

## The Theme of Guilt in *The Crucible* and *After the Fall* by Arthur Miller

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### Abstract

Arthur Miller can be described as a moral and social dramatist. He is social in the sense that most of his plays stress the connection between society and the individual and the influential nature of this connection. He is also moral because all his plays are an attempt to create a better society by exploring the demands of morality and uncovering important individual and social needs. For Miller, the moral responsibility of a dramatist is not setting forth a pattern of values that should be followed; it is rather the exposition of the want of values.

Miller has dealt with so many themes that expose the plight of the individual after the Second World War and the depression of the thirties in the United States. He has tackled themes that have a great effect on the inner self of his protagonists with such vividness and insight. The theme of guilt is one of these themes which can be traced in almost all of his plays. Accordingly, the study deals with guilt as an overriding theme in Miller's *The Crucible* and *After the Fall*. Thus, the study is divided into three sections. The first section is introductory note about of Arthur Miller's life and works.

Section two deals with *The Crucible* (1953). The play retells the story of the Salem witch hunts in the seventeenth century, and presents those who preferred to die rather than lie. Section three revolves around *After the Fall* (1964). This play,

though written in the sixties, it is haunted with the impact of the Second World War and the Depression of the 1930s. The study ends with a Conclusion, which sums up the main findings of the study, followed by notes and a Bibliography.

## Introduction

### The Life and Works of Arthur Miller

Arthur Miller was born in Manhattan(NewYork) on October 17, 1915 To a Jewish family . His father was a successful manufacturer who was committed to his work and family. He was a man of little education while the mother was the opposite , she loved books and music.Miller admired his mother artistic spirit and saw her as having a great influence on the way he viewed life.<sup>1</sup>

Miller enjoyed a secure sense of life. His upbringing gave him a strong ethical and moral center which was evident in his life and work: He was weak scholar,he failed three times in algebra nevertheless, he was an intense athlete.<sup>2</sup>

The thirteenth year of Miller was a turning point in his life. The Depression of 1930s shattered and shaped his life. His family faced poverty during the years of depression. The economic conditions forced his father to give up his coat business and move the family to a small farm house in Brooklyn. The new circumstances made him work as a waiter, a delivery boy and even a dishwasher. These jobs had provided him with the experience that left him with great respect for hard works.<sup>3</sup> Miller was not an avid reader. His interest in literature started accidentally after reading *The brothers Karamazov* (1880), a novel written by the Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881).This novel had a great influence on him as it made feel that he was born to be a writer. He studied playwriting in the university of Michigan<sup>4</sup> . His first play was *No Villain* (1936) which won The Hopwoodprize<sup>5</sup> .

Miller's career has been varied. His work includes *Focus* (1945) a novel which is an adaptation of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (1951), several one-act plays, a number of screenplays, and a collection of short stories. He also won several awards, like the Theatre Guild

National Award for *The Man Who Had all the Luck* (1944), his first Broadway production. He won the New York Drama Critics Circle Awards for *All My Sons* (1947),

Miller's first successful play on Broadway, and for *Death of a Salesman* (1949). He also won the Antoinette Perry Award for *The Crucible* (1953)<sup>6</sup>.

Miller belongs to the tradition of social drama. He insisted that the best drama is socially oriented. His essay "On Social Drama", makes clear that social drama does not necessarily mean the arraignment of evil in society. Real social drama is concerned with the subjective and objective reality of the individual. A playwright should present the individual's personal life alongside with his social life. So most of his plays stress the connection between personal and public life and the influential nature of each on the other. Miller integrated the conventions of realism and the conventions of expressionism. Realism remained the norm for his writing but he weaved it with expressionistic dimensions, as the case in *Death of a Salesman* in an effort to create reality of Willy Loman's inner world where past and present come together<sup>7</sup>.

Miller enjoyed a great sense of involvement; his plays tackle issues related to all aspects of life: political, social, and economical. He dealt with the family relationships, challenged the myths and idols of his society, like the success ideal and the American Dream. He expressed his contempt for the moral damage caused by Capitalism, and attacked the repression forces represented by McCarthyism. There are elements of all of these throughout most of his plays.

Robert Corrigan has divided the work of Miller into two main patterns. The first one starts in the plays upto and including *A View From the Bridge*(1957). The second pattern emerges in *The Misfits* in 1960, his only produced film. It manifests in his plays from *After the Fall* (1964) onwards. The central conflict in all of the plays of the first pattern: *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, *All My Sons*, *Death of a Salesman*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Crucible*, *A memory of Two Mondays*, and *A view from The Bridge* grows out of the crisis of identity<sup>8</sup>. Each of the protagonists in these plays is suddenly confronted with a situation which he is incapable of meeting, Miller has presented this crisis as a conflict between the uncomprehending self and a solid social or economic structure: the family, the community, or the system.

The second phase in the development of Arthur Miller as a playwright is marked by writing his screen play *The Misfits* (1960) inspired by his second wife, the actress Marilyn Monroe (1926-1962 ). In this work, Miller deals with new and wider dimensions. The first noticeable difference between this play and the plays that preceded it is Miller's different attitude to the role of women. There is a marked vein of Puritanism in Miller's view of women. For the first time, in *The Misfits*, a woman shares the central focus in a Miller work. The absence of the family in this play is another obvious change in Miller's dramatic attitude. The play evolves around the story of a group of people with no familial connection<sup>9</sup>.

Above all, Miller's work can be dealt with from a moral perspective. Miller beyond everything else is a moralist. On a general level, all his plays are an attempt to create a better society by exploring the demands of morality and uncovering important individual and social needs.

## The Crucible

*The Crucible* (1953) is a historical play based on the 1692 witch-hunt in Salem, Massachusetts<sup>10</sup>. Miller was inspired by reading Marion Starkey's *The Devil in Massachusetts*.<sup>11</sup> The play tells the story behind the Salem witch trials of 1692, centering attention on the effect those trials had on the Proctor family, as well as making a critical commentary on the actions and politics of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in the 1950s,<sup>12</sup> caused by the fear of Communism during the Cold War which resulted in the hearings by the Committee. Miller himself was a victim of those hearings and he was summoned and demanded to name those he supposedly knew were Communists<sup>13</sup>.

The Crucible is set in the village of Salem, Massachusetts in 1692 in a puritan community with restricted and conventional values. They believed they lived according to God's law and theocracy had been developed to keep people for their better protection materially and ideologically. "They believe that man is evil by nature with an inborn sin"<sup>14</sup>. They called it the "Original Sin," which has caused God's wrath toward mankind, because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden<sup>15</sup>. Mankind is deprived of his innocence, and lives constantly under the threat of intense suffering. They also believe that Satan is always ready to tempt and take control over the individual and the community. To the Puritans, Satan is not just a character in hell or an idea of evil. He is also an active, monstrous being operating on earth and in the lives of various people<sup>16</sup>. The Devil's job is to tempt people into sin and to disobey God's commandments, and by doing this he can slowly destroy God's kingdom.

The action starts when the town's Pastor, Reverend Parris, finds his young daughter, Betty, and a group of other girls dancing in the woods. Betty faints in a kind of coma, and her cousin, Abigail, admits that they were indeed dancing, and

accuses Betty of faking her illness to escape punishment. A neighbor, Ann Putman, arrives, and says she has heard the rumor that Betty has been seen flying like a witch. She declares her suspicion that Parris's slave, Tituba, has been conjuring with the girls, by using certain spiritual rituals and practices. She herself has sent her servant girl to Tituba to find out why she

has lost so many of her babies. Reverend Hale, who is the expert in witchcraft is called in for a consultation on whether this is a case of some evil invading the community.

He questions Abigail and Tituba to elicit their confessions. Abigail is the one who instigates the 'witchcraft', asking Tituba for 'a charm to kill Goody Proctor, the wife of John Proctor with whom Abigail has had an affair. Afraid that they will be condemned as 'witches', Abigail accuses Tituba claiming that she 'made them do it. When Reverend Hale questions Tituba and forces her to confess, he asked her to give names of others who compact with the devil.:

Hale: Take courage, you must give us all their names. ...Tituba;.....

God will bless you for your help.

*Abigail rises, staring as though inspired, and cries out.*

' Abigail: I want to open myself! *They turn to her,* ... I want the light of God, I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the Devil; I saw him; I wrote in his book; I go back to Jesus; I kiss His hand. I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osburn with the Devil! I saw Bridget Bishop with the Devil! (Act I p. 48)

Arthur Miller explores the theme of guilt through the plight of several central characters, like John Proctor and Elizabeth, as well as the community's reaction to the witch hunt:

The witch-hunt was not, however, a mere repression. It was also, and as importantly, a long overdue opportunity for every-one so inclined to express

publicly his guilt and sins, under the cover of accusations against the victims. It suddenly became possible -and patriotic and holy ..... Long-held hatreds of neighbors could now be openly ex-pressed, and vengeance taken,(Act I p.7)

The interpretation of guilt is given in two ways one for the individual or those of the accused of being witches and of the authority. The court has become the arena where Salem people confess their sins and guilt whether under the cover of accusation or confess as a way to gain redemption. So guilt and its meaning is split between two parties that of the individual, represented by Proctor and Rebecca Nurse and others who refuse to confess, and that of the authority represented by the judge Danforth and reverend Parris.

The witchcraft hysteria has created a situation in which Abigail is elevated to sainthood: "Abigail brings other girls into the court, and where she walks the crowd will part .... And folks are brought before them, and if they scream and howl and fall to the floor— the person's clapped in the jail for bewitchin' them" (p.53), while even the most spiritual character may be suspected of satanic influence. The accuser has become holy . Walter F. Kerr says:

Slander becomes the weapon of the opportunist, freedom is possible at the price of naming one's associates in crime; even the upright man is eventually tormented into going along with the mob to secure his own way of life and his own family.<sup>17</sup>

Danforth believes that he is the rule bearer and his responsibility to preserve the community from the evil by guarding the boundaries which if any one tries to break them has the power to destroy them. "But you must understand, sir that a person is either with this court or he must be counted against it, there be no road between." (p.94) He guards ignorance and believes that people must be preserved from knowledge. The authority as presented in the play is not holy and the witch



hunt hysteria proves the opposite. Hidden behind its sacred crusade are the petty grievances of the self-interested and the vengeful. The town's minister, Reverend Parris, is desperately trying to stabilize his power and is more interested in maintaining his social position than in ministering to his congregation. When his daughter Betty and Abigail Williams are seen dancing naked in the forest, he fears the scandal will bring down his ministry. Thomas Putnam is disturbed because he wants an excuse to confiscate his neighbor's land. His wife, Ann, is jealous of Rebecca Nurse, who has more children than she has. Abigail Williams consciously seeks to avenge herself on Elizabeth Proctor, who dismissed her from the Proctors' service. All that is needed to ignite hysteria is the specter of Satan, the epitome of insidious evil behind which small-minded people hide their own hostility and their quest for power.

On the other side, the playwright then focuses the most on the individual. The play is basically the story of John Proctor. He is a leading and an independent man who is not afraid to oppose his minister and to work on the Sabbath, Proctor's anger with the materialism of Reverend Parris puts him in suspicion of constituting a party against not only Parris but against the authority that Parris represents. This is taken as a direct defiance of the authority or theocracy that ruled, Which is a guilt that is unforgiven.

Proctor is a guilty man and a sinner with hidden sin gnawing at his conscience. He has betrayed his wife and has committed adultery with Abigail Williams who was the mover of the Salem witch-hunt. He also faces the judgment of his wife and has shaken her trust in him. Proctor's guilt is already revealed and known to his wife. In Act two, Miller presents the bleak relationship between Proctor and his wife, since his affair with Abigail. Elizabeth Proctor is intensely suspicious of her husband, "She has an arrow in you yet," Miller establishes Elizabeth Proctor as a morally upright woman, respectable and dignified. As a tragic hero, Proctor suffers



a fatal flaw. He is absorbed with his sense of shame. When Hale asks them to recite the Ten Commandments. Proctor manages to remember nine only, and then falters. Elizabeth reminds him "Adultery, John." (p. 67) His faltering is not out of forgetfulness but out of a deep sense of guilt. He has committed adultery, so he is a worthless Christian.

Proctor's heroism lies in the fact that he made a stand against the court and shows the strongest opposition to the established order. He struggles to retain dignity. When his wife is accused of witchcraft, he confesses to the court of his guilt of adultery to prove his wife's innocence, "My wife will never die for me" (p.80). He sacrifices his social position to save his wife. Even when Mary Warren accuses him of bewitching her and the court asked him to confess, he agrees not because he wanted to save his life. He accepts because he feels that he doesn't deserve to die as a saint like those who refuses to confess. The turning point in Proctor's story is when is asked to name names and sign a public confession, his conscience will not allow him to ruin the names of others or to have his name used to justify evil.

Only if he can retain his individual dignity can he pass on to his children anything of value. Warshow suggests that the refusal of these characters to confess is not an attempt to put witch against the true church. They intend to uphold their personal integrity against an insanely mistaken community<sup>18</sup>. They refuse to betray themselves by selling their soul to a lie in order to gain physical salvation. Proctor has gained a powerful sense of identity and self-consciousness. Signing his name would mean the death of a man's public self. To bring dishonor to his name is to bring social death to himself and his sons: "with a cry of his whole soul": "Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life! Because I lie and sign myself to lies! Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang! How

may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name!" (p.143)

Miller sees the crucible from inside. Integrity is fundamental to him. Proctor decides to confess of witchcraft but refuses to implicate others and then he recants because he believes that a life without a name is unbearable, it is a spiritual death. A man's name is his conscience and without it there is no person left.

### ***AFTER THE FALL (1964)***

Clinton W. Trowbridge observes: "What gives *After the Fall* its extraordinary intensity and its real dramatic significance is its form."<sup>19</sup> The entire action of the play, as Miller says, is in "the mind, thought and memory"(p.1) of its protagonist, Quentin. Since Quentin is imagined as speaking to a silent figure, whom Miller calls the "Listener," the action is formed as a monologue. It could also be called a soliloquy or a long aside or even a stream of consciousness technique. All these labels can fit the play's technique, but its importance lies in its innovation and its forcing the audience into a sense of involvement with "a person's words, thoughts, and memories over a two-hour period during which he is imagined in conference with a silent figure,"<sup>20</sup> i.e., the listener who might be a psychoanalyst or God or even the audience.<sup>21</sup>

The play is about a lawyer who married twice and now contemplates a third marriage, this time to a German-born archeologist and a World War II survivor, named Holga, in the Nazi concentration camp. He wonders whether or not to risk love again after acquiring a record of failed relationships. After two divorces he cannot face marriage with Holga until he knows "who and what he would be bringing her"(p.4). He begins a lengthy autobiography, which the play dramatizes on different levels. I called on the spur of the moment this morning; I have a bit of a decision to make" (p.3). This decision is whether he is fit for another chance to

embrace life with a woman whom he is not sure he "wants to lose " but finds it "outrageous to think of committing myself again." (Ibid.) Quentin looks at life as "a case at law, a series of proofs,"(p.4) When Quentin fails in his two marriages , he set himself on trial to find the source of guilt, so he "would be justified, or even condemned." (Ibid.) His sense of guilt kills any glimpse of hope: So he puts his life on trial. This trial is a way to find a way for resolution<sup>43</sup>.He is sustained with a mountain of guilt and he hopes that this mountain will not all be his. The problem is that when the trial begins, the bench is empty, no judge in sight. He will be judged by his own conscience, his own values and his own ideals.

The theme of guilt will be detected in relation to his family, friends and society. To begin with, he tells the listener that his mother has died recently and he feel in a way guilty because he cannot grief for her.This inability for grief is repeated when he visited the concentration camp. He goes with Holga to the concentration camp and unexpectedly, he is not moved by her description of one of the torture chambers. He himself was astonished when the image of his mother appears to him when he talked to the listener about the concentration camp: "Mother! That's strange. And murder" (p.22). Quentin's mother married his father because her parents had arranged this marriage for her. She gave up her plans to go to college and to marry Doctor Strauss. she was at first impressed by his appearance. Her shock began when she discovered that the man with whom she was supposed to spend the rest of her life was illiterate. With this disappointing truth to his mother, she managed to live her life but with a sense of contempt and patronization which she somehow concealed from her son. Her disillusionment with her husband made her transfer all the love toward her boy. She decided to fulfill all that she dreamt through him. When Quentin recalls his mother's reaction to his father's bankruptcy, he deeply condemns her:

Mother: I should have run the day I met you.

Father, *as though stabbed*: Rose!

Mother: I should have done what my sisters did, tell my parents to go to hell and thought of myself for once! I should have run for my life!

Father, *indicating a point nearby*: Sssh, I hear the kids—

Mother: I ought to get divorce! (p. 28)

The last words which she utters and shatters the relationship between them are "you are an idiot" (p.28). Each crisis Quentin goes through will remind him of his mother uttering the word Idiot. Quentin's inability to mourn his mother was not only out of contempt but also out of his sense of guilt. He himself feels that he betrayed his father and brother Dan.

Quentin's feeling of guilt is intensified when he recalls how he took his mother's side against his father. He left his family, pursuing his ambition. He's got the opportunity to go to college through Dan's sacrifice. Dan accepts to stay at home and support their father in business: "I felt power in the going and treason in it." So whenever he recalls his mother's encouraging words, he immediately senses his complicity:

Mother: I want your handwriting beautiful, darling; I

want you to be...

Quentin, *realizing*: ... an accomplice! (P.42)

Quentin's mother imposes on him an air of greatness, an image of the savior which gives him a sense of power, a power that enables him to betray his father and Dan by leaving them when they need him the most:

Quentin- *To Listener*: But power- where is...

Mother: And I saw a star, and it got bright and brighter, and brighter. And suddenly it fell, like some great man had died, and you were being pulled out of me to take his place, and to be a light, a light in the world.

His mother's influence has greatly affected his relationship with his first wife Louise. His life with Louise had been "some kind of paradise," "I had a dinner table and a wife . . . a child and her: the world so wonderfully threatened by injustices I was born to correct! From the day his world collapsed ... nobody was innocent again" (p. 31). Quentin saw Louise's culpability as well as his own. He relives their painful confrontations when she always assumed her innocence. Louise believes that he has "no conception of what woman is," and he thinks "that reading a brief to woman is talking to her" (p.39). She believes that his conduct with her is due to his mother's deep influence on him. She tells him: "You don't see any women. Except in some way your mother" (p.40). He reaches this truth with Maggie. But with Louise, Quentin feels himself victim.

He sees her now alongside his mother, the first female betrayer in his experience. He hates her sense of self- righteousness." You are full of resentment against me," Louise complains, but what Quentin resents is "being forever on trial"(p.55) The sense of power he felt enables him to betray Louise with Felice. Quentin was her divorce lawyer, and he had a brief affair with her. Felice idolizes Quentin," You changed my life" (p.5). Her constant appearance in his mind raising her hand in blessing: "I'll always bless you. Always" (p.8), intensifies his sense of guilt, "and yet I stand in her mind like some important corner she turned in life. And she meant so little to me"(p.8). His guilt is twofold with Felice; by being unfaithful to his wife, and by using Felice . He feels he has taken more than he gave, and so feels guilt over their affair. As he continues delving deep into himself, Quentin comes to the astonishing truth. He contemplates: "Well, that's power, isn't it? ..., it frightens me, and I wish to

God... she'd stop blessing me. ... Well, I suppose because there is a fraud involved; I have no such power." (p. 91)

The other problem with Quentin is his totality which cannot help but breed guilt for him. He tried to live on an all or nothing basis.<sup>44</sup> Grief is not grief until it kills one and love should be without limits. Throughout his life, Quentin believes that "underneath we're all profoundly friends" (p.85). This belief, Quentin notices, is constantly breached by disloyalty. What intensifies the tension between his Louise and Quentin is his ideals and principles which are now abandoned. Quentin finds it impossible to bear the guilt of living as a separate person. Miller traces it through the political and personal relationships. Louise claims to be a "separate person" in her own right: "Quentin, I am not a praise machine! I am not a blur and I am not your mother! I am a separate person!" (p.57) Louis's words answer his question: "In what sense treacherous?" (p.42) It is in the sense of detachment, separateness that allows people to inflict their tyranny upon others<sup>22</sup>. The idea of separateness is dealt with in relation to McCarthyism and the conduct of the Un-American Activities Committee. Quentin's friends, Lou and Mickey, show the two extremes of response to the Committee. While Lou refuses to comply and offer any names, Mickey does the opposite to keep his job. Lou loses everything and is ultimately destroyed. While Mickey tries to justify what he has done to escape his own guilt, he loses many friends in the process.

Quentin realizes that after the end of World War II all "principles Dissolve" (p.59), and one of those principles was the loyalty of friendship. Things were much simpler before," there were good people and bad people. And how easy it was to tell! Like some kind of paradise compared to this." (p. 31) All values and principles are now turned upside down. Quentin's friend, Lou, is a law professor. He was summoned by the Committee because of his previous involvement with the Communist party. Quentin accepts to present him before the committee.

When Louise Declares: "I am a separate person," Quentin realizes his friend's plight," I see that now," ... I got the same idea when I realized that Lou had gone from one of his former students to another and none would take him."(p.57) Unable to live with guilt Lou kills himself by jumping in front of a subway train. Lou's suicide sheds light on Quentin's guilt toward him. Quentin wonders why Lou should have died. He directly tells the listener that Lou died because he knew he had no friend left in the world; ironically, he was the "separate person" that Louise wanted to be: It was dreadful because I was not his friend either, and he knew it. I'd have stuck it to the end, but I hated the danger in it for myself, and he saw through my faithfulness.... Because I wanted out,..... in the joy ... the joy ... the joy I felt now that my danger had spilled out over the subway track! (p.82) His joy shows him his complicity with destruction.

The end of Act One remarks the end of Quentin's marriage with Louise. Quentin is unaware of his responsibility for this end. He blames Louise because he feels that she is punishing him for being honest. His problem is that he is unable to realize that Louise is a separate person. She is not an extension of himself or his needs. The Second Act deals with his second marriage.

Maggie is different from Louise. Quentin believes that Maggie will prove his innocence, for life is but a series of proofs. He observes, "She wasn't defending anything, upholding anything, or accusing —she was just there, like a tree or a cat" (pp.77-8) She does not pretend to be innocent, or self- righteous like Louise. She is enchanted by his fatherly attitude toward her as her father has abandoned her: "You are very beautiful Maggie... And I wish you know how to take care of yourself" (p.70). She idolizes him and sees in him the power and the salvation of a personal god<sup>23</sup>.



Maggie is an insecure girl whose mother once tried to kill her and whose father deserted her when she was a little baby. Quentin gave her a sense of belonging. After being a telephone operator, she is now a well known singer, "in the top three." He gives her the same adoration that he received unjustly from others. He feels that his success with Maggie will prove his innocence on one hand and Louise's culpability on the other. So Quentin plays the role of the protector with her. In spite of Maggie's success and fame, she was not taken seriously, she is exploited as an entertainer. She is "Some kind of a joke,... "A joke that brings in money"(pp.130-1)

At first she does not demand anything because as she tells him, "when you trust someone you trust him," and she trusts him. This trust starts to fade in the wedding when she asks him if he loves her (p.131). After marriage, ironically Maggie changes and insists on receiving his total devotion. She feels that he is cold with her. This shocks Quentin deeply because it is the same accusation Louise confronted him with. This coldness, Maggie's believes, is stemmed from his sense of shame of her past. With this accusation, the illusion of innocence collapses in front of him. It closes the circle for him. So, he writes a letter in which he states that the only love he holds is for his daughter. This hurts Maggie deeply and makes her feel betrayed. The last scene with Maggie which culminates in their split and divorce was rather a disastrous one. Quentin is fired and Maggie is so depressed that she tried to kill herself.

Maggie:I was going to kill myself just now.

He is silent. Or don't you believe that either?

Quentin: ... I saved you twice, why shouldn't I believe it? (p.145)

Quentin reaches the truth about both of them," Maggie, we... used one another"! (p.153) Quentin desperately tries to show her herself as she is stripped of any carnations:

And loved each other's innocence, as though to love enough what was not there would cover up what was... So you must love him because he keeps truth in the world. You eat those pills to blind yourself, but if you could only say, " I have been cruel," this frightening room would open. If you could say," I have been kicked around, but I have been just as inexcusably vicious to others, called my husband idiot in public, I have been utterly selfish despite my generosity, I have been hurt by long line of men but I have cooperated with my persecutors—" (p.153)

Maggie makes Quentin claim what he earlier despised, that he is now a separate person," I tried not to be, but finally one is—a separate person. I have to survive too, honey" (p.149). Because he thinks that she is setting him up for murder as suicide kills two people. When he tried to snatch the bottle of pills, she grips it. (p.158).In this last moment with Maggie, Quentin's intrinsic instinct for survival is clearly revealed, he grabs for the bottle, but she holds and he pulls. When she resists him he lunges for her throat and lifts her with his fists. But Quentin suddenly regains control over himself and with horror says," Murder?" Maggie triumphantly says," Now we both know. You tried to kill me, mister. I been killed by a lot of people, some couldn't hardly spell, but it's the same, mister.(p.159-160) at this last moment Quentin admits:

" I saw my life; what I had done, what had been done to me, and even what I ought to do. Quentin's life have become a proof of his complicity. The guilt lies in the man's refusal of responsibility for the otherness of human being motivated by the instinct of survival.

Salvation of this dark, depressive vision of life lies in the acceptance of this truth. Only then one can "finally take one's life in one's arms. With this notion Quentin realizes, "why I wake each morning like a boy—even now, even now! I swear to you, I could love the world again!" (p.163).

This love is generated from Quentin's acceptance of his responsibility for his action and their consequences as purely his own without looking for some moral victory or trying to prove his innocence.

## Conclusion

Miller is one of the most important American dramatist who has succeeded in depicting the post-war mood of American society. His plays show the interactive relationship between the individual and the community. He believes that man is society and society is man. Miller stresses on the importance of the consciousness and awareness of the individual in any society. An awareness of the existence of other people as separate entities who exist in and for themselves and not as extensions of his or her needs and concerns. The concern in his plays is around the effect of his protagonists on the others, and their capacity to accept full responsibility for their guilt and what they have or have not done.

In *The Crucible*, Miller shows how an ordinary individual living in a repressive community gains tragic stature by sacrificing his life rather than betraying his conscience. His conscience will not allow him to ruin the names of others or to have his name used to justify evil. The theme of guilt examines the ways that private sin and nagging guilt intermingle with public sin. To save his wife and the town, Proctor must discredit Abigail, but to do so, he would have to expose his own guilt. Though his confession is an attempt to save his wife, it also gives him the power to take a strong stand against the authority. Proctor refuses to confess or

implicate others because he believes that life without a name is unbearable, for it is a spiritual death. A man's name is his conscience, and without it there is no person left.

*After the Fall* is a play in which progress can be observed in Miller's dramatic attitude. The play is a dramatic revelation of a man who has come to realize that all people have been born after the Fall. The reference here is to the fall of Adam and Eve from Paradise. He has come to realize that, to know ourselves, we must accept the fact that no one is innocent. Repentance is in the acceptance of otherness and in the admission of one's guilt. These admission and acceptance demand an awareness of oneself and a high level of consciousness. Proctor and Quentin succeed in this task. Both decide to accept the consequences of their own actions as theirs. In doing so, they discover who they are. They reach a level of consciousness with which they can accept their own humanness.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Susan C.W. Abbotson, *Student Companion to Arthur Miller* (London: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Leonard Moss, *Arthur Miller*, (Boston: G K Hall and Co., 1980), p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Abbotson, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Moss, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Terry Otten, ed., *The Temptation of Innocence in the Dramas of Arthur Miller*. (Colombia, MO. : University of Missouri Press, 2002), p. 191.

<sup>8</sup> Robert W, Corrigan, *Arthur Miller* ( New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 2

<sup>9</sup> Gerald Weales, "Arthur Miller's Shifting Image of Man." In *Arthur Miller: A Collection of Critical essays*, Edited by Robert W. Corrigan. N(ew Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1969) p. 96.

<sup>10</sup> David Sievers, *A History of Psychoanalysis and the American Drama* (New York: Hermitage House, 1955), p.397.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Susan C. W. Abbotson, *Student Companion to Arthur Miller* (Westport, CT.: Greenwood, 2000), p.117.

<sup>13</sup> Ronald Hayman, *Conemporary Playwrights: Arthur Miller* (London: Heinemann Educational books Ltd., 1977), p.43.

<sup>14</sup> Claudia Durst Johnson, *Understanding the Crucible: A Student Casebook to Sources, and Historical Documents*. Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1998, p.38.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Walter F. Kerr, "The Crucible" In *The Crucible By Arthur Miller: II Criticism and Analgues*, edited by Gerald Weales( Middle sex: Penguin BooksLtd., 1977), p.190.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Warshaw, *The Liberal Conscience in The Crucible* (New York: Doubleday, 1962), p. 223.

<sup>19</sup> Clinton W. Trowbridge, "Arthur Miller: Between Pathos and Tragedy," in *Arthur*

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid. p. 48.

<sup>21</sup> Dennis Welland, "The Drama of Forgiveness," in *Arthur Miller*, edited by Harold

Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1987), p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> Terry Otten, *After Innocence: Visions of the Fall in Modern Literature*.

(Pittsburgh : University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982) p140.

<sup>23</sup> Sheila Huftel, *The Burning Glass* (New York: Citadel Press, 1965), p. 201.

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### الملخص

ان بالامكان وصف ميلر بأنه كاتب مسرحي اجتماعي و أخلاقي . فهو كاتب اجتماعي اذ اهتم في اعماله بالعلاقة بين الفرد والمجتمع وتأثير كل منهما على الآخر . وهو كاتب اخلاقي لأنه حاول في جميع مسرحياته خلق مجتمع افضل وذلك عن طريق التطلع لأيجاد القيم الأخلاقية والكشف عن حاجة المجتمع



والفرد لها . فالمسؤولية الأخلاقية عند ميلر لا تعني بالضرورة وضع مجموعة قيم واجب اتباعها للأفراد وإنما بالكشف عن الحاجة لتلك القيم . قام ميلر بعرض الكثير من الموضوعات في أعماله والتي تكشف عن المصاعب التي واجهت الفرد بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية الكساد الاقتصادي الذي تعرضت له الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية في الثلاثينيات من القرن التاسع عشر وهذا البحث يعنى بموضوعة الذنب التي تعتبر واحدة من تلك المواضيع التي يمكن تقفي اثرها في جميع مسرحياته تقريبا . يتعرض الجزء الأول لحياة وأعمال الكاتب . أما الجزء الثاني فيقدم موضوعة الذنب في مسرحية البوتقة (1953) والتي تسرد حكاية المحاكمة الشهيرة لمن اتهم بالشعوذة في القرن السابع عشر اذ تعرض قصة الأفراد اللذين فضلوا الموت على الاعتراف بممارسة الشعوذة . الجزء الثالث والأخير فيتعلق بمسرحية بعد السقوط التي قدمت عام (1964) وهي مشحونة باثار الحرب العالمية الثانية و الأزمة الاقتصادية في الثلاثينيات. ينتهي البحث بخاتمة تلخص اهم ما توصل اليه من نتائج موضوعة الذنب في البوتقة وبعد السقوط للكاتب الأمريكي آرثر ميلر