TIME IN THE PLAYS OF ARTHUR MILLER

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FOREWORD

This dissertation is the result of my long-time interest in American Drama. Failing to get the very basic primary and secondary materials relating to my research in Bangladesh, I applied a number of times to the American Cultural Center, Dhaka, which is now USIS, Dhaka for a research fellowship to collect the necessary materials from the States, but I was not successful. However, I succeeded over the years to get some of the required texts from Singapore, England and America with the help of my friends and relatives. I also took advantage of my opportunity of a British Council Fellowship for a short-term attachment to the Overseas Education Unit, University of Leeds, to collect some materials relating to my research. After my formal registration in the Ph.D. programme of Dhaka University I visited ASRC, Hyderabad, India in 1995 on a Middle Award senior research fellowship, which contributed a great deal towards the completion of my work. At the beginning of this year I managed to use the facilities available at the M. D. Anderson Library, University of Houston, Houston, America, which benefited my research considerably. I sincerely thank all these people and organizations without whose help and assistance it would not have been possible to complete the dissertation. My thanks are also due to the University of Dhaka and the University Grants Commission, Bangladesh for facilitating my research work with

the grants of a three-year period Study Leave and a U. G. C. Ph.D. Fellowship, respectively. I must acknowledge that my supervisor, Prof. Serajul Islam Chowdhury's help and guidance, and the love and affection of my entire family gave me the strength to go ahead with my research work. I am grateful to God for guiding me through all my difficulties and problems and making my long cherished dream of completing the research a reality.

My eldest brother, Mr. Ruhul Amin, who always showed keen interest in my academic work and had the earnest desire to see my research completed, unfortunately left this world on 15th December 1998. I dedicate this work to his fond and loving memory.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Time, which is a very complex phenomenon, is inseparable from our life. Our very existence and all that we do or happens around us are seen in relation to time. Time can be both scientific or objective and experiential or subjective. The setting, the plot and the characters of a play, the writer's life, and the audience, all relate to time. The purpose of this thesis is to first examine the concept of time and then show the relevance and importance of the different aspects of time in the published plays of Miller.

Conceptually, time is both objective and subjective. The former, which includes natural realization of time, has been studied in the plays in terms of mainly historical time and plot or fictional time, and the latter, which is experiential time, has been studied in terms of mainly memory of the writer and his characters. The introductory (the first) chapter in the thesis deals with time as a concept and its relevance to the dramatic form. Some of Miller's plays, as shown in the second chapter, have either clear historical settings or refer to historically verifiable characters and incidents. The role of Miller's life and the intrusive author has been shown in the third chapter dealing with autobiographical time. Miller's characters, like all of us, live in time and think in time. Miller's technique varies from play to play according to the different characters' concern with the three phases of time. In their minds, consciously

or subconsciously, the characters are either in the present, the past or the future. The fourth and fifth chapters deal with this particular aspect of time. The plot or fictional time has been studied in relation to the unity of time in the sixth chapter.

While discussing the appeal of Miller's plays to the audience, the playwright's belief and theory on the role of a writer and his attitude towards life and mankind have been brought to light. The concluding chapter of the thesis, in addition to summing up the treatment of time dealt in the earlier chapters, shows Miller's concern, as expressed in the different plays, with the entire life of mankind. At the end of the thesis has been included a bibliography of the works cited and consulted.

SHORT TITLES

The full titles of the works of Miller, which have been discussed or referred to in the dissertation, have been shortened as they appear on the right-hand side. In the cases of full titles being short, they are unchanged. Editions of the works appear in the Bibliography section.

The Man Who Had All the Luck	*Luck*
All My Sons	*Sons*
Death of a Salesman	*Salesman*
An Enemy of the People	*Enemy*
The Crucible	*Crucible*
A Memory of Two Mondays	*Mondays*
A View from the Bridge	*Bridge*
After the Fall	*Fall*
Incident at Vichy	*Vichy*
The Price	*Price*
The Creation of the World and Other Business	*Creation*
Playing for Time	*Time*
Elegy for a Lady	*Elegy*

Some Kind of Love Story	*Love Story*
I Can't Remember Anything	*Can't Remember*
Clara	*Clara*
The Ride down Mt. Morgan	*Mt. Morgan*
The Last Yankee	*Yankee*
Broke Glass	*Glass*
I Don't Need You Any More	*Don't Need*
Timebends: A Life	*Timebends*
Theater Essays of Arthur Miller	*Essays*
Introduction to the *Collected Plays*	*Introduction*
The Shadows of the Gods	*Shadows*
Tragedy and the Common Man	*Common Man*
The Nature of Tragedy	*Tragedy*
Preface to an Adaptation of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*	*Preface*
Foreword to *After the Fall*	*Foreword*

PREFACE

A leading figure in American literature and one of the most well known living playwrights of the world, Arthur Miller's importance in the field of American drama is undisputed. In his introduction to *The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller* Robert A. Martin rightly says:

> Along with the plays of Eugene O'Neill and Tennessee Williams Arthur Miller's plays have been responsible in large part for extending the significance of the American theater beyond the horizons of its national origins and for providing a standard of dramatic achievement for contemporary playwrights everywhere. (xv)

Miller is one of the very few writers in the history of American drama, especially modern American drama, to be known beyond the frontiers of the U.S.A. According to critics like James J. Martine, Miller's "very celebrity has often been a detriment to calm, objective evaluation of his work. However he remains one of the most respected, and produced, of American playwrights abroad, from Sweden to Latin America" (xxii). Neil Carson acknowledges that Arthur Miller is one of the three or four leading playwrights of the American theatre. He also says –

> While [Miller's] position in the history of American (and indeed world) drama is assured, it may be many years before there is general agreement about the nature of his contribution and the order in which his plays should be ranked. For not only is the playwright still active, but there is at the heart of his work something which seems to perplex and divide his critics. (1)

The productions of *The last Yankee* and *Broken Glass*[1] in 1993 demonstrate that Miller, whose literary career has continued to be active for more than half a century and who is now an octogenarian, has every possibility to surprise us with a new work any time.

Miller as a playwright is fascinating for both his creative output and theoretical formulations. Biographically, too, he creates in his readers a great deal of interest. His family background, academic life, dramatic career, marital lives, and his place in the context of contemporary political and social scenarios contribute to his becoming an unusually interesting person. His autobiography, *Timebends: A Life,* gives a detailed account of the different aspects of his personal life. His life, as revealed in his plays, has been discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis. Emile G. McAnany makes an important observation on Miller's critical writings and essays in her article, "The Tragic Commitment: Some Notes on Arthur Miller":

> Arthur Miller has created at least three images for the American public. To the vast audience of mass communications, he has been variously identified with Marxism, Marilyn or misfits. To the theater-minded person, his name evokes the memory of a play about a salesman. To a much smaller audience of interested readers, he is distinguished by a significant body of dramatic theory and critical comment on contemporary serious drama. It is precisely in this third capacity that he has made some of his most important contributions to the tradition of the American theater. (11)

[1] The titles of the works, which have been mentioned for the first time, are given in full. In subsequent discussions short titles are used.

Miller is among the few dramatists, who has written a considerable number of drama related essays some of which can be classed with the very best in this field. Robert A. Martin has justly eulogized the merit of the essays in his introduction to *Essays*:

> Miller's conviction that the theater should be a "serious business," one that places serious issues before the public, appears in various forms again and again in his prefaces and essays, which set forth his beliefs against the background of his plays. It is, I believe, through his prefaces and essays that Miller speaks most directly of his social and dramatic convictions, and of his craftsmanship as a playwright. They comprise a body of critical commentary that is both distinguished and significant in the history of American drama and culture. Collectively, Arthur Miller's essays on drama and theater may well represent the single most important statement of critical principles to appear in England and America by a major playwright since the Prefaces of George Bernard Shaw. (xvi)

Miller's "Introduction to the *Collected Plays*", "Tragedy and the Common Man", "On Social Plays", 'The Family in Modern Drama", "The Shadows of the Gods", and "Morality in Modern Drama", to mention a few of his essays, bear testimony to the fact that his theoretical base was solid and sound.

It is intriguing to note that the famous playwright and theorist of today, who received a Hopwood Award in Drama for his very maiden attempt *No Villain* (1936), was not a theatre-lover by any definition. Neither did he know anything about playwriting when he sat to compose his first play for winning some money in the form of an award while he was a sophomore in the Department of Journalism, University of Michigan. He asked a fellow student how long an act should be, and wrote the play in just six days. Encouraged by his success, he got transferred from Journalism into English and enrolled in the playwriting course offered by Professor Kenneth Rowe, and during the first year won an award of $1250 from the Theater Guild's Bureau of New Plays for *They Too Arise* (1937), the revised version of *No Villain*, and the

second Hopwood Award in Drama for his third play, *Honors at Dawn* (1937). His next play, *The Great Disobedience* (i938), was unsuccessful in winning another Hopwood Award. During the next seven years Miller wrote a good number of radio plays and scripts and some plays including *That They May Win* (1943) and *The Man Who Had All the Luck* (1944). The latter play, which opened on Broadway on 23 November 1944, failed to receive any favourable reviews and closed just after four performances. But the production won a Theater Guild Award for the playwright. In the meantime he toured army camps to gather the material for a film, *The Story of G. I. Joe* (1944), and published a book of reportage, *Situation Normal* (1944). A novel, *Focus*, came out in 1945. By this time Miller's frustration as a playwright reached its peak. He calls the plays written till 1945 desk drawer plays. None of his plays other than *Luck* written during the period mentioned was produced in the professional theatre. Not at all happy with the very limited success of these plays, he tells us about his disappointment as a playwright in *Introduction*:

> I was turning thirty then, the author of perhaps a dozen plays, none of which I could truly believe were finished. I had written many scenes, but not a play. A play, I saw then, was an organism of which I had finished only certain parts. The decision formed to write one more, and if again it turned out to be unrealizable, I would go into another line of work.... (16)

Miller did not have to change his vocation and go into another line of work. Quite by chance he heard a story about a family from an elderly lady visitor and soon he started working on it to materialize his decision of writing one more play. The finished play called *All My Sons*, premiered on 29 January 1947 at the Coronet Theatre in New York, and since then like his protagonist in *Luck* he started having all the luck. A box-office success, the play ran for 328 performances. It earned for him New York Drama

Critics' Circle Award, and, of course, his much longed for professional recognition and satisfaction. Two years later, the production and publication of *Death of a Salesman* (1949) placed Miller at the pinnacle of his success. The play premiered at the Morosco Theatre in New York and ran for 742 performances. It earned for Miller the Pulitzer Prize, New York Drama Critics' Award, Antoinette Perry Award, Theater Club Award, Donaldson Award, and a number of other awards. His next original play, *The Crucible* (1953), received the Antoinette Perry Award. During the next four decades or so Miller has regularly contributed in the field of theatre with the writing and production of about one and a half dozen plays. His latest published works in the present decade include three plays – *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan* (1991), *The Last Yankee* (1993), *Broken Glass* (1993), and a novelette, *Plain Girl* (1992).

Most of Miller's plays are meant for a "prophetic theater", which, according to him signifies "a theater, a play, which is meant to become part of the lives of its audience – a play seriously meant for people of common sense, and relevant to both their domestic lives and their daily work" (*Introduction* 16-17). Time in its varied manifestations, as mentioned by Miller in *Introduction*, is integral to these plays and his concept of tragedy as a whole:

> Time, characterizations, and other elements are treated differently from play to play, but all to the end that that moment of commitment be brought forth, that moment when, in my eyes, a man differentiates himself from every other man, that moment when out of a sky full of stars he fixes on one star. I take it, as well, that the less capable a man is of walking away from the central conflict of the play, the closer he approaches a tragic existence. In turn, this implies that the closer a man approaches tragedy the more intense is his concentration of emotion upon the fixed point of his commitment, which is to say the closer he approaches what in life we call fanaticism. (7)

Miller is aware of the changes that took place in the society around him as well as his own changing responses to it. According to him, in one sense the plays included in the volume of the *Collected Plays* are a response to what was in the air:

> Each of these plays, in varying degrees, was begun in the belief that it was unveiling a truth already known but unrecognized as such. My concept of the audience is a public each member of which is carrying about with him what he thinks is an anxiety, or a hope, or a preoccupation which is his alone and isolates him from mankind; and in this respect at least the function of a play is to reveal him to himself so that he may touch others by virtue of the revelation of his mutuality with them. If only for this reason I regard the theater as a serious business, one that makes or should make man more human, which is to say, less alone. (*Introduction* 11)

Miller points out in the same essay that one of the decisive influences upon style is the conception and manipulation of time in a play:

> Broadly speaking where it is conceived and used so as to convey a natural passage of hours, days, or months, the style it enforces is pressed toward realism. Where action is quite openly freed so that things mature in a moment, for instance, which would take a year in life, a true license for nonrealistic styles is thereby won. (5-6)

Miller thinks that "the destruction of temporal necessity occurs in every play", and so realism is a matter of degree because every playwright collapses time "destroying realism, by fastening only on those actions germane to the construction of his symbol."

Unlike the plays of many dramatists, we find in Miller's plays a great deal of autobiographical time fused with the fictional time. Harold Clurman writes in an article, "Arthur Miller's Later Plays": "When recently asked in what way his plays were related to the events of his life Miller replied, 'In a sense all my plays are

autobiographical" (143). The following words of Miller about *Salesman* in one of his letters written in 1949 demonstrate to what extent his characters reflect what he saw and experienced in his own life:

> However, it is obvious that I write out of life as I know it rather than construct plays out of a theatrical imagination, as it were. The remembered thing about "Salesman" is really the basic situation in which these people find themselves – a situation which I have seen repeated throughout my life. (Welland, *AM* 60)

Miller writes in "The Shadows of the Gods" that while in college he read Ibsen, and through him and Dostoyevsky he came to an idea of what a writer is supposed to be:

> These two issued the license, so to speak, the only legitimate one I could conceive, for presuming to write at all. One had the right to write because other people needed news of the inner world, and if they went too long without such news they would go mad with the chaos of their lives. With the greatest of presumption I conceived that the great writer was the destroyer of chaos, and a man privy to the councils of the hidden gods who administer the hidden laws that bind us all and destroy us if we do not know them. And chaos, for one thing was life lived oblivious of history. (180)

As far as Miller is concerned a writer should not write disinterestedly without paying any attention to what goes on around him. To achieve greatness a writer should try to have a social role by showing what defines humanity. According to him, another important function of a writer is to make us aware of what we are, and he feels that, this is only possible if we are aware of our history. So naturally, we find that history and historical references have a great deal to do with almost all plays of Miller. By emphasizing the character and inner nature of man, Miller also speaks for the universal appeal of a writer. Although the staging, the setting, the characters and the plot of a play and even the playwright's links to such characters and plot, and the

audience's reactions to what they watch involve the elements of time, Miller is possibly the only playwright who has stated in emphatic terms the importance of time in his plays. That his autobiography has been entitled *Timebends*, is another proof of Millers special interest in time.

It is interesting to note how Miller connects the different aspects of time to his plays: Most of his plays have topical settings. For example – *Luck, Sons, Salesman, Bridge, Fall, Price, Ceiling, Clock, Love Story, Mt. Morgan*, and *Yankee*. *Creation* has a biblical setting. *Crucible, Vichy, Time*, and *Glass* have settings in the past. In a number of plays there are autobiographical allusions and references. For example – *Salesman, Crucible, Fall, Mondays, Ceiling*, and *Clock*. The plays which have past and topical settings, relate directly or indirectly to past and topical history. Although in all the plays the concern is mainly with the present, the past is delved into or referred to in a number of plays, like – *Sons, Salesman, Fall, Enemy, Crucible, Bridge, Price, Mt. Morgan* and *Glass*; the future expectations are focussed along with the other phases of time in *Salesman, Crucible, Mondays, Bridge, Time, Creation*. The action is unfolded in a linear manner in *Luck, Price, Enemy, Creation, Vichy, Ceiling, Elegy, Love Story, Yankee*, and *Glass*. The chronological time is violated, and the past and the present and in some cases even the future are shown to exist simultaneously in plays like *Salesman, Clock, Can't Remember, Clara*, and *Mt. Morgan*. There is the unity of time in plays like *Sons, Salesman, Fall, Price, Vichy, Ceiling, Lady, Can't Remember*, and *Clara*, whereas, there is no unity of time in such plays as *Luck, Crucible, Bridge, Mondays, Enemy, Creation, Time, Clock, Mt. Morgan*, and *Glass*. In plays which maintain this unity, the action is confined to a limited time in the fictional present, but in the latter group the fictional present is stretched to a considerable period of time.

Although hundreds of articles and a good number of critical books have been written on Miller and his works, and "time" is an integral element of his plays, no detailed study of "time" in his plays has been made so far. "Time" in my thesis stands for both objective and subjective time. The former includes natural realization of time in terms of mainly historical, autobiographical, chronological and plot-time, and the latter experiential time in terms of memory and technique. Time, as we find in the development and unfolding of a plot, is part of the technique. Since Miller has more than twenty published plays and all of them are not equally important with regard to the different aspects of time, I have dealt with mainly some selected plays based on the realizations of time and made passing references to the others in different chapters of my thesis. In my selection of the particular plays I have also taken into consideration the importance of the plays in relation to their subject matter, Miller's fame and creative phase.

The research has been carried out with the specific objectives of examining the relevant plays of Miller in relation to broadly speaking scientific or objective time and experiential or subjective time as follows:

a. How can we see the setting, plot and characters of Miller's plays in relation to historically and autobiographically verifiable time?
b. What is the impact of time on Miller's characters? Do they dwell on the present only or do they dig the past or think about the future?
c. How does Miller unfold the plot of his plays? Does he follow the linear progression of time or explode the watch and the calendar as in expressionistic and stream of consciousness technique or show the

simultaneity of time as in the mind/memory or reveal the phase and lapse of time with complete detachment in the convention of the Epic Theatre?

d. To what extent does Miller adhere to or deviate from the unity of time, and what does he gain or lose by it?

e. How are the scientific or clock time and experiential time synthesized in his plays and what is Miller's main concern with time?

The methodology of my research depended on the following plan of action and its timely execution:

a. After reading some readily available plays of Miller I prepared a tentative bibliography of the plays, books, essays, articles, and interviews relating to my research.

b. In consultation with my research guide I fixed the priorities to study as much as possible the primary and secondary materials. The primary materials include the published works and interviews of Miller and the secondary materials include the writings on Miller and his works in the different books and periodicals, and the relevant writings on drama and time in general.

c. I was always on the lookout for the new publications relating to my research, explored all possible sources to collect them and, as required, made the necessary changes in the thesis and the bibliography.

d. In addition to a preface and a bibliography the thesis has been divided into seven chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction to the concept and study of time, the second chapter deals with Miller's plays in relation to historical time, the third chapter with the autobiographical time, the fourth

chapter with the conscious recall of past time and future expectations, the fifth chapter with time and memory, the sixth chapter with the unity of time, and the seventh chapter, which is the concluding chapter, deals with the synthesis Miller makes of all the elements of time as dealt with in the earlier chapters.

e. On the basis of my reading and discussion with the research supervisor I prepared the first draft of my thesis, and based on the comments and suggestions of my supervisor I made the necessary corrections, added the required fillers and prepared the second draft.

f. After thorough discussion with my supervisor I made the final changes in my work to bring it to its present form.

g. For citing sources in the text and preparing the Bibliography of the works cited and consulted I have followed mainly the principles of documentation given in *MLA Handbook*, 1995.

The research has benefited me immensely because it required of me to go through all the available works by Miller and on Miller. Personally I found my research "Time in the Plays Of Arthur Miller," challenging. The difficulties arose in collecting the relevant primary and secondary materials, dealing with the fluid concept of time and establishing its tangible link to the good number of plays written by Miller. Although the task was arduous, I now have the satisfaction that I have completed my work on an unexplored albeit very important aspect of Miller's plays.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Time can be neither seen nor felt, neither heard nor tested or smelt. But the physicist measures time, and in our day to day life even the laymen talk about the quantity of time. When we think about the measurement of time the obvious question that may arise is that how can something be measured that is not perceptible to the senses. Although time is not perceptible, for our convenience we associate time with some observable sequences of nature and divide it into arbitrary units which for the sake of uniformity are accepted as the standard sequences of time for all practical purposes.

Time is an indispensable element of our life. Modern world cannot function without making constant references to time as indicated by the standardized units of calendars and clocks. Although objective time is linear and forward moving, calendars and clocks represent time as linear as well as cyclical. In a calendar in "the symbolic flow of the never-returning years are incorporated the symbolic units of months, weeks and days that recur at particular intervals" (Elias 16)

"Time" and "space" are interrelated concepts in our day to day activities. Norbert Elias says:

> 'Time' and 'space' are conceptual symbols of specific types of social activities and institutions; they enable people to orient themselves with reference to positions or intervals between such positions which events of all kinds occupy in relation both to each other within the same sequence of events and to homologous positions within another standardized sequence of events. (98)

According to him '"every change in 'space' is a change in 'time'; every change in 'time' a change in 'space.'" He says that one should not be misled by the assumption that one can sit still in space while time is passing because there are constant changes in the organic system of our body although such changes may be very slow. Though inorganic substances are not susceptible to such changes, they also may change in the course of time. Besides, the earth in constant motion makes the substances which are apparently lying still change their position in relation to the solar system. But 'time' and 'space' are not one and the same thing:

> As the universe in which human beings live and of which they form part is continuously moving and changing, one way of accounting for the conceptualization of 'space' and 'time' as different, or even as separate, is to say that what we call 'space' refers to positional relationships of moving events which one tries to determine by abstracting from the fact that they are moving and changing; by contrast, 'time' refers to the relations of positions within a change-continuum which one tries to determine without abstracting from its continuous movement and change. (100)[1]

[1] In the case of consecutive references to a particular source where a new source does not come in between, only the page numbers are cited in order to avoid repetitions of the author's name or the work's title.

Hans Meyerhoff gives a detailed account of time in *Time in Literature*[2]. He says:

> Time, as Kant and others have observed, is the most characteristic mode of our existence. It is more general than space, because it applies to the inner world of impressions, emotions, and ideas for which no spatial order can be given. It is also more directly and immediately given than space or any other general concept such as causality or substance,... There is no experience, as it were, which does not have a temporal index attached to it. (1)

He further adds:

> Time is particularly significant to man because it is inseparable from the concept of the self. We are conscious of our organic and psychological growth in time. What we call the self, person, or individual is experienced and known only against the background of the succession of temporal moments and changes constituting his biography. But how can that which constantly changes be called the same person or an identical self? How can man be "for himself" if he always experiences himself as different and if he is always known as different from moment to moment in time? What is man, if he is nothing but a victim of temporal succession of change? What, if anything, endures throughout the constantly changing stream of consciousness of the individual? The question of, what is man, therefore invariably refers to the question of what is time. (1-2)

According to Ernst Cassier, "organic life exists only insofar as it evolves in time.... We cannot describe the momentary state of an organism without taking its history into consideration and without referring it to a future state for which this state is merely a point of passage." Meyerhoff says that "Cassier's words only re-echo what was the major thesis of the historical, evolutionary, and organic theories developed during the nineteenth century. From Hegel to Marx, from Comte to Darwin, from

[2] In this chapter there are constant references to this particular book to which I am deeply indebted for explaining the concept of time.

Bergson to Whitehead, these theories selected the temporal element as a basic methodological or metaphysical principle."(2)

Modern mind is deeply conscious of time as a universal condition of life and as an ineradicable factor in our knowledge of man and society. "This emergence of time into the fragment of modern consciousness is also reflected in literature. Literature – like music – is a temporal art; for time is the medium of narration, as it is the medium of life" (Mann 541). "Once upon a time" is the timeless beginning of many stories told from the ancient to the modern time. To be engaged in literature, quite naturally leads to questions about the meaning of time for the art form itself. "Moreover, if art holds a mirror up to human nature, and if man is more conscious than he was of the pervasive and precarious nature of time, then this consciousness will be reflected increasingly in literary works" (Meyerhoff 3). Time has become an over-all and predominant theme in recent literature. But, Meyerhoff observes: "time has always been in and on men's minds. What has happened in our age is only a difference in the degree to which this preoccupation with time has become explicit and articulate – especially in conjunction with the problem of man.." (3). He says that there is hardly a major figure in recent literature who has not raised the problem of time and its relation to man, and that the theme recurs so frequently in popular literature that the titles alone referring to time must, he presumes, run into hundreds or thousands. Time in literature mostly refers to elements of time as given in experience:

> Time in literature is *le temps humain*, the consciousness of time as it is part of the vague background of experience or as it enters into the texture of human lives. Its meaning, therefore, is to be sought only within the context of this world of experience or within the context of a human life as the sum total of these experiences. Time so defined is private, personal, subjective or, as is often said, psychological. These terms mean that we are thinking of time as directly and immediately experienced. (4-5)

There is of course another way of looking at time with which we are all familiar. It is the clock or conceptual time, which is the time relationship among objects and is unaffected by man's perception. This time is used for sublunary convenience, and is a highly artificial and arbitrary convention used to regulate and coordinate our day to day activities. It gives us the concept of time "which is not private, subjective, or defined in terms of experience, but which is public, objective, or defined in terms of the objective structure of the time relation in nature" (5). This is the scientific concept of time expressed by the symbol "t" in mathematical equations. It is also what Meyerhoff calls our "public" time, which we may also call earthly time, the time that we use with the help of watches, calendars, etc. "in order to synchronize our private experiences of time for the purpose of social action and communication," that is, for our earthly existence. We keep an appointment, reach a place or perform other actions by clock-time, whereas, our experiences and thoughts proceed at a different or personal rate. "Our sense of the speed or the duration of experience can only be assessed in terms of values and measured by our personal time, though for purposes of comparison we may project it against the fixed point of conceptual time" (Mendilow 54-65). The characteristics of this concept of time are independent of "how we personally experience time" which has "intersubjective validity." It refers to an objective structure in nature rather than to a subjective background of human experience. Though this time is measured in a cyclical process, the units always starting afresh come back to a starting point as is the case with the seconds, minutes, hours, days, months and years, etc., This time is cumulative, because it always goes forward making clear distinctions of the past, the present and the future.

Meyerhoff rightly points out that the notion of time "given as an immediate datum of our consciousness" by Bergson "apparently a simple and indubitable fact of

everybody's experience, turns out to be highly ambiguous and unreliable when used for the purpose of constructing a scientific concept of time applicable to an objective structure in nature." On the other hand the scientific analysis "objectively valid as it is, turns out to be quite estranged from the subjective experience of time. Thus what is logically clear and valid seems to be psychologically false and meaningless" (Meyerhoff 5-6). Both these notions of time seem to be quite irrelevant to each other although the scientist is not unfamiliar with the subjective experience of time and we are all familiar with and dependent upon the objective concept of time constructed by the scientist for our day to day life. For any attempt to give a philosophical analysis of time we are confronted with an apparent paradox between "time as an immediate datum of consciousness and time as a logical construct claiming objective validity." Different writers have often emphasized the difficulty faced by the writers on the subject of time in making the transition from what is psychologically simple and immediately given to what is logically clear and objectively valid in nature:

> This is what St. Augustine had in mind in the most famous and most quoted formulation of the dilemma: 'What, then, is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I wish to explain to him who asks, I know not.' Or as a writer in the seventeenth century expressed it: 'I lose thee while I seek to find thee out.' 'A few questions [about time],' Russell wrote [recently], 'can reduce [us] to hopeless confusion.' As an illustration he adds a brief dialogue by which a clever dialectician can induce this state of confusion in the minds of those of us who approach the problem of time in terms of experience or common sense. 'Does the past exist? No. Does the future exist? No. Then only the present exists. Yes. But within the present there is no lapse of time? Quite so. Then time does not exist? Oh, I wish you wouldn't be so tiresome.' This is of course, only a restatement of the ancient puzzle which Zeno, a clever eleatic dialectician, propounded in order to prove that time was unreal. Whatever happens, happens *now*; but 'now' does not include change, motion or lapse of time. Thus the arrow, in its flight through space and time, is, at any given moment or 'now,' always standing still – which seems to make

> mockery of our common-sense notions of flying through space and time. (Meyerhoff 6-7)

The difficulties faced in arriving at a logically sound theory of time based on time in experience "are so perplexing and overwhelming that many thinkers, from Zeno to Bradley, concluded that the whole subject of time was riddled with contradictions which could never be resolved; hence, that time was not a rational concept. And since it was believed that 'reality' must be rational, it followed that time was declared to be unreal and illusory, that is, not an objective part of reality whatsoever. Reality, according to this view, was without or beyond time, timeless and unchanging" (7).

St. Augustine was the first thinker to advance an ingenious philosophical theory of time "based entirely upon the momentary experience of time combined with the psychological categories of memory and expectation" (8). He was concerned with time as experienced in the present. According to him whatever happens, happens now, in the present – that is, it is always an experience, idea, or thing which is "present." We can, nevertheless, construct a temporal series accounting for past and future in terms of memory and expectation. The "past" means the present memory experience of a thing past, and the "future", the present expectation or anticipation of a future thing. This theory of time in terms of experience was reechoed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by Hobbes, Locke, Condillac, Berkeley and Hume. "The strength of the theory lies in its roots within human experience; its weakness, in the openly subjective nature of the theory" (8). The "past" as we recollect cannot be exactly the same as we experienced. Recollections cannot be the only justification for ordering events in time. If we think of the past as applied to nature in general, we see that the origin and evolution of the universe, the astronomical and geological time beyond the reach of any human experience, or the past of man's own evolution and history, all

these exhibit characteristics of succession, change, order, and direction which are objective and independent of our experience of time.

The dilemma posed by the apparent irreconcilability of time in experience and time in nature makes it difficult to construct a theory of time that will include both. The objective of a scientific theory is to eliminate the ambiguities and perplexities of subjective experience. But unfortunately, the process of constructing an axiomatic system of time believed to be objectively valid in nature eliminates certain qualities of time which are of significance in human experience. The divergent philosophical interpretations of time are invariably conditioned by the fact that they deal either with time in experience or with time in nature. Meyerhoff feels that the literary treatment of time "has always been 'Bergsonian' in the sense of analyzing time as an immediate datum of consciousness and as it enters into human lives and actions rather than 'into mechanics and physics" (10). Bergsonian time is subjective time. But it does not mean that literature eschews time in nature which is tangible and measurable in association with the natural phenomenon. The characters in a play as well as the writer are very much conscious of this time and its role in our life.

The elements of time treated in literary works "invariably refer to certain *qualities* which are significant in experience and in the lives of human beings and which are inadequately rendered by or altogether omitted from a scientific theory"(10). But this concept of experiential time which is purely subjective is strictly limited to the individual's response or handling of time. Whenever the relationship amongst the individuals has to be taken into consideration, the time that concerns them becomes no longer the concern of the individual only, it becomes interpersonal and gains a social dimension.

An axiomatic study of time in nature involves the clarification of at least three major concepts: (a) measurement or metric; (b) order; and (c) direction. An objective criterion has to be worked out for all of them so that "we are able to say that they are valid for a time series in nature independently of the subjective experiences of human beings. These criteria must coordinate a set of definitions with processes in nature rather than with processes inside human beings" (11-12). The objective metric, order, and direction of time in nature fall within the domain of scientists, scientific philosophers, and logicians. Our experiences are an unreliable basis for measuring time objectively. In our mind's repository at times time may pass fast or slowly – we may be conscious of every second or we may be completely oblivious or unconscious of the passage of time. The objective metric of time is inseparable from and indispensable to human life. Howsoever fluid time may be experienced subjectively the units of measurement of time became objective since the time they were coordinated with certain objects in nature for which a measurable uniform standard of motion could be determined. We are familiar with "lunar time" and "solar time." In the first, the objects are the earth and the moon, and in the second, the earth and the sun. Another basis for the objective metric of time given by the astronomer is the rotation of the earth with reference to the system of fixed stars. This is "sidereal time" and it is the most uniform standard of measurement by which we set our clocks and calendars. Although the kinds of motion involving some particular objects may be said to be arbitrary or conventional, the motions themselves are not. They are all parts of nature, observed by man but independent of man.

The scientific concept of time, which is based on objective relativity, is indispensable for the practical purposes of action and communication. This "time" which we call clock or conceptual time is objective time and is unaffected by man's

perception. Such concept of time is used for sublunary convenience. It is a highly artificial and arbitrary convention used to regulate and co-ordinate our day to day activities. In our day to day life we are all part of an objective time order which is measured quantitatively and uniformly according to the behaviour of objects in nature. We keep an appointment, reach a place or perform other actions by clock-time, but our experiences and thoughts proceed at a different or personal rate. Mendilow rightly observes: "Our sense of the speed or the duration of experience can only be assessed in terms of values and measured by our personal time, by psychological time, though for purposes of comparison we may project it against the fixed points of conceptual time" (64-65). Time, as experienced, "exhibits the quality of subjective relativity, or is characterized by some sort of unequal distribution, irregularity, and nonuniformity in the personal metric of time" (Meyerhoff 13). The regular, uniform and quantitative aspects of time characteristic of an objective metric have been often questioned by the psychologists and the writers writing about the subjective response of their characters to time. The psychologist argues: "When it seems long to you, then it is long; when it seems short, why, then, it is short. But how long, or how short it actually is, that nobody knows" (13-14). Thomas Mann says: "To be susceptible of being measured, time must flow evenly, but who ever said it did that? As far as our consciousness is concerned, it doesn't, we only assume it does for the sake of convenience; and our units of measurement are purely arbitrary, sheer conventions" (66). According to Andre Maurois Proust, "The time that is ours to use each day is elastic; the passions we feel dilate it, those that we inspire contract it, and habit fills it" (58). Virginia Woolf's attitude towards time as cited by Madeline B. Sterne is similar: "The mind of man works with strangeness upon the body of time. An hour, once it lodges in the queer element of the human spirit, may be stretched to fifty or a hundred times its

clock length; on the other hand an hour may be accurately represented by the timepiece of the mind by one second" (Sterne 351). These examples from some of the contemporary works clarify the quality of the subjective relativity in the personal metric of time.

The aspect of duration of time in experience is much more significant than its metric. Duration and metric are directly related in scientific, objective or what we may call natural time. Duration of time in nature consists of the successive moments. So, strictly speaking time cannot have any duration in the present because what passes in the present no longer remains present. Again in nature what passes becomes the past, measured till a certain point of time to give us the duration. But this duration does not include the present. The duration of time with regard to the future though may be calculated objectively, from the scientific point of view is unreal. The duration of time in experience has to take into consideration the fact that we experience time as a continuous flow. Experiential time is characterized not only by successive moments and multiple changes but also by something which endures within succession and change. It was Bergson's contention that "this quality of continuous flow or duration does not find an adequate correlate in the physical concept of time" (14-15). The moments of time in nature are "distinct, measurable quantities which always remain separate, disparate, and unrelated, like points in space or marks on a chronometer" (15). It is this contrast or the neglect of duration which caused Bergson to speak of physical time "as a distortion or falsification" of the essential nature of time. Meyerhoff rightly points out that the quality of continuous flow or duration has been an ageless theme in literary works from Ecclesiastes and Heraclitus to Joyce, Eliot and Thomas Wolfe. The most-used literary notation for making this quality explicit is the

symbolism of the "river" and the "sea" or the images of "flight" and "flowing." He quotes from Heraclitus, Omar Khayam and Thomas Wolfe respectively as follows:

> "In the same river, we both step and do not step, we are and we are not."

> "One thing at least is certain – this life flies."

> "Time is like a river." "Of time and river." "And time still passing ... like a leaf ... fading like a flower ...time passing like a river flowing." "The river is within us, the sea is all about us." "Every man on earth holds in the little tenement of his flesh and spirit the whole ocean of human life and time" (16).

The stream associated with the consciousness of the mind is a popular literary technique employed by James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner and others. "'Stream of consciousness' signifies what the symbolism time and the river has always meant to convey, namely, that time as experienced has the quality of 'flowing,' and that this quality is an enduring element within the constantly changing and successive moments of time. The quality of duration is superimposed, as it were, upon continuous change"' (16).

From a psychological point of view the continuous flow and duration of experiential time may be called specious present. This gives us a contrast to the single abstract moment which in reality is the present in physical time. The flow of time as understood in the psychological present contains the elements of some kind of order and direction pointing towards past and future. The present, as mentioned by William James in *Principles of Psychology*, chapter 17, has "a certain breadth of its own on which we sit perched and from which we look in two directions into time" (Meyerhoff

17-18). What he means is that the "temporal stretch enduring throughout the present includes elements from memory and expectation." All the remembered and anticipated elements coalescing in the experience of the specious present suggest to us some vague notions of "before" and "after," "earlier" and "later," "past" and "future" – terms which refer to the order and direction of time. If we accept the concept of the specious present, the basis of the stream of consciousness, we may say that time cannot have any fixed direction and order because in the present, the future and especially the past merge with no sense of order and direction. Time in nature is a forward moving element, and so naturally in this case we can clearly talk about what is over and what is to come in terms of the past and the future. Time, in the experiential sense too, can have the elements of the past and the future in terms of conscious memory and expectations.

"Time" as a concept cannot be at the mercy of or dependent on memory alone which is a subjective phenomenon and a constant source of error and deception because of a number of psychological variables – such as, forgetting, repressing, distorting, or projecting. The principle of causality at times helps us to determine what precedes or what comes later. But it is not always possible to establish causal links between two things in experience. Time when linked with the objects of nature gives us the order of the past, the present and what is to come, that is, the future. In the same way experiential time, too, considering the causal links, can give us a sense of direction and order.

It is a fact that cause and effect define the serial of time in the world, if they did not we would not be in a position to give the empirical, objective interpretations to the notions of earlier and later or to the concept of past and future. The use and acceptability of the causal principle in the objective order of time can be seen most

clearly in the irreversible process of nature as stated by Hans Reichenbach with the examples of running a film backward or unscrambling eggs (Reichenbach 148-149). The irreversible process of cause and effect not only defines the order but also the direction of time. The order of the sequence of time – "earlier" and "later," "past" and "future" proceeds in one direction only.

One empirical criterion which may be used for past and future is that in the world, including our own mind, the past leaves traces, imprints, or records, whereas, the future does not. Thus we may say that an event took place or something was done earlier if it left a trace or record, but the events which have not yet left a record belong to the future. By past we then mean "the entire collection of recorded history – whether of the universe or of man; by future which does not have a history" (Meyerhoff 20). Such traces and records of the past may be natural or man-made. With such records we orient ourselves with regard to an objective order of time which is different from the vague and fallible order of events in memory.

Like the geological records in the earth, which are the products of natural phenomenon, and the archaeological records, which are left by man with the help of tools and instruments, human mind is also a recording instrument. The traces and records of the past events preserved in memory, as observed by Marcel Proust, are analogous to the records preserved in geological strata (M. Proust 143). By virtue of this empirical basis, memory, which is a subjective phenomenon, may serve as an objective basis for the past as experienced. If the memory of human beings remained infallible like the memory of a computer which can be called back exactly as it was, then the records in the memory could also be treated like the objective records in nature. In both the cases, the records in memory and in nature, we are very much within the causal theory of an objective time order. Wherever we find traces we can

infer that these were caused by the events preceding them and are not the result of events yet to come. For all practical purposes in our life we recognize an objective time order as understood by the principle of causality, just as, we recognize an objective standard of measurement in terms of sidereal time. Time in nature, as realized by us, consists of not only quantitative, uniform units of measurement but also of a uniform series or linear order in terms of cause and effect.

Although the causal principle of time can be considered as an empirical fact of the physical order and may also in certain cases hold good for our memory, the records stored in our memory for its very nature pose special questions and difficulties. Compared to nature memory is a much more complicated and confusing recording instrument. The records in nature whether geological, archaeological or historical demonstrate a simple, linear progression. Instead of a uniform serial order, memory relations exhibit a non-uniform and more dynamic order of events where past, present and future are fused and associated with each other. Things remembered in the present are often fused and confused with things feared and hoped for: "Wishes and fantasies may not only be remembered as facts, but the facts remembered are constantly modified, reinterpreted, and relived in the light of present exigencies, past fears, and future hopes" (Meyerhoff 22). The objective order of temporal sequences forms only a partial aspect of our memory structure. Causality prevails in the inner world as much as in the outer, "but the causal connections (or associations) between events within memory do not constitute an objective, uniform, consecutive order of 'earlier, and 'later' as they do for events of nature. Instead they exhibit, as Bergson said, a quality of 'dynamic interpenetration.' It is this quality which is particularly significant for the relationship between time and the self." (Meyerhoff 22).

The dynamic interpenetration of events in memory which have a causal basis, however much distorted they may seem when viewed from an objective natural order, follow each other in an orderly manner because one event follows or gives rise to another. This peculiar order of the mind appears as a form of disorder when it is compared with an objective temporal sequence. The "logic of images" in literature stands for this peculiar characteristic order – or disorder. The method of "free association and interior monologue" is based on this logic. The desultory illogical causal connections in memory, when contrasted with the logic of objective sequences and connections in the external world, by their very uniform characteristics make us accept the logic of free association. So far as the sequences of events within the inner world of memory are concerned, "we must employ symbols of *disorder* that violate the strictly logical order and progression of events to which we have become accustomed by science and common sense" (23). The inner world of experience and memory exhibits a uniform structure which is causally determined by *significant associations* rather than by objective causal connections as noticed in the world outside. This peculiar structure normally takes the help of symbolism and imagery to show that "the different modalities of time – past, present, and future – are not serially, progressively, and uniformly ordered but are always inextricably and dynamically associated and mixed up with each other" (23-24).

An important element of time in literature concerns with the presence of the intrusive author and the biographical time. Goethe called his autobiography, which was completed in 1831, *Dischtung und Warheit (Poetry and Truth)*. It was a selection of experiences which had most influenced the author's development. The title indicates, as Meyerhoff rightly observes: "the literary reconstruction of one's life invariably involves two dimensions: a subjective pattern of significant associations

(poetry) and an objective structure of verifiable biographical and historical events (truth). Both dimensions are present not only in biographical and autobiographical forms of literature, but in any literary portrait whatsoever" (27). The particular work takes the form according to what is more dominant in proportion. If the verifiable biographical and historical events related to the author's life control or dominate the work, then the work is clearly autobiographical.

Time is significant for man because his quest for identity, i.e., "what I am," is connected with "what I was and what I have become," thus giving the biography of the self in terms of significant associations. In existentialism human existence is understood to be what is directly and immediately experienced by the individual himself and not the objective structure of his life as it appears to an outside observer. Literature, according to Meyerhoff, "has always been 'existential', for it has dealt only with those aspects of time believed to be significant in the lives of human beings" (28).

Experience for Hume consists of "perceptions which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in perpetual flux and movement" and the self is "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions" (252). Like Shakespeare, he compared the mind with the theatre "where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations" (253).

According to Bergson both time and the self are characterized by the fact that they are "unities of interpenetration." "Time and the self mutually condition one another by 'integrating' the separate moments of experience into some sort of unity" (Meyerhoff 36). The mental "now" even the "mental time" as a whole is a unity. Whatever may constitute "now" constitutes one significant pattern relating to the self.

The same is true for the entire gamut of experience. The self is a unity within multiplicity. The experiences recorded in the mind are integrated into what constitutes the self. The unifying of the experience of the moment according to Sherrington is an aspect of the unity of the "I" (Sherrington 222). This explains why in the stream-of-consciousness technique despite the most perplexing and chaotic manifold of immediate experience the unity of the self is not negated. The scattered fragments of free association make sense only if we presuppose that they belong to the same person.

A whole day constitutes the specious present in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. "The fragments of life in each are gathered together by a unitary, symbolic frame of reference, which also constitutes the unity of the narrative itself" (Meyerhoff 39-40). Ultimately all the three unities – time, self, and narrative are integrated in the form of significant associations. Meyerhoff gives other examples also to prove the point. Joyce in *Finnegan's Wake* attempts to render these unities within the prolonged present of one night. The book begins and ends in the middle of a sentence – a symbol for the cyclical theory of time. It shows "how the beginning and end of the rivers of time and life form a unity within the most bewildering multiplicity." Eliot said, "In the beginning is my end...; in the end is my beginning." Goethe said, "Let beginning and end be fused into one ..." (Meyerhoff 40).

If we consider the volume of literary work we find that the interdependence of the two unities of time and the self with regard to the past is more important than the preoccupation with the momentary stream of consciousness. St. Augustine mentions in the *Confessions* the importance of memory in one's life. The experiences stored in the memory are very much part of an individual and define him. Even "when the mind doth not feel, the memory retaineth" and "whatsoever is in the memory is also in the

mind" (Meyerhoff 42-43). The memory as a whole functions in the reconstruction of one's life.

In the literary portraits the principle of "unity within multiplicity" is normally extended beyond the present to the entire past of an individual in order to exhibit "the distinctive characteristic pattern of responses and associations which we call his character." Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* reveals how the reconstruction of the self corresponds to the recapture of time in experience. In such cases, memory becomes "a symbol for the active, creative, regulative functions of the self. And this creative aspect of memory (in art) discloses a unified, coherent structure of the self, which cannot be otherwise recovered in experience" (Meyerhoff 44). Meyerhoff cites a passage from Thomas Wolfe's *The Story of a Novel* in which he describes the infinite complexity and intensity of his memories, as a clue to his being a writer: "My memory was at work night and day, in a way that I could at first neither check nor control and that swarmed unbidden in a stream of blazing pageantry across my mind, with the million forms and substances of life that I had left, which was my own America" (44).

The story of Sophocles's Oedipus "may also be read as the tragedy of a man who is suddenly and brutally destroyed because the continuity of time in his life is irremediably disrupted" (52). A terrible gap is opened up regarding his past life – his past as lived and remembered since he defeated the sphinx and the past of his childhood and youth – forgotten and repressed and subsequently brought to light. In terms of his experience he may be considered two different persons but in reality he is one and the same person. Similarly, in *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby is engaged in a quest to find his true self through a recovery of the past. The narrator says of Gatsby that he wanted Daisy to tell Tom that she never loved him. "After she had obliterated four

years with that sentence they could decide upon the more practical measures to be taken". (Fitzerald 95). After she was free they were to go back to Louisville and be married – "just as if it were five years ago." The narrator and Gatsby talk of Daisy as Gatsby is about to meet Daisy again for the first time in five years:

> "I wouldn't ask too much of her," I ventured. "You can't repeat the past."
>
> "Can't repeat the past?" he cried incredulously. "Why of course you can!"
>
> He looked around him wildly, as if the past were lurking here in the shadow of his house, just out of reach of his hand.
>
> "I'm going to fix everything just the way it was before," he said nodding determinedly. "She'll see."
>
> He talked a lot about the past, and I gathered that he wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy. His life had been confused and disordered since then, but if he could once return to a certain starting place and go over it slowly, he could find out what that thing was.... (96)

The aspect of time in experience as understood by Proust, for which there is no correlate in the objective time structure of nature, is what Meyerhoff calls "eternity." For him eternity means timelessness, not infinite time – "a quality of experience which is beyond and outside time" (54). The recollection of events in the mind takes place under the aspect of eternity in two ways:

> (a) The act of recollection itself is timeless in that it seems to have no date or temporal index attached to it. It is a permanent or timeless possibility. The recollection may burst into consciousness at any time or place, which gives it the quality of being beyond time and place – though after it has happened we can fix the date within the sequence of physical time and say *when* it happened. Only the fact that it may happen at any time seems to put the recollection into a timeless dimension. (b) What is remembered, the content of the recollection, belongs in

> the same dimension.... The thing remembered seems to be independent of the date when it happened; it acquires the quality of an 'eternal essence.' (54-55)

Experiential time, no doubt, has no proper correlate with time in nature or objective time. The fact that "recollection may burst into any time or place" and the "thing remembered is independent of the date when it happened" does not necessarily give this time the quality of eternity, or timelessness, neither the infinite time. Howsoever fluid this time may be, the recollection takes place at a particular point of time and ends at a particular point of time and is very much limited to the person concerned. Timelessness or the quality of eternity may be attributed to art as compared to our earthly life. Keats said in the concluding part of his poem, "Ode on a Grecian Urn":

> When old age shall this generation waste,
> Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
> Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st
> "beauty is truth, truth beauty," that is all
> Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

What Keats says is that life in this world is short and temporal but art is eternal, which will live for ever. Time has the quality of eternity when it can neither be measured nor will it come to an end. In science this eternity is indicated by the symbol ∞, which stands for infinity. Eternal time has direction; it is forward moving and has a starting point but no end. For some believers the soul leaves for an eternal stage after death.

A. E. Mendilow says, "Time, according to the theory of relativity assumes different meanings in different systems and varies from one frame of reference to another" (63). He quotes Mac Traggart to express the multifarious realizations of time: "There are as many time-series as there are selves who perceive things as in time... Strictly speaking, no time can be common to two selves" (63). All the techniques and

devices of fictional work, especially drama, reduce themselves to the treatment of time in relation to the plot and the different characters as conceived by the writer and the reader. The writer, his work, and the reader together fall within a complex time-scheme. The shift of the reader from his own present to the fictional past and a reverse shift to a fictive present are a very common, though complicated, amalgam of time shift in the readers' or audiences' response to all plays.

Drama, more than any other literary form, is dependent on, and makes use of, the diverse aspects of time. Every element or aspect of drama, whether the composition, plot or characterization, language or production, involves the elements of time and space. T. Ungvari says that –

> it is possible to enumerate some valid definitions of lyric and epic poetry that simply leave out the time aspect, whereas there is no definition of dramatic art which refrains from making a reference to time. The study of the famous Goethe-Schiller correspondence clearly shows us that the time aspect of epic poetry emerges only in an opposite position to that of tragedy. Epic poetry relates past events, in contrast to tragedy, which introduces us into the world of action, to the world of the *now*, the becoming, the present. (470)

Ungvari adds in the following paragraph that "there is a time-preference in every definition of drama," because drama is preoccupied with time. By drawing a parallel with physics he says, "time seems to be as much an attribute of drama in the literary field as it is of motion in the natural sciences" (470).

A drama is an imitation of action, which is a form of motion. And this motion has implied in it the element of time. Time, as enunciated in Aristotle's *Physics*, "is the quantity referring to motion from the point of view of earlier or later" (Greenway 41). This obviously puts emphasis on now, i.e., the present, which Aristotle identifies as the link of time. Aristotle's concept of the now in *Physics* and his definition of

tragedy in *Poetics* are interconnected: "For that coherent unity of action which is the chief postulate of tragedy bears a close relationship to the definition of the *now*, the present. The unity of action is nothing else than the *now* mentioned in the *Physics* as the point which links past and future" (Ungvari 471).

Drama, more than any other form of literature, is a direct imitation and representation of life. Time affects every aspect of a play – its plot, the form and the medium of expression, i.e., language. The plot of a play, like that of a novel, normally deals with the behaviour of human beings who "act, feel and think in time and are subject to all its vagaries, varieties and variations" (Mendilow 31). All the characters in a play can be placed in relation to chronological time. They interact according to their reactions to the past, present and future-time happenings and expectations.

A play, which is an image of human nature, has to be composed within a limiting frame that determines its form. The playwright must devise techniques to shape and modulate his plot to give it the form that will most adequately and effectively convey his intentions to the reader or the audience. The time-constraint imposed directly or indirectly in the staging of a play leaves no scope to the playwright for composing his play without any plan. Mendilow's words regarding a novelist is true for a dramatist as well:

> A novel, even at its longest must come to an end; the writer must plan his beginning and ending, and his whole work must provide within itself the reason why these should fall where they do and not elsewhere. He must exploit different devices to urge the reader's attention forward and prompt his unposed question: 'and next?'; 'what then?' He must consider how to relate or link one part to another. He will experiment with suspense and tempo, with rhythm and climax and plotting. And time is a central figure of them all.(32)

A play, unlike a novel or an epic, deals with only a small segment of life. But this small segment, unlike most other literary forms, represents a complete action. Aristotle's definition of tragedy in Chapter 6 of his *Poetics* puts emphasis on this complete action: "A tragedy then is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself;..." (Aristotle 35). The focal point in drama is the present that joins only those parts of past and future extensions which are relevant to the plot. George Lukacs's observation that drama "has to transform everything into a present, otherwise it has no bearing on the *mythos*, the story, the plot" is pertinent (Ungvari 473). This element of the present in drama is directly linked to the concept of imitation, which implies selection, rearrangement and readjustment in view of the course of events. Goethe rightly says about epic poetry that it has "a certain Apollonian sense of distance, conceiving of a story-teller sitting on the dividing link of the chain looking back on past events in a reflective mood of nostalgia." The narrator's sense of the now thus becomes the dividing, rather than the linking point. "Drama on the other hand uses the linking quality of this *now*, sewing the threads of past events into the present action" (473). The emphasis of the *now* in drama is "time-redeeming." We are freed from our time for a couple of hours and released from its grasp just by entering into another fictitious world. No attempt need be made of suspending our disbelief willingly. We simply accept whatever we see in front of us.

Whatever changes the tragedy has undergone during the past centuries the time aspect of this particular literary form, as observed by Ungvari, has remained basically the same:

> It was a form that explored the field of action,.. connecting past and future in a sense that gave sense to suffering by ultimately linking a set of rather horrifying deeds and actions into an intelligible comprehensible time-scale succession.... [Tragedy

> focuses on] the point which we call the linking present where every sacrifice is justified because its time-scale has a higher meaning than the mere repetition of the *before* and *after*. In other words: tragedy as a form finds a transcendental image of time, peculiarly relating all the aspects of it to one or more coherent action to one or more character with identity and personal integrity. (474-475)

Tragedy since the days of the Dionysiac rituals in ancient Greece out of which it developed, in most cases has not simply dealt with the vicissitude of the protagonist from past prosperity to present adversity mostly ending in death as an indicator of persistent disorder and chaos. The death, on the other hand, restores equilibrium in the present with the hope of future regeneration. In some of the post-Second-World-War plays like, Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame*, and *Happy Days*, the gloom persists till the end with no hope of salvation. Ungvari observes: "If in the former structure of tragedy the hero perished and the world survived, today the hero perishes only along with the whole world" (477).

According to Miller "the essential difference, and the precise difference, between tragedy and pathos is that tragedy brings us not only sadness, sympathy, identification and even fear; it also, unlike pathos, brings us knowledge or enlightenment" (*Essays* 9). For him the knowledge that tragedy entails is the right way of living in this world. He says that tragedy is the most accurately balanced portrayal of the human being in his struggle for happiness. "That is why we revere our tragedies in the highest, because they most truly portray us. And that is why tragedy must not be diminished through confusion with other modes, for it is the most perfect means we have of showing us who and what we are, and what we must be – or should strive to become" (*Essays* 11).

Miller says in "The Family in Modern Drama":

> The playwright is not a reporter, but in a serious work of art he cannot set up an image of man's condition so distant from reality as to violate the common sense of what reality is. But a serious work, to say nothing of a tragic one, cannot hope to achieve truly high excellence short of an investigation into the whole gamut of causality of which society is a manifest and crucial part. (*Essays* 82)

In this sense Miller's concern is not with the present only although it is the present, which he considers important in a play:

> As people, as a society, we thirst for clues to the past and the future; least of all, perhaps, do we know about the present, about what *is*. It is the present that is always most evasive and slippery, for the present always threatens most directly our defenses against seeing what we are, and it is the present, always the present, to which the dramatic form must apply or it is without interest or a dead thing, and forms do die when they lose their capacity to open up the present. (*Essays* 85)

So, it is quite obvious that a play being an imitation of life, cannot be written without reference to any or all of the three periods of time – the present, the past and the future.

Time is also related to the structure of a play. The treatment of time is specially important in the organization of dramatic action. A playwright may or may not devise the general background of his play, but he is the one who organizes the sequence of events in the plot structure. The dramatist specifies the plot time as a point in some historical or fictional time in the present, the past or the future having a certain duration by the clock. The plot being the product of imagination, the plot time with regard to the setting is always different from the time in real life. Besides, the plot time in many cases exceeds the duration of the performance time. Making the time of the plot in a proper setting reasonably represented within the limited performance time has been a constant problem for the playwright, and has been an important factor in

the play's aesthetic appeal. Frederick J. Hunter rightly says, "Because human action occurs in time, plots have traditionally been organized in time, either explicitly as in modern realism or implicitly as in ancient tragedy and comedy" (194).

In the dramatic structure we find two distinct treatment of time. The first is usually employed to achieve vividness or intensity by compressing the action and confining it to events of short duration. In the second kind, the plot time is stretched to tell a richer and more extensive story by skipping long intervals between episodes or by using retrospective techniques. To increase the intensity or extensity of the plot a playwright has to either concentrate or extend the time structure.

A play, whatever action or segment of life it imitates, must be set in the context of a particular time. The characters live in time, interact in time and in many cases make constant references to time. The playwright, too, cannot be conceived of outside time. The action represented in the play covers some time either objective or experiential or both. The staging obviously covers some period of time in terms of objective time. Time, whether objective or experiential, is indispensable to the composition of a play, its structure, characterization and production. There is not a single aspect of a play which can be thought of without any reference to time.

CHAPTER TWO

Historical Time

A play unfolds its action through the plot, which cannot be conceived in a vacuum divested of a setting with regard to time and place. Time, whether mythical or historical past, or contemporary is an important component of the setting of a play. Almost all the extant tragedies of the ancient Greek and Roman dramatists – Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Seneca, deal with the mythical time. This time, although is beyond the records of historical time, may be placed in some kind of chronological order in relation to a particular mythical story. The time of action in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* obviously dates before any plays dealing with the Trojan War or its aftermath, like his *The Oresteian Trilogy*, Sophocles' *Ajax*, Euripides' *Andromache* and *Hecuba*, and Seneca's *The Trojan Women*. Similarly the action of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* occurs earlier than that in his *Antigone*, Seneca's *The Phoenician Women* and Aeschylus' *The Seven Against Thebes*. *The Persians* by Aeschylus, and *Octavia*, a Roman play by an unknown author, are the only two extant classical tragedies on historical subjects. In the latter tragedy, which deals with the plight of Octavia, Nero's wife, the time of action coincides with Nero's

reign. As it was the case in real life, Seneca and Burrus are seen here as two ministers of the emperor.

Although Aristotle in his *Poetics*, Chapter 13, mentions Oedipus and Thyestes as two ideal examples of the tragic hero, he does not say anywhere that tragedies must deal with the stories of the past only. But if we look at the history of the serious plays, especially the tragedies, we find that till about the end of the 19th century the tragedies mostly dealt with the stories of remote past occurrences only. Almost all the tragedies written during the Elizabethan Age, the golden age of English drama, deal with past actions. Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus, Tamburlaine, The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II*, and Ben Jonson's *Sejanus His Fall* and *Catiline His Conspiracy*, to mention a few, are based on past history or tale. Marlowe's *The Massacre at Paris* (1953), a historical tragedy based on the massacre of the Huguenots that began in Paris on the eve of St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572, is possibly the only Elizabethan tragedy based on contemporary history. All of Shakespeare's tragedies have historical, legendary or mythical setting. The historical plays like *Henry VI, Richard III, Richard II, Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus*, which have historical characters as their protagonists, can be placed in the fixed setting of time. Plays like *Othello, Macbeth, King Lear* and *Hamlet*, which are on legendary subjects, deal with the time as accepted in the legend which may not be as definite or fixed as in history. *Troilus and Cressida* is beyond the records of any historical time because it is based on Greek mythology.

Tragedies for quite a few centuries remained traditionally associated with the happenings of the past and the protagonists larger than life. The last two decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the beginning of a revolution in the dramatic art of Western writers, especially with the writers of serious plays pioneered by Ibsen,

whose new drama of ideas was dynamic in its concern with the social and moral problems of contemporary life. Ibsen's *The Pillars of Society*, *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Rosemersholm*, and *The Lady from the Sea* are good examples of realistic treatment of contemporary life of the ordinary people and their problems.

Comedies in all ages have mainly concentrated on the contemporary life. They present the audience, as tragedies need not, with a picture of life as they are familiar with. The comedy of each age usually holds up a mirror to the people of that age. The Old Comedy and the New Comedy are the two special genres of comedies of ancient Greece and Rome. Some of Aristophanes' comedies, which have survived, are the only examples of the Old Comedy. We do not find any small-man-and-woman affairs or the treatment of any paltry themes in the plays of Aristophanes. Although Aristophanes did not deal with any ordinary subjects, his plays were mainly satires on contemporary political, social and moral issues in the life of the Athenians. All the extant plays of Aristophanes have topical settings: *The Clouds* is a satire on the new education of the Sophists, and caricatures Socrates, who was Aristophanes' contemporary; *Wasps* satirizes the abuses of the Athenian judicial system, and is an attack on the demagogue Cleon. *The Frogs*, which also has a contemporary setting, deals with the merits and demerits of the three great tragic playwrights. It is one of the very few plays where the mythical gods like Dionysus and Hades appear with the real life characters – Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, in the underworld.

The Old Comedy did not survive long. It disappeared to give place to the New Comedy, which used stereotyped plots and characters. The New Comedies, dealing mostly with ordinary people, reflect a close picture of life and people of the time. The following comment of an Alexandrian on Menander, the father of the New Comedy,

attests to the degree of verisimilitude in his comedies – "O life, O Menander, which of you two was the plagiarist?" (Hamilton 18). With the exception of Plautus's *Amphitryon*, which is on a mythological story, all the extant comedies of Menander, Plautus and Terence deal with contemporary life. What Plautus and Terence show us of Roman life is the first glimpse we have of Rome. Although we can visualize much about Rome and the Roman people from the comedies of Plautus and Terence, none of their plays has Rome for its place of action. The playwrights possibly found it safe and convenient to make the Romans laugh at themselves on others', especially, the Athenians' cost. The realistic comedies and the comedies of intrigues and manners have their origin in the New Comedies.

Ben Jonson, in whose comedies the influence of Plautus and Terence are easily discernable, specialized in Comedy of Humours. His comedies, *Every Man in His Humour*, *Every Man out of His Humour*, *Volpone*, *Epicoene* and *Alchemist* have topical settings. *Cynthia Revels*, a romantic courtly drama, and *The Poetester*, a satirical drama based on historical Roman characters, although deal with the present in the form of allegory, have settings in the past. Shakespeare's comedies, which are mostly romantic, have different settings with regard to time. *The Comedy of Errors*, based on Plautus's *The Twin Menechmi*, deals with the confused events of one day in the ancient town of Ephesus in Asia Minor. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has its setting in the ancient time during the reign of mythical Theseus. *Love's Labours Lost*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*, which deal with imaginary romantic stories, have settings in the past coinciding with no particular historical time, *The Merchant of Venice* , which is based on two romantic stories forming the plot, has a topical setting.

Almost all the Restoration Comedies deal with the time of the age. Such comedies written in the post-restoration seventeenth-century England, like Sheridan's

The Rivals, Etherage's *The Man of Mode*, Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, Congreve's *The Way of the World*, and in the next century, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* are comedies of manners, which deal with the intrigue of witty and sophisticated members of the society. The amoral world of Restoration Comedy was not a dream or a fictitious world with no relation to the time. It had a very precise relation to the life of the time, being based on the attitude of the Court Wits of the 1660's.

In the plays of George Bernard Shaw, the most prolific English playwright of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, we notice that the action of most of the plays starts at a specific time of the day and takes place in a fixed period. The playwright at the very beginning of a great number of his plays mentions quite clearly the time when the action begins: *Widower's House* – On a fine afternoon in August in the eighteen eighties; *Arms and the Man* – Night time late in November 1885; *Candida* – A fine morning in October 1894; *The Man of Destiny* – The twelfth of May 1796; *You Never Can Tell* – A fine August morning in 1896; *The Devil's Disciple* – At the most wretched hour between a black night and a wintry morning in 1777; *The Doctor's Dilemma* – In the early forenoon of the 15th June 1903. In some cases although the time of the day is given but the month and year are not mentioned, it does not create any problem in locating the plot in the historical perspective of time. *Pygmalion* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession* have topical settings; *Caesar and Cleopatra* and *Saint Joan* have obvious historical settings. *Androcles and the Lion*, based on a fable, deals with a period of ancient Rome. In the play *Back to Methuselah*, Shaw even gives a fixed year 4004 B. C. as the particular time Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden. Shaw called his plays "problem plays", which stands for serious plays as opposed to the frivolous ones. He judged their worth by their social utility. That is why most of his

plays concentrate on the issues and problems of the day and have usually topical settings.

The earliest account of time that we come across in Miller's playa is in *The Creation of the World and Other Business*. The play is based on the *Book of Genesis* of the *Old Testament* and deals with the origin of mankind, and the life before and after the fall. The action of the play starts in the morning of a beautiful day; at the very beginning we are introduced to God and Adam. After an exchange of greeting, God says that it is a beautiful day, and Adam replies by saying, "Oh, perfect, Lord. But they all are" (378)[1]. Their conversation indicates that Adam was not created on this particular day, but earlier:

> God: I'm very pleased with the way you keep the garden. I see you've pruned the peach tree.
>
> Adam: I had to, Lord. An injured branch was crying all night. Are we going to name more things today?
>
> God: I have something else to discuss with you this morning, but I don't see why we couldn't name a few things first.... (378)

God tells Adam that all the animals live in pairs, and so He decides to give him a wife. Adam is made to sleep, and Eve is created out of one of his ribs. We come to know later that on that very day Adam and Eve were ousted from Paradise. At one stage when Adam tells Eve that he dreamed of Paradise and mentions wistfully his breakfasts, Eve says, "I wasn't there long enough for breakfast. I was born just before lunch. And I never even got that" (411).

Creation in some places echoes the *Book of Genesis* in its action and language. In the discussion that follows, the words, which are exact reproductions from the

[1] For the sake of convenience all quotations from Miller's plays and other works are indicated by page numbers.

Bible, are in bold type. As in the *Book of Genesis*, Lucifer tempts Eve in the form of a snake to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Once she takes a bite and Adam follows her, both of them become conscious of their nakedness. God calls for Adam. Afraid to face God, they hide themselves:

> God: **Where art thou**?
>
> Adam, *still unseen*: Here, Lord. *God Turns, looking around. Adam emerges. He is wearing a large leaf. Nervously apologizing.* **I heard Thy voice in the garden and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.** *Eve emerges.*
>
> God: **Who told thee that thou wast naked?** (*Creation* 392, *Genesis* 3: 9-11)

Adam tells God how he was made to eat the fruit by Eve and she in turn tells that a snake came to her and she could not help eating of the fruit. God immediately realizes that it was the doing of Lucifer. He pronounces His curse on the serpent:

> **Serpent, because thou hast done this,**
> **Thou art cursed above all cattle,**
> **And above every beast of the field;**
> **And I will put enmity between thee**
> **and woman –**
> That means all women will hate snakes.
> Or almost all. (*Creation* 393, *Genesis* 3: 14-15)
>
> God tells Eve:
>
> **I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;**
> **In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children –**
>
> He adds:
>
> **And thy desire shall be to thy husband**
> **And he shall rule over thee.**
> No more equals, you hear? He is the boss forever. Pull up your leaf.

Turning to Adam God passes the following decree and drives the two out of Eden.

> And as for you, schmuck!
> **Cursed is the ground for thy sake,**

> **In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.**
> **Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee;**
> No more going around just picking up lunch.
> **In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,**
> **Till thou return unto the ground**;
> Yes, my friend, now there is time and age and death,
> No more living forever. You got it?
> **For dust thou art.**
> **And unto dust shalt thou return**. (*Creation* 395, Genesis 3: 17-19)

The exact Biblical situation and language are also found in the last Act where we see the family complete with the sons, Cain and Abel. Both Cain and Abel make offerings to God – Cain, the product of the soil, and Abel, a lamb from the flock. God accepts both, but shows real satisfaction with Abel's offering. Infuriated with Jealousy Cain kills Abel. God, Adam and Eve ask Cain about Abel.

> God: **Where is Abel, thy brother?**
>
> Cain, *with a new, dead indifference*: **I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?**
>
> God: **The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.** (*Creation* 439, *Genesis* 4: 9-10)

The punishment God imposes on Cain is that he will lead the life of a wanderer and fugitive.

> Cain: Better kill me now! They will stone me wherever I go!
>
> God: No. I declare to all generations: **Whoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.** For I will set a mark upon thee Cain, that will keep thee from harm. (*Creation* 444, *Genesis* 4: 9-10)

The plays dealing with the Biblical stories, and in some cases a large cycle of such plays beginning with the creation and fall and going through the last judgement, known as miracle or mystery plays, were very popular with the medieval English audience. Although in these plays the Biblical texts were greatly expanded and the unknown authors often added scenes, both comic and serious, of their own innovation,

the underlying spirit was always religious and moral. In *Adam and Eve*, as in the *Bible* the pair despite being warned by God not to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge are tempted by Serpent to eat the fruit and so, they are driven out of Paradise. In the play, unlike what we find in the *Bible*, God, who addresses the audience, has another reason not to allow Adam and Eve to stay in Paradise, that is "Lest of the Tree of Life they eat, which giveth life forever" (129). Dolour and Misery, two characters of the author's invention, take hold of Adam, but with the arrival of The Holy Ghost and his assurance of final salvation Adam is restored to happiness, and Dolour and Misery loosen their grip on Adam and leave the scene. In *Cain and Abel*, Cain is portrayed as a comic figure who has no love and respect for God and so is not willing to offer Him any tithe. Abel is gentle and pious. Pikeharness, a character invented by the writer, is Cain's servant. After the slaying of Abel when Cain seeks Pikeharness's help to bury Abel the latter runs off. Cain makes a final speech to the audience summing up his misdeeds, and the play ends (23-37).

Regarding *Creation* Miller makes it quite clear in an interview that it was not his intention to write a typical theological play based on the *Book of Genesis*:

> The thing that has always intrigued me is that I would start thinking about a Biblical character, think I understood him very well, look him up and find it was all wrong and that I'd invented a whole different role for him. So what happens is that one's fantasies get connected with the panoply of characters and stories until they are no longer what they are but what you make them. (Buckley 251)

It is interesting to note that the play based on such a serious and exalted subject is possibly Miller's only comedy of some importance amongst all his produced or published plays. He called the play "a catastrophic comedy." Although he did not

elaborate, he talked about his fondness for real comedy during the first rehearsals of the play's production (Buckley 249).

In Miller's distortion and extension of the Biblical subject in *Creation* the characters and dialogue often become anachronistic because they tend to create typical modern situations severing links with the *Book of Genesis* and turning to the comic. In such cases the language is colloquial, ordinary and at times ribald as we find when after the creation of Eve God excuses Himself of Chemuel and Raphael for a few words with Lucifer regarding what He considers the senseless activities of Adam and Eve. Bewildered, shaking His head He says, "What did I do wrong?" and seeks Lucifer's comment. The conversation continues as follows:

> God: Lucifer, they don't multiply.
>
> Lucifer: Maybe give them a few more years....
>
> God: But there's no sign of anything. Look at them – the middle of a perfect, moonlit night, and they're playing handball. (383)

God observes that every once in a while Adam does seem to get aroused, but Lucifer says that nothing more will come out of their innocence. Unlike the Biblical story the innocence of Adam and Eve in this play is centred mainly on their ignorance of sex. God points at Adam kissing a tree and says, "The damned fool has no means of discriminating" (386). Lucifer tells Him that if He wants Adam to go into Eve, sex has to be made not just good, but terrific.

Just after eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, Adam realizes his nakedness; when God asks him how he is aware of it because he never had the idea of nakedness, Adam looking down at himself utters, "Say that's right," and God mimics him. Eve

tells God about the snake, and He reacts by saying "That son of a..." leaving out the very obvious "bitch."

> God *calls out*: "Lucifer, I get my hands on you...!
>
> Eve: But why'd you put the tree here if you...?
>
> God: You're questioning Me! Who the hell do you think you are? I put the tree here so there would be at least one thing you shouldn't think about! So, unlike the animals, you should exercise a little self-control.
>
> Eve: Oh!
>
> God: "Oh," she says. I'll give you an "Oh" that you'll wish you'd never been born! But first I'm going to fix it between you and snakes.... (392-393)

Driven out of Eden, the activities of Adam and Eve change radically. Azrael tells God: "Look at Adam and Eve down there. All they do any more is screw." Later on God, too, is shocked by their postures, and tells the Angels: "Look at that! How do they think up such positions" (396)? To Azrael all this is so repulsive that he wants to kill them. God recalls to him and other Angels what Eve said at the height of her sexual ecstasy: Suddenly she cried out "Oh dear God!" and He never heard His name so genuinely praised. But Azrael declares that he finds the whole spectacle disgusting.

God, despite being God, has limitations as a creator. Lucifer reminds Him of the fish that He had created drowned in the ocean. God admits His mistake by saying that He has stopped making fish with fur any more. In seeking Lucifer's advice about the mystery of His latest creation, Eve, and later on telling the Angels that Lucifer was the only one of them "who knew how to carry on a conversation" He acknowledges the superiority of the fallen Angel to the rest.

The earliest historical setting of time that we get in Miller's plays is in *The Crucible*. The action of the play is set in Salem, Massachusetts and begins in the spring of 1692. The playwright himself tells us about the historical accuracy of the play in a prefatory note:

> This play is not history in the sense in which the word is used by the academic historian. Dramatic purposes have sometimes required many characters to be fused into one, the number of girls involved in the "crying out" has been reduced; Abigail's age has been raised; while there were several judges of almost equal authority, I have symbolized them all in Hathorne and Danforth. However, I believe that the reader will discover here the essential nature of one of the strangest and most awful chapter of human history. The fate of each character is exactly that of his historical model and there is no one in the drama who did not play a similar – and in some cases exactly the same – role in history.
>
> As for the characters of the persons, little is known about most of them excepting that what may be surmised from a few letters, the trial record, certain broadsides written at the time, and references to their conduct in sources of varying reliability. They may therefore be taken as creation of my own, drawn to the best of my ability in conformity with their known behavior, except as indicated in the commentary I have written for the text. (*Crucible* 224)

In his essay, "Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*: Background and sources," Robert A. Martin identifies the close parallels between the play and history by quoting historical facts followed by a conversation between Parris and his niece:

> As in history, the play begins when the Reverend Samuel Parris begins to suspect that his daughter Betty has become ill because she and his niece Abigail Williams have "trafficked with spirits in the forest." The real danger Paris fears, however, is less from diabolical spirits than from the ruin that may fall upon him when his enemies learn that his daughter is suffering from the effects of witchcraft. (R. Martin 95)

The conversation is as follows:

> Parris: There is a faction that is sworn to drive me from my pulpit. Do you understand that?
>
> Abigail: I think so, sir.
>
> Parris: Now then, in the midst of such disruption, my own household is discovered to be the very center of some obscene practice. Abominations are done in the forest –
>
> Abigail: It were sport, uncle. (*Crucible* 295)

Martin observes that Miller did his research in the witch-hunt affair carefully and well:

> He found in the records of the trials of Salem that between June and 10 and September 22, 1692 nineteen men and women and two dogs were hanged for witchcraft, and one man was pressed to death for standing mute. Before the affair ended, fifty-five people had confessed to being witches, and another hundred and fifty were in jail awaiting trial. (Martin, *AM's Crucible* 94)

In the play too, the total number of men and women hanged are exactly nineteen. Judge Hawthorne tells Hale, who pleads for more time for the seven prisoners to be hanged in the morning, that twelve are already executed and so the villagers expect to see them die as scheduled. The play does not have any hanging of dogs, and neither does it tell us about the exact number of people who have confessed to being witches or are awaiting trial. As found in the records of the trials, one man, who is called Giles Corey in the play, is pressed to death for standing mute and not giving any answer to his indictment (*Crucible* 322).

At the very beginning of the play Miller talks about the puritanical life-style of the 17th century Salem people and the theocratic structure of the society:

> They had no novelists – and would not have permitted anyone to read a novel if one were handy. Their creed forbade anything resembling a theater or "vain enjoyment." They did not celebrate Christmas, and a holiday from work meant not only that they must concentrate even more upon prayer. (226)

The Puritans of New England led a very rigid and austere life. To all such people any kind of recreation and entertainment was ungodly. In the play, when Rev. Parris, the local priest, informs Rev. Hale of Beverley, who is reputed to have much experience in all demonic arts, that he discovered his daughter, niece, and ten or twelve of other girls dancing in the forest, Hale is surprised beyond belief and asks, "You permit dancing?" At one stage Hale goes to Proctor's house on his own to ascertain the Christian character of the house because a passing reference was made in the court to Proctor's wife, Elizabeth, in connection with witchcraft. Hale tells Proctor that he has found out from the book of record kept by Parris that he has not been regular in attending the church on Sabbath Day. Proctor tries to prove the contrary, but Hale is far from being satisfied:

> Hale: Twenty-six time in seven month, sir. I must call that rare. Will you tell me why you are so absent?
>
> Proctor: Mr. Hale, I never knew I must account to that man for I come to church or stay at my house. My wife were sick this winter.
>
> Hale: So I am told. But you, Mister, why could you not come alone?
>
> Proctor: I surely did come when I could, and when I could not I prayed in this house.
>
> Hale: Mr. Proctor, your house is not a church; your theology must tell you that. (272)

Hale asks Proctor how it is that only two of his three sons are baptized. Proctor says in reply that he does not approve of Parris's laying his hands on his baby because he does not see any light of God in the minister. Hale's reply testifies to the unquestioned religious authority enjoyed by the priests of the day: "I must say it, Mr. Proctor; that is

not for you to decide. The man's ordained, therefore the light of God is in him" (273). Hale also does not consider it a small fault of Proctor that he fails to quote one of the ten commandments. He says, "Theology, sir, is a fortress; no crack in a fortress may be accounted small" (274).

Crucible was first produced at the Martin Beck Theater, New York on January 22, 1953. Although historically the setting of the play is Salem, Massachusetts in the end of 17th century, allegorically speaking it also has a topical setting. Miller found a close parallel between the fear imposed on a section of people in contemporary life with the witch-hunt about two and a half centuries ago. He says that he wished for a way to write a play "which would show that the sin of the public terror is that it divests man of conscience, of himself." He adds:

> I had known of the Salem witch-hunt for many years before 'McCarthyism' had arrived, and it had always remained an inexplicable darkness to me. When I looked into it now, however, it was the contemporary situation at my back, particularly the mystery of the handing over of conscience which seemed to me the central and informing fact of the time. (*Introduction* 41)

J. H. Ferres notes that to many in the audience at the Martin Beck Theater, *Crucible* "seemed to draw a parallel between the Salem witch trials of 1692 and government investigations of alleged communist subversion in this country in the late 1940s and early 1950s." Given the national temper of the time, he does not consider it surprising. (Ferres 5). Henry Popkin, in his article "Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*" gives us the trend of investigations carried out to identify the suspected communist sympathizers several years before the play was produced:

> ...public investigations had been examining and interrogating radicals, former radicals, and possible former radicals, requiring witnesses to tell about others and not only about themselves. The House Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities evolved a memorable and much quoted sentence: 'Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the communist party?' Borrowing a phrase from a popular radio program its interrogator called it 'the $64 question.' (139)

While describing the character of Hale, Miller tells us about the political fanaticism prevalent in the society of his time:

> In the countries of the Communist idealogy, all resistance of any import is linked to the totally malign capitalist succubi, and in America any man who is not reactionary in his views is open to the charge of alliance with the red hell. Political opposition, thereby, is given an inhumane overlay which then justifies the abrogation of all normally applied customs of civilized intercourse. A political policy is equated with moral right, and opposition to it with diabolical malevolence. Once such an equation is effectively made, society becomes a congerie of plots and counterplots, and the main role of government changes from that of the arbiter to that of the scourge of God. (*Crucible* 249)

Drawing an analogy between the religious fanaticism of the past with the political diabolism of his time Miller says, "The analogy, however, seems to falter when one considers that, while there were no witches then, there are Communists and Capitalists now, and in each camp there is certain proof that spies of each side are at work undermining the other" (*Crucible* 250), To many of the contemporary conscious audiences of the play the term witch-hunt was nearly synonymous with the congressional investigations then being conducted into the allegedly subversive activities of the communists and their sympathizers.

As far as *The Man Who Had All the Luck* is concerned, for each scene the month and part of the day are mentioned, but the year is not given. In this respect the setting of the play may be in any past time. But certain references and things in the

play clearly indicate that the action takes place during a particular period. While describing to David one of his past experiences Shory mentions the Armistice which indirectly refers to the First World War:

> Even over there under shot and shell, as they say, I was sure there was a special star over my head – I was the only guy nothin' ever hit.... I walked up a stairs with the whistles blowin' out the Armistice. I remember her taking off my shoes. And the next thing I knew the house was laying on my chest and they were digging me out. (501)

He explains how the janitor of the house, which he visited, got drunk on the armistice, forgot to put water in the furnace boiler, and the walls blew out. Later on Gus mentions the war when he says that one of the reasons for him not succeeding is that he is a German: "I am German. It's very simple. They remember the war here" (528).

The theme of the play as mentioned by Dennis Welland is clearly rooted in the nineteen-thirties: "It belongs to an age of privation and disquiet, of economic insecurity, when wealth seems the product of luck rather than merit, and when guilt is the response proper to the decent-minded possessor of money" (*AM* 7). Considering the small towns, the initiative in business, untrained mechanic, and references to the car, Marmon, the baseball team, Detroit tigers, etc. we can assume that the time of action in the play is some time about a decade or so after the First World War.

The setting of at least four of Miller's plays, *Mondays*, *Vichy*, *Time* and *Glass*, coincides with the time of the rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany and the Second World War period. The time of action of *A Memory of Two Mondays* falls clearly within the first half of 1930s when Hitler came to power in Germany as is indicated from the following conversation centring a news paper between Raymond, the manager of an auto-parts warehouse, and young Bert, who has recently taken a temporary job there:

Raymond: How do you get time to read that paper?

Bert: Well, I've got an hour and ten minutes on the subway. I don't read it all though. Just reading about Hitler.

Raymond: Who's that?

Bert: He took over the German government last week. (333)

When another employee, Agnes, enters the room, after the usual exchange of greetings, she tells Bert about her thirteen-year old nephew who also reads the *New York Times*. She asks him about the latest news. He tells her about Hitler. She says that her nephew, too, knows about Hitler, and that the last week he told the entire family about what he felt about Roosevelt (335).

In *Incident at Vichy* the action takes place in a place of detention in Germany occupied Vichy, France in 1942. As the play opens, we see in the detention room six men and a boy of fifteen who have been brought here for interrogation. As they wait to be called they wonder why they have been arrested. Merchand, a businessman, thinks that they have been picked up for routine document checking. He justifies the action by saying – "There are thousands of people running around with false papers, we all know that. You can't permit such things in wartime. Especially now with the Germans starting to take over down here you have to expect things to be more strict, it's inevitable" (247). Labeau, a painter, asks him uncomfortably if there is any racial implication in this. He asks Bayard, an electrician, whether he is a Peruvian and thinks that in Vichy all the Peruvians are in trouble. He regrets for not leaving for America before the invasion in 1939 although he had an American visa, and makes his mother responsible for his present troubles: "In 1939 we were packed for America. Suddenly my mother wouldn't leave the furniture. I'm sure because of a brass bed and some fourth-grade crockery. And a stubborn ignorant woman" (248). Merchand asks the

Police guard if there is a telephone one can use because he has an appointment at eleven o'clock. Labeau is surprised that he is worried about breaking an appointment although he may be on his way to work in a German coal mine.

Three more men – an old Jew, Leduc, a doctor, and Von Berg, a prince, are brought to the place. The door opens and a German Major comes out. Leduc is immediately on his feet and approaching the Major addresses him: "Sir, I must ask the reason for this. I am a combat officer, captain in the French Army. There is no authority to arrest me in the French territory. The Occupation has not revoked French law in southern France" (253). He is thrown back to his seat by the Second Detective. After a while he reminds the Major of the battle at Amiens on June, 1940 where he was in the Sixteenth Artillery facing the Major. The Major remembers the battle, but it does not help Leduc in any way.

Leduc tries to find out from the rest why they have been arrested. Monceau, a professional actor, says, "It seems they're checking on identification papers." But Labeau, because of what he heard from a girl who came up from Marseille, thinks otherwise – "They probably need labour. She said there was a crowd of people just carrying stones. Lot of the Jews, she thought; hundreds" (254). Bayard tells them that he also heard there has been a "roundup of Jews in Toulouse the last couple of weeks." Leduc argues that he never heard the Germans applying Racial Laws in French territory regardless of the occupation. The bringing of the Gypsy bothers Bayard because "They're in the same category of Racial Laws. Inferior" (255). Soon it becomes clear that almost all the people brought to the place are Jews, and they are being identified by examining their papers and circumcision. The proprietor of a café and the waiter, who will also be interrogated, reveal to the rest that the Jews will be either burnt or gassed to death.

Throughout *Vichy* references are frequently made to Hitler, the Nazis and their atrocities on the Jews. Von Berg thinks that the Nazis are a vulgar people because nothing angers them more than a sign of refinement. He says, "Can people with respect for art go about hounding Jews? Making a prisoner of Europe, pushing themselves forward as a race of policemen and brutes? Is that possible for artistic people? Monceau reminds him of the passion and sensitivity of the Germans towards art and music. Although Von Berg is appalled at the truth, he accepts the actor's words by saying, "I'm afraid I know many cultivated people... did become Nazis" (260).

The action of *Playing for Time*, which begins in 1942, reveals the two contradictory aspects of the Germans – their passion for music and their insensitiveness to the atrocities perpetrated by them on the civilian people, especially the Jews. At the very beginning of the play we are told about the historical setting of the plot – "*Cut to* a sidewalk café in the afternoon. German soldiers relax, accompanied by French girls. We are in German occupied Paris" (449). Fania, a singer, accompanying herself on the piano performs to entertain the German troops and their French girlfriends: "Nothing in her manner betrays her hostility to Nazism and its destruction of France in the recent battles" (449). In the very next shot we find her, and a twenty-year old overweight girl, Marianne, being carried away as prisoners with a number of other people inside a freight car. They are both puzzled and are not really sure why they were arrested. Marianne expresses her premonition by saying: "But somebody said it's really we're Jewish that they picked us up. Are you" (451)? They reveal to each other that they are both half-Jews, and admit that their Jewishness never meant anything to them.

Late at night the freight car stops at a station and the kapos, who are prisoners working for the administration and are armed with truncheons, brutally pull the people

out of the car onto the ground. Dr. Mengele, the German physician in charge of the selection, motions people either toward several waiting trucks with Red Cross marks or to an area where they stand and wait. As the loaded trucks start leaving, Fania and Marianne follow them not knowing what to do. A kapo approaches them, puts an arm around Marianne and offers them coffee. Marianne is frightened. Fania and Marianne end up in a prison and are sent to the quarantine block with their clothes and belongings taken away and hair shorn off. They are escorted to the barracks by a Polish Blockawa, a female Block Warden, and are asked to take bunks above. The women who are already in the bunks are "cadaverous, barely able to summon interest in these new arrivals" (459). Fania enquires of the Blockawa about the people taken in the trucks. The latter takes her arms, leads her to a window and points out. Orange glow is seen in the sky. She says, "Your friends. You see? – cooking. You too, pretty soon" (459). Marianne is afraid and starts sobbing as she lies beside Fania on the bunk. Fania tries to console her as best as she can. She is indignant at the way the Polish prisoners have been treating them, and expresses her anger by saying – "If I ever get out of here alive, I'm going to kill a Polish woman" (460). With Marianne beside her in the bunk as she turns the other way to look at the woman on the other side, she finds her skeletal and absolutely still. Fania touches her skin and draws her hand away at the cold feeling. The woman must have been dead for quite some time. She calls to the Blockawa and tells her about the corpse. The Blockawa, club in hand, comes, allows a moment to pass, "slowly looks up at Fania with the interest of a seal" and strolls away without doing anything with the dead body.

The life of Fania and Marianne in the prison with little or no food and hard manual labour makes them look haggard and famished like the other prisoners. Fania observes the cruelty and atrocity of the Nazis through the dayroom window. She sees

how the people are being pulled out of the freight cars and driven into the platform by the kapos, their luggage taken away. She sees a Mother being torn off from her child, who is tossed into a waiting truck. The Mother rushes to Frau Mandel, an SS woman, to plead with her, but she mercilessly strikes her across the face with a riding crop.

Fania's hardships are mitigated a little when she is made to join the orchestra formed by Alma Rose, a German Jew prisoner, to entertain the German officers and troops. When Mangele, Commandant Kramer and Maria Mandel, in command of the women in the camp, along with their retinues listen to Fania's song in accompaniment of the orchestra, "Mandel stands, applauding – she is excited as a patron, a discoverer of talent, and turns to Kramer, who is also clapping his hands" (481). Mandel asks Kramer if he ever heard anything more touching. He responds by saying "fantastic" and waits for Dr. Mangele's opinion whom he considers a more expert judge. Fania stares at them with horror for their love for her music. Dr. Mengele, who is a monster, the so called Angel of Death, appears to be deeply stirred and says – "I have rarely felt so totally – moved" (481).

The prisoners are frustrated with the Allies because they do not see anything being done to stop the German atrocities. Elzvieta, who is a successful actress in Poland, loses her faith in the goodness of the human beings. She admits to Fania that she wonders whether it will be worse to survive than not to. She is disappointed at the Christian kingdoms of the world because she feels that their leaders have not done anything to put an end to Nazi atrocities. What Elzvieta and the other prisoners say about the inaction of the allies has a close historical parallel:

> By the early 1940s the world knew that the Jews en masse were being hunted down by the Germans, and by 1942 that they were being incinerated, but such was the grip of anti-Semitic bigotry on American State Department and the British Foreign office

> that even the official immigration quotas – which, small as they were, might have saved at least thousands of Jews – were never filled, and the rail lines into the killing camps were never bombed even after other equally distant installations were. (*Timebends* 63)

The ordeal of the surviving prisoners, however, comes to an end when finally the British soldiers save them from imminent death.

The action of *Broken Glass*, which takes place in November 1938, also has a great deal to do with Hitler and his Germany and the persecution of the Jews. At the very beginning of the play we find that Phillip Gellburg has come to see Dr. Harry Hyman, who is also a Jew like him, regarding some complications in his wife's physical condition. She cannot walk. At one stage Hyman says, "I find this Adolf Hitler very disturbing. You been following him in the papers?" Next he says about the brutalities of the Germans: "They've been smashing the Jewish stores in Berlin all week,.." and "Forcing old men scrub the side walks with tooth-brushes" (11). Gellburg also tells him that his wife has been very upset about the treatment meted out to the Jews, but she is not prepared to hear the other side of it. He disapproves of the pride of the German Jews, and says: "Not that they are pushy like the one from Poland or Russia but friend of mine in the garment industry; these German Jews won't take an ordinary good job, you know; it's got to be pretty high up in the firm or they're insulted. And they can't even speak English" (12). Hyman's reply and the following conversation between them show their attitude towards the Jews and the Germans:

> Hyman: Well I guess a lot of them were pretty important over there.
>
> Gellburg: I know, but they're supposed to be *refugees*, aren't they? With all our unemployment you'd think they'd appreciate a little more. Latest official figure is twelve million unemployed you know, and it's probably bigger but Roosevelt can't admit it,

> after the fortune he's pouring into WPA and the rest of the welfare *mishugas*. – But she's not *annoying* me, for God's sake.
>
> Hyman: ... I just thought I'd mention it; but it was only a feeling I had...
>
> Gellburg: I'll tell you right now, I don't run with the crowd, I see with these eyes, nobody else's.
>
> Hyman: I see that. – You're very unusual – *Grinning*. – you almost sound like a Republican.
>
> Gellburg: Why? – the Torah says a Jew has to be a Democrat? I didn't get where I am by agreeing with everybody. (13)

The behaviour of the Germans in the present mystifies Hyman. He says that the Germans he met in Heidelberg, where he took his M. D., were some of the finest people he ever knew. He says, "I simply can't imagine those people marching into Austria, and now they say Czechoslovakia's next, and Poland.... But fanatics have taken Germany, I guess, and they can be brutal, you know..." (14).

In trying to diagnose the reasons behind Sylvia's inability to walk Hyman tells Gellburg that it is a case of "hysterical paralysis." He explains: "People who are anxious enough or really frightened can imagine they've gone blind or deaf, for instance... and they really can't see or hear. It was sometimes called shell shock during the war" (16). Gellburg thinks that his wife got scared when she saw pictures of the Nazi activities in the paper. He noticed that she started staring at them in a very peculiar way and then she got harder to talk to. He does not approve of such pictures. He says: "She scares herself to death with them – six thousand miles away, and what does it accomplish!..." Hyman wants to know how she collapsed. He says that one day they were going to the movies and when they were just starting down the porch steps all of a sudden she collapsed – her legs failed to support her.

The time of action of the play can also be understood from Gellburg's and his son's professions. Gellburg is head of the Mortgage department of Brooklyn Guarantee and Trust. Gellburg takes a great deal of pride in telling Hyman that above him in the firm is only Stanton Wylie Case, the Chairman and President. Case's yacht won America's cup two years ago and he had the opportunity to be aboard the yacht twice – "The only Jew ever set foot on that deck." He also has been the only Jew ever worked for Brooklyn Guarantee in their whole history, and the starting of the firm goes back to the 1890s. Gellburg's son, Jerome, is a Captain in the army. Gellburg, too, wanted to join the army when he was young, but he had to earn money to support his parents, and so he had to hive up the idea. He feels that Jerome has a good chance to end up on General MacArthur's staff.

When we see Sylvia at her home we find her reading the paper "with an intense, almost haunted interest, looking up now and then to visualize." Her sister, Harriet, cannot just understand what has suddenly become so interesting in a newspaper. She does not consider it normal and so asks Sylvia about it.

> Sylvia, *pause. She stares ahead.* They are making old men crawl around and clean the sidewalks with toothbrushes.
>
> Harriet: Who is?
>
> Sylvia: In Germany. Old men with beards!
>
> Harriet: So why are you so interested in that? (34)

Sylvia thinks that in the picture one of the old men on his knees looks just like their grandfather. The picture shows fifteen to twenty people standing in a circle laughing at the old men scrubbing with toothbrushes. All this does not concern Harriet. But Sylvia identifies herself with their suffering and so she cannot help feeling their humiliation.

She gets hysterical and wants to know why the Jews are staying in Germany to be killed. She says, "They are beating up little children! What if they kill those children" (123)! She cannot separate herself from the suffering of the Jews and so bemoans their fortune saying, "Why do they stay there, what's the matter with those people! What are they waiting for! Where is Roosevelt! Where is England! Somebody should do something before they murder us all" (124). She gets so much carried away by what is going on that she faints.

Glass can be studied clearly against the background of the anti-Semitic hysteria and the plight of the helpless Jews in Germany in the late 1930s. When Gellburg goes to see his employer in his office, he has a feeling that owing to his advice against the buying of a property which was bought by another firm later on he no longer enjoys the old confidence of Case. With all sincerity he tries to assure Case of his loyalty to him and his firm, but all this does not have any impact on Case. As far as Case is concerned, he could not have the property because of Gellburg's advice, and so he indicates that he does not need Gellburg any longer. Realizing what Case has against him, he tells Case shouting that just because Allan Kershowitz, who works for the firm which now owns the property is a Jew, it does not mean that he had any secret deal with him and advised Case not to buy the property. Burdened with the stress of his domestic problems Gellburg cannot take in any more. He has some cardiac complications and collapses on his knees. Back from the hospital, he too, feels one with the fellow Jews and their sense of deprivation and discrimination. He no longer questions his wife's feelings and apprehensions for the other Jews. He says in presence of Hyman: "I want to tell her – tell her I'm going to change. She has no right to be frightened. Of me or anything else. They will never destroy us. When the last

Jew dies, the light of the world will go out. She has to understand that – those Germans are shooting at the sun" (149)!

In *All My Sons* it is mainly the references to the Second World War, which indicate the historical time in the play. Miller says that the play is based on the factual account of a family, which he heard from a visitor quite by chance:

> During an idle chat in my living room, a pious lady from the Middle West told of a family in her neighborhood which had been destroyed when the daughter turned the father in to the authorities on discovering that he had been selling faulty machinery to the Army. The war was then in full blast. By the time she had finished the tale I had transformed the daughter into a son and the climax of the second act was full and clear in my mind. (*Introduction* 17)

Miller writes later that *Sons* was "conceived in wartime and begun in wartime" (22). When the action begins in the play we find Keller reading the Sunday paper. Frank says that he is not interested in the paper because to him it has nothing but bad news. So he asks Keller, "What's today's calamity?" As we progress with the play, the term "war" is either mentioned or referred to a number of times as something that is now over and to be regarded as a thing of the past, and so the trouble hinted by Frank cannot be the war – we get to know that the Kellers lost a son in the war (63); it's five years since Chris went to the war (68); in the battalion Chris was known as Mother McKeller (75), he got almost killed in a battle (78), and he was a great killer (121); George did not go to see his father since he got back from the war (101); Steve would like to take every man who made money in the war and put him up against a wall (109); Keller complains to Chris, "Who worked for nothing in the war" (125)? and finally Kate's attempt to stop Chris from taking Keller to the prison by saying, "The war is over! Didn't you hear? It's over" ((126)!

The references to Army Air force, P-40s crashing in Australia, missing soldiers turning up almost every month, and a man missing even longer than Larry and turning up from Burma leave no scope to doubt that the war mentioned in the play is the Second World War. In addition to the words, "August of our era" regarding the setting of the play (58), the mentioning of movie and Warner Brothers (61), phone (62), toaster (63), aspirin (70), passenger plane (88), and General Motors (109), etc. and considering the time of three years Larry has been missing and the time Chris went to the war, i.e. before five years, it is easy to locate the action at the time when the play was first produced, i.e. 1947.

Miller writes in *Timebends* about the immediate reactions from some quarters on the play. Within a few weeks of the play's opening an engineer wrote to the *Times* flatly stating that the plot was technically incredible since all airplane engine elements were routinely X-rayed to detect such defects as Keller manages to cover. "The letter went on to accuse the play of being Communist propaganda, pure and simple" (238). Its presentation to U.S. troops in Germany was cancelled after blistering protests by the Catholic War Veterans. The Commander, Max Sorrenson, even without seeing the play, condemned it as a "Party line propaganda vehicle" and demanded the identity of "who in the War Department was responsible for this outrageous arrangement." Sorrenson was quickly joined by the socialist *New Leader*. Miller says that he "was spared to reply to such accusations when a Senate committee exposed the Wright Aeronautical Corporation of Ohio, which had exchanged the 'Condemned' tags on defective engines for 'Passed' and in cahoots with bribed army inspectors had shipped many hundreds of these failed machines to the armed forces.... A number of officials went to the jail in the Wright case, while in my play poor guilt-ridden Joe Keller blew

his brains out" (238-239). All this shows how the fiction in *Sons* is inseparable from history.

After the Fall, which has a topical setting, takes us back to historical times in flashbacks. We have proof of the Nazi atrocities in this play as well. Quentin tells the listener that while in Germany he along with Holga visited a concentration camp used by the Nazis during world War II. The scene comes to his mind and we find Holga translating a legend fixed to the wall of a torture chamber: "The door to the left leads into the chamber where their teeth were extracted for gold; the drain in the floor carried off the blood. At times, instead of shooting, they were individually strangled to death. The barracks on the right were the bordello where women –" (12).

At one stage Holga tells Quentin how she felt and what she did when in the middle of the war she saw British leaflets and photographs of a concentration camp and the emaciated prisoners on the sidewalk:

> One tended to believe the British. I'd no idea. Truly. It isn't easy to turn against your own country; not in a war. Do Americans turn against America because of Hiroshima There are reasons always. And I took the leaflet to my godfather – he has still commanding our Intelligence. And I asked if it were true. "Of course," he said, "why does it excite you?" And I said, "You are a swine. You are all swine." I threw my briefcase at him. And he opened it and put some papers in it and asked me to deliver it to a certain address. And I became a courier for the officers who were planning to assassinate Hitler.... They were all hanged. (14-15)

Fall also tells us about the historical time earlier than the Second World War period. The earliest Quentin's memory takes him is the time when he was a little boy during the late 1920s. The stock market crash of 1929 cost his family a sizable business, and as a result the relationship between his parents became tense and bitter. In such a setting we see that his mother is furious when she understands that his father

has risked everything for his precarious business. She says bitterly that she ought to get a divorce and calls him an idiot. The father wants her to understand how bad the things are, saying, "Rose, the college men are jumping out of windows" (20).

In some of the memory scenes and flashbacks the setting is the early fifties when under the influence of McCarthyism the House Un-American Activities Committee was busy finding out the so called communists. The anti-communist hysteria during this time jeopardized the career and peace of many people and redefined the relationship amongst the old friends. In the play we find that Quentin's friend, Lou, a professor of law, has been subpoenaed by the Committee. This has frightened his wife, Elsie, so much that she is against the publication of his new book. The following conversation between him and Quentin shows how concerned and cautious he has become:

> Quentin: But I hope you don't delay it too long, Lou; it'd be wonderful to publish something now. Just to show those bastards.
>
> Lou, *glancing behind him*: But you see, it's a textbook for the schools, and Elsie feels that it will only start a new attack on me.
>
> Quentin: But they've investigated you. What more damage could they do?
>
> Lou: Another attack might knock me off the faculty. It's only Mickey's vote that saved me last time. He made a marvelous speech at the dean's meeting when I refused to testify. (25)

Mickey was subpoenaed too. But he wants to face the Committee once again because he wants to give the names of other people to save himself. Quentin does not approve of it:

> Quentin: But why couldn't you just tell about yourself?
>
> Mickey: They want the names, and they mean to destroy anyone who –
>
> Quentin: I think it's a mistake, Mick. All this is going to pass, and I think you'll regret it. And anyway, Max has always talked against this kind of thing!
>
> Mickey: I've had it out with Max. I testify or I'll be voted out of the firm. (33)

Later, on Mickey suggests to Lou that they go together to the Committee and disclose the names of their associates. Lou is horrified at the idea and says, "You may not mention my name. *He begins physically shaking.* And if you do it, Mickey, you are selling me for your own prosperity. If you use my name I will be dismissed. You will ruin me. You will destroy my career" (36). When Elsie comes to know about Mickey's decision she simply cannot believe her ears because she feels that "After such friendship! Such love between them! And for so many years!" it is simply incredible (38). Quentin, too, despite all his feelings for Lou is not prepared to risk his career in defending his friend. He tells his wife that he can't bear to be a separate person, but he really does not want to be known as a Red lawyer; and does not want the newspapers to eat him alive and if it comes down to it Lou could defend himself.

The American Clock "offers a cross-section of American society during the first four years of the Great Depression, showing people of all classes waiting for the dream to come back from whatever it had gone to" (Barner). At the beginning, Lee in his fifties talks about the Civil War and the Great Depression and the effect they had on the people of every class in all places. He is afraid that everything may fall apart again owing to a similar disaster. Robertson does not agree and thinks that that kind of emotional collapse is not possible again because people are a lot more sophisticated now, they expect ups and downs and they are much more sceptical. He mentions the

complacency of the Americans and their optimism to get rich every year till 1929 and the subsequent changes in their life. This is exactly what happened in reality:

> From 1927 the U. S. A. had experienced an artificial boom, fed by rash speculation in securities, lacking adequate coverage. On 24 October 1929, fear of the probity of certain concerns led to a panic on the stock market, thirteen million shares changing hands on one day. On 29 October sixteen million shares were sold. Banks subsequently failed, there were major business disasters and rising unemployment. The Crash led to a business Depression throughout America and had repercussions in Europe as well. (Palmer 346)

Robertson says how he profited during the Depression and gives the reason why he was not destroyed by the Crash. In 1927 he bought some Wright stocks and one morning they shot up sixty-seven points. He says: "That was the day I ceased to believe in the permanency of the boom. Only one illusion can multiply itself sixty-seven times in three hours, and I began to remove myself from the market. In two years it was lying all over the floor" (2). How the people got attracted by the artificial boom can be understood when we are exposed to some scenes of the time. Clarence, a shoeshine man, requests Robertson to invest ten dollars for him on the General Electric shares. Although Robertson advises him not to invest more money in stocks and to sell all his stocks, he sticks to his decision. We find the atmosphere in the Baum house quite relaxed: Rose plays the piano, Lee sings, Frank, the chauffeur applauds, and Moe is full of humour. Moe rings up his broker, Herb, to buy another five hundred shares of General Electric. But in a very short time the Depression takes a heavy toll on most people's fortune and everything turns upside down.

Hoover and Roosevelt are mentioned a number of times to show that the historical past covered in the play is during their presidency. Joey, a friend of Lee, shows Rose and Lee an autographed photograph of Herbert Hoover:

Rose (*impressed*): Where did you get that!

Lee: How'd you get it autographed?

Joey: I just wrote to the White House.

Lee (*running his finger over the signature*): Boy... Look at that, huh? – Herbert Hoover!

Rose: What a human thing for him to do! – What did you write him?

Joey: I wished him success... you know, against the Depression. (18)

Later on Joey, who becomes a qualified dentist, sells flowers for his living and Lee takes a job on a Mississippi paddleboat. Lee writes to his mother about his job, "dear Mom and Pa. It's not really a job because they don't pay me, but they let me eat in the galley and I sleep on deck" (45). In another letter while stating the pitiable condition of the common people Lee mentions President Hoover:

> The boom of the twenties was a gigantic fake. The rich have simply looted the people. And all President Hoover can say is to have confidence! I've passed fields of corn rotting on the stalks unsold, and sheriff's guarding them while on the roads people fall down from hunger. – There is going to be a revolution, Mama... (46)

In another scene of the past, while on a trip Lee enters a restaurant to eat a slice of watermelon. Isaac, the black proprietor, tells him that the main thing about the Depression is that it finally hit the white people. People like them never had anything. A county Sheriff enters the place in full uniform. He tells Isaac that he has not been paid for three months. He thinks that he will talk to his second cousin, who has just been appointed the state senator, about a job on the state police where they are still

being paid. He has brought his radio to leave with Isaac as collateral security for eight fried chicken dinners. As they put the radio on they hear a part of Roosevelt's speech:

> Sheriff: Sounds like somebody up North.
>
> Isaac: Hush! (*To Lee.*) Hey, that's Roosevelt, ain't it?!
>
> Lee: Yes.
>
> Isaac: Sure! – That's the President. (53)

The time is clearly the beginning of Roosevelt's Presidency, i.e. 1932. Later on at the relief office, when Ryan, the supervisor, tells Irene, an imposing black woman and a member of the Worker's Alliance that there is no more appropriation for her till the first of the month, she tells him in anger what she did for Roosevelt: "So why don't you get on your phone and call Washington. And while you're at it, you can remind Mr. Roosevelt that I done swung One Hundred and Thirty-Ninth Street for him in the last election, and if he want it swung again he better get crackin'" (57)! At the end of the play in his concluding words Robertson mentions the role of Roosevelt in saving the nation from the disaster it had fallen into.

In *Clock* we also get to know about the Spanish Civil War from Edie, a friend of Lee, who tells him how the people are getting united to fight fascism: "Tomorrow we're picketing the Italian consulate; Mussolini's sending Italian troops into the Spanish civil war... They're fighting it out in Spain and they're going to win; the German workers are going to rise up any day and destroy Nazism..." (65). The historical time of this phase of the civil war is 1938.

The Archbishop's Ceiling does not deal with any particular historical characters, incidents or movements, but Miller has shown in the play the mistrust prevalent between the capitalist and socialist blocks of the world. In the play we get to

know about some writer friends in the capital of an East European country in the post-Vietnam War period in the late 1970s. The action takes place in a room of a former Archbishop's palace which is now the residence of a writer, Marcus, and centres around Sigmund, who is under constant threat and pressure of the government, and his possible migration to the U. S. A. At the very beginning we find that Adrian, an American novelist, has come to visit Maya in Marcus's place. Maya is surprised that although an American, he could get a visa to come to her country so easily:

> Maya: They gave you a visa so quickly?
>
> Adrian: Took two days.
>
> Maya: How wonderful to be famous.
>
> Adrian: I was surprised I got one at all – I've attacked them you know.
>
> Maya: In the *New York Times*. (5)

Adrian expresses his disapproval of the affairs in the country telling Maya about his experience the last night. He says: "I'll give you an example – it's an hour from Paris here; we sit down to dinner last night in a restaurant and two plainclothesmen take the next table. It was blatant. Not the slightest attempt to disguise that they were there to intimidate Sigmund and Otto. They kept staring straight at them" (17). Instead of condemning the behaviour of the policemen, she says that what they did it is their business to do, but it is not Sigmund's business to be taunting the government. She asks him if in his country they go about trying to infuriate their CIA and FBI. They stay at home and write their books as the Russian writers stay home and write theirs.

After arrival of Marcus, Adrian tells him and Maya that nobody knows the truth in their country because the things are so under water here that the outsider is

bound to imagine all sorts of nightmares. Maya retorts by questioning if there are no nightmares in America. She asks him when he visited them during the Vietnam War if anyone in her country blamed him personally for it. From his personal experience Adrian tries to convince her that the things are not the same in the two countries He says: "I was arrested twice for protesting the war. Not that that means too much – we had lawyers to defend us and the networks had it all over the country the next day. So there's no comparison, and maybe I know it better than most people..." (40). But America as well, as depicted in the play and as in reality despite being a democratic country, has its own agencies to spy for and inform the government about anti-state activities, and the individuals here are as indifferent to other people's troubles as in any other country. Marcus narrates to Adrian the bitter experience he had in the past when he tried to visit America on an invitation to lecture at Syracuse University. He was put in a cage on the suspicion that he was a Red agent, and when he returned to his country he was arrested as an American spy. He says:

> I phoned the university – from my cage – and they were appalled – but no one lifted a finger, of course, and I was shipped back to Europe. It was terribly unambiguous, Adrian – you were a Fascist country; to me. I was wrong, of course, but so it appeared. (67-68)

At one stage of their conversation Marcus observes that Adrian every now and then sounds as if he is from Brooklyn. Adrian says that he is from Philadelphia. Quite surprised he asks Marcus how he knows about Brooklyn. Marcus tells him that he was in the American Army for almost three years: "I enlisted in London – we had to get out when the Nazis came. I was translator and interpreter for General McBride, First Army Intelligence" (61). All this clearly shows that the setting of the play is post-Second World War 20th century. In not naming the country in question Miller has

made the canvas of the play wider. What is true for the individuals and state control in this country is likely to be true for all other countries with authoritarian or totalitarian form of government and in some cases even for some democratic states.

Intrinsic evidences in *Clara* show that the setting of the play is in the post-Vietnam War modern period. While detective Fine tries to get some clue from Kroll about Clara's murder, Kroll suddenly asks him if he has all his toes. Kroll is amazed at the similarity between his friend, Bert, and Fine. He observes that they both have missing toes and speak exactly the same way:

> Kroll: I can't believe this is happening.
>
> Fine: Why? – he probably lost them in the war, right?
>
> Kroll: That's right. France.
>
> Fine: Well you realize the number of men lost toes on their left foot in all the wars? (35)

Kroll asks Fine if he has any children. Fine says one, and before he can complete the sentence Kroll asks again, "Didn't he kill himself?" Fine nods in affirmation and Kroll presses his fingers to his eyes. Fine continues in a matter-of-fact manner – "Nothing to be depressed about; a good number of them did that to themselves during Viet Nam, probably hundreds..." (35-36). Apart from the Viet Nam War there are also references to another war, which is obviously the Second World War.

To emphasize his wife's and his indifference to their daughter's choosing of a Porto Rican boyfriend, Kroll tells Fine that his wife had been dancing in Broadway shows for years when he met her. They are accustomed to associating with all kinds of people in show business. He says about himself, "I may as well tell you – I had a black company during the war. I spent three years with those men" (42)! In the last part of

the play he tells Fine how he became an officer during the war – "When the war began they needed officers so bad they took you without a college degree." After he was commissioned he took command of a black company in a new transport battalion. He says, "In a couple of months we had a pretty sharp battalion—later in the Pacific McArthur gave us three citations" (54). He then narrates how on one occasion he saved some of his men from being lynched.

In a memory scene Clara tries not to overemphasize the killing of a girl by her boyfriend by telling Kroll that he also has killed people:

> Kroll: In a war. That's a different thing.
>
> Clara: But you understand rage. You weren't firing from a distance or dropping bombs from a place...
>
> Kroll; But they'd jumped us, Clara. I was fast asleep in the tent and suddenly they were all over me like roaches.
>
> Clara: You felt that same uncontrollable rage, though...
>
> Kroll: It's not the same...
>
> Clara: Yes, it is – when you grabbed that Japanese and bent him over your knees till you broke his back... that was the strength of rage. (45)

Back to the present, Kroll tells Fine that the fight in the tent was in the Philippines and says more about it.

Kroll became a professional singer after the war and sang in eight musicals. He tells fine that it is how he met Jean. We get to know something about the brutalities of the war from what Fine tells Kroll to provoke him to reveal the name of Clara's boyfriend: "That day in 1945, remember? When they first showed those pictures of piles of bones? Remember that? The bulldozers pushing them into those trenches,

those arms and legs sticking up" (52)? The naming of the particular year confirms the historical accuracy regarding the time when the Second World War ended.

Miller's plays give us a wide range of time from the creation of Adam and Eve to the political rivalry and cold war between the two major blocks of the world till the late 1970s. Although apart from *Crucible* Miller has not written any historical plays, he has successfully blended history with fiction in a number of plays like *Luck, Sons, Mondays, Vichy, Time, Glass, Fall, Clock, Ceiling* and *Clara. Creation,* dealing with a Biblical theme, gives us the history of the creation of mankind. *Crucible* is possibly the only play, which is modelled from the beginning to the end on a historical factual occurrence and has a number of characters who lived in real life. The references to Hitler, the Nazis and their atrocities on the Jews, President Hoover and Roosevelt, General McArthur, General McBride, the First World War, the Stock Market Crash, the Great Depression, the Second World War, Vietnam War and a number of other historically verifiable names and incidents in the different plays remind us clearly of the historical times concerned.

CHAPTER THREE

Autobiographical Time

A writer's personal experiences many a time creep into his works consciously or unconsciously because it is impossible for a normal human being not to be influenced by the different incidents and activities that take place around him, and the people he associates with. The playwright has a vision of life that he passes down to the reader or audience through different characters. Whatever the playwright talks about, has been in a number of cases formulated by all that he has known and experienced, and so all plays, in this sense bear testimony to the author's time. In a letter written to A. W. Mcleod regarding his reactions to *Sons and Lovers*, an autobiographical novel, D. H. Lawrence says, "I felt you had gone off from me a bit, because of *Sons and Lovers*. But one sheds one's sickness in books – repeats and presents again one's emotions, to be master of them" (234). Since there is nothing universally acceptable or fixed as to what a writer should say in his work, and the autobiographical elements are very much the predilections of the individual writers, what Lawrence says here with regard to his novel cannot be generalized. On the other hand, most writers not being bothered with any sickness to shed, may just reveal some

aspects of their personal life and speak about their complaints against society and life or any other thing through their characters.

Autobiographical fiction is different from autobiography because in the former the author has license to change and invent. Coleridge says in *Biographia Literaria*, Chapter XIV – "A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth;.."(10). Pure autobiographies on the other hand are supposed to deal with facts – what happened in real life. With its emphasis on facts, which may be verified, and not fiction, the autobiography falls within the domain of scientific discourse. But in an autobiography, too, although the writer tries to be objective, everything is viewed from a subjective angle and produced on the strength of the writer's imagination. Darrell Mansell in his article, "Unsettling the Colonel's Hash: 'Fact' in Autobiography", notes: "We really do believe that autobiography is somewhat obligated to fact, what happened in real life, in a way what literature is not. We believe that fact is fact and fiction is something else"(64). He then quotes from Sidney the example of Aesop, who through his talking beasts gave us fables and not fact. Mansell asks the question, "What would make a writer decide to call his work autobiography, or fiction?", and gives a simple answer – "The writer more than anybody else, is able to declare his writing one or the other on the basis of whether or not what he writes happened in real life"(69). In many cases the characters and the thoughts and ideas of the writer are so dressed that it is difficult to find any similarities with what or whom he has known or his own thoughts and ideas, either professed or practised. The opposite kind of works, where we can clearly see the writer, his associates, his beliefs, his environments, etc. are what we normally term autobiographical.

Any account of what happened is bound to be coloured by the imaginative life of the person telling the story. If we can accept all this, 'autobiography' and 'fiction' are both autobiography and fiction. All creative writings are to a certain extent autobiographical. Even if we do not brand them as autobiographical, we associate them with the characteristics of the writers concerned, for example, Shakespearean, Miltonic, and Keatsean, which in a very broad sense are not different from what we mean by autobiographical.

According to Robert E. Sayer, "Autobiographies in all their bewildering number and variety, offer the student in American Studies a broader and more direct contact with American experience than any other kind of writing" (11). Some people scorn autobiographies as inferior kind of literature because they believe that autobiographies are too subjective and are limited by historical truth and personal facts. Being limited by the experiences of a person concerned, they are not considered works of imagination. Alfred Kazin starts his article "The Self as History: Reflections on autobiography" with three quotations from Dostoyevsky, Freud and Camus to show that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth are impossible in autobiographies because no one tells everything in his writing. But if we read Jean-Jaccques Rousseau's *Confessions*, we are amazed by the writer's naked unalloyed truth and disconcerting frankness. Rousseau says at the beginning of his book, "My purpose is to display to my kind a portrait in every way true to nature, and the man I shall portray is myself" (17). Rousseau's *Confessions* and the personal documents like Whitman's *Specimen Days*, Adam's *Education*, Conrad Aiken's *Ushant*, and Malcolm X's *Autobiography* can be more lasting than many a novel. "What preserves such books is the news they bring us of history in a new form. From Franklin's *Autobiography* to Richard Wright's *Black Boy* and Frederick Exley's *A Fan's Notes*,

we have the epic of personal struggle, a situation rather than a plot. The writer turns himself into a representative sinner or Christian or black or Jew – in Exley's case a comically incurable drunk" (Kazin 36). Miller's autobiography, *Timebends*, too, which was published in 1987, will survive the test of time for the account he gives of his life against the background of the socio-economic and cultural scenarios of his time.

A good number of American writers, whether essayists, poets, novelists or playwrights tend to be autobiographical in nature. We find autobiographical elements amply demonstrated in the works of the writers like Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, Hemingway, Saul Below, Alex Haley, O'Neill, and Tennessee Williams. Kazin mentions the tendency of the American writers to be autobiographical:

> In my experience, Americans sooner or later bring any discussion around themselves. The American writers with whom, more than any others, I have lived my spiritual life tend to project the world as a picture of themselves even when they are not writing directly about themselves. No doubt this has much to do with the emphasis on the self in American ancestral Protestantism. Theology in America tends to be Protestant. The self remains the focal point of American literary thinking. From Jonathan Edwards to Hemingway we are confronted by the primitive and unmediated self arriving alone on the American strand, then bathing opposing selves who share with us only the experience of being an American. (32)

Saul Bellow has written only one novel, *The Victim*, in which he is not a leading character. Most plays of O'Neill alludes to the life of the writer to different degrees. *Welded*, written in 1923 and produced in 1924, reflects the marital tension of his life during this time. In his later plays, *The Iceman Cometh*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and *A Moon for the Misgotten*, we can get clear pictures of his past life. Besides, a number of his important characters in plays like *The Hairy Ape*, *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *Long Day's Journey into Night* express a romantic longing ,

shared by O'Neill himself, to belong, to be one with pristine nature and escape from the stark realities of life. Tennessee William's most famous play, *The Glass Menagerie*, is based on the playwright's family, and their life in St. Louis, the play's locale. In the play, the protagonist, Tom Wingfield, recalls his life in St. Louis with his mother and sister. We see that at the persuasion and nagging of his mother to bring home "gentlemen callers" to meet his sister, he brings home a young man from the shoe warehouse where he works. Tennessee William's first name is Thomas; his parents moved from Columbus to St. Louis along with Tom and their older daughter, Rose, in 1918; just before his senior years in 1932 his father removed him from college and obtained for him a $65-a-month job in the warehouse of International Shoe Company.

An author's work does not necessarily reflect his personality, character and beliefs. There is no reason to believe that King Lear, Prospero or any other character of Shakespeare speak like Shakespeare: authors cannot be assigned the ideas, feelings, views, virtues, and vices of their heroes. And this is true not only of dramatic characters or characters in a novel but also *I* of the lyrical poem. "The relation between the private life and the work is not a simple relation of cause and effect" (Wellek 77). It is difficult to pinpoint any incident in Shakespeare's plays that is autobiographical. On the other hand we may see a great deal of O'Neill and Miller in their plays. The ancient writers of whose lives we do not have much information are difficult to be traced in their works even in the cases when they possibly tried to speak for themselves. There are, broadly speaking, two types of writers, the objective and the subjective: Those who like Keats and T. S. Eliot, stress the poet's 'negative capability,' his openness to the world, the obliteration of his concrete personality, and

the opposite type of the writers who aim at displaying their personality, who want to draw their portraits and express themselves.

Autobiographical elements are inseparable from Miller's plays. Neil Carson says that one problem with the plays of Miller is their acknowledged autobiographical nature. He adds:

> Although most of the dramas are based on an external source (overheard story, novel, published memoir) they become translated in the course of composition into something personal. 'The writer who wants to describe life,' Miller once explained, 'must describe his own experiences.' Going even further, he maintained that the 'best work that anybody ever writes is the work that is on the verge of embarrassing him.... Where he puts himself on the line.' Miller's natural tendency in the direction of subjectivism is compounded by his particular talent. Whereas writers like Dickens or Shakespeare appear, like photographic plates, to be able to reproduce the astonishing variety of nature, Miller is more like a painter who works always from the same model. He does not so much create other people in his plays as divide himself up into a number of *personae*.
>
> It is the amalgam of the documentary and the personal in the plays that presents the reader or spectator with the most difficult challenge. Many critics find that the autobiographical elements in some of the plays give them a heightened intensity and psychological reality. Others sense in the personal preoccupations of the playwright an inability (or at least a failure) to enter sympathetically into the lives and problems of characters very different from his own. (2)

In a proper work of art, if it contains elements which can be identified as biographical, the subjective elements are so arranged and transformed that they form an integral part of the work and lose all that is idiosyncratic or individualistic. "Once the author's identity is discovered," Miller observes, "a certain counterfeit of knowingness spreads through the readers soul, quite as though he had managed to see through an attempt to trick him into believing that the work at hand was art rather than a disguised biography" (*With Respect* 66). He does not deny the autobiographical

elements and allusions in his plays. If we go through Miller's plays, we can find some very obvious reflections of the time of Miller in terms of his personal life and the people and the society he was familiar with.

In a press interview at the premiere of *Sons* in 1947 Miller said that in all his plays and books he tried to take settings and dramatic situations from life that he experienced and saw around him, which involved real questions of right and wrong. Leonard Moss says about the link between Miller's plots and characters with history and autobiography:

> Though intrigued by 'interior psychological questions,' Arthur Miller has tried in his plays to create a 'sense of dealing with an existing objective fact.' One way he does this is to draw upon history or autobiography for his plots and characters. With the possible exception of *Focus*, his only novel, and *The Creation of the World and Other Business*, all his writing alludes in some manner to actual persons and events. Usually such references are unobtrusive; sometimes as in *The Crucible* and *After the Fall*, they are quite prominent. A good deal of this allusion is autobiographical.(1)

Moss mentions the following autobiographical connections in Miller's unpublished play, *They Too Arise*, a revised version of *No Villain*:

> The Jewish family of *They Too Arise* – a small-scale coat manufacturer, his wife, father-in-law, two sons, and a daughter – duplicates Miller's family. The younger son, reminiscent of Arthur Miller as a youth, does not care for the business world, attends college in Michigan, 'wants to be a writer,' and leans towards a socialistic solution to the economic problems of the 1930s. Miller's Austrian born father was serious in his business dealings but jocular at home, just as Abe Simon in *They Too Arise*,..(1-2).

We find repetitions in some form or others of all these autobiographical elements in the later works of Miller. The Jewish family in the short story *Don't Need* with the

five-year old Martin, an elder brother, Ben, their parents and grandfather duplicates Miller's own family. Martin is clearly the five-year old Miller just before he started going to school. Once when Martin's mother kept looking down at him without speaking with her eyebrows creasing together he became quite self-conscious –

> ...and he was suddenly aware that he was the only one in the family, including his cousins, whose ears stuck out. "Pull in your ears, Martin, we're going through a tunnel!" And his uncles looking down at him grinning – "Where did he come from? Who does he take after?" He did not look like anybody, he recalled as he sat there before him. (8)

At the age of five Miller had the prospect of going to School with his elder brother, Kermit. Comparing himself with his brother Miller says –

> ...he was handsome and I was funny looking, with ears that stuck out and forced me to endure my mother's brother Moe's inevitable salutation when he came to visit, "Pull in your ears, we're coming to a tunnel." As for my father's side of the family they invariably greeted me by staring at me with supercilious smiles ... and saying, "Where did he come from?" (*Timebends* 10)

The comments on Martin's and young Miller's physical looks as recreated and recalled by the writer in both fiction and fact are exactly the same.

In *Clock*, through Lee and Robertson Miller gives an account of the American people during the Great Depression. Part fiction and part fact, the play apart from displaying the great economic crisis of the time reflects the condition of Miller's own family before and during the Depression. Miller recalls how he initially based *Clock* on *Hard Times*, a book of interviews about the Depression by Studs Terkel, but he soon realized that his "own life was moving into it, until there was very little of Terkel left" (Schlueter and Flanagan 37). We are reminded of the writer's boyhood family

from what we see of the Baum family in the play: Moe Baum, the father, is a businessman broken by Depression; Rose Baum, the mother, is a cultured and complaining wife; Lee Baum, their fourteen-year old son, is an aspiring writer.

In the mid-twenties, when Miller was a little boy, all was hope and security in his family; "with the stock market continuing its apparently endless climb and the coat business better than ever" his father, Isidore Miller had nothing to worry. The family enjoyed visiting the factory of Miltex Coat and Suit Company. Miller records in *Timebends* his pleasure and pride during such visits with his brother – "The gazes of the help upon us were filled with respect and a kind of congratulation for being who we were, the sons of the boss and our clever and pretty mother" (18). During this time of his life his mother bedecked with diamonds on her fingers frequented the music shows and other places of entertainment. The Millers lived in affluence with no concern for anything. Miller says, "In the twenties in the apartment at the edge of Harlem, six stories above the glorious park, from whose windows we could see far downtown, even down to the harbor, it seemed we had no thought of politics" (6). But the Great Crash of 1929 changed the life-style of Miller's family as his father lost his entire business in the collapse of the stock market and the ruination of his garment company. Miller's view of his mother and their house during this time as noted below serve as a sharp contrast to what they had been earlier:

> ...in the little Brooklyn house she shuffles about in carpet slippers, sighing, cursing, with a sneer on her lips, weeping suddenly and then catching herself, in the winters feeding the furnace with as scant a shovelful of coal as will keep it burning, making meal money at high-stakes professional bridge all over Midwood and Flatbush, which are sometimes raided by the police, whom she talks into letting her go home to prepare supper.... My mother moved with the times. (4)

The Baum family too, just immediately before the Depression is not aware of any financial strain. Rose plays on her piano and her young son, Lee, sings with her. Moe Baum wants his broker to buy more shares for him. They have a spacious house where Rose's father has been comfortably housed every alternate six months. Her sister, Fanny, is reluctant to take him away from this comfort to her small one-bedroom house in Brooklyn. What Rose tells Frank, their chauffeur, indicate the happy and carefree life they have been used to – "You'll drop us at the theatre and then take my father and sister to Brooklyn and come back for us after the show. And don't get lost please" (*Clock* 5). Moe offers Lee a ride with them but he decides to stay back. Rose says, "Good, and go to bed early. I'll bring home all the music from the show and we'll sing it tomorrow. (*kisses.*) Good night, darling. (*She has a fur stole over her arm and swings out.*) Realizing Lee's size Moe asks him if he should talk to his mother about going to a college. Lee replies, "Oh no, not for a couple of years" (7). But time changes everything. Depression takes a heavy toll of their affluence as Moe loses everything. During this time Moe, like Miller's father, can no longer afford to retain a chauffeur and so he tells him to leave. The Baum family, like the Miller family, moves to a new locality in Brooklyn. Lee's grandpa who stays with them can find no place for his four or five walking sticks and two hatboxes and so he lays them on the floor. He reprimands Rose for buying such a small house and says:

> One bedroom for so many people is not right – you had three bathrooms in the apartment and you used to look out the window, there was the whole New York. Here ... listen to that street out there, it's a Brooklyn Cemetery. And this barber is *very* bad – look what he did to me. (21)

Like Lee's grandpa Miller's grandfather, Louis Barnett, too, carried with him wherever he went a number of walking sticks and hats. Since during the Depression he

no longer had a home of his own, he moved to the Millers' tiny house in Brooklyn and shared the same small room with Miller. Miller says about him – "Louis Barnett, who in the worst months of the Depression, when every cent in his pocket came from my father, who himself had next to nothing, would still stroll down to the barber's every single week to get his little vandyke and moustache properly trimmed and powdered and his bald head sprinkled with perfume" (*Timebends* 31).

Referring to the house in Brooklyn and the financial hardships of the family during the Depression years, Miller says that there could hardly have been a cheaper way to live, but by 1932 his mother was required to charm the man in the bank on King's Highway to extend one month's mortgage payment into the next. For survival of the family she had to either sell or pawn her immense stock of jewelry one by one. Miller writes in *Timebends*:

> By the early thirties the last of her disposable pieces of jewelry had been pawned or sold, all but a diamond brooch of her mother's and a few wedding presents she refused to part with, as though to shed them would have extinguished her last hopes, which, like the seeds for next year's crop, must not be eaten. (112-113)

Like Miller's mother, Rose, too, is compelled to cope with the time and pawn her last pieces of jewelry. Young Lee shows his ignorance of what a pawnshop means when she wants him to take her diamond bracelet, which was a birthday present from her husband, to the pawnshop. She explains the meaning and sends him off with the gorgeous bracelet which was her sister, Fanny's envy. The next time when she removes a pearl choker from her neck she does not need to explain to her son what a pawnshop means. But Lee, not at all happy about it, asks her about his father's

business. Rose says, "He put too much capital in the market, dear – it made more there than in his business. So now ... it's not there anymore..." (23-24).

Robertson, a corporate leader in his seventies, tells Lee in his fifties how bad the things were during the Depression. He says that everything went out of control, and asks Lee if he was aware of it. Lee replies: "All I knew was ... it was a very strange July. I'd graduated high school but nobody was mentioning college anymore. It was like having to ... invent your life" (34). This exactly must have been the feeling of Miller after his graduation from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1932. Although he was interested in higher studies, he could not get into any university because his academic record was not satisfactory and his parents did not have the means to bear his educational expenses. "Decidedly non-intellectual, he spent his boyhood playing football and baseball, skating, swimming, dating, failing algebra three times, reading adventure stories and just plain fooling around" (Moss 3). Miller's realization of his laxness as a school student and the financial constraint in the 1930s are reflected in Lee of *Clock* as well as in Bert of *Mondays*: Young Lee finds out from a catalogue that in Cornell there is no tuition fee at all for the bacteriology degree. But he does not like the idea of becoming a bacteriologist. He says, "Boy, I wish I'd gotten better marks. I don't know what I was doing in school." His mother says, "You were in love with a baseball bat" (35). To find about the other universities Lee thumbs the catalogue further but getting no encouragement from his mother he abandons the idea of going to a college and decides to look for a job. This is what the conversation below indicates:

> Lee (*gently breaking the ice*): I guess it's too late to apply for this year anyway. Don't you think so?

> Rose (*turns to him*): Well, I guess probably for this year. I imagine so, dear.
>
> Lee: Okay, Ma.
>
> Rose: I feel so terrible – all those years we were throwing money around, and now when you need it –
>
> Lee: That's Okay. I think maybe I'll try looking for a job. But I'm not sure whether to look under 'Help Wanted, Male,' or 'Boy Wanted.' (36)

Bert in *Mondays* is fully aware that his past negligence to studies has made his entry into a college uncertain. The following conversation with Raymond, the manager of the auto-parts warehouse where he has been working, shows that with his low grades in the past examinations he does not feel at all confident to get a place in any college:

> Raymond: I hear you're going to college. Is it true?
>
> Bert, *embarrassed*: Oh, I don't know, Mr. Ryan. They may not even let me in, I got such bad marks in high school.
>
> Raymond: *You* did?
>
> Bert: Oh, yeah. I just played ball and fooled around, that's all! I think I wasn't listening, y'know? (333-334)

Lee considers himself lucky in getting a job. But this only makes Rose full of remorse for their changed lot. She simply cannot forget their past affluence to which the present hardship is a sad contrast. She cannot reconcile herself to the fact that in time of Lee's need the family cannot be of any assistance. At a later stage we find Rose in the company of Fanny and Fanny's daughter, Lucille, trying to keep the collector away by keeping the front doors and windows of their house closed to give the impression that nobody is inside the house. She is in tears and Fanny tries to

console her. Time has taught her not to have any illusion about anything or any person:

> Fanny: Rose, dear, come on – something'll happen, you'll see. Moe's got to find something soon, a man so well-known...
>
> Rose: I wouldn't mind so much if we hadn't been so stupid! He builds a marvellous business like that and lets a bunch of idiot brothers suck him dry.
>
> Lucille: Couldn't he ask his mother for a little?...
>
> Rose: His mother says there's a Depression going on. Meantime you can go blind from the diamonds on her fingers. Which he gave her! The rottenness of people! – I tell you, the next time I start believing in anybody or anything I hope my tongue is cut out! (69)

Rose's anger and frustration with Moe and her outbursts against Moe's brothers have a close parallel to what Miller's mother felt regarding her husband and his brothers and mother at more or less the same time. Miller writes in *Timebends* about his father's booming business and what he did for his brothers and other relatives:

> His father's firm, S. Miller and Sons, had recently been dissolved, and a veritable wave of brothers and their outriding relatives had descended on Isidore and his Miltex Coat and Suit Company, which he had broken away to establish after the Great War. Family loyalty had forced him to make jobs for all of them, something my mother would blame for his firm's collapse a few years hence. (12)

Later on Miller writes about his mother's attitude towards his grandmother: "She hated his mother – who continued to live two miles away in a great old Flatbush house, apparently knowing nothing of hard times – and through his mother womankind, which she saw as born to suck out the marrow of men,.." (*Timebends* 113).

Miller's father was very fond of his mother, i.e., Miller's grandmother, and often bought her expensive presents. In *Clock* Rose tells her sister that her husband gave his mother exactly the same kind of bracelet which he had given her as a birthday present. In *Fall* Quentin's mother talks sarcastically of his father's devotion to his mother and the expensive presents he buys her every year (17). The grandmother who in both the plays is blamed for her apathy towards her son's misfortune reminds us of Miller's grandmother and her indifference to his father's bad days. Miller describes her as a woman, to whom until his father married at the age of thirty-two, "he handed over his sizable weekly pay in return for an allowance. His three brothers had done the same. A formidable woman, she would decline, at a particularly desperate moment during the Depression, to loan him money..." (*Timebends* 9-10). Miller, no doubt, had in mind his mother and grandmother when he created the characters of the mothers in *Clock* and *Fall*. The similarities between Miller's mother and the fictional mothers can also be noticed in their fondness for reading books and their frustration at their academic lives being cut short by suddenly bartering them into arranged marriages by their fathers.

Miller was very much influenced by his time and the life around him. What he says below in "The Shadows of the Gods" is clearly echoed in *Clock*:

> My standard, my viewpoint, whether it appears arbitrary, or true and inevitable, did not spring out of my head unshaped by any outside force. I began writing plays in the midst of what Allan Seager, an English teacher friend of mine at Michigan, calls one of the two genuinely national catastrophes in American history – the Great Depression of the thirties. The other was the Civil War... through no fault or effort of mine it was the ground upon which I learned to stand.
>
> There are a thousand things to say about that time but maybe one will be evocative enough. Until 1929 I thought things were pretty solid. Specifically, I thought – like most Americans – that

> somebody was in charge. I didn't know exactly who it was, but it was probably a businessman, and he was a realist, a no-nonsense fellow, practical, honest, responsible. In 1929 he jumped out of the window. It was bewildering. His banks closed and refused to open again, and I had twelve dollars in one of them. More precisely, I happened to have withdrawn my twelve dollars to buy a racing bike a friend of mine was bored with, and next day the Bank of the United States closed. I rode by and saw the crowds of people standing at the brass gates. Their money was inside! And they couldn't get it. And they would never get it. As for me, I felt I had the thing licked.
>
> But about a week later I went into the house to get a glass of milk and when I came out my bike was gone. Stolen. It must have taught me a lesson. Nobody could escape that disaster. (*Essays* 176-177)

At the very beginning of *Clock* Lee in his fifties tells the audience about the Great Depression and its effects on the American people:

> There have been only two American disasters that were truly national. Not the first or second World Wars, Vietnam or even the Revolution. Only the Civil War and the Great depression and the Great Depression touched nearly everyone wherever they lived and whatever their social class. (Slight pause.) Personally, I believe that deep down we are still afraid that suddenly, without warning, it may all fall apart again. And that this fear, in ways we are rarely conscious of, still underlies... (1)

Robertson enters the scene and says that he does not think that that kind of collapse is really possible again. He does not mean only the stock market but also the emotional collapse. He says, "By the year 1929 you had a general belief that every American was inevitably going to get richer every year. People are a lot more sophisticated now, they expect ups and downs, they are much more sceptical ..." (1-2). Both Lee and Robertson, we can say, voice Miller's understanding of the effects of the Depression on the American people.

In a scene centring on Tony's Speakeasy during the beginning of the stock market crash we see the millionaires Jesse Livermore and William Durant. Livermore inquires of Tony if he could actually see Randolph Morgan, a stockbroker, falling. The latter replies in the affirmative and tells them how he committed suicide by jumping out of the window. Livermore responds saying, "Poor, poor man." Durant calls him "Damned fool" (11). But within minutes the slide in the stock market shares reduces them to penniless men. Robertson says how, not long after, Livermore shot himself in the washroom of a hotel.

Young Lee, like young Miller, buys a beautiful bike from his friend for twelve dollars emptying his savings account. At a later stage he parks the bike outside his house and goes inside to inform his mother that the bank from where he withdrew all his money amounting twelve dollars has just been closed down by the government because it is broke. He congratulates himself for timely withdrawal of his money. His mother hands him her pearl choker and instructs him to go to the pawnshop with it. As he returns to the place where he parked his bike, he is at a loss to find it stolen. He curses the thief and says that he would like to see if he can trot to the shop.

Miller is fully aware of the financial hardships people felt during the Depression. He noticed that there was no stability anywhere. He says in "The Shadows of the Gods": "practically everything that had been said and done up to 1929 turned out to be a fake. It turns out that there had never been anybody in charge." He adds in the same writing:

> What the time gave me, I think now, was a sense of an invisible world. A reality had been secretly accumulating its climax according to its hidden laws to explode illusion at the proper time. In that sense 1929 was our Greek year. The gods had spoken, the gods, whose wisdom had been set aside or distorted by a civilization that was to go onward and upward on

> speculation, gambling, graft, and the dog eating the dog. Before the crash I thought "Society" meant the rich people in the Social Register. After the crash it meant the constant visits of strange men who knocked on our door pleading for a chance to wash the windows, and some of them fainted on the back porch from hunger. In Brooklyn, New York. In the light of weekday afternoons. (*Essays* 177)

What Miller says here about the jobless hungry people of the time is not different from what Lee saw and experienced at the same time. Lee says: "You'd see the stranger coming down the street – poor and ragged – and he'd go past house after house, but at our driveway he'd make a nice self-assured turn right up to the back porch and ask for something to eat" (29). We then see hoe Henry, an Iowa farmer, knocks at their door, implores for a job and at one point fails to support himself out of hunger. Dwelling on the jobless condition of the people during the Depression days, Miller says that there were "touch football games in the side streets between teams whose members were twenty or older, fellows with no jobs or even hopes for one anymore" (*Timebends* 119). In *Clock*, Lee tells Robertson that "fellows with advanced degrees were out on the block throwing footballs around all day" (34)!

Young Lee gets a job on a Mississippi paddleboat where he is not paid, but he can eat in the galley and sleep on the deck. Lee's friend Joe, a qualified dentist, sells flowers on the subway. Lee sees a county Sheriff in a restaurant who wants to get some chicken dinners leaving behind his radio to its owner as a collateral security. The Sheriff has not been paid for three months and so he intends to talk to his cousin, the new State Senator, for a job on the State Police where they are still being paid. Later on we find a number of people including Lee crowding at a relief office. Lee wants to be on relief to qualify for a WPA job. In order to qualify for relief he has to prove to the relief supervisor that he has no place with his father. So he has brought his father with him with a pre-rehearsed plan so that he disowns him in front of the supervisor.

Moe waits there and starts a conversation with Toland who used to be a cab driver but does not have a cab anymore. He tells Moe, "What're you gonna do? You can't make it in a cab anymore. The town is walking..." (58). He asks Moe about his profession. Moe replies, "I sell on commission right now. I used to have my own business." Toland's reaction to Moe's words indicates the changes that have taken place from the past till date and the need for doing something to change their lot – "Used-ta. Whoever you talk to, 'I used-ta.' If they don't do something, I tell ya, one of these days this used to be a country" (58).

After graduation from the university in 1938 Miller wanted to get into the WPA Theatre Project. Miller did exactly what Lee does to get the WPA job. Miller writes in *Timebends*:

> To join the WPA Theatre Project it was necessary to get on the welfare rolls first, in effect to be homeless and all but penniless. And to get the bureaucratic process started I had brought my father to the Welfare Department's requisitioned old warehouse near the Hudson River, where we put on a fine scene of parental indignation against filial rebellion. The welfare worker looked on as we demonstrated why I would never be allowed to sleep in my family home, and judged the performance adequate, without necessarily believing anything more than our economic desperation. (246)

Unlike Miller, Lee in his fifties is a graying journalist. But what we learn of the Depression from Lee may be considered as Miller's own words. Besides, the periods of Lee's life and of his parents correspond to those of Miller and his parents. From the experiences of Lee, especially as a boy and youth, the good and bad days of his family in the early twenties and 1929 to the thirties respectively we can gather the experiences of Miller and his family during these times.

Eighteen-year old Bert, who works in an auto-parts warehouse in New York in the play *Mondays*, clearly reminds us of Miller of the same age at about the same time. Benjamin Nelson, comparing Tom Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* and Bert in *Mondays*, says that each character speaks in great part for the author. The element of the autobiographical time in *Mondays* becomes clear from what he says as below:

> Although Bert is no more an unerring autobiographical portrait of Miller than Tom is of Williams, both characters recall events based on the playwrights' lives. Tom Wingfield remembers a family conflict similar to Williams' in St. Louis during the Depression, and Bert evokes memory of the year and a half Miller worked in an automobile parts warehouse in Manhattan during the same bleak decade. (Nelson, *Memory* 149)

Miller in *Introduction* expresses his special fondness for the play:

> I wrote it, I suppose, in part out of a desire to relive a sort of reality where necessity was open and bare; I hoped to define for myself the value of hope, why it must arise, as well as the heroism of those who know, at least, how to endure its absence. Nothing in this book was written with greater love, and for myself I love nothing printed here better than this play. (49)

All this speaks for the playwright's direct involvement in the play and its protagonist. The memory of the two Mondays, the second Monday being the last day of Bert at the warehouse, is not in reality the impression of any unknown narrator of these two days. It is actually the writer of the play who gives us his memory, real or imagined, of the two Mondays. The play, concentrating on Bert, gives us the closest account of autobiographical time amongst the plays of Miller.

During the Depression period, when Miller graduated from high school, his family failed to show up for the ceremony. Miller writes in *Timebends*: "I knew that with my education at an end I was but another new young man on the long line

waiting for work. Anyway, with a master's degree, as the saying went, you might get hired to sell ties at Macy's" (119). Failing to get the support of any universities for his higher studies, he desperately looked for a job. He worked at a number of jobs and settled down as a shipping clerk in an automobile parts warehouse in Manhattan at $15 a week. He travelled a long distance in the subway to reach his place of work. During this time he read more than he had in the rest of his life. He read the great Russian novelists, especially Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, and he began to dream of becoming a writer.

At the beginning of *Mondays* we see that Bert has come to the warehouse early because he wanted to get a seat in the subway. Raymond, the manager, has time to ask him some personal questions, like, how he gets time to read the paper he has with him, if it is true that he will go to a college, how much it is going to cost him, etc. without forgetting to tell him to sweep up the excelsior laying around the freight elevator and open the three crates of axles that came on Saturday. It seems Bert has taken up the present job with the sole purpose of saving some money for his future educational expenses. Raymond wants Bert to tell him when he decides to leave so that a substitute may be arranged to fill his place. Bert assures him that it would not be possible for him to leave the place quite soon because he needs to have the entire amount for his first-year study out of his earning. Out of curiosity the manager asks him how much he saves. Bert says that he has been saving eleven to twelve dollars a week from the fifteen-dollar wage for the four to five hundred that he would require for the first year.

Gradually the other employees enter the room. Their togetherness in an office for a common job has made them quite well-acquainted with each other's life and problems. They are mostly concerned with the present. Besides discharging their

allotted responsibilities, they also engage themselves in the exchange of pleasantries and inquiries about each other. As Raymond moves for the toilet, Agnes enters. The weather makes her tell Bert, "Bet you wish you could go swimming, heh?" He replies, "Boy, I wouldn't mind. It's starting to boil already" (335). She tells him of her thirteen-year old nephew who is a wonderful swimmer and like Bert reads the *New York Times*. She is surprised that he is still with the book, *War and Peace*. Bert is embarrassed and says apologetically that he gets time to read it only in the subway.

Like Miller, Bert becomes attached to the people with whom he works, and shares their troubles, joys, hopes and disillusionment. After saving some money he prepares to leave. "On the morning of his departure he expects some kind of significant moment, a sign perhaps that his presence has meant something to his friends; but lost in their personal problems and the deadening morass of routine, they barely notice him" (Nelson, *Memory* 150). The concluding lines of his rumination on his departure show what indelible imprints the job at the warehouse has left in his mind although he understands very well that he will not be remembered by anyone:

> God, it's so peculiar to leave a place!
> I know I'll remember them as long as I live,
> As long as I live they'll never die,
> And still I know that in a month or two
> They'll forget my name, and mix me up
> With another boy who worked here once,
> And went. Gee, it's a mystery! (371)

This is what Miller must have felt about his final departure from the warehouse. When it is time for Bert to leave he wishes his fellow-workers could stop their work for a moment. But he finds everyone engrossed in his/her work. There is no sentimental good-bye. Bert, or we can say Miller, remembers the time at the warehouse very well and the memory of the two Mondays amply demonstrates it.

Regarding *Fall*, Leonard Moss in his book *Arthur Miller* quotes Leslie Hanscom from *Newsweek* to say that although the playwright was normally a "fugitive from familiarity," he had "written what is undoubtedly the most nakedly autobiographical drama ever put on public view" (66). Miller defended himself by denying any autobiographical intention whatsoever. "The man up there isn't me," he retorted in reference to Quentin; "a playwright doesn't put himself on the stage, he only dramatizes certain forces within himself" (66). Although the play amply demonstrates the dramatization of such forces and not bare representation of the writer, if we are aware of Miller's life and family, we can very easily trace the prototypes of the main characters of *Fall* in real life. Quentin's boyhood, friends, his marital and social lives, political conviction, his parents – their relationship, background, education and attitude towards life are very much like those of Miller and his parents.

The country of Quentin's father's origin is unknown to us, but we are told that he migrated to America all alone when he was a little boy with a tag around his neck like a package in the bottom of a boat (20). Miller's father, Isidore Miller (Izzie), too, was put on a train all alone from the middle of Poland for the port of Hamburg before his seventh birthday "with a tag around his neck asking that he be delivered, if the stranger would be so kind, to a certain ship sailing for New York on a certain date" (*Timebends* 9). Miller describes his journey and reception as follows:

> ...after three weeks in steerage – the bottom deck where the light of day never shone, an area near the chains that operated the steering gear, where twice a day a barrel of salt herring was opened for the scores of emigrant families, from which naturally, a child travelling alone got no more than the leavings – he arrived in New York with his teeth loose and a scab on his head the size, they used to say, of a silver dollar. His parents were too busy to pick him up at Castle Garden, and sent his

> next-eldest brother, Abe, going on ten, to find him, get him through Immigration, and bring him home to Stanton Street and the tenement where, in two rooms, the eight of them lived and worked sewing the great long many-buttoned cloaks that were the fashion then. (*Timebends* 9)

Izzie was put into a school for several months and then removed to take Abe's place at one of the sewing machines never to see the inside of a school again. His "mother's selfishness had forced him to work before he was twelve so that he could lay his weekly pay on her dinner plate every Saturday night" (*Timebends* 113). It is quite obvious that he did not have the opportunity to read or write any language. Martin's father in *Don't Need* and Quentin's father in *Fall,* are both uneducated like Miller's father. The grandmothers too, in both the works have been drawn as selfish as Miller's grandmother. Once Martin was sulky with his mother. When she told his father that she was trying to help him because he was just five years old, the latter expressed his disapproval by telling her, "A boy five years old! I was six I was out selling newspapers." "Sure," she said sarcastically, "that's why you got such a good education!" She turned to Ben, her elder son, and said, "Not even to let a boy go to school so he could maybe read a book in his life" (38). Quentin's mother's attitude to his uneducated father and selfish grandmother is similar to that of Miller's mother. She tells young Quentin how she felt when she understood that his father could neither read nor write:

> ... two weeks after we were married; sit down to dinner, and papa hands me a menu and asks me to read it to him. Couldn't read! I got so frightened I nearly ran away! ... Why? Because your grandmother is such a fine, unselfish woman; two months in school and they put him into a shop! That's what some women are, my dear – and now he goes and buys her a new Packard every year. (17)

Young Miller felt as much embarrassed and helpless for the academic handicap of his father as Martin did for his father. Miller says that he cold not help blushing for his father when his mother made him her target. He admired his warm and gentle nature as much as he despaired of his illiterate mind (*Timebends* 113).

Izzie's tall physique, charming personality, and success in business made up adequately his lack of formal education. Miller describes him before the Depression as " a fellow whom policemen are inclined to salute, headwaiters to find tables for, cab drivers to stop in the rain for,.." (*Timebends* 4). All this personal charm is also reflected in what Quentin's mother says about his father in *Fall*: "To this day he walks into a room you want to bow! *Warmly*: Any restaurant – one look at him and the waiters start moving tables around" (17).

By the time Miller's father, Izzie, was twelve he himself employed two other boys to sew sleeves on coats alongside him in some basement workshop and later on he built one of the two or three largest coat manufacturing businesses in the country. It is hard work, not education, which brought him success and affluence. No wonder he took very little interest in the education of his children, including Miller. Quentin's father, too, conscious of his past struggle shows no interest in his son's education even though the mother pleads for him, saying: "You've got Dan, you don't need him! He wants to try to get a job, go to college maybe" (67). All this is beyond his logic, he cannot understand why Quentin should be treated differently from Dan, and so he loses his temper and says: "You're two of a kind – what you 'want'! Chrissake, when I was his age I was supporting six people! *He comes up to Quentin.* What are you, a stranger? What are you" (67)!

Miller's mother, who had few interests outside her sons, had great hopes for young Miller. She, like Quentin's mother in *Fall* and Lee's mother in *Clock*, took

great interest in her son's education although during the Depression the financial constraint in the family left her no scope to see to her son's educational advancement. Like Dan, Miller's elder brother Kermit stayed home to help his father reestablish himself in business, but like Quentin, Miller left to make his own way.

Miller's mother died in March 1961. Five months after her death Miller would be about forty-five. Quentin, like the playwright, is in his forties five months after the death of his mother. Quentin remembers his past days and goes back to an early period of his life, and we can see the attention paid by his mother to his handwriting. In a past scene we also find the mother telling little Quentin of her disappointments with her brothers' marriages:

> My brothers! Why must every wedding in this family be a catastrophe!... Because the girl is pregnant, darling, and she's got no money, she's stupid, and I tell you this one is going to end up with a moustache! That's why, darling, when you grow up, I hope you learn how to disappoint people. Especially women. (16)

Little Miller, too, had heard of similar disapproval of his mother's brothers' wives from his mother. One afternoon when her youngest brother, Hymie, "appeared with a thin blonde woman wearing a black fur collar on a white coat, his beloved, he said, his Stella," she instantly disapproved of her. Miller says that she "disapproved of all wives of all her brothers" (*Timebends* 30).

Miller entered the University of Michigan in 1934. He met there Mary Grace Slattery, a gentile girl, with whom he lived for about two years before marrying her in 1940. It was a strange coincidence that the pronouncement of the Catholic priest before their marriage – "that our experience shows these marriages never last" (*Timebends* 76) – came true after sixteen years when Miller was divorced from her in

1956. The same year he married the Hollywood film star, sex symbol, glamour girl Marilyn Monroe. And just after five years, in 1961 this marriage, too, ended in a divorce. In 1961 Miller married an Austria born photographer, Ingeborg Morath, and in August of the same year Marilyn Monroe committed suicide. Moss is quite right in showing the following close parallels between the wives of Miller and Quentin:

> Quentin met his first wife when both were college students; Like Mary Grace Slattery, she was a quiet, introspective type. That marriage ended in a divorce after lasting more than a decade. His present fiancee, a foreign professional woman, suggests Miller's present wife, Ingeborg Morath, a [foreign] photographer. And his second wife, despite Miller's protest, greatly resembles Marilyn Monroe. The two women experienced the same unpleasant childhood: each was an illegitimate girl who tried unsuccessfully to locate her father, a fact that contributed, as did the mother's instability, to loneliness and insecurity in adult life. Though neither was graduated from high school, both nevertheless rose to the highest rank in popular entertainment with an arresting combination of sexual attractiveness and girlish charm. (68)

Maggie in *Fall*, like Marilyn Monroe, often had to confront the problem of her legitimacy. When Maggie tells Quentin that she went to see her father and Quentin says that he must be proud of her. Maggie replies Laughing:

> Oh, no – he left when I was eighteen months, see – 'cause he said I wasn't from him, although my mother always said I was. And they keep interviewing me now and I never know what to answer, when they ask where you were born, and all. So I thought if he would just see me, and you know, just – look at me ... I can't explain it. (72)

Maggie adds that her father would not even talk to her over telephone , and just asked her to see his lawyer.

Miller's failed marriages are clearly reflected in *Fall*. There are enough indications in *Timebends* that Miller never forgot the strained relationship, he saw as a boy, between his parents. When Miller got married he must have felt like, and tried avoiding the lacks of his parents. Even then, two of his marriages ended in divorce and he took a third wife, whereas his father had only his mother as his wife. In 1944, during his visit of the army camps for collecting materials for the screenplay, *The Story of G. I. Joe*, he met a young woman whose husband, a sailor, was reported missing while serving in a destroyer. On the long train ride to Hollywood he blithely told his wife, Mary, of his attraction to this woman saying that were he not married he would have liked to sleep with her. This truthful admission of Miller instead of being appreciated by his wife complicated their relationship further (*Timebends* 278-279). Miller first met Marilyn Monroe in 1950 at Twentieth Century Fox Studios. Elia Kazan introduced them, and they were immediately attracted to one another. Neil Carson observes: "From internal evidences in the plays, it is highly likely that Miller told his wife about his meeting with Marilyn, and that this further complicated a relationship that was already beginning to fray" (20-21). Quentin, like Miller, tried to be truthful to his wife when he told her that he had met a woman he wanted to sleep with. But Louise cannot forget it and accuses her husband of infidelity whenever she gets an opportunity. We get an echo of the words of Proctor to his wife in *Crucible* in what Quentin tells his wife in frustration: "What I resent is being forever on trial, Louise. Are you an innocent bystander here" (40)?

Miller began working on *Fall* in 1963, i.e. after his marriage to Ingeborg Morath and suicide of his second wife, Marilyn Monroe. The play, first staged in 1964 is Quentin's self-analysis "whose biography so much resembles the playwright's that most critics take it as Miller's *Long Day's Journey into Night*." But *Fall* is not

autobiographical in the sense of *Long Day's Journey into Night*. In O'Neill's play, unlike that of Miller's, the main characters have their exact counterparts in the playwright's family. O'Neill attempts no subterfuge. Nakedly autobiographical, he wrote the play as he said, to face the dead at last. He puts in the dedicatory note of the play – it is "a play of old sorrow written in tears and blood." The play, which exposes the tension in his family in 1912, was completed in 1941. Although O'Neill did not want the play to be published until twenty-five years after his death and expressed no intention of it being staged at any time, after two years of the dramatist's death in 1953, his widow, Carlotta O'Neill, gave Yale University Press the publication rights. The play, unlike *Fall,* concentrates on the writer's parents, elder brother and the writer himself making no mention of his first wife, Kathleen Jenkins, and his associates and friends. O'Neill dedicates the play to his third wife, Carlotta Monterey, on the occasion of their twelfth wedding anniversary. Miller, too, dedicates his play to his third wife, Ingeborg Morath. Although O'Neill had the strength to face the dead, he was afraid of facing the living even being with the dead. On the other hand, Miller, staging and publishing his play in 1964, not only displayed his mental strength in facing the dead and his past but also showed great courage in laying himself bare in front of the living, including his wife. If we put emphasis on the autobiographical elements in *Fall,* Miller surpasses the sinner who confesses to the priest alone facing no risk of public reproof or castigation. In dedicating the play to his wife Miller goes farther than his protagonist, Quentin, in his confession of all that he did and experienced. Quentin reveals, or exposes himself, to the listener and not to Holga; the latter, though able to make some guesses of his tormented mental condition, remains ignorant of his past life.

Critics have often blamed Miller for his (according to them) frank and unsympathetic account of Marilyn Monroe through the character of Maggie. But Miller wrote in *Life* after the play had opened that Maggie "is not in fact Marilyn Monroe. Maggie is a character about the human animal's unwillingness or inability to discover in himself the seeds of his own destruction" (Hayman, *AM* 85-86). Ironically, what Miller said about Maggie clearly fits the character of Marilyn Monroe who got addicted to pills and drugs and committed suicide. But it can be said in Miller's defence that, when we analyze the relationship between Quentin and Maggie, it is not difficult to understand that Miller has not tried in any way to idealize the character of Quentin, putting all the blame on Maggie.

Maggie attributes all her fame and success to her first meeting with Quentin. She feels that everyone laughed at her and took her for a joke, but he was different. Quentin cries out to the listener and utters: "Fraud! From the first five minutes!... Because! I should have agreed she was a joke, a beautiful piece, trying to take herself seriously! Why did I lie to her, play this cheap benefactor,.." (70). Later on we find that Maggie is prepared to do anything for him because to her he is like a god. She does not withhold or hide anything about her life from Quentin. She tells him readily and frankly about all her relationship with other men. Even when the wedding guests appear she tells Quentin that she was with two men the same day. Quite aware of the implications of what she has just revealed, she tells him to feel free to stop the wedding. Quentin assures her of his readiness to accept her as she is saying: "Sweetheart – an event itself is not important; it's what you took from it. Whatever happened to you, this is what you made of it, and I love this" (87)!

Despite Maggie's exalted idea of Quentin, and Quentin's professed love and feeling for her, soon they both feel terrible disappointment in their conjugal life. From

both sides, there are allegations and counter allegations. Maggie gradually becomes neurotic and gets addicted to pills and drink. Recapitulating how Maggie got addicted to drugs and lost her hold on life and how he gradually lost his patience with her, Quentin tells the listener about his idea of love: "It's that if there is love, it must be limitless; a love not even of persons but blind, blind to insult, blind to the spear in the flesh, like justice blind.." (100). Quentin, as it is clear from his attitude towards Maggie, falls short of such selfless and limitless love. He is convinced that Maggie is determined to bring her life to an end, but he is not prepared to die for her or with her. He now realizes that everybody is a separate person. In this world we mostly lie to show that we feel and understand. Despite all our feeling and sacrifices we cannot go beyond a certain limit. This realization in retrospect on the part of Quentin about his marital failures is very likely the realization of the playwright about himself, which is indirectly an acknowledgement of his faults and imperfections.

Shortly after Miller married Marilyn Monroe he had to cut short his visit to his sick daughter because of his wife's needs. Sometime during this period Marilyn Monroe, quite by chance, read an entry in her husband's notebook in which he expressed some disappointment in her. "This incident was traumatic, and may have been the first of what she considered to be a series of betrayals that gradually alienated her trust and affection" (Carson 2). Maggie, too, like Marilyn Monroe, was soon disillusioned with her husband after reading, quite by chance, a note written by him. She tells Quentin how all her faith in his goodness vapoured into thin air and she wanted to bring her life to an end when just after two months of their marriage looking for a fountain pen she read his handwriting – "The only one I will ever love is my daughter. If I could only find an honorable way to die" (108). She tells him that she thought she was married to a king, but no longer has any illusion regarding him. She

also accuses him of being ashamed of her in their first party that was attended by some network heads and directors. Quentin admits his guilt and says, "Maggie, we were born of many errors; a human being has to forgive himself! Neither of us is innocent. What more do you want" (109)? But by this time Maggie, thoroughly disillusioned with Quentin, has become addicted to pills and drink beyond recovery with no urge to live. As Quentin tries to take away the bottle and the pills from her hands, she quickly swallows a handful of pills and gets violent. Quentin in his desperation says, "Drop them you bitch! You won't kill me" (111)! He lunges for her throat, lifts her with his grip and repeats the last sentence two more times. Although Quentin manages to send her to a hospital, she dies after two months.

Quentin's attitude to Maggie proves that Miller has not portrayed him as an embodiment of virtues and sainthood. His violence proved to Maggie that he was like all other men and no exception. No wonder, once when he spreads arms to the two light fixtures on the wall of his hotel room in the posture of crucified Christ, Maggie enters in his subconscious mind and says, "Liar! Judge!"

Miller had first-hand experience of the anticommunist hysteria in the United States in the 1950s. At the worst of the McCarthy time, in 1953, the editor of *Holiday* magazine, Ted Patrick, asked him to go to Ann Arbor and report the changes there since the thirties. When he went to his former university, Erich Walter, his old English Professor who had become Dean, told him that the FBI was asking teachers and students to inform on each other. Miller went to the editorial room of the *Daily* and sat down at the large round oak table at the end of the room to browse through some old issues of the thirties. Soon a burly middle-aged man appeared and sat at the same table to peruse some recent issues of the paper and take notes. A student reporter whispered

to Miller to follow him if he wanted to know the state of affairs there. What Miller learnt from the student is given below:

> In a distant corner of the editorial room, the student introduced himself with evident pride as the author of a recent four-part series, "Communism on Campus," which had exposed a couple of student radicals who, he said – not without some pity – might face expulsion soon. The result of his expose, he was happy to inform me, was a job offer from a Los Angeles paper.... [He] indicated the middle-aged man, who was still turning pages at the round table, and whispered, "He's state police. He comes in once a week and goes through the letters columns and the news and picks up the names of anybody who says stuff that sounds leftist." (*Timebends* 95)

A week or two after Miller's *Holiday*-piece on Michigan came out the editor requested him repeatedly to write once again on anything he liked. He finally wrote a memoir of life in Brooklyn in the thirties that was duly published. Years later, after Ted Patrick's death Miller learned the reason for his persistence to get a write-up from him: "The advertising department of the Pontiac division of General Motors had warned Patrick that Pontiac would cancel all its advertising in *Holiday* if they ever published another piece by Miller" (*Timebends* 96). Miller adds, "the air in those days bristled with such threats, and I regretted being unable to congratulate Patrick for his courageous stand and editorial integrity" (96).

Miller soon observed that, according to the ways of the time everyone, whatever reputation or position he enjoyed, was considered "little more than easily disposable hired hands." Informers and agents of the anticommunist forces, especially of the HUAC (House Un-American Activities Committee), were active in all spheres of life. He notes in *Timebends* – "Everywhere teachers were being fired for their associations and ideas, real or alleged, as were scientists, diplomats, postmen, actors, directors and writers" (310). Later on he adds: "I saw the civilities of public life deftly

stripped from the body politic like the wings of insects or birds by maniac children, and great and noble citizens branded traitors, without a sign of real disgust from any quarter" (312). Miller knew many of the victims personally. In 1951 when Ingeborg Morath, who was not yet known to Miller, arrived as a photo-journalist on a brief assignment in Hollywood, she was harshly interrogated by an immigration inspector under the suspicion of communist connections because she had a novel in her suitcase published by the Left Book Club of London.

Miller noticed the inherent connection and similarities between the ritualistic congressional hearings of his time and the Salem witch-trials of the seventeenth century. In almost all the former cases the committee knew in advance what they wanted the persons concerned to tell them, the names of their comrades in the Party. Since the FBI had long since infiltrated the party and the informers had long ago identified the participants in various meetings, nothing was unknown to the Committee. As in Salem, the main point of the hearings was that – "the accused make public confession, damn his confederates as well as his Devil master, and guarantee his sterling new allegiance by breaking disgusting old vows – whereupon he was let loose to rejoin the society of extremely decent people" (*Timebends* 331).

Crucible deals with autobiographical time in the sense that the irrational fanatical activities of the HUAC as observed by Miller in 1950s has a clear parallel in the seventeenth century Salem witch-hunt. Regarding the play Miller says in *Introduction* – "what was in the air" provided the actual locus of the tale" (39). He mentions in the same work that he was not moved solely by the anticommunist hysteria manifested in "McCarthyism," but something much more weird and mysterious:

> It was the fact that a political, objective, knowledgeable campaign from the far Right was capable of creating not only a terror, but a new subjective reality, a veritable mystique which was gradually assuming even a holy resonance. The wonder of it all struck me that so practical and picayune a cause, carried forward by such manifestly ridiculous men, should be capable of paralyzing thought itself, and worse, causing to billow up such persuasive clouds of "mysterious" feelings within people. It was as though the whole country had been born anew, without a memory even of certain elemental decencies which a year or two earlier no one would have imagined could be altered, let alone forgotten. Astounded, I watched men pass me by without a nod whom I had known rather well for years; and again, the astonishment was produced by my knowledge, which I could not give up, that the terror in these people was being knowingly planned and consciously engineered, and yet all they knew was terror. That so interior and subjective an emotion could have been so manifestly created from without was a marvel to me. It underlies every word in *The Crucible*. (39-40)

Miller mentions in *Introduction* that he at first wondered "whether it must be that self-preservation and the need to hold on to opportunity, the thought of being exiled and 'put out,' was what the fear was feeding on, for there were people who had had only the remotest connections with the Left who were quite as terrified as those who had been closer" (40). He continues, that he knew a man who was summoned to the office of a network executive, who having explained that despite the current attacks on him had no left connections at all, was told that this was precisely the trouble. "'You have nothing to give them," he was told, meaning he had no confession to make, and so he was fired from his job and for more than a year could not recover the will to leave his house'" (40). To Miller this as well as other kinds of social compliance seemed to be the result of the sense of guilt which individuals strive to conceal by complying: "Generally it was a guilt, in this historic sense, resulting from their awareness that they were not as Rightist as people were supposed to be; that the tenor of public pronouncements was alien to them and that they must be somehow discoverable as enemies of the power overhead" (40). He noticed a new religiosity in the air, not

merely the kind expressed by the spurt in church construction and church attendance, but an official piety which his reading of American history could not reconcile with the free wheeling iconoclasm of the country's past. He saw forming a kind of interior mechanism of confession and forgiveness of sins which until then had not been rightly categorized as sins:

> New sins were being created monthly. It was very odd how quickly these were accepted into the new orthodoxy, quite as though they had been there since the beginning of time. Above all, above all horrors, I saw accepted the notion that conscience was no longer a private matter but one of state administration. I saw men handing conscience to other men and thanking them for the opportunity of doing so. (*Introduction* 40)

John H. Ferres rightly observes in "Introduction" of *Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Crucible*: "Miller believes a man must be true to himself and his fellows, even though being untrue may be the only way to stay alive" (8). This belief of Miller was sharpened and strengthened by what he particularly saw and experienced in the 1950s. In early April 1952, just a day before his trip to Salem, Massachusetts, where he wanted to research the witch-trial records for a tentative play on the subject, his close friend Elia Kazan, who was associated with the theatre and film industry, informed him that he had been subpoenaed by the HUAC. Kazan said that although he had at first refused to cooperate with the Committee, later on he changed his mind to give some dozen names of the people he had known during his short connection with the Communist Party long time ago. Kazan, Miller felt strongly, did so just to safeguard and promote his self-interest (*Timebends*, 332-333).

Schlueter and Flanagan observe: "Miller's literary reaction to the general proceedings of the HUAC and the political tenor of the times, was *The Crucible*, which appeared at a time when Miller the writer was to be held responsible for Miller

the political leftist" (11). According to them in both *Crucible* and *Fall* Miller views "the naming procedure" as "a symbol of moral degeneracy and of the breakdown of faith between men" (11). Through the ordeals of some characters in these plays as well as his stand in life during similar crisis, Miller has shown two options open to man: the easy path of serving one's selfish interests by betraying others and the difficult path of endangering oneself by keeping others free from danger.

Although none of the characters in *Crucible*, which opened on Broadway in 1953, resembles Miller, the determination of Giles Corey and John Proctor in not giving or confirming the names to Danforth and Hawthorne is reflected in Miller's later life. After the production of the play the conservative and anticommunist elements in the government, the entertainment industry, and the press made Miller a target of attack for his alleged communist connection. In March 1954, the State Department refused Miller a passport to attend the Brussels premiere of *Crucible*. In 1955 when Miller was busy completing a script for a New York City Youth Board film project, a reporter, Fredrick Woltman, charged him with leftist and communist leanings in the *New York World Telegram*. As a result he was voted down for the project by the New York City Youth Board. The reason given by a member for his objection was that, Miller refused to repent. We find that it is the same kind of objection that condemns John Proctor, the hero of *Crucible*. In June 1956 Miller was subpoenaed to appear before the HUAC. Ironically, state authorities, by insisting that he inform on others and confess sins against the community, presented him with a challenge to 'conscience' directly analogous to that which had confronted the protagonist of *Crucible*. Although Miller freely admitted his association with the leftist or communist-front groups in the 1940s, he refused to be branded a communist at any time of his life. He took great risk by candidly acknowledging his opposition to

the HUAC and by refusing to identify persons he had seen at the communist-run meetings for the writers because his conscience would not permit him to use the name of another person and bring trouble to him. On May 31, 1957, he was found guilty for the contempt of Congress, fined five hundred dollars, and given a suspended thirty-day jail sentence. A year later, in 1958, the conviction was reversed by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

Although by the early 1950s there were very few, not excepting Miller, who were not disillusioned with the Soviet Russia and the Communist cause, Miller's attitude, as found in *Fall*, towards activities of the HUAC and the principle of betrayal remained unchanged. *Fall* is, in a way, Miller's recantation of his past belief in the Communist Party. Mickey, a friend of Quentin, who is modelled on Miller's friend, Elia Kazan, like Kazan was subpoenaed by the HUAC because it wanted to know the names of his radical associates. He tells his colleague Lou, a professor of law, that he had already been in front of the committee two weeks ago and he asked to be heard again because he wants to speak the truth. He is disillusioned with the Communist Party and his old associates. He thinks the Party is a conspiracy and says – "I think we were swindled; they took our lust for the right and used it for Russian purposes. And I don't think we can go on turning our backs on the truth simply because reactionaries are saying it" (35). At an early stage we notice that when Lou does not feel comfortable about his changed political views and expresses his uneasiness to publish them, Quentin tells him: "Lou, you have a right to publish; a radical past is not leprosy – we only turned left because it seemed the truth was there. You mustn't be ashamed" (25). Lou's attitude to Mickey and the committee is not much different from Miller's attitude to Kazan and the HUAC. In *Timebends* Miller tells us how he felt about Kazan's cooperation with the Committee:

> He had been subpoenaed and had refused to cooperate but had changed his mind and returned to testify fully in executive session, confirming some dozen names of people he had known in his months in the Party not so long ago. He felt better now, clearer about everything. Actually, he wanted my advice, almost as though he had not done what he had done. Confirmation was what he needed; after all he had no sympathies with the Communists, so why should he appear to be withholding the testimony? (333)

Lou considers Mickey a coward and thinks that the committee has bought his soul. In the following words uttered in anger to Mickey, Lou justifies his resolution not to cooperate with the committee:

> Because if everyone broke faith there would be no civilization! That is why that Committee is the face of the Philistine! And it astounds me that you can speak of truth and justice in relation to that gang of publicity hounds! Not one word from my lips! No – your eleven-room apartment, your automobile, your money are not worth this. (36)

Quentin, very much like Miller himself, tries to "be true to himself" and "his fellows." Despite all the implied risks it troubles Quentin to distance himself from what is good and right. He feels that Mickey has become a separate person. But it does not mean that his commitment to sincerity and selflessness is absolute and total. The awareness of his limitations torments his conscience and makes himself guilty in his eyes. He is shocked to know that Mickey was subpoenaed. But when Mickey needed his help and advice at this crucial time, he kept himself aloof from him. He tells Mickey: "I had a feeling it was something like that. I guess – I didn't want to know any more. I'm sorry Mick" (32). The Following appendix meant for the listener in the present – "Yes, not to see! To be innocent!" expresses not only his own limitation but also the limitation of what innocence may imply at times. It is not unlikely that

through Quentin's limitation Miller has tried to acknowledge his own limitation with regard to Elia Kazan and other people. Although Miller was quite conscious of the predicament of Kazan regarding the HUAC, he did nothing even after receiving two phone calls from his friend. It was only after he had received the third phone call that he went to see his friend (*Timebends* 332).

We are not aware of any other writer who has recorded so vividly the personal dilemma with regard to the activities of the HUAC as Miller has done in *Fall*. Like Miller, Bertolt Brecht and Lillian Hellman were also subpoenaed by the HUAC. Brecht's association with Communism began when he joined the Independent Social Democratic Party in 1919. With a musical collaborator, Hanns Eisler, in 1930 he wrote and produced his first overtly Communist play, *The Measure Taken*. He migrated to the U. S. in 1941. In October 1947, Brecht was called to testify about his Communist Party affiliations before the HUAC. He evaded the Committee's questions and denied Hanns Eisler's statement that he had joined the Communist Party in 1930. The next month he left for Switzerland. Hellman's attitude to the Committee was like that of Miller. A woman of her time, she was deeply stirred by all injustices and spoke against them. In 1952 she was called to appear before the HUAC in the hope that she would reveal the names of her associates and friends in the theatre who might have Communist associations. Fully aware of the consequences, that she might be charged with contempt of Congress, she refused to cooperate with the Committee. Subsequently, the Committee dropped the charges against her.

Quentin considers Maggie a very moral girl because she tells the truth even against herself and does not pretend to be innocent. Whether it is Miller or the protagonist of *Fall*, Quentin, they have both tried to be moral , because, like the innocent Maggie, they have spoken the truth even against themselves without

pretending to be innocent. This innocent self-revelation, from the autobiographical point of view, is mostly the product of late realization. The autobiographical time in Miller's plays, whether in relation to Martin, Bert, Lee, or others, normally gives us two layers of time – one, the actual time of the characters as verifiable from the writer's life, and two, the actual time of creating these characters. The writer in the later case is in a better position to understand his past. While portraying himself through his characters the writer always sees the past from the point of the present. In some cases when the writer expresses his overall attitude towards life or anything in particular as in the case of *Sons*, *Salesman*, *Crucible*, *Time*, *Vichy*, and *Ceiling*, where we do not notice clearly any autobiographical characters, everything is viewed from a particular point, i.e. the date of composition of the play. Despite the particular setting with regard to the time of a play, a playwright may project through his characters his life or a portion of his life as experienced or the lives of the people he has known. The writer's experiential time is thus objectively represented through his characters. In some cases the ideas of a playwright expressed through his characters cannot be pinpointed to any particular time of his life. Such ideas are based on his life spread through several years. In some cases the ideas and beliefs of the writer may change, as a result the thoughts and ideas expressed in different plays may also vary. Autobiographical time in Miller's plays, like historical time, is limited by the factual occurrences and the lives of the real-life people. But it is normally different from historical time in the sense that it is very much private because it concerns the playwright himself, directly or indirectly.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conscious Recall of the Past, and Future Expectations

Rebelling against the tyranny of time and its arbitrary sequence of day and night a playwright brings time under his control. In life, in the linear progression of time, today becomes yesterday and tomorrow becomes today. Viewed from the point of temporal present, if the past is always a part of the present, the future as imagined or thought of also remains inseparable from the present. But the past, which is already experienced, has greater impact on life than the future, which is uncertain and yet to be experienced. In some cases certain things in life for purely personal reasons or the sense of justice or humanity leave such indelible prints in the minds of people that they cannot be erased from memory. In O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* James Tyrone wants his wife Mary Tyrone, who mostly lives in the past, to forget the past. The reply Mary gives to her husband shows the importance of the past in her life and our life in general: "Why? How can I? The past is the present, isn't it? It's the future, too. We all try to lie out of that but life won't let us..."(87).

The past, whether immediate or distant, is readily accessible to most of Miller's characters. They call upon it to compare and contrast their experiences in the

present. The barrier between the present and the past or the future is often broken in his plays with both conscious awareness of his characters, or subconsciously. The revival and the impact of the personal past in the characters vary in degree and intensity. Some experiences or happenings in the present make them recall the past or think about the future, and in some cases the past just comes without any conscious effort and the future comes as something wished or longed-for. In some cases the characters are too time conscious to permit the past and the present or the future to be confused or blended.

In his first successful play, *Sons*, Miller follows a retrospective method in exploring the past actions and their consequences in the present. The playwright thinks that the shadow of Ibsen was seen on the play because "as in Ibsen's best-known work, a great amount of time is taken up with bringing the past into the present" (*Introduction* 20). He feels that as a technique "this creates a sense of artificiality which we tend to reject." It is no longer acceptable that the characters should be discussing events of the past when in life they would be busy discussing the present. He followed the technique as practised by Ibsen not because he considered it a successful dramaturgical device, but because as said by him, the play's theme is "the question of actions and consequences, and a way had to be found to throw a long line into the past in order to make that kind of connection viable" (*Introduction* 20). With his emphasis on realism in *Sons*, he acknowledges Ibsen's influence on him:

> Having so long written in terms of what people felt rather than what they did, I turned to his work at the time with a sense of homecoming. As I have said I wanted then to write so that people of common sense would mistake my play for life itself and not be required to lend it some poetic license before it could be believed. I wanted to make the moral world as real and evident as the immoral one so splendidly is. (*Introduction* 19)

Miller thinks that too many modern playwrights assume that their duty is merely to show the present condition rather than to account for what happens. Because Ibsen in his first and at times the second acts devotes so much time to a studied revelation of antecedent information, it would, according to Miller, be wrong to imagine his view static. He says: "In truth, it is profoundly dynamic, for that enormous past was always heavily documented to the end that the present be comprehended with wholeness, as a moment in a flow of time, and not – as with so many modern plays – as a situation without roots" (*Introduction* 21).

The action in *Sons* starts in an early Sunday morning in Joe Keller's house. The broken apple tree, which we notice the moment the curtains are raised, leads the conversation amongst Keller and his neighbours, Jim and Frank, from the present to the past. Frank asks Keller about the tree and expresses surprise at the coincidence, saying – "Larry was born in August. He'd been twenty-seven this month. And his tree blows down" (60). Keller is surprised and touched that he remembers his son's birthday. Ronald Hayman is right in observing that the main function of the tree is "to introduce the plot as it does when Frank talks about it as Larry's tree and mentions that he is working on Larry's horoscope. After that it is easy for Miller to start planting the play's pre-history" (Hayman, *AM* 23). Gradually in bits and pieces the entire past relating to the plot is revealed to us. The crisis in the Keller-family is triggered by Ann Deever's visit to their house at the invitation of Chris, Joe Keller's son. Her innocent visit shakes the balance and peace in the Keller-family, for the past is delved into, and all that was forgotten regarding Keller and her father's involvement in the supply of cracked cylinder heads to the Army Airforce during the war surface up. We get to know that the Deevers were the neighbours of the Kellers and Steve Deever was Joe Keller's business partner. Joe is a free man, but Steve has been languishing in the

prison severed of all contact even with his son and daughter, and bearing the stigma of killing twenty-one pilots.

Chris and Ann have not been able to forgive Ann's father for what, they believe he did in the past. Ann says that she has never written to him and neither has her brother and asks Chris about his feeling. The following conversation shows their unforgiving attitude towards Steve:

> Chris: He murdered twenty-one pilots.
>
> Keller: What the hell kinda talk is that?
>
> Mother: That's not a thing to say about a man.
>
> Ann: what else can you say? When they took him away I followed him, went to him every visiting day. I was crying all the time. Until the news came about Larry. Then I realized. It's wrong to pity a man like that. Father or no father, there's only one way to look at him. He knowingly shipped out parts that would crash an aeroplane. And how do you know Larry wasn't one of them? (81)

Ann's brother, George, comes to take Ann away with him because he has very recently become aware of the truth about Keller and his father, and how cunningly Keller implicated his father in the crime for which he himself was solely responsible. He tells her that she is not going to marry Chris because it is Keller who has destroyed their family. He regrets their harsh and cruel treatment of their father in the past years:

> Annie – we did a terrible thing. We can never be forgiven. Not even to send him a card at Christmas. I didn't see him once since I got home from the war! Annie, you don't know what was done to that man. You don't know what happened. (101)

Bitter experiences of the past have made Steve a changed man. As reported by George, "He'd like to take every man who made money in the war and put him up against the wall" (109)

If we look at Chris we find that he, too, cannot get over the memories of the past. When he is left alone with Ann, they profess their love for each other and he kisses her for the first time, but without any passion. Observing his discomfiture and lack of spontaneity Ann asks him what is wrong and reminds him that even his letters gave her the impression that he was somewhat ashamed, and so, she demands to know all about it. Taking Ann's hands, Chris tells her how the impact of his past experiences, the troubles and comradeship he shared with the troops he commanded and lost and how the sacrifices they made for each other made him ashamed of the joys and comforts of his post-war life. He saw blood in everything he possessed and felt uncomfortable in taking any of it, which included even Ann. Arvin R. Wells observes:

> Chris has brought out of the war an idealistic morality of brotherhood based on what he has seen of mutual self-sacrifice among the men he commanded. But he has not survived the war unwounded; he bears a still festering psychological wound, a sense of inadequacy and guilt. (7)

But it does not mean that Chris considers the present, which has been built on his past experiences, unlivable. When the play opens, we do not find him a tormented human being. He has no complaint against anyone or anything. He has accepted the death of his brother as a reality and thinks that his mother should accept it, too. Nevertheless, he feels pricks in his conscience when he compares his good fortune with those unfortunate soldiers who died in the past.

The changes seen in the present at times make some people nostalgic. As Ann sees Jim come out of the yard of the house where her family lived once, she has fond and happy memories of the days her family and she passed in the house. She tells Chris: "I guess I never grew up. It almost seems that Mom and Pop are in there now. And you and my brother doing algebra, and Larry trying to copy my homework. Gosh, those dear days beyond recall" (75).

Sue, like Chris and Ann, is concerned for her present and future welfare. She has been convinced by her past experiences that her husband, being under the idealistic influence of Chris is incapable of doing anything for his family because according to her, Chris makes people want to be better than it is possible to be. She tells Ann: "My husband has a family, dear. Every time he has a session with Chris he feels as though he's compromising by not giving up everything for research.... He meets a man and makes a statue out of him" (93). In Ibsen's plays we do not find any complaining wives like Sue. Nora in *A Doll's House* and Mrs. Stockmann in *An Enemy of the People* seem to have no complaint against their husbands. Nora revolts in the end only when she discovers that her past selfless gestures to her husband has no value to him. To Sue, financial needs have the priority over the idealism of her husband.

Sons, like all tragedies, deals with actions and consequences. Miller says that the crime in the play is not one that is about to be committed but one that has long since been committed (*Introduction* 18). So naturally, the past time here is as important as the present. The past crime of Keller cannot be kept hidden indefinitely. As soon as it is revealed, it unbalances the status quo of the present. We get to know that Keller managed to absolve himself from the crime of supplying cracked cylinder heads on the excuse that as he had been laid in a flu, it was Steve who was responsible

in covering up the cracks without his having any role in it. As George compliments Keller and Kate on their good health and Kate makes the slip that Keller has not been laid up in fifteen years, it confirms to George what he has been already told by his father. Frank who has just finished Larry's horoscope arrives at the scene and tells Kate and Chris that since the twenty-fifth of November (the day Larry was reported missing) was his favourable day, he could not have died on this day and so he must be alive somewhere. Chris considers all this insane, whereas, the finding simply validates Kate's belief that Larry is not dead and he will return someday. Kate, who has already packed up Ann's bag, wants her to leave with George because she feels that Ann is Larry's girl. Chris is furious; his determination to marry Ann forces his mother to tell him, "Your brother's alive, darling, because if he's dead, your father killed him. Do you understand me now? As long as you live, the boy is alive. God does not let a son be killed by his father..." (114). Chris immediately becomes aware of Keller's crime, and overwhelmed with fury he accuses his father of murdering twenty-one men. Keller explains under what circumstances he supplied the cracked cylinder heads to the Army Air force, and tries to justify his action saying – "Chris, I did it for you, it was a chance and I took it for you. I'm sixty-one years old, when would I have another chance to make something for you" (115)? Chris reacts strongly as he should, and says in fury:

> What the hell do you mean, you did it for me? Don't you have a country? Don't you live in the world? You're not even an animal, no animal kills his own, what are you? What must I do to you? I ought to tear the tongue out of your mouth, what must I do? *With his fist he pounds down upon his father's shoulder. He stumbles away, covering his face as he weeps.* What must I do, Jesus God, what must I do? (116)

Kate, although all along aware of her husband's past crime, has firmly stood by him to keep it concealed. Even after Chris has gone out of the house in anger and frustration, she cautions Keller saying, "You can't bull yourself through this one, Joe, you better be smart now. This thing – this thing is not over yet" (119). She advises him to demonstrate his repentance to Chris when he comes back by making it clear to him that he had done a terrible thing, wants to pay for it and is even willing to go to prison. But Keller is not at all repentant because he does not acknowledge any crime for which he should be forgiven. He has no regrets for his profiteering during the war. In doing so, he feels that he simply toed the ways of the world, which according to him should exculpate him from any wrong-doing, and so he strongly feels that Chris has no reason to declare that the jail is his right place. In anger he says:

> Who worked for nothin' in that war? When they work for nothin', I'll work for nothin'. Did they ship a gun or a truck outa Detroit before they got their price? Is that clean? It's dollars and cents, nickels and dimes; war and peace, it's nickels and dimes, what's clean? Half the Goddam country is gotta go if I go! ... (124-125)

Keller feels that by making profit in business in the past he served the interests of his son and wife. He says that he could live on a "quarter" a day himself but he had to earn more money for his family.

To Ann, her love for Chris and the desire to have a family of her own have the upper hand over everything else including the injustice done to her father in the past. She understands that the past is a barrier to her relationship with Chris. She seeks Kate's help to bury the past permanently and free them from its influence. She assures Kate that she will do nothing against Joe, but in return she wants Kate to do something for her because she is the one who makes Chris feel guilty by reminding him that

Larry is alive and that she is Larry's girl. She would like Kate tell Chris that Larry is dead. She is resolved not to leave the place alone because it would make her future life meaningless. She wants Kate to set Chris free from his sense of guilt, and then she promises her that everything will end peacefully and Chris and she will go away peacefully.

Chris, too, as we notice earlier wants to free himself and the others in his family from the influence of the past, especially the past relationship between Larry and Ann. He is not prepared any longer to accept that Larry is alive because he intends to marry Ann. He seeks his father's help and support in this regard. The father, although not against the match, says that from his mother's point of view Larry is not dead and so he has no right to take Larry's girl. He advises Chris to give it some more thought. But Chris's past experiences make him determined to stick to his stand. He bursts out, saying – "I don't know why it is, but every time I reach out for something I want, I have to pull back because other people will suffer. My whole bloody life, time after time after time" (68). He says that if Ann feels the same way as his mother then that is the end of it. But as he understands from her letters, she has forgotten Larry. He says that he was brought up next door to her and when he thinks of someone for his wife, he thinks of Ann. Without any hesitation he makes it quite clear to his father that time has taught him what is good for him and what he ought to do. The following conversation shows that, if need be, he is prepared to sacrifice everything for his future life with Ann:

> Chris: I've given it three years of thought. I'd hoped that if I waited, Mother would forget Larry and then we'd have a regular wedding and everything happy. But if that can't happen here, then I'll have to get out.
>
> Keller: What the hell is *this*?

> Chris: I'll get out. I'll get married and live some place else. Maybe in New York.
>
> Keller: Are you crazy?
>
> Chris: I've been a good son too long, a good sucker. I'm through with it. (68-69)

Keller reminds Chris of his business, but it does not have any impact on him. He says that the thing which can make his life beautiful and meaningful is his own family, and without Ann he cannot conceive of it: "I want a family, I want some kids, I want to build something I can give myself to. Annie is in the middle of that. Now ... where do I find it" (69)? He is determined not to allow any present or past barrier to stand between him and his future happiness. Keller is simply bewildered. He tells him that all that he did in the past was for Chris only. He says that he would like to do more for Chris and proposes to have a new signboard, Christopher Keller incorporated, over his plant. He also says that he is going to build him a house with a driveway from the road. He wants Chris to spread out and enjoy what he has already built for him.

Normally time affects everybody and most things. During the three years the Deevers have been away from their old place, Ann has been completely transformed physically. At the beginning of the play Keller tells Jim and Frank, "Girl leaves here, a scrawny kid. Couple of years go by, she's a regular woman. Hardly recognized her, and she was running in and out of this yard all her life" (62). Later on when Ann runs to the fence of the house occupied by them three years ago and expresses her surprise at the poplars getting thick, Keller says, "Well, it's three years, Annie. We're gettin' old, kid" (75). When George arrives, Kate is disappointed to see the changes in his physique. She cups his face in her hands and says, "They made an old man out of you. *Touching his hair.* Look, you're gray" (104).

With the passage of time most people forget their past sorrows, reconcile themselves with the bitter memories and the life thus continues. Ann does not feel the separation from her former lover anymore and is fully prepared to marry Chris. The supposed past misdeed of Ann's father estranged him from her mother. As Kate asks Ann whether her mother is getting a divorce, she says, "No, she's calmed down about it now. I think when he gets out they'll probably live together. In New York, of course" (77). Time and filial piety have mellowed the spirit of Chris. Even when he comes to know about Keller's crime which was responsible for the crash of twenty-one P-40s he cannot do anything against him. In his frustration he tells Ann:

> I know what you're thinking, Annie. It's true I'm yellow. I was made yellow in this house because I suspected my father and I did nothing about it, but if I knew that night when I came home what I know now, he'd be in the district attorney's office by this time, and I'd have brought him there. Now if I look at him, all I am able to do is cry. (123)

Chris knows that what has been done cannot be undone, and so he says, "Do I raise the dead when I put him behind bars? Then what'll I do it for" (124)?

Kate, who could never accept Larry's death, is finally reconciled to it and tries her best not to disturb the balance of the present with the truth of the past. Her concern is to save her husband and leave the present undisturbed. But when Ann manages to take away the letter from her hand which she had given her earlier and show it to Chris who reads it aloud, the past with regard to Larry's death is completely exposed putting the blame directly on Keller and clearing whatever illusions remained in the minds of both Keller and Chris. Keller, realizing his role in the death of his son, is immediately ready to accept his punishment and go to jail. Despite all is said and known Kate tries to dissuade him from his course of action by reminding him that Larry was his son too, and he would not tell him to go to prison. Keller, looking at the letter, which he

grabbed from Chris, says, "Then what is this if it isn't telling me? Sure, he was my son. But I think to him they were all my sons. And I guess they were, I guess they were" (126). Telling Chris to get the car ready he goes into the house. Kate becomes desperate to convince Chris to let bygones be bygones. But after having read the letter of Larry Chris is a changed man. He tells his mother that Larry did not kill himself just to make them feel sorry. She says, "What more can we be!" Chris replies: "You can be better! Once and for all you can know there's a universe of people outside and you're responsible to it, and unless you know that, you threw your son because that's why he died" (126-127). Keller, realizing the intensity of his past crime and social responsibility, instead of coming down to go to the Attorney's office for social justice, shoots himself in his room becoming the dispenser of justice rather than its target. Chris, almost in tears, considers himself responsible for the death of his father. Kate, failing to save her husband, holds on to the present to save whatever she is left with, and so she tells her son, "Don't dear. Don't take it on yourself. Forget now. Live" (127).

In *Salesman* the past is constantly referred to or recalled by the protagonist Willy Loman, his wife and their two sons to compare and contrast it with the present. Dissatisfied with their present lot, the entire family dream of better days in the future. At the very beginning of the play we see that Willy has returned from his abortive trip to Boston. He tells his wife, Linda, that while driving his mind became completely blank and he tended to go off the road. He went as far as Yonkers and drove back home ten miles an hour. He presses two fingers against his eyes and says, "I have such thoughts, I have such strange thoughts." Linda says that he needs more rest and suggests that he should talk to his employer so that he can stay in New York and avoid going to New England. Willy is aware that under the present circumstances nothing

will come of it, but if his old boss Wagner was alive, things would be different and he would be in charge of New York. He says, "That man was a prince, he was a masterful man. But that boy of his, that Howard, he don't appreciate" (133). The pastoral scenery in the midst of which Willy was driving back led him into dreams of the past and made him oblivious of the present. Dissatisfied by the present surrounding and environment he complains that their house has been boxed by the apartment buildings around it, there is not a breath of fresh air in the neighbourhood and nothing can be grown in the backyard. He misses the two beautiful elm trees where Biff and he hung the swing and longs for the spaciousness and freshness of the past: "They should've arrested the builder for cutting those down. They massacred the neighborhood. *Lost*: More and more I think of those days, Linda. This time of the year it was lilac and wisteria. And then the peonies would come out, and the daffodils. What fragrance in the room" (135)! B. W. Bates observes how the recurring melody played on a flute is associated with the past in *Salesman*:

> 'A melody ... played upon a flute,' one of the several keynoting images present as the opening curtain rises, is a multivalent symbol, suggestive not only of the past but also of the lost pastoral life. Strongly associated with Willy's wanderer father, it is later often heard as Willy begins his schizoid voyages into bygone years. Similar melodies announce Willy's brother Ben and accompany Ben's brief tales of his and Willy's father. (60-61)

As with nature there has been changes for the worse in the profession of salesmanship as well. Later on when Willy goes to see Howard he emphasizes such changes from the past to the present: "In those days there was personality in it, Howard. There was respect, and comradeship, and gratitude in it. Today, it's all cut and dried, and there's no chance for bringing friendship to bear – or personality..." (180-181).

Hearing Willy talk about his old car with Linda, Happy, who is in the upstairs bedroom with Biff, tells Biff that he must have smashed up the car again. The brothers talk about Willy's present condition. Happy observes that something has happened to Willy: he talks to himself and most of the time he talks to Biff.

> Biff: What's he say about me?
>
> Happy: I can't make it out.
>
> Biff: What's he say about me?
>
> Happy: I think the fact that you're not settled, that you're still kind of up in the air.
>
> Biff: There's one or two things depressing him, Happy.
>
> Happy: What do you mean?
>
> Biff: Never mind. Just don't lay it all to me. (138)

Unlike Happy, Linda is aware of a tension between Biff and Willy, and so she enquires of Biff the cause of the strained relationship between them. She says: "You were such pals! How you used to talk to him on the phone every night! How lonely he was till he could come home to you" (163)! Linda wonders why he was thrown out of the house. Biff says, "Because I know he's a fake and he doesn't like anybody who knows" (164). Biff's words here, as well as what he said earlier to Happy, clearly indicate that he knows something about Willy which others are not aware of. Brian Parker observes that in both *Sons* and *Salesman* "Miller adopts Ibsen's 'retrospective' structure, in which an explosive situation in the present is both explained and brought to a crisis by the gradual revelation of something which has happened in the past" (12). We cannot accept the observation as valid because Miller's technique of unfolding the past and showing its consequences in the present are not the same in the

two plays. Biff does not tell anyone about Willy's adultery which he came to know by chance quite a few years ago when he went to visit his father in a Boston hotel. Throughout the play no one other than Biff is aware of this particular lapse in Willy's life. On the other hand, the past crime of Keller is revealed to everyone gradually. As soon as Keller is exposed and condemned by his son, Keller takes on him the consequences of his crime and kills himself. Willy takes no such step. As in the past, in the present, too, Willy shows no regret for his adultery. No wonder he has lived with it till he is past sixty years of age in the present. Willy's past suicide attempts were not impelled by any sense of guilt.

In the chronological present of the play Willy's fortunes are at the lowest ebb. His failures and unhappiness make him conscious of the past prospects and clutch at the faintest hope of future success. His elder brother Ben's memory constantly reminds him of the opportunities he missed in the past. He tells Happy, "I got an awful scare. Nearly hit a kid in Yonkers. God! Why didn't I go to Alaska with my brother Ben that time! Ben! That man was a genius, that man was success incarnate! What a mistake! He begged me to go" (152). Later on, when Biff and Happy tell him about Biff's plan to see his ex-employer for a loan the next day to start a sporting-goods business of their own, he gets carried away with the very idea of the project's bright prospects. Willy still has a great deal of hope and confidence in his elder son. He and Linda recall with immense pleasure the championship game at Ebbet's Field where Biff outshone everybody:

> Willy: .... When the team came out – he was the tallest, remember?
>
> Linda: Oh yes. And in gold.

> Willy: Like a young god. Hercules – something like that. And the sun, the sun all around him. Remember how he waved to me? Right up from the field, with the representatives of three colleges standing by? And the buyers I brought, and the cheers when he came out – Loman, Loman, Loman! God Almighty, he'll be great yet. A star like that, magnificent, can never fade away! (171)

Linda asks Willy whether he will ask Howard to let him work in New York. He assures her of doing so the first thing in the morning.

In life when we are in the grip of despair we do not care to plan our future life but once we see a ray of hope we often start building castles in the air. The prospects of a good life for Biff and Happy make Willy forget his frustrations and sorrows. For the first time in months he has a sound sleep. He enjoys his breakfast and looks rested and refreshed. He visualizes a home in the country and a happy family life. He hopes to build a guest-house so that when his sons get married they can come to visit him. He feels that he has the necessary tools and he would just need some lumber and peace of mind for its construction. He thinks that he could build two guest-houses for his two sons and their families. Before leaving for his employer's office he even decides to get some seeds for his garden. Although all his plans centre around his sons, both Biff and Happy remain ignorant of them. In *Sons* it is quite different. Keller discloses his future plan to Chris as a kind of bait, so that he does not think of leaving his house and business.

Willy goes to Howard and requests him for a New York posting. He reminds his young employer of his contributions to the firm and the relationship that existed between Howard's father and himself. But to Howard, Willy is of no further use. He considers him no better than a peel of orange, and so despite Willy's repeated entreaties, he tells Willy that he is not required any longer. Losing his job Willy goes straight to Charley's office to ask his friend for some money. He meets there Bernard

who is now a successful attorney with good social connections. Before his departure Bernard has a candid talk with Willy regarding Biff's past, especially the time he went to Boston to see Willy because he feels that since then Biff has lost all interest in life. He wants to know what happened there. Willy is annoyed and does not tell him anything.

Charley is proud of his son and tells Willy with complacence that Bernard is going to argue a case in front of the supreme court. Willy on his part sees no achievement of his sons to boast of. Realizing his present worth he tells his friend, "Funny, y'know? After all the highways, and trains, and the appointments, and the years, you end up worth more dead than alive" (192). Charley understands what Willy is up to, so he cautions him against his contemplated action saying, "Willy, nobody's worth nothin' dead. *After a slight pause*: did you hear what I said" (192)? But Willy is not completely beaten yet. Before leaving Charley's office what he says about their sons indicates that he still has a great deal of hope and optimism in the days to come: "Apologize to Bernard for me when you see him. I didn't mean to argue with him. He's a fine boy. They're all fine boys, and they'll end up big – all of them. Someday they'll all play tennis together. Wish me luck, Charley. He [Biff] saw Bill Oliver today" (193).

Losing his job, Willy looks forward to the success of his sons. According to the earlier schedule when he goes to have dinner with his sons he is made to realize that all his hopes regarding them have come to nothing. As Biff starts telling him the bare facts about himself and the absurdity of his interview with Oliver, Willy loses his patience and says: "I'm not interested in the stories about the past or any crap of that kind because the woods are burning, boys, you understand? There's a big blaze going on all around. I was fired today" (199). Now Willy has nothing to hold on to and no

good news to tell his wife. Left behind by his sons in the restaurant in a pitiable state, he enquires about a seed store from a waiter and says, "I've got to get some seeds, right away. Nothing's planted. I don't have a thing in the ground" (209). As he has nothing in the soil, which might come up in the form of plants, he has nothing in life to look forward to. Back home, while planting the seeds he has in his mind the suffering of Linda and the sense of his utter hopeless state. He wants to make up to Linda for all the financial hardships she had been through. In his mind he talks with Ben about his contemplated suicide and gets carried away with its profitable outcome: "What a proposition, ts, ts. Terrific. 'cause she's suffered. You understand me? ... Remember, it's a guaranteed twenty-thousand-dollar proposition. Now look, Ben, I want you to go through the ins and outs of this thing with me. I've got nobody to talk to, Ben, and the woman has suffered, you hear me" (212)? Ben, not supporting his plan, says that he will simply make a fool of himself because his insurance policy might not be honoured, and besides, it would be a cowardly thing to do. But Willy argues that he worked like a "coolie to meet every premium" and so his policy has to be honoured. He also tells Ben that he does not like to prolong his life being no more than a zero.

Ben, who is dead but makes his appearance to Willy, is clearly Willy's conscience where he considers the pros and cons of his next move. With this device Miller has the advantage of using two streams of time, the conscious and the subconscious, in the present. Both are important because what happens in the conscious stream affects the subconscious, and vice-versa. Willy indicates to Ben that beside helping Linda his suicide has its other advantages. It will be an act of revenge on Biff, who spites him, for he thinks that Willy is not worth anything. When Biff will see Willy's massive funeral attended by many of his professional associates from the

distant cities he would be simply amazed because he never realized Willy's importance and popularity. Ben says that Biff will simply consider him a fool and a coward and will hate him for his action. Still hankering after the past love and comradeship that existed between Biff and himself, he says, "Why, why can't I give him something and not hate me." This wish of Willy indicates that the breach in the relationship between Willy and Biff has all along tormented Willy. Although Ben is dead, he lives in the present in Willy's subconscious mind to remind him of the tension free and happy family life of the past and the missed opportunities. Willy on the other hand lives in the past because in the past he did not have the frustrations and problems of the present.

Biff returns home, goes to Willy and tells him of his decision to leave the house nursing no ill feeling against him. But Willy's love for his son is so strong that their relationship cannot come to an end so easily. He tells Biff, "May you rot in hell if you leave this house!" Biff asks him what exactly he wants from him. Willy refers to the past by telling him that he wants Biff to know that he cut down his life for spite and so when he would be suffering somewhere in the future he should not put the blame on Willy. Biff tries to do away his father's illusion by telling him exactly what they are and the hard facts about his life. Blaming his father for creating in his mind a wrong idea of himself Biff tells him what it cost him. He had no address for two months because he was in jail for stealing a suit in Kansas city. Miller has introduced here an element of surprise withholding this information so far from Willy as well as the readers. Willy and Biff try to put the blame on each other for Biff's failure:

Willy: I suppose that's my fault!

Biff: I stole myself out of every good job since high school!

> Willy: And whose fault is that?
>
> Biff: And I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is! (216)

Biff is the only one in the family who sees himself and others in the right perspective. He tries desperately to make Willy reconcile to the present realities and get rid of his past dream. He says:

> I am not a leader of men, Willy, and neither are you. You were never anything but a hard-working drummer who landed in the ash can like the rest of them! I'm one dollar an hour, Willy! I tried seven states and couldn't raise it. A buck an hour! Do you gather my meaning? I'm not bringing home any prizes any more, and you're going to stop waiting for me to bring them home! (217)

But Willy, instead of accepting the present reality, clutches at the illusion of future success. In his attempts to convince his father to reconcile with the present facts of life, Biff finally breaks down and starts sobbing holding on to Willy. There is no trace of any spite in his words and action. The wheel has taken a full circle and the past bond between the father and the son is restored. To Willy the outbreak of Biff's passion is a clear demonstration of Biff's love and affection for him. The fact that despite everything Biff loves him, is a revelation to Willy. Moved by what Biff has said and done, Willy immediately realizes what he can do to materialize his dream, and decides on his next course of action. The suicide that he contemplated earlier becomes a finality. He says, "That boy – that boy is going to be magnificent!" And Ben, his conscience, prompts aloud, "Yes, outstanding, with twenty thousand behind him" (218). We notice this change in Ben because what Willy has just experienced is reflected in his subconscious mind as well. And so, once again he becomes optimistic

of Biff's potentials and future success. After Linda and Happy move upstairs, he talks to Ben and gets carried away with the success Biff would be able to achieve with his insurance money – "Can you imagine that magnificence with twenty thousand dollars in his pocket?" The success of Bernard and the failure of Biff being very much in his mind, he gloats over the prospects of his son getting ahead of Bernard once again. Willy visualizes in Biff's expected future success his own success as well. He feels that finally his dream has come true, and so he tells Ben, "I always knew, one way or another we were gonna make it, Biff and I!" Willy remains resolved in his decision, and despite repeated calls from his wife he does not go upstairs to his room; he goes out in his car at full speed and kills himself.

Like *Sons* and *Salesman* the past has a great deal to do in the action of *Price*. In the play there are constant references to all that was said and done in the past. There are no memory scenes or flashbacks in *Price*; the past is narrated or referred to, to support or dispute a point. The action centres on the selling of some old furniture lying in the attic of an old Manhattan building. At the very beginning of the play, Victor, in police uniform, enters the attic of the building. Soon his wife Esther joins him. The condition of the building makes her feel a hundred years old. She tries to remember the name of the person who had rented the front parlor and repaired saxophones. Victor tells her that it was Saltzman. The name makes them recall the past and Saltzman's success with the girls. Victor tells her humorously how at times he also benefited from Saltzman's invitations. Esther goes to the phonograph and asks him about a record.

> Victor: It's a Laughing Record. It was a big thing in the Twenties.
>
> Esther, *curiously*: You remember it?

> Victor: Very vaguely. I was only five or six. Used to play them at parties. You know – see who could keep a straight face. Or maybe they just sat around laughing; I don't know.
>
> Esther: That's a wonderful idea! (10)

Later on Victor draws out the chassis of an immense radio. He looks at the ceiling and points at the damage done to it by the explosion of a battery. Not seeing any trace of the dealer, they decide to leave. Victor takes up the foil and mask lying there and demonstrates his past skill in fencing. Exhausted and tired, the dealer, Solomon, enters coughing. A brief introduction being over, Esther leaves for the cleaner to get Victor's suit, and Solomon and Victor get busy with the furniture.

Victor tells Solomon that the furniture was moved to the building after the 1921 crash, and since his father died sixteen years ago the furniture has been left there. Solomon says that time is a terrible thing. Indicating the harp, he tells Victor that the sounding board is cracked. He points at the armoire and says, "an armoire like this, thirty years you couldn't give it away; it was a regular measles. Today all of a sudden, they want it again" (30). He then says that he is no longer in his furniture business as he used to be before and that Victor must have found his name in a very old phone book. He adds:

> ...a couple of years ago already I cleaned out my store. Except a few English andirons I got left, I sell when I need a few dollars. I figured I was eighty, eighty-five, it was time already. But I waited – and nothing happened – I even moved out of my apartment. I'm living in the back of the store with a hotplate. But nothing happened. I'm still practically a hundred percent – not a hundred, but I feel very well. And I figured maybe you got a couple nice pieces – not that the rest can't be sold, but it could take a year, year and a half. For me that's a big bet... (39-40)

The deal for the furniture is fixed, and when Solomon is handing Victor the hundred dollar bills the latter's brother, Walter, arrives quite unexpectedly. The two brothers enquire of each other about their family. Victor talks proudly of the success of his son, Richard; Walter, on the other hand has no enthusiasm to talk about his daughter and sons because like Willy in *Salesman* he has nothing to boast of so far as his children are concerned.

Walter tells his brother that he will not take anything from the sale proceeds and that he has just come to say hello. But Victor has pride and self-respect not to forget Walter's past attitude towards him and their father and take Walter's share of the money. As Walter helps Solomon to the bedroom, Esther says that since they need the money she can think of no reason why they should not accept Walter's offer. Victor says: "Esther, I've been calling him all week; doesn't even bother to come to the phone, walks in here and smiles and I'm supposed to fall into his arms? I can't behave as though nothing ever happened, and you're not going to either! Now just take it easy, we're not dying of hunger" (70). Esther is not still convinced, but Victor has reasons not to feel the same way. He says: "Certain things have happened, haven't they? I can't turn around this fast, kid. He's only been here ten minutes, I've got twenty-eight years to shake off my back" (70).

Walter is not much concerned with the past. It is the present, which is important to him, and he wants to make the best of it. Shrewd, worldly-wise and business-minded, he gives a formula according to which after an inflated value of the furniture has been fixed he would donate the money to the Salvation Army saving about twelve thousand dollars in income tax, half of which, i.e. six thousand dollars he would give to Victor. Walter also talks about the prospect of Victor working in his project. Esther is easily taken in by Walter's suggestions. Though appreciative of

Walter's offer, Victor is unable to forget what happened in the past. Esther understands what is standing between Walter and Victor: Walter had refused to loan him five hundred dollars that he needed to get his degree. Victor cannot forget Walter's neglect of him in the past. The work that Walter offers him hurts his pride and dignity because he knows that he is not educated to do anything decent. He tells Walter:

> Walter, I haven't got the education, what are you talking about? You can't walk in with one splash and wash out twenty-eight years. There's a price people pay. I've paid it, it's all gone, I haven't got it any more. Just like you paid, didn't you? You've got no wife, you've lost your family, you're rattling around all over the place? Can you go home and start all over again from scratch? This is where we are; now, right here, now. And as long as we're talking, I have to tell you that this is not what you say in front of a man's wife. (98)

Walter says in his defence that the five hundred dollars that victor needed was not what kept him from his degree. He could have left his father and gone ahead. He himself did not pay their father more than five dollars a month because he knew their father had four thousand dollars. So instead of giving Victor five hundred dollars he told him to ask their father for it. He adds later, "Well, all I can tell you is that I wouldn't sit around eating garbage with *that* staring me in the face! *He points at the harp*. Even then it was worth a couple of hundred, maybe more! Your degree was right there. Right there, if nothing else" (104). All this is revelation to Esther. She simply cannot believe that despite Victor knew that his father had money they had to bear with the hardships to support him. She declares his past cares for his father a farce, a goddamned farce.

Victor: don't. Don't say that.

> Esther: Farce! To stick us into a furnished room so you could send him a part of your pay? Even after we were married, to go on sending him money? Put off having children, live like mice – and all the time you knew he ...? Victor, I'm trying to understand you. Victor? – Victor!
>
> Victor, *roaring out, agonized*: Stop it! Silence. *Then*: Jesus, you can't leave everything out like this. The man was a beaten dog, ashamed to walk in the street, how do you demand his last buck – ? (105)

Victor, however, says that he told his father what Walter had suggested but in reply he just laughed. He tried to figure out that laugh and thought how their father could be holding out on him when he knew that he loved him. But in the present he knows the truth. Even then he does not condemn him. He remembers vividly the scene when their father all dressed-up told them that he was bankrupt and their mother vomited on his arm and he kept on sitting letting it dry on his hands. He did not want him to feel helpless and all alone, and so he stuck to him. He says, "I just didn't want him to end up on the grass. And he didn't. That's all it was, and I don't need anything more" (112).

Victor cannot forget Walter's past apathy and indifference towards him and their father. Walter's present overture of offering him a job and making him the gainer with the proposed six thousand dollars do not convince him of his good wishes. He says, "I would know if you'd come to give me something! I would know that" (111)! He says finally, "I couldn't work with you, Walter. I can't. I don't trust you" (112). The past thus acts as a strong barrier to any kind of reconciliation between the two brothers.

In the plays like *Enemy* and *Crucible*, although the past is often recalled, the action in the present is a continuation or the result of what was done or took place in the immediate past. *Enemy*, like *Sons*, "begins in an atmosphere of undisturbed

normality." At the very beginning of the play we see that everything is quite normal and fine in Dr. Tomas Stockmann's house. The Stockmanns not only enjoy eating but also are liberal in sharing their good meals with those who come to visit them. People like Kill, Hovstad, Billing, Horster and the others are in the habit of benefiting from their hospitality. Hovstad tells Peter Stockmann, the Mayor, that the Doctor at times contributes to his paper, the *People's Daily Messenger*, "when he wants to uncover the real truth of some subject." As the Doctor returns home, Peter tells him that one of his articles about the springs that Hovstad is going to print would be quite timely. A hint that all may not be right is dropped by the Doctor. He tells Peter that under the normal conditions if his article came out in print, it would be quite timely, but he does not feel quite sure about it at present: "There could be a great deal abnormal about conditions; then again, there could be nothing at all" (26). He does not tell the Mayor anything about his being apprehensive of the condition of Kirsten Springs and of the samples of the spring water already sent by him to the University for an analysis. The entire action of the play is moulded by the findings of the University.

After Peter's departure Tomas's daughter, Petra comes to house. She hands her father his mail which the mailman had given to her on her way to school. He takes the letter with great eagerness and leaves for his room. The Doctor, as Billing and Petra are informed by Mrs. Stockmann, has been impatiently waiting for a letter, and during the past couple of days he has been asking again and again about the mailman. Dr. Stockmann comes out of his room. He is excited and jubilant. He informs them that he has just received a report on the samples of spring water which confirms his doubt about the existence of infectious organic matter in the water. Hovstad, Billing, Mrs. Stockmann and Petra are extremely happy at the discovery of the Doctor. Hovstad says that he would like to put a brief item about the discovery in the *Messenger*

because the public ought to know about it soon. He adds – "By God, you'll be the leading man in the town, Doctor" (37).

The next day at the Doctor's house Aslaksen, the publisher of the *Messenger*, says that there should be a demonstration of the citizens done with the utmost moderation complementing the Doctor for bringing the matter to everyone's notice. Hovstad tells Stockmann that the "blunder of the water system has to be made clear to every voter," and so he wants the Doctor's permission to print his report. Dr. Stockmann feels elated at the promise of support from Aslaksen and Hovstad and the backing of the solid majority. He tells his wife: "It's wonderful. You can't imagine the feeling, Catherine, to know that your own town feels like a brother to you. I have never felt so at home in this town since I was a boy" (50). But with the Mayor's arrival everything changes. Peter, from whom Tomas could not think of any opposition, stands firmly against making his findings public for fear of the present and future consequences. Apart from the financial side, the thought of the long time of two years which may be required to build a waste-disposal plant and reconstruction of a brand new water system is a good reason for Peter to abandon the project altogether. He tells Tomas that as soon as it is known that the water is dangerous the town will not have a single visitor and so they will be compelled to shut the springs. He tells his brother to reconsider everything because the future will depend on what they do in the present. But the Doctor, not at all happy with the present condition, is fully aware that the present malaise is the outcome of the doings in the past. He accuses Peter saying that he and his administration were the ones who insisted that the water supply be built where it is, and now they are afraid to admit the blunder they committed. Peter is not willing to listen to any reason and the Doctor, too, remains firm in his stand:

> Peter Stockmann: Then we will publish our own statement, to calm the public.
>
> Dr. Stockmann: Good enough! And I will write against you. I will stick to what I said, and I will prove that I am right and that you are wrong, and what will you do then?
>
> Peter Stockmann: Then I simply won't be able to prevent your dismissal. (57)

Petra expresses her disgust at the treatment of her father by her uncle. Peter leaves the place making it quite clear that he means what he says.

Tomas is blocked from getting any public place for his lecture on the water system. Horster offers him the use of his place, which he gladly accepts. But when the meeting starts Peter and his lackeys take control of the meeting and the Doctor is made to look a traitor in the eyes of the people. Booed and insulted, he just manages to escape with his family unhurt. But the onslaught of the mob does not stop. They make him their target and throw stones at his house. The Doctor collects the stones which fall on the floor of his house as souvenirs to remind him in future of his undaunted stand against what is wrong. He tells his wife: "I'm going to keep these like sacred relics. I'll put them in my will. I want the boys to have them in their homes to look at every day..." (99-100). Nobody wants to help the doctor or cooperate with him: the glazier does not come to fix the windowpanes; he also receives a notice of eviction from his landlord. He tries to pacify his wife saying that they will go to America and the whole thing will be over like a dream. She asks him how he knows "it'll be any different there." He replies: "I don't know. It just seems to me, in a big country like that, the spirit must be bigger. Still, I suppose they must have the solid majority there too. I don't know, at least there must be more room to hide there" (101). He tells her that he does not think he is ever going to forget the face of the crowd which condemned him.

The Doctor's sons, Ejlif and Morten, return home, the latter with a bruised head. He has been beaten up by the boys because he retaliated to their calling the Doctor a traitor. Shocked by such violence, the Doctor declares that to such people who teach their own children to think with their fists, he is an enemy. He resolves not to run away and stay back to fight for truth. He is confident that truth one day will be victorious. He decides not to send his children to their school – he and Petra will teach them in Captain Horster's house along with the helpless ignorant and uncivilized children. From the Doctor's stand we can conclude that the present is not the end of everything, and a person like Doctor Stockmann cannot accept defeat because he has his ideals and future dreams to live for.

The action in *Crucible* triggers from what Abigail, Betty, Tituba, Mary Warren, Ruth and Mercy Lewis did in the forest before the play opens. At the very beginning we find Reverend Parris praying for his ailing daughter, Betty: "He mumbles, then seems about to weep; then he weeps, then prays again; but his daughter does not stir on the bed" (229). The rumour has spread that she is bewitched, so the parlour of Parris's house is packed with curious people. Parris does not want to believe that Betty is under any demonic spell, and so he has already sent for Reverend Hale, an expert on demonic art, to confirm his belief. He discovered his daughter and niece, Abigail, dancing like heathen in the forest along with some other girls. He tells Abigail that he cannot go down and face the crowd till he knows from her what she and the other girls were doing in the forest.

> Abigail: Uncle, we did dance; let you tell them I confessed it – and I'll be whipped if I must be. But they're speakin' of witchcraft. Betty's not witched.

> Parris: Abigail, I cannot go before the congregation when I know you have not opened with me. What did you do with her in the forest?
>
> Abigail: We did dance, uncle, and when you leaped out of the bush so suddenly, Betty was frightened and then she fainted. And there's the whole of it. (231)

Parris then asks Abigail why she was discharged from Elizabeth Proctor's service. He has heard that Elizabeth comes rarely to the church because she does not want to "sit close to something soiled." He cannot understand what she meant by the remark. He wants to know in detail what happened in the past, and till it is known he feels uncertain about the present and is apprehensive for the future.

Putnam and Mrs. Putnam, who have come to see Betty, seem to be too eager for the public to know that Parris's daughter is bewitched. Putnam wants Parris to declare that he has discovered witchcraft. Parris is horrified at the probable consequences of such a declaration. After they depart Abigail spells out to Mercy Lewis, Mary Warren and Betty their strategy to face the present crisis. She does not want to reveal more than what Parris already knows: she has told her uncle that they danced in the forest and Tituba conjured Ruth's sister to come out of the grave; he saw Mercy naked. Mary knows what was done to the witches in Boston two years ago, and she is afraid of what might happen to them. She says, "Abby, we've got to tell. Witchery's a hangin' error, a hangin' like they done in Boston two years ago! We must tell the truth, Abby! You'll be whipped for dancin' and the other things" (237)! As Betty whimpers and raises her arms as though to fly, reaches for the window and gets one leg out, Abigail pulls her away from the window and tries to calm her down saying that she has told her father everything. Betty says, she did not tell him that she drank blood. Abigail warns her not to utter it again. Betty says, "You did, you did! You drank a charm to kill John Proctor's wife! You drank a charm to kill Goody

Proctor" (238)! Abigail smashes her across the face, tells her to shut up and pronounces dire consequences on each of them if they utter anything more than she has already said. When John Proctor comes and Abigail is left alone with him, she tells him frankly that their dancing in the woods and the fright that Betty took at the sudden presence of her father are at the root of the present commotion in Salem. Although Proctor is determined not to revive his affair with her, she hankers after his love. She thinks that he still loves her and says that she was discharged from his house by his wife, not by him. She implores him to give her what she wants but Proctor says that he will cut off his hands before he will ever reach for her again.

In *Crucible*, unlike any other play of Miller, the playwright, like a novelist, narrates the past of some characters prior to their appearance to give us some idea about their nature. At the very beginning of the play before Parris opens his mouth the playwright says, "In history he cut a villainous path, and there is very little good to be said about him. He believed he was being persecuted wherever he went, despite his best efforts to win people and God to his side. In meeting, he felt insulted if someone rose to shut the door without first asking his permission" (225). Similarly, we know that Thomas Putnam was a man of many grievances. In the past his wife's brother-in-law, James Bayley, had been turned down as minister of Salem. "His vindictive nature was demonstrated long before the witchcraft began. He could never forget his failure in making his brother-in-law minister.... Thomas Putnam felt that his own name and the honor of his family had been smirched by the village, and he meant to right matters however he could" (224). So, the playwright says, "it is not surprising to find that so many accusations against people are in the handwriting of Thomas Putnam." The Putnams bore grudge against Francis Nurse and Rebecca Nurse because "the Nurse clan had been in the faction that prevented Bailey's taking office." Before we hear

anything from Proctor we are told about his nature and character – "But as we shall see, the steady manner he displays does not spring from an untroubled soul. He is a sinner, a sinner not only against the moral fashion of the time, but against his own vision of decent conduct" (239).

Crucible is a play of vengeance in which the lines of action are clearly stated. The past in the play contributes to a very great extent to the theme of vengeance. Abigail, failing to win Proctor's love, takes her revenge on Proctor and his wife. Parris avenges his hurt pride on those who did not attend his church, and Putnam his past embarrassments on the people responsible for them. Elizabeth, too, cannot forget or forgive her husband's past relationship with Abigail. When she hears of Abigail's role in the identification of witchcraft, she wants her husband to go and inform the court what he was told by Abigail about Betty's sickness. He falters and says, "I am only wondering how I may prove what she told me, Elizabeth. If the girl's a saint now, I think it is not easy to prove she's a fraud, and the town gone so silly. She told it to me alone – I have no proof for it" (*Crucible* 264). As soon as she comes to know that he was alone with Abigail suspicion creeps into her mind and she tells him, "John, if it were not Abigail that you must go to hurt, would you falter now? I think not" (264). That Elizabeth is still suspicious of what Proctor did in the past makes him angry. He says:

> ...spare me! You forget nothin' and forgive nothin'. Learn charity, woman. I have gone tiptoe in this house all seven month since she is gone. I have not moved from there to there without I think to please you, and still an everlasting funeral marches round your heart. I cannot speak but I am doubted, every moment judged for lies, as though I come into a court when I come into this house! (265)

The Proctors get to know from Mary that Elizabeth was accused in the court. This fully convinces Elizabeth that Abigail wants her dead to take her place. She feels that in the past some promise was made in bed between her husband and Abigail and so she wants Proctor to go and break the promise by declaring in public that Abigail is a whore.

When, at the accusation of Abigail, Elizabeth is forcibly taken by the Marshall, Proctor goes to the court to save his wife by revealing his past relationship with Abigail. Not caring for his shame and humiliation he admits his lechery with Abigail, and tells the court that his wife threw her out of his house because she knew about the relationship. He declares that he has never known his wife to lie and the court can confirm what he has said about him and Abigail from her. He cannot prove his adulterous relationship with Abigail because his wife lies to save him from his humiliation. Mary, whom he has brought to expose the pretension of Abigail and the other girls, accuses him of witchcraft to save her own life, and so, instead of freeing his wife he himself ends up in the prison.

After about three months since Proctor and some other people were imprisoned, Deputy Governor Danforth is informed by Parris that Abigail has vanished. Although Danforth is no longer convinced of the guilt of Proctor and the other prisoners, he tells Hale that he cannot postpone their hanging and pardon them because twelve people have been already hanged for the same crime. The confinement has made Proctor more conscious of his guilt and imperfections. When his wife is brought to him he tells her: "I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud. I am not the man. My honesty is broke, Elizabeth; I am no good man. Nothing's spoiled by giving them this lie that were not rotten long before" (322). Proctor, however, refuses to hand over his signed confession to Danforth to make it public. The concern for his

identity and his present and future name makes him say: "You will not use me! I am no Sarah Good or Tituba, I am John Proctor! You will not use me! It is no part of salvation that you should use me" (327)! Like Proctor, Joan, too, in Shaw's *Saint Joan*, despite her obdurate resolute stand against the pressure of the inquisition for giving a signed confession of her heresy, yields to save herself from the fire, and finally tears the signed paper into pieces as soon as she is told that she would not be set free. To Joan, death at the stake is more welcome than perpetual imprisonment. Proctor's concerns, on the other hand, are of different nature. He does not want to bring any shame on his children and blacken the names of those who have died for silence. Ronald Hayman rightly observes about Proctor's predicament: "Like Shaw's St. Joan he is so eager to stay alive that he makes the 'confession' that is required of him, only to tear it up afterward, knowing that if he puts his name to it he will never 'find himself' again. Identity is more precious than survival" (Hayman, *AM* 57). When Danforth asks him why he will not give him the signed paper, he says, "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!" He tears the paper and says, "... for now I do think I see some goodness in John Proctor. Not enough to weave a banner with, but white enough to keep it from such dogs..." (328). Leaving for posterity this goodness and integrity Proctor goes to the gallows without any vacillation. In the concluding note of the play, "Echoes Down the Corridor," the playwright notes: Parris was voted out of office; Abigail turned into a prostitute in Boston; Elizabeth married again four years after Proctor's death; some steps were taken to compensate the families of the past victims. All this shows that like time life

does not stop at one point. With the continuity of time there is also the continuity of life from present to the future.

In *Glass* Phillip Gellburg wants his wife Sylvia to get cured from her recent inability to stand and walk and to be happy in life. He suggests that they should go to Doctor Hyman and tell him about all their problems. In their talk a certain thing of their past life is referred to. Sylvia is surprised that he is still worried about it. Gellburg says that he is not worried but he just thinks about it now and then. But as far as Sylvia is concerned what happened in their past life is irretrievable. She says, "it's too late," and "it does not matter any more." She adds that they talked to Rabbi Steiner twice about it but it did not do them any good. For the last couple of years the past has remained a barrier in their life. She complains that he regretted marrying her. Although in his defence he says he did not regret it, he tells her – "in those days I thought that if we separated I wouldn't die of it. I admit that" (45). He tells her that he is now a changed man, and makes a move for reconciliation. From her following words we know that their relationship is beyond repair: "I'm here for my mother's sake, and Jerome's sake, and everybody's sake except mine, but I'm here and here I am. And now finally you want to talk about it, now when I'm turning into an old woman? How do you want me to say it? Tell me, dear, I'll say it the way you want me to. What should I say" (45-46)?

Sylvia's sister, Harriet, goes to Dr. Hyman to discuss Sylvia's problem with him. While talking to him she refers to a past happening of Hyman's life with regard to her cousin Roslyn Fein whom he took out once. He does not seem to remember either Roslyn or the time of their dating. Harriet tries to jog his memory giving more details. Quite pleased with what he hears about himself, he laughs and tells her to give Roslyn his regards. He asks Harriet about Phillip and how he met Sylvia. She tells him

that Sylvia was head bookkeeper at Empire Street in Long Island City. She got to know Phillip when she was twenty. Her company took out a mortgage and she had to explain all the accounts to Phillip. Hyman asks her about their marriage, which he feels is a troubled one. Harriet tells him that on one occasion he picked up a steak and slapped her in the face with it because it was overdone. If her mother hadn't patched up the matter, she says that she is not sure what would have happened. To make it up, Gellburg bought his wife a gorgeous beaver coat and painted the whole house. She also tells him about one of the New-Year parties which they used to have at the basement of their uncle Myrone's place. It was about fifteen or sixteen years ago. They all had a lot of fun looking at the photographs of naked men and women kept in the shoebox. When Sylvia was laughing looking at the picture of a man he took it out of her hand and gave her a real push up the stairs and she got a cut on her scalp. He screamed at everyone and took her out of the place. The story was that he was not adequate anymore in his sex-relationship.

Dr. Hyman comes to Gellburg's house to find out the progress in Sylvia's physical condition. He pinches her toe but she does not feel anything. He tells her to try to relax her muscle and move her legs. Hyman wants to know more about her and asks her if Phillip was her first boyfriend. She says that he was the first serious one. They mostly talked about business. Hyman thinks that she was a good businesswoman. Sylvia says, "Oh, I loved it! I've always enjoyed ... you know, people depending on me" (68). He gets the information from her that Phillip did not want her to continue her work. Hyman leaves and the next time we see him with Sylvia is when Phillip is away to Jersey for a zoning meeting. They have a friendly talk. She asks them about the flying birds she heard in the morning. Hyman says that they were really amazing, he saw hundreds of them shoot up like a spray in front of

his house. The thought of the birds makes her feel nostalgic for the lost past as in the cases of Paddy and Edmund in O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* and *Long Day's Journey into Night*, respectively. Both Sylvia and Hyman seem to share similar ideas regarding the past. Sylvia's talk about the past not only reveals what she misses in the present but also a trait of her past life with all her responsibilities in her family. She, like Willy in *Salesman*, feels nostalgic for the freshness and spaciousness of the past surrounding. She says: "Brooklyn was really beautiful, wasn't it? I think people were happier then. My mother could stand on our porch and watch us all the way to school right across the open fields for – must have been a mile. *A little laugh*. And I would tie a clothesline around my three sisters so I wouldn't have to keep chasing after them" (108)! Changing the topic Hyman asks her a very personal question regarding her relation with Phillip. He wants to know especially what Phillip told him recently about their having a relation, which she could not remember in the morning. Quite surprised by what she has just heard she tells him that they have not had any relations over twenty years – since a few years after Jerome was born. Sylvia recalls the past to tell him what happened between them. He just could not have relations with her any more. He was incapable of it. She was so young. After about a month she told her father about it. Her father, who loved Phillip, tried to suggest a doctor, but Phillip was so furious that it took him months to have normal conversation with her again. For a while she thought of having a divorce. She thinks that Phillip felt ashamed in front of Hyman, so he made it up that he had relations with her.

When Gellburg returns home he is surprised to see Hyman with Sylvia who has just fainted. The doctor tells him to get some water immediately. His commanding and possessive attitude annoys Gellburg. After his departure he tells his wife that he will change her doctor, but Sylvia is determined not to do so. He does not approve of

her tone. But her declaration that "It's a Jewish woman's tone of voice!" shows to what extent she identifies herself with the Jewish cause and is embittered by Gellburg's apathy towards it. He cannot simply understand her. She finally tells him not to sleep with her again which he finds difficult to accept. He says that if they cannot be together it will simply kill him. They both recall the past to explain what actually happened to make a permanent breach in their marital relationship. As past time cannot be brought to the present so is the case with the past happenings. Like the broken glass, in life certain things once damaged cannot be restored to their original position. Sylvia complains how much she has sacrificed for him and what a waste she has made of her life: "What I did with my life! Out of ignorance. Out of not wanting to shame you in front of other people. A whole life. Gave it away like a couple of pennies – I took better care of my shoes" (129). He defends himself in an apologetic manner saying that he was ignorant and could not help himself. He says that it all started when she wanted to go back to the firm and join her job. After Jerome was born she did not want to keep the house any more: "You held it against me, having to stay home, you know you did. You've probably forgotten, but not a day passed, not a person could come into this house that you didn't keep saying how wonderful and interesting it used to be for you in business. You never forgave me Sylvia" (130). So, he says that he could not feel at ease with her any more. And on top of everything when she did not want to have any more children he could not just be normal with her. Everything inside him dried up; he became passive and incapable of having any relations with her.

Quite unlike Maggie in *Fall*, Gellburg did not protest. He accepted his fate because she meant everything to him. The realization of the breach of conjugal relationship makes Maggie neurotic. Like Quentin, Phillip too, admits his fault. But

although Phillip tried to talk to Sylvia about it he could not. He says that he kept waiting for them to change. But time changed everything and everything went beyond his control. He adds, "And then we got to where it did not seem to matter anymore. So I left it that way. And I couldn't change anything anymore" (131). But now he is more than eager to make amends. He suggests teaching her driving so that she could go to any place she liked, or if she liked, she could find a new job. But she remains determined not to allow him to share her bed. Later on, while discussing his marital problems with Hyman, Gellburg says that something sticks in his mind that he has always wanted to talk to somebody about. In this case he does not feel the barrier of time. He says: "It's like it happened this morning. But years ago, ... when I used to do it with her, I would feel almost like a small baby on top of her, like she was giving me birth" (147). Lying next to him in bed, he felt she was like a marble god. He says that he worshipped her from the day he laid eyes on her. Gellburg does not lose all hope of future happiness. He wants to obliterate from his mind the unhappiness of his present life considering it an intermediary stage between the past and the future.

In *Bridge*, unlike any other play of Miller, the past action is recalled and narrated by Alfieri, a lawyer, who is also a character in the play. The play deals with the past time centring on a longshoreman Eddie Carbone and his family. The entire action is shown in flashbacks with Alfieri performing his role like a chorus. Quite interestingly Alfieri's recall of the past becomes the present from the point of view of Eddie and his family who very often refer to the time further back in the past. At the very beginning Alfieri addresses the audience to tell them how the general people take to his profession of law. He gives the hint of a case, a problem, the like of which was heard in the past "in Calibria or on the cliff at Syracuse by another lawyer, quite differently dressed, heard the same complaint" and sat there as powerless as him, and

"watched it run its bloody course" (379). Immediately we see Eddie, the main person involved in the case. Back from work he takes leave of the other longshoremen and enters his house where he is greeted by his wife Beatrice's niece, Catherine. Soon Eddie starts expressing his disapproval of Catherine's ways. He does not like the looks the people give Catherine or the way she attracts their attention walking on high heels. He refers to the past to make her change her present ways: "Kattie, I promised your mother on her deathbed. I'm responsible for you. You're a baby, you don't understand these things. I mean when you stand here by the window, wavin' outside" (381).

Eddie has news for Beatrice that her cousins have arrived in America. They are still on board, but in a couple of hours they are expected to be at his place. He warns them that since they are illegal immigrants, they should not utter a single word to anybody about them even by mistake. Beatrice and Eddie tell Catherine how Vinny betrayed his uncle to the Immigration authorities and what was done to him. Beatrice says: "Oh, it was terrible. He had five brothers and the old father. And they grabbed him in the kitchen and pulled him down the stairs – three flights his head was bouncin' like a coconut. And they spit on him in the street, his own father and his brothers. The whole neighborhood was cryin'" (389).

Marco and his brother Rodolpho arrive at Eddie's house at night. They tell Eddie, Beatrice and Catherine about their life in Italy. Marco has come to America leaving behind his three children, aged, four, five and six. Beatrice tells him sympathetically, "Ah...I bet they're cryin' for you already, heh?" Marco replies, "What can I do? The older one is sick in his chest. My wife – she feeds them from her mouth. I tell you the truth, If I stay there they will never grow up. They eat the sunshine" (393). He says that he will earn sufficient money staying in America for four to six years and then he will go back home. Rodolpho adds that they will work

hard, work all day and night to materialize their dream. Unlike Marco he has no plan to go back to his country within the next few years. He wants to live in America and be an American, and when he is rich he will go back to Italy and buy a motorcycle to work as a messenger for the rich people staying in the hotel. Later on as Catherine tries to find out the real motive behind his feeling for her and suggests going to his country with him, he tells her that if he took her home with no money, no business, everybody would call him crazy. He thinks that it would be criminal to do her harm. He tells her, "In two years you would have an old, hungry face. When my brother's babies cry they give them water, water that boiled a bone" (419).

As recalled by Alfieri we see how the development in the relationship between Rodolpho and Catherine annoys Eddie. He tells Beatrice grudgingly, "They must've seen every picture in Brooklyn now. He's supposed to stay in the house when he ain't working. He ain't supposed to go advertising himself" (397). He tries to convince Catherine that Rodolpho's only motive is to be a citizen of America by marrying her. Besides, he also emphasizes to what extent Rodolpho is impractical and irresponsible: "Is that a workin' man? What does he do with his first money? A snappy new jacket he buys, records, a pointy pair new shoes and his brother's kids are starvin' over there with tuberculosis? That's a hit-and-run guy, baby; he's got bright lights in his head, Broadway. Them guys don't think of nobody but theirself! You marry him and the nest time you see him it'll be for divorce" (403)! Later on he tries to prove to Alfieri to what extent Rodolpho is effeminate by saying that he is blond, sings like a girl, sews dress, etc.

Beatrice does not like the way Catherine is treated by Eddie. She wants Catherine to realize that she is no longer the child of the past. She tells her that she has got to be her own self more, and so she should not act the way she acts, like walking

around in front of Eddie in her slip or sitting on the edge of the bath tub when he is shaving in his underwear. Catherine is what the past has made her. She knows that it is not easy to go against Eddie and make him unhappy. She says, "I've been here all my life, ... Every day I saw him when he left in the morning and when he came home at night. You think it's so easy to turn around and say to a man he's nothing to you no more" (421)?

Not being able to stand the relationship between Rodolpho and Catherine, Eddie goes to Alfieri for legal action against Rodolpho. Getting no endorsement from Alfieri he rings up the immigration bureau about the illegal stay of the brothers. When Marco and Rodolpho are being led away by the immigration officials, Marco spits on Eddie's face and condemns him in front of the entire neighbourhood. Marco cannot forget Eddie's treatment of Rodolpho and his final betrayal and neither can Eddie his public humiliation. Marco tells Alfieri, "He degraded my brother. My blood. He robbed my children, he mocks my work. I work to come here, mister" (434).

Beatrice expedites Catherine's marriage to Rodolpho to enable him to have the legal status to stay in America. As Beatrice gets ready to accompany Catherine to the church for her wedding, Eddie forbids her to go. Catherine who has lost all her love and respect for Eddie calls him a rat and tells Beatrice that he belongs in the sewer. As far as she is concerned he has forfeited all his rights to tell anybody anything the rest of his life. Rodolpho comes and apologizes to Eddie for all that has happened. He tells Eddie that if they demonstrate to Marco that they are friends then maybe Marco will not try to do anything against him. Both Catherine and Beatrice plead with him, but Eddie cannot forget the shame and humiliation he was subjected to by Marco. He tells them: "I want my name! He didn't take my name; he's only a punk. Marco's got my name – *to Rodolpho*: and you can run tell him, kid, that he's gonna give it back to me

in front of this neighborhood, or we have it out. *Hoisting up his pants*: Come on, where is he? Take me to him" (437). Beatrice makes a last try to save Eddie with her love, and when she finds him insensitive to it she tells him quite bluntly, "You want somethin' else, Eddie, and you can never have her." Before he can recover from the shock of what has been told he hears the challenging call of Marco. Fallen in the eyes of the two women at home and to the entire neighbourhood outside, Eddie becomes desperate to get back his self-respect in front of everyone. That Catherine has called him a rat does not seem to be of any concern compared to the public humiliation. Eddie cannot visualize a respectable existence for him in the present if he cannot raise himself in the eyes of the people. As Marco approaches he shouts and says, "I want my name Marco. Now gimme my name and we go to together, to the wedding" (438). He goes out to face Marco. The present and the future are important to both Eddie and Marco, and so they feel no qualms in risking their life to find redress to their present humiliation.

In *Time* the present is a struggle for existence; this struggle is against the odds created by the selfish, self-centred and insensitive people. The plans for the future and the thought for the fulfilment of such plans are what make most people live in this world. It makes life meaningful. If one has no such plans and does not bother to look into the future, one loses the power to live. Fania, as we see at the very beginning of her prison-life in *Time*, does believe in resigning herself to determinism. She tells the frightened sobbing Marianne, "I've always had to have an aim in life – something I wanted to do next. That's what we need now if we're ever to get out of here alive" (459). Marianne does not seem to have any such plan. As Fania sees her straddling a kapo, she tries to justify her action by saying, "I'm not going to live to get out of here anyway." Fania asks, "But if you do? Marianne? What if you live?" Marianne,

resigned to her fate, is silent and walks away with a certain stubborn air (479). Later on we see her biting into a bar of chocolate which two kapos had given her and being led away by them around the corner of the barracks, one holding a bottle of wine. Like Fania, Michou and Esther live for the future. To Michou the cruelty or humanity of the Nazis is of no concern. For her there is still hope, "because when the war is over Europe will be communist," and that is what she wants to live for. Michou's optimism is similar to Bayard's, expressed to Von Berg in *Vichy*. Bayard feels that in the present-day world one cannot be oneself. As a socialist he sees in the future triumph of the working class people a salvation for the suffering humanity. Esther thinks otherwise. Quite conscious of her identity, she dreams of Palestine. Not sharing Michou's zeal for communism, she tells her, "No. To see Palestine – that's why you have to live. You're Jewish women – *that's* your hope: To bring forth Jewish children in Palestine..." (483-484).

Elzvieta's present fate is a sharp contrast to what she was in the past. She tells Fania that she is one of the most successful actresses in Poland. Her father was a Count and she was brought up in a castle. She has a husband and a nine-year-old son, Marok. She has lost her faith in the goodness of human beings and so she admits to Fania that she wonders whether it will be worse to survive than not to. She is disappointed at the Christian kingdoms because their leaders have not done anything to put an end to the Nazi atrocities. She tells Fania: "When I first came here I was sure that the Pope, the Christian leaders did not know; but when they found out they would send planes to bomb out the fires here, the rail tracks that bring them every day. But the trains keep coming and fires continue burning. Do you understand it?" Fania tries to rationalize their attitude saying, "Maybe other things are more important to bomb. What are we anyway but a lot of women who can't even menstruate anymore – and

some scarecrow men" (503)? When the news of Mala and Edek's escape reaches them and other prisoners, they are all proud of their daring feat. Elzvieta feels that through them the world will know about their ordeals, and so she proposes to play for them The Wedding March.

Alma, the leader of the band, is delighted at the prospect of leaving the barracks after the next Sunday concert. She will be sent on a tour to play for the troops. In her excitement and pride she tells Fania, "I am going to be released, Fania! Can you imagine it? I'll play what I like and as I like. They said...*Elated now, filling herself:* they said a musician of my caliber ought not to be wasted here!... What's the matter? I thought you'd be happy for me." Fania does not approve of her entertaining men who are keeping them enslaved, and so she cannot be happy for her. The fact that she is a Jew is of no concern to Alma. She tells Fania with pride that she is a German and she can't help that. She says that she will play for German soldiers and adds: "I will be playing for honorable men, not these murderers here! Soldiers risk their lives...!" In that case, Fania asks her why she needs her approval and says sarcastically that if it makes her happy she can enjoy her happiness (511).

In the plays of Miller, in some cases, by recalling the past what is brought to light or what one remembers in the present does not contribute simply to reveal a portion of the lived existence, but also it shows the moral significance of that existence which enables one to understand and judge oneself and others as they really were in the past and are in the present. In *Sons*, although Kate was aware of Joe's complicity in supplying the defective parts, and Ann was aware of the death of Larry, they would not like to accept the implications of their past knowledge. George is the first person, who understands the real significance of what happened in the past concerning Keller and his father. Keller is not concerned with the past till he is made to understand by

his rebellious son, Chris, the intensity of his past crime. There are people like Willy in *Salesman* and Sylvia in *Glass* who feel nostalgic for the past peace and happiness and crave to regain them. Willy finds the present unbearable because he remembers constantly the opportunities he missed, his young sons full of promise, and his happy family life. The past in some cases intrudes into the present and reverberates in the memory of some characters like, Proctor in *Crucible* to make him wish to escape it at any cost. He wants to forget his past relationship with Abigail, whereas, Abigail is prepared to do anything to revive it. Proctor's wife Elizabeth, the Putnams and Parris nurse what happened in the past and judge the present accordingly. The past is a barrier to reconciliation in *Price* and *Glass*. In *Salesman*, too, it is the past, which is responsible for antagonism between Willy and Biff. In *Sons* and *Enemy* the past contributes to unbalance the present. The past is revealed in *Bridge* to show the unavoidable course of life. Although the future expectations in Miler's plays do not play as conspicuous a role as the recalling of the past, the concluding idea or expectation for a number of characters is guided by the thought of the future. The present, passing to the future in life, shows life as an onward movement. Death brings an end to this process, but as long as we live, we go ahead with time. In *Sons* and *Salesman*, the protagonists, killing themselves, bring an end to their life. In *Crucible* and *Time* external forces cut short the life of a number of characters. But life continues for those who live. In *Sons*, Kate, who had all along tried to look after her husband's interest, does not take any time to shift her attention from her dead husband to her living son because she wants the living to live. The "Requiem" part in *Salesman*, "Echoes Down the Corridor" in *Crucible*, and the "restaurant scene" at the end of *Time*, all demonstrate life as something which goes ahead with time. The concern for one's name, identity, self-respect and dignity is moulded mainly by the thought for the

future. It is as much true for Willy Loman, John Proctor and Dr. Tomas Stockmann as it is true for Eddie Carbone. The ideals and future expectations of Stockmann in *Enemy* and Sigmund in *Ceiling* make them finally change their decision of leaving their homeland for America. The dream and plan for a better future make almost all characters of Miller desire an escape from their present ordeal and look forward to a better future.

CHAPTER FIVE

Time and Memory

Our realization of time is inextricably linked with our memory. Without memory there would be no sense of time and no sense of human existence. Georges Poulet, a French philosophical literary critic, rightly says in the introduction to his classic book on time, entitled, *Studies in Human Time,* that the great discovery of the eighteenth century is the phenomenon of memory:

> By remembering, man escapes the purely momentary; by remembering he escapes the nothingness that lies in wait for him between moments of existence. "Without memory," says Quensay, "the sentient being would have only sensation, or the idea of the actual instant ... all his ideas would be consumed by forgetfulness as fast as they were born; all the instants of his duration would be instants of birth and instants of death." And Buffon: "In as much as the consciousness of our existence is composed not only of our actual sensations but also of the train of ideas which the comparison of our sensations and our past existences has brought to birth, it is evident that the more ideas one has the surer he is of his existence; the more wits one has the more he exists." (24)

He further says that to exist is to be one's present and one's recollections.

In conscious memory, which follows chronological time, the present, the past and the future are distinctly separated. But very often, time as conceived in memory may have no such chronological distinctness. Here the past or the future may take place of the present, and in the present one may move to the past or the future. Such time, which is purely psychological, lacks the metric, order and direction of chronological time. Because this time is completely at the mercy of memory, living in time we may lose all sense of natural or objective time. In human life the subconscious memory, which is as important as conscious memory and at times even more important, affects one's sense of the present, the past and the future. Miller has shown this particular aspect of time and memory in a number of plays, like *Salesman, Fall, Clock, Love Story, Can't Remember, Clara* and *Mt. Morgan.*

Exploiting the nature of experiential time and subconscious memory and the link between the two, Miller uses a technique of unfolding time in *Salesman,* which is solely dependent on the mental condition of Wily Loman. It is a means of revealing the character of Willy, his past life, his values and particularly the way his mind works. Willy's overwork and repressed guilt, his sense of failure in professional life and unhappiness in family life result in a mental breakdown in which the present and the past mingle inextricably. Miller says in *Introduction* that the first image that occurred to him which was to result in *Salesman* was "of an enormous face the height of the proscenium arch which would appear and then open up and we would see the inside of a man's head." In fact, *The Inside of His Head* was its first title. He continues:

> The image was in direct opposition to the method of *All My Sons* – a method one might call linear or eventual in that one fact or incident creates the necessity for the next. The *Salesman* image was from the beginning absorbed with the concept that

> nothing in life comes "next" but that everything exists together and at the same time within us; that there is no past to be "brought forward" in a human being, but that he is his past at every moment and that the present is merely that which his past is capable of noticing and smelling and reacting to. (23)

In this play Miller wished to create a form which would be the process of the protagonist's mind. He wished to speak of the salesman most precisely as he felt about him, "to give no part of that feeling away for the sake of any effect or any dramatic necessity." The following words give us a clear idea of his treatment of time in the play:

> This time, if I could, I would have told the whole story and set forth all the characters in one unbroken speech or even one sentence or a single flash of light. As I look at the play now its form seems the form of a confession, for that is how it is told, now speaking of what happened yesterday, then suddenly following some connection to a time twenty years ago, then leaping even further back and then returning to the present and even speculating about the future. (24)

Miller says that unlike *Sons* he did not consider it necessary to prove the connections between the present and the past, between events and moral consequences, between the manifest and the hidden in this play. All he did was to bring the past to Willy's mind.

Amidst Willy's present problems and frustrations we are exposed to the scenes of his past life. But these past scenes and incidents are not mere flashbacks; they are the memory scenes, which Willy himself sees and feels, and we see them exactly as they come to Willy's mind. To what extent these memory scenes control and compel Willy to his catastrophe becomes clear from what Miller says in *Introduction:* "The play was begun with only one firm piece of knowledge and this was that Loman was to destroy himself.... I was convinced only that if I could make him remember enough

he would kill himself, and the structure of the play was determined by what was needed to draw up his memories like a mass of tangled roots without end or beginning" (25).

Remembrance of the things past does not necessarily torment our lives. In some cases they may be pleasant and invigorating. When we say that forgetfulness is a blessing, we mean those incidents and happenings which if not forgotten would make our life no better than living death. In the case of Willy, at times an incident or a word in the present conjures up a related or contrasting experience, either pleasant or unpleasant, of his past life. Linda making the suggestion to Willy that if it is warm on Sunday they will drive in the country and open the windshield, makes him conscious that while returning from the abandoned sale-trip he was thinking of his old Chevrolet, whereas, in reality he had some other car. He reminds her of those past days when they had the Chevrolet. The next we see Willy he is in his past. He is pleased with his sons for the care they take of the car. They are overjoyed to see the punching bag that he has brought for them. There is no trace of any tension in the family. Everyone is relaxed; the talk between Willy and his sons is intimate and hearty. Biff asks his father where he went and tells him that they were lonesome for him and missed him every minute. Willy proudly confides in his sons that someday he will have his own business, and then he will never have to leave home anymore. He asks Biff about his next game and takes great pride in his son's popularity. Biff's love and attachment for him make Willy feel quite complacent. As Linda enters the place carrying a basket of washed clothes, Willy asks his sons indulgently since when they let their mother carry wash up the stairs. They are immediately ready to help their mother. Linda informs Biff that the cellar is full of boys and that they don't know what to do with themselves.

Biff's reply, "Ah, when Pop comes home they can wait!" demonstrates his love and feeling for his father.

Willy's disintegrated family life and his disillusionment with his sons' capabilities are in sharp contrast to what he experienced, believed in, and expected in the past. The fact that we see Willy in the past through Willy himself proves that the past is very much alive and living in his mind, which makes him conscious of the gaps between his life in the present and in the past In the present Willy regrets missing the past opportunities for bettering his economic condition. He is all praise for the dare and adventure of Ben. As Happy assures him of his support, saying, "Pop, I told you I'm gonna retire you for life," Willy explodes by expressing his disappointment in his sons and revealing the state of his tormented life and physical exhaustion in his attempts to cope with the demands of his professional life: "You'll retire me for life on seventy goddam dollars a week? And your women and your car and your apartment, and you'll retire me for life! Christ's sake, I couldn't get past Yonkers today! Where are you guys, where are you? The woods are burning! I can't drive a car" (152)! Charley, Willy's neighbour and friend, enters the room and signals Happy to leave. He and Willy engage themselves in a game of cards. Charley, cognizant of Willy's financial crisis, offers him a job, which Willy takes as an insult. At one stage of their game Willy says, "I'm getting awfully tired, Ben." Charley asks him if he called him Ben. Willy replies, "That's funny. For a second you reminded me of Ben." Here, Willy operates on two levels – the present and the past, and the memory scene appears gradually and usurps the present bit by bit. Although Willy tells Charley about the death of Ben, we find Ben talking to Willy about the bright prospects in Alaska. Still, not losing entirely the link with the present, Willy tells Charley – "sure, sure! If I had gone with him to Alaska that time, everything would have been totally different"

(155). He continues his conversation with both Ben and Charley, and at one point we find him totally in the past.

Memory plays an important part in the action of *Salesman*. In Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*, too, memory plays a significant role. In the "Production Notes" of the play the playwright says, "'Being a "memory play," *The Glass Menagerie* can be presented with unusual freedom of convention"' (xx). We see the entire play as narrated by the protagonist, Tom Wingfield, from his memory. At the beginning, Tom gives the social background of the play saying, "To begin with, I turn back time. I reverse it to the quaint period, the thirties," and after giving the background he adds, "The play is memory" (2-3). But memory in the play is not exploited from psychological point of view. It is more or less the conscious recall of the past time as we get in flashbacks. In *Salesman*, in the case of Willy, memory is not conscious, it is subconscious. This memory is psychological or Proustian rather than the kind we notice in *The Glass Menagerie*. What goes on in Willy's mind is not perceptible to any character other than Willy. H. W. Koone points out this particular treatment of memory in *Salesman*:

> In Miller's usage, an incident or a word in the present suddenly conjures up the memory of a related experience that forwards, or is part of the action.... Willy's mind goes from present to past to present without the other characters noticing anything more than a temporary silence, a nonsequitur of speech or a minor memory lapse too slight to be alarming. (*Introduction* 13)

Willy's memories present a subjective rather than an objective record and are directly linked to his thoughts in the present. Whereas in the present the events develop chronologically and there is a causal link amongst them, the memory episodes are neither sequential with each other nor do they form a single cohesive unit. The order

of the memory episodes depends on the way they come out of Willy's memory because of his emotional association with the happenings in the present. The past, as in hallucination, comes back to Willy, not chronologically as in 'flash-back' but simultaneously with the present with the characteristics of "dynamic interpenetration." In psychology we call this "the return of the repressed," "when mind breaks under the invasion of primitive impulses no longer capable of compromise with reality." (Welland, *Salesman* 27)

Willy became a salesman by choice. He forgoed the prospects of an adventurous life with his elder brother because he was impressed by the success of Dave Singleman, a salesman. When he goes to see his employer he cites the example of Singleman's successful career which inspired him to choose the profession of salesmanship:

> And when I saw that, I realized that selling was the greatest career a man could want. 'Cause what could be more satisfying than to be able to go, at the age of eighty-four, into twenty or thirty different cities, and pick up a phone, and be remembered and loved and helped by so many different people. (180)

Despite all his hard work Willy was never successful professionally and well off financially. In a memory scene we find that he is nowhere near the success, comfort and popularity of Dave Singleman: He is under constant financial pressure and can hardly cope with the repair costs or the payment of premium for the refrigerator, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, car, etc. When Linda gives him the total figure they owe, he expresses his frustration, saying, "A hundred and twenty dollars! My God, if business don't pick up I don't know what I'm gonna do" (148)! Linda makes him optimistic saying that the coming week he will do better. Inspite of his perked up fighting spirits and inflated self-confidence, Willy acknowledges his limitations to his

wife. He says: "Oh, I'll knock 'em dead next week. I'll go to Hartford. I'm very well liked in Hartford. You know, the trouble is, Linda, people don't seem to take to me" (148). He adds that when he walks in the buyers seem to laugh at him, he is not noticed and they just pass him by. Linda tries to give him a boost with her encouraging words: "But you're doing wonderful, dear. You're making seventy to hundred dollars a week." Willy replies: "But I gotta be at it ten, twelve hours a day. Other men – I don't know – they do it easier. I don't know why – I can't stop myself – I talk too much. One thing about Charley. He's a man of few words, and they respect him" (149). In addition to his being conscious of all these defects, Willy is also aware of the handicaps in his physical appearance, i.e. he is fat and very foolish to look at. Still, he is not prepared to resign to his fate and accept the things as they are. We notice in him sparks of determination to succeed and survive. He tells Linda, "I gotta overcome it. I know I gotta overcome it. I'm not dressing to advantage, maybe" (149).

We know nothing about Dave Singleman's family. In the memory scenes, Willy seems to be enjoying a great advantage over Charley with regard to his family. Besides, Willy is good at handling tools, which makes him feel superior to his neighbour, Charley. He makes fun of Charley telling Ben, "Great Athlete! Between him and his son Bernard they can't hammer a nail." He considers Bernard a weakling and a good-for-nothing bookworm, whereas he is proud of his well-built, athletic sons, Biff and Happy. To him they are the handsomest and most able boys in the world (not stated directly but implied in his words and attitude). Biff and Happy tell their father about Bernard that "He's liked, but he's not well liked." Willy's following words prove to what extent he is proud of his sons and what he considers most important for success in life:

> That's just what I mean. Bernard can get the best marks in school, y'understand, but when he gets out in the business world, y'understand, you are going to be five times ahead of him. That's why I thank almighty God you're both like Adonises. Because the man who makes an appearance in the business world, the man who creates personal interest, is the man who gets ahead. Be liked and you will never want. (146)

What Willy lacks in his professional field, physical looks and personality are more than made up in his family and familial bonds. His wife, Linda, is the personification of what could be called oriental love and devotion. She tells him that to her he is the handsomest man in the world and that few men are idolized by their children the way he is. Willy responds with great feeling and passion for her: "You're the best there is, Linda, you're a pal, you know that? On the road – on the road I want to grab you sometimes and just kiss the life outa you" (149). Linda's love and care are the constant unfading elements in Willy's life.

Willy's convictions regarding success in life, as we get especially in the memory scenes, are far from being sound. He tells his sons that if they are liked, they will be successful. His boastful utterance about himself – "You take me, for instance. I never have to wait in line to see a buyer. 'Willy Loman is here!' That's all they have to know, and I go right through" – is, as it is clear from his subsequent admission to his wife, nothing but a lie (146). His preference for physical charm to intellect, to say more plainly placing of brawn over brain, cannot be considered right and proper from the standards of a civilized society. He looks at the world from the wrong angle, and that is why he is quite oblivious of Biff's drawbacks and cannot appreciate the academic interests of Bernard. When Bernard comes to remind Willy and Linda that if Biff does not study seriously he will fail in mathematics and Linda says that he is right, Willy explodes with annoyance – "there's nothing the matter with him! You want him to be a worm like Bernard? He's got spirit, personality..." (151). In two

scenes of the past we find Willy giving his sons all indulgence in stealing and indirectly encouraging them to break the social norms. He does not take Biff's stealing of a football seriously. On the other hand he approves Biff's action telling him, "Coach'll probably congratulate you on your initiative." On one occasion he tells his sons to get some sand from the building site of the apartment building for rebuilding the entire front stoop. He does not pay heed to the warning of Charley against such acts:

> Charley: Listen, if they steal anymore from that building the watchman will put the cops on them!
>
> Linda, *to Willy*: Don't let Biff...
> *Ben laughs lustily.*
>
> Willy: You shoulda seen the lumber they brought home last week. At least a dozen six-by-tens worth all kinds a money.
>
> Charley: Listen, if that watchman –
>
> Willy: I gave them hell, understand. But I got a couple of fearless characters there.
>
> Charley: Willy, the jails are full of fearless characters. (158)

The past time which intrudes into the present subconscious mind of Willy, does not make him condemnable in his eyes so much as it makes him conscious of the failure of his sons, especially of Biff, and of his unhappy family life. There is an intrinsic evidence in the play to show that it is Willy, not Biff, who is actually responsible for their strained relationship, the former's unhappiness in his family life and the latter's derailment from the expected course of his life and the subsequent failures. All these can be accounted for in Willy's moral lapses unveiled to his son quite accidentally in a Boston hotel and revealed to us in a memory scene: After failing the mathematics test Biff comes to Boston to see his father, full of confidence

that his father would be able to convince the teacher to give him the required grade. But Biff's life-long respect and love for his father are reduced to nothing as he sees a naked woman coming out of Willy's bathroom and taking with her two boxes of stockings. Willy tries to cover up her presence in his room with lies, tells his son to take it easy and not to overemphasize what he has seen. Biff finds everything so disgusting that that he would hate to have anything further to do with his father. He simply cannot believe his eyes and cannot accept the fact that his father has given the woman his "mama's stockings." He tells Willy not to touch him, calls him a liar, a fake and leaves the hotel-room alone. This particular incident is pivotal in the alienation of Biff from Willy, and it is responsible more than anything else for Willy's subsequent unhappiness in family life.

Miller uses a technique in *Salesman*, which is solely dependent on the mental condition of Willy Loman; it is a means of revealing the character of Willy Loman, his past life, his values and particularly the way his mind works. Willy's overwork and repressed guilt, his sense of failure in his professional life result in a mental breakdown in which present and past mingle inextricably. Miller blends realism and expressionism in *Salesman* because this combination reflects the protagonist's actual way of thinking. The family set-up in the Loman-house with the four members and their interactions in the present are realistic. But the past as seen by Willy in his subconscious memory and the exposure of Willy's subconscious life are expressionistic. Besides, Ben is introduced to us exactly as Willy sees him in his subconscious mind, and so Ben is distinctly less real than the other characters. This becomes most explicit in the card-game scene where Willy talks to Ben and Charley simultaneously, as well as, in the last memory scene where Willy tells Ben about his suicide plan. In the original production of the play, to give a proper presentation of

Ben on the stage, "Elia Kazan had the part acted unnaturally, like an automation" (Parker 45). The past time which appears in the subconscious mind of Willy although is involuntary, depends very much on his present mental condition. Time in the subconscious mind of Willy serves a contrast to the natural or linear time in the development of the plot.

Fall is Miller's second play in the expressionistic technique. In the stage direction of the play it is clearly mentioned that the action takes place in the mind, thought and memory of the protagonist, Quentin: "People appear and disappear instantly, as in the mind; but it is not necessary that they walk off the stage. The dialogue will make clear who is 'alive' at any moment and who is in abeyance. The effect, therefore, will be the surging, flitting, instantaneousness of a mind questing over its own surfaces and into its depths" (1). As the setting of the stage is skeletal and is not limited by the boundaries of realism, the realism sought in the play is subjective, rather than objective. As in the mind the past and present shift from one to the other or are simultaneous.

At the very beginning of the play while awaiting the arrival of Holga from Frankfurt to Columbia Quentin addresses an almost invisible listener telling him about his hesitation of committing himself to a marital relationship with her because he already has had two divorces. He indulges in self-analysis recalling to his mind or telling the listener what he did, came to know of and experienced in the past, and thus revealing how many of his commitments – familial, social and political – collapsed, leaving him rather shaky and disillusioned regarding himself and his role.

Quentin is quite uncertain and uncomfortable concerning his hold on life. In the present state of his mind he remembers or recalls different incidents and experiences in the past moving freely in time and space with no regard for chronology.

The listener, who may be considered Quentin's own mind or conscience, is often addressed by him to express or confirm what he feels in the present. He tells the listener how every morning he wakes up full of hope only to be confronted with his life and its pointlessness. Felice, with whom he had a short affair in the past, appears and reminds him of meeting her two years ago. The arrival of Felice in the scene, Quentin's dialogues with her and the listener, and the appearance of Louise, Maggie and Holga, the three important women of his life, show how the different phases of the past time come to his mind, and he is both in the past and the present at the same time.

Very often the memories in *Fall*, as in the other plays of Miller, are associative; one thing in the present or the past leads to another in the past. Seeing in the distance two pall-bearers carrying an invisible coffin, Quentin remembers his mother's funeral and admits his inability to mourn for her. His mother appears with arms crossed as in death, and he says: "I still hear her voice in the street sometimes, loud and real, calling me. And yet she's under the ground. That whole cemetery – I saw it like field of buried mirrors in which the living merely saw themselves. I don't seem to know how to grieve for her" (6). He does not believe that grief is grief unless it kills someone. This is further confirmed by what he remembers of his father's reaction to his mother's death, and we immediately move on to a past scene in a hospital where he tells his brother, Dan, that their father ought to know about her death. Dan protests saying that it would be like sawing off his arm. After the news is finally broken and the disappearance of his mother from the scene, the shocked and agonized father is led away by Dan and the nurses. Quentin tells the listener how after a short span of time his father recovered from his shock. In the middle of Quentin's sentence a tower begins to light, Quentin is caught by it and says that he visited a concentration camp in Germany. He starts towards the tower, and there is an

interruption: Felice appears raising her arm in blessing and tells him to close his eyes. Without responding to her in the past, Quentin in the present wonders why she sticks in his mind. His mother appears again and raises her hand in blessing as Felice does. Felice says, "I'll always bless you!" and exits, and the Mother exits too. Quentin in the present starts to tell the listener what he did after they had left. In the middle of his sentence Maggie enters, he starts a fresh sentence and says by spreading his arms how in his hotel room he could reach out and rest his arms on two light fixtures some distance apart. Just before he completely spreads his arms Maggie sits up, her breathing sound is heard, and she exits with the comment "Liar! Judge!" Holga appears as in the past and bends to read a legend fixed to the wall of a torture chamber. Still in the present, Quentin says, "Oh. The concentration camp ... this woman ... Holga took me there" (11). Immediately he is in the past with Holga who translates and explains what took place in the concentration camp. Their conversation continues; he kisses her and asks her why she keeps coming back to this place which seems to tear her apart. His mother is heard softly singing a musical comedy-ballad of the twenties. The reply that Holga gives, and Quentin's response in the past and the present to what she says and his address of the listener show how the two levels of time coalesce in his mind:

> Holga, *after a pause; she is disturbed, uncertain*: I don't know. Perhaps ... because I didn't die here.
>
> Quentin, *turning quickly to the listener*: What?
>
> Holga: Although that would make no sense! I don't really know!
>
> Quentin, *going toward the Listener at the edge of the stage*: The people ... what? "Wish to die for the dead." No-no, I can understand it; survival can be hard to bear. But I – I don't think I feel that way.... Although I do think of my mother now, and

> she's dead. Yes! He turns to Holga. And maybe the dead do bother her. (14)

Holga's dialogue with him continues without any interruption on her side and Quentin is very much with her till the time she leaves him to get some flowers. "He stands in stillness a moment; the presence of the tower bores in on him; its color changes; he now looks up at it and addresses the listener" (15).His mother appears; Dan enters, kisses her and exits, and we immediately move to a domestic scene when Quentin was a little boy. The Mother addresses little Quentin, whereas adult Quentin soliloquizes in the present. The domestic scene continues and becomes more real when it highlights to some length without any interruption the strained relationship between his parents. At on stage the Mother rushes out after little Quentin; we notice exit of the father and Dan, and instantly Holga appears with a bunch of wild flowers. The broken conversation between Quentin and Holga continues till the exit of Holga and return of Quentin to his present self (22). This pattern of link between time and memory is repeated throughout the play with Quentin in different scenes in the presence of the same or different persons.

In his subconscious mind Quentin is tormented by the loss of innocence manifested in the violence of man and the lack of trust and feeling in the familial and social lives. In some scenes of the past we see that adult Quentin cannot obliterate from his mind the unhappy relationship of his parents. He is very much aware of what caused their unhappiness. And so, when he marries Louise he tries hard for mutual trust and oneness in their marital life. But their relationship, too, becomes strained. Quentin blames his wife for this state of their relationship and tries to gain credit saying how much he cares and worries about her. He also tries to impress upon his wife the necessity of trust and oneness in their familial relationship by reminding her

of his public commitments. He cannot simply understand what is left of their relationship if they are separate persons, and so he says in desperation, "When you've finally become a separate person, what the hell is there?" He realizes his failure to mould Louise according to his likes; he gives their relationship a last try by telling her – "but I swear, Louise, if you would just once of your own will, as right as you are – if you would come to me and say that something, something important was your fault and that you were sorry, it would help." Louise's pronouncement, "Good God! What an idiot" (42)! And her sudden exit could not have helped but remind him of the similar attitude of his mother regarding his father.

In some of the memory scenes and flashbacks we see the value Quentin attaches to innocence and the sense of oneness in public life as well. Mickey, a professor of law and a friend of Quentin, was subpoenaed by the committee investigating un-American activities because it wanted to know the names of his radical associates. He tells his colleague, Lou, that he had already been in front of the committee two weeks ago and he asked to be heard again because he wants to speak the truth. Quentin cannot support Mickey's concern for self-interest and his indifference to the miseries of his past and present time associates and friends. But it does not mean that Quentin is above his own self-interest. He tells the listener in the present how he avoided Mickey during the latter's time of crisis. He is very much aware of his own limitations with regard to Lou as well. When he comes to know about Lou's death he tells Louise about the gap in his friendship with him: In the last meeting between them Lou said that he was his only friend. Quentin thinks that it was a dreadful thing to hear because he was quite aware about himself. Tears well in his eyes as he says – "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 faithlessness..." (59).

Act Two begins with Holga addressing Quentin and approaching him with open arms. As he turns from her to the listener, she moves out. He says that he does not mind waiting; asks how much time he has and looks at his watch. Instantly Maggie appears in a lace wedding dress; Lucas, a designer is on his knees, finishing the vast hem. Carrie, a Negro maid, stands by, holding her veil. Maggie, *in an ecstasy of fear and hope* says: "All right, Carrie, tell him to come in! *As though trying the angular words:* My husband"! Carrie, *walking a few steps to a point, where she halts*: says: "You can see her now, Mr. Quentin" (63-64). They are gone and Quentin in the present philosophizes to the listener on love and his women, punctuated by the presence and exit of Holga, appearance of his mother, and Felice, who is about to remove the bandage on her nose. All this shows how the past merges completely with the present in Quentin's mind. He says about Felice – "Maybe that's why she sticks in my mind. *He walks around her, peering.* Well, that's power, isn't it? To influence a girl to change her nose, her life?... It does, yes, it frightens me, and I wish to God – *Felice raises her arm* – she'd stop blessing me! *Mother exits on upper platform. He laughs uneasily, surprised at the force of his fear.* Well, because there is a fraud involved; I have no such power" (64). Immediately we find Maggie in man's pajamas reminding him adorably over telephone about her four years after their first meeting. Quentin, glancing from Maggie to Felice, tells the listener about the similarity he sees in their attitude towards him. Holga appears at a café table and tells him, "I love the way you eat! You eat like a Pasha, a grand duke" (65)! Quentin's words to the listener, "Yes, adored again!", show how cautious his past experiences have made him.

In the present Quentin has no illusion about himself with regard to his second wife, Maggie. In a past scene when we see Maggie telling him about his influence on her life because she found him different from the other people, he cries out to the listener telling him what a fraud and a liar he is. Later on we find Maggie telling Quentin that she would do anything for him because to her he is like a god. When Quentin tells her that anybody would have told her to mend her dress, she replies in the negative and says that they would have only laughed at her or tried to take advantage of her condition. Quentin, very much aware of his mundane limitation of his exalted position in her eyes, tells the listener: "Yes! It's so clear – the honor! The first honor was that I hadn't tried to go to bed with her! She took it for a tribute to her 'value,' and I was only afraid! God, the hypocrisy!..." (72).

In a memory scene we see that when Quentin marries Maggie he takes total responsibility for her. But he soon discovers that she is set on a course that can only end in self-destruction. Fully aware of his limitations that, unlike God he does not have the capacity for selfless love, he withdraws to become a separate person. Quentin's experiences in the past are very much alive and vivid in his mind. The sense of right and wrong makes him aware of his tilt towards the latter. Tormented and hounded by his past failings and failures, he does not feel confident to take another life, especially the life of the woman he loves, into his hands. Quentin's dilemma, which Miller points out in "Foreword to *After the Fall*", is the product of his memory in relation to different levels of time:

> He is faced, in short, with what Eve brought to Adam – the terrifying fact of choice. And to choose, one must know oneself, but no man knows himself who cannot face the murderer in him, the sly and everlasting complicity with the forces of destruction. (*Essays* 256)

In the present, Quentin no doubt understands himself better than the past in the light of the past. Being a jurist he has put himself in the dock and tried to see everything objectively, quite unlike Willy Loman, the protagonist of *Salesman*.

In *Mt. Morgan* Miller exploits the characteristics of both memory and dream. Unlike *Salesman*, Miller does not limit here memory experiences to the protagonist alone. At the very beginning of the play we see the protagonist, Lyman Felt, who has met with an accident, deeply asleep in a hospital bed. His one leg and one arm are in casts. He starts talking as if he is conducting some office activities in the past. His father addresses him further back in the past. He does not approve of Lyman's activities and says, "I'm sorry to say you very stupid boy, big disappointment." Lyman responds saying, "I promise. Papa! I promise!" and wakes up (2). Time, which is treated here and in some cases in the dreams of Lyman, is shaped by the characteristics of a dream. This time, which is purely the product of Lyman's subconscious mind, lacks the order and duration of objective time. But as in dreams the past and the present become as real as the present. Dreams in some cases may affect the person concerned more than the memory experiences, which are brought to light by the subconscious mind. Lyman comes to know from the nurse what has happened to him and that he is in Clearhaven Memorial Hospital. His wife, Theodora, and daughter, Bessie, have arrived from New York, but he does not want to see anybody. As the nurse exits we see Lyman in hospital gown but not bandaged. The empty cast is on the bed. He has a vision of all that passes between Theodora and Bessie in the hospital waiting-room where they are seated on a couch. Like a spirit he is invisible and is free to move to any place. He sits beside his wife and daughter, and is impressed by what the former tells to console the latter. He also hears them talking about his mother and reacts to what they say. As his second wife, Leah, enters he is

terrified, claps hands over his eyes and utters: "No, she mustn't! It can't happen! It mustn't" (11)! He starts to flee but finally stops to see what happens. As a conversation develops among them leading towards their identity, Lyman is horrified and desperately wants them not to continue further. Theo and Bessie are shocked to know that Leah is Lyman's wife. As the nurse announces that the doctor would like to see Mrs. Felt, both Leah and Theo start toward her. Theo sways and starts to fall to the floor, Nurse and Bessie catch Theo, and Leah yells frantically for a doctor. At this point the scene ends.

The next time we see Lyman, he is having a dream. Lyman's father upbraids him for being preoccupied with his interests in girls. As Tom, a lawyer friend of Lyman, enters, the nurse tells him about Lyman's condition. Tom wakes him up. The dream being in his mind, he asks whether Tom is in the store. Tom says that it is the hospital and that Theodora called him. It seems Lyman saw in a dream all that happened earlier in the hospital waiting room. Tom says that Theo and Leah have met already. The conversation continues:

> Lyman, *Pause. He struggles to orient himself*: Theo ... didn't collapse, did she?
>
> Tom: Yes, but she's come round, she'll be all right.
>
> Lyman: I don't understand it, I think I dreamed the whole thing...
>
> Tom: Well, that wouldn't be too difficult, it's all pretty inevitable. (40)

Lyman discusses with Tom his predicament regarding his two wives and children. Theo and Bessie enter the room and try to talk to Lyman. He manages to respond three times and then his eyes close; deep snores emerge from him. Next we see that Lyman

has moved out of the cast. He is in a hospital gown but unbandaged. There are apparently two Lymans – one in the cast lying in bed and another out of it reaching to Theo's words. Everything takes place in Lyman's mind as in a dream. When Leah enters Theo wants to get rid of her. As she is about to lay her hands on Leah, Lyman throws his arm up and cries out imploringly, "I want everybody to lie down" (46)! He makes Leah and Theo lie on his two sides and talks to them. At one stage we find that he and Leah link arms as they walk and sit together on a park bench. It seems to be the meeting after their first physical relationship. Here we find no time barrier between the past and the present. At the beginning when Lyman is in the cast we find Tom asking Lyman to give Theo a few minutes for saying goodbye (42); at the end, too, when Lyman is back in the cast we find Tom asking him the same thing (56). All that Lyman has said and all that has gone on in between have been the product of Lyman's subconscious mind and covers no time at all. Lyman's subconscious desire for an ideal bigamy where there is no conflict between the two wives is demonstrated with his two wives in bed with him at the same time. This is also shown later on when Lyman in sleep has a vision of his two wives preparing meal in the kitchen as the best of friends.

In some cases, the memory scenes in the play are mere flashbacks of the past experiences and occurrences relating to a particular character or characters. Tom has known the Felts for about sixteen years. He comes to the house of Leah, who claims to be Lyman's second wife, to read Lyman's will. Tom tells Leah that although the will recognizes her son as Lyman's son, she cannot establish her claim to be his wife because Lyman never divorced his wife, Theo. She informs Tom that she accompanied Lyman to Reno to obtain the divorce decree. She says, "God, I'd forgotten all about this ... *Breaks off.* How could I have been so stupid! – You see, it was July, a hundred and ten on the street, so he had me stay in the hotel with the baby

while he went to the court to pick up his divorce decree..." (22). She says that she was curious to see what a decree looked like. Immediately we go to a scene in the past. Lyman enters in short-sleeved summer shirt and tells Leah that he threw the decree away; she asks in surprise 'why?', and their conversation continues:

> Lyman: I don't want to look back. Darling, I feel twenty-five! Laughs. You look stunned!
>
> Leah, *kisses him lightly*: I never believed you'd do it, darling.
>
> Lyman: I know. It's a miracle. *He draws her to him; Tom is a few feet away.* I feel like flowing round me like I'm like a rock in the river. – I have a car and driver downstairs; come to your wedding Leah my darling! (23)

Leah tells Tom that she cannot understand why Lyman lied to her. Tom recalls that he and Lyman had a discussion about a divorce about nine years ago. Next, we see Lyman entering in a business suit, and he and Tom are in the past. Lyman talks about bigamy, what people think about his business partner, his cheating on Theodora, his having fallen in love, divorce, etc. Leah is bewildered because it was Lyman who was pushing her to get married, and once she was pregnant he simply would not listen to reason. Before she can complete the sentence we see a past scene: Lyman wants to have the baby. He is definite that it will be a boy and names him Benjamin Alexander after his father and mother's mother. As the conversation continues we know that although he is in earnest to have the baby, he wants their relationship to remain as it is. But Leah's main concern is the baby and its parentage. Before leaving, Lyman tells her to give him a week to tell his wife, Theo, that he is going to marry her. Tom's comment in the present "I see" proves that he comes to know what happened between Leah and Lyman through Leah. Tom also gets to know certain things about the past from Theo. At one stage when Theo tells Tom that Lyman tried to kill her, the scene in

the past is revealed to us. We see Lyman in swim-trunks and Theo in a swim-suit. There is an announcement about the sighting of sharks in the water. She does not take the warning seriously and says, "sharks are impossible this time of the year." Lyman says in reply, "I know I shouldn't say this, Theo, but how you can hang onto your convictions in the face of a report like that ... just seems ... I don't know – fanatical" (65-66). Before diving into the water she wants to warm up, and so she backs up to make a run for it. Lyman does not agree to join her. As she starts running behind him toward the water, he catches sight of a moving shark, and as she comes abreast of him, he suddenly reaches out and stops her at the edge yelling at her to stop. Tom says in the present – "That sounds like he saved you" (67). Tom's reaction to the scene in the past indicates clearly that the past here has been described in flashback.

Certain things of Lyman's past life are revealed to us in memory scenes, which affect no one but himself. These memory scenes are not chaotic or nonsequential as we find when Theo along with Bassie comes to see her husband in his hospital room to say goodbye to him. She accuses him of his relationship with Leah and other women. She says that Lyman has been utterly selfish and that he has never loved anyone. Lyman in his defence says that he made both Leah and Theo happier than they had ever been in their lives. Theo says sarcastically, "Really and truly happy" (93)! Lyman steps out of the cast and says, "In fact if I dared admit the whole idiotic truth, the only one who suffered these past nine years – was me" (93)! The scene changes to their safari in Africa before nine years. Although they are all very happy, Bessie observes some kind of sadness in him. As they see a lion heading toward them, Bessie and Theo get into the car as instructed by the guide but Lyman holds ground ignoring the guide's call. The lion gives a roar. Lyman, with eyes on the lion and shouting toward it with exhilaration says, "I *am* happy, yes! That I'm married to

Theodora and have Bessie ... yes, *and Leah, too*" (99)! He also says about the immense fortune he has made and that both he hand the lion love their lives. Theo and Bessie are simply amazed because the lion turns back. They are proud of him; he tells them what he plans to do in the future, which makes Theo happy beyond all limits. Lyman tells them about the time he will spend with them without forgetting to add, "except maybe a week or two a month in the Elmira office!" As Theo and Bessie leave, the nurse addresses Lyman in the cast and says that she does not understand why a man like him married Theo. Lyman is in the past once again. He stares ahead and Leah appears as before when she was about to go for an abortion. He tells her to cancel the operation giving her the assurance that he is going to ask his wife for a divorce just the next day. He tells her about having a son with a girl he knew. He says – "A long time ago now. – I'm ashamed of this – I convinced her to have it. I was crazy about her. But I had to break it off or lose my marriage. It was torture..." (103). He tells her how he met his son at the airport in Los Angeles after seventeen years. He could not introduce himself because his son was sure to feel he had betrayed him, and so hate him. The sense of guilt makes him tell Leah repeatedly not to go for abortion. Even after they part the past time continues, but the scene changes. As promised earlier Lyman comes to Theo to ask her for the divorce. Theo receives him with a cashmere sweater wishing him a happy birthday. She is overjoyed for being able to give him this lovely present. She tells him delightfully about another surprise, that is, she got tickets for the theater and a table booked for dinner. Lyman makes several attempts to tell her what he has come for but he has to abandon the idea in the face of Theo's overflowing love and care for him. Back to the present he says to himself, "No guts. That's the whole story. No guts" (106)! The very next moment we see Lyman in the past again. This time he has come to the hospital to see Leah who has given birth

to a boy. She, like Maggie before her marriage to Quentin, is prepared to continue the relationship with him without any kind of strings attached. Lyman tells her, Give me a month! By June first I either settle with Theo or I disappear" (110). After Leah is gone we find him in his cast again, and Leah in the present comes to visit him and announces her presence.

Clock deals with the past in America as reproduced by Lee Baum and Robertson from their memory. The play opens with Lee Baum in his fifties facing the audience and telling about the only two truly national disasters. He is apprehensive of another. Robertson in his seventies enters and just tells his point of disagreement, which is, that the American people are now more aware of ups and downs, so a total emotional collapse is not possible. Lee and Robertson in the present, despite being the dramatic personae, seem to address the audience as it could be in the Epic Theatre. Besides, like a chorus they comment on and reveal the past. In the play two times are shown – the present and the past. The past covers the time immediately before the crash and during and after the crash.

Lee and Robertson talk about the Depression years. Robertson tells Lee how he made more money during the Depression than he ever had before by selling his shares and removing himself from the market. Rose Baum, in the past, appears softly playing the piano, but although her sight moves Lee, their talk continues. Lee says, "But there were people who could not pull out because they believed. And with all their hearts. For them the clock would never strike midnight, the dance and music could never stop ..." (2). Robertson recalls the people who believed in the boom, and immediately we are in the past. Clarence, a black shoeshine man enters, sets his box down; Robertson approaches him, and Lee moves in another direction toward Rose. Robertson in his forties asks Clarence how he is doing and puts his shoe on the box.

Before Clarence can respond the scene changes to a domestic one where Rose asks Lee, now a boy, to sing. Lee sings the first line of "For I'm just a vagabond Lover" – there is a blackout on Rose and Lee, and we see a continuation of the Clarence-and-Robertson scene. Clarence requests Robertson to invest for himself another ten dollars on the General Electric. Robertson tries to discourage him and leaves. We are back to Rose at the piano playing Vagabond Lover softly. Before taking his position in the past, Lee comments on what the different people achieved by banking on their belief, and finally expresses his disappointment with his mother's bobbing of her long hair. His comments merge with the past, and his mother defends her new hairstyle. The scene now concentrates on the Baum family before the Depression.

In the next scene we see Robertson advising Dr. Rosman to sell all his stocks and buy gold bars. The next time we see Robertson he is with Lee in the present talking about the financiers Jesse Livermore and William Durant. The flashback takes them back in time and we see them with Tony in the latter's Speakeasy. They talk about the death of Randolph Morgan, a broker. Morgan's sister, Diana, who has an appointment with Robertson, joins them. Soon we see the impact of the Stock Market Collapse on these two millionaires who within minutes lose almost everything they owned. The scene continues with Robertson joining Diana. He tells her about her brother's death. All fade except Robertson, who turns to face the audience. He is in the present and tells the audience about the fate of Livermore, who shot himself in the bathroom of a hotel. The past once again merges with the present. We see the boy Lee as he rides on a bike. Robertson asks Lee in the present about the death of Livermore. Lee replies and Rose, offstage in the past, calls for him. Saying "interesting" in response to Lees reply, Robertson walks into darkness, and Rose appears. The scene is the Baum house, but this time it is during the Depression. Rose's sending of Lee to a

pawn shop with her diamond bracelet, and Moe's getting rid of Frank, their chauffeur, are indicative of their financial crisis. As Frank, relinquished from service, walks away, Robertson, in his seventies, appears again and says that they just walked away to nothing, no unemployment insurance, and no social security, just fresh air. He adds to say about his feeding of a number of hungry people every night – "There were seventy-five new ones every night. It began to look like Germany" (20). Lee joins him and says how the population jumped overnight on a certain block as the married people and parents with children came back home. The flashback then shows the Baum family during the Depression when we find the uncomfortable Grandpa lodging with them. Lee in the present comments on how everything fell apart and the system broke down. We see in flashback how some Iowa farmers took the law in their hands to stop a judge from the legal auctioning of Henry's farm. The scene changes to the Baum house where we find Lee talking about his tuition with Moe. Three hundred dollars tuition a year is too much for Moe, who simply lies back in chair and closes his eyes. Lee says: "Minnesota here is, a hundred and fifty, for instance. And Ohio State is about the same, I think. *Turns to Moe, awaits reaction.* Pa? *Moe is asleep. Lee closes catalogue and looks front*" (29). He continues, but this time it is no longer the past, it is the present. He says:

> He always got drowsy when the news got bad. (*Moves downstage*). And the mystery of the marked house began. You'd see the stranger coming down the street – poor and ragged – and he'd go past house after house, but at our driveway he'd make a nice self-assured turn right up to the back porch and ask for something to eat. Why us? (29)

Next, we see Henry, the farmer from Iowa, ringing their doorbell in search of work. He almost faints in starvation. Lee's grandpa tells him not to bother about the stranger

but to worry about himself. Robertson asks how he reacted to that advice. Lee says that all he knew was that, it was a very strange July. He had graduated from high school but nobody was mentioning college any more. Then the flashback takes us to the Baum house in the past where the scene starts with his talk with Rose about his enrolment in a college. The episodes from the past are thus revealed and commented upon by both Robertson and Lee.

The progression of time and the change of place as have been shown in this play do not take place in a realistic manner. Robertson and Lee simply alter their outfit and physical appearance to change their position in the context of time. The plot moves freely in space and time. The flashbacks are associative. A comment in the present on some incident in the past shows something similar during the same time to make it more elaborate. The time in the present stands still. The plot does not develop in the present. The hands of the clock, which move forward in a systematic and rhythmic manner, represent no forward motion in this play. On the other hand they move backward and forward and vice-versa in the past. This way Miller has been able to show through the memory of Robertson and Lee the past time, similar to the time traversed by the hands of the clock, till the present, and the true nature of the present, which is fixed and unchanging.

So far we have seen the coexistence of the different periods or levels of time in memory. The fact that memory can be blocked to time, whether present or past, has been shown in *Love Story*, *Can't Remember*, and *Clara* – all three written and produced in the 1980s. The first play not only shows how memory can be consciously suppressed, it also shows how one travels back in time in memory despite the attempt to keep one stuck to the present. In *Love Story*, Tom O'Toole, a detective, is anxious to solve a five-year old murder because he is sure that his client, Felix Epstein, who

has been kept in prison all these years, was falsely implicated in the crime. Angela, a call girl, knows that Felix is innocent but does not tell her one-time lover, Tom, whom she has called into her apartment at night, all that she knows. Maneuvered into an emotional corner she offers only fragments of information, the hints of further revelations. She tells Tom that she has been losing her memory and consciousness of her surrounding. She narrates that during the day she was walking past the piano store, Ramsey's, and all she remembered next was that she was sitting on the fender of a parked car with a whole crowd of people around her. She says, "I go blotto for longer and longer stretches, I think. Sometimes I get the feeling that I don't know where the hell I been all day, or what I said, or to who I said it" (31). Tom suggests that she should go to a psychiatrist. Angela feels that it would be of no use because he would simply say that she is schizophrenic, which is nothing new to her. If what Angela tells is true, then we can surely say that her memory is at times blocked to what happens in the present. But later on she admits to Tom that what she said earlier about her temporary loss of memory is not true. In reality she was picked up into a cruiser by two cops and a detective. They asked for the letters written to her by Charley, the prosecutor of Felix, and threatened her with dire consequences if she did not comply with their demand. But that does not mean that Angela is without any psychological problems. Psychologically, Angela is unstable to the extent that her personality is in constant danger of fragmenting. Profoundly frightened by what she experiences in her mind, she retreats into a series of alternative personalities. Angela's personality at times disintegrates. Psychologically she goes back to her past and forgets the present. In one such fit she thinks that she is little Emily and behaves like an eight-year old girl. Tom tries to hold her to the present. Not succeeding, he treats her like a little girl. He says: "Okay, Emily ... (*Opening his coat and holding out his palms.*)... see?

Nothin' on me at all. Okay, darling? Why don't you come out and we get a little ice cream from the corner? Your father's gone, honey – honest, he won't be comin' back tonight" (47). He then tells Josh, a psychiatrist, over telephone – "Oh, zonked out again, being Emily now, all scrunched up like an eight year old..." (47). Soon Angela comes round and is very much herself in the present. Later on, faced with Tom's charges and questions she turns into a new personality, Renata Marshall, a terribly austere, dignified lady with upper-class speech. She tells Tom, "... it might just be a terribly good idea for you to think a little more highly of me and stop irritating me" (58-59)! This spell too, soon passes, and Angela is back to the present. Although Miller does not tell us about Angela's past in detail, by making Angela transform into different personalities in her subconscious mind Miller is able to give us a good idea of her past life.

At the beginning of the second play, *Can't Remember*, Leonara enters her long-time friend Leo's living-room kitchen through the open door. They discuss various things relating to their past life and experiences. But Leonara has some psychological block to admit the past into her memory. This block is not total and complete. She remembers the faith the people had in New England. She thinks that she has no purpose in life, and that she is totally useless. At times she is oblivious of certain things she did in the past. Leo tells her to do something and take up the piano again. She is surprised at the suggestion, and says, "I don't know where I'd ever begin a thing like that." Leo then suggests an accordion; she is surprised even more and says that she never played the accordion in her life. Leo tells her of a party where she played the accordion. She stares and says in reply; "Sometimes ... I think I remember something, but then I wonder if I just imagined it. My whole life often seem imaginary. It's very strange" (7-8). Leonara often says that she cannot remember

anything: She does not remember to have eaten bread just the previous week. She does not remember to have used rosemary in food, though Leo tells her that she used to use a lot of it, especially on gigot.

Leonara's mental block to the past is not total as the following conversation on the gramophone record that she finds in a packet sent by her son shows:

> Leo: Another record? Oh Christ.
>
> Leonara (*uncertain*): He never sent me a record before.
>
> Leo: Sure he did, about three years ago, that goddam Indian music, it was horrible.
>
> Leonara: Yes, I remember now ... it was wonderful for a certain mood. (12)

Leo suggests to Leonara that she should take a trip somewhere and find somebody to go along with her. She observes that everybody except Leo is dead. In reply to another suggestion that she should visit Asia because she has never been there, she says that she had been there when Frederick did the Ganges Bridge, and they stayed with the Maharaja for six months. She tells him about her experiences there, about her first meeting with Frederick, and all that Frederick told her mother about her. Leo says, "See now? You remembered all that" (19)? She wants to play the record because her machine is broken. She says, "Am I wrong? Didn't you and I dance once?" Leo reminds her that there must have been a couple hundred nights when he would come over to her and Frederick and just the three of them would play records, and Frederick and he would take turns dancing with her because she would never get tired. He also says that they would drink a dozen bottles of wine and that Frederick had a fantastic French corkscrew. Now Leonara does not complain that she does not remember

anything. On the other hand, she tells him that she thinks she still has the corkscrew. Before she leaves, Leo tells her: "We could have a lot more interesting conversations if you'd stop saying you can't remember anything" (23). Quite obviously, without Leonara's past memory Leo does not find her as she should be. On the other hand, Leonara, too, remains incomplete and unreal without her past.

At the very beginning of *Clara* we find that Detective Lieutenant Fine and Officer Tierney have come to Clara Kroll's apartment-office where her murdered body is lying. Clara's father, Albert Kroll's mind is completely blocked to the fact that his daughter is dead. The shock has made him oblivious of certain things in the present and the past. He mixes Fine with Bert, one of his past time friends. Kroll however faces no problem in telling Fine that as a child Clara did not know what danger was. He describes how she faced a dog, which scared off everyone on the street. He remembers her age and says that she was twenty-eight last July. He also tells Fine that "she was mainly interested in prisoner rehabilitation," "worked for three years in Botsford Penitentiary ... and also Mt. Carmel," and that the people who got out of the prison idolized her (33-34). Later on he admits that he did not tell his daughter anything about the risk implied in her job because he was in a way proud of it. At this moment Clara is shown entering with a birdcage, waggling her finger at the bird. Kroll says that his words to Clara would be of no use because she would always give the answer – "If my work requires me to be in a place..." He continues mouthing the words as Clara says, "... people somehow know it and they never hassle me." And Kroll says simultaneously, "Never hassle me" (38). We see here that in his subconscious mind Kroll's memory of Clara is so vivid and so much in one with her that, at times we find her appearing physically and Kroll repeating aloud her words.

At first Kroll does not remember that Clara had a piano, but soon he recalls that he played on the piano one evening. Gradually he reveals that a young man who had been in prison for murdering his girlfriend but was out of it a number of years, had an intimate relationship with Clara. Kroll cannot recall his name. He has no problem in talking about his landscaping business in the past and his present association with Ruggierie Construction, but he does not remember the name of the person whom Clara brought to his house. He says that he will get through and it will come to him. Fine tries to reconstruct his memory regarding the person by asking leading questions, like, where he used to live? What sort of fella? Jewish, Irish, Italian...? Short? Tall? Did she drive him up? How did Clara greet him? Was the person introduced to him? Etc. Fine tells Kroll – "You know about mental block, don't you – you've been to college, haven't you?" "Generally – you probably know – we block things we're ashamed to remember" (40). Kroll's answer is in the affirmative. Fine keeps on questioning him. "Luiz appears overhead and quickly fades out." Kroll just mentions "Luiz" and asks himself why he saw it like on a screen. Yet he does not remember the second name. But he remembers what the person was wearing and what his wife, Jean, was doing during that time.

Fine wants to know how Kroll felt when he was told about the person being in prison for murdering his girlfriend. Fine says, "I'm wondering, Albert – are you guilty because you didn't put your foot down right then and there" (43)? He also says that a murderer is a murderer, and no kind of social injustice or discrimination should be brought to his defence. All this confuses Kroll and he cannot give any explanation. Immediately there is a memory scene, and we find Kroll discussing with Clara her relationship with Luiz:

> Clara: He has two things that are a lot like you, Daddy. He's soft and he's strong. And he's overcome so much that we can't even imagine. But it's made him deeper, you see? It's made him love life more...
>
> Kroll: I don't understand enough about the mind, darling. How a man can ever kill a woman.
>
> Clara: But you've killed.
>
> Kroll: In a war. That's a different thing. (44-45)

Clara tells her father about uncontrollable rage. She reminds him how this rage made him grab an attacking Japanese and bend him over his knees till his back broke. Still he cannot justify Clara's defence of her boyfriend. He tries to discourage her from continuing her relationship with her new friend by telling her that he is not sure whether her friend is in love with her or she is simply a medal for him and that he considers her like an accomplishment. Clara understands that the matter has not been settled. Kroll blesses her, she walks into darkness, Kroll is back to the present, and the talk between him and Fine continues:

> Fine: Where would that be, some island?
> Kroll *looks at him, uncomprehending.*
> That fight in the tent.
>
> Kroll: Oh! Yes, the Philippines. Was I talking? (*He breaks off, points at Fine. And still confused about it.)*
> Of course I was, I'm sorry. (45)

The above example is illustrative of the fact that Kroll's memory is not simply the remembrance of the things past. At times he also mumbles out part of it quite unconsciously.

Tierney enters the room carrying a record of Kroll in its cover. Kroll tells Fine that many years ago he had a choral group for a while. As the record plays, he goes

back to the past and we see him in the company of young Clara. At her insistence he tells her how he joined the war as an officer and gives an account of one of his exploits in which he saved some of his soldiers from being lynched. Clara is all admiration and praise. She kisses him. And as she moves backwards and finally vanishes, he is terrified and cries out "Clara!" A doorbell rings and Kroll is back to the present. Hernandez suddenly blazes up in the air above and vanishes. Kroll's mental block with regard to the past disappears completely, and he utters loudly – "Hernandez." "Luiz Hernandez. Worked at Kennedy. For Pan American" (56). In showing Fine leave the place instantly, Miller exposes here the professional side of a detective, who unlike a psychiatrist, is interested only in crime and not the person.

Time in Memory discussed in this chapter generally deals with the wide range of past time. Time in the present proceeds in a linear manner, whereas time in memory does not adhere to any chronological order. Time in memory moves forward and backward quite freely. At times the change of time is quite abrupt and at times it is indicated in penumbraec manner with double exposure where the changed time and characters gradually supplant the existing ones. In some cases the memory scenes are shown in flashbacks with conscious awareness of one or more people, but in some other cases these scenes are involuntary and concerns the individual persons only. Whether flashbacks or subconscious travels in time – they are mostly associative – one thing or event in the present or past leads to another similar or contrasting thing or event in the past. When the memory unfolds an experience or incident of the past in the subconscious mind, it becomes as real and alive as anything that takes place in the present.

Memory in Miller's plays is both conscious and subconscious. In *Salesman*, what Willy tells his wife, Linda, and his employer, Howard, it is conscious memory.

Same is the case in *Fall* regarding what Quentin tells the listener about his own past. But in *Fall*, unlike in *Salesman*, the conscious memory, too, is fully subjective because the listener is no one other than Quentin's own mind. So what Quentin sees and experiences are very much the product of his own thoughts. Willy has absolutely no control over his subconscious memory experiences also, but it is rather different with Quentin. Quentin's wishes and expectations give rise to his memory experiences, and besides, the memory experiences in a way explain his present doubts and fears. In *Glass*, we see the memory experiences of not only Lyman, but also his two wives, Leah and Theodora. Here the degree of control on the subconscious memory of the three characters is more than what we find in *Fall*. In *Clock* the control is still more because an observation in the present is clearly confirmed or supported by what follows in the memory scene. Memory in *Love Story* is unlike the memory in any other play. The subconscious memory in Angela affects her so much that it completely disintegrates her personality, the manifestations of which we see in reality when she behaves like little Emily and Renata Marshall.

The sense of the past and the present depends exactly on the conscious perceptions and reproductions of memory experiences. Our awareness of the past depends on what the memory retains. Without memory, as in the case with Leonara in *Can't Remember*, there is no past. Miller also shows through Kroll in *Clara* that to some people the past as well as the present may not have any existence because mental or memory blocks cause similar blocks in the awareness of time as well.

CHAPTER SIX

Unity of Time

The Unity of Time is the only time related concept in drama on which there have been elaborate theoretical discussions since the days of Aristotle. It is one of the three unities, also called the unities, which stand for a certain limit to the duration, setting and action of a dramatic plot. Popularly, though not justifiably, known as the Aristotelian or the Classical Unities, most neoclassical critics considered them the binding rules on all playwrights. In Dryden's *An Essay of Dramatic Poesie* we get a detailed discussion on the unities. Crites, one of the four interlocutors, tries to prove the superiority of the ancient classical playwrights to the English playwrights on the grounds that the ancients were faithful imitators and wise observers of nature which according to him were the outcome of their scrupulous fidelity to the unities. Going into details, first of all he talks about the unity of time as practised by the ancients:

> The Unity of Time they comprehend in 24 hours, the compass of a Natural Day; or as near it as can be contriv'd; and the reason of it is obvious to every one, that the time of the feigned action, or fable of the Play, should be proportion'd as near as can be to the duration of that time in which it is represented; since therefore all Plays are acted

> on the Theater in a space of time much within the compass of 24 hours, that play is to be thought nearest imitation of Nature, whose plot or action is confin'd within that time;... (146)

He concludes the argument by saying that it is the poet's duty to take care that no act should be imagined to exceed the time in which it is represented on the stage, and that the intervals and inequalities of time may be supposed to fall out between the acts.

A number of neoclassical critics and writers believed Aristotle's *Poetics* to be the origin and source of the unities. What Aristotle said on the unities may become clear if we go through a standard translation of *Poetics* or *On the Art of Poetry* and the comments of some critics on the work. In Chapter 5 of *On the Art of Poetry* while talking about the similarities and differences between epic poetry and tragedy Aristotle mentions the length of action in the two types of compositions. According to him, one difference between the two literary forms is in length: "Epic poetry... differs from Tragedy ... in its length – which is due to its action having no fixed limit of time, whereas Tragedy endeavours to keep as far as possible within a single circuit of the sun, or something near that" (42). Humphry House thinks that there is not the slightest question that by the phrase "a single circuit of the sun" Aristotle meant a solar day of twenty-four hours. He rightly observes: "Aristotle says nothing of the twenty-four-hour limitation as a rule; it was merely a fairly normal practice, and even Greek practice was flexible" (House 65).

What is important about the Greek practice is that no claim was made by Aristotle or anyone else in the classical period to show that the time taken in performance coincided precisely with the duration of the action. Although it was quite normal to complete the action within twenty-four hours, a number of exceptions may be cited to prove the contrary and the Greek playwright's liberal attitude to time. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* the gap between the news of the Greek's victory over the

Trojans and the arrival of Agamemnon to Argos is of several days. In *The Eumenides* though specific time between the first scene at the oracle of Delphi and the second scene at the temple of Athens is not given, it is definitely more than a day or two and may extend up to weeks or months. Terence has neglected the unity of time in his *Heautontimorumenos*, or *Self-Punisher* – he has taken two days. In *The Suppliants* of Euripides there is a gap of more than a week for the raising of an army in Athens, its march to Thebes for a battle, its victory and return. Eugenius, in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesie*, cites this lapse of time to prove to what extent the ancients failed to correspond the stage time with the imagined action (55).

Aristotle does not say anything about the unity of place, which is, that the stage should represent only one place throughout the course of action, in any of his extant works. Humphry House rightly observes that it was the 16th century Italian critic, Castelvetro, who started the doctrine of "The Three Unities" in its rigid form with his edition of Aristotle's *Poetics* in 1570. In this work Castelvetro argues that "the time of the representation and that of the action represented must be exactly coincident", besides, the time should not exceed the limit of twelve hours, for people "owing to bodily needs, could not possibly remain in theatre longer than that." The effect of a drama on its audience, according to him, depends on its adherence to the unities. He says that there is no possibility of "making the spectators believe that many days and nights have passed, when they themselves obviously know that only a few hours have actually elapsed" because "they refuse to be deceived" (Charlton 84-86).

The stand taken on the three unities by the various neoclassical writers and critics was dictated mainly by their concern for verisimilitude and their attitude towards the ancient writers and critics, especially Aristotle. A number of them had such high esteem for the classical writers that they considered their works inseparable

from life and hence most proper for imitation. But there were others who had sufficient historical sense and analytical mind not to be carried away by the blind admiration of the ancients and their rules. What Pope says with regard to the rules supposedly laid down by Aristotle in the following lines of his "Essay on Criticism" express the typical neoclassical writer's attitude towards the ancient theorists and writers, and justify their desire to follow and imitate the ancients: "Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem; / To copy nature is to copy them" (lines 139-140). In *An Essay of Dramatic Poesie* Dryden expresses a different view. He speaks through Neander to say that strict adherence to the rules, that is the three unities, restricts and thwarts creativity. He quotes Corneille to say that writers in the past were constrained and limited by the rules and thus were forced to banish from the stage many artistic beauties (85). Although in the essay Dryden defends the English playwrights against the accusation of their violation of the three unities, he follows the unities in *All for Love* and speaks in support of them in the preface to the play on grounds of his respect for the past writers. He says: "I have endeavoured in this play to follow the practice of the ancients, who, as Mr. Rymer has judiciously observed, are and ought to be our masters" (18-19). Saint-Evremond, a French writer, readily concedes in his writing that Aristotle's *Poetics* is a fine work, but then, according to him "there is nothing so perfect as to rule all ages and nations" (Atkins 2). There were also writers like Johnson who objected to the rules because they found some of them arbitrary and without any logical basis. In *Rambler*, 156 Johnson affirms that all laws previously laid down are not of equal importance:

> Among the laws of which the desire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has promoted the prescription, all which writers have received, had not the same original right to our regard. Some are to be

> considered as fundamental and indispensable, others only as useful and convenient; some as dictated by reason and necessity, others as enacted by despotic antiquity; some as invincibly supported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of intellect; others as formed by accident or instituted by examples, and therefore liable to dispute and alteration. (96)

The unities, as professed by the neoclassicists, concerned the nature of the dramatic illusion necessary for achieving credibility through verisimilitude. For them, the less the call was made on the audience's imagination in shifting their attention from a place and the less the time was stretched the more persuasive and satisfying the play was likely to be. They felt very strongly that one of the preconditions of delight on the part of the audience was verisimilitude, which depended on the strict observance of the unities. Sidney says in his *A Defence of Poetry* that the neglect of the three unities by the English playwrights is the main reason why the English people are averse to poetry, i.e. drama. In Dryden's essay Crites echoes Sidney's attitude to English drama with regard to the form or the rules relating to the unities. He says:

> If by these rules (to omit many other from the Precepts and Practice of the Ancients) we should judge our modern Plays; 'tis probable, that few of them would endure the tryal: that which should be business of a day, takes up in some of them an age; and for one spot of ground (which the Stage should represent) we are sometimes in more Countries than the Map can shew us. (48-49)

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place, as Johnson rightly points out in his *Preface to Shakespeare*, arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The advocates of these unities are not prepared to stretch the extent of delusion by making allowances for the range and scope of imagination. They cannot accept that "an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three

hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress, shall lament the untimely death of his son" because the mind revolts from "evident falsehood", and "fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance of reality." Johnson finds no reason why the spectator is not capable of imagining the stage to be different places from what he imagines it to be when the play opens because if delusion is admitted, there is no limit to it. The argument is similar to Sir Robert Howard's critical attitude towards the unities of time and place justified on the presumption of being nearest to nature because it is considered to be most natural which is thought to be most probable and nearest to that which it represents (Howard 109).

The advocates of the unities failed to understand that the credibility of drama is different from life and that "the delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction" for if we thought murders and treasons real we would be simply shocked and repelled by them. What Johnson says in the following words aptly demonstrate this truth:

> Imitation produce pain or pleasure, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is recreated by a painted landscape, the trees are not supposed capable to give us shade, or the fountains coolness; but we consider, how we should be pleased with such fountains, and such woods waiving over us. (*Shakespeare* 146)

Contrary to the neoclassical principles, Johnson does not consider the unities of time and place obligatory for a drama. He says that the unities of time and place are not

essential to a just drama, and that though they may sometimes conduce to pleasure, they are always to be sacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and instruction. He thinks that a play written with minute observation of the critical rules "is to be contemplated as an elaborate curiosity, as the product of superfluous and ostentatious art, by which is shown what is possible than what is necessary (*Shakespeare* 147).

A number of seventeenth century and later writers who cannot be bracketed with the neoclassical school have followed the unities in their plays. But it does not mean that they have done so in veneration to the classical writers and critics. Even the greatest of playwrights, Shakespeare, who was not at all scrupulous about the unities of time and place, followed the three unities in *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Tempest*. What the Chorus says in the prologue to *Henry V* demonstrate that Shakespeare was fully aware of the role of imagination in transcending the boundaries of the physical realities of stage performance:

> But pardon, gentles all,
> The first unraised spirit that hath dar'd
> On this unworthy scafold to bring forth
> So great an object. Can this cockpit hold
> The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt?
> O, pardon! Since a crooked figure may
> Attest in little place a million;
> And let us, ciphers to this great accompt
> On your imaginary forces work.

The three unities have long since ceased to bother the critics, but in some cases the practical playwright has to take them into consideration, even if unconsciously he may do so. In some plays, especially in some tragedies where the tragic fate and vicissitude of the protagonist may not be shown within the time limit of twenty-four

hours and a limited place of action, the unities of time and place may be dispensed with without marring the effect of the play on the reader or the audience. David Daiches observes: "Most contemporary comedies, and indeed the greater number of plays that are not comedies, tend to stick roughly to the unity of time, if only because it takes a greater genius to handle a large area of time successfully than to keep the action confined to a relatively short period" (232). Although there may be some truth in the argument given here by Daiches about the competence of a playwright with regard to the handling of time, it may also be argued to the contrary.

It is the selection of plot, character and place of action that necessitates the adherence to or the violation of the unities in a play. No play or for that matter no literary composition can include life in its totality. The selection, whatever it might be, is a must for all creative writings. In Chapter 5 of *On the Art of Poetry* Aristotle says about such selection while discussing the time covered by the tragic and epic writers. Aldous Huxley in "Tragedy and the Whole Truth" mentions the differences in the selection of the aspects and particulars of life in the tragedy and the epic.

It takes time for a reader or a spectator to go through or watch the staging of a play. The duration of the reading time of a play is sure to vary from a reader to reader. But the staging of a play as viewed by the audience is more or less fixed. The dramatist, unlike the novelist is constrained by stage time, and so he has to keep his composition within a reasonable time. Although the actual time of staging a play may be limited to a few hours, the fictional time may cover many hours and days. The neoclassicists, especially the advocates of the three unities, were greatly troubled by the discrepancy between the audience's clock time and the fictional time as actually covered in the play. According to Johnson the audience's clock time and the fictional time do not present any difficulty to the imagination: "Time is, of all modes of

existence, most obsequious to the imagination; a lapse of years is as easily conceived as a passage of hours. In contemplation we easily contract the time of real actions, and therefore willingly permit it to be contracted when we only see their imitation" (*Shakespeare* 145-146).

A playwright, unlike a historian, does not need to say everything from the beginning and step by step. He has the freedom to leave out many things that are not essential to his plot. The action covered in a play is proportional to the time taken to unfold the action. Aristotle says in *Poetics* that as a beautiful living creature must be of some size that is agreeable to the eye, "so a story or Plot must be of some length, but of a length to be taken in by the memory." Castelvetro's concern for the limit in time and place makes him critical of Aristotle for not justifying one action and the importance of one person in a play. He says: "But he ought to have justified this, not by the fact that a plot is incapable of comprising more actions, but by the fact that the extreme temporal limit of twelve hours and the restriction of the place for the performance, do not permit a multitude of actions nor the action of a whole race,.." (Charlton 89). In *A Defence of Poetry* Sidney also tells us how the plot can be shortened by coming to what is most relevant instead of dwelling on the unnecessary details and telling everything from the beginning (Sidney 66-67). Henry Fielding, the novelist, not in favour of following the path of the historian justifies the method of selection by the time jump in *Tom Jones*, Book II, Ch.1. According to him, the writer is not obliged to keep even pace with time (87-88).

Most playwrights are not consistent in their plays regarding the breach of time in the progression of their plots. Instead of overleaping the gaps between one scene or act and the next scene and act, they prefer to achieve the continuity by severely restricting the fictional time. In some cases they take help of a single or a series of

intercalated flashbacks. The classical epic poets, like Homer and Virgil, used single retrospective episodes. The stream-of-consciousness technique, transferring the events to the mental plane, can dispense with the ordinary chronological sequence. In exploiting the mental processes the playwrights may use associative memory which follows purely private and individual laws of sequence.

Whatever the technique or techniques followed in unfolding the plot, the playwright must make some selection of life to complete the action of his play. Miller in *Introduction* points out that the playwright like the prosecutor concentrates on only those characteristics of life, which are germane to the construction of his symbol or what he wants to communicate. He also says: "To one degree or another every play must do this or we should have to sit in a theater for years in order appreciate a character and his story" (6).

The fictional time in Miller's plays can be known from the references he makes to the social or calendar time in the development of the plots, as well as in some cases at the beginning of acts and scenes. In the latter cases the time covered in the play becomes quite evident, and we face no problem in calculating the time. In the plays where time is not indicated at the beginning of acts and scenes we can calculate the duration of the action from the intrinsic references to the social or calendar time. On the basis of fictional time Miller's plays can be broadly placed in four groups:

(a). The plays which violate the unity of time. Such plays are: *Luck, Enemy, Crucible, Mondays, Creation, Time*, and *Glass*.

(b). The plays, which maintain the unity of time by confining the actions to a single circuit of the sun, i.e. twenty-four hours. Such plays are: *Sons, Salesman*, and *Mt. Morgan*.

(c). The plays which maintain the unity of time in the strict sense of the term. In such cases the plot time corresponds exactly to the staging time. That is, the fictional time and the time covered in reality to unfold the action are exactly the same. Such plays are: *Bridge, Vichy, Price, Fall, Clock, Ceiling, Elegy, Love Story, Can't Remember, Clara*, and *Yankee*.

(d). The plays which maintain the unity of time but go far beyond the twenty-four-hour fictional time-limit by exploiting the nature of time in memory. Although all these plays have been grouped in (b) and (c), as memory plays they form a class of their own and so should be discussed separately. These plays are: *Salesman, Mt. Morgan, Bridge, Fall, Clock*, and *Clara*.

The first play in group (a) is Miller's first-produced play, *Luck*. In the play, after the cast list, the time and place of action of the different scenes are clearly mentioned. The stage direction for Act One: Scene 1 indicates that the action begins in the evening of a cold day in April. As the action proceeds we are introduced to most of the characters. David Friebar runs a garage in Shory's place and works hard to materialize his dream of marrying Hester, whose father stands as a barrier between the two. J. B. Feller, who is very fond of David, arranges for David to work on a Marmon car belonging to his brother-in-law, Dan Dibble. By the time the scene ends the car which is the key to David's success knocks down dead Hester's father in an accident eliminating the barrier to his marriage. In this scene we are also introduced to Patterson Beeves and his son, Amos Beeves. Patterson has put all his energy in training Amos to be a star baseball player.

Act One: Scene 2 starts in the following morning, two hours before dawn. David has been working on the Marmon throughout the night. Hester cannot sleep, and so she comes to see the progress in David's work. David wants to know the time , and

she says that it is about four. Just after her departure, Gus, a motor mechanic and a new-comer to the town, drops in to get himself introduced to David and make it clear to David that if he is not wanted in the town he will leave. They get friendly, and with David's permission he starts working on the car. David soon falls asleep. By morning the car is ready and Gus leaves the place. Hester, J. B., and Dan enter the garage at about 11 a.m. and wake David up.

There is a considerable lapse of time between Act One and Act Two. Act Two: Scene 1 starts three years later, in June. The time is noon. David, happily married to Hester, leads a comfortable and solvent life. Gus visits them , they get ready and wait eagerly to be joined by Shory, J. B., Patterson and Amos to go to the basketball game where Amos will be playing in the presence of a Detroit Tigers scout. In the meantime Bucks, a mink man, comes to David's house to persuade him to rear mink. All the expected people soon turn up, and they leave the house in a hilarious mood.

Scene 2 starts on the same day at about 7 p.m. Amos is sleeping in an office-bedroom at the back of David's house. The game is over; Patterson, proud of his son's performance, is optimistic of getting the news of his son's selection for Detroit Tigers. David and Hester have a party for Amos in their new house. The scout comes and tells Patterson and Amos about Amos' weakness and the fault in Patterson's training. David, who earlier thought that luck could be created by one's efforts, is now fully convinced that everybody including himself is a victim of fate. Despite having everything he cannot have a son. When the news of an expecting baby is broken to him by Hester, he decides to sign his property to different names and start on his name the new mink business because he has a feeling that he will have to pay a price for his good fortune and he does not want to lose everything connected with his name.

Act Three starts in an early evening of March the following year. By this time David has a son and has invested almost everything he owns in mink business. This act frees him from the psychological premonition of paying as price the thing he loves most for retaining all that he has. Although David has the chance to save his mink, Hester makes him refrain from doing so voluntarily so that he is fully convinced that whatever he has lost has been lost by his doing and not as a matter of ill luck. By letting the mink die David loses his entire investment. Hester, however, fills his mind with hope to start afresh with the shop of which Gus has sixty percent and he has forty, and the play ends covering a total time of about four years. With the jump in time from act one to act two, and from act two to act one Miller shows quite convincingly the changes in David's fortune and family.

Enemy is divided into three acts. The action in Act One: Scene 1 starts in the evening at Dr. Tomas Stockmann's living room. In this scene Petra hands her father, Dr. Stockmann, the letter for which for which the doctor has been waiting impatiently for the last couple of days. The letter, a report from the university, confirms the doctor's suspicion of the existence of infectious organic matter in the water of Kirsten Springs. He feels buoyed up for getting the opportunity to serve the cause of people, exposing the real truth about the springs's water. He is sure that everyone, including his brother, Peter Stockman, the Mayor of the town, will have nothing but praise for his timely discovery. The report is sent to the Mayor for his perusal. The following morning when Scene 2 starts, Dr. Stockmann receives a letter from Peter, who does not show any enthusiasm regarding the report. In the letter he just says that he will come around in the afternoon. Aslaksen, the publisher of the *People's Daily Messenger*, and Hovstad, who works for the daily, come to Dr. Stockmann's house to assure him of their support. The latter wants to publish the report because he feels that

the "blunder of the water system has to be made clear to every voter" (60). As the doctor says that he will not give him permission to print the report till he has talked to his brother, Hovstad says that he will write an editorial in the meantime. Peter Stockmann comes, and instead of accepting Dr. Stockmann's proposed changes in the water supply for the springs, puts forward his own suggestions , which to the doctor seems to be nothing but a trickery. He orders the doctor to deny publicly the rumours centring his findings. Failing to get the doctor's compliance, the Mayor leaves with the threat of dismissing him from the Board of Directors for Kirsten Springs.

No time is mentioned regarding the beginning of Act Two: Scene 1. The place of action is the editorial office of the *People's Daily Messenger*. The time is probably the evening of the second day. Hovstad and Billing, a junior editor of the daily, are quite enthusiastic about getting the doctor's report on Kirsten Springs printed. But with the arrival of the Mayor and his disapproval of the doctor's report, and finally his proposal regarding the supply of the springs' water with some minor structural changes make the key figures of the daily change their stand on printing the report. The setting of Scene 2 is in Captain Horster's house. Although the time is not mentioned, within the scene there are clear indications from Billing's greeting to Petra and Mrs. Stockmann, and the subsequent dialogues that the time is evening of the third day, i.e. the same day when the mayor's statement is printed:

> Billing, *going over to this group*: Good evening, ladies. *They simply look at him.* I don't blame you for not speaking. I just wanted to say I don't think this is going to be a place for ladies tonight.
>
> Mrs. Stockmann: I don't remember asking your advice, Mr. Billing.
>
> Billing: I'm not as bad as you think, Mrs. Stockmann.

> Mrs. Stockmann: Then why did you print the Mayor's statement and not a word about my husband's report? Nobody's had a chance to find out what he really stands for. Why, everybody on the street there is against him already! (83)

Peter Stockmann in collusion with Aslaksen and others succeeds in humiliating his brother, Dr. Stockmann and barring him from telling the people about Kirsten Springs. Aslaksen declares the doctor an enemy of the people. Booed and hooted down and about to be manhandled by the audience, the doctor somehow manages to leave the place with his family.

Act Three starts the following morning, i. e. on the fourth day, in Dr. Stockmann's living room. In the meantime the windowpanes of the doctor's house have been shattered by stones thrown by the children. Dr. Stockmann and his family have been bearing the brunt of the cold weather because the glazier has refused to come and replace the windowpanes. Soon he receives a notice from the landlord for his eviction from the house. Petra returns from her school and informs her parents that she has been fired. Horster comes to inform them that he has no ship to sail as he has been fired, for the owner of the ship belongs to the Mayor's party. This news is followed by Peter Stockmann's arrival with an envelope which contains the information that Dr. Stockmann, too, has been fired from his position in the management of Kirsten Springs. The Mayor informs the doctor further that a petition is being signed by everybody not to call the doctor any more. The mayor expresses his readiness to reinstate him in his job if he gives the Mayor a signed statement saying that in his zeal to help the town he "went overboard and exaggerated." The doctor's father-in-law, Morten Kill, and the newspaper people, Hovstad and Aslaksen, too, come to the doctor with their proposals. The doctor bluntly turns them down. As his sons, Morten and Eljlif, return from school mauled up by the fellow students, the

doctor forgoes his earlier plan of leaving for America, and decides to stay back to continue his fight against the corrupt system and people. The cause and effect, which form the crux of both Ibsen's and Miller's plays, make it imperative on the playwrights to include certain time and place for development of their plots. What happens to Dr. Stockmann on the last day is the logical outcome of the actions which take place in the preceding days. Since the play is an adaptation, Miller simply follows what he found in Ibsen. In Miller's adaptation, the four scenes in the first two acts and the third act correspond respectively to Ibsen's five acts in time and place. The total time covered in the play is about seventy-two hours. With respect to the change of locale and lapse of time, Ibsen's division seems to be more proper. There is no justification for Miller to substitute Ibsen's first and second acts, which are separated by about twelve hours, with two scenes of first act, and Ibsen's third and fourth acts, which are separated by about twenty-four hours, with the two scenes of second act.

Crucible opens in the morning with Reverend Parris distraught with fear and anxiety for his daughter, Betty, who he believes, is under the spell of witchcraft. No time is lost by the curious people to come to Parris's house to confirm what they have already heard. Mr. Putnam and his wife, who are the first visitors, see in Betty clear signs of witchcraft. Reverend Hale of Beverly, an expert in detecting witchcraft, has been called to ascertain the cause of Betty's illness. Mrs. Putnam tells Hale that Tituba, the servant girl of Parris, has knowledge of conjuring. When Tituba is brought to the scene, Hale accuses her of compact with the devil, and presses on to name the persons who come to her with the devil. She yields to the threats, and by the time Act One ends Tituba, Abigail and Betty name as many as eleven persons of witchcraft.

Act Two begins in the evening, eight days later. A number of persons have been already arrested because the judges in Salem have found in them the signs of

witchcraft on the basis of the reactions of Abigail and the other girls to their presence. Hale comes to Proctors' house to determine their faith in God. Giles Corey and Francis Nurse come to Proctor to tell him that their wives have been taken to the jail. Soon arrives Cheever, the clerk of the court, followed by the Marshal. They find the poppet with a needle stuck into it that was given to Elizabeth by Mary Warren, and forcibly take Elizabeth away.

Act Three takes place in the Salem meeting house, serving as the court house. The playwright does not give any indication of the time before the act starts. Elizabeth Proctor, Rebecca Nurse, and Martha Corey were arrested on the 9th day. Francis Nurse, along with Proctor and Giles Corey, complains to Judge Danforth that they have been coming to the court for three days but they cannot be heard (287). In the meantime they have collected ninety-one signatures to prove the innocence of their wives. Mary Warren has also come with them. We get to know that she could not come to the court during the past few days because she was indisposed. Marshall Herrick had gone to fetch her the previous week but "she said she were sick" (288). At a later stage producing her deposition to Deputy Governor Danforth, Proctor says, "I would ask you to remember, sir, while you read it, that until two week ago she were no different than the other children are today. You saw her scream, she howled, she swore familiar spirits choked her; she even testified that Satan, in the form of women now in jail, tried to win her soul away,.." (296). All these indicate that a period of two weeks has passed from Mary's last presence in the court to the beginning of Act Three. Proctor, however, cannot prove to Danforth her deposition regarding the pretence of the girls and the innocence of the victims because the trickery of Abigail, with support from Susana Walcott, Mercy Lewis and Betty Paris, compels Mary Waren to leave her stand and join the girls in their pretence of being tormented by the evil spirits. To save her

own skin Mary accuses Proctor of having evil influence on her in the signing of the deposition and condemns him of his compact with the devil. Both Proctor and Giles Corey, who refuse to divulge the names of the ninety-nine signatories, are in Jail at the end of act Three.

Although the playwright does not tell us when Act Four begins, there are clear indications in the act that the action takes place after about three months of the action in Act Two . In the last night before the hanging of Rebecca and Proctor, Parris tells Danforth that Rebecca has not given him a word "this three months since she came." Later on he says about Proctor and his wife – "He have not laid eyes on her these three months" (318). John Proctor's refusal to implicate anyone in witchcraft and to give a signed statement of his alleged compact with the devil leads him to the gallows, and the play ends. All told, the time covered in the play is about three and a half months. The action takes such a long time because the prosecutors kept on trying with the hope of getting some names and a signed statement of complicity with witchcraft from Rebecca and Proctor as were the cases in the history of Salem witch trials.

The action in *Mondays* takes place in the shipping room of a large auto-parts warehouse in New York. The action starts on a Monday morning in summer just before nine. The monotonous routine work continues in a cyclic order ; the same Monday returns every week. In this play we know particularly what happens on two Mondays, that is on two days of two weeks just after the week-end. Time passes from summer to winter in the middle of the conversation between Kenneth and Burt (357). On the second Monday Bert tells Raymond that he won't be leaving till after lunch the next day (360). Gus goes out just at half-past nine. Jim narrates how he moved around the whole day. The next day when it was just getting morning he found Gus dead in his cab. The action continues till the afternoon of Tuesday when Bert leaves at last.

The memory that would linger in Bert's mind or that lingers in Miller's mind is not the memory of just two Mondays but the last Tuesday, too. Leonard Moss in his book *Arthur Miller* tells us that the second Monday is six months later (50). Benjamin Nelson in his article, "*A Memory of Two Mondays*: Remembrance and Reflection in Arthur Miller," says:

> Although the first Monday is set in midsummer and the second in winter, their chronology is blurred. We do not know if the winter belongs to the same year as the preceding summer or the following year. The two days are structured laterally, set parallel to each other like two railroad tracks, never touching yet integrally related as they move off toward eternity. The time sequence between them is not measured in hours or weeks but in the period it has taken Bert to earn his first semester tuition at college. The transition is made as the first Monday draws to a close. (150)

One obvious indicator of the time passed is the book, *War and Peace* that Bert has been reading. On the first Monday, Raymond asks Bert how long it takes to read a book like this. Bert replies, "Oh, probably about three, four months, I guess. It's hard on the subway, with all those Russian names" (334). The same book comes on the second Monday as well. This Monday is obviously the beginning of the New Year as the following conversation indicates.

> Kenneth, *in a routine way*: Morning Mr. Ryan. Have a nice New Year's, did you?
>
> Raymond: Good enough. *To Bert, seeing the Book on the table*. Still reading that book?
>
> Bert: Oh, I'm almost finished now...(360)

The time, as we can understand, has passed from a summer Monday morning to the first Monday of a new year in the winter. Bert has almost finished reading of the book. So from all this we can infer that in the play the time of action covers about five to six months.

The action that *Creation* encompasses cannot be limited to a day or two. The action covers Heaven and Earth. Act One is in Paradise before the fall and the subsequent two acts are in the Earth after the fall. The action starts in the morning as the darkness disappears and light spreads. God teaches Adam the names of different things, and creates Eve from one of his ribs. The two eat the forbidden apple, God pronounce their punishments and drive them out of Paradise.

Act Two starts in the night. Here we find the gestation of Eve. Cain is born. The lapse of time between the first and second acts is about nine months, the natural time required for the growth and development of the seed within the womb of Eve. Act Three starts after a considerable lapse of time. Here we find the family complete with Abel, the younger son. Cain does the farming and Abel tends the sheep. The jealousy of Cain toward his brother finally makes him kill Abel. Despite the sins of mankind the human beings are not estranged from God, and they do not consider Lucifer their God. After revealing the ways of life and death to Adam and Eve God leaves saying, "seek me only in your hearts, you will never see my face again" (445). Cain does not ask Eve's pardon. Neither can Eve forgive him. As he leaves, Adam calls toward him "Mercy" and the play ends. To show the creation of the world and the life of Adam and Eve before and after their fall, the time of action in the play has been stretched quite convincingly to cover quite a long time.

The change of time in *Time* is shown in flashes. The progress of time is linear – there are no flashbacks. The action starts in the afternoon of 1942 with Fania Fenelon

singing in a café in Germany occupied Paris. The very next shot shows a train of freight cars moving through open French farmland, and then the inside of a freight car packed with different types of people. The time is compacted. Since the play is in the form of a film script, the change of shots changes the time and space without any inconvenience or questions of credibility. With the level of water dropping in Fania's bottle, the condition of the people also changes. The alert, energetic crowd gradually loses its energy. With parched lips people fall down unconscious, one on top of the other. Late at night the train stops at a station . Fania and Marianne end up in a prison and are led to a bunk where they find a dead woman.

In the double exposure on Fania and Marianne time is made to pass very quickly. We are shown how they are made to labour in their imprisonment in the changed seasons:

> Snow falls over the image of the two women in their bunk: a forest; now spring comes; flowers appear and green grass; brook ice melts – always over the image of Fania and Marianne dragging stones, carrying wood, digging drainage ditches... And finally, once again, in their bunk – now without the dead woman, and they are both asleep, side by side. And both are haggard now, with the half-starved look of the other prisoners. (460-461)

Fania is taken in the orchestra band, she prepares for the orchestra, and in the very next shot we see her performing. Schmidt, the German supervisor, invites Alma, the leader of the band to join her for dinner. Alma spruces herself and takes leave of Fania. In the very next shot we find the whole orchestra filling into a room , and Alma is dead in a coffin. The sound of keening begins and next we are taken to the black market where we get to know that Schmidt poisoned Alma at dinner, and in the morning she, too was shot. The ordeals of Fania and the other prisoners continue in the

prison camp till the Nazis surrender to the allied troops and the British soldiers rescue them.

The action comes to an end in Brussels in 1978. Fania waits in a fashionable restaurant and soon Liesle and Charlotte join her. Fania comes to know from Liesle that Marianne died of cancer a few years after the war. Charlotte, the young maid of the prison camp, now has two children. The period of time covered in the play is about 36 years – that is, 1942 to 1978, the time between when we see Fania first at the beginning of the play and Fania last at the end. Covering such a long time, Miller has been able to show to what extent things are different in the late 70s from the early 40s, i.e. the wartime. We can also see the effects of time and the changes in the different characters over the years.

In *Glass* the time is not mentioned when Act One: Scene One starts. As the play opens we know that Gellburg has an appointment with Dr. Harry Hyman regarding some complications in his wife, Sylvia's physical condition. He has come to see the doctor at his office in his home. Gellburg is a bit annoyed with the doctor because the doctor's wife, Margaret Hyman, informs him that he is just changing and will see him without any delay. Gellburg says with faint reprimand, "He said seven O'clock sharp" (3). That the meeting between the doctor and Gellburg takes place at night is clearly understood from what the doctor tells him – "I'm glad you could make it tonight, I want to talk to you before I see your wife again tomorrow" (8).

That the action in Scene Two takes place the next evening , i.e. on the second day is clearly mentioned by the playwright. Sylvia's sister, Harriet, asks her what she will buy from the market. After she leaves, Gellburg enters and enquires about the doctor. Sylvia tells him: "He called; he has the results of the tests but he wants to come tomorrow when he has more time to talk to me. He's really very nice" (36). Scene

Three is set in Hyman's office. No time is mentioned. Harriet has come to see the doctor. They talk about Sylvia and Gellburg. The time may be the same evening of the second day or the morning of the third day. The setting of scene Four is in Gellburg's employer, Stanton Case's office. No time is mentioned. There is internal evidence that it is the third day. Scene Five is in Gellburg's house. Although no time is mentioned when the action begins, since the doctor has come to see Sylvia it must be the third day. The doctor does not approve of her being in bed so late in the day. He says, "But look now – here it's eleven in the morning and you're happily tucked into bed like it's midnight' (64). He wants her to tell him everything frankly, and finally leaves saying that they will talk again the next day.

No time is mentioned when Act Two: Scene One starts. Gellburg has come to see the doctor at his home office. The internal evidence suggests that the action here is later than two to three days of Act One. Scene two starts on the same day . Before the action begins it is mentioned, "Later. Hyman's office..." Hyman writes a prescription for Harriet. Before she leaves she tells him that Sylvia wants him to pay her a visit at night. The doctor is reluctant to make such a visit. Harriet reminds him that he has been to Sylvia's house five or six times. The number of the visits indicates the lapse of some days from Act One to Act Two. Scene Three is in Stanton Case's office. The time is not mentioned. Case is disappointed for not being able to make a particular purchase. From what follows in Scene Four we know that the action in this scene takes place on the same day as Scene One. Scene four is in Gellburg's house. Hyman has come to see Sylvia. Gellburg is away for a zoning meeting. It is clearly night time. Scene Five is in Case's office. The time gap between Scene Four and Scene Five is not mentioned. The time in this scene could be the next day of the preceding scene or a few days later. Gellburg tries to prove his innocence for his failure to make the

purchase, but Case would not be convinced. At one stage he collapses. The time of action in Scene Six is not mentioned. The place is Gellburg's bedroom. It could be the same day as in Scene Five or the next day. Hyman examines Gellburg's heart and says that he should be in a hospital. Losing his job Gellburg becomes sentimental about his Jewish identity. He tries to make his wife stand erect by pulling on her arms and collapses. Sylvia with enormous effort raises herself to her feet, takes the steps to the oxygen mask and hands it to the doctor. Although Sylvia calls her husband to see that she is standing, she gets no response from him because being dead he has reached a timeless stage, where nothing matters to him any more. The action of the play covers about five to six days.

In *Sons,* which has been included in the second group, time of action is clearly indicated before the beginning of all the three acts. Act One begins "in an atmosphere of undisturbed normality" in an early Sunday morning. The tension in the play develops and heightens Chris' determination to marry Ann, his brother, Larry's girl when he was alive. Kate, his mother, does not approve of the match. By the end of Act One we get to know that Ann's brother, George, who has been to Columbus to see their father is coming straight from their to the Kellers' house in the evening. The news makes Kate nervous because she is apprehensive of her husband, Joe's danger, and so she cautions him to be smart. Act Two starts in the evening of the same day. Kate tries to get Chris's support in the event of George's attempts to revive the old case and create problems for Joe. George's arrival further intensifies the tension and exposes Joe's role in the supply of the cracked cylinder heads to the Army Airforce, which caused the death of twenty-one pilots, and leads to the crisis of the play. Act Three starts at two o'clock in the morning of the next day. Kate tries to protect Joe from Chris' anger, and Ann tries to persuade Kate to tell Chris that Larry is dead and

let him have his way. In utter desperation finally Ann manages to show Chris the letter that Larry had written to her before committing suicide. Chris reads the letter aloud, Joe realizes his crime and involvement in the death of his son, enters the house and shoots himself. As Miller does not start the story of Keller-family from the beginning, and he makes use of the antecedent information, we can see the resolution in the play within the limited time of twenty-four hours.

Now, to come to the group of plays maintaining the unity of time, we can first consider *Vichy*, which is a one-act play. The place of action is fixed. At the very beginning we find six men and a boy of fifteen seated on a bench in front of a room, all waiting to be interrogated by some officials. The men are – Merchand, a businessman; Labeau, a painter; Bayard, an electrician, Monceau, an actor; a gypsy and a waiter. Although time is not given, it is to be understood that the time of the day is morning, and more precisely before eleven because soon after the play begins Merchand addresses a police guard who appears there, saying – "Excuse me, officer, is there a telephone one can use? I have an appointment at eleven o'clock and it's quite.." (249). Besides, later on when the Major comes out of the room the waiter who serves him breakfast at the café greets him, saying, "Good morning, Major" (251). Soon come to the scene First detective with an old Jew, the Second Detective holding the arm of Leduc, the uniformed Police Captain with Von Berg, and the Professor. The detectives direct the prisoners to take seats.

Merchand, who is not at all concerned for his own fate, is the first prisoner to be called inside and soon released. His release raises hope in Labeau and the rest that they have possibly been rounded up for routine check-up of their papers. The waiter learns from Ferrand, the proprietor of a café, that the Jews are being sent to Poland not to work but to be burnt in furnaces. The Police Captain appears and calls him inside

the room. Leduc tells the rest to overpower the lone guard and make a run for their escape but does not get support from anyone. After the waiter is taken inside, the Boy offers his help, but Monceau is totally against any such move. Monceau has the experience of performing in front of German audience and cannot simply conceive of their burning of actors in a furnace. But Von Berg has bitter memories of their cruelties. The Boy and Leduc are convinced that Von Berg would be released. The Boy hands over a ring to Von Berg to take it to his mother. Lebeau, Monceau and the Boy are called inside in quick succession. Leduc gives Von Berg the direction to his residence and requests him to go there and tell his wife about his fate. Next, the Captain and the Professor lift the Old Jew forcefully into the office. Left alone with Von Berg Leduc tells him that he has never analyzed a gentile who did not have somewhere hidden inside his mind a dislike if not a hatred for the Jews. Von Berg protests vehemently and says that it is not true of him; in his life he never said a word against the Jews.

It is Von Berg's turn to be interrogated next. He goes inside with the Professor and comes out with a pass for his release. He goes by Leduc, suddenly turns, walks back and thrusts the pass into his hand telling him to take it and leave. After some time the Professor comes out and not finding Leduc calls into the office "Man escaped!" He runs up the corridor calling "Man escaped! Man escaped!" The Police Captain and the Major rush out of the office. The voices outside are swept away by a siren going off. The Major faces Von Berg with a look of anguish and fury. Four new prisoners are brought to the detention room by the detectives, and the play ends. As Miller's main purpose in the play is to show how an individual like Von Berg risks his life to save a fellow human being, the action of the play covers a rather short time.

The next play under discussion that follows the unity of time in the strictest sense of the term is a two-act play, *Price*. The action in Act One starts a little earlier than 5.30 p.m., the time fixed by the dealer to come to the attic of a building to buy the furniture. Victor comes to the place first and gazes at the furniture piece by piece. He looks at his watch and waits for time to pass. Soon Esther, his wife, enters from the backdoor. Victor says that the dealer is due in a few minutes and asks her if she would like to take anything. They have a plan to go to an evening movie and Victor has already got two tickets. They talk about some of their old acquaintances who lived in the same building. Esther gets up, goes to the harp and asks him about the furniture dealer. Glancing at his watch he replies, "It's twenty to six. He should be here soon" (9). After a while he looks at his watch and expresses disapproval of the dealer's sense of punctuality. – "Look at that, will you? Five thirty sharp, he tells me. People say anything" (12). Solomon, the dealer, arrives shortly. Esther leaves to collect Victor's suit from the cleaner. Solomon, left alone with Victor, talks on the merits and demerits of the furniture, and finally the deal is fixed at eleven hundred dollars. Solomon hands Victor hundred dollar bills one by one. As he pays the seventh bill, Victor's brother, Walter, appears. After the exchange of greetings Victor tells his brother regarding the sale of the furniture. With his hand extended, Solomon comes to Walter and introduces himself. Walter reciprocates saying, "How do you do?" and shakes Solomon's hand.

The action from Act one to Act Two is continuous. As the curtain rises for act two "Walter is just releasing Solomon's hand and turning about to face Victor" (53). Walter and Victor enquire about each other's family. Victor says apologetically that he never thought Walter would show up, and so suggests going through the deal all over again. Returning with Victor's suit Esther is surprised to see Walter. Walter compliments her on her looking young and beautiful. Esther is disappointed with the

price fixed for the furniture. Walter supports her and says that a minimum of three thousand dollars would be the right price. At one stage he comes out with a new proposal how by fixing the sale amount at a much higher price than the one agreed on and then by donating the furniture to the Salvation Army he would be saving a sizeable amount in income tax which could be split in half for the benefit of both Victor and himself. He also says that they would pay Solomon an appraisal fee of fifty to sixty dollars which he would get just for filling a piece of paper. As Victor cannot forget the treatment meted out to him by his brother, he does not trust Walter's gesture, and so, Walter leaves the scene in a fury. Victor sticks to his deal with Solomon who pays him the rest of the money. Victor folds the money and tells his wife that they could still go for the movie. The play ends with the plot time corresponding exactly to the performance time. Within this limited time, too, making Victor and Walter talk about the past and the present, Miller has been able to give a good account of the two brothers and their families, the reasons behind their strained relationship, and the price they have paid in their lives.

In *Ceiling* the setting is the former residence of the archbishop, presently occupied by Marcus, a writer. The action in Act One starts with Adrian, a visiting American writer, seated on a couch and Maya entering from the living quarters with a coffee pot and two cups on a tray. Although the time is not stated, there are indications to show that it is night-time, a little earlier than nine:

> Adrian: You're not drinking anymore?
>
> Maya: Only after nine o'clock.
>
> Adrian: Good. You seem more organised.
>
> Maya: Until nine o'clock. (7)

Quite soon Maya says that she will have a brandy, and in response to Adrian's question whether it is nine o'clock, she replies, "In one minute." Their conversation takes a political turn, and centres around the topic of individual freedom and state harassment. They are soon joined by Marcus, Sigmund and Irina. Adrian is shocked to know that Sigmund's manuscript has been taken away by the government agents. He wants to know when it was done. Sigmund replies: "Now. Tonight" "around six o'clock" (28-29). The discussion among the four friends centres around the manuscript. Adrian is suspicious of Marcus being a government agent and would not be convinced till he finds a proof contrary to this. Act One ends with a question from Adrian to Marcus whether he will say inside the room what he has just said, that is, he has always warned people that the government might be listening in the room. Act two begins with everyone waiting for Marcus to speak. Marcus's words gradually prove the implications and accusations against him baseless.

Marcus has already invited Alexandra, a minister's daughter to come to his place so that Sigmund may have the opportunity to make his position clear to her. He tells Adrian that she is expected soon – "She's at some embassy dinner. As soon as she can break away. Shouldn't be long..." (59). He also tries to convince Sigmund the seriousness of the affair between him and the state, but the latter is not prepared to consider all this real. Marcus goes up to the bedroom to attend a telephone call from Alexandra. He returns and sends Sigmund to the phone because she wants to talk to him. Sigmund comes down speechless; Marcus informs his friends that the manuscript will be returned and that Alexandra may be able to bring it with her. The play ends with Sigmund deciding not to leave the country because he feels that he would not be able to create anything in an alien land. Although the fictional time of the play is short and limited, the condition of life and government as shown in a democratic and a

police state, and the sense of oneness of a writer like Sigmund with his own country show that thematically the play has quite a broad canvas.

The shortest play under discussion is *Elegy*. Limited to only eighteen pages, the characters, too here are limited to only two persons, and that too, without any names – Man and Proprietress. The time is not indicated when the action starts. At the very beginning of the play Man enters a boutique shop to buy a present for his supposedly dying beloved. He tells Proprietress earlier that he passed a flower shop twice, but could not decide whether to buy a bunch of flowers or a plant. She suggests that either would be all right, and their conversation continues:

> Man: Except that a bunch would fade, wouldn't they? – in a few days?
>
> Proprietress: But a plant would last. For years sometimes.
>
> Man: But there's a suggestion of irony in that. Isn't there? (5)

Man says that he is quite selective in choosing a present because he does not want it to remind his beloved of her present condition: "Everything I can think to send her seems ironical; every book seems either too sad or too comical; I can't think of anything that won't increase the pain of it" (6). Finally he decides to send her something she could keep for a long time and selects a watch. Proprietress does not charge him any money for it. She tells him, "Go ahead – it's just the right thing; it will tell her to be brave each time she looks at it" (21). Proprietress says that he did not tell her the woman's name. Man says in reply that nether did she tell him her name, and the play ends. The significance of the play centres on the final selection of the watch, which with its movement of the hands shows symbolically the present in our life as well as our steps toward the future.

Love Story, another one-act play, has also just two characters: Tom O'Toole – a detective, and his one time-lover, Angela – a call girl. The action takes place in Angela's bedroom. Although no time is mentioned when the action begins, we gather from their conversation that it is a little earlier than 11 p.m. Tom is anxious to unearth the mystery behind the murder of Abe Kaplan for which his client, Felix Epstein, has been in prison for the last five years. Angela seems to hold the key to the mystery, but she does not tell Tom all that she knows. The following conversation indicates Tom's anger and frustration with her:

> Tom: Honey, it's the same schizophrenia conversation we had fifteen times, and it's eleven p.m.
>
> Angela: What I am trying to tell you is that my heart is hanging by a thread, I haven't got very long. Or is that important?
>
> Tom: Then why don't you tell me what you know before it's too late? The man is still innocent and he's still dying by inches in prison; his wife is a walking wreck, her parents are ready for the morgue, and you have the key to this case, Angela – I know it is as sure as I know my name – and you jerk me around month after month, a crumb here and a crumb there .... I'm so exhausted I can't sleep! – and now you take to dragging me out of bed every other night to chat me up?... (31-32)

In reply to Tom's questions Angela at times gives some relevant but partial piece of information which gives rise to further queries and questions, and he digs for them with more questions.

Occasionally, Angela has fits of psychological disintegration when she acts like completely different persons. Towards the end of the play, soon after recovering from one such fit she receives a phone call from one of her clients. She comes to know from Tom that the time is ten to twelve and she immediately prepares herself to go to her client. At this stage Tom gets quite sentimental about his relationship with her and

declares his love for her, saying, "Oh, Darlin'... Oh, Ange... I can't help it, I love you" (64)! Angela does not waver from her professionalism. When Tom tells her that if she could believe in him she could start a new life, she replies – "No, not only you, Tommy – I think you got me too late; all that went by. Come on, I'm late" (64).

Since Tom feels that Angela will not tell him all that she knows about the murder, he says that he will not see her again. Angela reminds him that if he leaves her, he leaves the case because she is the only one alive who knows about the people who are involved. She says: "There are names that'd knock your head off, all the way to Boston, Washington, providence and New York. The whole criminal justice system could be picked up by the tail like a dead rat. All you got now is the tip of the tip of the iceberg..." (65). Although the play ends here with the fictional time covering just about one hour, Tom's expectations of getting in the future more information from Angela about the unresolved case, create in us the feeling that the action of the play is not yet finished, there is still more to come.

Can't Remember, another one-act play, is about two elderly people, Leo and Leonara. Although it is not stated when the action begins, we can infer from what goes on that it is the evening. At the very beginning we find that Leonara has come to Leo's place to have dinner with him. She observes that there is only one plate on the table. Leo tells her to get another plate. He says that he has work to do at night. Leonara tells him, "I won't stay, I'll just sit here for a bit and look out of the window. Is that all right" (12)? She has been drinking whiskey since she entered Leo's place and gets his approval to take with her what is left in the bottle. She does not seem to remember or is not simply interested to remember anything. The action centres around her resistance to the past, its pain and irony. Towards the end she is made to remember by Leo certain happenings and things of the past. She tells him the time when she had

been to Asia and how long she and Frederick were with the Maharajah. She remembers clearly the time she first met Frederick and how he complimented her to her mother. Leo understands Leonara's unstable condition, and so he wants her to stay at his place. But she decides to leave. Leo says goodnight and she leaves the place. After her departure Leo waits for her phone call, gets it soon and feels assured of her safety, and the play ends. The fictional time covered in the play is very short, but Leo's delving into the past to do away Leonara's memory block and the nature of the block itself give the plot an added dimension.

Yankee, which is the last play in group three, is in two scenes. The time of action is not indicated before the scenes begin. The setting of the play is in a state mental hospital. Leroy Hamilton and John Frick wait in the visiting room to meet their wives, Patricia Hamilton and Karen Frick, respectively. Initiating a conversation with Leroy, Frick comes to know from him that Leroy's wife has been in the hospital for the third time. Frick tells Leroy that he brought his wife in last Tuesday, and hopes she does not have to stay long. As the conversation develops, we get to know more about their families, wives, and themselves.

The place of Scene Two is the hospital bedroom of Patricia. As the action begins we understand that Karen and Patricia are playing ping-pong. Soon they stop playing. Karen says that her husband does not like being kept waiting, and so, she should go out to meet him. Patricia tells her to take it easy; they talk about themselves and their families. After some time Leroy and Frick come to the place. Leroy wants Patricia to be back home. He does not want her to decide immediately and says that he will come on Thursday again. Patricia blames Leroy for their financial difficulties. They talk about their marriage and the relationship between the Swedes and the Yankees. Both Patricia and Leroy tell Frick that Karen in a way has felt neglected for

not getting his proper attention. Frick complains that his wife gets out of bed at two o'clock in the morning to practice tap-dancing. Karen demonstrates her dancing in front of them. Not quite happy with what goes on, Frick leaves the place saying that he will try to come again on Friday.

After Frick's departure, at Patricia's request Leroy plays on the banjo and Karen dances. After they stop Patricia goes to a closet, takes a small overnight bag to the bed and puts her things into it. Leroy has his old car to take them home. The fictional time in this play, too, corresponds exactly to the playing time. Patricia's humorous words, "Between the banjo and the car I've certainly got a whole lot to look forward to", indicate the continuity of her life with Leroy, and all their problems and differences.

Out of the seven plays under discussion in group four, i.e. the plays that maintain the unity of time but go beyond the twenty-four-hour fictional time by exploiting the nature of time in memory, *Salesman* is the earliest according to the date of composition and production. In *Salesman* at the very beginning of Act One we find that Willy Loman has returned home at night weak and tired from his abortive business trip. He is tormented not only by his professional failure but also the failures of his sons and the breach of the past bond of love and intimacy in his familial life. Mentally he often goes back to the past and we see him and his sons in the past in sharp contrast to what they are in the present. With Biff's proposal to start a business of his own, taking a loan from his ex-employer, Bill Oliver, and his own decision to go to his employer, Howard, the next day, Willy becomes very much optimistic of his son's success and their happiness.

As the action in Act Two begins in the morning of the next day we find Willy and his wife, Linda, quite relaxed in the kitchen. The time and the day are indicated

from what Willy says: "I slept like a dead one. First time in months. Imagine, sleeping till ten on a Tuesday morning. Boys left nice and early, heh" (173)? As decided earlier, Willy goes to his employer, Howard's office to ask for a New York posting. To his utter disappointment, Howard tells him that the firm does not need him any longer. Left with nothing to hold on to in his professional life, the happy days and opportunities of the past come to his mind, and we see him in a past scene where we find his brother, Ben, offering him the opportunity of looking after his timberland in Alaska. He does not accept the offer because he is confident that he will have success in his own place. The scene in the past continues even after Ben's departure, and we see young Biff in all his charm and glory leaving for the Ebbet's field game accompanied by his father, brother and Bernard.

When according to the prior arrangements of his sons Willy goes to a restaurant to have dinner with them and Biff tells him of his failure to get a loan from Bill Oliver, Willy goes back to the past once again. This time we see the crucial hotel-room scene where Biff is shocked to find his father with a woman. Chronologically, this is the last thing in Willy's past life, which is revealed to us. After Willy goes back to his house and there is reconciliation with Biff, he decides to commit suicide to enable Biff get twenty thousand dollars insurance money to realize his dream of success through his son. The entire action in the play's fictional present takes place within twenty-four hours, but if we consider the memory scenes the action covers about twenty-five years. The action in the short Requiem scene, which is like an epilogue to the play, takes place on the third day. Using the technique of double time Miller has been successful in concentrating not only on the last day of Willy's life but also on certain crucial moments and experiences of his past life which have direct

relevance to his present problems. This way within a tight-knit plot-structure Miller shows us the protagonist's past as well as the present.

To come to *Mt. Morgan* next, we see that the specific time of action is not stated at the beginning of the play. The play begins in a hospital where we find Lyman Felt, his arms and legs in cast lying in a bed, and his wife, Theodora, and daughter, Bessie, who have just arrived from New York to see him, are waiting in the waiting room. Soon Leah Felt, his second wife, arrives. Lyman's accident, as we get to know after some progress in the action, took place very early in the morning of the day, at about 3 a.m. In Act One after Theodora collapses and Leah calls for a doctor there is blackout. Next, we see a change of locale from the hospital waiting room to Leah's home, where we find Tom, her and Lyman's lawyer, discussing with Leah her marriage to Lyman with respect to Theodora. It must have taken some time for Tom to be informed about the accident and Lyman's bigamy. This jump in time is shown just by the blackout. From Leah's house in the present we go back in time in a flashback showing Leah and Lyman before nine years in Reno. The change of time from the present to the past time nine years ago and back to the present and so forth is shown in a continuous manner.

At the beginning of Act Two we see the hospital waiting-room once again where Tom is seated with Theodora. Although the time is not mentioned, from what follows we know that it is morning. The absence of Bessie indicates that it is not the continuation of the same morning in Act One. Soon Leah joins them; she and Tom greet each other saying "Good morning" (58). Leah asks Theo whether she has seen the *Daily News*, which has printed their photos on the first page with a headline, "Who gets Lyman" (62). The news item proves that some time, at least a day and a night, has already passed since the beginning of Act One. Leah has a nine o'clock conference

call. She says that she will be back by ten or so and leaves. Theo tells Tom that once Lyman tried to kill her, and next we see a scene on a beach before nine years. Theo wants to go back to her hotel to be alone and for taking rest. Before she leaves she says that they will probably go back to the city by noon – or maybe they will just leave. After some time Theo returns to the hospital room accompanied by Bessie. She tells Lyman that she won't be seeing him again. They accuse each other of their selfishness and next, we see a past time scene – the safari in Africa before nine years. The nurse comments to Lyman in the present about his marriage to Theo, and once again we are shown a past scene, but this time Lyman is with Leah. He wants Leah to keep the baby and not to go for abortion. After a blackout we see Lyman in the past trying to tell Theo something but fails to do so. Next, we see Lyman with Leah in a hospital. She has given birth to a baby boy. Back to the present Leah comes to see Lyman. When Lyman tells her that he loved her as he loved Theo, she reminds him about their staying in a hotel four blocks from his house when she was two months' pregnant. The scene of the past time is revealed to us, and we see Lyman with Leah in the hotel and Theo in his house quite ignorant about his stay with Leah. Back to the present Lyman is with Leah. Leah tells him about her decision to live separately depriving him of the opportunity to see his son, Benjamin. Theo and Bessie, too, come to say goodbye and Lyman is left alone with the nurse. Although the total plot time is not clearly spelt out, from the progress of the plot we can say that the action covers about twenty-four hours. If we take into consideration the time in the memory scenes as well, then it is between nine and ten years. Here, too, the use of double time helps to bring to life within the limited time of the present the relevant experiences of the past.

The entire action in *Bridge*, which takes place in the past, is unfolded by Alfieri, a lawyer, as remembered by him. The action in Act One most likely starts in

the evening. Soon after the play opens Eddie tells his wife, Beatrice, that her cousins, who have arrived in a ship from Italy as illegal immigrants, will come to their place about ten o'clock. The cousins, Marco and Rodolpho, arrive in time. The introduction part being over, their talk centres mainly on the kind of jobs they were doing in Italy and their economic hardship. Beatrice offers them coffee. Alfieri appears into the scene for a short while, tells us about Eddie's destiny and hints at the impending trouble. Next, we find Eddie standing on the doorway of the house waiting for Catherine and Rodolpho, who have gone to a show at the Paramount. It is obvious that some time has already passed since they first met. Eddie complains to his wife about Rodolpho: "They must've seen every picture in Brooklyn by now. He's supposed to stay in the house when he ain't working. He ain't supposed to go advertising himself" (397). In reply to Beatrice's words to Eddie that she is being deprived of the privileges of a wife he says, "I ain't been feelin' good. They bother me since they came" (399). Beatrice adds that he has not been feeling good for almost three months, whereas they have been in their place only a couple of weeks. So the time passed so far cannot be more than a few weeks.

At the beginning of Act Two Alfieri narrates what happened on the 23nd of December when Eddie saw Catherine and Rodolpho together in the house alone. Next, he says that on December 27th Eddie came to see him in an abnormal condition. The scene then moves to the past. Eddie, failing to convince Alfieri of anything unnatural in the behaviour of Rodolpho, informs the Immigration Bureau against the illegal immigrants. When Eddie returns to his apartment, he gets to know from his wife that Rodolpho and Catherine are going to get married.

After the arrest of Marco, Rodolpho, and the two new-comers when Marco accuses and condemns Eddie in public, the latter tries to clear his name by telling

Lippari and his wife – "He's crazy! I give them the blankets off my bed. Six months I kept them like my own brother" (433)! Eddie encounters Marco on the marriage day of Rodolpho and Catherine, and in the scuffle that ensues is killed by his own knife. The action of the play covers in all a total period of about the last six months of Eddie's life. But the plot time in the present is just the time required by Alfieri to narrate the happenings relating to Eddie and the others which is the same as the staging time.

In *Fall* the action takes place in the mind and memory of Quentin, a lawyer in his forties. Act One starts with Quentin addressing an almost invisible listener and telling him that he quit the firm about fourteen months ago, a few weeks after the death of his wife, Maggie. He says that he called the listener in the morning because he has a decision to make about Holga, an archaeologist, whom he met when he was in Germany about five months ago. The time is four o'clock, and he is expecting her arrival at night for some conference in Columbus. At the end of the act we hear roaring of a jet; Quentin glances at his watch and says that it is six o'clock. Act Two starts with Holga approaching Quentin with open arms. The stage direction indicates that no time has passed between the two acts. The spark from Quentin's lighter at the end of Act One can be seen at the beginning of Act Two.

In the two acts flashbacks cover the incidents related to Quentin's life which took place fourteen months ago when he was married to Louise and Maggie and when he was in Germany before about four months. The memories of the days when Quentin was a little boy and when he was yet to go to college also come to his mind. The total action covers some phases of his life from his boyhood till his present, when he is in his forties. Although the period of action covers almost the entire life of Quentin, the spectator gets to know about all this within the time which corresponds to

the time of Quentin's unfolding of his memory scenes which should not be more than three to four hours.

At the very beginning of *Clock* in Act One we see first Lee Baum facing the audience and telling them about the Great Depression and its effects on the American people, and next, Robertson commenting on the Depression and the emotional collapse. We get no indication of the time when the action starts in the present. We know that Lee is in his fifties and Robertson is in seventies. Like a chorus they comment on the past, and we get to know about the Baum family and the social conditions in the past . Following their cues and hints we go back in time by about thirty years. We go back to the time immediately before the Depression when Lee was just a boy and the Baums lived a carefree life with no idea of economic strains. Robertson in his forties talks with a shoeshine man. We see the people like Rosman and Robertson speculating on the stock market. Next we see the conditions of the Baums and some other people during the Depression.

In Act Two the Depression period continues. But the time has gone ahead. Lee is in college, graduates, gets some odd jobs and tries to be a sportswriter. Roosevelt has replaced Hoover as President of the United States of America. Jobs are still scarce. Lee wants to be on relief to get on the WPA Writer's Project. He brings his father to the relief office so that the latter convinces the authority concerned that his son has no place in his house. The play ends with Robertson in the present commenting on what saved the United States.

Although the play covers the happenings within a range of about thirty years, the entire time is covered in flashbacks. In the present the action takes exactly the time taken to show or tell about the days just prior to and during the Depression period. So in reality it covers exactly the stage time; it should be roughly about three hours.

The last play under discussion in this chapter is *Clara*, a one-act play. The entire action of the play takes place in Clara Kroll's apartment-office where she was murdered the previous night. The action starts with Detective Lieutenant Fine and Officer Tierney examining the scene of the murder. At the beginning of the play fine tells Kroll that the time is one o'clock (30). Kroll's mind is completely blocked to the fact that his daughter has been murdered. With Fine's repeated and persistent questions Kroll starts responding gradually. When Tierney shows them a record and plays it Kroll recognizes his own voice. As he listens to the record staring front, we see a past scene when Clara was a very young girl. Suddenly Hernandez blazes up in the air and vanishes and immediately Kroll says, Hernandez. Fine asks "What!" and he replies, "Luiz Hernandez. Worked at Kennedy. For Pan America." Fine rushes out with the information and the play ends. Although the time covered in the memory of Kroll goes back by about ten years, in the present the time of action corresponds to the time taken to stage the play.

The scrupulous adherence to the unity of time is a typical neoclassical requirement. That Miller was not dictated by the practices and precepts of any particular school of writers and critics can be understood from his attitude toward the Greek concept of a tragic hero. He does not accept Aristotle's observation that someone of the common mould cannot be a fit tragic hero. He argues:

> It is now many centuries since Aristotle lived. There is no reason for falling down in a faint before his *Poetics* than before Euclid's geometry, which has been amended numerous times by men with new insights;... Things do change, and even a genius is limited by his time and the nature of his society. (*Introduction* 31-32)

So, it is not surprising that we do not find Miller very particular regarding the unity of time. The twenty-one plays of Miller which have been discussed with regard to plot time clearly show that Miller has not been consistent in the relationship between the fictional time and the playing or staging time of the plays. The unity of time that we notice in a good number of Miller's plays is not due to his veneration of the classical models, but because of the requirement of the plots.

In *Bridge, Vichy, Price, Fall, Clock, Ceiling, Elegy, Love Story, Can't Remember, Clara,* and *Yankee* the plot time is exactly the same as the performance time. According to Frederick J. Hunter the limitation of plot time in a play delimits its scope: "The story behind a play is a large panorama from which the playwright selects the crucial events of the action, but when he is limited to an equal time there is almost no room for exposition together with action in the development of background" (195). But in Miller's plays, as we have already noticed, the scrupulous adherence to the playing time does not necessarily make the plot barren. It is likely that in the one act plays, *Vichy, Elegy, Love Story, Can't Remember*, and *Clara*, Miller was handicapped by the short length and plot time of the plays. But even in most of these plays, making use of retrospective technique and memory scenes, Miller has succeeded in delineating a proper picture of life and increase the magnitude of the plot.

Although *Mondays* is a one-act play, the plot time here is not confined to the playing time, neither does the play stick to the unity of time. The play not being confined to one or two characters, tells us about the joys and sorrows, hopes and expectations, and attitude towards life of a number of people. *Time,* too, not divided into acts and scenes may be considered a one-act play technically. But the play being a film-script, exploits the effects of camera shots to cover in the plot a number of years.

Bridge, Price, Fall, Clock and *Ceiling* are two-act plays. But the plot time in these plays do not exceed the playing time. We do not notice any jump in time from one act to the next in any of these plays. In *Price, Fall*, and *Ceiling* we can clearly understand the continuity of time from what happens at the end of Act One and beginning of Act Two. No break of time is indicated between the acts in *Bridge, Fall*, and *Clock*, and between the two scenes in *Yankee. Sons, Salesman* and *Mt. Morgan* deal with the most crucial last twenty-four hour periods of the protagonists' lives. In *Glass* to some extent, and in *Enemy* and *Crucible* to a very great extent the focus of attention being the protagonist as well as the contemporary society and the human nature in general, the plot time is not confined to twenty-four hours. In *Luck* since some time is required for the protagonist to have all the luck in his social and familial lives, the plot time is not limited to twenty-four hours. *Creation*, dealing with the creation of Adam and Eve, the beginning of human life in this world, and the relation between God and mankind, covers maximum time among all the plays under discussion. In the memory plays like, *Salesman, Mt. Morgan, Bridge, Fall* and *Clara* Miller, as has been shown already, by skilfully manipulating the action in a double sense of time gives us the intensity of the compact present time as well as the extensity of the past or retrospective time spread over a rather long period. The shifts in time from the present to past memory and back to the present are dealt in such a way that they take virtually no time at all. In all such cases time ceases to have any duration.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Miller does not seem to have made any attempt to explore the theme of time in his plays. In Tennessee Williams's play, *Sweet Bird of Youth*, which is the expanded form of his one-act play, *The Enemy: Time*, emphasis is on time as the destroyer of youth and beauty. In the play, handsome Chance Wayne's chances and good look wane with each passing year, whereas, the aging motion-picture star, Princes Kosmonopolis, makes a successful comeback with the enormous success of her last film. Through the princess's success Williams shows that art, which is not affected by time, can conquer time. In Shakespeare's Sonnets 1-126, where the word "time" has been used for more than seventy times, time is a major theme. In these sonnets Shakespeare personifies time, and views with pain and sorrow the ever-lasting and all-enduring time ravaging and corroding youth, beauty and everything else in this world. He talks about time as "never resting time" (No. 5), "Time's scythe" (No. 12), "wasteful Time" (No. 15), "bloody tyrant, Time" (No. 16), "Devouring Time", "swift-footed Time" (No. 19), "time's furrows" (No. 22), "sluttish time" (No. 55), "Time's injurious hand" (No. 63), "Time's fell hand" (No. 64), "[decaying] time" (No. 65),

"Time's thievish progress to eternity" (No. 78), "Chronicle of wasted time" (No. 106), "[time's] registers" (123), "Time's hate" (No. 124), and "Time's fickle glass" (No. 126). To Shakespeare, all these cruel and decaying manifestations of time may be conquered and defeated, and man may gain immortality by leaving behind his progeny, by the power of verse and by enduring love.

Shakespeare uses Time as the Chorus in *Winter's Tale*. Here, Time tells us about its own nature, which has no similarity with the way Shakespeare sees time in the Sonnets. In Act Four: Scene One the Chorus says, "I that please some, try all, both joy and terror / Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error, / To use my wings. Impute it not a crime / To me or my swift passage, that I slide / O'er sixteen years..." Time, here relates to not only the vicissitude of our life but also the jump in time (in the case of *Winter's Tale* over sixteen years), which is quite natural in fictional works. The fictional or plot time in Miller's plays, showing the passage of time from one scene or act to the next scene or act, with or without any break, has been discussed in detail with regard to the unity of time.

T. S. Eliot's view of time is quite unlike that of Shakespeare. In "East Coker" the opening and closing phrases, "In my beginning is my end" and "In my end is my beginning," do not imply that the past and the future are simultaneous. What they mean is that every moment is an end and a beginning, because on the one hand, the beginning points to the end ahead, and on the other hand, the end contains the beginning, the starting point. Although time has a beginning and an end, from the point of view of our temporal existence and the changes and transformations that take place in presence of time as a witness, time has an eternal dimension. The title of the poem was taken from a village in Somerset where Eliot's family lived for some two centuries, yet the imagery and symbols that we find in the poem concern no particular

place or time. At the beginning of the poem Eliot says, "In succession / Houses rise and fall, crumble, are extended, / Are removed, destroyed, restored, or in their place / Is an open field, a factory, or a by-pass." He continues:

> Old stone to new building, old timber to new fires,
> Old fires to ashes, and ashes to the earth
> Which is already flesh, fur and faeces,
> Bone of man and beast, cornstalk and leaf.

All these lines indicate the flux of life in this world, a cycle of growth, decay, and new growth. Nothing in this world endures time: everything flows in time and is either destroyed or transformed. We do not get here the rapacity of time as expressed in Shakespeare's sonnets.

In the following lines of "East Coker", "there is a time for building / And a time for living and for generation / and a time for the wind to break the loosened pane" (9-11), Eliot emphasizes not only the limited life for everything in this world but also the right or exact time for all actions and happenings. The right time for something to be done or to take place is emphasized in Miller's *Luck* as well. In the play, Falk considers David a lost soul because unlike other boys he never knew when to do what: "Other boys knew when it was time to play and time to go home, time for work and time for church" (499). J. B. wants David to learn about tractors, and tells him, "Now's the time, Dave. You're young, strong, you don't get tired, by the time you're thirty, you can have five kids and the world by the back of the neck" (512)! David tells Shory and J. B. that he has been turning his back for three years regarding Gus's fixing of Dan Dibble's Marmon for him. He says, "It's time somebody knew what I am" (529). According to Augie Belfast, as Patterson failed to train his son, Amos, at the right time, nothing can make up the deficiency in his training. Amos, too blames

his father for not training him properly at the proper time: "He wouldn't let me learn how to figure. There wasn't no time, he said, no time for nothin' but throwin' that ball.... I knew all the time I was doin' wrong.... Well, this is one time I know something. I ain't gonna touch a baseball as long as I live" (535).

Miller does not make any noticeable use of time as a theme in his plays, yet we find a great deal of social, historical, personal, psychological, technical, and artistic aspects of time in almost all his works. The word "time" has been used a good number of times in his plays, but without the epithets and connotations of Shakespeare's sonnets. It has been used mainly in social context because life represented in the plays of Miller from *Luck* to *Glass*, including *Creation*, which has a biblical setting, conforms to social time. At the opening of most acts and scenes of these plays, apart from the day, date, or year, the time of the day, whether morning, afternoon, evening, or late night are usually indicated. In the progress of the plot, too, the social or calendar time is often referred to and maintained. Miller specially underscores the social time in his plays because he examines and reveals the life of his characters in relation to society and family. If we take the example of *Luck*, we see that the action in the play begins in a cold evening of April. At the very beginning David tells Shory that he saw Hester in the morning. After her graduation in June, Hester is supposed to leave their town to teach in a school at Normal because the last night Hester's father planned it so to send her away from David. David, too, thinks that he should leave the town and go to Normal so that within the time he has from April to June, he could have a job and get established to marry Hester. Hester comes to see David at Shory's place and tells David she came to know from her mother that in the morning her father had decided to send her to Chicago. The next time Hester sees David, he is busy working on the Marmon in his shop and the time is about 4 a.m. When she returns

again the following morning at half-past-eleven, she finds David asleep. In Act Two we see that Hester and David have been happily married for three years. In the play there are also many other references to time as can be understood from the following examples. Patterson Beeves has received a telegram from Augie Belfast, a Detroit Tigers scout, that he would be in Burley on "July 16th" to see Amos Beeve's performance. Patterson has been waiting for this telegram for "twenty-two years" (522). David rang up "eleven times" to bring the scout (530). Amos has been pitching since he was "eight years old." Augie has been scouting for good baseball players "for a long time." He saw Amos playing "two years ago." He came to see him "last year, too." "Last year and the year before," Augie could not say yes or no. Amos loses his head "every time the bases get loaded" (532). In "three years" Augie has not noticed any improvement in Amos. He says, "In fact, this year he's worse in that respect than last year. Why? today I found the answer." Patterson has trained Amos in the cellar for "thirteen years" (533). At the beginning of Act Three Hester is found busy "trying to occupy time rather than accomplishing a task" (537). She does not like to be left alone "all the time" (538). "The first time" David was speaking of losses was "twenty minutes" after he had seen his baby (542).

In *Sons*, the beginning of action is "early Sunday morning." Larry was born "in August and he would be "twenty-seven this month." He was reported missing on "November twenty-fifth." "November twenty-fifth" was a favourable day for Larry (60). Ann came by "the one o'clock train last night" (62). Chris tells his father about Larry that "nobody comes back after three years" (67). Chris has not seen Ann since he went to war before "five years." He has thought about his relationship with Ann for "three years" (68). Ann almost got married "two years ago" (84). Ann suggests eating "at the shore tonight" (76). After "a year, eighteen months" Steve will be a free man

(97). George tells Ann that the train leaves at "eight-thirty" (105). When Act Three begins at "two o'clock in the morning" Kate is still waiting for Chris to return home (117). Similarly in all other plays of Miller we are constantly reminded of social time. While discussing the plays with regard to the unity of time, social time has been referred to to ascertain their fictional time.

The retrospective bent of a number of Miller's characters in their conscious or subconscious minds, as we find in the plays like *Salesman, Fall, Price, Clock, Clara* and *Mt. Morgan*, is a typical feature in his plays. He makes his characters move continually and unobtrusively backward and forward along the continuum of social time. As in real life, most of them are mainly preoccupied with their present state of affairs. Almost all the plays show how the protagonists and a number of other characters try to overcome their present problems and difficulties with varying success. It is as much true for David's premonitions of some impending disaster, as it is true for Chris's and Keller's concern for their social responsibilities; the relationship between Biff and Willy, Gellburg and Sylvia; the social injustice on Dr. Stockmann and John Proctor; the individual choice of Proctor, Von Berg and Sigmund; the problem of memory with Kroll and Leonara, and the relationship between God and his created human beings, Adam and Eve.

As the present is always ahead of the past, the imprints of time play a very important role in Miller's plots and characters. This time, which is purely experiential time, relates to both the characters and the writer. In *Sons* almost all the characters talk about the past. In reality the entire action of the play is controlled by the past happenings. The same is true for *Enemy* and *Price*. Miller observes in *Introduction* that Ibsen presents barely and unadorned what he believes "is the biggest single dramatic problem, namely, how to dramatize what has gone before." He feels that

dramatic characters, and the drama itself can never hope to attain a maximum degree of consciousness unless they contain a viable unveiling of the contrast between past and present, and an awareness of the process by which the present has become what it is. He takes it "as a truth that the end of drama is the creation of a higher consciousness and not merely a subjective attack upon the audience's nerves and feelings. What is precious in Ibsen's method according to him is "its insistence upon valid causation, and this cannot be dismissed as a wooded notion" (21). In Ibsen's technique, as it is in the case of Miller in his plays *Sons, Enemy* and *Price,* the progression of the events and time in the present is linear and chronological with constant references to the past. But the past is not shown in flashbacks or in memory; we do not move to the past; we simply get to know what happened, which shapes the present.

If we study *Crucible,* we notice that apart from being a story of witch-hunt, it is very much a story of personal revenge which has its root in the past. Parris, the Putnams, Abigail and John Proctor have grievances of their own that contribute to the crisis in the play. The entire story of *Bridge* is unfolded exactly as Alfieri reveals it from his memory. In *Clock* there are constant flashbacks of past time. References to the past are in plenty in *Vichy, Creation, Ceiling, Time, Love Story, Can't Remember, Clara, Mt. Morgan, Yankee* and *Glass* as well.

The memory scenes in plays like *Salesman, Fall, Love Story, Clara* and *Mt. Morgan*, which concern the individual characters only, show the past and the present existing simultaneously. These memory experiences, which have certain durations, in reality take place within time that has no duration. In *Salesman*, talking to himself in the kitchen Willy goes back to a time when Biff and Happy were young boys in high school. Within this memory scene, just after he talks to Linda about his bad business

we see him with a woman in a Boston hotel room, which is farther back in time. After the woman leaves, there is the continuation of Willy's earlier conversation with Linda. Next, we see Bernard coming to them and looking for Biff to remind him of his studies, which is definitely a few days ahead of the time we first saw him with Biff, Happy and Willy. All these happen within a single memory sequence that should cover quite a bit of time. But in reality they have not taken any time at all. Such fluidity and negation of time have been possible because of Miller's skilful manipulation of the dramatic action in a double sense of time. This particular treatment of time may also be found in all other plays of Miller involving memory scenes.

In Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth*, unlike any play of Miller, the past is not recalled or remembered. The characters do not bring the past to the present, instead the past itself comes to life in the present. In *Our Town*, Emily, who dies in childbirth, is granted her wish to visit the living and relive her twelfth birthday. In the play local events are placed in universal perspective, and the individuals are seen in relation to their town, nation, ancestors, and to geologic time. In *The Skin of Our Teeth* man's life is woven into the whole fabric of time in the universe. In the play through the ordeals of Antrobus we see man's struggle for survival through three major catastrophes – the ice age, the flood, and war.

The element of the past in *Mondays* is an interesting case. Although the title of the play is *Memory of Two Mondays*, here there are no flashbacks and no memory scenes. The play is unlike *Salesman* or any other memory plays. Here the past does not come to mind as it does in the case of Willy Loman. Bert, the protagonist of the play, does not recollect the memories of the two Mondays in his mind. We see him clearly in the progression of the time in the plot. The past is at times casually referred to as it

is in the cases of Gus's weekend at Staten Island (338), Jim's age with regard to his experience with the Indians (344), the mechanic's truck (351), the relationship between Larry and Patricia (367-368), etc. It is only Gus's life in the last hours, which is described vividly by Jim. But in the action of the play there are no flashbacks and neither is there any mobile concurrency of the past and the present. The play is in reality the memory of two Mondays as remembered and reproduced by Miller himself. The intrusive author is undoubtedly at his best in this play.

Unlike Shaw's *Saint Joan* and J. B. Priestley's *Time and the Conway*, future does not come to the present in Miller's plays. In the *Epilogue* of Shaw's play we see the Gentleman, who belongs to a time four centuries ahead, announcing Joan's canonization. In Priestley's play, Kay, an aspiring novelist, on her twenty-first birthday in 1937 has a vision of the future life of her family twenty years ahead of her present time. When Kay reverts to her present and her mother prophesies a warm and happy future for her children, all save Kay are unaware of the disasters in store for them. In almost all plays of Miller future comes in the sense that life moves forward and looks ahead. David in *Luck* is apprehensive of his future good fortune; in *Sons*, Chris is angry with his parents because they stand as barriers to his plan for his future life with Ann; Willy kills himself in *Salesman* to ensure a successful future for Biff; Dr. Stockmann in *Enemy* and Sigmund in *Ceiling* decide to stay back in their countries and not to leave for America so that they can lead their future lives according to their plan and will; In *Crucible*, Proctor's concern for his future name makes him go to the gallows and embrace death; Bert in *Mondays*, Marco and Rodolpho in *Bridge*, and Quentin in *Fall* are all concerned for their future lives. In *Yankee* there are hints and promises of a happier future without the problems of the past and the present, whereas, in *Mt. Morgan* there are no such hints or promises for Lyman.

A play is usually different from a novel with regard to the exposition of time, whether past, present or future. In the novels the author or a narrator comments on the plot or the characters to show what happens in the perspective of time, but in a play in most cases no such device is necessary. Although in the classical Greek and Roman plays we find the chorus commenting on the action of the play and in some later and modern plays too, the use of chorus in some form may be noticed, all this is quite different from the usual practices in the plays. Whatever may be the setting of a play, the audience sees the entire action in terms of his immediate experience in the present. As the plot moves ahead in time, the fictional present we are exposed to at the beginning also moves ahead encompassing the entire action within the range of specious present. In Miller's plays the duration of the specious present varies from the very limited fictional time represented in the plays like *Vichy, Price, Ceiling, Elegy, Love Story, Can't Remember, Clara* and *Yankee*, which maintain the unity of time in the rigid sense of the term, to *Luck, Enemy, Mondays, Creation, Time* and *Glass*, which cover a wide range of time. In the plays that maintain the unity of time the entire action stretches over a short period in the fictional present. But in the cases of the plays which cover a longer time, although the present becomes the past and the future the present, everything is viewed in context of the fictional present.

Since a playwright's personal experiences, insight and view of life mould his plots and shape his characters, Miller's personal life, as we have seen in Chapter Three, is a very important factor to understand the element of autobiographical time in his plays. No one who has some knowledge of contemporary history and Miller's life will fail to notice the intrusive author in most of the plays of Miller. The historical references to time that we get in Miller's plays are solely dependent on the factual accuracy adhered to by the playwright. Historical time is objective time and stands on

its own, whereas autobiographical time, which is experiential, fuses with the fictional time of the characters. In the former case history controls the fictional present, but in the latter case as the past of the writer and the present of his characters are inseparable, there is no such control. The action in *Creation*, which has been discussed in the context of historical time, takes us back to Biblical time; *Crucible* to the end of seventeenth century Salem, Massachusetts. The references to the rise of Hitler in *Mondays* and *Glass*; German-occupied Vichy and Paris in *Vichy* and *Time*, respectively; the Nazi atrocities in *Time* and *Fall*; the Stock Market Crash, the Great Depression, Herbert Hoover, and Roosevelt in *Clock*; to mention a few, take us back to the very obvious historical times. Autobiographical time, on the other hand, has no such overt marker or indicator.

Without going into a controversy as to what extent autobiographical references or allusions affect the merit of a play, we can safely say that extra-dramatic knowledge is helpful to find out the intrusive author, who represents autobiographical time, in the works concerned. Miller says in *Timebends* that his uncles, Manny Newman and Lee Balsam were both salesmen, owned tools, and did their plumbing and roofing themselves. Manny had two sons, Buddy and Abby, and "had managed to make his boys into a pair of strong, self-assured young men, musketeers bound to one another's honor and proud of their family. Neither was patient enough or perhaps capable enough to sit alone and study, and they both missed going to college" (127). Earlier in the same work he mentions – Manny "was a competitor, at all times, in all things, at every moment. My brother and I he saw running neck to neck with his two sons in some race that never stopped in his mind" (122). This sense of competition parallels the sense of competition between Willy and his two sons with Charley and his son. Moss observes the similarities between Miller and Biff: "Young Arthur was as intense

an athlete and as week a scholar as Biff Loman. Decidedly non-intellectual, he spent his boyhood playing football and baseball, skating, swimming, dating, failing algebra three times, reading adventure stories, and just plain fooling around" (Moss 3). But these similarities and some other things, which we may find common between Miller and Biff, do not in any way indicate that Miller modelled Biff on himself. Biff and happy seem to have more in common with Buddy and Abby than Miller and his brother, Kermit. Willy Loman complains that his son, not settled on any particular job even at the age of thirty-four, is yet to make thirty-five dollars a week. Biff tells Happy how he spent six or seven years after high school taking odd jobs in different places. By the mid 1940s Miller, too, had taken different odd jobs. He worked as a delivery boy for a bakery, as a dishwasher and waiter, as a singer, as warehouse clerk, editor of a university newspaper, mouse attendant in a laboratory, truck driver, tanker seaman, factory labourer, and ship-fitter's helper. Miller's first experience with construction was when he improvised a porch with his uncle Lee Balsam. He was so thrilled about it that he could not sleep for anticipation of the next day. He felt exactly the same when in one cold April in 1948 he built a ten-by-twelve studio near his first house in Connecticut where he intended to write a play about a salesman (*Timebends* 121). Willy Loman, like Miller, loved gardening, carpentry, and athletics. According to Miller's sister Joan, Miller was "very handy with tools. He built the back porch on our house, and some of the roses he planted in the backyard are still blooming" (Moss 3). All this shows that the characters in *Salesman* are not modelled strictly on Miller himself or on any particular person or persons he came to know of. Though we may find autobiographical elements in some characters, the analogy between them and the writer and his family would not hold for long. Miller gives some traits of his self or

the people he got to know to some characters, which we can notice only if we have adequate information about the life of the writer. Miller mentions in *Timebends*:

> Much more than a single model would ultimately go into Willy Loman. Indeed, since I saw so little of Manny he was already, in my youth, as much myth as fact. But there are images of such defined power and density that without offering concrete information to the writer they are nevertheless the sources of his art. (126)

Miller says that he smiled when he wrote the line in the spring of 1948 – "I still feel – kind of temporary about myself." – the words of Willy Loman to his brother. At that time it had not yet occurred to him that it summed up his condition then and throughout his life (*Timebends* 69). All this clearly indicates that autobiographical time, which is not as fixed and specific as historical time, unlike historical time may not restrict the time of action to a particular person or incident in real life.

In the case of autobiography merging with history as we find in *Crucible*, *Fall*, *Vichy*, *Time*, and other plays, it is mainly the historical time which attracts our attention. Miller's words on *Vichy* are as follows:

> The root of *Vichy* came from my friend and former psychoanalyst Dr. Rudolph Loewenstein, who had hidden out in Vichy, France, during the war, before the Nazis openly occupied the country. But all I recalled was the bare outline of his story: a Jewish analyst picked up with false papers and saved by a man he had never seen before. This unknown man, a gentile, had substituted himself in a line of suspects waiting to have their papers and penises inspected in a hunt for Jews posing as Frenchmen.
>
> There was a second root in an old friend of Inge's, Prince Josef von Schwarzenberg, a senior surviving member of a very ancient Austrian noble line, who had declined to cooperate with the Nazis and had suffered for it during the war. He was a source for Von Berg, the prince in my play who steps in to take the place of a condemned analyst. It was not altogether a

> romantic idealization, for in some absurd yet logical way Josef von Schwarzenberg embodied an elemental resistance to the fascist spirit, which is fundamentally one of enforced vulgarity in all its forms. (*Timebends* 538)

It is important to note that in Miller's plays historical and autobiographical references are not made to confine and limit our interest and attention to the past time neglecting the human characteristics and values which transcend the limits of a particular time period. Talking about *Mondays* in *Introduction* Miller says, "Nothing in this book was written with greater love, and for myself I love nothing printed here better than this play" (49). The playwright's love for the play may be attributed to the character of Bert, who is clearly modelled on himself, as well as to his purpose of writing the play. He says, "I wrote it, I suppose, in part out of a desire to relive a sort of reality where necessity was open and bare; I hoped to define for myself the value of hope, why it must arise, as well as the heroism of those who know, at least how to endure its absence" (49).

Although Miller does not deny the role of the intrusive self in his works, that he is not willing to sacrifice his art to his beliefs and opinions becomes quite evident from his following words said regarding a writer's political conviction: "Doubtless an author's politics must be one element, and even an important one, in the germination of his art, but if it is art he has created it must by definition bend itself to his observation rather than to his opinions or even his hopes" (*Introduction* 36). Regarding *Salesman* he says, "There was no attempt to bring down the American edifice or to raise it higher, to show up family relations or to cure the ills afflicting that inevitable institution" (*Introduction* 29). He did not write *Sons* to condemn or uphold any particular social system; *Crucible* to revive in the audience the memory of senseless and inhuman Salem witch-hunt; *Vichy*, *Time* and *Glass* to speak of Nazi

atrocities and arouse sympathy for the Jews, or *Ceiling* to show how rotten everything is in a totalitarian state. In a press interview at the premiere of *Sons* in 1947, Miller expressed quite clearly his theory on playwriting:

> In all my plays and books I try to take settings and dramatic situations from life which involve real questions of right and wrong. Then I set out, rather implacably and in the most realistic situations I can find, the moral dilemma and try to point a real, though hard, path out. I don't see how you can write anything decent without using the question of right and wrong as the basis. (*Essays* xvii)

Leonard Moss rightly observes:

> Miller is not primarily interested in the reactions of specific Jews to anti-Semitism in France during World War II, just as in *Focus* and in *The Crucible* he does more than retell stories about the persecution of Jews in New York City and witches in Salem. Historical facts establish a suitable context for the demonstration of a point that could have been made as well, the author believes with evidence drawn from Harlem or Vietnam" (74).

Miller attended the Nazi murder trials in 1963. He said that he had never seen a real live Nazi, and so he was curious to see such a trial. Barbara Gelb observes: "His immediate reaction to the trials was to write an impassioned article attempting, in his words, to 'reinstate an understanding in the public mind of the dynamics of Fascism.' His thoughts then turned to writing the play, *Incident at Vichy*, which dramatizes the same subject.."(78). Gelb adds that although the episode on which the play is based had been in Miller's mind since 1950, the trials sharpened his viewpoint about guilt and responsibility – the leitmotif of the play – and Miller was able to turn out the final draft in just three weeks. Miller said that he "suddenly saw the play whole," and that "it happens like that sometimes" (78). Miller's comments on the play are as follows:

> The occasion of the play is the occupation of France, but it's about today. It concerns the question of insight – of seeing in oneself the capacity for collaboration with the evil one condemns. It's a question that exists for all of us – what, for example, is the responsibility of each of us for allowing the slums of Harlem to exist? Some perfectly exemplary citizens, considerate of their families and friends, contributing to charities and so forth, are indirectly profiting from conditions like that. (B. Gelb 80)

Even the characters in the play are not limited to the particular time of action. Miller said that all these characters are flesh-and-blood people, each with a subterranean life of his own, "but they are also symbolic in the bearing they have on ourselves and our time."

If we analyze the background of the composition of a later play like *Love Story*, we find that here too, the personal and the topical give place to the general and the universal. In the past, Miller had found himself involved in a local criminal case. He intervened to secure the release of a man falsely accused of murder. In doing so he exposed the public officials who had indicted him. Christopher Bigsby observes in "Afterword" to *Two-way Mirror* that this particular experience lies behind the play. He adds:

> The fascination, however, lies in the extent to which what, earlier in his career, might have been recast as social drama is now forged into a metaphysical work of great subtlety. And what appears as melodrama is in effect a highly self-conscious study of a dislocating sensibility, a hunt for meaning and security conducted on the very borders of madness by those who can scarcely understand their own motives let alone press the question of truth and reality to the point at which it may destroy them both. (68-69)

Although Miller acknowledges the role of a writer's experience in his work, according to Miller what a reader should be interested in is the work and not the writer

behind the work. In an interview with the playwright, Robert A. Martin asks him the following question regarding the very obvious autobiographical reflections in *Fall*:

> Can you actually separate the man who writes a play about Salem in 1692 (which happens to have many parallels with McCarthyism) from the man who writes a play about two marriages that failed and a congressional hearing? I think the autobiographical intrudes in *After the Fall* more directly than in any of your plays, and consequently leads critics to an autobiographical conclusion on the internal evidence of the play itself." (*Interview* 179)

In reply Miller gives the examples of the novelists like Thackery, Meredith, Jane Austen and Dickens, whose works are being read by the people of later generations in complete ignorance of their lives and ages. He says that he is not reading Dickens, if he reads him, because Dickens was obsessed with prison. He says, "I'm reading him because the work itself has some truth in it – for me some generalized truth. Now if he had never been anywhere near a prison, would that make it any less or more valuable as a work of art? It wouldn't." He rightly adds: "It's only, it seems to me, an easy way out for people who will not or cannot examine the work at hand. So what they do is examine the author" (180). It is quite obvious that Miller is against giving autobiographical elements the upper hand in his plays. But the fact remains, the writer's experiences and attitude towards life have a great deal to do with what he creates. So, in the case of an autobiographical work, it is quite natural for a curious reader to try to find out the links between the writer's life and the work.

The difference between an ordinary writer and a great writer lies in this that the latter transcends the personal and the topical and appeals to what is general, universal and timeless. The views and practices of the time, however, may be reflected in the works of both ordinary and great writers. All playwrights, whatever might be the

quality of their works, address the contemporary audience. It is as much true of the major and minor writers of the ancient Greek and Roman days and the Elizabethan period of England as it is true of the writers of the later age like the Restoration and the early and modern American writers. A playwright does not write consciously keeping in mind a future audience. But there are certain things enduring in the works of a great playwright as observed by Dr. Johnson in his critique of Shakespeare, *Preface to Shakespeare*. It is inherent in a great playwright to be topical and universal at the same time.

Fully aware of what is true in life, Miller chose his dramatic themes very carefully. He says in "Preface to an Adaptation of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*" that he decided to work on the play because he had a private wish to demonstrate that "Ibsen is really pertinent today," and he is not old fashioned. He continues:

> And I believed this play could be alive for us because its central theme is, in my opinion, the central theme of our social life today. Simply, it is the question of whether the democratic guarantees protecting political minorities ought to be set aside in time of crisis. More personally, it is the question of whether one's vision of the truth ought to be a source of guilt at a time when the mass of men condemn it as a dangerous and a devilish lie. It is an enduring theme – in fact, possibly the most enduring of all Ibsen's themes – because there never was, nor will there ever be, an organized society able to countenance calmly the individual who insists that he is right while vast majority is absolutely wrong. (17-18)

Dr. Stockmann's discovery hurts the vested interest, and as he clings to the truth, they manage to ostracize him from the society. Miller says that "those who attempt to warp the truth for ulterior purposes must inevitably become warped and corrupted." The timeless relevance and appeal of the play can be understood from his words, "This theme is valid today, just as it will always be" (*Preface* 9). The last sentence makes it

clear that Miller's use of the word, "today", does not mean that he considered Ibsen's theme relevant only to his time.

Playwrights write their plays with the contemporary audience in their mind. Miller's plays, which have temporal settings, are no exceptions. In plays like *Luck, Sons, Salesman, Price, Ceiling, Clock* and *Yankee* the setting being topical is contemporary with the writer and the audience. *Creation* has Biblical setting, whereas *Crucible, Vichy, Time* and *Glass* are connected to past history. Miller's following words in "Introduction to *A View from the Bridge*" prove that he is quite conscious that the contemporary or topical element in the plot is not the sole criterion for its appeal to the audience:

> A PLAY is rarely given a second chance. Unlike a novel, which may be received initially with less than enthusiasm, and then as time goes by hailed by a large public, a play usually makes its mark right off or it vanishes into oblivion. Two of mine, *The Crucible* and *A View from the Bridge* failed to find large audiences with their original Broadway productions. Both were regarded as rather cold plays at first. However, after a couple of years *The Crucible* was produced again Off-Broadway and ran two years, without a line being changed from the original. With McCarthy dead it was once again possible to feel warmly toward the play, whereas during his time of power it was suspected of being a special plea, a concoction and unaesthetic. On its second time around its humanity emerged and it could be enjoyed as drama. (*Essays* 218)

In his article, "Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*: Background and Sources," Robert A. Martin notes that Miller has said that he could not have written *The Crucible* at any other time. The statement obviously reflects the impact of the McCarthy era on Miller. Martin justly adds: "If it is true, however, that a play cannot endure unless it speaks to its own time, it is also true that a play cannot endure unless it speaks to new audiences in new times" (93). As it is true for all great plays, it is also true for *Crucible*. The

allegorical or historical appeal of the play is bound to depend on the extent the audience is aware of it. The appeal of the play today according to Miller does not lie on its political allegory but on what he believes to be its "real and inner theme." Miller observes that *Crucible* has been produced more often than any of his other plays and more successfully more the time elapses from the headline "McCarthyism" which it was supposed to be. He says:

> I believe that on the night of its opening, a time when the gale from the Right was blowing at its fullest fury, it inspired a part of its audience with an unsettling fear and partisanship which deflected the sight of the real and inner theme, which, again, was the handing over of conscience to another, be it woman, the state, or a terror, and the realization that with conscience goes the person, the soul immortal, and the 'name.' (*Introduction* 47)

Miller's *Salesman* has appealed to the audience from the very first day of its production till today. We can find in the play appropriate concrete symbols not only for the social realities of Miller's time and place but also for the tension in an average American family. Willy's problems, an individual pitted against himself, his own conscience, his family, and the society, are also the problems of any conscious individual of our time. His ramblings over his past and present life, opens before us the internal drama of a man's journey to self-knowledge. Lois Gordon justifiably observes: "*Death of a Salesman* is a drama of a man's journey into himself; it is a man's emotional recapitulation of the experiences that have shaped him and his values, a man's confession of the dream to which he has been committed" (105). But Gordon's comment, that the play is "also a man's attempt to confront, in what is ultimately a metaphysical sense, the meaning of his life and the nature of the universe" (105), does not conform to the character of Willy because Willy's problems, which are

the problems of an ordinary man, are down-to-earth. The meaning of life and the nature of the universe do not bother Willy; what torments him is his sense of failure in his familial and professional lives.

The time of action of a play may or may not correspond to its date of production. In some cases the playwright deals with the contemporary life and so the audience of this time may see or hear the familiar things according to the spirit of the time. In the case of some past or historical time, a strong effort of the imagination may be needed of the audience if he is to enter the spirit of the distant times. The time of composition of a play and the period or the stage of time depicted in the play remain unchanged, whereas, the time of the readers or the audience goes on changing. What is contemporary once becomes past and remote at later times. Hence, the reactions of the audience to the topical events and ideas treated in the play are bound to vary with time. For example, the Restoration Comedies, which reflect the social world of the court wits of the reign of Charles II, is not likely to have the same kind of appeal today as they had in those days. Reactions to historical events in any kind of literary works, too, vary with the ages. Shakespeare's Historical Plays, *Richard II, Henry IV: Part I, Henry IV: Part II, Henry V, Henry VI: Part I, Henry VI: Part II, Henry VI: Part III, Richard III,* and *Henry VIII*, which deal with such political crises as rebellion, usurpation, conspiracy, and war, had special kind of relevance to the contemporary audience. Collectively, these plays demonstrate unrest and disorder resolved to stability and order. The ordinary modern audience cannot come to such plays with the same mental attitude and atmospheric approach of an Elizabethan audience. The divine rights of the medieval kings, as exemplified in Richard II; Richard II's usurpation by Bolingbroke, who later on became Henry IV; the internecine war that followed after Henry IV's reign; the killing of Richard III; the ascension of the first

Tudor King, Henry VII, to the throne of England, and the stability and order shown under the ideal king Henry V do not mean much to us today. A. E. Mendilow observes rightly: "Shakespeare's audiences projected into the historical plays a fear of internecine warfare that had been strong since the Wars of the Roses and was accentuated by contemporary dangers and the approaching end of a dynasty" (87). Similarly, Miller's plays like, *Crucible, Fall, Vichy, Ceiling, Time*, and *Glass*, which have historical and political references cannot have the same kind of appeal to the contemporary and modern audience. The contemporary audience of *Crucible* saw in the play indirectly the anti-Communist hysteria prevalent during their time. The contemporary audience of *Fall* and *Vichy* were closer in time to the Holocaust than we are today. The later the reader or the audience, the more knowledge of history is required of him to do justice to the reactions of the characters and the significance of the theme in a play. Since the historical references in a play are usually overt, the readers must make conscious efforts to be familiar with them. On the other hand, the autobiographical references, which are usually covert or indirect, require no such effort.

Whatever the settings of Miller's plays may be with regard to time, most of them deal in some form or other with the struggle between good and evil, the sense of right and wrong, and the realities of life. *Creation* does not intend to simply provide a sex-centred burlesque of the *Book of Genesis*. Inspite of Miller's indifference to and rejection of Judaism and all other religions (*Timebends* 70-71) and his irreverent and in some places blasphemous treatment of the *Book of Genesis*, *Creation* does not foresee a Godless world after the fall with no bond of love between God and mankind and no discrimination between good and evil. Lucifer gives God the news that Eve has conceived, and considers it their combined victory: "It was supposed to happen

through me. Of course, I am perfectly aware that I merely acted as Your agent" (398). Later on he suggests to God that with himself, that is evil, beside Him there will be no war in the world and there will be only peace. God tells Lucifer quite bluntly that the problem is, He does not love him. He also declares that He is perfect and He is His "feelings." The following argument confirms God's uncompromising attitude:

> Lucifer: You don't think that's a limitation?
>
> God: It certainly is. I am perfectly limited. Where evil begins, I end. When good loves evil, it is no longer good, and if God could love the devil, then God has died. And that is precisely you're after, isn't it!
>
> Lucifer: I am after peace! Between us and mankind!
>
> God: Then let there be war! Better ten thousand years of war than I should rule one instant with the help of unrighteousness! (402)

Failing to convince God to accept him as partner, Lucifer visits Adam and tells him that there are two gods, God in heaven and god on earth, and that Lucifer himself is the second god. In reality Lucifer wants a Godless, lawless world where there will be no sense of sin and guilt. Nowhere is it better demonstrated than in the scene where he invites Eve, Cain, Abel and Adam to join him in a dance. What Lucifer succeeds in making them do is totally obscene and is anything but Biblical. Eve wants love to take place of hatred. She invites Abel and Cain to love her and Lucifer encourages them. When God appears, Lucifer considers it his victory in exposing to Him man's true nature, and so he finds no justification for God's quarrel and disagreement with him. Although God is angry, He does not make any reply to what Lucifer tells him. On the other hand He readily accepts the offerings of Cain and Abel.

After the slaying of Abel by Cain, Eve cannot get the answer how she can go on leading a normal life with Cain living close to her. She wants Cain to repent. All these are of no concern to Lucifer. Adam and Eve are now fully convinced that Lucifer does not love them, and so they turn to God with the cry "Father, save us." Cain, too, though not quite repentant, does not submit to Lucifer's control. On the other hand, as we see earlier in the play, although God ousts His favourite creation from paradise for disobedience, He is not indifferent to their troubles and pains. Left in the open, both Adam and Eve suffer the onslaught of the inclement harsh weather. They quarrel with each other and want to get rid of or destroy the living thing in Eve's womb, but once they know that it would be a man Adam is all service to Eve and there is complete reconciliation between the two. They both think of a name for the newcomer and marvel at their same thoughts. They praise and thank God, and immediately the grass starts growing and the troublesome wind stops blowing. When the throes of childbirth reaches the climax, Eve becomes desperate to be relieved of the agony and calls both God and Lucifer for help. She begs Lucifer to still her and take the child out of her. She blames God for her pain and says: "God, if this is Thy pleasure, then I owe Thee nothing anymore.."(417). Yet, God comes with Azrael and Chemuel and at His order Chemuel delivers Eve of a youth of sixteen. As she sees him and feels her flat belly, she prostrates before God and feels guilty for doubting His goodness.

Despite Lucifer's success in leading men to the paths of sin and persuading them to forget God for some time, God has confidence in the ultimate goodness of man. God tells Lucifer that he will never be God not because He forbids it, "but because they will never – at least not for long believe it." He explains why He cannot be wrong – "For I made them not out of dust alone, but dust and love; and by dust

alone they will not, cannot long be governed" (444). The same confidence of God towards his favourite creation is revealed when He tells Azrael that it makes him feel marvelous when they are good. Azrael questions how often they are good. God replies – "I know, but when they praise my name and all that. There's nothing like it. When they send up those hallelujas from Notre Dame –." Azrael exclaims, "Notre Dame!" and Raphael adds, "Lord, Notre Dame isn't for six thousand years." God says that He is aware of it, but He's looking forward (395-396). Miller thus comes out of the Biblical time to the historical time of the future to show the mutual love between God and His created human beings.

Although Miller is not pessimistic in his plays, he has shown in a number of plays to what extent evil is ingrained in human nature and how human beings in all ages have either tried to justify or shirk its consequences. It is quite ironical to the believers that Miller makes God to some extent responsible for the murderous tendency of His most beloved creation, mankind. In the introduction to *Collected Plays*, Vol. II Miller says that in *Creation* "the dilemma for God Himself is his inability to determine his own responsibility for the indifference to murder in the minds of his most gratifyingly successful creatures" (2).

Miller says with reference to *Crucible* that some critics have taken exceptions to the unrelieved badness of the prosecution. He justifies his position saying:

> I understand how this is possible, and I plead no mitigation, but I was up against historical facts which were immutable. I do not think that either the record itself or the numerous commentaries upon it reveal any mitigation of the unrelieved, straightforward, and absolute dedication to evil displayed by the judges of these trials and the prosecutors. After days of study it became quite incredible how perfect they were in this respect. (*Introduction* 42-43)

Miller mentions in the same piece of writing, how Rebecca Nurse, a pious and universally respected woman of age, was taken forcibly from her sickbed and ferociously cross-examined. The members of the Putnam family conferred with Abigail and other girls in private with cool and calculated steps and told them whom to accuse next. He understands the objections to such absolute evil in men because "we are committed, after all, to the belief that it does not and cannot exist" (43). According to him his own and the critics' unbelief in this depth of evil is concomitant with their unbelief in good, too. He sought to make Danforth, who was somewhat put off by Mary Warren's turnabout at the height of trials, perceptible as a human being:

> In my play, Danforth seems about to conceive the truth, and surely there is a disposition in him at least to listen to arguments that go counter to the line of prosecution. There is no such swerving in the record, and I think now, almost four years after the writing of it, that I was wrong in mitigating the evil of this man and the judges he represents.... I believe now, as I did not conceive then, that there are people dedicated to evil in the world; that without their perverse example we should not know the good. (43)

Miller feels that evil in human beings "is not a mistake but a fact in itself" (43-44). In *Vichy* Leduc tells Von Berg that "Jew is only the name we give to that stranger, that agony we cannot feel, that death we look at like a cold abstraction" (288). To Miller, the Jew here is a symbol of the victim who is hated, persecuted and in many cases annihilated. Leduc's words, "each man has his Jew; it is the other. And the Jews have their Jews," indicate that the tendency to hate others and remain indifferent to other's sufferings is common to all human beings. Although Miller does not deny that given infinite wisdom and patience and knowledge any human being can be saved from himself, he says:

> I believe merely that, from whatever cause, a dedication to evil, not mistaking it for good, but knowing it as evil and loving it as evil, is possible in human beings who appear agreeable and normal. I think now that one of the hidden weaknesses of our whole approach to dramatic psychology is our inability to face this fact – to conceive, in effect, of Iago. (*Introduction* 44)

Unlike Miller, Thornton Wilder, for example, sees mankind as essentially good, and has faith in the time-honoured values. Yet, Wilder, too, is aware of man's capacity for evil. In *The Skin of Our Teeth*, George Antrobus begets Henry, an evil aggressor, who is the antithesis of his father.

Explaining in "Foreword to *After the Fall*" what *Fall* is about Miller says that the play looks at man and human nature as the only source of violence which has come closer and closer to destroying the race. He continues:

> It is a view which does not look toward social or political ideas as the creators of violence, but into the nature of human being himself. It should be clear now that no people or political system has a monopoly of violence. It is also clear that the one common denominator in all violent acts is the human being. (25)

Miller argues that the very consciousness of man of himself leads him toward violence. He supports his argument by referring to the story of the murder of Abel in the *Bible*. He believes that in Eden there was peace because man had no consciousness of himself nor any knowledge of sex or his separateness from plants or other animals. Although man is no longer innocent in the postlapsarian period, he can become "himself" by becoming aware of his sinfulness. In reality a conscious human being "is" what he is ashamed of.

The answer to human being's love for evil and the unmitigated cruelties and atrocities by the human beings to their fellow human beings as revealed in some of

Miller's plays can be found in *Fall*. Tormented and hounded by his failings and failures in both domestic and public lives, Quentin, the protagonist of the play, is apprehensive of committing himself to another marital relationship. Miller points out Quentin's dilemma in "Foreword to *After the Fall*: "He is faced, in short, with what Eve brought to Adam – the terrifying fact of choice. And to choose, one must know oneself, but no man knows himself who cannot face the murder in him, the sly everlasting complicity with the forces of destruction" (256). The sight of the German torture tower in the present makes Quentin feel sceptical about the innocence of human nature, which makes his mental condition still worse. He visualizes normal people building the torture chambers with perfect ease, quite complacent of their safety with no concern for the people who would suffer there, which he finds difficult to accept: "good fathers, devoted sons, grateful that someone else will die, not they, and how can one understand that if one is innocent" (59)? As in the present, in the past too, Quentin felt the fright and agony by thinking that the people who had built the torture chambers and indulged in extreme brutalities were also human beings and believers. Holga tried to alleviate his suffering saying, "no one they didn't kill can be innocent again" (21). Her words indicate that the very understanding and knowledge of good and evil strips us of our innocence and makes us incapable of going back to our former self.

Quentin, like Christ, is aware of the shortcomings of mankind, but unlike Christ, burdened with his own sense of guilt, he has the limitations of an average human being. He has two options – either to brood over his past actions and remain where he is or to go ahead within the limitations of life without any external help. Holga tells him that it is a mistake to look for hope outside oneself. She says that although at the end of the war she lost her hold on life, she finally got the strength to

live by overcoming her despair and accepting the reality. She tells him her recurring dreams about having an idiot child who she knew represented her life, but she was repulsed by it and ran away from it. The child always crept into her lap again and clutched at her clothes, and she finally brought herself to own the horrible child and kiss it. She tells him the moral of the dream: "I think one must finally take one's life in one's arms, Quentin" (139). The answer that Quentin eventually discovers is that howsoever repulsive and dreadful life may appear after the fall, i.e. after the loss of innocence, it is necessary to know oneself, understand the nature of mankind and accept the realities of life in order to live in this world.

It is Miller's belief that although man is no longer innocent he has the freedom to choose and decide for himself. If we take the example of Joe Keller in *Sons* we see that he betrays his friend and fellow human beings for his personal gains. Chris, stunned by the discovery of his father's guilt and complicity in the death of the pilots is so shocked by his degradation that he just cannot consider his father a human being. He finds it impossible to accept Keller's explanation that he did everything for him and the family. The outburst of Chris's anger and disgust are manifested in the tirade that follows:

> What the hell do you mean, 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? What must I do to you? I ought to tear the tongue out of your mouth, what must I do? *With his fists he pounds upon his father's shoulder. He stumbles away, covering his face as he weeps. What must I do, Jesus, God, what must I do*? (116)

In no other play of Miller is the conflict between familial and social interests expressed and articulated so pithily as it has been done in *Sons*. Miller is fully aware what it costs to be true to oneself and his fellow human beings. In Miller's world the

types of Rebecca Nurse, John Proctor, Dr. Stockmann are always different from the Putnams, Parris, Peter Stockmann and the others like them. Miller believes that man is always capable of saying "no" even to his tormentor and retain his humanity as it is expressed in *Vichy*. When Ferrand, the café proprietor, tells the waiter that from amongst the prisoners the Jews are being identified to be taken to Poland and burnt in furnaces, Von Berg realizes that as he is not a Jew, he will be set free. Leduc tells Von Berg that he has never analyzed a gentile, who did not have somewhere hidden in his mind, a dislike if not a hatred for the Jews. Von Berg reacts strongly and says, "That is impossible, it is not true of me" (288)! Soon he proves his words handing over his pass to freedom to Leduc. Lawrence D. Lowenthal rightly says about Von Berg's decision, "If Miller seems pessimistic about Mankind, he is still optimistic about individual man" (186-187).

Miller's concept of a writer's role as given in "The Shadows of the Gods" shows that a great writer tries to make this world of lost innocence a better place to live. As a high school student Miller read *The Brothers Karamozov* and learnt from it that –

> There is a hidden law in the world. There is only one reason to live. It is to discover its nature. The good are those who do this. The evil say there is nothing beyond the face of the world, the surface of reality. Man will only learn peace when he learns to live humanly, in conformity to those laws which decree his humanity. (*Shadows* 180)

Miller has tried to propagate this belief through his writings, especially, his tragedies. His views on tragedy and tragic hero are quite explicit on the kind of effects tragedies can have in our life. He thinks that as a general rule "the tragic feeling is evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life, if need

be, to secure one thing – his sense of personal dignity" (*Common Man* 4). The underlying struggle of the tragic protagonist consists in his attempt to gain his rightful position in his society from where he has been displaced. Tragedy is "the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly" (4).

In "The Nature of Tragedy" Miller says that the essential difference and the precise difference between tragedy and pathos is that tragedy "brings us not only sadness, sympathy, identification and even fear; it also, unlike pathos, brings us knowledge or enlightenment" (9). He explains the kind of knowledge tragedy brings us – "In the largest sense, it is knowledge pertaining to the right way of living" (9). According to him a character becomes a tragic figure if his career engages great issues like the survival of the race and the relationships between man and God – "the questions, in short, whose answers define humanity and the right way to live so that the world is a home, instead of a battleground or a fog in which disembodied spirits pass each other in an endless twilight" (*Introduction* 32). He believes that the lasting appeal of tragedy is due to our need to face the fact of death in order to strengthen ourselves for life.

Miller's concept of tragedy fits into O'Neill's tragic vision as understood from the latter's words given below:

> People talk of the "tragedy" in them [my plays], and call it "sordid," "depressing," "pessimistic" – the words usually applied to anything of a tragic nature. But tragedy, I think, has the meaning the Greeks gave it. To them it brought exaltation, an urge toward life and ever more life. It roused them to deeper spiritual understandings and released them from the petty greeds of everyday existence. When they saw a tragedy on the stage they saw their own hopeless hopes ennobled in art. (Tornqvist 13)

In a tragedy even death in a number of ways "appear to be an assertion of bravery, and can serve to separate the death of man from the death of animals," and Miller thinks "it is this distinction which underlies any conception of victory in death" (*Introduction* 33). The fathers in both *Salesman* and *Sons*, who were loved, respected, and idolized by their sons, find themselves fallen and degraded in their progeny's eyes. By committing suicide both Keller and Willy regain their personal dignity and their rightful places in their families and society. Despite their crimes and faults, Keller and Willy are tragic figures and so is Proctor in *Crucible*.

All plays of Miller, with the exception of the short time in Paradise in *Creation*, where there is no sense of choice and awareness of good and evil, deal with the life of man after the fall, which to Miller symbolizes our life in this world with freedom to choose. Miller concentrates on this later time because it defines and places mankind in the right perspective. Miller expresses the idea explicitly in *Fall* and implicitly in all other plays that we as separate human beings mostly act in our self-interest. In *Fall* he also views mankind not as simple individuals but in their totality and in this way he makes all individuals collectively responsible for anything done in this world. The fact that we are separate does not mean that we can totally exculpate ourselves from the wrongdoings of other people. Humanity is composed of separate individuals. Anything done by anyone is done by the human race as a whole, and hence, no sensitive human being can keep himself free from the guilt and responsibility of his fellow human beings. This vicarious sharing of guilt and responsibility in a way embraces the entire humanity irrespective of time and place. Besides, with the inclusion of the two plays, *Creation* and *Fall*, in his dramatic design, Miller has in fact included thematically the entire time and nature of mankind in this universe.

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