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The Stage Irishman and the Idea of Ireland in British and Irish Theatre

Final thesis

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1. Introduction

This paper is going to examine the stock character of the stage Irishman in six different plays written by Irish authors. A stock character is a traditional and stereotypical character which writers and actors use as a helping device to move the story forward. The plays we are going to discuss are *The Brave Irishman; or, Captain O'Blunder* by Thomas Sheridan, *The Rivals* by Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Shaughraun* by Dion Boucicault, *John Bull's Other Island* by George Bernard Shaw, *The Playboy of the Western World* by J. M. Synge and *The Rising of the Moon* by Lady Gregory.

The goal of this paper is to carefully inspect different phases of the stage Irishman from political, social and cultural angles and to analyse the complex Anglo-Irish relations demonstrated in the plays. The stock character of the stage Englishman is going to be briefly included as well. Moreover, we are going to see how the Irish represent themselves in the theatre and how they are represented as "other". Each chapter is going to talk about two plays which address a common issue. Both Irish and British points of view are going to be explored in order to show how the stock character is established, transformed, and then rejected. This paper is divided into the following sections: "The Chronology of the Stage Irishman", "The Stage Irishman in England", "The Stage Irishman in Ireland" and "The Stage Irishman on the Stage of the Abbey Theatre". In the first chapter, we are going to explore the history of the stage Irishman, the historical context in which the stereotype was built but also the complexity of the Irish identity in theatre.

In the next chapter "The Stage Irishman in England" we are going to analyse two plays of the 18th century: *The Brave Irishman* by Thomas Sheridan and *The Rivals* by Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The intention of this chapter is to analyse the typical stage Irishman of that period and to find subverted and new elements in these seemingly archetypical characters. In the chapter "The Stage Irishman in Ireland", which includes the plays *The Shaughraun* by Dion Boucicault and *John*

Bull's Other Island by George Bernard Shaw, we are going to further investigate the development of the stage Irishman and discuss the dynamics between the stage Irishman and the stage Englishman, the Anglo-Irish relations of the late 19th century and the rejection of the stage Irishman established in the previous chapter.

The last chapter "The Stage Irishman on the Stage of the Abbey Theatre" examines the plays of the Irish Literary Revival: *The Playboy of the Western World* by J.M. Synge and *The Rising of the Moon* by Lady Gregory. The goals of the authors of the Revival was to ignore all previous representation of the Irish in theatre and to form a new national identity. Therefore, we are going to inspect the status of the Stage Irishman in the Abbey Theatre in the early 20th century. Before we start with the discussion, we are going to provide the historical context and explain the origins of the stage Irishman.

2. The Chronology of the Stage Irishman

We are going to start with a well-known quote by C. G. Duggan which describes an unfavourable but typical idea of the stage Irishman:

> The Stage Irishman habitually bears the general name of Pat, Paddy or Teague. He has atrocious Irish brogue, perpetual jokes, blunders and bulls in speaking and never fails to utter, by way of Hibernian seasoning, some wild screech or oath of Gaelic origin at every third word: he has an unsurpassable gift of blarney and cadges for tips and free drinks. His hair is of a fiery red, he is rosy-cheeked, massive and whiskey loving. His face is one of simian bestiality with an expression of diabolical archness. In his right hand he brandishes a stout blackthorn or a sprig of shillelagh and threatens to belabor therewith the daring person who will tread on the tails of his coat. (288)

From this description, we can conclude that the Stage Irishman is highly emotional, probably violent and traditional and patriotic. His verbal skills are poor, especially when he is under the

influence. In London theatres, the Irish character has served as a laughing stock since the Elizabethan age. The most known and the most analysed stage Irishman character from that time is MacMorris from Shakespeare's play H*enry V*. There are other Irish characters from that period, but why is MacMorris so important? This minor character asks the same questions about the national identity and cultural differences as many scholars and historians: "Of my nation? What ish my nation? Ish a villain and a basterd and a knave and a rascal. What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?" (Shakespeare 125) Through the analysis of the aforementioned plays, we are going to try to give an answer to these questions.

Bate in his introduction to *Henry V* discusses what kind of nation is MacMorris's nation. He believes that this question shows that Shakespeare gave the voice to the Irish nation or questioned the English right to speak for Ireland. He sees Shakespeare as a counter voice to Edmund Spencer who represented the colonialist attitude in his works. Bate writes: "What Englishman or anglicised Welshman dare talk of MacMorris' nation? What kind of a nation can Ireland be when the Irish are construed by the English as villains and bastards and knaves and rascals?" (14). On the other hand, William Stockley describes MacMorris as a good-hearted Irishman who is trying to please both sides, the English and the Irish one, thorn between his sensitivity towards Ireland and his obligations towards England. MacMorris feels he is serving two masters and because of that, he is a half-ashamed Irish (qtd. in O'Neill 253). Andrew Murphy calls him "an oddly liminal figure, as he is invested with an identity which is part Irish, part English" (225).

MacMorris's question suggests the fragile construct of identity, something changeable and fluid. Irish identity cannot be the same in England and in Ireland. O'Neill concludes that MacMorris represented the historical moment of Anglo-Irish relations of that time (257). The Elizabethan period was a period of the English final conquest of Ireland. The Irish had two faces, they cooperated with the Crown, but also rebelled against it. Their position was a kingdom and a colony at the same time. The colonisation of Ireland was not the same as the colonisation of the New World. Ireland

was culturally and geographically much closer to England and they saw it as an internal expansion. The exoticism of Gaelic Irishness was at the same time fascinating and barbarous to the English. The Irish in Britain were a part of the play they were serving to the English. Their true identity could only be seen in their own homeland. MacMorris is a representation of the Gaelic Irish and the Old English seen through a prism of Renaissance drama in the English language. However, many things have changed since *Henry V.*

At first, the stage Irishman did not change much from play to play, it mostly served the same purpose - to entertain the audience at the expense of the true Irish identity. However, the character eventually evolved and the part of that evolution is going to be investigated in this paper. Grene in *Politics of Irish Drama* writes: "What is one play's authentic spokesman becomes the next play's stage Irishman, acting out the false stereotypes of foreign expectations" (6). The image of the Irish character has not always been as exaggerated and negative as it is described by Duggan. Most of the time it would depend on the Anglo-Irish relations of the period. Sometimes they would impersonate military and professional men and sometimes beggars and bawds. The admiration and the respect for Irish culture is a secondary countercurrent of the English discourse of Ireland which would happen during calm periods of the Anglo-Irish relations. Some positive qualities of the stage Irishman emerged. Leerssen writes that a positive representation of the stage Irishman appeared after the rising in 1745. He describes the stage Irishman as "endearing, loyal, prepossessing" (164).

This change is visible in the first two plays we are going to analyse. Captain O'Blunder from *The Brave Irishman* and Lucius O'Trigger from *The Rivals* are a mixture of traditional qualities of the stage Irishman and new positive traits that were developing in theatre at that time. Leerssen, Nelson, and Kiberd approach the stage Irishman and Irish identity through a colonial aspect, while Bartley and Scott create their own categories of the stage Irishman. J.O. Bartley describes how a stock character comes to life in three different stages: the realistic one, the indifferent one and the false one. The realistic stage includes building a stage type on a realistic situation and facts, the sec-

ond stage refers to the building on convention and ignoring all new information about the type. Bartley calls the second stage "indifference to realism". In the third stage, the convention is so strong that resists all the facts which do not fit into its structure (444).

The realistic stage lasted from 1587 to 1659 during which we could find comic characters who spoke in a particular manner with the Irish dialect and accent. Bartley names five kinds of characters; swaggering Irish captains, tradesmen, footmen, beggars, and so-called wild Irish or kerns. Many of the Irish employees in London are "adjusted" and "domesticated", they usually work for an English person and they are mostly hardworking, some of them wear their traditional clothes or carry a native object or a weapon. When it comes to the language it is hard to guess the pronunciation from the written text, but some sounds are easily defined, for example, *s* was pronounced as *sh*, *th* as *d* or *t*, *wh* as *f.* This specific pronunciation came from the influence of the Gaelic language (441).

The second stage starts in 1660 and ends in 1759. Some new characteristics of the stage Irishman appear in the second stage. He is Catholic in many cases, but still a liar, he eats potatoes, swears and he is known for his blunders and blurs, he easily falls in love, but he is also looking for a fortune. When it comes to his physical appearance he wears *shillela* and brogues. His brogue is full of phrases like *my dear, dear joy, honey, by my shoul,* but the stage Irishman speaks English less as a foreign language than before. Both countries became culturally closer. According to Bartley, *The Brave Irishman* fits into this stage.

The third stage covers the period from 1760 to 1800 and during this stage, the popularity of the stage Irishman extremely raised, especially with the help of two great Irish actors John Moody and John Johnstone who would bring Irish characters to life. The most common professions for Irish roles in this period were servants, naval or military officers, sailors, soldiers, sometimes priests, chairmen, doctors and clerks, fewer fortune hunters or liars, but his speech is still infused with blunders. He is prone to arguing and infatuation, he is linked to potatoes, shamrock, but also to

pigs. It is harder to notice the Irish brogue in the text, but thanks to talented actors, the Irish identity is expressed through the language. We can notice the use of *i* instead of *e*, for instance, *iligant* instead of *elegant*, *ax* instead of *ask* and *ould* instead of *old*.

During the third stage, the Irish bulls became an important part of the convention. Gaelic speakers who were unable to speak English well created the so-called Irish bull, which is logically meaningless and serves as a humorous tool in a story. During performances, actors added bulls on their own and some of those bulls were added to the plays. The theatre-goers expected certain characteristics from the stage Irishman and if they were not delivered, the audience was not satisfied. The stock was created and the actors did their job to increase its popularity. The Irish brogue was very popular among the English audience and some actors would specialise for the roles of Irish characters, imitating dialects and accents.

Bartley mentions that nationality is not usually important for stock characters, they are mostly characterised by some other attributes, like jealousy, infatuation or stinginess. If there is a mention of nationality the reason behind it is in the plot, not in the character. On the other hand, Irish nationality is the most used nationality in the English drama. At first, the stage Irishman was based on real features of the Irish, but later it became a caricature of itself in order to serve as a laughing stock. Florence R. Scott does not agree with Bartley's classification and she offers four other terms: the Irish in the Dumb Show, the Sham Irishman, the Irish soldier, and the Irish serving man (314). According to Bartley, the stage Irishman had already been firmly established when our first play *The Brave Irishman* was performed. From that point, we see how the perception of Ireland and the Irish changes over time. Grene says: "Every dramatist, every dramatic movement, claims that they can deliver the true Ireland which has previously been misinterpreted, travestied, rendered in sentimental cliché or political caricature" (*Politics in Irish Drama* 6).

Before we go any further into the subject of the stage Irishman we are going to try to explain Anglo-Irish relations of that time and how the Irishness and the Britishness were perceived from the

Irish and English standpoint. Kiberd in *The Irish Writer and the World* explains that Ireland represents the antithesis to the English. "The English have always presented themselves as a cold, refined and urban race, so it suited them to see in the Irish the reverse of all these traits - they see them as hot-headed, rude and garrulous" (24). Bruce Nelson agrees and writes: "Apparently, no matter what our station in life, we need to imagine the Other in order to envision ourselves not only as literal, flesh-and-blood creatures but also as bearers of a set of characteristics— above all, a set of virtues —that define the collective entity we call the nation and the race" (17). What happened here, according to Kiberd, was downsizing of a culturally and biologically diverse nation to a few features which formed a needed contrast with the English race (24).

Two of the most prominent examples of the Irish theatre, which discuss Anglo-Irish relations are *The Shaughraun* by Dion Boucicault and *John Bull's Other Island* by George Bernard Shaw. In these plays, we are going to see the appearance of the Stage Englishman and the end of the traditional Stage Irishman as depicted in the previous two plays. At the time, when a secret revolutionary organisation called Fenian Brotherhood caused troubles in Victorian England, Boucicault wrote *The Shaughraun* to make the spectators sympathise with the Fenian prisoners. This play was also culturally important for the Irish-American audience who saw the play as an idealistic image of their distant homeland. According to Matthew Arnold, the Celts are a feminine race, therefore subordinated to their masculine neighbour - England. Arnold suggests that the unity of Ireland and England will make both nations stronger. This metaphor is also explored in the aforementioned plays by Boucicault and Shaw through the characters Claire and Nora and their marriages to the Englishmen.

When Synge and Lady Gregory appeared on the stage of the Abbey Theatre it seemed as if the revolution had started. The Abbey Theatre was a national theatre where the authors could exchange diverse ideas of Ireland, nationalism, and theatre, but above all, it was a place of an artistic experiment. Everything that we knew about the stage Irishman and the stage Englishman was redundant in this case because in these plays there were no Englishmen, no Anglo-Irish relations,

simply Ireland left to its people. Grene writes: "Ireland is at once here, our own, held in common between playwright and audience, and elsewhere, out there to be imagined and, with difficulty, understood" (*Politcs of Irish Drama* 6). *The Rising of the Moon* and *The Playboy* offer self-reflection and a chance for self-identification and they also encourage the audience to find their own authenticity.

3. The Stage Irishman in England

In this chapter, we are going to analyse two plays: *The Brave Irishman; or, Captain O'Blunder* written by Thomas Sheridan and *The Rivals* written by Sheridan's son Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Although Thomas Sheridan was not the greatest Irish playwright, he was certainly an important figure in the Irish theatre during that period, as an actor and a manager of Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin. He was also a teacher of elocution and wrote *A Course of Lectures on Elocution.* His son, Richard Brinsley Sheridan was more successful at playwriting. Some of his notable plays are the aforementioned *The Rivals, The School for Scandal, A Trip to Scarborough* and a comic opera *The Duenna*. Sheridan was the manager and the owner of Drury Lane or the Theatre Royal in London from 1776 to 1809.

3.1. *The Brave Irishman; or, Captain O'Blunder*

Thomas Sheridan was born into a wealthy Irish Protestant family. His father was a big admirer of theatre, which caused Sheridan's early immersion into the art of performance and playwriting. Many plays were performed in his own home and Sheridan would sometimes serve as an actor. His godfather was a famous Irish author and patriot Jonathan Swift who had a great influence on young Sheridan, including his diction and pronunciation. As a gifted student, Sheridan was sent to Westminster school in London where he would spend many nights at theatres; he was particularly fond of Shakespeare. Many Irish actors were famous performers on the English stage and some of

them were gentlemen as well. Sheridan's career path would be similar. The school promoted oratory, acting and dramatic production which later became Sheridan's main interests.

After his father lost sufficient means to support Sheridan's education in London, he enrolled in Trinity College, where he continued to enjoy Irish theatre, so he was in a situation to compare the English and the Irish theatre scene. At that time, the Smock Alley theatre in Dublin was rebuilt. Sheridan planned to follow in his father's footsteps and become a scholar, but his love for the stage interfered with his career. Conrad Brunstorm compares Sheridan with his stage Irishman character Captain O'Blunder, both of them are gentlemen which is contradictory with some of their other characteristics and life choices. Sheridan is an actor, which was not a very noble profession for a gentleman and Captain is an Irishman in London where the English are surprised with his noble status because at that time many Irish people were poor immigrants in London looking for a job (120).

Elocution was of great importance to Sheridan. Under the influence of his godfather and some other notable figures, his point of view was quite conservative regarding the pronunciation and spelling. According to Swift and Sheridan, the paragon for proper pronunciation was the speech of Queen Anne's court. His stance was reflected on the stage, Sheridan always insisted on proper pronunciation in the theatre. Also, pronunciation is one of the most important motifs in his farce *The Brave Irishman; or, Captain O'Blunder.* Disappointed by the education system, he wrote a number of works where he stressed the importance of the English language, correct speaking, and pronunciation. He certainly appreciated the spoken word more than the written one.

Conrad Brunstorm says that Sheridan had only two ideas in his career, the first one being about elocution, he believed that "only the close cultivation of oratorical technique could reenergise humanity in general and Ireland in particular" (5). The other one was that Dublin should have only one theatre and that he should manage it. In spite of the fact that he made a lot of positive changes regarding theatre, for example, his restrictions banned the audience from the stage and the backstage, so actors and crew could be protected from intoxicated and vulgar spectators, he was also

viewed as a conceited man who believed that he was the only one capable of running the Smock Alley Theatre.

However, in this work, we are going to focus on his comedy play *The Brave Irishman; or, Captain O' Blunder* which was performed for the first time in the Smock Alley Theatre in 1742 and published in 1754. We will focus on the title character Captain O'Blunder, an Irishman in London who courts a beautiful English heiress Lucy Tradewell. Lucy also has other suitors: a Frenchman Monsieur Ragou and an Englishman Cheatwell. Because of his dialect, pronunciation differences and naive character, Captain O'Blunder goes through numerous inconvenient, but humorous situations, for instance, he ends up in a mental institution unaware of the doctors' diagnosis and later believes he had killed a man. In the end, he shows his true nature of a decent gentleman and his kind heart by helping others and consenting to marry Lucy, although her father had lost all his fortune. The play ends with a song dedicated to Captain and the Irish which says:

Of all the husbands living, the Irishman's the best,

With my fal, lal, &c.

No nation on the globe like him can stand the test,

With my fal, lal, &c.

The English they are drones, as plainly you may see;

But we're all brisk and airy, and lively as a bee.

With my fal, lal, &c. (Sheridan 18)

Captain O'Blunder is an example of the stage Irishman, a stereotypical role in Irish and British drama which was very common in the 18th and 19th century. His name O'Blunder explains the two main qualities of the character. The Irish identity is evident in the patronymic term O' and Blunder represents his careless, clumsy and perhaps senseless character. Beverly E. Schneller writes that Sheridan was under the influence of Shakespeare's MacMorris while creating the character of Captain O'Blunder. MacMorris was the first, more prominent stage Irishman character from Shake-

speare's play *Henry V* who raised some important questions about his Irish identity. "Sheridan plays on English suspicions of both the Irish and the French, while powerfully illustrating the Teague stereotype" (175).

The Teague[1] stereotypes are pretty blunt in this play and can be found in many different aspects. First of all, O'Blunder's exaggerated speech, so-called brogue[2], which is full of bulls and blunders, mispronunciations and dialectal varieties. As soon as the prologue starts, we can see O'Blunder's accent represented in switching *s* with *sh* sound (*guesh* instead of *guess*), *w* with *ph* sound (*phat* instead of *what*), also dropping *h* sound and lengthening some vowels, for example, *plaash* instead of *place*. Captain wears traditional clothes and carries a weapon. Here Captain is described by an Englishman and admired by an Englishwoman.

> LUCY. Oh! Mr. Cheatwell – pray let's have a Sight of the Creture –
>
> CHEAT. Oh! Female Curiosity – Why, Child, he'd frighten thee – he's above six Feet high – LUCY. A fine Size – I like a tall Man. [Aside.
>
> SCONCE. A great huge Back and Shoulders.
>
> LUCY. We Women love Length and Breadth in Proportion. [Aside.
>
> SCONCE. Wears a great long Sword, which he calls his Andreferara. –
>
> LUCY. I hear the Irish are naturally brave –
>
> SCONCE. And carries a large oaken Cudgel, which he calls his Shillela.
>
> LUCY. Which he can make use of on Occasions, I suppose. [Aside.
>
> SCONCE. Add to this a great Pair of Jackboots, a Cumberland Pinch to his Hat, an old red Coat, and a damn'd Potato Face.

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[1] Teague is a typical Irish male name which is used today, among other things, as a religious slur for Irish Catholics in form of Taig.

[2] Brogue is a term used to refer to an Irish accent in English, which appeared for the first time in Sheridan's play *The Brave Irishman; or, Captain O'Blunder.*

> LUCY. He must be worth seeing truly –
>
> CHEAT. Well, my dear Girl, be constant, wish me Success; for I shall so hum, so roast, and so banter this same Irish Captain, that he'll scarce wish himself in London again these seven Years to come. (Sheridan 7)

In this dialogue we have two different ideas of the Irish, Sconce describes Captain with a mocking tone, while Lucy romanticises him as being handsome, mysterious and different from any man she encountered. Sconce and Cheatwell represent how the English see the Irish: primitive, folkloric, perhaps savage and barbarians. Lucy represents what Nelson calls a secondary counter-current of the English discourse of Ireland which is the admiration of Irish culture, their hospitality and cheerfulness (18). Other stage Irishman stereotypes include Captain's naive nature, impulsive character and his affinity for food and alcohol. However, Captain O'Blunder is not just a one-dimensional Teague simulacrum, he is also a brave, kind-hearted gentleman. Most of the early stage Irishmen were working for the English as footmen and they were seen as "domesticated" in London, many of them were written to be mocked, hated or feared (Bartley 441). Schneller calls Sheridan's character the hybrid between the stereotype and the man of substance: "By mixing the Teague with the man of substance in O'Blunder, Sheridan creates the hybrid character that Macmorris challenges Fluellen[3] to define" (175). Still, O'Blunder was made to appeal both English and Irish audience that enjoyed that type of character. Perhaps that was the reason why Sheridan did not experiment more with the stereotype.

However, Morash says that Captain O'Blunder represented one of the first subverted stage Irishmen. He says: "Indeed, it would be possible to go back at least as far as Thomas Sheridan's Captain O'Blunder to argue that the so-called *typical* stage Irishman had been subverted so often and for so long that a continuous state of subversion is, in fact, an intrinsic feature of the character's

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[3] Fluellen is a character in Shakespeare's play Henry V. He is a Welsh Captain. He also portrays a Welsh stereotype of the period.

history (and attractiveness)" (159). Sheridan's text cleverly criticises the English, even their speech. Although Captain is the one who has a different pronunciation, everybody seems to understand him perfectly. On the other hand, he goes through different mishaps, especially with two doctors in a Mad-house, because he does not understand proper English.

Mary Trotter lists three different ways of subverting English interpretation: the performance which would be sympathetic to Irish national sensibility, Irish characters written as heroes, not fools and the third one would be the response of the audience (39). This combination of actors, play-wrights and spectators would successfully subvert the stage Irishman stereotype. Captain O'Blunder meets all the criteria from the list. He was written with many flaws, but still as a hero. We could say he was the only decent male character in the play, he was performed in a humorous manner, but he was also shown a great respect in the end. We know that the audience was fond of the play, not only because of the entertaining nature but also because of the positive depiction of the stage Irishman.

Nevertheless, Captain O'Blunder is still a stereotypical figure, often offensive and not very flattering from today's point of view. However, we cannot forget that the play was created to produce laughter, not to criticise the status of the Irish in British society. The play, like many others, was probably adapted in accordance with to the audience and the character of the stage Irishman, as we will see, will be adjusted to different cultural and ideological circumstances in the future. We can conclude that Captain O'Blunder was a decent base for the exploration of the stage Irishman, representing all the typical and traditional characteristics, but also revealing something behind the surface that will be investigated further.

3.2 *The Rivals*

The next example of the stage Irishman we are going to discuss is Richard Brinsley Sheridan's Sir Lucius O'Trigger from the play *The Rivals*. *The Rivals* is a comedy of manners in five acts, premiered in early 1775 at Convent Garden Theatre in London. Its first performance was severely criticised precisely because of the stage Irishman character and did not make a great first impression

on its audience. Many spectators considered Sir Lucius O'Trigger to be an atrocious and offensive example of the Irish character.

The role was written badly and performed in an even worse manner, which was seen as an insult to Ireland and the Irish. The actor who portrayed O'Trigger was attacked on the stage by the audience that night. His performance was so poor that he was hit by an apple and got into an argument with the spectators after the incident. However, this fiasco did not put an end to *The Rivals*, Brinsley Sheridan decided to withdraw the play and rewrite it. He paid special attention to Sir Lucius O'Trigger and replaced the actor. Immediately after the second premiere, the play achieved a great success and became one of the standard shows in Ireland and England in 18th and 19th century. In the preface, Brinsley Sheridan commented that the character Sir Lucius O'Trigger was not intended to be a reflection of the whole nation (31-34).

The play revolves around four gentlemen fighting for the affection of a young lady named Lydia Languish. One of the rivals is fictitious - ensign Beverly who is the alter ego of Captain Jack Absolute. His father Sir Anthony Absolute and Lydia's elderly aunt Mrs. Malaprop arranged their marriage, but Captain Absolute created a fake persona — ensign Beverly to please Lydia's romantic ideas about love and marriage. Lydia does not know that Jack Absolute and her beloved Beverly are the same person. Other rivals are Bob Acres, a friend of Jack Absolute who, encouraged by Sir Lucius, challenges Beverly to a duel and finally Sir Lucius O'Trigger who believes he is corresponding with Lydia, while, in fact, he is exchanging letters with her older aunt Miss Malaprop. Sir Lucius is not a protagonist, as Captain O'Blunder was, but his character is notable and in many ways different from other characters in the play.

While the story evolves around mistaken identities and false pretences, Sir Lucius is the only one who is completely honest with his intentions and does not hide his status of a poor Irish gentleman who wants to marry a wealthy young lady. Although the plot is somehow complicated, it is also a secondary source of comedy. The humour comes from the characters and their interaction.

All characters are clichéd and exaggerated, not only our stock character the stage Irishman. Some characters exhibit their traits even in their names, for example, Mrs. Malaprop keeps using ill-fitting words ("pineapple of politeness" instead of "pinnacle"), however, she loves giving speeches and is often complimented for her vocabulary. The expression malapropism[4] is based on the character of Mrs. Malaprop. Lydia Languish yearns for forbidden love and Sir Lucius O'Trigger has a short fuse.

Language is a very important topic in *The Rivals*. Although Mrs. Malaprop is an English lady, Kiberd in *Irish Classics* mentions that the ill-usage of English words was very common among the Irish who learnt their English from books and not from conversations with other people. He says: "In the Ireland from which Sheridan came, a novel was read not just for its storyline, but also as a manual of etiquette among a middle class that equated modernisation with anglicisation. From such novels, a wholly new type of society might eventually be inferred" (141). Many women of that period tried to prove their intelligence by using the vocabulary learnt from novels, mostly because of limited education they had. In this play, Lydia is mocked because of her literary tendencies and we laugh at Mrs. Malaprop because of her vocabulary, but in fact, this is probably Sheridan's comment on female education in Britain, as he grew up with smart and educated women.

However, Mrs. Malaprop is proud of her vocabulary. Nobody corrects her and she keeps using those expressions because she wants to show off her intelligence, but in fact, she reveals the silliness and pretension of her social class. Just like Mrs. Malaprop, Bob Acres's usage of language makes him seem ridiculous and not modern, he tries to learn a French dance and he is mocked because of mispronunciation of the French language. He uses a lot of swear words thinking he will make a good impression. On the other hand, Captain Absolute entertains us with a sarcastic use of language. He mocks other characters in their faces without them noticing, especially Mrs. Malaprop and his father.

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[4]the mistaken use of a word in place of a similar-sounding one, often with an amusing effect (e.g. ‘dance a *flamingo* ’ instead of *flamenco*).

When it comes to Sir Lucius and his language skills, he is blunt, direct and does not beat around the bush which is very refreshing in these circumstances. He differs from Captain O'Blunder in a great manner, his brogue is not harshly exaggerated, at least not in a written manner. Earlier versions of the stage Irishman are usually mocked because of their brogue, but in this case, all laughs are at Mrs. Malaprop's expense when it comes to language. As already mentioned, deception is the source of many plots in the play. Almost all characters try to deceive somebody or present themselves in a different manner, from Captain Absolute to Mrs. Malaprop who invents the persona of "Delia" in order to exchange love letters with Sir Lucius. As well as Bob Acres who is trying to seem more worldly and educated than he actually is, or Lucy, a servant, who earns money from participating in Mrs. Malaprop's fraud. Sir Lucius is perhaps the most honest person in the play. He says he is poor but proud of his origin and values. He openly says he hopes he will make a fortune by marrying young Lydia, but in the end, he stays true to his principles and refuses Mrs. Malaprop's courtship although she could also provide him with prosperity.

It is not mentioned how Sir Lucius's family lost their estate, however, that might have happened due to the Penal Laws that were imposed in the early 18th century when the Catholics in Ireland were not allowed to own land. He still proudly talks about his family history and fondly marks: "I could show you a range of ancestry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furnish the new room; every one of whom had killed his man! For though the mansion-house and dirty acres have slipped through my fingers, I thank heaven our honour and the family-pictures are as fresh as ever" (86). Sir Lucius plays on the stereotype of the Irish being barbarous and violent people by encouraging the others to duel anyone whom he perceives as his rival. He will find any reason to fight and he likes to stir the pot. He obviously does not know the rules of duelling and his arguments in favour of confrontation are childish and absurd. "Now I think he has given you the greatest provocation in the world. Can a man commit a more heinous offence against another than to fall in love with the same

woman?" when he was persuading Acres to fight Beverly (86). He also challenges Captain Absolute to a duel without thinking that death could be a consequence.

He is very passionate, but not quite reasonable and he does not provide any clear motive to fight Captain except courting the same person. According to Leerssen, his impulsiveness represents "a dangerous intrusion of English placidity" (165). He sees O'Trigger as a perfect stage Irishman according to English perception: a noble and sentimental hero, with a touchy national pride, very honourable, to the point of mockery and confirming his pro-English loyalty. Brinsley Sheridan probably based the character of Sir Lucius on his father's stage Irishman Captain O'Blunder, but in this case, Sir Lucius is not as developed as Captain O'Blunder. His growth is not that important because he is a supporting character who is there to play the role of an agitator. That was the image that English audience saw in Sir Lucius and the image of the stage Irishman which was popular in Sheridan's time; simple, combative and blustery, but not dangerous.

Christopher Dowd says that those qualities were relatable to the English. They wanted to see the stage Irishman who was Irish enough to be considered comic, but they wanted to see his loyalty to the Crown and sense English superiority and this is what this play offers. Although he was a troublemaker, he did not represent a real threat to his rivals or a serious suitor for Lydia. Dowd calls this "neutered Irishness" (17), which was created to ease the English guilt. Where does this English guilt come from? Why was the English audience so offended by the first version of Sir Lucius? The play was performed in London and both Irish and English people did not consider the play to be politically correct. They claimed that the character was offensive to the Irish, although that same character had been performed on the stage many times before without any complaints. During certain periods of their history, the English would be more sensitive about the Irish, for example during the Penal Laws in the 18th century or the Great Famine in the 19th century. Dowd marks "that English audiences sympathised only with this new stage Irishman in a way that they did not sympathise

with the actual Irishmen and this discrepancy reveals significant cultural disconnect with Anglo-Irish relations" (17).

As Kiberd in *The Irish Writer and the World* says, the English had "an attitude compounded of guilt, fear, affection, and racial superiority" (22). They would express their discontent with an early stereotype of the stage Irishman, an inferior and savage villain, but they would feel compassion for a simple and funny Irishman who was loyal to the English crown - a stereotype of the 18th century. Leerssen writes that the English needed good Irishmen in the play not to sympathise with them, yet they needed to believe that Ireland was sympathetic to the English (132).

Brinsley Sheridan was in his early twenties when he wrote this play and the characters that Sheridan created were very common in that period. However, this play became Brinsley Sheridan's masterpiece. That is perhaps because Sheridan was surrounded by playwrights since his early age. Both of his parents were playwrights and his mother's plays influenced his work notably. He was well aware of the Anglo-Irish relations at that time because he was an Irishman who grew up in England and experienced all prejudice that came with his status of a poor Irish gentleman.

It is impossible not to notice the similarity between this play and Brinsley Sheridan's life. We can notice his experience reflected in some characters and situations. His family lost their whole fortune, the same ill luck that occurred to Sir Lucius. Linda Kelly writes: "He drew a portrait of the impoverished Irish gentry to which his family belonged" (15). Brinsley Sheridan moved to London when he was seven years old, he was well educated in English schools, but still marked as an Irishman. However, Brinsley Sheridan probably identifies himself the most with both Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverly. Like Captain Absolute, he had a lot of issues with his father Thomas Sheridan, who was often very strict with his son. Sheridan also disapproved of his son's marriage to Elizabeth Linley, an English singer, but Brinsley Sheridan did precisely what Ensign Beverly was planning to do, he eloped with his fiancée.

He was also challenged to a duel by Captain Matthews and forced to challenge his rival as well because they were both courting the same woman, who later became Brinsley Sheridan's wife. Bob Acres represents his first duel with Captain Matthews who was not aware of the gravity of the situation and acted cowardly at the time. The second duel which was far more dangerous and both parties ended up being harshly hurt, is represented by Sir Lucius and his bloodthirsty nature. Brinsley Sheridan, as Captain Absolute, has two identities the one of a poor Irish gentleman who lost his family money and the other of an English intellectual who was never English enough.

Brinsley Sheridan was a contradictory figure, just like his character Captain Absolute. He was a traditionalist, a supporter of the status quo, but he was also a progressive thinker in many ways. He was a very successful member of the Parliament and a Whig. Captain Absolute has the luxury to play the role of Ensign Beverly, to joke with the idea of being poor and running away with his lover, but the fact is he was always supported by his father and his family fortune. In spite of all apparent obstacles, the marriage of Lydia Languish and Captain Jack Absolute is one more proof of the status quo in England.

When it comes to Sir Lucius, his arc is not very significant. When he finds out that he was tricked by Mrs. Malaprop, he gives up on his love conquest and carries on with his life of a poor Irish gentleman. He certainly fills the shoes of a stock character as all the other characters. However, he represents an image of a fair and honest Irishman, succeeding Captain O'Blunder. *The Rivals* is a clichéd play, quite a standard sentimental comedy for that period, however even today it is worthy of a few laughs, perhaps because it makes fun of its own sentimentalism. Thomas Sheridan and Richard Brinsley Sheridan created two very similar characters with many common characteristics.

Both Captain O'Blunder and Sir Lucius of Trigger represent the stage Irishman of their period. Their story is also their authors' story of the Anglo-Irish gentlemen who lost their fortune and had a questionable status due to their theatre careers and life choices. Captain O'Blunder and Sir Lucius were created for the English to sympathise with them. Captain O'Blunder was a good-heart-

ed man, carrying positive stereotypes about the Irish and Sir Lucius was a funny thrill-seeker who did not clash too much with the English authority, on the contrary, he brought the much-desired temper into the story.

Thomas Sheridan showed in his play that an Irishman can be a gentleman and in his private life he wanted to prove that an actor could also be a gentleman. Brinsley Sheridan, as a politician, fought for Irish unity and wanted to present an honest and proud Irishman, but they both fell into the trap of stock characters in order to entertain their audience. In the end, the primary role of the theatre is to entertain and only then educate the audience.

4. The Stage Irishman in Ireland

In this chapter, we are going to discuss two plays: *The Shaughraun* by Dion Boucicault and *John Bull's Other Island* by George Bernard Shaw. Unlike the previous plays by Thomas Sheridan and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, these plays are set in Ireland and the majority of the characters are Irish. Boucicault and Shaw also introduce a new stereotypical character — the stage Englishman, represented by Captain Molineux in *The Shaughraun* and Tom Broadbent in *John Bull's Other Island*. Therefore, in this chapter, we are going to compare the stage Irishman and the stage Englishman, explore the subversion of these stock characters and the Irish-English relations at that time.

4.1. *The Shaughraun*

Conn the Shaughraun is perhaps the most loved and charming stage Irishman character ever written. He is described as "the soul of every fair, the life of every funeral, the first fiddle at all weddings and patterns" (Boucicault 258). Elizabeth Butler Cullingford calls him "reinvented stage Irishman who is not drunken, stupid and violent, but drunken, clever and charming" (287). He is not a protagonist of the story, but he steals every scene he is in with his delightful presence. The play was a huge commercial success in Ireland and England, but also in The United States, making a profit of half a million dollars for Boucicault. The play was first performed at Wallacks Theatre in 1874 in New York where Boucicault lived and died in 1890. The play was the longest-running show

in the 1870s. Not only did Boucicault earn a huge fortune as a playwright, but he was also a very successful actor, taking the title role of Conn, the Shaughraun.

The story is about Robert Ffoliot, an Irish gentleman, wrongfully accused of being a part of the Fenian Brotherhood which was a secret revolutionary Irish society founded in Ireland and the United States. Their goal was to overthrow British Rule in Ireland and establish the Republic of Ireland. Although the rebellion was suppressed, the Fenian Brotherhood had a big impact on the course of the history of Ireland. Now a fugitive, he left his sister Claire Ffoliot and his fiancée Arte O'Neill who live alone with the help of Father Dolan. With the help of Harvey Dunn, a police informer, Kinchela, a country squire is trying to catch and arrest Robert in order to marry Arte O'Neil and get Ffoliot's land. There are a lot of dramatic and tense situations in the play but thanks to Conn the Shaughraun, who always saves the day, they are combined with humorous episodes. The other comic relief is the stage Englishman character Captain Molineux, who falls in love with Claire Ffoliot. From the first scene, we know that *The Shaughraun* is going to be a different kind of play. We meet Captain Molineux and Claire Ffoliot. Captain thinks Claire is a maid because he caught her churning butter. We encounter the language problem, characteristic for the stage Irishman, but this time the roles are reversed.

> MOLINEUX. Is this place called Swillabeg?
>
> CLAIRE. No; It is called Shoolabeg.
>
> MOLINEUX. Beg pardon; your Irish names are so unpronounceable. You see, I'm an Englishman
>
> CLAIRE. I remarked your misfortune. Poor creature, you couldn't help it.
>
> MOLINEUX. I do not regard it as misfortune.
>
> CLAIRE. Get accustomed to it, I suppose. Were you born so? (Boucicault 260)

Later, they have a similar conversation where their roles are reversed.

> CLAIRE. What's your name again - Mulligrubs?

MOLINEUX. No;. Molineux.

CLAIRE. I ax your pardon. You see, I'm Irish, and the English names are so unpronounceable" (Boucicault 260).

Molineux shows up with a typical colonising attitude, but Claire immediately denounces his behaviour. He is so confused by her reaction that he does not understand she is making fun of him. Throughout the play, Claire and Molineux depict the traditional relationship between Ireland and England. At first, Molineux tries to force himself and treat her with disrespect, but after he receives a strong backlash from Claire, their relationship oscillates until they fall in love. Feeling like she had betrayed her brother, Claire tries not to succumb to her feelings for a "traitor" but after she tests his loyalty, she decides to reciprocate his love. Cullingford writes that Ireland has often been represented in a traditional literature as a female figure 'feminized and subordinated' while "English imperialists saw themselves as masculine, even paternal in relation to their colonial subject" (288).

She also mentions the English male gaze which we notice when Molineux forcefully kisses Claire believing she is a maid. When Claire protests he says that he only wanted to taste the brogue and adds "Stop, my dear: you forget the crown I promised you" and hands her the money. Cullingford calls this "a colonial fantasy" (297), treating an Irishwoman like he owns her but this imbalance is overthrown by Claire who shifts the power by making him churn butter which was traditionally a maid's job. Molineux's manners are appalling and very condescending, he acts as if he were entitled to her, but after Claire teaches him a lesson, his insecurities rise to the surface and we see his fragile masculinity. The English gaze was not limited only to Irish women, but also to Irish scenery; the English were often captivated by the natural beauty of Ireland and some of them tried to capitalise on the land as we will see later in *John Bull's Other Island*. He is delighted and quite surprised by all the beauty Ireland has to offer. At first, we expect from Molineux to take a role of a villain because he is there to catch Robert Ffoliot, but we soon learn to like Molineux and to sympathise with

him after he spends more time in Ireland and with Claire. The role of antagonists is then given to the Irish squire Cory Kinchela and his accomplice Harvey Duff.

Boucicault was a big supporter of releasing Fenian prisoners, the writer even sent a public appeal to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Benjamin Disraeli citing that the huge success of the play represented the English willingness to grant pardon to the Fenians. In this play, we find out that the Fenians will receive a general amnesty and at that moment the burden is stripped away from Molineux. He does not have to choose between his love for Claire and his duty, so the English audience could have a relatable hero they can cheer for. Molineux represents a typical stage Englishman who is polite, but a little bit stiff, he loves Ireland and Claire, but he still cannot permit himself to be impulsive or spontaneous when it comes to his duty and loyalty to the English crown. Like a typical Englishman in these plays, he is prone to stereotyping the Irish. When some characters find themselves in a difficult situation, Claire wants to react immediately, while he acts more prudent. He often makes comments starting with "You Irish..." commenting on Claire's impetuosity, excessive Irish wake, and some other traditions, but Claire rejects his prejudicial projection by telling him: "I won't be called *You Irish*" (311).

When Captain Molineux finally decides to help Robert to escape, English viewers feel like they are able to sympathise with the wrongly accused hero Robert Ffoliot and the rebellion in some way. Morash claims that the reason why the play was so well accepted is because it supported the rebellion and the authority at the same time (109). Orel writes: "The English could laugh because it was the English colonial system Boucicault demonised, not the English themselves" (77). We notice that Molineux's love for Claire and Ireland had softened his character, made him less stereotypically English than he seemed in the beginning. After Robert approves the marriage of his sister and Molineux, we can see the fraternal bond between the coloniser and the colonised, sealed with a marriage. Richard Allen Cave notices that Ireland "never willingly subsumed within the concept of Britain; no astute dynastic marriage created a ruling house that could claim Irish descent and that

might have given the Irish people some hereditary sense of belonging on a level of popular appeal and involvement in the historical processes creating Britain" (68).

Claire and Molineux's marriage represents the unity of two countries and the loyalty they share. Boucicault also encourages Anglo-Irish relationship by creating a stage Englishman who is loved and understood by both the English and the Irish audience. The real threat is, actually, a local low-class country squire Kinchela. He is seen as a traitor because he turned against his own people, trying to get their land and ruin their families. In his *The Politics of Irish drama* Nicolas Grene calls Kinchela and Duff "the middle men" (11); they are corrupted police officers who are taking advantage of a flawed colonial system. Kinchela and his sidekick Harvey Duff are so abhorrent and vile that we cannot even think about the faults in the system which allowed these circumstances. Kinchela's opposite is everybody's favourite Conn the Shaughraun. The Shaughraun is an Irish word for a wanderer or a vagabond. Without him, this play would be just another suspense melodrama, but this stock character adds a comical touch to it. Boucicault decided to name the play after his favourite character, although he is not the main protagonist of the story and many spectators could not even pronounce the name.

Boucicault would play the part of Conn the Shaughraun at the age of 50 and he was praised for his skill and authenticity. Boucicault was born in Ireland, but he lived most of his life in London and New York. However, he still kept his Irish brogue which was certainly a part of Conn's charm. The brogue in the play is more noticeable with lower-class characters, probably Catholics, like Conn, Moya, Mrs. O'Kelly, Conn's mother and Father Dolan, while Ffoliots and Arte O'Neill have a more standard English manner of speaking, not only regarding the pronunciation but also the style. The image of Ireland as a magical and romantic country is presented not only through its landscape but also through the speech of lower-class Irish people who have a rather poetic way of speaking. The upper class speaks more prosaically and conveys more information while the English are the most straightforward with their expression. Bernard McKenna writes: "Style is more important for

the Irish characters, content is the priority for the English" (58). Lisa Fitzpatrick writes that Irish dialects and accents are usually associated with positive attributes, for example, warmheartedness, charm and friendliness and in this case Boucicault confirms that stereotype (147).

Boucicault said that he wanted to abolish the stage Irishman stereotype, but he actually confirmed the stereotype, in a predominantly positive manner. He took different negative stereotypes and converted them into positive traits. Bernard McKenna says: "The Catholic Irish are usually seen as problem or ideals, but never human figures" (55). However, Conn is neither an ideal nor a problematic figure, on the contrary, he is flawed, but he is forgiven because of his ability to entertain the audience. He even asks the audience for forgiveness for his past sins. Father Dolan is far more stereotyped as an impoverished Catholic priest with his melodramatic speeches and a primitive but benevolent approach.

Conn is not a laughing stock, but he is funny and smart. He is not educated and does not know how to read, but he is resourceful and communicates with Robert Ffoliot through singing while he is in prison. His brogue is not mocked but seen as rather charming and poetical. Conn's most important purpose is providing a comic relief with his unconventional ways. Under his vagabond surface, there is a good and loyal person who will do anything for his friends. Boucicault does not let his protagonists do anything illegal, they are always morally superior, that is why Conn is the most relatable figure among these extremely righteous or evil characters. Cave claims that only the ruling class i.e. the Anglo-Irish characters are freed from traditional stereotypes, while the lower class is still burdened by some of them. Without the Shaughraun, the story would not have unfolded so quickly or would not have had a happy ending. Boucicault wanted to show an image of a cheerful Irishman whose charm will get him out of all troubles and who will serve as a background hero. Claire says about him: "The boy is so full of sport that I believe he would sing of his own funeral" (287). That image was generally well received by the Irish and English, but more interestingly by the Irish diaspora in the states.

The play was favoured by the American Irish community because the political note it contained was of huge importance for the Irish American audience. Many supporters of the Fenian Brotherhood lived in the States and Canada and some of them came back to Ireland to help in achieving Ireland's independence. The character of Robert Ffoliot was based on a real Fenian John Boye O'Reilly who was supposed to escape to Australia with the help of fellow American Fenians. Although the Fenian movement dissolved, later organisations such as Sinn Fein and IRA continued with the idea of Irish independence.

The Shaughraun represented the image of the stage Irishman the American Irish saw as a typical Irishman in their native land. Many praised Boucicault for portraying a positive image of the Irishmen in the States where Irish immigrants were not always welcomed with open arms. Irish immigrants were fighting with prejudices on daily basis, especially with the image of the stage American Irishman. McFeely mentions that the Irish were seen as uneducated servants and political extremists: "Such entrenched views, held by New York's ruling classes, deny the Irish community any possible identity other than of servant or manual worker. They also fail to acknowledge that the Irish contributed to American society in ways other than unskilled labouring" (78). On the other hand, some interpreted the play and the character of Conn as an insult to the Irish race. They claimed that the stage Irishman was constructed to satisfy the American and the English expectations of the stage Irishman and that the play was a product of British rule. McKenna writes:

> Boucicault is looking in from the outside, constructing the Irish for the observer, removing all possible harmful elements and presenting the *otherness* of these figures in an appealing and acceptable way. Such an approach becomes harmful when the representations of the characters become the truth for the observer. Ireland itself develops not as a nation and as a people, but as a collection of impressions, with fallacy built on fallacy until the impression displaces the reality for an audience. (59)

The clash of false impression and reality happens in all national communities who live abroad and especially affects the second or third generation whose only image of their homeland and countrymen can be experienced through the rather subjective and obsolete point of view of their fathers and grandfathers. What Boucicault offered to Irish immigrants and their children was an ideal mixture of picturesque scenery, Irish brogue, folklore, and tradition, along with a positive image not just of the stage Irishman, but also of the women in the play and even the English. Dowd writes that Boucicault "helped to redefine and reconstruct Irish ethnicity for a whole generation who only vaguely remembered Ireland or who (more often) had never seen it for themselves." Grene wrote: "Boucicault as Conn the Shaughraun interpreted Ireland as the actor interprets his role, embodying, impersonating, the part he plays, but always with the consciousness of an outer, other audience with its preconceptions and prejudice" (*Politics of Irish Drama* 17).

Boucicault confirmed that he changed the play in order to appeal to the American audience. Allegedly, Augustin Daly, the manager of the Wallacks Theatre, advised him to make the play more humorous so Americans could take their minds off heavy subjects, like famine and financial depression, but still feel solidarity for the Irish, which was exactly what the play produced and the reason why it was such a tremendous breakthrough. Boucicault wrote this play to express his political views regarding the Fenian prisoners. He wanted to build a bridge between the Irish and English and help them understand each other's point of view, which would ameliorate their relations. However, his task was also to show a different kind of the stage Irishman for the American audience, to present it in a good light and bring to the Irish American a positive image of their homeland they desperately needed. Having in mind the huge success of the play, we can be sure that Boucicault achieved at least some of that while at the same time entertaining his audience.

4.2. *John Bull's Other Island*

John Bull's Other Island premiered in 1904 in London at the Royal Court Theatre and three years later it premiered in Dublin. At first, the play was written at the request of William Butler Yeats, and it was supposed to be staged at Dublin's Abbey Theatre. However, the play needed a bigger production, so it demanded a bigger theatre. The other reason is that the play did not turn out to be what Yeats had expected. Yeats was a part of the Irish Literary Revival and their mission was to restore the Gaelic tradition and to build a positive national sentiment. According to Grene in *Bernard Shaw, a critical review,* Shaw considered the ancient idealism to be an "upmarket version of the stage Irishman" (69).

Shaw's play did not exactly fit the mould. Shaw did not want to create a new Ireland, he wanted to represent the real and old Ireland according to his view, which was not in Yeats's interest. However, in spite of not having a place in the Irish theatre movement at that time, the play was a huge success, both in Dublin and London. Many politicians saw the play more than once and King Edward VII broke his chair from laughing too hard. Today the play is not one of Shaw's most popular pieces, perhaps because it is tied to the political and social context of that time and the dialogue is too specific for that period. Shaw dealt with the Irish questions in his own way, through satire, inversion, and social criticism.

The name of the play *John Bull's Other Island* is pretty blunt. John Bull is a personification of the United Kingdom or England. He is a jolly, middle-aged, plump man, described as well-intentioned and sensible. The other island, of course, refers to Ireland. The story begins with two civil engineers Larry Doyle and Tom Broadbent who share a company in Westminster. Larry Doyle is an Irishman who had been living in England for almost twenty years and does not want to return to Ireland for personal reasons. His father, Cornelius Doyle, a nationalist and separatist; and his "fiancée", Nora Reilly who had been waiting for him since he left, live in his small village of Rosscullen. Tom Broadbent, his English partner, wants to go to Rosscullen on business and employs a

man Tim Haffigan, a native Irishman to be his secretary. Tim Haffigan is everything that we expect from the stage Irishman to be. He is a short red-head, a heavy drinker with a pronounced brogue. Broadbent is delighted by his Irishness and offers him a job and gives him an advance payment. He tells him about his plans to develop the estate in Ireland and Haffigan responds: "Take all you have out of Ireland and spend it in England" (Shaw 4). Broadbent reassures him that his plan is quite the opposite. Their conversation is interrupted by Doyle's entrance. After Tim Haffigan leaves, Doyle reveals to Broadbent that Haffigan is not Irish at all.

> BROADBENT: But he spoke — behaved just like an Irishman.
>
> DOYLE: Like an Irishman!! Is it possible that you don't know that all this top-o-the-morning and broth-of-a-boy and more-power to-your-elbow business is as peculiar to England as the Albert Hall concerts of Irish music are? No Irishman ever talks like that in Ireland, or ever did, or ever will. But when a thoroughly worthless Irishman comes to England, and finds the whole place full of romantic duffers like you, who will let him loaf and drink and sponge and brag as long as he flatters your sense of moral superiority by playing the fool and degrading himself and his country, he soon learns the antics that take you in. He picks them up at the theatre or the music hall. Haffigan learnt the rudiments from his father, who came from my part of Ireland. I knew his uncles, Matt and Andy Haffigan of Rosscullen. (Shaw 8)

Both the audience and Broadbent are shocked by this discovery. That was a great trick that Shaw played on his audience and everybody enjoyed it, especially the Irish viewers. After this scene, we never see Tim Haffigan again and at that moment Shaw does exactly what Boucicault intended to do — abolishes the Stage Irishman. Shaw wanted to show a real image of the English and Irish, individually and collectively, not a stock character. Doyle, like Shaw, is frustrated with a typical image of the Irishman. (Grene, *A critical review* 18)

> BROADBENT: We get on well enough. Of course you have a melancholy of the Celtic race.
>
> DOYLE: Good god!!!
>
> BROADBENT: — and also its habit of using the strong language when there's nothing the matter.
>
> DOYLE: Nothing the matter!!! When people talk about the Celtic race, I feel as if I could burn down London. That sort of rot does more harm than ten Coercion Acts? Do you suppose a man need be a Celt to feel a melancholy in Rosscullen? Why, man, Ireland was peopled just as England was; and its breed was by just the same invaders. (Shaw 10)

Doyle, like Shaw, believes that the English and the Irish are the same and that ancestry and nationality are not connected to one's personality or even identity. He blames the climate for differences between people. He says to Broadbent: "My dear Tom, you only need a touch of Irish climate to be as big a fool as I am" (Shaw 10). Broadbent has a very naive point of view, to express it mildly, when it comes to the English and foreigners, especially the Irish. In the beginning, he has quite anti-Semitic and racist statements, which proves that he harbours a huge sense of superiority. After Doyle's explanations, Broadbent concludes that all the Irish characteristics that he considers positive and masculine are actually of English origin.

> BROADBENT: True. All the capable people in Ireland are of English extraction. It has often struck me as a most remarkable circumstance that the only party in parliament which shows the genuine old English character and spirit is the Irish party. Look at its independence, its determination, its defiance of bad Governments, its sympathy with oppressed nationalities all the world over! How English! (Shaw 10)

Frustrated by stereotypes, Shaw wanted to reverse them, making his Irishman Larry Doyle a practical realist, free from any sentimentalism and traditional Irish qualities and making Tom

Broadbent an over-the-top sentimentalist. Shaw thought that the idea of the stage Irishman was not invented by the English but created by the Irish themselves to please the English. That is why he creates a farce with Tim Haffigan and the real Irishman Larry Doyle.

Shaw describes him in a very untraditional manner. "Mr Lawrence Doyle is a man of 36, with cold grey eyes, strained nose, fine fastidious lips, critical brows, clever head, rather refined and goodlooking on the whole, but with a suggestion of thinskinndness and dissatisfaction that contrasts strongly with Broadbent's eupeptic jollity" (Shaw 6). When they arrive in Ireland, Tom Broadbent becomes even more Irish than Larry Doyle in that setting. Grene in *Shaw - A Critical Review* writes: "Shaw revenged generations of Teagues and Paddies when he created Tom Broadbent, the stage Englishman. No stage-Irish buffoonery could be more extravagant or more fantastic that the show puts on for Rosscullen" (76). Broadbent proposes to Nora the first time he meets her. He acts on his impulsiveness and high emotions. He is so confused by his own behaviour that he asks Nora if he seems drunk to her. Later that morning he asks his secretary Hodson if he seemed drunk to him the night before, but Hodson denies it.

Broadbent is captivated by Nora and the beautiful Irish setting and he confuses this new feeling with drunkenness. Kosok writes that "either he is sentimental or drunk he breaks the code of the stage Englishman, entering the code of the stage Irishman" (44). Irish landscape has always inspired the action of the characters, especially the English. We could say that there is something magical in the Irish air which makes them behave less restrained. Both Tom Broadbent and Captain Molineux fall in love with Nora Reilly and Claire Ffoliot respectively, when in nature, surrounded by Ireland's lakes, ruins or mountains. Shaw also ridicules Broadbent's touristic persona who has never set a foot in a place like Rosscullen. He is delighted by Irish natural spots, although he mispronounces their names, he is surprised when he finds out there is no hotel there and he exaggerates when it comes to quotidian traditions. Although he is mocked because of his silly behaviour, he still

wins Nora's heart and a seat in the parliament. Unlike the stage Irishman, the stage Englishman is always in a position of power. He makes himself a fool in order to achieve what he intended to do.

In Rosscullen we meet Cornelius Doyle, Larry's father who is a former Land Agent, nationalist and separatist; Nora Reilly who seems like a thirty-year-old fairytale princess whose prince never came to rescue her. She is a weak, inert woman who kept writing letters to Doyle for 18 years probably knowing that he had given up on their relationship. At least, she is perceived in that way by Doyle, but to Broadbent, her slender figure and delicacy are very desirable, he instantly falls in love with her, supported by the romantic Irish landscape. Shaw describes Nora as an "incarnation of everything that drove him (Doyle) out of Ireland, helpless, useless, almost sexless, an invalid without the excuse of disease" (20). Once more, we have a female figure representing Ireland, and while in *The Shaughraun* we had a strong and passionate Claire, divided between her loyalty for her brother and the country and her love for an Englishman, here we have Nora whom we meet first as a fragile, inexperienced woman, not aware that her qualities could be quite charming outside of Ireland.

Doyle feels the same way about Nora as he feels about Ireland. He is angry because of her passiveness and lack of potential, but perhaps, he is even more angry with himself because he and Nora are more similar than he wants to admit. When they finally discuss their relationship and she leaves him for Broadbent, Doyle comments: "Oh, that's so Irish! Irish both of us to the backbone: Irish, Irish, Irish" (Shaw 65). Doyle refuses to be Nora's husband and later he refuses to be a candidate for a member of parliament, which Broadbent eagerly accepts. Doyle doubts his feelings towards Nora and Ireland, but when arguing with her, he says: "Nora, dear, don't you understand that I'm an Irishman, and he's an Englishman. He wants you; and he grabs you. I want you; and I quarrel with you and have to go on wanting you" (Shaw 65). We can see that Doyle's resentment towards Nora and his country is actually self-resentment. Grene in *Shaw - A Critical Review* writes: "Larry

Doyle is the most subtle study of the emotions of the Irish exile before Joyce - the dream of escape and the fear of return, the guilty shame and self-disgust of nationality" (75).

Rosscullen is the place where all Doyle's frustrations came to surface. He rejects his provincial life, opposes his father and current politics in Ireland and loathes sentimentalism and romanticism of Ireland. Grene writes: "In Larry Doyle, Shaw faced the feelings of provinciality, divided national identity, of emotional instability which confirmed him an Irish exile. But he also faced self-destructiveness implicit in that aggressive rejection of Ireland" (83). After years of ignoring his Irishness and Ireland, Doyle becomes confused about his feelings only when Broadbent takes over his lady and his land. Kiberd in *Inventing Ireland* writes: "All this would seem to ratify the stereotype, of the ineffectual Celt, who shows a disinclination to submit to duty or (if Nora epitomises Ireland) to the discipline of self-government, and who actually prefers to pass such disagreeable chores on to the more skilled English" (58).

In the end, we are not sure if Doyle regrets his decisions regarding Nora, or if he has romantic feelings for her. We probably do not know that because Doyle does not know it either. Broadbent's case is similar to Doyle's, they both have a mixture of traditional Irish and English qualities. Broadbent is sentimental, especially in Ireland but he does not forget that he is there on business and he works towards his goals. Larry Doyle and Tom Broadbent represent the new ideas of Ireland and England that Shaw had established. Their Irish and English identities are closely connected because one needs the other in order to be identified. They put on an act for one another to fulfil each other's expectations, when in fact they are more similar than they imagine. Shaw decided to deconstruct the stage Irishman and the stage Englishman by mixing traditional Irish and English qualities and dispersing them between Doyle and Broadbent. He also wanted to show that traditional nationalist characteristics are based on the perception of the other and on what we expect from ourselves to be within our national community.

Merriman says: "Ireland and Britain are, above all else, ideas which antagonise and complement each other. In order to identify oneself, the identity of the Other must be established" (8). Through Broadbent's action, we identify Doyle's passiveness. Apparently, no matter what our station in life, we need to imagine the Other in order to envision ourselves not only as literal, flesh-and-blood creatures but also as bearers of a set of characteristics— above all, a set of virtues—that define the collective entity we call the nation and the race. Although Doyle had spent many years living in London, he is still marked as "the other" just like Broadbent is in Ireland.

Although Doyle fights against the stereotype image of the Irish, he stills play the role he despises so much. In the beginning, in their office in England, Broadbent enjoys stepping on Doyle's toes and even comments on his lack of restraint when he gets upset about Broadbent's prejudicial comments. Later, in Rosscullen he comments that his inert behaviour is very Irish of him. Perhaps Broadbent's assertive Englishness makes him project his passive Irishness. Kolos writes: "Larry walks into the trap of stereotypes. By merely rejecting them, he has not shown an alternative yet. Larry in all of his ways remains passive and artificially non-competent, just the way Arnoldian tradition constructs the Irish" (44). He becomes what he has been disapproving of the whole time. He complains a lot but does not do much.

Not only Doyle but also other characters in *John Bull's Other Island* also do the same when Broadbent is in their company. For instance, Patsy Farrell, a young Irish farm labourer acts like a simpleton in order to present himself as the Irishman he thinks Broadbent wants to see, not to mention Tim Haffigan, a false stage Irishman who served Broadbent as a perfect English fantasy of what a typical Irish is. Kolos says that Broadbent "lays the same trick on the Rosscullen men that mocked him in the case of Tim Haffigan. He is acting out a Paddy, showing himself a harmless full" (46). Kiberd says that this strategy of pretending to be less dangerous or less capable than you are is typically an English strategy (54). In the play, Doyle says that a caterpillar should be an English na-

tional animal because he pretends to be a fool, eats all other fools, while his enemies let him alone because they do not see him as a threat (Shaw 14).

Shaw wanted to show an Irishman and an Englishman who would be free of traditional stereotypes, however, in the end, we have at least one confirmation of the Arnoldian dichotomy of "the efficient English administrator" and "impractical Irish" (qtd. in Kiberd 58). We can see that Doyle is much more preoccupied with his Irishness, perhaps because the play is set in Rosscullen, the place of big personal importance for him, but the most probable reason is that the Irish have always been reflecting on their nationalism and national identity. Shaw considered that only a happy and healthy nation is freed from such curse and disease and also drink, as Tim Haffigan says. According to Shaw, Ireland cannot move forward until they dismiss their national question.

5. The Stage Irishman on the Stage of the Abbey Theatre

In this chapter, we are going to discuss *The Playboy of the Western World* by J. M. Synge and *The Rising of the Moon* by Lady Gregory. Both plays were produced in 1907 by the Abbey Theatre, Irish national theatre, during Irish Literary Revival. Synge, along with Yeats and Lady Gregory, was an important figure of the movement. In the mid-19th century, there was a growing interest in Irish-Gaelic language and culture. In the spirit of Irish nationalism the Irish National Theatre Society was founded in 1903 by Lady Gregory and Synge among others, and the following year the Society established the Abbey Theatre. This theatre was a starting point where many authors of the Revival paved their way.

The Abbey Theatre was born in the midst of formation of a new national identity. Lady Gregory expressed the goals of the theatre in *Our Irish Theatre*: "We hope to find in Ireland an uncorrupted and imaginative audience trained to listen by its passion for oratory and believe that our desire to bring upon the stage the deeper thoughts and emotions of Ireland will ensure for us a tolerant welcome, and the freedom to experiment which is not found in theatres of England, and without

which no new movement in art or literature can succeed. We will show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and of easy sentiment, as it has been represented, but the home of ancient idealism. We are confident of the support of all Irish people, who are weary of misrepresentation, in carrying on a work that is outside all the political questions that divide us" (9).

5.1.*The Playboy of the Western World*

The Playboy of the Western World by J. M. Synge was perhaps the most experimental and controversial play of the Abbey Theatre which caused even more riots than Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals*. This unusual play was perhaps a bit too extravagant and grotesque for that time and stage. *The Playboy* is a story about a young man called Christy who appears in a bar claiming that he had killed his father. The story takes place in County Mayo, in the west of Ireland. The Irish definitely had a soft spot for the population of County Mayo, not only because the people there suffered immensely during the famine years and the reminders of the Great Famine lingered in the County for years, but also because those people represented a typical picture of the rural Irishman - poor, but with strong moral values. While writing the play Synge was inspired by the Aran Islands on the West coast of Ireland where he spent five years investigating Irish culture, folklore, oral history, and language. It was Yeats who encouraged Synge to leave Paris and go to the Aran Islands to find inspiration. Yeats claims that: "writing should be founded on the experience or personal observation of a writer" (349). While living there, Synge was writing a journal which was published in 1907 with Yeats's illustrations.

The story starts in a pub in Mayo, with Pegeen Mike, the owner's daughter and Shawn Keogh, her fiancé. The setting does not differ much from popular peasant dramas of that time. Other villagers are at the wake, so Pegeen asks Shawn to stay with her because the dark frightens her, but Shawn refuses because it would not be appropriate, especially because Father Reilly had not sent his approval for their wedding yet. Pegeen is frustrated by his prudish behaviour and comments on his lack of courage. She expresses her disappointment with all the men from the village. After

the bar has already been filled with the locals, a stranger enters, he seems tired, dirty and scared. He introduces himself as Christy Mahon and tells everybody that he had done a gruesome crime — he had killed his father. Before that scene, we were presented with a typical rural life of coastal Ireland, but with Christy Mahon's entrance, our expectations are subverted. The villagers do not even consider denouncing Christy to the police, they celebrate his patricide and see him as a hero. The first act ends with Pegeen's father Michael offering Christy a job and leaving his daughter with Christy, a cold-blooded murderer so she is not alone.

The audience was puzzled after the first act. Nobody was sure why the villagers' moral compass was so disoriented. Perhaps they were captivated by Christy's poetical confession or they simply did not consider a murder to be a horrendous act, having in mind that later we find out that Widow Quin, a local woman, beat her husband with a hoe until he died of blood infection, so we can see that the villagers are no strangers to manslaughter. Moreover, Christy brings the much-needed excitement into a dull village life and that could be the reason why they see Christy as a hero, especially Pegeen Mike who is obviously smitten by him. She openly complements him on his appearance and praises him for his vocabulary and vocal expression: "...and any girl would walk her heart out before she'd meet a young man was your like for eloquence, or talk, at all" (Synge 110).

We find out that Christy grew up with a strict father in a distant village where he was seen as an underachiever. Old Mahon, his father, has mistreated him his whole life and he had a very low opinion of his son. He even tried to make him marry a widow from the village who used to breast-feed him, so in the heat of the argument, Christy tried to kill him. On the other hand, villagers see Christy in a completely different light, which allows Christy to see himself as a new and confident man. Looking at the mirror, impressed by his own figure, he asks himself why he did not kill his father years ago. He comments that the mirror at home must be broken because he had never no-

ticed his good looks before. His patricide represents a chance for a new life where Christy will be able to make his own choices. He feels liberated and strong, believing his father is dead.

After the first act, Lady Gregory sent a telegram to Synge telling him that the play was a success, but that was about to change with the second act when this unusual portrayal of village life continues. A few village girls come with gifts to the pub to see Christy. They have already heard many stories about a new man in town and they are enchanted by him. They are so engrossed in his storytelling that they even build a narrative together with him, commenting there is some blood on his boots, although that is not true. Christy proudly retells the story about his father to the girls, but this time he does it even more passionately and poetically, supported by his newfound confidence. Synge demonstrates the untypical image of Irish village girls, who are often presented as proper and chaste and do not usually talk about blood and murder and rarely complement men so openly.

Christy and Pegeen become more infatuated with each other. She sees him as someone who can offer her the life she wants to live, the life of freedom and choices. However, her fiancé, Shawn feels insecure about their relationship, so he tries to bribe Christy to leave the village, but Christy refuses because he feels safe and welcomed there. Shawn finds an accomplice in Widow Quin who wants to marry Christy. Widow Quin identifies with Christy in many ways because she feels like an outcast in her own community, she is also a "murderer" but not a hero, and she is the only one who is on Christy's side when the village finds out the truth about him.

On the other hand, Shawn also compares himself to Christy and laments how he is not able to kill his father because he is an orphan. Shawn believes he does not have an obstacle to overcome, so he cannot be liberated like Christy. Shawn's passiveness is what blocks him, not the absence of the father. Nevertheless, Shawn has a father figure in his life — Father Reilly. We do not see his character in the play but he is mentioned a few times. Father Reilly represents the Catholic Church and Shawn's loyalty to the Catholic values which Pegeen sometimes finds irksome. Shawn's be-

haviour is so lethargic and when he shows initiative we are not even sure if he is actually in love with Pegeen or he simply does not want to feel inferior next to Christy.

Christy continues to build his own narrative through storytelling and imagination, every time he tells the story, it becomes more exciting and dramatic. His speech is often compared to poetry, which gives him the power to transform any ordinary story into an epic tale. However, Christy's story crumbles when his father appears. Old Mahon bursts Christy's bubble and threatens to ruin the life he had built for himself in County Mayo. Old Mahon is a reminder of the old version of Christy which he wants to hide from Pegeen and other villagers, but also from himself. He is afraid that his father will bring out the insecure young man he truly is. After a local racing competition which Christy wins, Old Mahon starts to doubt the winner is his son, however Widow Quin describes the champion as an exceptional young man and the wonder of the Western world. Old Mahon agrees that that man cannot be his cowardly son and describes Christy as: "Didn't you hear me say he was the fool of men, the way from this out he'll know the orphan's lot with old and young making game of him and they swearing, raging, kicking at him like a mangy cur" (Synge 106). After the competition, Christy proposes to Pegeen in the bar and she accepts.

In the beginning, her father is reluctant to bless their union because of Christy's criminal past, but after Pegeen tells him she wants her children to have a brave father like Christy and not a coward like Shawn, he accepts their relationship. Just like her ex-fiancé, her father does not pay enough attention to Pegeen. Christy is the only man Pegeen feels is worthy of her and that is why she is extremely hurt and disappointed when she finds out the truth. Old Mahon enters the bar and starts beating Christy, revealing the true story and destroying Christy's character and credibility in one instance. The crowd that worshiped him once turns against Christy as he is begging for mercy. The audience was already on the edge because of the scene with Old Mahon.

The actor entered the stage covered in blood and the spectators were appalled by that image. The next scene was even more shocking. In order to redeem himself, Christy tries to kill his father

once again, but the villagers, as well as the spectators, revolt against Christy/Synge. Kiberd in *The Irish Writer and the World* writes: "Synge's play, and by extension Christy himself, thus became - like Christy - a scapegoat for the violence visited upon one another by the colonised" (167).

The villagers are repulsed by Christy's act as if they had not welcomed him, a murderer, a few days ago. They praised him while his murder was distant, but when they saw it happening in front of their eyes they turned their backs on him. There is no compassion for Christy, the villagers even enjoy in his failure. We are not sure if the villagers are disappointed and angry with Christy because he tried to kill his father on their soil or because his story was completely fabricated. Even Pegeen, his future wife, does not want to help him but tells his father to take him or she will send the villagers to destroy him. She explains to Christy that is not the same to tell the story about killing his father and do it in front of her and the village: "I'll say, a strange man is a marvel, with his mighty talk; but what's a squabble in your back-yard, and the blow of a loy, have taught me that there's a great gap between a gallous story and a dirty deed" (119). She is unexpectedly cruel to him, perhaps because his betrayal means that her liberation is not real either.

The villagers nor Pegeen do not want to be a part of Christy's crime and they protect themselves by casting Christy out. One of the villagers says to Christy that hanging him would be an easy end. When we see a real and cruel face of the villagers, we are not that surprised why they accepted Christy with open arms in the first place. Synge portrayed them as hateful, corrupt and vulgar people. At the same time, the audience in the Abbey Theatre broke the fourth wall, climbing onto the stage and reflecting the maddening crowd from the play. Patrick Kenny wrote in his review: "The merciless accuracy of his revelation is more than we can bear. Our eyes tremble at it. (...) It is as if we looked at a mirror, for the first time, and found ourselves hideous. We fear to face the thing. We shrink at the word for it. We scream" (qtd. in Castle 281).

Christy does not succeed in killing his father the second time. Moreover, when the crowd tries to kill Christy, it is Old Mahon who saves his son from the villagers. They finally come to

peace and forgive each other. The father and the son leave the village threatening to expose the true nature of the people of County Mayo. Old Mahon says to the villagers: "... but my son and myself will be going our own way, and we'll have great times from this out telling stories of the villainy of Mayo, and the fools is here" (Synge 121). Both men are visibly changed through this experience. Christy is not "a mangy cur" anymore, but a confident young man, who explicitly says to his father that he is now in charge: "Go with you, is it? I will then, like a gallant captain with his heathen slave. Go on now and I'll see you from this day stewing my oatmeal and washing my spuds, for I'm master of all fights from now. (*Pushing* MAHON) Go on, I'm saying" (Synge 121). Old Mahon is impressed by his resolute attitude and is finally proud of his son.

On the other hand, Pegeen felt like she had lost "the only playboy of the Western World" (Synge 121). She does not mourn the loss of Christy, but the idea of him and the life he had promised her. However, Pegeen had changed as well. Although alone, she still refuses Shawn's marriage proposal and the life she did not want to have in the first place. Pegeen is not just another Irish peasant girl. She is not sweet, kind nor modest. Christy did see her as a beautiful girl, his ultimate prize, but through the eyes of Widow Quin we find out that Pegeen "smells of poteen" and does not have ladylike manners at all (Synge 101). Until Christy showed up, Pegeen led a miserable life in County Mayo, disappointed by her neglectful father and her fiancé Shawn whose disinterest did not match Pegeen's feisty personality. Pegeen dreamt of a different life which slipped so swiftly through her fingers when she found out the truth about Christy.

Despite all controversies, Synge has become one of Ireland's greatest writers and *The Playboy of the Western World* one of the staples of Irish literature. The play criticises hypocritical Catholic and traditional Irish morals, so riots were not completely surprising, especially coming from the Catholic Nationalists. Synge wanted to provoke his audience by showing the parody of Irish peasant drama. Mary C. King argues: "Much of the strength of Synge's 'peasant' drama derives from turning stereotyping discourses against themselves" (84). However, the audience saw peasant

dramas as essential representations of the Irish peasant life with Catholic and Gaelic elements. Full of good-hearted stock Irish characters, those dramas would always carry a lesson on moral.

Arrowsmith says that Synge was perhaps inspired by the play *Casadh an tSugain* by Douglas Hyde who also wrote a story about a travelling poet who tried to split one engaged couple, but without success (xviii). However, the story of patricide is actually in the folklore of the Aran Islands where Synge used to live. It was not very uncommon to protect criminals or murderers in that part of Ireland. The villagers felt English jurisdiction was not always fair to them, so sometimes they would decide to take justice into their own hands. The stereotypes of the Irish being lawless and barbarous were still present in England, so many spectators were of the opinion that Synge's play, inspired by these cases, actually confirmed the negative stereotype that the Irish were trying to erase.

Those kinds of characters were usually written to entertain the English audience at the expense of Irish reputation and Anglo-Irish relations. The first review of *The Playboy* was printed in *The Freeman's Journal* and it was described as: "The worst specimen of stage Irishman of the past is refined, acceptable fellow, compared with that imagined by Mr. Synge" (Kilroy 7). Even before the scandalous premiere of *The Playboy* Synge's Irishness and his right to represent it on the stage was brought into question by some playwrights and members of the audience. Synge was born in an Anglo-Irish Protestant family and his work was disputed by some Catholic nationalist groups who considered Catholicism and Gaelic heritage to be traits of a true Irishman.

Before the premiere, the theatre released less expensive tickets so the lower class could afford a theatrical experience. A diverse audience and a provocative performance created a perfect match that started a fire in the theatre. What Synge created was a parody of idealist, Catholic Ireland. Synge did not want to compromise on his artistic values and he had the support of Lady Gregory and Yeats who praised the plays that contained "some criticism of life" and rejected "propagandist plays" (349). Kelly Hill writes that Synge wanted to "preserve" and "liberate" Ireland (18).

That liberation is shown through Christy's journey and partially through Pegeen's. In this play there are no Englishmen, so we are left without the expected English-Irish dynamics and the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised. Nevertheless, that relationship is reflected in Christy and his father, even in Pegeen and her father. Christy's father is controlling, Pegeen's is neglectful, but both of them disobey their parents when it comes to their marriage choices. Old Mahon represents a tyrannic parent, just like England was to Ireland. However, in the end, Christy is the only one who becomes completely free once he discards the projections of others and finds his own authenticity. He is not a hero but neither a failure. Kiberd in *Inventing Ireland* actually reads the play as liberation from a coloniser in three acts that was misread by generations of nationalists. In the first act, Christy sees himself through his father's eyes which represents the Irish under a colonial misrule. In the second act, he sees himself as a hero because the villagers see him as such, which represents Irish pride in self-glorying revival. In the third act, Christy does not need others to define him, he does it on his conditions.

Kiberd writes: "Only then does he lose the marks of a provincial who is doomed to define himself through the distorting mirror of a public opinion shaped in some faraway centre of authority" (175). Kiberd compares Christy's revelation of his identity to a revolution. He defines it as "when the old take their cue from the young" (175) and that is what happens in the end when the new and reborn Christy takes the lead, leaving his father in a subordinated position. *The Playboy* is exactly what the Abbey Theatre wanted — an Irish play with Irish characters, written for the Irish and by an Irishman. However, not many Irishmen liked the play for its content and unflattering representation of the people.

It seemed like Synge went back to the beginnings of the stage Irishman when this character was often described as belligerent, barbarous, unreliable, hard-drinking and speaking gibberish. Arrowsmith writes about Synge's disappointment with the middle-class Catholics. He was a true admirer of Irish peasant life but frustrated by the "version of Irishness promoted by the Catholic bour-

geoisie" (x). He considered it to be "a corruption of true Irishness, one polluted by modern values such as commercialism and organised religion" (x). Because both of them had a different idea of the national identity, there was an argument between the Protestant Ascendancy and Catholic and Gaelic representatives. But the truth is that there is not just one national identity, there are multiple identities and neither of them is the best one or the correct one. When the stage Englishman disappeared, the perception of the other was gone and the Irish were left to themselves. Some of them did not like what they saw or at least did not want to accept some negative qualities of their fellow countrymen.

Who exactly is the stage Irishman in *The Playboy*? At first, it seems as Synge brought back the wild Irish, one of the first notions of the stage Irishman in the play. We also notice many other qualities of the early stage Irishman, for instance, boastfulness (Christy), religiousness (Shawn) hard-drinking (Michael), violence (Old Mahon), but none of them is a typical stage Irishman. We could say that the villagers as a group represent the stage Irishman but ultimately *The Playboy* is not their story, it is Christy's story. Furthermore, we could see that Christy as our hero/anti-hero, trying to kill his father, or having a crowd worshiping him one day, while hating the other, has some elements of classic literature. Grene in *The Politics of Irish Drama* calls Christy's story "a ludic version of the Oedipus myth" (95), a man who killed his father and married his mother. Christy did not marry his mother, but his father tried to force him to marry his old wet nurse.

Grene compares Christy to Christ and to Cuchulainn, a god from Irish mythology and often compared to Heracles from Greek mythology, but finally, he concludes that *The Playboy* is a dramatic Bildungsroman in a little metamorphosis of a figure of farce into a dynamic character (86). Christy surpassed his father and the way people at home see him, he also rejected the identity that the strangers from the County Mayo had given him and decided to become a completely new man. He had the power because he was aware of himself. Perhaps Synge wanted to raise self-awareness

for his nation. At that time Ireland was still under British rule but soon it was going to become an independent country and a new identity was there to build.

Language is another important distinctive trait of the stage Irishman. The language of the County Mayo is called Hiberno-English, which is English spoken by native speakers of Irish, who still use Irish syntax and grammar when speaking English. Welch states that this language was often misunderstood and sometimes parodied, but it represented the reality of the experience of the Aran Islands (30). Kiberd in *Inventing Ireland* writes: "Hiberno-English, like Christy Mahon, owes its force to the apparent murder of its parent" (174). Irish was slowly disappearing in Ireland, but not completely. It held on long enough to "deteriorate" standard English. Dialectal forms were never appreciated and embraced by nationalist leaders, some even called it a bastard lingo, stuck between two languages and cultures, just like Irish national identity - Catholic and Gaelic in contrast with Protestant and Anglo-Irish.

A new hybrid language was so beautifully carried out by Christy whose poetic expression helped him create a heroic image of himself. Kiberd explains that in the first act Christy speaks in prose, but as his confidence grows his language becomes more exotic and flowery in the second act. Finally, in the third act, his language is terse and more telling (175). The style of the language in the play is on some occasions very graphic. Descriptions of violent events, naming different tools used to kill people and animals were very shocking for the audience, but there was one word which outraged the audience more than a bloody head of Old Mahon and that word was "shift". A shift is a loose-fitting dress worn as underwear mostly by women. "Audience broke up in disorder at the word shift" was said in the second telegram sent to Synge that night of the premiere (Grene 80). The word appears in the play when Widow Quin says to Christy that there are many "sweethearts " finer than Pegeen, but he answers her: "It's Pegeen I'm seeking only, and what'd I care if you brought me a drift of chosen females, standing in their shifts itself maybe, from this place to the Eastern World" (Synge 118). It was the third time the word had been mentioned but this time it was men-

tioned as a garment covering naked female bodies. Furthermore, those bodies covered by shifts were even more scandalous than if they were naked. For the conservative audience, Synge's right to address that there are female sexual bodies with desires underneath the clothes was an attack on the modesty of Irish women.

Although born in Dublin, Synge was very interested in rural Irish life and most of his characters are Roman Catholic peasants. He was a talented author who died of cancer before his 38th birthday. *The Playboy of the Western World* was his masterpiece, a mixture of realistic and grotesque elements, perhaps difficult to understand at that time. This story, about a personal transformation of a young Irishman, was confusing to the audience who perceived it as a highly insulting piece. Dubliners had an image of an Irish peasant as a pure and good-natured protector of traditional Irish values, so for them to see their fellow countrymen enraged and shameless in Synge's play was not just an attack on Irish culture and tradition, but also on the idea they had about the Irish rural life. Not all the Irish are like the villagers from County Mayo, but some of them are and Synge wanted to demonstrate the abhorrent side of society and human beings.

Christy was the hero Ireland had always waited for but then rejected. Kiberd explains that a bad reaction came from the nationalists, middle-class men who were not ready for the revolution (175). They were more like Shawn Keogh and less like Christy Mahon. Perhaps Synge wanted to reconstruct traditional Irish values by creating something extraordinary and shocking like *The Playboy of the Western World*. However, Synge's mission was not to fulfil someone's expectations, his mission was art and creation of a new drama. He did not want to mimic or represent Irish life, but to take inspiration from it, and the most of all, he wanted his piece to stand as an original cultural performance.

5.2. *The Rising of the Moon*

The Rising of the Moon is a one-act play by Lady Gregory where she addresses the most important political question of that time — the independence of Ireland. That does not come as a surprise since it was known that Lady Gregory was an ardent supporter of the Home Rule. The Irish Home Rule movement campaigned for Irish self-government within the United Kingdom. This play is a short one, yet densely packed with wisdom and substance. It also serves as an astute reflection of the socioeconomic struggles of the Irish in the early 20th century. Gregory also speaks about topics such as Anglo-Irish relations, political division, the use of disguise and finding the inner self. The protagonist of the play is the Sergeant, and his transformation and realisation of his youth desires upon meeting The Man is the most important aspect of *The Rising of the Moon*.

The play begins with three Irish policemen entering. They are currently hunting for an escaped prisoner in hopes of catching him before he flees the country. The Sergeant, the oldest of the three, decides to stay near the ocean because he believes the fleeing convict will contact friends to smuggle him by boat to his freedom. After the other two officers search elsewhere for the prisoner, an unnamed man approaches the Sergeant. This man has disguised himself because he is the political prisoner that the policemen are searching for. The man, who later identifies himself as Jimmy Walsh, a ballad singer, is the character who sets up the dilemma that the Sergeant needs to resolve by the end of the play.

Will he let the prisoner go and help his cause or will he arrest him and be awarded by a prize? As the Sergeant and the Man converse, smoking cigarettes, the Sergeant is trying to put himself in the position of the escaped convict. The Sergeant is moved by the Man's song, *The Rising of the Moon.* The play takes its name from this old Irish ballad the Man is singing. The ballad recalls a battle that took place between the Irish and the British, clearly suggesting that a difference remains between the Sergeant and the Man. The Man reminds us of Conn, the Shaughraun, not only because

he is disguised as a wanderer but because he as well communicates using traditional Irish songs. The Sergeant is reminded of his youth, when, he too, was a young revolutionary. He recalls the passion he felt in his heart, fighting political causes against those who were in possession of power. When the two other officers return, the Sergeant is put in a position where he could arrest the convict and receive his bounty of one hundred pounds.

However, because of his conversation with the disguised prisoner, the Sergeant decides not to reveal him to the other officers. The other two policemen exit, leaving the Man and the newly enlightened Sergeant together onstage. The Man leaves the Sergeant with parting words that echo the call of the Irish revolution. The Sergeant, alone on the stage, exclaims, "A hundred pounds reward! A hundred pounds! I wonder, now, am I as great a fool as I think I am" (57). Just like the Sergeant and the Man, the people of Ireland had different opinions about the British Rule and Irish independence. Many of them supported the status quo because it helped them provide for their families and the others desperately wanted a change, even if it meant breaking the law and overthrowing the English government. We see in the Man that a revolutionary path brings poverty, and a dangerous and unstable life, while the other path brings career. The Sergeant is not sure if he should listen to his mind or his heart and he does not take his decision light-heartedly. However, the feelings of national pride and unity when he hears the song prevail and the Sergeant takes part in the rebellion as well.

Although they are different, both the Man and the Sergeant are Irish and they are connected by common culture and folklore. Traditional Irish songs are an important motif in the play. At first, when the Man is singing the song the Sergeant tells him to keep his voice down, but as their conversation continues, the Sergeant fills the gaps of the verses that the Man skipped on purpose. Gregory wanted to show that, in spite of their different political viewpoints, they both are Irish and that is the bond that should be stronger than any political affiliation. Gregory intends for the reader to see the development of the Sergeant as he garners empathy for the same prisoner he is tracking. The

Sergeant says to the Man: "If it wasn't for the sense I have, and for my wife and family, and for me joining the force the time I did, it might be myself now would after breaking gaol and hiding in the dark, and it might be him that's hiding in the dark and that got out of gaol would be sitting up here where I am on this barrel" (Gregory 55). This is one of the more significant lines throughout the play. It is the moment where the Sergeant thinks about the circumstances that made him a figure of the law, consequently freeing him from a life of crime.

Not only does *The Rising of the Moon* serve to reiterate the Man's position as an escaped political prisoner, but it also reflects some socialist beliefs of Gregory, in spite of her being a landowner's wife and a member of Protestant Ascendancy. The Man's parting words with the Sergeant have revolutionary undertones: "Well, good-night, comrade, and thank you. You did me a good turn to-night, and I'm obliged to you. Maybe I'll be able to do as much for you when the small rise up and the big fall down…when we all change places at the rising of the Moon" (Gregory 57). The Man refers to the Sergeant as his "comrade", a word often associated with socialist rhetoric. The Man's comment "when the small rise up and the big fall down" (55) suggests the inevitable revolution the Socialists claim will take place when the proletariats (workers) overthrow the bourgeoisie (owners). Although there were some socialist tendencies in Irish history, an Irish politician James Connolly was one of the most known socialist leaders of Europe at that time, Ireland never truly embraced socialism as a political option.

It is through the disguised man that the Sergeant is able to reveal his true self, the self of his youth. The Man says to the Sergeant. "Sergeant, I am thinking it was with the people you were, and not with the law you were, when you were a young man" (Gregory 55). In order to disguise himself, instead of a wig and a beard he hid his inner self behind the law. He no longer exhibits his youthful ambitions, which before his change of heart he referred to as being, "foolish then, that time's gone" (Gregory 55). Eventually, as they converse, the Sergeant reveals his true self; he is free from

the constraints of being a representative of the law. The Sergeant is able to embrace this newfound sense of compassion and he is grateful to the Man for enlightening him.

The Sergeant, by giving back the disguise, is physically giving the means for the Man to continue to be free. His freedom thus allows him to continue rebelling against others. Therefore, the disguise acts as a symbol of the Man's ability to rebel. Gregory is clever in that it took the Man's disguise to unmask the Sergeant's true beliefs. The disguise itself serves as a representation of the revolution, whose roots seem bound to Gregory's socialist ideals. *The Rising of the Moon'*s message remains clear as this text is an excellent reflection of the conflict between the Unionist and the Nationalists, attempting to apply a neutralist stance through the embrace of sympathy. There is no revolution without unity and there is no unity without mutual understanding.

The Rising of the Moon is a marvellous example of Irish theatre. It is a simple one-act play, yet with so much depth and significance found throughout it. The action begins immediately, setting up a contrast between the law protecting Sergeant and the politically inclined free spirit demonstrated by the Man. Gregory's use of character development is arguably her greatest accomplishment. Even more significant is how this character development takes place. Lady Gregory was a director of the Abbey Theatre until her retirement in 1928. She was close to her colleagues Yeats and Synge, they shared some principles and goals, and they sometimes even assisted each other in writing, especially when it came to the language. Yeats and Synge used a distinguished dialect of Western Ireland in their plays. Gregory was born in Galway, so she would advise them on the use of this variety which was also one of the important characteristics of her work. Saddlemyer calls Gregory "a rebel nationalist" and adds: "While Synge celebrated the artist as vagabond and looked on Irish life with the romantic vision of self-imposed exile, Lady Gregory planned folk-history plays aimed at educating the country towns" (29).

While Synge puts an accent on the artistic value when it comes to *The Playboy*, Gregory's goal was to create a tolerant environment and spark a change in *The Rising of the Moon*, even the

title suggests a revolution. She was proud of her mission to restore Ireland's national dignity and to educate the people from the stage in the Abbey Theatre. *The Rising of the Moon* is very personal to Gregory, her nanny used to sing her that song when she was a child. Her wish to learn Irish finally came true when she got married, she translated a lot of works from the Irish language and collected a decent amount of Irish folklore. Lady Gregory was loved and appreciated throughout the country, Shaw even called her "the greatest living Irish woman" (Mikhail, ix). She was a true patriot at heart, supporting workers and nationalists, but we also have to remember that her rich and Anglo-Protestant origin allowed her to enjoy good education and access to theatre and literature.

Synge and Gregory did not always see eye to eye, but their plays have one thing in common and that is a personal transformation and finding the true self. Christy needed three acts to reveal his true self, and the Sergeant needs just one song to remind him of his true nature. In order to be free, both Christy and the Sergeant have to reject their authority, which, in Christy's case is his father and in the Sergeant's his employer - the English government. They do not behave as it is expected of them, but according to their own opinions and beliefs obtained through these profound experiences.

The Rising of the Moon did not have the same response as *The Playboy,* however, there were some complaints from the nationalist side about the Sergeant's character. Welch writes that there was a great scepticism towards the Sergeant, and many spectators did not believe in his conversion (30). The Sergeant was presented perhaps a bit too ideal and too romantic, while in reality, the police were cruel and not very empathetic to the nationalists and fugitives. Lady Gregory even had problems finding an actor for the role because nobody wanted to perform it. Still, the supporters of the English rule had opposite complaints. They did not want to see a policeman, a representative of the English government supporting the criminals. In spite of her great will to reconcile two different sides, tolerance was not easy to achieve in everyday Irish life.

Synge and Lady Gregory had a similar vision, they both wanted to give their audience a chance to build a new self as a nation and to get rid of all stereotypes and projections made by

themselves and by the others. They wrote these plays during politically turbulent times in Ireland and every scene performed in the theatre could have been interpreted as a politically charged message. As artists and playwrights, they also took part in building and portraying a new national identity. According to *The Rising of the Moon* and *The Playboy,* this identity was a mixture of common Irish cultural heritage that was shared by both Catholics and Protestants, their will to build the future together and a new 20th-century Irishman who had a chance to reinvent himself/herself in what soon is going to be an independent country. Nevertheless, these plays are beautifully written and they could stand on their own without any social framework. Although they are set in Ireland at that particular time, they do not give us an image of Irish reality. Both plays have exaggerated elements, *The Playboy* is grotesque and *The Rising of the Moon* is idealistic. However, the message they try to convey is very sensible and important to the Irish. The riots that occurred simply show that the plays struck the chord and hopefully caused a deep reflection on the true Irish identity.

6. Conclusion

Stock characters have always been a part of storytelling. These archetypal characters are a good base for a further development of a character and sometimes they serve as a useful tool to an author. Marginalised people are usually portrayed as stock characters, for instance, women and non-white characters. When using a stock character an author simply copies a group of already existing stereotypes and creates a character that the audience had already seen many times. By doing this, an author demonstrates their unwillingness to create something original and a lack of inspiration. Familiar elements in the story will sometimes entertain the audience, or, in some cases, they will discredit spectators' trust or even raise some complaints if the stock character serves as a damaging representative of a certain group of people.

Sheridan, Brinsley Sheridan, Boucicault, Shaw, Synge, and Lady Gregory interpreted the stock character of the stage Irishman in their own manner. They reflected the sociocultural context of their time and created an innovative and unconventional twist of the stage Irishman character. In

the 18th century, Thomas Sheridan and Richard Brinsley Sheridan created two stage Irishmen: Captain O'Blunder and Sir Lucius who were charming and courageous, yet a bit unrefined. The English audience was disarmed by Sheridan's play *The Brave Irishman* when premiered in the 1740s. However, 30 years later when *The Rivals by* Brinsley Sheridan premiered in 1775, the play was scrutinised precisely because of the stage Irishman character who was seen as a shocking and repulsive representation of the Irish. The perception of the audience during that period changed considerably because the Anglo-Irish relations changed. The English audience sympathised more with Lucius O'Trigger than with Captain O'Blunder.

Their names tell us a lot about them, they are hotheaded, sometimes half-witted, their speech is recognisably different because they are surrounded by the English or other nationalities. These kinds of plays rarely had more than one Irishman and the character was expected to act in a certain manner so he could produce laughter and when was needed, sympathy. However, Sheridan and his son Brinsley Sheridan offered their audience a bit more. Behind a superficial portrayal, they brought us a different character that had some depth and showed compassion and endurance.

While the plays by the Sheridans took place in England, *The Shaughraun* and *John Bull's Other Island* took place in Ireland and most of the characters are Irish with one English character who becomes the stage Englishman. The change of setting is important because we can see the English colonial attitude towards the Irish land and the people. Both Boucicault and Shaw transformed the traditional image of the Stage Irishman and created a new dynamics between the Irish and the English. In *The Shaughraun* Boucicault's stage Irishman Conn, the Shaughraun carries all the weight of the past stage Irishmen, but in the end, he is transformed in front of the audience. He asks for forgiveness for his past sins and Boucicault gives him a new, better life where his qualities will represent the Irish in a positive light as loyal, honest and kind people.

Moreover, this play was of a great importance for the Irish diaspora in the USA, where a reconstructed portrayal of the Irish was welcomed with open arms. Irish immigrants finally had a

positive representation in a country where they were not always treated with respect. However, *The Shaughraun* was also criticised as the play made for the American and the English audience. Watching the stage English who is kind and compassionate but still superior and in charge, the English felt better about their own position. Boucicault smartly mixed entertaining and more serious elements like the issue of the Fenian prisoners. He successfully inspired solidarity among the British and gave hope for a better relationship between the English and the Irish. Boucicault executed a great task without sacrificing an amusing story.

On the other hand, Shaw did not try to improve the stage Irishman, he actually destroyed the traditional stage Irishman at the beginning of his play *John Bull's Other Island* and later reversed the roles of the stage Irishman and the stage Englishman. By reversing the stereotypes, Shaw subverted the characters of the stage Irishman, in this case, Larry Doyle, and the stage Englishman, Tom Broadbent. Shaw wanted to prove how similar the Irish and the English were. They put stereotypical masks for each other because they believe that is what the other side wants to see. Shaw proved that our identity depends on the other and we conduct ourselves in a certain manner in order to fulfil somebody else's expectations. The reason why the stage Irishman was used all over again in the plays by Irish authors was that they wanted to present the image of the Irish they thought the British wanted to see. Shaw wanted to show that national identity is not natural, but constructed by social and cultural norms. He concludes that the Irish will be free and happy people once they are not haunted by the issues of nationality.

Tired of misrepresentations, Synge, Yeats, and Gregory established the Abbey Theatre where they wanted to create more profound content and avoid cheap jokes and shallow emotions. *The Playboy of the Western World* by Synge was one of the most significant plays of the Theatre. That play had such an impact on the audience that the auditorium became the stage and the spectators became the players. The fourth wall was broken. The life in rural Ireland represented in the play was distasteful for the majority of the audience, however, Synge did not want to compromise his

artistic beliefs. Although a short play, *The Rising of the Moon* by Lady Gregory carries a strong and evocative message which promoted the unity and understanding among the Irish. Both Synge and Lady Gregory ask their fellow Irishmen to reveal their authentic identity by stripping all the previous ones assigned by the Irish and the English and to search for their true self. When we look beneath the surface we see a chance to build a new nation without stereotypes and expectations. Without a single Englishman in the play, there was no need to define the Irish in a conventional manner. The authors of the Revival wanted to create the environment where the Irish could reflect their identity on their own.

In this paper, we could see different attempts at trying to answer a continuing question of Shakespeare's MacMorris: What is my nation? Sheridan and Richard Brinsley Sheridan offered a seemingly traditional answer to that questions but also presented some refreshing concepts of the stage Irishman. Then, Boucicault reinvented it and Shaw subverted it. Synge and Lady Gregory decided to ignore it and to build a new identity from the very beginning. These two authors wanted to give their spectators a chance to find their own meaning without social, political and cultural constraints of the past.

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Abstract:

The stage Irishman has been a stock character in England and Ireland since the 17th century. It is an exaggerated and caricatured portrayal of Irish people. The origins of the stage Irishman can be found in Shakespeare's play *Henry V*. The Irish captain from the play, named MacMorris, is one of the most important and influential stage Irishmen. This paper explores the change of the stock character from the 18th century to the early 20th century. The Anglo-Irish relations, which serve as the context for the plays, are also investigated through the dynamics of the English and Irish characters. Thomas Sheridan and Richard Brinsley Sheridan tried to entertain the English audience with their plays *The Brave Irishman* and *The Rivals* using the character of the Stage Irishman. However, the performance of these characters made the English sympathise with the Irish. These two seemingly typical plays of the 18th century actually contain some elements of the subverted stage Irishman which is later explored in Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island*. Unlike the Sheridans, Shaw and Boucicault wrote their plays for the Irish audience. *The Shaughraun* by Dion Boucicault was a huge success in Ireland and in the USA. Ireland was represented as a beautiful country with good and honest people. Shaw and Boucicault introduced the character of the stage Englishman and additionally explored the dynamics of the Anglo-Irish relations.

In the early 20th century the Abbey Theatre was established in Dublin and it served as a platform for the Irish authors to experiment and form a new national identity without compromising their artistic freedom. The most controversial piece of the theatre was Synge's play *The Playboy of the Western World* which provoked the Irish audience to display their outrage over Synge's portrayal of Irish rural life and values. Synge described his depiction of the Irish as extravagant and real. However, the Irish audience experienced it as a very offensive piece which was harmful to the Irish image they had been trying to ameliorate. The paper ends with a one-act play *The Rising of the*

Moon in which the author Lady Gregory reflects the struggle of the Irish for the political independence and explores Ireland as a divided nation on the matter of British Rule.

Key Words: the stage Irishman, Anglo-Irish relations, the stage Englishman, the stock character

Sažetak:

"The stage Irishman" služi kao tipski lik u Engleskog i Irskoj još od 17. stoljeća. Radi se o preuveličanom i karikiranom prikazu Iraca. Ovog lika, po prvi puta, susrećemo u Shakespearevoj drami *Henry V*. Irski kapetan, pod imenom Macmorris, je jedan od najvažnijih i najutjecajniih tipskih likova te vrste. U ovom radu promatramo promjenu tipskog Irskog lika u kazalištu od 18. stoljeća do početaka 20. stoljeća. Istražujemo također englesko-irske odnose koji daju kontekst dramama kroz dinamiku engleskih i irskih likova.

Thomas Sheridan i Richard Brinsley Sheridan su pokušali zabaviti englesku publiku sa svojim dramama *The Brave Irishman* i *The Rivals* koristeći tipski kazališni lik Irca. Međutim, engleska se publika također mogla poistovjetiti s tim likovima. Ove dvije, naizgled tipične drame 18. stoljeća, zapravo sadrže elemente subverzivnog tipskog lika, koji ćemo poslije pomno istražiti u drami *John Bull's Other Island* koju je napisao George Bernard Shaw. Za razliku od Sheridana, Shaw i Boucicault su pisali svoje drame za irsku publiku. Boucicaultova drama *The Shaugraun* je doživjela veliki uspjeh u Irskoj i SAD-u. Irska je bila predstavljena kao predivna zemlja s dobrim i poštenim ljudima. Shaw i Boucicault su uveli tipski lik Engleza i dodatno istražili dinamiku englesko-irskih odnosa.

Početkom 20. stoljeća osnovano je kazalište The Abbey Theatre u Dublinu koje je služilo kao platforma irskim autorima koji su željeli eksperimentirati i graditi novi nacionalni identitet, a da ne ugroze svoju umjetničku slobodu. Najkontroverznije djelo tog kazališta je bila drama *The Playboy of the Western World* koju je napisao J.M. Synge. Na premijeri te drame Irska publika je pokazala svoje nezadovoljstvo prema Syngovom prikazu moralnih vrijednosti i ruralnog života Irske. Synge je smatrao da je taj prikaz pretjeran, no realan. Međutim, irska publika je smatrala da je ta drama iznimno uvredljiva i štetna za ugled Iraca na čijem se poboljšanju u kazalištu radilo dugi niz godina. Rad završava s kratkom dramom *The Rising of the Moon* autorice Lady Gregory koja je žel-

jela prikazati borbu Iraca koji su težili za političkom neovisnošću, te istražuje podjeljena mišljenja Iraca kad je u pitanju Britanska vlast.

Ključne riječi: Irski kazališni lik, englesko-irski odnosi, Engleski kazališni lik, tipski lik