conservatories had grown popular by the late nineteenth century and were now widely available to the public on a cultural and social level. Creating natural areas inside cities merged the rural and urban sectors into a single locale. In order to examine the "green world" experience in Victorian theater, three plays by three British playwrights namely Arthur Wing Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, and Oscar Wilde from the second half of the nineteenth century have been chosen for this study. The plays span farces, fantasy, and melodrama, presenting many viewpoints on the idea of escapism along with the discovery of and yearning for other worlds.

By analyzing the dreams and experiences of the alternate universe, it is feasible to understand Victorian views about the landscape and its role as a respite from urban or industrial commercial centers. This can assist to spark a discussion about characters' desires for escape and the circumstances that drive them to seek tranquility in rural locations. The protagonists' otherworldly experiences inside the alternate worlds may be examined if it is obvious what they are trying to get away from. After knowing what happens in the green world, it is possible to examine how often characters are able to go through difficult situations.

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التحقيق في "الهروب من العالم الأخضر" في ثلاث مسرحيات فيكتورية

جوان عادل محمد / كلية التربية / جامعة كرميان/كلار

الخلاصة:

ازدهرت الحدائق الحضرية والمتنزهات والمعاهد الموسيقية في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر وأصبحت الآن متاحة على نطاق واسع للجمهور على المستوى الثقافي والاجتماعي. أدى إنشاء المناطق الطبيعية داخل المدن إلى دمج القطاعات الريفية والحضرية في مكان واحد. من أجل دراسة تجربة "العالم الأخضر" في

المسرح الفيكتوري، تم اختيار ثلاث مسرحيات من تأليف ثلاث كتاب بريطانيين وهم آرثر وينج بينيرو وهنري آرثر جونز وأوسكار وايلد من النصف الثاني من القرن التاسع عشر لهذه الدراسة. تمتد المسرحيات إلى المهرجانات والخيال والميلودراما، وتقدم العديد من وجهات النظر حول فكرة الهروب إلى جانب اكتشاف العوالم الأخرى والتوق إليها.

من خلال تحليل أحلام وتجارب الكون البديل، من الممكن فهم وجهات النظر الفيكتورية حول المناظر الطبيعية ودورها كفترة راحة من المراكز التجارية الحضرية أو الصناعية. يمكن أن يساعد ذلك في إثارة نقاش حول رغبات الشخصيات في الهروب والظروف التي تدفعهم إلى البحث عن الهدوء في المناطق الريفية. يمكن اختبار تجارب الأبطال في العالم الآخر داخل العوالم البديلة إذا كان من الواضح ما الذي يحاولون الابتعاد عنه. بعد معرفة ما يحدث في العالم الأخضر، من الممكن فحص عدد المرات التي تكون فيها الشخصيات قادرة على اجتياز المواقف الصعبة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهروب، العالم الأخضر، المناظر الطبيعية، القرن التاسع عشر، المسرح الفيكتوري.

1. Introduction

Northrop Frye claimed that irrational laws and pastoral or rural settings apart from cities produce a "green world" in which "the comic resolution is attained and the cast returns with it to their former world" (141). The comedy plays of Shakespeare permit the suspension or reversal of traditional conventions since the characters physically go to islands and forests beyond the boundaries of social order. In his plays, "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "As You Like It", and "The Tempest", fairies, animals, and wizards all contribute to the golden, magical, or dreamy ambiance needed to elevate the green realm above reality and everyday civilization.

Nevertheless, it's important to realize that the green world doesn't provide easy or even rational escape. The Christian pattern of the fall and redemption, according to Frye, is one in which "man loses a peaceable kingdom, staggers through the long nightmare of tyranny and injustice...and eventually regains his original vision" (133). However, if the "green world is a metaphor of...the original human civilization, which is the natural home of man and the golden world he is yearning to reclaim" (Frye 142), then it stands to reason that the Christian pattern cannot be used to create escapism in play. Characters intentionally abandon the "original vision," create the green world, ultimately depart the other dimension, and then go

back to their original location. In reality, the peaceful kingdom is founded after characters return to normalcy, indicating that the green world is more of a passing glimpse of restoration than a "home" or "regained" area.

"The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" by Arthur Wing Pinero (1855- 1934), which was performed in 1893, seems to support the idea that life in the country is free from social problems. However, despite relocating to the "Surrey hills" and falling under its "refining influence" (Pinero 104), the protagonists never come close to realizing Frye's vision of the peaceful kingdom. As a melodrama from the late nineteenth century, Pinero's ending is filled with fin de siècle pessimism on human progress in a society that is primarily obsessed with the past.

Similar to this, Henry Arthur Jones (1851- 1929) in his play "The Dancing Girl", which first appeared on stage in 1891, has a main character who is "chained to look always backwards" and eventually "broken in fortune, rejected in love, and unsuccessful even in suicide" (Jones 356). Jones' character finds his "desired haven" (Ibid 357) on the pastoral island, but Pinero's character expresses skepticism about the curative qualities of nature.

Oscar Wilde (1854- 1900) in his play "The Importance of Being Earnest", which premiered in 1895, likewise explores the importance of natural landscapes. The estate's garden and surrounding countryside situated the characters in a remote setting apart from London society. In contrast to "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" and "The Dancing Girl", there is no return to "the orderly tranquillity of usual life and conventional ideas" (Powell 121) following exposure to the countryside. So, whereas melodrama offers a truthful and somewhat dismal view of reconciliation, Wilde's comedy seems to provide characters a permanent escape.

The psychological consequences of escapism seem to have taken precedence in the three plays, whether comedy or melodrama, rather than the real impacts of nature and the pastoral. Comparatively, Pinero, Jones, and Wilde have a significantly more immediate connection with the rural, natural surroundings. It would thus be wise to start by investigating Victorian-era expectations for rural areas before examining the green world experience in these three plays.

2. Victorian Rural Fantasies: Idealized Nature

Examining Victorian conceptions of the landscape and its capacity to provide escape is crucial in consideration of Northrop Frye's assertion that "nature has a

miraculous and irresistible reviving power" (Frye 119). The rural retreat or country manor became popular among the lower classes in addition to serving as a temporary respite for the nobles. High employment rates and the emergence of sociable societies in the middle of the nineteenth century influenced working-class families to adopt a saving culture. Consequently, there was an increase in demand for weekend breaks, especially in seaside resorts (Walton 251). The working classes might momentarily escape from labor and financial anxiety by switching urban life for rural or seaside places and altering landscape and ambiance.

Amid the mid-19th century, Smiles claimed that "honest earning and the frugal use of money", together with "prudence and self-denial" provide "hope until better days come around" (295). He said that people are capable of overcoming their circumstances and achieving respectability. Additionally, he lauded the working class and middle class for their dedication, abstinence, and overall goodness for being able to rise beyond their birth and material circumstances via hard effort and self-education. Nevertheless, considering the effort required to save money, vacationing in the country demonstrated that people may advance themselves via self-help. In this sense, the countryside provided urban dwellers with a refuge and, perhaps, social respect for the working man.

Since they were far from crowded, industrial regions, the country and the seaside were instantly seen to be conducive to health and happiness. In "The Dancing Girl", Drusilla remarks that Endellion "is very healthy- Sara Bazeley has lived to a hundred and two" (Jones 299). Additionally, "the air is soft and pleasant" (Ibid 290) in contrast to stereotypes of filthy, stuffy cities. Friedrich Engels recorded instances of slow development, hormonal imbalances, and a short average life expectancy in fields like mining and cotton production. Furthermore, he claimed that "carbonic acid gas" affected "two and a half million pairs of lungs", including chronic sicknesses as well as "mental and physical lassitude and low vitality" (Engels 96). Therefore, romanticized ideas of living longer outside of cities may be related to worries about industrial pollution and the damaging consequences of excessive physical work on England's general health and constitution in the nineteenth century (Waters 86).

It is important to keep in mind that the green world presents an idealistic vision of physical work as well. The need for agricultural labor increased as a result of the rising population, which also produced the illusion of rural luxury in contrast to the

terrible circumstances of urban life. In fact, both natural circumstances and economic stability were necessary for agricultural development.

This struggle with nature is examined in "The Dancing Girl", as the water around Endellion endangers the lives of its residents and impedes commerce. However, Jones maintains that despite the hardships, the labor on the island fosters camaraderie and gives redemption for everybody. Guisebury and the workmen work with their "hands", "head" and "heart" (Jones 348) to construct the islands' breakwater. It is indicated that these people do not use force or labor for profit since their employment is voluntary; rather, they have a positive attitude toward the residents of the island. Crake claims that "the harbor was built in time to develop the trade of the island" (Ibid 354). By overcoming the obstacles presented by the economy and nature itself, Quakers, in addition to being stable in their religious beliefs, take pleasure in their work and employ it to the benefit of the community.

Wilde's "garden at the Manor House" (81) doesn't need any physical effort, in contrast to Jones' characters, who must work hard to sustain their ideal existence. According to Michael Waters, "when used as a pastoral metaphor, garden inevitably defines the country as something to look upon and enjoy rather than as something from which to derive a living" (Waters 185). By doing this, gardens became spaces where people could enjoy the beautiful qualities of nature, transcending any associations with urban and country work. Interestingly, Wilde said "nature is so uncomfortable. Grass is hard and lumpy and damp" (909). Farming difficulty and the subjectivity of laborers to economic swings resulted in small, romanticized, and most significantly, manageable recreations of rural environment in garden.

Early in the summer, the garden of Cecily is "full of roses" (Wilde 82). Due to the season, the characters are not motivated to labor or plant. As a matter of fact, the traditional notion of spring and fertility is ignored in favor of full bloom and vitality rather than output and effort. The scope of Cecily's relationship with nature onstage is limited to two instances of her watering flowers. Cecily only engages in gardening to avoid German classes or to meet Algernon, despite her commitment to living a natural lifestyle. In addition to revealing her ignorance, her misinterpretation of the word "agricultural depression" (Ibid 113) demonstrates the absence of economic concern or realism in the beautiful garden. Wilde transfers his

characters and viewers to a completely beautiful, maintenance-free rural refuge contained by a Victorian garden.

Nature was indeed existed in the "conservatory", as described by Waters, "it captured the Victorian imagination" through replicating "the greatest of all glass palaces, the Crystal Palace" (270). The conservatory offered regulated "airiness and profusion, and darkness and luminosity," in contrast to gardens that featured unpleasant nature and unpredictable conditions (Waters 271). In this regard, the countryside or other idealized natural setting offers the protagonists the prospect of spiritual redemption and labor or hardship free lives. However, authors comply to stereotypes about rural areas by depicting these "green worlds" or "escapist realms" as beautiful settings, providing audiences and characters with a way to escape.

3. The Desire to Escaping

In this section, it is crucial to understand why individuals wish to leave the city and question about the motivations for escapist. According to Kerry Powell "farce is obsessed with travel, whether to the sea or to a country house" and "beginning the world again...is one way of gratifying the need to be somewhere else, somebody else" (126). Even though he connects "travel" with "farce," the desire to become someone else in a romanticized or otherworldly location is anything but frivolous since it reflects a desire to physically and intellectually transcends reality. It will be feasible to understand why and how characters strive to allude to other universes by analyzing external and psychological constraints on normalcy, such as poverty and guilt.

3.1 Avoiding Society

In "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray", Aubrey contends that by replacing "the Surrey Hills" for "Pall Mall," he "avoids mortification" (Pinero 87). He uses the countryside as a haven to escape the mostly lifeless experience of everyday life. His "chambers in the Albany" (Ibid 177) induce a feeling of claustrophobia while being surrounded by company and luxury. The flat has no windows and provides no possibility for peaceful activities since he is expected to host visitors. On top of that, Drummle's remarks about the marriage of Orreyed as being "worse than death" and a "social dead sea" interrupt the solo work of Aubrey at one of the room's opposing corners, causing "a frown upon his face", "a half-stifled exclamation of impatience" (Ibid 81). Pinero has shown how Aubrey cannot avoid

hearing rumors and insults in his house in order to make a point about the absence of privacy in the constrictive character of town life.

Likewise, Jones's urban scenes in "The Dancing Girl" take place inside. London is connected with "silly social conventions" and "hating, fighting, eating, drinking, and scrambling for happiness" (Jones 334). The contrast between joy and unhappiness in this scene emphasizes how London society is deteriorating. Although Pinero evokes thoughts of morality with words like "dead sea" and "mortification," Jones incorporates a violent and dissatisfied aspect. "Full of pain and shame", "almost pushes", "fiercely seizing" (Ibid 311), "kicks the footstall savagely", "breaks old china bowl" (Ibid 313), "threatening", "forcing", and "beating" (Ibid 345). These stage instructions highlight how unstable and dangerous town life is, which promotes unpredictable behavior. This contrasts with the meeting house, cliffs, and sea vista in the opening scene of *Endellion*, which evokes a sense of peace and community.

Additionally, the audience may recognize the urban environment from these plays because of the claustrophobia and "hubbub" of the town. As a result, Jones' island becomes a pleasant refuge, much like how Aubrey's rural estate offers the characters and viewer peace and open hills.

3.2 Lovers and Authority

In the same way that characters strive to avoid worldly suffering, lovers also aspire to avoid societal and familial constraints. Despite the fact that Gwendolen says in "The Importance of Being Earnest": "the country always bores me to death" (Wilde 112), the straightforward need that Gwendolen departs London in order to communicate with her boyfriend instantly indicates that she has to get away from Lady Bracknell. To emphasize the prohibition on physical contact, the characters in London "blow kisses" (Ibid 66) to each other. Strangely enough, in the performances of George Alexander, Gwendolen "puts arms around Jack's neck during the proposal" (Jackson 63). By eliminating the social and sexual constraints of town life, this closeness appears to contradict the purposeful distance Wilde establishes between his lovers here.

Once they reach the countryside, though, they "fall into each other's arms", and "offer to kiss" (Wilde 126), Jack places his arm around the waist of Gwendolen. Additionally, even though this couple is only permitted to pretend to kiss after being engaged, Algernon is able to cuddle Cecily in the garden scene. Cecily,

unlike Gwendolyn, feels free to commit herself to her lover despite Jack's closeness. Despite father yearning and the rural girl's idolization, actual parental interference is negligible in Wilde's rural setting, which allows couples to be married outside the law and against societal norms.

In addition to providing an escape from the rules that control the majority of middle-class and upper-class marriages, the idea of autonomous lovers also fulfills dreams about curing or correcting one's spouse by exposing one to nature. For instance, Belmont serves as Jessica and Lorenzo's safe haven in Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice", enabling them to overcome ethnic and family barriers. However, there is a suggestion that by putting Jessica in a purifying, Christian environment while fleeing from Venice to Belmont, she would be cleansed and separated from her Jewish background.

In "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray", the first wife of Aubrey was sent to a remote residence during their "terribly unsatisfactory" and "short married life" (Pinero 83). According to Drummle, Miss Herriot is "an iceberg" and "the one lady who made me scared" (Ibid 84). In fact, Aubrey "married her and took her away" and "reckoned...that in the early days of marriage she would thaw" (Ibid 83). Similar to Lorenzo and Jessica in Belmont, Aubrey here inserts a religious outsider into a fresh environment where he may exercise influence on her. Given Drummle's disapproval of Aubrey's wife, it is probable that Drummle used the rural getaway as a tool to mold her personality to conform to societal standards. Here Pinero equates physical displacement with reformation or rebirth. In actuality, idealized notions of individual reformation and restored relationships drive lovers to seek sanctuary and a fresh start in the countryside, away from society's reach and scrutiny.

3.3 In Search of a New Identity

Physical or mental relocation reflects a vision of personality change and the promise of a new life because characters aim to get go of the knowledge of remorse and previous behavior. Undoubtedly, Darwin's theory of natural selection contributed to ideas of regenerating impacts in rural settings. It is possible to compare the restoring or healing qualities of the countryside to nature's capacity to help species adapt for survival. Because of its capacity to develop human beings into physically and cognitively skilled humans, the pastoral sphere becomes desired.

In Pinero's "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray", considering Paula's declaration, "I do so want to be married" (90) it is assumed that the countryside and marriage would liberate her from her past and future worries. In the first act, Paula tells Aubrey a dream about "a very long table, flowers and guests" (Pinero 89), implying that her concept of escape is social prominence. Moreover, she states, "the nicest part of my fantasy" is that "none of our visitors have ever heard anything...strange about the enchanting hostess" (Ibid 90). Consequently, the climax of Paula's escape is the creation of a "new identity" that would change her social standing as a "fallen" woman.

Paula's relocation to the country, in keeping with Darwinian Theory, is essential for her change. She asserts that she would "make away with" herself if Aubrey were to "behave like the rest" and leave her (Pinero 90). Here, Aubrey serves as Paula's gateway to the natural world and, thus, to evolution and natural redemption rather than extinction and death.

The idea of progression and regeneration in the countryside, however, appears incongruous if rural fancies are nostalgic longings for a bygone era. Jones' Drusilla in "The Dancing Girl" lives in a small town, which enables her to take on a new name, demeanor, and profession. She gives up the outdoors for London, "wit," and "mischief" (Jones 294). "You and I live in different worlds- all the old things have gone...they are old- fashioned and out- worn" (Ibid 345). The idea of a return to the natural environment is called into question when the "forgotten," pastoral way of life evolves into an adapted and extinct way of life.

However, Victorian country retreats and gardens, according to Waters, were "visionary and forward- looking rather than nostalgic genuflections to the myth of a Golden Age" (218). Drusilla may be constrained by the "old things," but it is important to remember that by ignoring the natural world, she denies herself the benefits of its renewing forces and, eventually, her capacity to survive.

In addition, Wilde implies that his characters have the chance to become a better, if not perfect, "humanity" through interaction with nature. Being "Ernest in town and Jack in the country" (Wilde 53) enables the character to embody both imagination and reality. The ability of the characters to mold their personality to their environment is the cause of their amazing survival skills. As a protector, he has a responsibility to safeguard Drusilla's concept of the "old life," stringent rules, and "a high moral tone" (Ibid 55). On the other hand, he may "amuse himself" in town

instead of "other people" (Ibid 54). As a result of Jack's relationship with nature, he is able to adapt to any situation, which brings to mind Powell's idea of identity renewal through travel.

4. The "Green World" Experience

The "green world" requires an existence outside of normalcy due to the desire to avoid psychological and physical barriers. In fact, the Saturnalia or "wave of subversive mockery" experienced by Shakespeare's characters "undermines authority" (Laroque 63) and evolves into a purposeful rejection of the order associated with Frye's "irrational society" (Ibid 141).

Through gratifying "the people's laughter," Bakhtin said that "carnival celebrated temporary liberation" (687). Though the "carnavalesque" denotes "grotesque", physiological and sexual demands, the idea of disregarding "established order...hierarchical rank...norms and prohibitions" (Bakhtin 686) is perceptible in the "green world". Given that Victorians were reluctant to engage in sexual excess on stage, it is possible for them to interpret this ephemeral freedom as celebration and Saturnalia outside of community.

Francois Laroque claims that Elizabethan celebrations included "masques, music, dancing and cuisine" but "one of the most common criticisms...was that they...distracted the faithful from the proper respect due to Sunday services and prayers" (37). Considering "Sunday" as a day of reflection and spiritual contemplation rather than a day free from work and obligations may help to explain the fantasy of piety and austerity seen in the green worlds of Victorian theater. It may have been possible to bring order and direction to what otherwise might have been chaotic by encouraging people to spend downtime or special occasions participating in religious or contemplative activities, substituting the spiritual rebirth and vitality found in rural areas for the urban mortification. Analyzing the experiences characters really undergo while in the "green world", for instance, the distorting of time, the sanity's rejection via inverted normalcy, and the loss of real world organization, is crucial for understanding how characters arrive to this self-reflection and revivification.

4.1 The Festive Escape

Due to the abundance of food in "The Importance of Being Earnest", one may think of the garden as a place for celebration. Not only are there bread and butter,

muffins, and tea cakes, but Cecily claims that "when one is going to lead an entirely new life, one requires regular and wholesome meals" (Wilde 88). Like the feast of Pinero's schoolgirls, financial constraints do not apply to this green world, allowing it to become an economically autonomous domain of gluttony and gastronomic excess.

As previously discussed, since reality is a matter of opinion, rural locations cannot be the only place where people feel escape. It is simple to imagine the town as a backdrop for "masques, music, dancing, and cuisine" (Jones 33) given that Jones starts "The Dancing Girl" on the pastoral island. The town scenes don't follow any preset routes, and a massive feast, dancing, and "fiddler" all add to the joyful mood of the scenario. In addition, Drusilla is able to forego Quaker sensitivities of modesty and piety by clothing and moving her body in a manner calculated to draw attention. Despite being surrounded by "the world of the court" and the "ordinary, every time," this town is able to capture "the frenzy of Carnival" (Ibid 235).

4.2 Madness

Normality is challenged by the rising of suppressed or denied desires in the green world. The early Victorian fascination with mesmerism suggested that the mind might change while being manipulated or interrogated by outside influences. It was clear that the psyche was unstable since it was possible for the subconscious or uncontrolled mental faculties to override or replace the logical. On the other hand, phrenology claimed that mental abnormality was a result of physiological characteristics, and Darwin also asserted that "idiocy" or "lunacy" was hereditary (662). However, the pseudoscientific interest in psychological repression and the subconscious is maintained by hinting that everyone is prone to insanity and that characters lose their senses in the "green world".

Paula Tanqueray is referred to be "a mad woman" (Pinero 103) after enduring a kind of psychological deterioration in the green world. Actually, Kromm's portrayal of mad "agitation" is well captured by Pinero's use of stage instructions. "Fierce cry", "tearing", "stabs it viscously" (Ibid), "glares suddenly and fiercely", "snatches", "uplifted hands as if to strike him" (Ibid 111), "forcing Ellean down upon her knees" and "throwing her off violently" (Ibid 127) are all used to describe this action. Paula's erratic behavior is attributed to a perceived mental deficiency in women as Drummle says: "all jealous women are insane" (Ibid 103). Notably,

Kromm contended that whereas people with schizophrenia saw men as aggressive and powerful, those with mental illness perceived women as "sexually provocative" and "primarily self-abusing" (507). In accordance with Victorian standards, Paula's interactions with Dartry, Ethurst, Jarman, and Ardale show sexual promiscuity. She could act violently, commit suicide, or harm herself in the future as a result of her "provocative" conduct.

Instead of associating sexual desire with insanity, Jones argues that women's attraction for men indicates a need for psychological health. The death of her husband causes Mrs. Christison in "The Dancing Girl" to go insane. "I know he hasn't forgotten me, because when man and wife love as we loved, there's never any forgetting on either side of the grave" (Jones 302). This partnership between a man and a woman might represent the harmony of the many mental states. Thus, Christison's death causes his wife to become insane when Sybil says, "she's mad, you needn't take any notice of her" (Ibid).

Additionally, Leddra urges Guisebury to ignore his wife. "She's only a woman, and she's fond of me...that's what makes her so foolish" (Jones 304). In this instance, the island challenges female reason by requiring it to rely on male guidance. This contrasts with the burgeoning feminist idea in the "New Women" writings of Gilman and Schreiner that patriarchy presented a threat to the mental health of women. As Elaine Showalter observes, the patriarchal ideology that constrains the protagonist in the short story of Charlotte Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" through "the confinement of marriage, the burdens of motherhood, and the demands of the body" (Showalter xvii) produces a horror story about impending and compelled female insanity. Even if Jones' "green world" does not foster insanity, the fact that the lack of males produces crazy implies that women are mentally unstable by nature. Jones opposes the female need for freedom from male restriction by subverting psychological standards, implying that the loss of masculine authority signifies the abandonment of reason.

The simultaneous abandonment of society and celebration results in a loss of sanity and psychological order, since festivity symbolizes a departure from normalcy. Although this lack of inhibition is freeing, it is hard to overlook the ease with which people slip into mental illness, possibly serving as a reminder to the spectator that societal laws are essential to the stability and psychological structure of humankind.

4.3 Time

The abandonment of normalcy propels the protagonists into regions outside of regular time. According to Herbert Spencer, time depends on the activity of individuals and "the series of remembered states of consciousness" that "serve as the measure between a past and present state" (67). Therefore, the experience of time is consequently determined by engagement with and subsequent recall of the present. For Spencer, new experiences "make deep impressions" on memory, lengthening the perception of time (68). This defense contends that when characters leave their homes, their perception of the world and what Spencer refers to as their "state of consciousness" during the escape experience are affected by the new environment.

Laroque states that the Elizabethan landscape was dependent on "the predominance of the agricultural way of life, in which the rhythm of daily activities was directly linked with climatic factors and the seasonal cycle", whereas "town life called for a precise measurement of time" (29- 30). Time was standardized across the town and countryside in the late Victorian era of rail travel. Therefore, Spencer's idea of "relativity" and "novel" surroundings are used to experience alternative green world time and create a subjective interaction between characters and their environments.

In "The Importance of Being Earnest", it seems that the residents of Wilde's "green world" are aware of the passage of time. Examples from the play are the following: "We did not look for you till Monday afternoon" (Wilde 91) and "I might trot round about five" (Ibid 94). Keeping in mind that the town is close by, the rural manor is under danger. The sense of escaping seems to be endangered by the likelihood of urban invasion and the link between the countryside and cities.

In fact, it's possible that the sensation of solitary freedom in the countryside was enforced by the standardization of time, primarily for rail travel. Therefore, it is intriguing that the play has allusions to urgency that involve rail travel, such as "I am obliged to go up by the first train" (Wilde 87), "you have got to catch the four-five" (Ibid 100) and "we have already missed five if not six trains" (Ibid 137). The fact that up to six trains may leave while Lady Bracknell is there highlights how accessible and close the city is to the countryside.

Even while the protagonists of this play do not completely forsake time in the "green world," this does not mean that they are denied access to heavenly freedom.

It may be argued that Wilde uses this knowledge of time to examine the disparities between urban and rural ideas of life. When contrasting military operations, Cecily says: "our little country newspaper is sure to chronicle the fact next week", but Gwendolen claims: "the announcement will appear in the *Morning Post* on Saturday at the latest" (Wilde 111). Within towns, news and communication flow quickly and effectively, while information is published and spread considerably more slowly in rural areas. Additionally, Cecily calls news "chronicling," implying that national events are reported and recorded as past, finished actions. She refers to all previous events in a manner that suggests completeness, such as "ten minutes ago" (Ibid 112), "half an hour ago" (Ibid 95), and "on the 14th of February last" (Ibid 104). By allowing things to be experienced, then forgotten or abandoned, the "green world" transforms into a place where things may be forgotten or abandoned, giving the players a chance to free themselves from knowledge and experience in the new setting.

The vast majority of people who live in cities may have had their existence decided by time. The spectators in the pits and galleries would have been well-off professionals and members of the middle class who were dependent on schedules, including those for theater performances, train travel, and working hours. It immediately provides audiences with a way out by implying that existence need not be governed by time, even when time is not transcended in the "second world" or on stage. This is due to the notion that one's understanding of time in the "green world" is influenced by experience quickly providing an escape.

4.4 Ambiguity and Danger

The threat in the "green world" lends mystery to the parallel reality. In Jones's "The Dancing Girl", for instance, Sybil is characterized as "an odd, elfin girl...very bright, sprightly and alert" (Jones 299). Her "oddness" is reminiscent of Ariel from Shakespeare's "The Tempest", despite the fact that she is not confined to the island. She is being guarded by Guisebury "like a master to a favorite dog" (Ibid). As well as calling Ariel his "servant," Prospero also refers to her as "my brave spirit" (Ibid 305). In a way similar to how Prospero frees Ariel from imprisonment and pain, Guisebury likewise rescues Sybil by sacrificing his life. In reference to Ariel's "groans" in the "cloven pine," Sybil says she "used to...beat my fists against the wall in agony" (Ibid 309).

It's interesting to note that Sybil was compared as "a fairy godmother" by A. B. Walkley in a review of the play "The Dancing Girl" (225), emphasizing Sybil's peculiar and magical traits. Sybil prevents Guisebury from committing suicide and transfers him to Endellion for recuperation, despite the fact that she is "lamed". The "otherness" conveyed by Sybil's "elfin" traits might thus be compared to the enigma of spirituality. Guisebury's unwavering devotion to Sybil results in salvation just like faith since the island is a symbol of the Christian community.

When Ellean and Ardale first meet in Pinero's play "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray", they discuss the garden's otherworldly, sanctuaries-like qualities. Hugh enters the home via the garden, eluding parental supervision and, inadvertently, entering into a relationship with Ellean that is characterized by the "green world". "Come into the garden for five minutes; we'll stroll down to the plantations", "I shall wait for you behind that yew- tree" (Pinero 115). The following statement "come down to the plantation, make it up with me" (Ibid), serves as a reminder to the audience that the natural world is apart from the home and, implicitly, from organized society. It also implies that there is potential for both physical and verbal closeness in the remote, silent garden.

The protagonists in these plays are forced into a Saturnalia experience that subverts expectations of social and psychological normalcy by the mystery and feeling of unreality present throughout the escape times. It may seem paradoxical that the celebrations of the "second world" merely promote physical and mental excess given that the idealized vacation or break was intended to inspire reflection. Characters may really indulge in their own impulses thanks to the discovery of sexuality and the ability to flee poverty in the "green world." The protagonists must thus return to normalcy and, by extension, life outside the self after indulging in sensual, edible, and material indulgences.

Conclusion

It appears that the ability to completely interact with the experience of the other realm has an effect on the ability to recover and return to normalcy with a new identity and life when contemplating the concept of a "green world" escape in Victorian drama. In his book "Body and Will", Henry Maudsley claims that the desire for an "ideal" is a necessary evolutionary feature. According to this reasoning, escapism may be a way of idealizing the actual as rural dreams foster a belief in the ideal. But if surviving relies on Maudsley's conception of idealizing

the actual, then existing must imply the unsatisfactory quality of the current situation. As a result, unless characters learn to enhance and idealize their circumstances, the alternative "green world" cannot completely or permanently allay the need to leave town or normalcy.

The plays grow increasingly gloomy about the tendency to cope with real-life situations when they are seen chronologically, regardless of genre. After awakening from their nightmare experience, Pinero's absurd characters deal with their obstacles right away. The fact that only Guisebury faces reality and that Drusilla's continual desire for escape ends with her death, however, shows a loss of hope in Jones' drama. The fact that Paula Tanqueray was unable to make amends for her past only serves to increase this lack of confidence in her capacity to face and deal with reality. Therefore, it seems that Wilde's entire avoidance of real-life issues is a rejection of the quest for realism in favor of a made-up universe devoid of reality's constraints. The Victorian stage's rejection of real world obligations may have led to the perception that escapism was more detrimental to the natural advancement of civilization.

However, the "green world" or alternative escapist environment's goal is to provide the characters a way to get over their challenges. Despite nature's rejuvenating powers and the morally romanticized beliefs of innocent countries, the rural location just serves as a background or setting for the ongoing problems and guilt in real life. Each author has given his audience a moment of enjoyment by engrossing characters in islands, gardens, dreams, clouds, and country homes. However, they too must return to the real world, just like the fictitious ones. Despite the fact that the plays' rural locations seem to fit into typical rural fantasies, characters only idealize the real when they are actively involved in and engaging with their surroundings and other people.

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