

thought that since it was his decision to kill himself, he has gained control over his guilt and shame. Centola also writes, "He comics himself that only his death can restore his prominence in his family's eyes and retrieve for him his lost sense of honor"(41). Willy fails to see that his illusion of success was a lie when he commits suicide.

The American Dream

America has long been known as a land of opportunity and from this idea comes the 'American Dream,' the idea that any person can achieve success, even if he or she started with nothing. In "Death of a Salesman," Arthur Miller allows his audiences to make the difference between what is real and what is not real in the American Dream in the lives of millions of Americans. Therefore, 'American Dream' is the main theme of the play. In 'Death of a Salesman,' the idea depends on being well-liked, popular person and attractive personality to gain success in business (the American dream in Arthur miller's Death of a Salesman).

Willy Loman, the main character in the play, works all of his life as a salesman, as a cog in the network geared to mass produce not only multiple new produce to be sold, but also to create ever-expanding new desire by making people feel they always need something they do not have. So, Willy's 'American Dream' consists of a well liked and personally attractive man in business, and being able to acquire all of the material comforts offered in the modern American life. In fact, Willy was wrong about this idea and his view is failed because it is just a superficial ideas comparing with the real one of the 'American Dream'. On this point, Brook Atkinson in a review in The New York Times talks about the protagonist of the play, Willy Loman, and his dream:

"Willy has always believed in something that is unsound. He has assumed that success comes to those who are "well liked" as he puts it. He does not seem to be much concerned about the quality of the product he is selling. His customers buy, he thinks, because they like him. Because he is hale and hearty and a good man with jokes" (qtd in Bentley 730).

He explains Willy quest for the 'American Dream' lead to his failure because throughout his life, he pursues the illusion of the 'American Dream' and not the reality of it. The result of his blind faith toward the 'American Dream' leads to his psychological decline and suicide. He is unable to accept the gap between the 'American Dream' and the successes of his life.

Willy's dream is personified strongly by two characters in the play: David Singleman, who could travel anywhere, place many order by phone in his hotel room and he is well-liked by all people who know him. And when this man died at the age of eighty four people come from all over to attend his funeral. This is the kind of personality Willy desire to become and this is the main reason that leads him to choose the job as a salesman (Sajjadul 71). Willy's brother Ben is another symbol of the success that he wants to reach in his life. Willy talks to Happy about Ben: "The men knew what he wanted and went out and got it! Walked into a jungle and comes out, the age of twenty-one, and he's rich!!"(1.28). this is what Willy believes as achieving the American Dream. Ben was a rich man, meaning he had succeeded in the eyes of Willy.

Through the play Willy tells his sons, especially Biff, of what his brother had done. He has also many flashbacks to Ben, asking him for help because he looks at him as being the symbol of his 'American Dream'.

Bernard is that person in the play who Willy looks down upon. Bernard is more of a weird, who doesn't have many friends and spends most of his time doing school work. On the other hand he believes his son, Biff, to be a perfect example of his American Dream. Biff was always well liked in school and was good-looking. However, Bernard is the one who becomes extremely successful, while Biff struggles in his life. Biff begins to work on a ranch out west, making Willy believes his son is not at all successful. In his mind Biff did not succeed in the 'American dream'. This is why Willy continues to push biff to talk to his boss, Bill Oliver. Willy believes that since Biff was once so liked Bill will open his arms to him and do whatever he can for him. But Willy's perception of the 'American dream' was wrong, and Bill does not help Biff at all. Therefore, at the end he commits suicide because he failed and he done this for the American dream. He believes that once he dies all his insurance money will be left to Biff and by this way Biff will be successful and in turn Willy would have been successful in raising his son. With the money left to Biff he will be rich, and would have achieved the 'American dream' (Kewl).

Rodham considers "Death of a Salesman" a play about all dreams. He comments that Willy dreams two versions of the American dream, i.e. the business- success dream and the rural – agrarian dream. For him, Willy does not only fail to achieve the business –success dream, but he also fails the substitute of this dream which is affected on Willy. He states that:

The strongest emphasis on the pursuit of dreams is in Death of a Salesman which is a play about dreams ... For the success dream, Willy's models are Dave Singleman (the perfect ex-salesman), Charley (the friendly neighbor), and Uncle Ben... Even Howard (Willy's boss), whom he single-minded pursuit of 'success' he turned into a monster, is Willy's ideal. One cause of Willy's remorse is that he is a failure in the pursuit of this substituted of a dream-a failure in his own, as well as in his family's eyes (119-20).

He means that Willy Loman fails again to achieve his dreams. Because he is fired from his job and this makes him felt failure in his family eyes also and in this the tragic point in Willy's life. Pardhan also comments that the two dreams; the business- success dream and rural-agrarian dream are used to highlight the inner life of Willy "who aspires to be greater than himself" (121). He also states that "Willy's rural- agrarian dream is a sort of safety valve to withdraw from the harsh realities of failure in the pursuit of the success of dream." He means that if the two dreams are consider separately, they will be "equally hopeless as far as Willy is concerned. They provide meaning in his life because he can balance on dream against the other" (120).

Abboston takes Pradhan's idea that Willy's dreams provide meaning in his life because he can balance one dream against the other. She believes that Willy Loman's family has been able to survive for years just through their dreams. She also agrees that Willy and his family can balance their dreams against a harsh reality, but these dreams "are usually more destructive in the long run." She means that, while the dream is give strength to face the hard reality but this reality when intrudes the dreamer will suffer a lot. Abbotson states also that "A central thematic issue in this play "Death of a Salesman" is Miller's consideration of the problematic and elusive 'American dream' of success, and how it tends to be interpreted by society." She adds "Miller sees many people's lives [like the Lomans'] poisoned by their to be successful," and therefore he presents the characters of Charley Bernard as opposed to Ben and Howard to "offer us a potential solution to this social problem"(46).

Stephen Lawrence's "The Right Dreams in Death of a Salesman," focuses on the social forces that are the main reason for Willy's downfall. Lawrence blames the social expectations placed upon Willy Loman, which are so extensive that he cannot grasp the contradictions in his world. All those people around him, but they let Willy falls with his dreams and social problems without helping him. Willy cannot solve his troubles and get what he dreams because American society as Lawrence says.

Irving Jacobsen's 'Family Dream in Death of a Salesman' looks at the dreams that puts in his characters. Jacobsen maintains that "Family dreams extend backward in time to interpret the past, reach forward in time to project the future, and pressure reality in the present to conform to memory and imagination"(248). The moment of reality seems to come through a shocking or violent act. For instance, Biff when discover that his father is having an affair, and that truth shatters the dream that Willy has constructed for his son; Willy is not only connected to his past, he is entrapped by it by the vision what should be, rather than what is (249).

In addition to all of this, the biggest and the most important dream of Willy Loman is having a big, spectacular funeral. At the end when Willy dies, at his funeral, his wife Linda says, "Why didn't anybody come...where are all the people he knew?"(2.112). All his life, he holds on this fantasy, but he never face the reality of how he could have made it come real. It is his vision of the people of the past that lead Willy to follow a particular path, leading to his denies in the end.

Reality vs. Illusion

Illusion versus reality is another major theme in the play of Arthur Miller because Loman family are all unable to separate reality from illusion to some degree. Willy, the main character, who is mainly suffer from this ailment. Willy's dreams and self-image, however, are not the only forces working against him in achieving success. Reality represented by society is also another force working against him. Willy's hope dream to get a job in New York and a good salary is destroyed by reality that Howard fires him. Howard, in A2S1, tells him that "there just is no spot here for you" (2.80). He expects that he would be rewarded a job in New York and a good salary after his long service with Wagner's company, thirty-five-year service, but when he faces the reality that he is seen to be of no use his hope is shattered.

Willy's dream of establishing his own business also crashes with reality. Willy is unable to achieve his dream of having his own business as he tells his boys: "Tell you a secret, boys. Don't breathe it to a soul. Someday I'll have my own business, and I'll never have to leave home any more" (1.30). He also tells Linda: "You wait, kid, before it's all over we're gonna get a little place out in the country, and I'll raise some vegetables, a couple of chickens. . ." (2.72).

We notice that Willy dreams of establishing his own business one day and of having a house of his own in the countryside where he would be more comfortable. But he is unable to achieve this dream, because business is slowing down as it is indicated by his speech to Linda: "My God, if business don't pick up I don't know what I'm gonna do!" (1.37).

Willy's hope for Biff to be successful is also destroyed by the reality of nothing. Willy looks at his son as great, successful boy, when in reality he has not achieved all that he hoped. He has gone west to work on a ranch. Willy also believes that Biff is doing big things out west while Biff is nothing. However, at the end of the play Biff is the only family member who is able to realize what is real and what is not. Biff realizes who is, and that is not a successful business man. He likes and wants to work out west, and he has come to accept that. He does not want to live up to all the dreams of his father, he knows who is. He also realizes who Willy is. He says Willy is "a dime a dozen," showing

that Willy followed the illusion of the American dream and now he realizes this and he knew that he would not to be like Willy. He would live his own live.

Willy's dream of popularity, i.e. being well liked, also crashes with reality. He notices that people do not like him, as mentioned in his talk to his wife Linda: "You know, the trouble is, Linda, people don't seem to take to me" (1.36).

we noticed that when Willy chose the sales profession because he wanted to be loved as he tells Howard in A2S1: "... I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. 'Cause what could be more satisfying than to be ... remembered and loved and helped by so many different people?" (2. 81).

It means that Willy's discovers that people do not like him and this is not easy for him because it works against his wish. What is more annoying to Willy is what he tells Linda about, in A1S2, when he was in one of his business trips: "... a salesman I know, as I was going in to see the buyer I heard him say something about—walrus. And I—I cracked him right across the face. I won't take that. I simply will not take that. But they do laugh at me. I know that" (1.37). Here, Willy was made fun of by the others. Thus, his dream of popularity collides with reality, too. Finally, Willy expectation of a massive funeral also collides with reality. He expects to have an impressive funeral when he dies. In A2S5, he tells his brother Ben (as he is hallucinating):

the funeral-straightening up: Ben, that funeral will be massive! They'll come from Maine, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire! All the old- timers with the strange license plates-that boy [Biff] will be thunder-stuck, Ben, because he never realized-I am known! Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey-I am known, Ben, and he'll see it with his eyes once and for all. He'll see what I am, Ben! He's in for a shock, that boy! (2.126).

We can notice that Willy dreams of a funeral like that of Dave Singleman which he tells Howard about in A2S1: "when he [Singleman] died hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral" (2.81). In Willy's funeral, however, only five people attend namely, Linda, Biff, Happy, Charley, and Bernard. Linda gets surprised and wonders "Why didn't anyone come ? ... But where are all the people he knew? Maybe they blame him." Charley responds to her wonder saying "Naa. It's a rough world, Linda. They wouldn't blame him" (2.139)

Conclusion

Many characters in the Twentieth-century tragedy are still struggling with their subjective nature, which in turn structures their cathartic experience. In "Death of a Salesman", the subjective and the substantive exists in dialectical conflict. We notice the set of characters, not united, but centering on his or her personal struggles; Willy and his failures, Happy and his narcissism, and Biff with his emotional paralysis. Even Linda exhibits more of a subjective than substantive nature as she frets about tactics for appeasing the family.

In his play Miller talked about many forces that put characters into action. The economic forces include the race for money, keeping up with the neighbors, desperate expectations of fulfill an American dream of happiness, serene and resplendent. The complications hindering characters are an incredibly rigid class structure, and of conspicuous consumption (Willy buys the car and the washer, all the while confronting the continuous need for house repair). All in all, "Death of a Salesman" is one among the plays that makes a turning point in American drama. Because it deals with one of the great problems of twentieth century which is the tragedy of the American common man and his conflicts and struggles with society to gain the American dream. In addition, Miller's play gains an important place in the American drama because it focuses on the middle class American society and Miller combines both realism and expressionism in this play (M. Metzger 30).

The play centers on middle-class American. The main character in "Death of a Salesman", Willy Loman and his family are from middle-class American family. Miller designs characters that are liable to the pain of existing since they are alone and free. There is no deity or anyone to help them. This results in an endless distress for the characters, which means life-long suffering.

The main themes that the play concentrates on are uncertainty of life, absurdity, and illusion. Therefore, they do not make any changes, because everything they have done will vanish in an instant, resulting in no reward for their time and hard work as in "Death of a Salesman".

It also deals with the theme of absurdity. The main characters in "Death of a Salesman" work hard to achieve and live successfully but at the end nothing happens; Willy commits suicide, Biff and Happy do not get better work and Linda lost her husband and stays alone.

In idea of illusion, their main characters are all unable to part what is real from what is not real. When the main characters dream or want to get something successfully, reality always faces them or works against them, so, their hope and dream crash with reality. In "Death of a Salesman" this appear when Willy's dream to get a work in New York is destroyed by reality that the boss of his company fires him.

Miller's main characters do not depend on each other. For example, Willy Loman depends on himself to get his goal in life which is the 'American Dream' without asking help from his friends.

Arthur Miller's characters seem to be free in their action. There is no power above to control them or to limit their freedom.

In "Death of a Salesman" Arthur Miller intermixes past events with those of present. This appears when Willy Loman uses flashbacks in his present life. In other words, he is in and out of the present moment.

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