

Post-War Crises in Arthur Miller's All My Sons and Death of A Salesman.

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Abstract

In the twentieth century, America witnessed the break – down of what is called the portrait of the ideal American family in the New Eden . That popular portrait was destroyed by the two World Wars , by their many political , economic , and social crises and challenges that had a devastating impact on every aspect of life .Therefore , many social writers began to signal the consequences of the social prejudices on society . Materialistic greed corrupted the American Adam's life , and destroyed his social values and moral rearmament . The dream of material advancement and success became an obsession that should be gained at any rate even if it costs man's life or the unity of his family .This research aims at showing the impact of War upon American drama in selected plays by Arthur Miller that attained a universal appeal from diverse audience and readers all over the World , Death of A Salesman , and All My Sons

This research also includes a conclusion that shows the impact of War upon American drama.

Several powerful forces in America began to emerge declaring the beginning of the twentieth century which was the age of technology and new human activity as well as human conception. It was the world of Sigmund Freud and Albert Einstein and the age of new and inhuman wars causing poverty, agony and intolerable anxieties. ^(١)Therefore, there were, so to speak, two kinds of America: the Edenic legend which collapsed by the advent of materialism and self-interestedness and the ٢٠th century America , a land that is stripped off its good characteristics and is always in search of an identity .^(٢)

This makes the mythical American Dream of the Edenic garden only an unachieved dream. The American individual of the twentieth century has hence become the victim of the American myth. The American society received many shocking blows like the two World Wars, the Economic Depression that resulted in mass unemployment, over population and the collision between the old conservation generation and the young liberal- minded one. More over, the political instability brought about an instability in almost every aspect of life and left its gloomy prints on the society as a whole. Professor Mowar and Dr Lovell examined in details the effect of the Great Depression of ١٩٢٩ on everyone's life,making the stable ,economic order before the war irrevocable ^(٣).

Therefore, intellectuals found their refuge in the recent thoughts of Carl Marx ,Frederick Engels,John Lenin and Sigmund Freud as temporary solutions to the" malaise of Capitalism " That era witnessed important periods, as Fred B. Miller states:

In the history of America since the beginning of the World War I, several distinct periods can be distinguished each of which had a more or less direct influence on the kind of literature produced and consumed in America..... These periods may be designated as war period (١٩١٤-١٨), the period of reconstruction (١٩١٨-٢٠), and the period of depression and recovery since ١٩٢٠. ^(٤).

War is not a usual experience in man's life. It is a nightmare and an omnipresent traumatic modern fact with the outbreak of World War I in ١٩١٤, the world all of a sudden was full of chaos. Every kind of unity was threatened and above all the unity of man's own self. Western civilization witnessed a sudden rift. No hope was left to man just the horrible facts of war and its foolishness that accelerated his sense of loss and deterioration. The influence of the war was disastrous as it made man's life harsher and crushed his identity.

In ١٩١٧, America joined world war ardently believing that they were fighting for a noble cause and that "they were fighting for a better world, for a world of peace". ^(٥)But the people who participated in that war returned home disappointed They were shocked by the harsh realities of the

destructive war, and that America's entry was only to protect the politician's interests. As a result America was transformed intoa world of violence irrational world in which vulgarity, filth, confusion and unreason were the rule instead of pleasant expectations. ^(٦)

After four years from its outbreak, the World War I came to its end in ١٩١٨. The post-war era came to unmask the false patriotism which was called for by war-mongers. War crystallized a chance in man's life and his attitude towards authority, values, civilization, society, economics, and politics. The disillusionment, frustration, and pessimism that characterized the post-war decade made materialism and the pursuit for wealth an essential aim in life. That trend dominated the American society which was shocked and bewildered, losing its sense of security in many fields. Moreover, the new ideas and the constant changing values led the young generation to be further away from the old generation in its principles and ideas.

The destruction caused by the World War I with its painful experience and consequence were still in mind, when world War II it began in ١٩٣٩, most Americans wished to stay out of it. America first was a popular phrase at that time. American people felt that America should worry about its own problems, and forget the rest of the world. But the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour on December ٧, ١٩٤١ changed all that. ^(٧) By ١٩٤٥, America was a world power with huge international responsibilities. This made the Americans both proud and extremely uncomfortable as that war gave America the chance to pour to the world its greatest power. But World War II proved to be both destructive and inhuman as millions of innocent people were killed, and other who were still a live suffered from psychological pressure and mental disturbance. Due to the cruelty of war, the idea of "killing or being killed" haunted people for along time. The war also crippled the role of all institutions, among them the social education and religious ones. But the most dangerous imprint the war left along with the depression was social disorganization of the community, the family and the individual. As a consequence, man was alienated from God, his surrounding environment, and his fellow men, as Walter lafeber wrote about the impact of World War II, saying:

World warII it produced the largest disorganization of the American nation has ever experienced as a community, family and identity of the individualBetween three and four million families were separated for varying periods during the war, some because of employment in distant War industries, but the majority by service in the armed forces. (٨)

Nevertheless, the first and second world wars were the main causes that negatively affected human values. The influence of war was not limited to mass-killing and public genocides; it extended to include the literary mind as well. ^(٩)

Such influential events and Factors under whose effect America had undergone, restored peace and tranquility only seemingly in ١٩٤٥, but in Fact peace had not been restored at all, because serious problems were already rooted in the American Society. That matter made the American people unable to enjoy the Fruits of their victory in the World War II , When the Americans looked back nostalgically to their past , They felt that they were cut off from their own past American Dream. ^(١٠)

World War II came to it send in ١٩٤٥ after the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. ^(١١) The War ended with the high price of killing thousands of innocent people .That destruction people's faith in the future of science . Therefore, The Post-War years were marked by disturbance, decay, anxiety, restlessness, and a period of inflation unemployment. Those years resembled that of Great Depression bearing people's mind and perplexity, shaken faith, and domestic problems .Norman A.Graebnev comments on this, he says that :

Throughout the post –war era, the country continued tolerate highly visible levels of crime and domestic insecurity, racial tension and unemployment , poverty and even hunger , ghettos and slums , pollution on and urban decay , use of hard drugs, public and private corruption , inequitable taxes and waste , inflation and soft currency . (١٢)

The influence of war was not limited to mass-killing and public genocides; it included the literary mind as well.

The American Literature like every field of life, from 1939 to 1945 was completely disturbed by World War II which shattered not only America, but the whole civil life. ⁽¹⁷⁾

The major theme shared by many playwrights after the two Wars was that of the dehumanizing effect of modern materialism which reduced human beings to animal level, while the accumulation of wealth was looked at as an activity paralyzing man's social relations and his sense of personal dignity.⁽¹⁸⁾ The general public admitted, for the first time, that something was wrong and so people began to listen to the writer's view.⁽¹⁹⁾ That suggested solutions to specific problems. During the troublesome period, people no longer needed a Christ-like figure; rather, they needed a simple social reformer who could do much better when poverty and unemployment threatened man's existence. ⁽²⁰⁾

There was a new spirit of compassion for the underprivileged with a new social structure of society which was usually a leftist movement that characterized an increasing part of. ⁽²¹⁾ literature generally and drama particularly.

Many modes of the thinking were advocated and adopted by some extremely influential figures as Sigmund Freud, Carl Marx and A. Young late in the nineteenth century. Their ideas revolutionized drastically the human mind regarding morals. Each contributed directly to crushing the patterns of the old world. and establishing new ways of life. ⁽²²⁾

Modern drama has become truly the representative of psychology when the playwrights of depression as Tennessee Williams, and Arthur Miller who brought psychological drama to its peak-all used socio- economic themes that become a characteristic of a new genre in play writing. ⁽²³⁾

Miller has shown an enthusiastic interest in the essential problems of contemporary human nature while the themes of "Americanness", has run through most of Miller's plays. This theme has become a characteristic of his dramatic personae. His characters are typically American and there is always a nostalgic feeling for the sweet past of the legendary America inside all Miller's characters. In other words, there is a sense of longing for the previous state when man was once innocent. This contrast between the lazy dream and reality makes the individual unstable, a matter that drives the members of one family or group to go in deep and bitter clash which sometimes exterminates one of the conflicting sides. Examples include the case of Joe Keller and Willy Loman's family, whatever the reason of their struggle would be.

American playwrights began to show their social consciousness in plays that commented on social issues and expressed particular opinions. As this kind of plays continued in popularity, the dramatists' views became more pointedly expressed in satirical drama, and protest became linked with propaganda. ⁽²⁴⁾ Playwrights began to give more emphasis to the inner reality of the individual on the stage than to the outer one.

Despite the dark and gloomy reality of post-war era still that era was emerged as one of the richest periods in the American literary history. Many pure American plays began to appear reflecting the agony of the American individual. The period of the post- world war had discovered and developed two new significant dramatists, namely Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. They brought a new life into American drama during a time that was difficult, especially for artists and intellectuals. Walter J. Mervin comments on them saying:

Their position as America's foremost playwrights of the post-war era suggests the scope of the American mind, the growing liberalism of the theatre and the maturity in the American criticism. ⁽²⁵⁾

After the Second World War, Arthur Miller (1915, 2005) emerged as a prominent American playwrights.

Miller is also known throughout America and in many parts of the world for his tragedies. He wrote other forms of literature, including his own autobiography, but he is most famous for his plays

that he had been writing for more than sixty years, He has received many prestigious awards, including the Avery Hopwood Award, and his greatest honor, the Pulitzer Prize for his play **Death of a Salesman** (١٩٤٩). The most important feature of Miller's plays is that "he has brought back into the theatre in an important way, the drama of social questions".^(١٢٧) Miller is one of many literary scholars who have created their own definition of a tragedy. He deviates from the standard perception of tragedy in his plays **Death of a Salesman** and **All My Sons** (١٩٤٧), because, unlike other tragedies, the tragic heroes are common simple men and the tragedies are written in a simple language.^(١٢٨)

Arthur Miller was the product of the depression period. Though not writing during the thirties, Miller dedicated his plays to explore the common man under daily economic strains. Due to war experience and the depression, the common American becomes a victim to relentless competition where business career was based on survival through materialistic aspirations devoid of moral considerations. The materialistic strife assumed disregard to the basic values of human community such as love, responsibility, comradeship and respect for others' lives. The common man found himself unavoidably involved in that strife to gain a different economic status and social recognition.

War helped America out of its economic decline as it created urgent and continuous war fare demands. Factories were mobilized across the country to satisfy war supplies, but the shadow of the depression lingered in the memory of American businesses, They were anxious of what would happen next when the war over. Almost every where was the general awareness that the immediate economic prosperity was simply brought home by military expenditure rather than by a well-established long-lasting economic planning.

Miller was aware too of that atmosphere of apprehensions in post- depression America. He warned against that "fear of falling" among Americans who might "even kill" to avoid it.^(١٢٩)

For Keller and Loman, the "only imperatives are those to do with survival, the only relationships of value those generated by genuine human necessity"^(١٣٠). C.E.W. Bigshby explains:

The fear uncovered the fact that economic privation was not only a matter of money, but "rather it was a moral catastrophe, a violent revelation of the hypocrisies behind the façade of American society".^(١٣١)

Consequently, the common men of Miller's plays were metamorphosed by economic apprehensions into individuals ready to break the rules of human existence.

Miller shows the presence of a belief that society and man are closely related, and reveals that society drives the tragic hero to his own downfall.^(١٣٢) Miller shows that man in modern America is isolated, and, even though he struggles, he may be faced with impossible odds. they are struggling with the pressures of twentieth-century life: of money, city, family and the job while their weaknesses are those which ordinary humans share. Loneliness, the inability to decide exactly what one wants and the breakdown of communications between the two generations are all part of the audience's lives, to some extent.^(١٣٣)

All My Sons which gained an instant success was a tragedy about a manufacturer who sells faulty parts to the military in order to save his business ,Concerned with morality in the face of desperation, **All My Sons** appealed to a nation having recently gone through both war and depression.^(١٣٤)

All My Sons is based on are al story. Miller was told that a daughter destroyed her family when she turned her father to the authorities after she found out that she had sold defective machinery to the army during the war . But Miller transformed the daughter to a son and kept the real story as it is^(١٣٥). Joe Keller in **All My Sons** does this when he causes the death of twenty-one young American pilots by shipping faulty engine parts into their planes. Similar fear was also responsible for Willy Loman's moral leniency and confusion in **Death of a Salesman**. Willy tries to convince his sons to achieve materialistic success at the expense of their social commitment. **All My Sons** has made undeniably a strong impression .^(١٣٦) It revolves around an industrialist during the wartime by means of which he is solved from bankruptcy .Finding himself under pressure ,Joe Keller,the small industrialist ,sells defective arms to the air force and so becomes responsible for the death of twenty-one pilots .^(١٣٧) The burden of guilt can be shifted to the shoulder of his assistant and thus he wins acquittal .But his son's conscience accuses him and prefers death in war to shame .The defense

of Joe Keller is that he wanted to preserve his business for his sons.^(٢٢) In *All My Sons* (١٩٤٧) which was a drama of guilt and responsibility, the security of Chris Keller who is one of the main characters in the play is turned into a nightmare when he discovers that his much loved father, Joe, is responsible for the death of twenty-one pilots. Joe's second son, Larry, who is a pilot, kills himself to recompense his father's crime. Finally Joe Keller commits suicide.^(٢٤) Miller sets his play to explore the steadfastness of man's values when challenged by fearful sense of falling.

All My Sons depicts the psychological aspect of the united second states during and immediately after the Second World War in a realistic setting. It is a moving exploration of the paradoxes and illusions upon which the American Drama is built.^(٢٥) A key part of a tragedy, according to Arthur Miller, is the "tragic flaw" Joe Keller, the chief character, is a man who loves his family above all else, and has sacrificed everything including his honors, in his struggle to make the family prosperous. In *All My Sons*, Miller examines the morality of the man who places his narrow responsibility to his immediate family above his wider responsibility to the men who rely on the integrity of his world. The roots of conflict among the Keller family can be felt earlier in the play when the solid unity of the family is taken by the eternal conflict between the contrasting attitudes of capitalism whose agent is Joe Keller and Idealism that is represented by Chris and Larry. This sudden change of a family that once was harmonious made Joe wonder what happened to his family for which he sacrificed some of his principles. Miller sees that such conflict is usually between youth and old generation, between private and public life.^(٢٦) Keller is the embodiment of capitalism who does not differentiate between business laws, i.e., business is business regardless entirely of any emotional interference. Joe is a war-profiteer, the more he sells, the better his social status will be. But he betrays himself, his two sons and his country. Chris tries hard to explain that to Keller. When he fails, Chris began to treat his father as a convicted criminal when he states:

**What the hell you mean, you did it for me? Where do
you lives, where have you come from? For me!-I was dying
every day and you did it for me? Don't you have a country?
Don't you live in the world? What the hell are you? You're not
even an animal, no animal kills his own, what are you?
(II, p.١١٥,١١٦)**

The conscience of Chris is troubled whenever he remembers the misery of war that led to the newly born responsibility inside him towards other men. The war proved to teach men lessons of moral responsibility changing them to the best. War to him to exchange people to the beasts that live upon other people's blood and flesh. Therefore, he thinks that:

**when you drive that (new car) you've got to know that it came
out of the love of a man can have from a man. You've got to
be a little better because of that. Otherwise what you have is recall
loot, and there's blood on it. (١, p.٨٥)**

Joe tries to escape Chris's accusation when he mixes the business ethics of survival with his love for his son.^(٢٧) But Ronald Haymen argues that Chris accepts Joe's attempt to lay the blame on the capitalistic system.^(٢٨) Miller's argument about the case is that now faultless, not even within the realm of a family.^(٢٩) Chris wonders how would Keller did that, where his conscience was or what kind of scruples allowed Joe to do it. The defect is ascribed mainly to the inhuman world in which animalistic people live. Chris complains about the lack of responsibility man shows for men and the sense of fraternity he feels in war when boys were sacrificing themselves for each other as one family, a sense that he did not feel at home when he came back from war. In this respect, war in itself is a blow to human civilization, a clear remark of human failure to sacrifice and understand each other communication between the nations is hampered. Here, the contrast between those who have ideals like Chris in war and who do not have them like Joe Keller is made clear.^(٣٠)

It is clear that a sense of relatedness is achieved in *All My Sons* when Chris says:

**Everything was being destroyed (in the war), see, but it
seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of**

responsibility. Man for man (I.P.^{٨٥}).

Chris is an idealist who lives on his suffering and that of others ,taking up the whole responsibility of others ' faults. ^(٤١) These factual tensions Chris undergoes are mirrored in the play . Referring to All My Sons , Miller says :

I wanted then to write so that people of common sense would mistake my play for life it self and not be required to lend it some poetic license before it could be believed . I wanted to make the moral would as real and evident as the immoral one so splendidly is . ^(٤٢)

The problem with Keller is not that his standard of rights and wrongs is a deformed one but "his cast of mind " ^(٤٣) can not admit that he, personally, does not have any riabile connection with his community and society. Chris, on the opposite pole, wants to establish a society founded upon shared prosperity and responsibility instead of a one-sided society. Chris refuses to punish his father for having betrayed society because he thinks that society is undoubtedly guilty of his father's notorious private act. ^(٤٤)

Anybody-whether an ordinary man or a modern man-has to respond to the demands of society and to the political urges to the surrounding conditions. Thus. Faulkner believes that:

The economic break down and mass unemployment of the west Italy and Nazism in Germany initialed a process of violence which led to the invasion of Abyssinia, the Spanish civil war, and the Second World War. In such a world, politics become a primary concern, and the new writers began to criticize the modernists for their lack of political commitment. ^(٤٥)

Larry's letter expresses his choice to die than live with the shame of his father. However seeing the rejection of Chris and being the main reason behind Larry's death, Joe decides to kill himself because he fails to be the faithful citizen of his own society as well as his failure as a holy figure that Chris demands:

"I know you're on worse than most men but I thought you were better. I never saw you as a man. I saw you as my father. (III, P. ١٢٥)"

Thereupon Joe wish to be forgiven he was put in front of a choice between social, public duty and familial survival in business which he chose to prosper his family, no matter how Chris and Larry are going to look at him. He has done what he saw as his full responsibility towards his family in that unnatural conditions that hit America. black nor utterly white-who was caught in a struggle with the social and the moral codes of society that threaten human existence all the time. ^(٤٦) The main message of All My Sons can be traced through Chris's speech to his mother. At the end of the play, Chris tells his mother that it is not enough for them to be sorry about Larry's death, for there is a universe of people outside and that they are all responsible to it. ^(٤٧)

Mother: the war is over! Didn't you hear? It's over!

Chris: then what was Larry to you?

A stone that fell into the water? It's not enough for him to be sorry Larry did not kill himself to make you and Dad sorry. Mother: what more can be!

Chris: you can be better! "Once and for all you must know that there is a universe of people outside, and you're responsible to it,

Unless you know that, you threw away your son, because that's why he died" (I.P.^{٩٠}).

The urgent action to be taken is that either man adapts himself to its false values or in this way he could live, though wrongly, Or rejects them but be defeated and left alone disillusioned because one cannot fight a society unless he is crushed down. The characters in All My Sons are dramatized by the social system. The play offers the audience "a slice of life" as Mary me Cathy believes. ^(٤٨) So Joe's failure is seen much like the failure of any ordinary man in the sense that what Joe has done

during the war can be done by any one else who has a natural concern for his family under the same compelling circumstances.

Joe Keller, the protagonist in *All My Sons*, falls from dignity in a theme of the "unrelatedness between the child and the parent" as Leonard moss believes.^(٤٦) The same case is Found in death of a salesman, when Biff looks to his father, Willy, for moral direction but he finds instead corruption that rots the bond of mutual respect.^(٤٧) Each of his heroes is involved in a struggle which is the outcome of the hero's objection or acceptance of the image that grows out of his own values and those of his society.^(٤٨)

Death of a Salesman Miller's most famous work, addresses the painful conflicts within one family, but it also tackle larger issues regarding American national values. The play examines the cost of blind faith in the American dream, in this respect; it offers a post war American reading of personal tragedy in the tradition of Sophocles' Oedipus cycle. Miller charges America with selling a false myth constructed around a capitalist materialism nurtured by the post war economy, a materialism that obscured the personal truth and moral vision of the original American Dream described by the country's founders.^(٤٩)

Death of A Salesman is considered to be both Miller's masterpiece and a cornerstone of contemporary American drama. It is a play about the tragic life of an American salesman who is called Willy Loman. He is a traveling salesman, who is getting too old to fulfill the requirements of his job successfully. He goes to his boss to ask for a position that does not involves traveling, but his employer ended up by firing him. Loman was left jobless with a family that he has to support. Willy kills himself so that his family may have his insurance money. Willy loman is a victim of his own false values of modern America.^(٥٠)

Willy believes wholeheartedly in what he considers the promise of the American Dream that a "well liked" and "personally attractive" man in business will indubitably and deservedly acquire the material comforts offered by modern American life oddly, his fixation with the superficial qualities of attractiveness and like ability is at odds with a more gritty, more rewarding understanding of the American Dream that identifies hard work without complaint as the key to success. Willy's interpretation of like ability is superficial he childishly dislikes Bernard because he considers Bernard a nerd. Willy's blind faith in his stunted version of the American Dream leads to his rapid psychological decline when he is unable to accept the disparity between Dream and his own life.^(٥١) He is described by Edward Brown as follows:

Tried and exhausted, Willy is a man who seems to have been left behind the race of life. He is tired with the me of life where as he is on the brink of collapse. There is nothing is left that could inspire him to a renewed struggle with the might forces of life and that is why he now is sunken in despair.^(٥٢)

He is now only a blind man to reality, always in contradiction even to himself because he constantly "dreams the American legend"^(٥٣) Willy has misshapen and can no longer recognize his own reality, and he has consequently become a failure as a salesman and as a father.

Consequently, Willy has nothing genuine to pass on to his sons. This fact is further admitted by Biff when he tells his father that: "I never got any where, because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking order from anybody ! That's whose fault it is !" (٧.p.١٠١). Willy raises his sons to follow in his foot steps and share his false dreams. They are taught that stealing is accepted therefore they have the right to go anything they like because they have good appearance, "both built like Adonises" (١.p.٧٠). This fact has its results on Biff and Happy when they grow up; Biff has been put into prison for three months for stealing, and Happy is always obsessed with cheating others and taking bribes. Like their father, Biff and Happy are lost and dreamers, but they differ in one major thing; Biff at the end realizes the wrong ideal and values he has been following, whereas Happy continues his self delusion. The failure of Biff and Happy leads Robert W. Corrigan to conclude that: "Death of A Salesman is not only about the death of Willy Loman. In fact it is about the death of Americans as a whole. Each of them experiences a Living death; where as Willy will die physically at the end, his sons will still be alive, but in a state of spiritual death". As a result, Willy makes his two sons his lost hope, encouraging their weakness by his wrong way of bringing them up. Therefore, man gets the same deteriorated relationship between fathers and sons. Willy

repeats the same mistake when they depend on memories of the glorious past as if they were prisoners of the past. ^(٥٧)Without using their minds to live up in the present and find a way out. Loman is betrayed by the myths and ethics of his society. It is thus that Willy works hard for his sons whom he loves best but the way of bringing them up is improper and unsuitable to the American society because it is a dreamy one. Willy has not absorbed the rules of life well. Instead he recommends his two sons the rules of failure. He has not put in his mind that such a mentality could not in any way communicate and adapt with society and its rude realities.

Two persons defend Willy. His wife Linda, the patient loyal wife, and Charley, the patient loyal neighbor. Linda accuses Bill and his brother Happy of being disrespectful to their father and begs them to pay Willy more attention. She asks her two sons to respect their father, because she sees him as a victim of his dreams which are originally fuelled by the illusions of his society. ^(٥٨)

After all his attempts to do something good for his family, Willy realizes agonizingly that he has been working his whole life for nothing. It was a big lie he himself makes. Eric Mottram believes that:

Woman has been unable to learn that business ethics, the morality of his work-community oppose the tradition he assumed were still in action: the personal ethics of honour, the patriarchal nature of a basically benevolent society and family and neighbor relation. ^(٥٩)

What remains in front of Willy is the only permanent fact of death through which he could offer his sons something valuable. Willy will try a last attempt to prove how right he is as if his suicide is not an escape only, but away to re-establish his own confidence and his family's integrity. ^(٦٠)He mistakes all whom he loves and his affairs are upheaval in and outside home therefore, he finds no peace of mind because everything seems to be against him and feels lonely, unable to attach himself to society because he cannot cope with its norms. Willy Loman's agony during his last twenty-four hours in life comes to an end when he commits suicide, Willy is obsessed with dream of success. In Willy's mind, his imminent suicide takes an epic proportions. Not only it does validate his salesman ship, but also renders him as a martyr since he believes that the insurance money from his sacrifice will allow Biff to fulfill the American Dream. Thereupon, Willy's funeral, like his other unfulfilled dreams, is not what he wanted. He wishes his funeral to be like that of Dave Singleman which was attended by hundreds of Salesmen from various American states. He tells Ben that his "...funeral will be massive! They come from Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire! All the old-timers with strange License plates..." (p. 97). But the funeral proves to be a pathetic end to the Salesman's life. Only his family, Charley, and Bernard attend Willy's funeral whereas none of his supposed friends bother to pay their respects and pay Willy the last farewell. Willy Loman's death at trying to achieve his dreams of success makes him fitting embodiment of a mythical version of the American Dream that makes him an easy prey. Willy's tragedy, then, conveys both; a personal tragedy of a man whose wrong dreams "bring tragedy down on him self not by opposing the lie, but by living it" ^(٦١) and a social tragedy in that his death is partly caused by stressing pressures of a cynical and impersonal business world where the poor man is inhumanly and easily crushed. Willy's failure as a father is also due to the fact he has a one-dimensional view of success, he makes from the social environment of the sales world a family environment. ^(٦٢)His obsession with the superficial social world of the sales profession prevents him from making a genuine connection with his wife and sons. He looks for love, approval, dignity, and validation from outside, and compassion from his family. Willy's longing to be seen as a successful man and to be placed in a position where he can achieve his ambition is obviously connected with his affair with the woman which also reveals his superficiality of his family life. Though he loves Linda and his two sons, yet his need for success overcomes his feeling of loyalty, He is unable to accept genuine love and affection from his wife, yet he accepts gratification from the woman at the hotel because she makes him feel well-liked and wanted as a salesman. Thus Willy's inability to accept his reality with its imperfections makes his life based on lies, exaggerations, and avoidance. Willy's blind faith in a myth of his distorted notions of what it takes to succeed, his inability to accept Linda's love from him and, his son's need of him as a father and not a salesman, and to be loved unconditionally, lead him to give up his life in order to make form a myth reality. He sells his idea of the American Dream to his sons to be successful with the twenty thousand dollars insurance money. A.D. Choudhuri observes that: "Death of A salesman begins with

dreams and longings of the human heart and the curtain comes down on shattered dreams; the longing are still there ,but side by side stand the hard facts of reality ". ⁽¹³⁾ The play is a direct criticism of the decayed and social standards of the contemporary America which make the individual an easy prey of the American Dream. ⁽¹⁴⁾ In this sense, the play is a faithful documentation of a year frustration in America. Miller's presentation of man's failure as a father a brother and tradesman is a desperately series theme in modern time in American society for example, the case of Joe Keller may concern anyone and Willy's failure both as a faithful father and a salesman may happen to any father and any salesman. Very much like Brecht, Miller successes in a voiding the production of social didactic plays, though they have a very definite socially intense point. Therefore, the tragedy of Willy Loman conveys both a personal tragedy of man whose life is based on falsification and a social tragedy in that his death is partly cased by the stressing pressures of a cynical and impersonal business world in which the poor man is inhumanly and easily crushed. ⁽¹⁵⁾ Laurence kitchen asserts Miller's belief that the source of corruption is a specific human weakness and this time it generates false ideals and feeds the ambition to an antisocial extreme in both case of Keller and Loman. ⁽¹⁶⁾ Willy is an individual and a type, a product of producer consumer society that he must sell himself before selling any commodity. Thus, Miller sees America as a nightmare and a home for tragedy. ⁽¹⁷⁾ **Death of Salesman**, like other social plays of Miller "carries for ward the struggle to create a realistically critical expression of American life, to present the common as the centre of dramatic " ⁽¹⁸⁾ Willy and Keller become consenting victims when they attach themselves to ideals created as good by their society. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Willy is a little man who cannot give up his ideal without destroying his personal dignity. His present dilemma is the inevitable consequences of his commitments to the ideology of success. ⁽²⁰⁾ William McCollum observes that "there is both self-determination and social determination ". ⁽²¹⁾ Willy searches for the truth about himself and his situation. He both pursues truth and struggles against it within his personal and social limits. ⁽²²⁾ Miller justifies Willy's weak personal by portraying it as an outcome of the economic crash in 1929 and the hidden laws of fate that could turn a proud and prosperous man into a fragile shed what even he thinks of himself. That explains why it is impossible to find home in the world any more. ⁽²³⁾ Willy Loman is the American version of everyman whose case is applicable to all who have the fatal dramas that put them in astute of puzzlements between a shabby present and a guilty-ridden past. ⁽²⁴⁾ But Miller himself once said that "it is obvious that Willy Loman cannot be an a verge American man, at least from one point of view, he kills himself" ⁽²⁵⁾ The idea of the enslavement of the present by the past is strongly felt in both plays as well as in all Miller's plays in which the destiny of the protagonist is fatefully and inevitably determined One can conclude that in Miller's two plays **All My Sons** and **Death of Salesman** the impact of War upon the American society is clear. Naturally, the members of the young generation are more social and moral conscious and they have the sense of universal brotherhood. They were unlike the old generation, who might have been exposed to the shocks of the first and second world wars and the great depression and who suffered so much that they saw wrong as right out of their perplexities the younger are more able to contain the shocks and react sanely. What interests Miller is the different ways of comprehending essential norms of society and even humanity. Miller present in these social plays a dramatization of slice-of –life situations that can fit generally to any modern man and the American individual particularly. The aim of depicting such views of real life is to mirror the errors of the social, political and religious institutions where man is victimized and fatigued by evil and defeat that become a characteristic of the American life. Between the dichotomies of the success for which all the American hope and defeat that become a fact, lays the individual perplexed and unsatisfied with everything around him. Man becomes at a loss in such a shifting and rapidly chargeable world. As a result, all Miller's characters are not sure of what is right and what is wrong. Being in such circumstances, the sanctity of the family's unity is also threatened and unprotected from the creeping evil of the intrusion of society. Therefore, there is a call to change such a society and the process of change starts with man who must courageously fall reality and react in a more responsible way. Miller, the thinker playwright, suggests a solution to the problematic issue of society The combination of the social and the political dilemma led the destruction of man's psyche, the necessarily cause the conflict of wills: the will of life and the will of death. Chris and Biffe's will of life is stronger than the will of death, whereas will's and Keller's will to die defeats the two protagonists as well as their will to live. Miller's play arouses doubt that

eventually leads after all to faith whereas despair leads to hope and hesitation leads to resolution. It is a journey to know one's self.

Notes

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- (²²) Alvin B. Kernan, ed., The modern American Theatre (New Jersey: Prentice- Hall, Inc., ١٩٦٧), P. ٣٥.
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- (³⁴) Nelson, P. ٨٨.
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