

Original Paper

A Mythological Archetypal Study on A Streetcar Named Desire

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Abstract

Tennessee Williams is regarded as one of the most significant figures throughout the history of American literature. Tennessee Williams is always seen as one of the most famous representative writers of American south along with Carson McCullers and Flannery O'Connor. A Streetcar Named Desire, first published in 1947, has run for almost 855 performances. It's one of Williams' most famous plays and it has always been studied in all aspects by numerous scholars for many years. Since Tennessee Williams lived in American south and his grandfather was an Anglican so there is no doubt that his works are influenced by the religion in American south and his own family. However, the researches on A Streetcar Named Desire from the perspective of mythological archetype are much fewer. Thus, this thesis is an attempt to employ Frye's archetypal theory to analyze the mythological archetypal symbols of the environment, theme and characters in one of Tennessee Williams' noted plays, A Streetcar Named Desire.

This thesis will be divided into four parts, including an introduction, the theoretical framework, an analyzing part and a conclusion. The first part of the thesis will contain the relative background information of Tennessee Williams and his play A Streetcar Named Desire and a comprehensive literature review of researches on A Streetcar Named Desire on the main perspectives. In the second part, the author introduces the development and the main ideas of Frazer, Jung and Frye's theories.

The third part probes into the mythological archetype of the setting, characters and the theme. The author uses Frye's Myth-archetype theory to analyze the archetype of the setting of the play, the mythological archetypal characters and the theme in A Streetcar Named Desire. In the conclusion part, a general summary is given and the significance of analyzing the mythological archetypes in A Streetcar Named Desire is reaffirmed further. The author also analyzes the limitations and shortcomings of this thesis. What's more, the use of mythological archetype in the play to some extent shows the playwright's pity and sympathy for the decay of American south just as the loss of Eden as a southern writer, indicating his sense of nostalgia of the south.

Keywords

Tennessee Williams, Mythological archetype, Frye's archetype theory, A Streetcar Named Desire

1. Introduction

Tennessee Williams can be seen as a milestone in the history of American literature. Lived in a Christian family in the American south, Tennessee Williams was a loyal Christian and was influenced by the thoughts of religion so that there is no doubt that his works are deeply influenced by Christianity and the thoughts of American South. This introduction part will be divided into the introduction of basic information of Tennessee Williams, the basic information of *A Streetcar Named Desire* and literature review of researches on *A Streetcar Named Desire* at home and abroad.

1.1 Basic Information of Tennessee Williams' Writing Career

As one of the most outstanding Southern playwrights in America after the Second World War, Tennessee Williams has a strong influence on American drama and World's drama. Tennessee Williams, Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller are entitled with the greatest three American dramatists in the 20th century.

Tennessee Williams is his pen name while his real name is Thomas Lanier Williams III. In 1928, Williams started his writing career by finishing his first novel. He insisted on his writing career all the time. His reputation is mainly built on the plays he finished in the first half of his writing career. He centered on the writing of dramas since the year 1937 and he won a great fame after the performance of *The Glass Menagerie* in the year 1944. As a productive playwrights, most of his popular works are dramas such as *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Summer and Smoke* and *Cat on a Hot Roof* and so on and so forth. What's more, Tennessee Williams is a prolific and insightful playwright so that he has also won the New York Drama Critics' Award four times and the Pulitzer Prize twice.

Influenced by the social condition of his time, most of his works focus on the decay and depravity of American South and most characters in his works are people who come from American south and have to face the fall of their hometown with the development the process of industrialization. Williams pictures a society on the turn. The southern setting of most of most of his plays suggests a culture whose past is no longer recoverable, except as myth, and whose future represents the threat of dissolution. Language has been evacuated of meaning, ironised by time. History has swept on by. Private illusions and public values are shattered by the quickening pace of a modernity that implies the corruption alike of style and morality. (Biggsby, pp. 41-42)

1.2 Brief Introduction of a Streetcar Named Desire

As Tennessee Williams was later to imply, loss became a central theme. It was certainly a concern of the protagonist of his second great success, *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

A Streetcar Named Desire tells a story about the depravity of a faded South Belle, Blanche Dubois. The main characters in this play are Stella, Stanley, Blanche and Mitch. Blanche Dubois is a faded South Belle whose family has once owned property in Mississippi. But now she is lack of money and is in the

lowest financial estate since she has lost her job as an English teacher for her dissolute behaviors. As a result, she decides to come to stay with her younger sister Stella who lives in New Orleans for a sanctuary. When she arrives at these Elysian Fields by the streetcar called Desire, the place where her sister lives, she is astonished about her sister's living condition and doesn't satisfy her sister's husband, Stanley, who is a primitive and bestial machine salesman full of animal vitality. And at their home, Blanche meets Mitch who is one of Stanley's poker pals and falls in love with him without hesitation. Urged by the willing of marriage, Blanche confides in Mitch about her last marriage in which she finds out that her husband's homosexuality and her husband's suicide. Just before the two decide to get married with each other, Stanley tells Mitch about the reason of Blanche's leaving her hometown and condemns Blanche's lost virginity and alcoholism, so in the end Mitch cancels their decision for marriage and Blanche's "belle reve" is broken. And after Stella is sent to hospital with labor pains, Stanley rapes Blanche both Physically and spiritually. Finally, Blanche is sent to a bedlam and is abandoned by the society forever.

1.3 Literature Review of Researches on the Play

According to current researches, when searching *A Streetcar Named Desire* on the CNKI, we can find 441 relative papers analyzing this famous play. These analysis can mainly be divided into three parts: the first part is the analysis of main characters in this play, such as the analysis of the tragedy of the heroine Blanche, the analysis of symbolism in this play such as the symbol of "belle reve", and the analysis of the theme of loss and the conflict between the old south and the new developing industrial society.

1.3.1 The Analysis of Main Characters in This Play

Most papers centered on the analysis of main characters in this play focus on the analysis of the tragedy of Blanche by using several theories such as psychoanalysis' theories such as Freud's theory and Jung's theory, trauma theory and feminism theory. What's more, Stanley and Stella are also be analyzed for many times. Stella and Blanche are always seen as two totally different types of women. There are basically two types of women in the plays of Williams: the women who are the relics of the moribund tradition of gentility in which Williams himself was reared, women who are unable to accept the twentieth century and who prefer living in the illusive and legendary world of something that never really was- the mythical cavalier old south; and the healthy, uncultured, who seem to have been conceived by their creator (Robert Emmet Jones, p. 347). Blanche is the former one while Stella is the latter one. The causes of the fate of these two sisters are always studied by thousands of scholars and there is still a long way to go.

1.3.2 The Analysis of Symbolism in This Play

Most papers centered on the analysis of symbolism in this play focus on the researches on some symbols such as the names of their habitations and color such as white and red and the symbol of water. Those symbols not only act as hints of main characters' fates and endings but also help the audience better understand the play. The analysis of symbolism in this play

1.3.3 The Analysis of the Theme of This Play

Critics pour numerous comments while numerous papers have focused on the analysis of this play, however, little attention is paid to the mythical archetype of the main characters in this play. It is reasonable to relate the mythical archetype of the main characters to characters in the Bible based on Tennessee Williams' religious background. Therefore, this thesis aims to analyze the mythical archetypes of the main characters in this play by using the story of Edam and Eva in the Bible and hopes to call for more researches on Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* from more perspectives.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Religious Background Information of Tennessee Williams' Family

Throughout the history of western countries, there is no doubt that Christianity has played a significant role in the process of being civilized. Christianity has not only shaped the standard of western moral values, but also influenced people's views on issues, especially writers'. Many American Scholars are mostly churchmen themselves, they all hope to revitalize their old faith. From the perspective of archetype, the Bible is the many source of mythical archetypal symbols in western literature. As a result, we can see many mythical archetypal symbols from the Bible in Tennessee Williams' play.

Tennessee Williams was born in the state of Mississippi, a state where 63% of adults have their own religious belief and it is also a state with the highest level of religious belief. Influenced by the social circumstance of American South, many people take Christianity as their religious belief. What's more, Tennessee Williams was brought up in a strict Episcopalian family and his grandfather was the rector of the Saint Episcopal Church in their neighborhood so that he was greatly influenced and tormented by the doctrines of the Saint Episcopal Church. The religion has played an important and critical role in his personal life and his play. Meanwhile, Williams' mother was a typical south belle just as every female character in his play. The virtue of the South, for Williams, as also the source of its particular pathos, lay in the fact that it had jumped the rails of history. So there is no doubt that his mother's characteristics of a south belle and the religious background of his family have greatly influenced the theme of his play and his writing style. When analyzing all Tennessee Williams' plays, the analysis of the religious symbols is indispensable. To study him and his plays, learning the Bible and the biblical literature is the first step. He is not only an excellent playwright but also a wise Christian who is filled with nostalgia for American South.

2.2 The Theory of Mythical Archetype

Myth is the origin of human civilization which shows human beings' imagination and expression of the outside world. The word "archetype" was much used in ancient Greek, arche means origin while typos means model.

The modern concept of the archetype appeared in the late 19th century, which originated from Britain and it is related to the recurring literary phenomena for instance, motifs, themes, and narrative designs.

(Qiao, p. 16) As one of the most important literary theory, the archetypal criticism is widely used in the latter half of the 20th century. The first one to use this concept of the archetype is James G. Frazer, a pioneer of mythology and comparative religion. In his book *The Golden Bough: A Study in Comparative Religion*, Frazer invented a modernist way to analyze religion, trying to explain the religion as a cultural phenomenon instead of from a theological view. This book tries to define the shared elements of religious belief such as fertility rites, human sacrifice, the dying God, the scapegoat and other symbols. According to Frazer, the progresses and improvement of human race have shifted from magic through religious belief to scientific thought. What's more, his book has also laid the foundation of the emerging discipline of anthropology. Malinowski is greatly influenced by Frazer's book. "No sooner had I read this great work than I became immersed in it and enslaved by it. I realized then that anthropology, as presented by Sir James Frazer, is a great science, worthy of as much devotion as any of her elder and more exact studies and I became bound to the service of Frazerian anthropology." (Bressler, p. 58).

Above all, Frazer has explained the structural principles behind the archetypal myths and rituals in the tales and ceremonies of diverse cultures. He holds the view that religious phenomena is the origin of western literature. Frazer's works show the similarity of human's behaviors with those in ancient myth, magic ritual and religion and relate closely with Christianity. After Frazer, studying literature works from the perspective of myth and ritual has become a trend at that time, thus forming the Cambridge School. His works and theories are the foundation of Jung and Frye's latter studies.

The concept of archetypes and its correlate, that of the collective unconscious, are among the better known theories developed by professor Jung. Carl Gustav Jung is a famous psychiatrist and psychologist as Sigmund Freud and he is Freud's student. Jung agreed with Frazer that myth was the means by which the primitive people experienced the world. Jung theorizes about myths and archetypes on close link to the unconscious. According to Jung, myths are the "culturally elaborated representations of the contents of the deepest recess of the human psyche: the world of archetypes" (Jung, p. 156). He has related collective unconsciousness to archetypal criticism. He has defined collective unconscious as "a series of innate memories, thoughts, feelings and instincts that reside in the unconsciousness of all people" (Jung, p. 86). "And these series of innate memories, thoughts, feelings and instincts that reside in the unconsciousness of all people was named by Jung as primordial images or dominants at first, then the term was finally changed to archetypes. Primordial images or archetypes, serving as the structural form of collective unconscious, are formed by those psychological objects that are repressed and forgotten." (Ye, p. 104) They are expressed the most obviously in myth and religion and they will also appear in people's dreams and fantasies which provides the theme to the creation of art and literature. Like Frazer, although Jung is not a professional literature critic, there is no doubt that they both play an important role in the history of modern criticism.

Based on the former theories of Frazer and Jung, the Canadian scholar Frye developed the concept with the literary archetypes in the 1950s in his work *Anatomy of Criticism*, which is entitled with the Bible

of archetypal criticism in 20th century. For him, literary criticism should possess the methodological discipline and coherence of the natural science. The coherence reveals itself in the recurrence of archetypes in literature, and the discipline he works out is the schematic structure of literature. The Bible serves as a great source of archetypes to Frye. In his works, he holds the view that *The Old Testaments* and *The New Testaments* are of vital importance and the greatest origin of art and literature. Having been living in such atmosphere with the belief of Christianity, western writers are influenced consciously or unconsciously, therefore they get their inspiration from those sacred stories. In *A Streetcar Named Desire*, there are many archetypes from Bible in this play and they can be divided into three parts: the archetype of the setting, the archetype of main characters and the archetype of the theme.

All in all, this thesis tries to analyze the connection between the mythical archetype in Bible and *A Streetcar Named Desire* from the perspective of the archetype of the setting, the archetype of main characters and the archetype of the theme by using Frye's myth-archetype theory to help readers better understand the theme of the play and the meanings of those symbols, thus adding more charm to this play.

3. The Analysis of Mythical Archetypes in This Play

3.1 The Mythical Archetypes of the Settings

In this play, there are two obviously different types of environment. One is Blanche's plantation- Belle Reve in the South and the other is Stella and Stanley's flat in Elysian Fields in New Orleans by taking a streetcar named Desire and a streetcar called Cemeteries. According to Frye, Bible serves a great sources of archetypes. (Ye, p. 104) In this play, the archetypes of the settings can be found in the Bible. Belle Reve originates from the archetype of Eden while the flat in Elysian Fields originates from the cursed Earth.

There are three reasons why the flat in Elysian Fields originates from the cursed Earth. First of all, the flat in Elysian Fields is a place that can be reached by a *streetcar named Desire* and a streetcar named Cemeteries. Desire in this play may refer to Blanche's sexual desire. While Cemeteries refer to the place where dead people are buried. The names of these two streetcars indicate that the place where Blanche will arrive is a place filled with devil just as the cursed Earth. What's more, the name of Elysian Fields refers to the heaven but in fact, it is a place full of sin and chaos. Many cruel things happen in this small flat in the Elysian Fields, so the archetype of the setting can be seen as the cursed Earth. Secondly, the condition of this flat is so poor that Blanche can't believe that her sister lives in such a place. When Blanche first arrives at the flat in Elysian Fields and meets Stella, she says "Stella, what are you doing in a place like that? Never, never, never in my worst dreams could I picture-only Poe! Only Mr. Edgar Allen Poe could do justice to it." (Williams, p. 6) She compares the flat of Stella and Stanley to the house in Edgar Allen Poe's works, showing her astonishment and suspect for her sister's living condition. Although Stella's living condition is poor, it reflects the situation of people at

that time, so it is in the same condition of the cursed Earth where has terrible environment and people live a hard life. What's more, the environment around the flat is a sordid wasteland where people's living space is limited and there is no green plants and lack of vitality. Since there is a saying goes "Everything on the earth is bounded and cursed because of the first sin resulted from Satan's temptation" (The Holy Bible, p. 57), the place with boldness and isolation can be seen as the cursed Earth. The third reason why the archetype of the settings is that the flat is the place where Stanley finally rapes Blanche so that the flat is a devil world with devil behaviors just as the cursed Earth.

Oppositely, the plantation in Belle Reve can be seen as the symbol of Eden. The name of Belle Reve is a French word which has the same meaning as beautiful dream, indicating its purity and holiness. Purity and Holiness are the most basic features of the Eden, the most holy place in the Bible. Belle Reve, just as its name, it is the dream in Blanche's heart. "I stayed and fought for it, bled for it, almost died for it!" (Williams, p. 38) Belle Reve and the Eden are both gardens with liveliness and vitality just like a fantasy. They are both the recorder of happy life. Belle Reve is the recorder of Blanche's previous happiness in her teenage while the Eden is the recorder of the serenity of Adam and Eva. What's more, the ending of Belle Reve is the same as the ending of the Eden- it is lost in the end. In the play, Blanche describes Belle Reve as a loss. "Blanche (slowly): The loss-the loss...Stella: Belle Reve? Lost, is it? No! Blanche: Yes, Stella." (William, p. 38)

Blanche confesses the loss of Belle Reve to Stella, and Stella can't accept the fact. To some extent, Belle Reve is also the symbol of the South that is lost with the development of history and many people are still filled with nostalgia for it.

In conclusion, there is a strong contrast between these two places. Belle Reve is lost and nobody can return again while the flat in Elysian Fields is the place from which they want to escape. Associated the two places with the images in the Bible, the archetypes of the settings pave path to people's urge for a further development of biblical theme.

3.2 The Archetypes of Main Characters

3.2.1 The Archetype of Blanche Dubois: Eva

Eva is a character of the Holy Bible. In the Holy Bible, God uses one of Adam's ribs to create Eva. She is the first woman in the world whose name means "life", indicating the ability to give birth to a new life so that she is also named the mother of all human beings. In the Old Testament, Eva is a woman with purity but is finally seduced by Satan to pick the forbidden fruit. In *A Streetcar Named Desire*, after Blanche's homosexual husband committed suicide, she was painful in her heart so that she chose to deprave at that time. She had sexual relationship with her students and she finally lost her job and was expelled from the school in Belle Reve just as Eva is punished by the God.

What's more, Blanche is still the symbol of purity in the play. Tennessee Williams has mentioned the color white with Blanche for 22 times. Blanche always wear snow-white dress, which she once shows to Stanley. At the beginning of the play, Blanche wears white dress, white hat and white gloves. When Mitch first meets her, Mitch describes her as "a white moth" or "a white angel". What's more, her name

Blanche is a French word that means the color of white. In the Bible, white is a holy color representing purity. Apart from the color of white, the images of water are mentioned 34 times in the play. Blanche always wants to take a bath and go to the bathroom frequently. Water in the Bible is always seen as the way of refinement, which Eva has done for her whole life after eating the forbidden fruit. Blanche realizes that she has lost her purity and sincere, so she chooses to take bath to purify herself, just as Eva has done.

Besides, Blanche has once worked as an English teacher in Belle Reve. Her teaching experience is just the same as Eva's behavior of giving birth to new human beings. They all provide new vitality to the earth. Blanche teaches her students new knowledge to revitalize their spiritual world while Eva, being called the mother of human beings, gives birth to new human beings to revitalize the realistic world. Both of them can bring hope to the world.

Blanche has also been seduced to do the wrong thing as Eva has done. Eva is seduced to eat the forbidden food while Blanche is seduced to have sexual relationship with different people. They are both appealed by the temptation they meet and finally pay the price.

Above all, Blanche may be the representative of a world of elegance and style corrupted by brute materialism but she is also a source of a cruelty. (Bigsby, p. 46) Williams pictures Blanche as a pure and innocent girl who seeks for love, truth and beauty but is seduced to do the wrong thing and finally pays the price, whose archetype is Eva in the Bible.

3.2.2 The Archetype of Stanley Kowalski: Satan

Stanley Kowalski is the Promethean husband of Blanche's sister, Stella. He was a Master Sergeant in the past and he is a primitive, rude person and shows a strong hatred of Blanche. When Stanley first meets Blanche, he asks about Blanche's previous situation and Blanche looks down on him for his primitive behaviors. In the Bible, Satan acts as a monster both in The Old Testament and The New Testament. Satan is the person who seduces Eva to eat the forbidden fruit to examine whether the creation of the God can stay away from the temptation. There is no doubt that Stanley is a monster to Blanche for his behaviors. At first, he asks about Blanche's past and shows strong hatred of Blanche. He hates Blanche for the reason that Blanche always teaches his wife Stella to rebel against him. When Blanche and Mitch are going to get married, he tells Mitch that Blanche has once gotten married before and her husband died, then she was expelled from the school for her loss of innocence, thus destroying Blanche's dream of starting a new life. And in the end, Stanley rapes Blanche, destroying her dream totally. With the birth of the new baby, Blanche is sent to the asylum with the disillusion of her need for a sanctuary. To Blanche, he must be the devil in her life. So as we can consider Eva as the archetype of Blanche, we can also take Satan as the archetype of Stanley.

In this play, Stanley is described as the embodiment of animal force and brute life. He always shouts, screams, cries and yields without considering about others. He is more like an animal while the original form of Satan is a serpent that can hurt people. He is always fascinated by those very qualities of aristocratic arrogance and neurotic sexuality which he affects to hold in contempt. Stanley conducts a

complete plan to drive Blanche away by spying, seducing, forcing, temptation, frightening and deceiving. (Zhang, p. 334) In the end, he reaches to his goal of driving Blanche away from his flat. In the Bible, Satan also succeeds in seducing Eva to eat the forbidden fruit. Thus, Stanley can be seen as a seducer and beast who does harmful things to other people as Satan once does. Williams has pictured Stanley as a brute, rude and boorish person who always destroys the peace of the world just as Satan in the Bible.

3.2.3 The Archetype of Mitch: Adam

Mitch is an important character in this play. He is the last hope of Blanche for escaping from her past and heading for the future. In this play, Mitch and Blanche are lovers even preparing for getting married. Mitch is a mother's boy without his own ideas and he is always influenced by other people such as Blanche and Stanley. When Stanley tells him Blanche's past, he chooses to cancel the promise of getting married with Blanche without hesitation. From this we can come to the conclusion that he is easy to be seduced. In the Bible, Eva seduces Edam to eat the forbidden food with her. In this play, Mitch is at first seduced by Blanche when they are playing poker games so that he wants to get married with her. Then Mitch is seduced by Stanley who tells the loss of Blanche's innocence so that Mitch could get away from Blanche. Like Adam, Mitch is also seduced to do the wrong thing. They are both seduced and are finally be punished.

In the Bible, Edam is a man created by God so he can't decide his own fate. He wants a partner to accompany him and for this reason, God creates Eva by using one of Edam's ribs. So Adam has an urge for finding a partner and so does Mitch. Mitch always feels lonely and requests to find a partner to his kind as Adam. The one he has chosen is Blanche. But when Satan tempts him to do the wrong thing, Mitch accepts his temptation and put all the responsibility on Blanche. He wants to make a change but finally he puts himself in the dilemma as he cares about other people's opinions. As Adam is punished along with Eva in the end, Mitch is punished along with Blanche too. His punishment is not as obvious as Blanche's, but it will be seen for the long run, showing that human beings are struggling in the modern society. Mitch speaks for Williams about his care for those people who are lost in the rapidly changing modern society. "At the end of the play, Blanche is leaving and Mitch is crying, which means he is not the man he was and there are still expectations on him." (Zhang, p. 334)

3.3 The Archetype of the Theme of the Play

Consisting of many tragedies in different periods, the Bible is a "divine comedy" as a whole the large type of the U-shaped plot structure in plot contains numerous small U-shaped structures that appear in different independent stories. "If we take the Bible as a comprehensive story, and then its plot unfolds according to the U-shaped narrative structure, that is, following the pattern of the depravity-redemption-salvation and resurrection." (Li, p. 21)

Fyre has concluded that the *Bible* follows the routine of U-shaped structure of seeking. In this play, the seeking refers to Blanche's seeking for the future. Her seeking starts from Belle Reve then in the flat in Elysian Fields. She starts to seek for her beauty and value and tries to pull her sister Stella back

from her husband, from the corrupted world, but she fails. Then she finds Mitch who needs a partner and shares her secret with him and even wants to get married with him. Blanche is very close to the success but she still fails. In the end, she is sent to the bedlam and lives her rest life with loneliness. “Blanche is an almost willing victim of the world that has trapped her and in which she can find ‘peace’ only by accepting the verdict of her unfitness for ‘normal’ life.” (Hurrell, p. 95)

In the *Bible*, the seeking path starts from the awareness of sin but it will finally fail and stops at the hopelessness of the realistic world. The U-shaped routine means that it is impossible to eliminate the gap between the ideal world and the realistic world, illustrating the trend that the Old South must be replaced by the industrial development in the North.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The Significance of Analyzing the Mythical Archetypes in This Play

A Streetcar Named Desire is one of Tennessee Williams’ most popular Broadway performances. Being influenced by the religious background of both the South and his family, there is no doubt that Williams will apply some mythical archetypes especially those mythical archetypes in the *Bible*, such as the Eden, the cursed Earth, Adam, Eva and Satan. He uses this biblical archetypes in order to clearly clarify the theme of the play that is shown in the U-shaped routine that although everyone tries to seek for the salvation, they finally can’t come back to their ideal dream of the past because everything is changing and this kind of change is a trend and can’t be resisted just as the rise of the industrial development in American North and the decay of the American South. Everyone must conform to the historical trend of the time and can’t live in one’s fantasy otherwise he will be abandoned by the time just as Blanche in the play. What’s more, in the *Bible*, Eva and Edam are finally expelled from the Eden, and the Eden is finally lost. Williams uses the lost of the Eden to indicate the lost of American South. In the battle with the rising industrial North, the South is a complete loser. Since Tennessee Williams is a playwright with a root of the South, the application of the mythical archetypes in the *Bible* may illustrate his sorrow and pity for the lost of Blanche and the decay of American South, showing his nostalgia for his hometown as a southern writer.

4.2 The Limitations and Shortcomings of This Thesis

This thesis mainly talks about Tennessee Williams’ application of mythical archetype in his famous play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The author has analyzed the application of mythical archetype from the perspective of setting, character and the theme of the play. The author firstly compares the setting of the flat in Elysian Fields and Belle Reve to the Eden and the cursed Earth. Then the author analyzes the similarities between main characters and the main characters in the *Bible*. In the end, the author analyzes the theme of the play by comparing it to the U-shaped structure in the *Bible* and comes the conclusion to the feelings and theme which the playwright Tennessee Williams wants to express. Although the author tries to analyze these issues carefully and patiently, there will still be some limitations and shortcomings, which mean that we still have a long way to go in the study of the play.

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