

Chapter One

Critics and Contexts

Miller and the Criticism of Society

Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*, written on the subject of World War II American family life, addresses the material aspect of American dream. The play exposes the materialistic post-war America where the pursuit of money has led people to the loss of social and human values. Had Joe, the protagonist of the play, not been so greedy for money and not sold the defective cylinders, there would have not been the death of twenty one pilots and his son, his own suicide and ultimately family disintegration. So the play is an explicit criticism of a business-oriented society in which depression, corruption, selfishness and indifference have been the norms.

Miller attacks the anti-social consequences of capitalism. Joe, a war time manufacturer of aeroplane engines, ships out a number of faulty cylinder heads in order to keep his contract and stay in business. Joe is arrested, but succeeds in laying the blame on his partner, Steve Deever, and goes scot-free. Here, Joe's crimes derive from the amoral nature of competition. This man has acted according to the laws of the competitive economic environment that is familiar to him.

This study mostly focuses on the family disintegration of a well-run family. The major dramatic question in this study is: "Is Joe guilty of shipping out defective engine heads that resulted in the death of twenty-one pilots?" The issues of materialistic success versus the success of fatherhood are constructed so that nothing but death can result from such tension.

Joe, who is admittedly a good husband and a good father, fails to be a good man, a good citizen that his son Chris demands. Joe says, "I'm his father and he is my son, and if there is something bigger than that I'll put a bullet in my head!" (63). Here,

Joe loves his family and he has sacrificed everything, including his life, in his struggle to make the family prosperous. Joe is a self-made man, a successful businessman “with the imprint of the machine-shop worker and boss still upon him” (2). There is nothing ruthless about him, no hint of the robber baron in his makeup. His ambitions are not big but to provide a comfortable life for his family and to establish a successful business to pass on to his son. Yet he is fastidious in achieving his goals. Hence he not only accepts the American notion of primacy of family to meet his target but also sacrifices his morality and becomes instrumental in the murder of twenty-one soldiers. He has been indeed a capitalist business man. Hence he says: “I’m in business, a man is in business” (58). He proves himself simply as a business man who is merely concerned about making more profits sacrificing even the business ethics.

When Miller at last moves in on Joe, brings Chris and discovery to destroy him, there is no longer any possibility of choice. His fault, according to Chris is that he does not recognize any allegiance to society at large; his world, as he mistakenly says of that of his dead son Larry, “Had a forty-foot front, it ended at the building line” (64). Joe is shortsighted however, he is a product of his society. They give him credit for “being smart” (37). At the end of the play, finally confronted with another alternative, Joe in killing himself destroys the image that he has accepted.

The phrase “loyal to a fault” (52) is given new meaning in the character of Joe. His sole motivation for pursuing wealth is to give it to his family.

Great Depression of the 1930s

The great depression of the 30s badly affected the lifestyle of people. The price hike of the commodities had crippled the economic activities of people. As a result, the concept of earning more by any means became the primary concern of the

people. Besides this people were more concerned to earn to give a better future to their children. For example, in Miller's *All My Sons*, Joe is no exception to this mentality. Hence, he puts aside his moral value; consequently he produces faulty cylinders and supplies to the American Air force. By this, he is able to earn a lot to manage his family and provide plenty of property to his son. Furthermore, he also deceives his business partner and sacrifices his moral values and honesty for earning more money.

American history is the history of many upheavals. The period between 1930's to 50's is remarkable in the sense that many fluctuations occurred in this period, especially in social, political, economical as well as cultural lives. The changes that occurred in these sectors had their direct influences upon psychic, behavioral, spiritual and moral values of individuals and families. It was an age of distorted values, pleasures of the moment, material richness, making money and showing it off. The world of business was prospering as never before. Most of the Americans shared the common belief that they deserved money and material things as their birth right.

But America also faced great depression during 1930s. With the deepening of depression, there were surprisingly few signs of social disorder or outbursts of violence within it. The war that immediately followed trapped the American society into a sense of dissatisfaction, social disorder and unrest within a greater American psyche. The reaction of unemployment slowly spread from 1930 to 1933 in the nation. At that time, millions of Americans who had never been unemployed for any length of time were jobless and unable to find work of any sort. Current, Williams and Friedel, in *The Essential of American History*, write:

These people were humiliated and baffled at not being able to provide for themselves and for their families. As millions of people remained

idle for months and then years, they were in danger of losing their skills as well as their morale; physical and moral erosion threatened.

(310)

Their view clarifies that there was humiliation in people, affecting their social, cultural and family affairs. They were in fear of losing their skill and family responsibility due to unemployment. Both depression and government effort to deal with it left its mark on the cultural life of the time. The book further focuses: “Unemployment left many people with unaccustomed leisure which they used either to protect or to escape from unpleasant realities” (352). They analyzed the problem that unemployment not only affected family life but also made them escape from the unpleasant realities.

Additionally, the nation faced the problem of millions of unemployed people and economic problem due to the wars for several years. Many lives and properties were lost. It took a long period of time for economic recovery of the nation. The armed forces had first called upon men through the nation’s selective service, which had been in operation since the fall of 1940. Including volunteers, over fifteen million men and women worked in the armed forces during the war. The number of civilian employees of the federal government trebled.

This mobilization of manpower entailed the greatest change of population within such a short time in the entire history of the nation; altogether 27.3 million people moved during the war. It also means a heavy weight of wartime tension on American families. With the return of prosperity and the impending departure of soldiers of the nation, both marriage and birth rate rose. In 1942 and 1943, about three million children were born each year.

World War II caused great destruction of lives and properties. It was like a disastrous wildfire, in which huge numbers of people were sacrificed. Further, Current, Williams and Friedel claim the effects of war time: “More than 2.5 million wives were separated from their husband because of war. The divorce rate increased slowly. When mothers were forced to work children suffered neglect, or were upset over the change” (356). It means that war and the ensuing financial crisis were the main cause of family disintegration and social disorder causing the divorce of many husbands and wives causing lack of care for their children. War time indulgence of soldiers and their wives’ duty towards their family were the example of American hard life.

America seemed to be well prepared for the war. It had stored huge quantity of food stuff and other requirements. But soon after America’s involvement in war, there arose an artificial scarcity of goods due to the insecure mentality of people during the war. Explaining the war time economic condition of nation, Current, Williams and Friedel further say:

At the beginning of the war, with a two year supply of wheat, cotton and corn stored in Secretary Wallace’s ever normal granary, there seemed no danger of food shortages in the United States. But within six months after Pearl Harbor, scarcities of many sorts began to develop. Pressures from business, farmers and labor combined with the scarcity of consumer goods and the burgeoning of buying power, created an almost irresistible trend toward inflation. . . . Consumers suffered numerous irritations and discomforts. Black marketing and over charging grew in the nation. Shortages ranged from automobiles to appliances to men’s suits, nylon stocking and beef. (374)

Before World War II, America stored foodstuff for two years. But after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the price of foodstuffs and other commodities increased which caused hardship in the life of people. There was a great shortage of goods; black market caused sorrow and discomfort to the consumers. The business trend was changed after the great threat of war. It converted the investment of the industrialists into unproductive fields to earn more profit.

The common industries stopped their production during the war. Further, some industries started producing the arms and logistics for the military. About the changes of business trend accepted by the nation under the great threat of war, Ritchie, writes:

Within weeks of Pearl Harbor, production of bicycles, beer cans, refrigerators, tooth paste tubes and more than 300 other items was banned. Automobile manufacturer, were ordered to convert production of tanks and otherwar supplies. (544)

The common industries stopped their production during the war. Further some industries started producing the arms and logistics for the military. These changes in industries not only affected the production of goods but also the psychology of every individual. It also clarified the scenario of wartime because about fifty percent industries were busy in manufacturing tanks, aeroplane cylinders, weapons and other necessary war materials.

The need of defense workers altered the traditional pattern of American society. Millions of men joined the armed services, more women than ever before entered into labor force. Further discussing about the role of gender during the war on the basis of their participation, Ritchie writes: "If you can drive a car, you can run a machine became an advertising slogan for industries" (560). The above line hints that

the traditional concept of American society was broken because one should have practical concept to do service in the factories and even women should work if they have the capacity and knowledge.

Resentment towards social change was another reality for Americans. Among many social changes, migration to war industries created problems in American industrial cities. People were deprived of having education in a proper way. Ritchie further evokes: "Between 1941 and 1945, one of every five Americans relocated to another part of the country. The movement of so many Americans to fill jobs in war industries created housing shortages, crowded schools and heightened social tension" (602). Here, Ritche implicates that the Word War II caused tension in American society. He indicates that many Americans were employed in the military and many of them migrated, it caused problems in education settlement of the people.

The new doctrine caused inconvenience to both income distribution and profits. Hence, the market was uncontrolled by the state. Everyone earned high profit abusing the transitional period of war. Galbraith presents the picture of World War II Americans, as:

In the decade following World War II business profits were exceedingly handsome several times what they were before or even during the war. The question of the fairness of these profits and the resulting personal incomes- the question of whether someone was getting more than he deserved- was hardly raised. . . . The post war attack on profits, as avowed, was almost exclusively on their alleged contribution to instability. It was widely asserted that high profits were the feature of the boom which, if uncurbed, would cause the bust. (83)

After the World War II, there was anarchy in American business. Businessmen were earning high sum by corruption or unfair means. No question was raised against the earning exceeding what one deserves. Hence, the instability was promoted by a handful of people for the sake of high profit. If not controlled in time, it might corrupt the whole American society. After the end of World War II in 1945, American people were afraid of the possible depression. When war formally ended, government reduced its budget in war materials and soldiers also returned back to their home. It created a great problem of unemployment in America. Even though, factories were running, some newly appointed Afro-American and women workers now feared that they would be replaced by returned soldiers.

World War II challenged American families in major ways, affecting great economic, social and psychological strains and demands upon families and their members. Dealing with the psychological, economic and family struggles of the Americans, Brinkley writes:

The war created considerably anxiety in American lives. Families worried about loved one at the front and as the war continued, many mourned relatives who had died in combat. . . . Business and communities struggled with shortages of goods and shortages of labor, people living on the two coasts, in particular worried about enemy invasions and sabotages. (828-29)

In Brinkley's view, war affects general psychology of American people. There is the pathos and melancholy caused by war. Women were compelled to earn for the survival of their family due to the loss of their husbands.

Furthermore, the people living in the coasts feared the invasion and sabotage by their enemies. Such environment of the nation had directly affected the psychology

and behaviour of the people. The behaviour of the then people was studied in the light of behaviorism as Trachtenberg claims:

Human being is an organism whose actions can best be understood in light of demonstrable and measurable response to definite stimuli or signals. Behaviorism seeks to control behaviour by controlling environmental stimuli. (19)

For him, different socio-economic characteristics shown by Americans must have the effect of wartime environment.

Intellectuals of various fields like sociology, literary criticism and philosophy responded to the environment of the nation and related their country with their culture. Among them, comparing the ideas of Mills with Howe, Trachtenberg writes:

The sociologists C. Wright Mills noted “A shrinking difference to status quo. Moreover, Mills and Irving Howe, both detached themselves that political democracy is responsible by itself for the tawdriness of” mass culture; it is capitalist commercialism which manipulates people into standardized tastes,” wrote Mills, to which Howe added that both democracy and “Mass culture” have so far been “known to us only in the corrupting context of capitalism”. (9)

According to them, it was capitalist commercialism which manipulates people for their status in society.

In a similar way, regarding the idea of individuals and society, Trachtenberg writes: “Centralization of power had created in outlook; the true character of their behavior was irresponsibility” (17). Materialistic belief of capitalism holds human beings to be selfish and irresponsible. Trachtenberg, relating self with society and behavior, writes the idea of B.F. Skinner:

The crux of Skinner's behaviorism is that "a self is repertoire of behavior appropriate to a given set of contingencies." Thus what we normally (and inaccurately) call a "person" usually refers to several distinct "selves." Against the traditional humanist ideal of a "whole" man, self-knowing and self-controlling behaviorism sets the image of man as function of his habits. (22)

For Skinner, it is not man but the environment which builds the behavior with which problems are solved. There is no consciousness separate from the experience of the body in a particular environment. There is only behavior learned through the "contingencies of reinforcement" (34). In this way, people were motivated by strong ethical precepts before the World War II but presently they are more about others' perceptions of them and calculate their behaviour accordingly. Among other developments, it was the ongoing revision of a cherished national myth: the so-called "American Dream" of the self-made man.

Due to the great depression followed by 1929 many American people lost their jobs. Those who still had jobs lived in the penetrating fear that their turn would be next. By focusing upon the great depression in the American family, Galbraith opines:

When there was nothing to hope for, it could still be hoped that the depression would be temporary. . . . The very notion that depression was made to last for ten years. The very notion that depressions in the United States were self-correcting- that there were corners that would be turned became a national jest. (65)

Thus, the great depression of 1929 greatly affected the family life of American society. They were always in fear of losing their jobs at any time. Most of the people lost their jobs. They were facing many problems to support their families.

Regarding the hardship of American life due to unemployment, Galbraith further asserts: “In the years following World War II the fear of a recurrence of depression was without question a dominant factor in the calculations of a large proportion of all businessmen” (66). In this way, depression not only brought hardships and insecurity in one’s life. It also made people to be economic and manage their family at any cost.

The Critics

The contemporary American society and its social structure is well exposed in Miller's *All My Sons*. There was a great influence of materialism in American society. Americans were mostly concerned to earn more money by hook or by crook and provide good life to their family. The contemporary American belief was completely self-centered alienating the people from society and individual's responsibility towards it. As the main concern of the study is to analyze Miller's play, it is important to look into what other critics have said about it. The play has received bulk of critical commentaries and responses from many writers, scholars and critics.

Commenting on *All My Sons* along with other plays of Miller, Weales writes: “They obviously criticize or comment upon the structure of the society, they may be considered as social plays” (3). He reveals the relatedness of social structure such as social conception, social hierarchy, and social behavior through his play. He categorizes *All My Sons* as a social play because the play seems aiming at the reformation of the then American society. So he quotes the dialogue spoken by Chris “If I have to grub for money all day long, at least at evening I want it beautiful, I want a family, I want some kids, and I want to build something I can build my-self to” (12). The reason Weales quotes these lines in his comments is the portrayal of some glimpse of idealism inherent in the youths of that time.

The most important fact about the plays of Miller is that he has brought back into the theatre, in an important way, the drama of social question. The conflict between individual desire and social responsibility has been at the centre of his works throughout his career. In this regard, Weales again writes:

The true social drama which he calls the “whole drama” must recognize that man has both a subjective and an objective existence, that he belongs not only to himself and his family but to the world beyond. This definition fits the Miller’s famous- *All My Sons* (1947).
(96)

Miller’s *All My Sons* is a whole drama as it depicts the subjective as well as objective existence of man. A person is not liable just to himself and his family but he/she should fulfill his duties and obligations to the society. Regarding his play, Raymond William opines: “*All My Sons* is in these Universal terms: the father, in effect, destroys one of his sons, and that son, in his turn, gives sentence of death on him, while at the same time, to the other son, the father offers a future, and the son, in rejecting it, destroys his father in pain and love” (qtd. in *The Realism* 146). William describes the behaviour of the father whose mistake causes the death of his elder son and the rejection of the offer of the property leaves the father in sorrow.

The play is a great success since there is a good combination of ideas, presentation and characterization. Steven R Canola in his criticism on the quality of the play writes: “The play is indeed a tightly constructed play with ideas of importance, but the drama’s success derives more from Miller’s ability to capture the spirit and rhythm of a life not easily reducible to terse summary in a single assertion” (qtd. in Bigsby 50). Miller's play is actually the exposition of importance of the idea

and the spirit and rhythm of life. Hence, a good combination of ideas, presentation and characterization can be found in his play, which is mingled quite aesthetically.

A group of critics found Miller's play as an Ibsensque play. In this connection, Brenda Murphy, in the essay "The Tradition of Social Drama: Miller and His Forebears," opines:

All My Sons has been long recognized as Miller's most Ibsensque play both by himself and by others. Although he has acknowledged his technical debt to Ibsen in showing him to bring the past into the present and how to represent the principle of casualty in the play of events, the most Ibsensque aspect of the play is its theme. (qtd. in Bigsby 19)

Here, Miller's play resembles the qualities of Ibsen's play. He aesthetically represents the principles of casualty in the events of the play. Dillingham finds the play as an excellent example of Hegelian tragedy. He writes: "*All My Sons* illustrates well the Hegelian theory of tragedy, since its conflict is between these intrinsic good, the family and society" (341). The tragedy of the play arises from the conflict between two goods. The conflict between the family and society is the central conflict of the play. The protagonist sacrificed the society and individual's responsibility towards it. Hence, he meets the tragedy.

The World War II has been presented as the theatre or setting where the cruelty and brutality of war is vividly performed. Interpreting the text, Van Spanckern asserts:

As the United States and others countries pass through this current war, we may want to ask what memories are being created on the inside to

screen the atrocities and how people can break away from that inner circle, that vague collective memory, that coliseum. (82)

Of course, the play is highly related to World War II and its subject matter as memory of the past. The performance of the play is an attempt to break away from that inner circle of chaos created by war. For Warden, memory presented in the play is not only an individual memory but the collective memory of the society.

The contemporary social system has victimized the individual to a great extent. So the fault of an individual is not merely the individual's fault; rather it is the inevitable outcome of the social characteristic. Crutch analyses this play as:

Miller seems to want to imply, without quite explicitly committing himself to the implication that this is not merely the story of an individual guilty man but that of an evil inevitably characteristics of our social system. (325)

It is the story of the social guilt which superficially seems to be the guilt of an individual but in deeper sense it is the inevitable result of social beliefs of materialism. Further, Crutch describes: "Miller has not brought the issue of the play from any individual experience but the play has drawn the common characteristics of mid-twentieth century America" (345). For him, the act of Joe for earning money for his family by any means is not unique individual behaviour but it was a common aspect of the American people of 40's and 50's.

In this way, Miller's play has been approached from different perspectives. But none of them lays special focus on the social issues of contemporary America in terms of great depression and ideology of the society. Ideology affects the psychology and behaviour of the people, which causes family disintegration and deprivation. How the ideological state apparatus and repressive ideological state apparatus affect

the formation of psychology and behavior of the character of the play, and cause family disintegration is the main focus of this study.

The overall emphasis of this study rests on the issue of ideological effect relating it to social structure. The play displays the state of great depression and social structure which affect the family life of the protagonist. Miller's idea of presenting the characters in diverse situations and molding them according to socio-political, economic and psychological context has a connection with the ideological effect of apparatuses upon an individual. The play unfolds the situation of the protagonist in his economic, social and family affairs.

Organization of the Study

This study has been divided into four chapters to explore the family disintegration and deprivation with respect to the characters, great depression and its impact on American social structure. The first chapter includes the general introduction to the study. It also presents historical situation of America between 1930's and 50's along with the general introduction of the playwright and different critics' commentaries.

The second chapter elucidates the theoretical aspect employed in this study. The principal theoretical tool employed in this study is Marxism focusing on Althusserian Ideological State Apparatuses. The third chapter presents an extensive textual analysis to reveal how the play documents the instances of family life in Miller's *All My Sons* in such a socio-economic environment. The final chapter presents and illustrates Joe's depression and deprivation due to the ideology of the American society.

Chapter Two

Althusser's Ideological State Apparatus

The term 'ideology' was invented by Cabanais, Destutt de Tracy and their friends, who assigned to it as an object the genetic theory of ideas. When Marx took up this term fifty years later, he gave it a quite different meaning, even in his early works. Here, ideology is the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of man or a social group. Ideology has been widely used in the discourse of political and economic theory, particularly in Marxist theory. It was most powerfully developed in Marxism because Marxism always seeks to be not just narrowly political, but a more comprehensive kind of theory. Ideology, in fact, has become the term through which Marxists have been trying to articulate themselves in various ways.

Ideology has a variety of meanings connected with power, identity, social life, class and ideas. Ideology is an encompassing belief system that is the product of cultural conditioning. Berterns, in his *Literary Theory: The Basics*, states:

For Marxist, ideology is not so much a set of beliefs or assumptions that we are aware of, but it is that which makes us experience our life in a certain way, and makes us believe that way of seeing ourselves and the world in natural. (84)

He further writes:

Ideology distorts reality in one way or another level and falsely presents as natural and harmonious what is artificial and contradictory the class difference that we find under capitalism . . . if we succumb to ideology we live in an illusory world, in what in Marxism has often been described as a state of false consciousness. (84-85)

The play of ideology changes the existing reality of the society. Due to its effects, artificial and contradictory realities are portrayed as if as natural and ultimate truth.

Marx and Engels had dismissed German philosophy as a metaphysical form of ideology, practised by a few professionals. Gramsci sought to bring philosophy down to earth by suggesting that most people were philosophers in so far as they engage in practical activity. Activity is constrained by the views of the world they inhabit.

For Gramsci, the establishment of hegemony involved the co-ordination of different interests and their ideological expressions, so that all embracing group, possibly society as a whole, would be engaged. Hegemony produced compromise, an equilibrium that took some account of the subordinate groups. As against the abstract and refined nature of the Marxist conception of ideology, Gramsci sought to explore the working of ideology as a practice on the world. It is referred to ideology as a thought practice.

Barrett comments on Gramsci's ideas:

Gramsci must be identified as taking a 'positive' rather than 'critical' stance on ideology. Gramsci suggests though not quite in these words- that the weak understanding of ideology in Marxist thought can be blamed to those who have seen ideology as merely determined by an economic base and therefore 'pure' appearance, useless, rubbish etc: in this regard he lies himself up with Korsch's critique of 'Vulgar Marxist' Gramsci then stresses that 'historically organic ideologies', those that are 'necessary' – have a psychological validity and they 'create the terrain on which man move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle etc. (236)

Gramsci suggests that ‘organic’ ideologies can be distinguished from the polemics of individual ideologies distinguished between ideology as the ‘necessary superstructure of a particular structure’ and ideology in the sense of this ‘arbitrary’ lucubration of individuals.

Barrett opines that the concept of hegemony is the organizing focus of Gramsci’s thought on politics and ideology. Its distinctive usage has rendered the hallmark of the Gramscian approach in general. Here, Barrett further elaborates:

Hegemony is best understood *as the organization of consent*- the process through which subordinate forms of consciousness are constructed without resource or violence on coercion. The ruling bloc according to Gramsci, operates not only in the political sphere but throughout the whole of society. (238)

Thus, Gramsci’s emphasis was on hegemony in relation to a political and cultural strategy for socialism. His interest in the relation between the state and civil society leads directly to his work in what has been called the socially ‘commenting’ functions of ideology and the way, in which consent is secured at a non-violent level.

Williams, a twentieth century British Marxist theorist, wants to break the hierarchy of low and high when other cultural theorists focus on marginal culture. Williams developed an approach, which he named cultural materialism in the book, *Culture and Society* (1961) and *Marxism and Literature* (1977). For Williams:

Cultural materialism is always a Marxist theory an elaboration of historical materialism, “latent within historical materialism is . . . a way of understanding the diverse social and material production . . . of works to which the connected but also changing categories of art have

been historically applied. I call this position cultural materialization.

(2)

Cultural production is itself material as much as any other sector of human activity. Culture must be understood both in its own terms and as part of its society. The relationship between culture and society can be understood in his concept of cultural materialism. He further indicates about the culture and its relation to the society: "A culture must be interpreted in relation to its underlie system of production and glossed it as follows; a culture is a whole way of life and the arts are part of a social organization which economic change clearly radically affects" (4). Williams very clearly relates how culture and society are interrelated.

Cohen writes about the problems of participation in different social and cultural systems:

Continued participation of individual in social groups or social systems can be due to one on more of a number of factors: the absence of, or ignorance of, alternatives unwillingness to risk change, moral commitment, a fatalistic acceptance of condition, coercion, on the threat of it, the perception of present on future advantages in continued participation, involvement in a network of social relations, the need for a familiar culture on sub culture, the need for strong and familiar social ties, and so on. (129)

Every individual activity continues the participation in the social system and group. It is essential for the individual because nobody is willing to bear the risk of the change. It also strengthens the social ties, co-operation and culture. Cohen further discusses about Marxist economic theory: "Owing largely to the influence on Marx and Marxism, the economic theory of change occupies a major place in the discussion of

social scientists and historian” (203). The major issues of Marxism are the economic change that occurs in the society. It can also change the class, consciousness and ideology of the people.

Social scientists and historians are mostly concerned with the issues of economic change. Cohen again says about the cultural effects upon the societies: “Cultural interaction often, though not always, results in new forms of social relationship, particularly in the form of conquest. Such process may also expand the range of social relation which can occur, thereby stimulating the development of new institutions” (203). Cultural interaction creates good harmony and relation among the people in the society. It also helps to develop new ideas for further development of the society.

French Marxist philosopher, Althusser propounds the widely influential theory of ideology. More than other Marxist philosophers and critics, Althusser explores the role of ideology in the formation of individual as ‘subject’. Althusser presents the changing mode of bourgeois tool of exploitation i.e. from repressive state apparatus to ideological state apparatus. He develops his idea how the institutions like church, trade union, school, society and our own family culture are playing pivotal role in favor of capitalistic society turning every individual as a subject. For Althusser, human being is a subject and he/she acts according to the ideological state apparatuses.

For Althusser, ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real condition of existence. He further clarifies, “What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relation which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live” (125). Ideology does not reflect the system of the real relation that

determines the existence of the individuals rather it shows the imaginary relation of the individuals to the real relation they are living in. He believes that ideology interpolates individuals as subject and he claims:

We are subjects and that we function in the practical rituals of the most elementary everyday life the handshake, the fact of calling by your name, the fact of knowing, even if I do know what it is, that you 'have' name of your own, which means that you are recognized as a unique subject etc. this recognition gives us only the 'consciousness' of our incessant (eternal) practice of ideological recognition.-its consciousness i.e. its recognition- but in no sense does it give us the (scientific) knowledge of the mechanize of this recognition. (130)

The Althusserian notion of ideological state apparatuses designates the material existence of ideology in ideological practices; Rituals and institutions for Žižek, Althusser and himself in his writing *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* further categorize the difference in use of ideology in a state. In order to advance the theory of the state, it is indispensable to take into account not only the distinction between state power and state apparatus, but also another reality which is clearly on the side of the repressive state apparatus.

For Althusser, Marxist theory, the state apparatus contains: "the government, the administration, the army, the police, the courts, and the prisons etc. which constitute what he later called repressive state apparatus" (139). His repressive state apparatus suggests that the state apparatus in question 'function by violence'. But ideological state apparatuses, for him, are certain number of realities, which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions. Althusser believes in existence of many ideological state apparatuses

such as religious, cultural, legal, family etc. in the society. These ideologies are the major tools of the contemporary capitalistic society which directly or indirectly affect the psychology of the people.

Differentiating his ideas on what he calls repressive state apparatus with ideological state apparatuses, he clarifies that, “There is one (Repressive) State Apparatus, there is a plurality of Ideological State Apparatuses” (103). The repressive state apparatus functions by violence, where as the ideological state apparatus functions by ideology. He further clarifies that every state apparatus, whether repressive or ideological, functions both by violence and ideology. But for him, repressive state apparatus functions primarily by repression, while it functions secondarily by ideology. He further claims:

If the Ideological State Apparatuses ‘function’ massively and predominately by ideology, what unifies their diversity is precisely this functioning, in so far as the ideology by which they function is always in fact unified, despite its diversity and its contradictions, beneath the ruling ideology, which is the ideology of ‘the ruling class’ in principle holds State power openly or more often by means of alliances between classes or class fractions), and therefore has at its disposal the (Repressive) State Apparatus, we can accept the fact that this same ruling class is active in the Ideological State Apparatuses in so far as it is ultimately the ruling ideology which is realized in the Ideological State Apparatuses, precisely in its contradictions. (112)

In order to clarify the difference of repressive state apparatus with the ideological state apparatuses, he further claims, “No class can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the state ideological

Apparatuses” (112). Thus, for Althusser, the ideological state apparatuses may not be only the stake but also the site of class struggle. It often, creates the bitter forms of class struggle.

Althusser further argues that it is necessary to distinguish between state power on one hand, and the state apparatus on the other. But he adds that the state apparatus contains two bodies: the body of institutions which represents the repressive state apparatus and body of institutions which represents ideological state apparatuses.

For Althusser the repressive state apparatus constitutes an organized whole whose different parts are centralized beneath a commanding unity, that of the politics of class struggle applied by the political representatives of the ruling classes in possession of state powers. The ideological state apparatuses are multiple, distinct, relatively autonomous and capable of providing an objective field to contradictions which express in forms that may be limited on extreme. It also reflects the clashes between the capitalist and the proletarian as well as their subordinate forms.

Another feature of state apparatus for him is the unity of the repressive state apparatus with its unified and centralized organizations. It shows the relationship of the representatives of the classes in power executing the politics of the class struggle. But the unity of the different ideological state apparatuses is secured, usually in contradictory forms, by the ideology of the ruling class. At last, he concludes that all the ideological state apparatuses function by repression and ideology of the society.

Regarding this Althusser claims, “All Ideological State Apparatuses, whatever they are, contribute to the same result: the reproduction of the relations of production, i.e. of capitalistic relations of exploitation” (117). He further declares:

The communication ideological apparatus by cramming every
‘Citizen’ with daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism,

moralist etc. by means of the press, the radio and television the same goes for the cultural apparatus. The religious apparatus by recalling in sermons and the other great ceremonies of Birth, Marriage and Death, that man is only ashes, unless he loves his neighbor to the extent of turning the other cheek to whoever strikes first. (118)

He means that ideological state apparatus though seems working in favor of common people, in its essence works in the reproduction of the relations of production by the mode of production threatened in its existence by the world class struggle.

Althusser develops ideology as an imagined representation of reality; it is false, distorted by definition. He means that art cannot be reduced to ideology; it has, rather, a particular relationship to it. Ideology signifies the imaginary ways in which men experience the real world, which is of course a kind of experience literature gives us too, what it feels like to live in particular conditions, rather than a conceptual analysis of these conditions. In the same essay, Althusser remarks that ideology is bound up with the constitution of the subject. Man is an ideological animal by nature, meaning that people constitute or define themselves 'as human' through ideology as he writes, "The category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology has the function of constituting concrete individuals as subjects" (160). Althusser expresses the idea of forming ideology with the help of the established norms and values which ultimately proves a man as an ideological subject.

The implication of this idea is enormous because it means that 'ideology' goes to the heart of the personal identity of how we conceive ourselves as subjects in the world and all that it involves. Althusser avoids a reductive opposition of ideology and reality by suggesting that ideology makes our reality in constituting it as subjects. About ideology, he argues, "Hails or interpolates concrete individuals as concrete

subjects” (162). Publicity and the exaggeration help to form the concrete subjects out of the individuals. It is not determined on the bears of reality. For him, the functions of Art is, as he remarks in *A letter on Art* is “To make us see, and what it allows us to see, what it forces us to see, is the ideology from which it is born” (204). What is most terrifying and compelling about this is the fact that a subject feels so real, so natural and yet, as Althusser remarks, “This very reality or ‘naturalness’ of being a subject is itself an ideological effect” (204). The mere reality and naturalness of being the subject is the ideological effect that an individual feels. Eagleton remarks:

Ideology for Althusser does indeed represent- but what it represent is the way I ‘live’ my relations to society as a whole, which cannot be said to be a question of truth or falsehood, Ideology for Althusser is particular organization of signifying practices which goes to constitute human beings as social subjects, and which produces the lived relations by which such subjects are connected to the dominant relations of production in society. (18)

Thus, Eagleton understands regarding Althusserian ideology is “Ideology for Althusser alludes in the main to our effective, unconscious relations with the world to the ways in which we are pre-reflectively bound up on social reality” (18). Here Eagleton states that in Althusser's opinion, ideology shows an individual's effective and unconscious relation to the real world.

Every individual make up their ideology they are bound up on the social reality. Comparing it with the ideological sphere, Eagleton states: “The human subject transcends its true state of diffuseness of decentrement and finds a consolingly coherent image of itself reflected back in the ‘mirror’ of a dominant ideological

discourse” (214). The ideological discourse acts as a mirror for human being. Hence they form their ideology from the reflection of the societal behavior.

The contribution of Gramsci's, the radical Italian Marxist, theorist and activist to the analysis of ideology is significant. Gramsci modified the Marxist understanding of the term, working within a broadly Marxist tradition. He is best known to students of ideology for his notion of hegemony. Ideological hegemony could be exercised by a dominant class, the bourgeoisie, not only through exerting state force but through away from being solely a tool of the state. Ideology operated and has produced in civil society, the sphere of non-state individual and group activity.

In modern days, there is exploitation by means of ideologies. The individual's psychology and behaviour are determined by prevalent ideologies of society. The state rules over its citizens more by using its ideological state apparatuses through repressive state apparatus. Miller's *All My Sons* is a play where economic depression and ideologies play important role to create family disintegration and deprivation.

Chapter Three

Ideological State Apparatus in Miller's *All My Sons*

Miller's *All My Sons* tells the story of a successful mid-western manufacturer of aeroplane parts who knowingly allows defective engines to be shipped to the American Army during the World War II. As a result, twenty-one American pilots die when the cracked cylinder heads cause their plane to malfunction and crash. Exonerated by the courts for his role in the catastrophe, Joe, the play's central character, triumphantly returns to his community and futilely attempts to return to a life of normalcy, pretending the crime never occurred.

The semblance of family harmony is maintained until his son, Chris, himself under pressure as his fiancée's brother forces him to acknowledge his own acquiescence, questions him about his role in the sordid business transaction. Chris, who had fought bravely in the war and seen many of his troops perish under his command, has a different outlook from his father on the question of an individual's social responsibility. After several powerful scenes of intense debate about the individual's relation to society, Chris finally discloses his father's guilt and challenges him to accept responsibility for his actions. Until his son forces him to acknowledge his wrongdoing, Joe steadfastly maintains his innocence and justifies his anti-social behavior by proclaiming his right to keep the business from collapsing to ensure his family's survival. Ultimately, Chris succeeds in convincing Joe that he has an obligation to others in society as well.

Joe belatedly realizes that his decisions have consequences and that his responsibilities extend beyond the family. Tortured by his guilt and unable to deal with his shame in his son's eyes, Joe tries to escape from his intolerable situation by putting a bullet in his head. The play ends with Chris facing with horror with his own

complicity his father's self-destruction, and with Joe's death the play forcefully repudiates anti-social behavior that derives from the myth of privates in American society.

The jail reference is repeated throughout the play to bring the past into the present and thereby strengthen the association between Joe's crime and his guilt. This motif underlines the fact that Joe's actions have consequences while illustrating the problem of setting oneself apart from the outer world. As though he were confined in a jail, Joe views the world as having "a forty-foot front. . . [that] ended at the building line" (64). He denies his relation to society so that he can excuse unethical business practices that keep his manufacturing company fiscally sound and his family secure financially. So long as he acts to preserve the welfare of his family, Joe believes that anything he does can be justified. He convinces himself that his sole responsibility in life is to be successful so that he can support his wife and children. For him, "Nothin' is bigger" (63) than the family.

The play investigates some basic assumptions about the post war American bourgeois society. As a man of independent thought, Miller, in this play, is profoundly and angrily concerned with what he perceives as the immediate issue of his society: the irresponsible pressures that are brought to bear upon the free man, the self-seeking that blinds whole segments of human civilization, the evasions and dishonesties into which cowardly men slip daily.

In addition to the social and economic factors, ideology plays the crucial role for forming the psychology of the people. The psychological complexities, of course, spill over into social complexities. When the court exonerated Joe on appeal, he returned from his stint in the penitentiary and people on his own street shouted "murderer" (60) at him. Given the timeline, this happened less than three years prior.

The immediate social environment is at least latently hostile, and this is something the Kellers have had to deal with and have been determined to overcome. Most of the people in neighborhood think Joe is guilty, but still give him credit for “being smart” (37). Sue complains of living under the shadow of “the Holy Family” (37) and is seething at the hypocrisy of it all. Her feelings are particularly strong about Chris, whom she claims is acting like a saintly philanthropist and encouraging Jim to do likewise, yet taking blood money from Joe's factory. Chris's idealism is affecting Jim's behavior, causing him to want more than she is willing to let him have. Jim, who comes over regularly to play cards with Joe and other neighbors, admits to Kate in Act Three that he knows about Joe's guilt, but also admits that he has just as much of a talent for covering up the truth as Kate has. Chris will eventually capitulate and accept the seemingly harsh and inevitable truth about the world, that there is very little room for idealism when dealing with human beings.

In shipping the cracked cylinder heads, Joe sacrificed others to avoid socio-economic diminishment. Instead of showing loyalty to his family through financial aggrandizement, he should have shown true love by being willing to sacrifice his own position to ensure that the pilots were safe.

The line that carries religious ideology is Joe's exclamation to Chris that “a man can't be a Jesus in this world” (68). Joe's contention is that no one can be expected to live up to such high and self-sacrificing standards, and in that light, he did the best he could for his family. Since the reference to Jesus, arguably the best-known exemplar of charity, compassion, humility, and sacrifice in the Western world, comes from the villain, the effect on the American society is opposite from Joe's intent. A person may not be able to be Jesus, but he can at least try. Indeed, Chris expected his parents to be better than the average person. The fact that his parents let him down on

this point leaves him at a terrible crossroads, as it were, and he is faced with the decision to move forward with his idealism (tempered by realism) intact or to abandon all hope and leave the world to the “great big dogs” (67).

Bigsby accurately observes, while *All My Sons* is a play about our ability to connect with others and the world around us, it is also about more than our success or failure at achieving such a connection:

This is a play about betrayal, about father son, about American, about self deceit, about self- righteousness, about egotism presented as idealism, about fear of morality, about guilt, about domestic life as evasion, about the space between appearance and reality, about repression, about kind of despair finessed into hope, about money, about an existence resistant to our needs, about a wish for innocence when as, Miller was later to say in his autobiography, innocence kills, about a need for completion, about the gulf between the times we live in and the people we wish to believe ourselves to be about fragility of what we take to be reality, about time as enemy and time as moral force and so on. (51)

At the time when Miller wrote *All My Sons*, he did witness the World War II and was aware of the crimes against humanity. He found the idea for Joe’s crime in true story, which occurred during the World War II: a manufacturer knowingly shipped out defective parts of tanks. These had suffered mechanical failures that had led to the deaths of many soldiers. The fault was discovered, and the manufacturer convicted.

Joe Keller as the Victim

The study examines how Joe becomes the victim of depression and ideology of the American society thereby causing his own family disintegration. Thus, the

study over his actions of running business through wrong means to his understanding of responsibility, duty and reality caused by depressed materialistic belief. Alter his understanding of reality; he kills himself whereas his wrong act directly results in the suicide of his elder son, Larry. All his family members as well as Joe himself are the victims of the capitalistic ideology of American society. Joe is portrayed as an ignorant, good natured and kindly fool whose love for his wife and family is genuine and selfless. Yet, in a deeper sense, he is anti-social, alienated from his work, from his family member and finally from the larger society around him. He knows that his crime is taking him away from family and social spheres yet he tries to prove his action to be fair. His actions hereby are said to be the result of the contemporary ideological state apparatuses.

Joe prefers to see himself as a victim of others. Instead of acknowledging his complicity in the crime that sends unsuspecting pilots to their deaths, he lies about his involvement and denies his personal culpability so that he can preserve his false image of himself and maintain the illusion that he has regained his rightful place in the society. He denies his connection to the disaster because he blinds himself to the impulses that make him a danger to himself as well as to others. Miller, in his collected plays, says: "Joe's trouble, in a word, is not that he cannot tell right from wrong but that his cast of mind cannot admit that he, personally, has any viable connection with his world, his universe, or his society" (*Collected Plays*, 19). Hence the play shows why an individual's betrayal of trust and refusal to accept responsibility for others, if left uncensored by society. "Can mean a jungle existence for all of us . . ." (*Collected Plays*, 19). Paradoxically, the very denial that is designed to protect him from prosecution and incarceration sets in motion the chain of events that lead to Joe's own self-imprisonment and self-imposed execution.

The paradox of denial in *All My Sons* is that not only does denial dehumanize, by nullifying the value of the social contract through the justification of indefensible anti-social acts, but it also intensifies the personal anguish and the irremediable alienation that plunges an individual into despair and brings about his tragic suicide.

It is never a simple reflection of a ruling class idea. On the contrary, it is always a complex phenomenon, which may consist of uncertain, formless and paradoxical views of the world. So to understand ideology, one should deem the specific relation between different classes in society; and also should try to find precise vision about it.

Man is an ideological animal by nature. So what he thinks or what he does fall in the sphere of ideology. There is no ideology except for concrete subjects. The destination for ideology is made possible only by the category of the subject and its functioning. Ideology is not a dream like illusion that we build to escape insupportable reality to its basic dimension; rather it is a fantasy construction that serves as a support for our reality itself. It is an illusion, which structures our real social relation and thereby marks some insupportable, impossible and essential part. The function of ideology is not to offer us a point of escape from our relatives but to offer us the social reality itself as an escape from some traumatic identities. Joe is the victim of the contemporary American bourgeois society. Activities performed by characters in the play and psychological mood of every members of family and society are controlled by the ideology of the society. In the play, different repressive state apparatuses and ideological state apparatuses play vital role to the reproduction of the relation of production, i.e. of capitalistic relation of exploitation over Joe and his family members, herby causes his family disintegration. Ideological state

apparatus exploits Joe and his family members. In the play, social group operates itself on the basis of shared rituals, prejudices, stories, etc.

The ideology of family responsibility and compulsion to earn to look after the family plays crucial role to form the psychology and behaviour of Joe and other characters of the play. It is family ideological state apparatuses, which are apparently visible in his life. The following dialogue highlights the theme of an individual's responsibility towards his family.

CHRIS. I'll get out. I'll get married and live someplace else. May be in
New York.

KELLER. You've got a business here, what a hell is this?

CHRIS. The business! The business doesn't inspire me to. Annie is in
the middle of that. Now. . . where do I find it?

KELLER. You mean_ Goes to him. Tell me something, you mean
You'd leave the business?

CHRIS. Yes. On this I would.

KELLER. Well . . . you don't want to think like that.

CHRIS. Then help me stay here.

KELLER. All right, but-but don't think like that because what the hell
did I work for? That's only for you, Chris, the whole shootin'
match is for you! (12)

Here, Joe and Chris discuss about their family business. Their discussion reveals the play of psychological and social forces that form and distort the family and an individual. Joe tries to convince Chris to inherit property earned by him. He also tries to convince Chris about his business activities. Initially, Chris accepts his father's activities but later he suspects his father's action of selling faulty cylinder parts and

reveals his dislike to inherit his father's property. Though Joe's act of running business is out of family ideological state apparatuses, ultimately he suffers from it. He is hated even by his own son causing family disintegration and deprivation.

Play of Family Ideological State Apparatus

Almost all the characters in the play are victimized by the family ideological state apparatuses. Joe's neighbouring families too have been suffering from the same ideology. Jim and Sue are the neighbours of Joe. Sue compares Jim's every patient with money as Jim is doctor by occupation. The following dialogue between Jim and Sue elaborates the psychological formation of family ideological state apparatus in the mind of Joe's society.

SUE. *commandingly sweet*: Please, dear! Please!

JIM. *resigned*: All right, Susie. *Trailing off*: All right, all right...

To ANN. I've only met you, Ann, but if I may offer you a piece of advice _When you marry, never _even in your mind never-count your husband's money. (19)

In the play, Jim's advices to Ann are not only an individual's advice but the revelation of his own suffered life. Similarly, Joe is reminded of his guilt of selling faulty cylinders and his days at jail more by his wife than other people in his communities. Therefore, with his discussion with Ann, Joe clearly says that his case of jail is reminded by his wife. Here, it is family ideological state apparatus that tortures him psychologically.

ANN, to KELLER. Do they still remember the case, Joe? Do they talk about you?

KELLER. The only one still talk about it is my wife.

MOTHER. That's because you keep on playing policeman with the kids. All their parents hear out of you is Jail, Jail, and Jail. (22)

In the above dialogue, Kate, plays the role of family ideological state apparatus over his husband. For a long time, she has been a pillar of strength of her family. While Joe runs the factory without autocratic efficiency, it is clear that Kate rules in the home. Kate wields enormous power, which holds sway over nearly everyone she encounters. Though her insistence that her son Larry is alive. Somewhere has more to do with Joe than with any personal belief that Larry has a chance of survival after three years of missing; it ultimately becomes the play of family ideological state apparatuses.

The ideology of Joe's family and his neighbors is similar. Sue, one of his neighbours, relates everything with money. Therefore, Sue says, "Research pays twenty five dollars a week minus laundering the hair short." "You've got to give up your life to go into it" (36). The given idea of Sue represents the ideology of the contemporary American society during the depression period about the money. Sue relates her husband's research with his income and expenditure. It was ideology of the society that her husband was a subject to earn money for her family affairs. In bourgeois society ideology turns every individual as subject.

Ideology related with family relationship guides Joe's mind and actions. Therefore, he claims "My only accomplishment is my son. I ain't brainy. That's all I accomplished" (40). For Joe, the responsibility is to earn for his family and to provide material comfort to them in the materialistic society is the ideological hegemony. It is family ideological state apparatus that constructs his mind. On the similar kind of ideology, he speaks, "A father is a father" (40).

The above dialogue shows the contemporary American mind in Miller's play represent the play of family ideological state apparatus. Characters in the play

function a considerable part and help in bourgeois social formation. The family values of the then American society framed the psychology and behaviour of the characters in the play. Through Joe and his actions, Miller beautifully draws the picture of family ideological state apparatus.

Role of Cultural Ideological State Apparatus

In addition to the physical environment, social and economic environment play important role to construct the cultural ideology of the characters. Joe believes an American ideology that man gets happiness and comfort only after having good sum of money. He also believes that through the good progress in business, he can provide happiness to his wife. But his wife's behaviors of complaining him in every step made him aware him of his previous illusion.

Kate is another character of the play, who represents the play of cultural ideological state apparatus. She tries her best to manage her family and to protect her guilty husband from the society but she fails at the end of the play. In order to protect her husband's guilty effort in the death of her son, she believes on superstition. In her discussion with her younger son Chris, she says:

CHRIS. What does it go to show?

MOTHER to CHRIS. Don't be so intelligent. Some superstitions are very nice! To Lydia: Did he finish Larry's horoscope?

LYDIA. I will ask him now, I'm going in. (50)

Kate's belief on horoscope is cultural Ideological State Apparatus which shapes her psychology. By bringing her belief on horoscope of Larry, she tries to convince her other family members the possible return of her missing son Larry. And from the letter written by Larry to his fiancée Ann, we understand that Larry was not missing but he himself killed due to his father's guilt.

There are other characters who are suffered from the cultural apparatus in the play. Through the character of Sue, who values everything with material prosperity as American people during the age of depression, Miller portrays the role of cultural apparatus in the then American society. When Chris is worried about the health of his mother, Joe's family is preparing to have dinner outside. But Sue takes this very lightly so she says:

SUE. *going up to porch*: Oh, yeah, she's psychic

CHRIS. Maybe there's something in the medicine chest.

SUE. I'll give her one of everything. *On porch*: Don't worry about

Kate; couple of drinks, dance her around a little. . . She'll love

Ann. (37)

Sue's belief in "couple of drinks" and "dance her around a little" reveals cultural ideology of the American society. Here, cultural apparatus constitutes Kate as subject who can be happy out of some drinks and dances. This shows that during the hardship of economic condition American people were very happy if they got food to have. Here, Kate is portrayed as social subject who produces the lively relation by which such subjects are connected to the dominant relations of productions in society.

There are other characters who are influenced through the cultural apparatus in the play. Jim, one of Joe's neighbours, is a medical doctor by occupation. He seems happy from outside but suffers a lot in individual life. He seems interested in further research, but it is his wife who hinders. When Chris knows the reality of his father's crime, he moves out of the house. Kate worries about her son. Jim talks to her and tries to console her. What he speaks to Kate:

MOTHER. Just as long as he comes back.

JIM. I wish he wouldn't Kate. One year I simply took off, went to

New Orleans, for two months I lived on bananas and milk, and studied a certain disease. It was beautiful. And I went back home with her. And now I live in the usual darkness; I can't find myself; it's even hard sometimes to remember the kind of man I wanted to be. I'm a good husband; Chris is a good son- he'll come back. (61)

The given dialogue of Jim with Kate clarifies that ideology is representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence. Though, Jim claims himself to be good husband, his relationship with his wife seems to be imaginary. Here, the real relation is inevitably in the imaginary relation. Ideology here works as an indispensable element for the production of human subject.

Kate believes more on religious affairs whereas, her neighbours help into making her believe in it. Sue ironically reveals the criminal activities of Joe and relates herself to her own location. At this point in the play, Sue expresses her resentment, "I resent living next door to the Holy Family. It makes me look like to burn, you understand?" (37). As Sue compares herself to be burn, whereas she compares Joe's family on religious ground. Her comparison is the effect of cultural ideological state apparatus. It provides the memory of pre-capitalist historical period where church guided people on cultural spheres. This cultural ideology interpolates her as a subject. The culture of being rich and psychological formation of being respected in economic matter was seen in American mind during the depression period through Joe's activities.

KELLER. And I don't understand why, after I worked forty years and I got a maid, why I have to take out the garbage. . . .

KELLER. Yeah, I'm in last place again. I don't know, once upon a time I used to think that when I got money again I would have a maid and my wife would take it easy. Now, I got money, and I got a maid, and my wife is workin' for the maid. *He sits in one of the chairs.* (13)

The contemporary American culture has the great influence of materialism and luxurious life style. Hence Joe expected to earn money and employ a maid. Yet after achieving all those things his life was not happy.

Reflection of Communication Ideological State Apparatus

Different ideologies of the society form the psychology and behavior of Miller's characters. In the play, characters pay their attention towards newspaper which reflects the act of favoring bourgeois form of exploitation. Joe reads newspaper only for advertisement whereas his neighbor regards newspaper as a tool to import bad news.

KELLER. *indicating the sections beside him.* What the paper?

FRANK. What's the difference, it's all bad news. What's today's calamity?

KELLER. I don't know, I don't read the news part anymore. It's more interesting in the want ads. (2)

Here, Joe's interest in advertisement is his acceptance in bourgeois way of cramming every 'citizen' with their daily doses of exploitation. Similarly, Frank accepts the bad news to be true and real, and tries to escape from it. Similarly, Joe gets afraid of his guilt relating it to the missing of his elder son Larry. The more Joe reads newspaper and returning of American armies from missing reports, the more he remembers his son Larry and his own criminal act of shipping faulty aeroplane cylinders. Joe says

that the trouble is “the God dam newspapers” because for him “every month some boys turn up from nowhere, so the next one is going to be Larry” (10). Joe’s fear is with his guilty and gets psychological torture from the communication ideological state apparatus. So Kate says “Only last week a man turned up in Detroit, missing longer than Larry. You read it yourself” (17). Communication has played vital role to shape individual’s concept and belief. Hence the news of arrival of the missing army consoled Kate about the return of her son, Larry.

Though they are engulfed by bourgeois way of exploitation through the means of communication they regard it to be the absolute real. Newspaper constitutes the dominant ideological state apparatus, the apparatus playing a determinant part in the reproduction of the relation. The mode of production threatened in its existence by the world class struggle, as Kate says: “I know, dear, but don’t say it’s ridiculous, because the papers were full of it; I don’t know about New York, but there was half a page about a man missing, even longer than Larry, and he turned up from Burma” (20). It is the news published in papers that bring conflict between Chris and mother. Chris regards belief on communication to be ridiculous whereas, mother blindly waits for her missing son Larry believing on the means of communication.

Outcome of Repressive State Apparatus

The cause of Joe’s family disintegration and deprivation is due to public domains like government, police, army, etc. These repressive state apparatuses are unified to bring tragedy in his life. The state ideology rules Larry to participate in the war. Even Chris works in American war and fails to understand his family members, neighbor and his own Fiancée Ann. All the family members of Joe are victimized by the authority of bourgeois law. Here, Joe says, “For what! Bert, the whole neighborhood is depending on you. A policeman doesn't ask questions. Now peel

those eyes!” (32) Joe says that when every neighbor trusts him, Bert shouldn't worry about it. He won't be inquired by the police about that.

Joe's faith on police is another acceptance of authority of bourgeois law. Here state authority exploits over him whereas he fails to resist over the exploitation. While discussing with his neighboring child Bert, he reminds the duty and responsibility of state authority thereby accepting bourgeois law of exploitation. He further says:

The beast! I was the beast; the guy who sold cracked cylinder heads to the Army Air force: the guy who made twenty-one P-40s crash in Australia Kid, walkin' down the street that day I was guilty as hell. Except I wasn't and there was a court paper in my pocket to prove I wasn't, and I walked. . . past. . . the porches Result? Fourteen months later I had one of the best shops in the state again, a respected man again, bigger than ever. (23)

Joe accepts his culpability in his discussion with his son Chris. He also fears about his reputation in the society. He has only one thing to console him and it is the court paper. 'Court paper' is the only means which releases him from the jail. It is Joe's another acceptance of the bourgeois law of exploitation. He feels free of all troubles related with his crime, jail and his social life due to the court paper. But if court paper has real value of society, what is his reason of suicide? Though he ratifies own self claiming the court paper in releasing from the jail, he himself falls on the grip of state ideology and commits suicide.

While dealing with his act of selling cylinder heads he tries to convince Chris and Ann that the work was out of compulsion rather than his individual will. He further says to convince his son that:

Listen, you gotta appreciate what was doin' in that shop in the war. The both of you! It was a madhouse. Every half hour the Major callin' for cylinder heads, they were whipping us with the telephone. The trucks were hauling them away hot, damn hear. I mean Just try to see it human, see it human. All of a sudden a batch comes out with a crack. That happens, that's the business. (25)

Joe tries to prove that shipping of cylinder heads are out of compulsion even for his partner Steve as he succeeds in having the entire episode blamed on his partner, who was imprisoned in jail. Here, the part 'Major' works as the repressive state apparatus. Kate is afraid of the arrival of George because he is a lawyer by profession. So her dialogues with the intention of warning are exploitation of repressive state apparatus. Mother talks about her innocence in these words: "I don't know. *She speaks with warning*: He's a lawyer now; Joe George is a Lawyer" (31).

In another case, Joe while discussing with his partner Steve's son, George, reveals the tragedy of Justice: "Sure, he just got here. That's the way they do, George. A little man makes a mistake and they hang him by the thumbs; the big ones become ambassadors. I wish you'd-a told me you were going to see Dad" (52). Laymen are panelized badly for the minor faults whereas the aristocrat or the people who have higher links will be released even if they commit great crime. This is the contradictory reality which is the outcome of repressive state apparatus.

Though, Joe and Steve were accused for the same fault, Steve was imprisoned but Joe released from the jail. Joe understands the faulty decision of law and discusses accordingly with George but fails to understand the bourgeois law of state which in final hour causes his own family disintegration and deprivation. It is the repressive state apparatus that functions both by repression and ideology of the ruling

class. Given the fact that the “ruling class” Americans hold the state power and accordingly they use their power through the illusion of ideology. The very ruling class is active in the ideological state apparatuses.

In the play, Miller has tried to justify how the people have lost societal responsibility and faith in the blind pursuit of success. Men have become drifters rather than stable responsible personalities. Man attempts to live in a society by creating sense of order. For example, one of the characters in the play, Chris remarks: “I want a family. I want some kids, I want to build something” (12). In fact, Chris has most of the things he ever wanted. Yet, he is not internally happy as he thinks that a family is the place where he gets his most important experience that helps determine and shape his personal behaviour and other traits as well. So it needs to have a proper well functioning familial norm, value, belief or familial fidelity so that the family members can have a blissful life.

But here in this play, these integral parts do not seem to work in good and normal order and interrelationships between and among people have been impaired and degenerated. The excessive lust for money and rush for superficial success has made people blind and mad. The material needs have been taken as ends for which people commit great sin. Joe, without hesitation, pleads with his son, Chris, to take his money saying “because it’s good money, there’s nothing wrong with that money” (26). It means that people believe more in money no matter where it comes from. Consequently, the value of human relation has been totally ignored in the society. In fact, Joe has accepted the American myth of primacy of the family.

When the truth about his role is finally revealed Joe tries to mitigate his guilt by portraying himself as the victim of forces beyond his control. He has convinced himself, and futilely tries to persuade Chris, that, given the limited choices available

at the time, he made the best choice possible. However, after Chris forces him to admit that he knew the planes were likely to crash with the faulty engines; Joe justifies his decision by pretending that it was constant with the code of ethics prevalent in American business transactions during the war:

Who worked for nothing in that war?

When they work for nothing; I will work for nothing; 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! (68)

In reality, this is the pathetic cry of a small man blown about by forces beyond his control.

Joe's world is carefully constructed of lies to cover up the wrongful deaths caused by his action. He continues to deny his guilt, and even when he is exposed he rationalizes away his responsibility to the pilots that died. Hence, Chris shows his anger at his father for violating the principles of good citizen. He further says:

CHRIS. (*with burning fury*): For me!

Where do you live, where have you come from? For me! –I was dying every day and you were killing my boys and you did it for me? What the hell do you think I was thinking of, the Goddam business? Is that as far as your mind can see the business? What is that, the world-the business? 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

mist I do? I ought to tear the tongue out of your mouth, What must I do? (59)

As Joe was justifying his guilt of supplying the defective cylinders for the sake of making more profit, Chris was furious at him. He condemned his father's act as it was a great crime against his family, society, and country as well as mankind. From the above expressions of Chris, it is clear that Joe must have the obligation to others in society as well.

Chris who had fought bravely in the battle and seen many of his troops perish under his command has a different outlook from his father on the question of any individual's social responsibility. Even in the battlefield, there "was a kind of responsibility. Man for man" (28). But he finds his father who feels responsibility for no one outside his family. In this case, Miller seems to be influenced by Bertolt Brecht's theory of writing plays. Moral paradox is at the root of Brecht's theatre. As Gascoigne opines: "It arises throughout his plays from the clash between ends and means, between the intention and the effect, between the individual and the world" (121). Joe has denied his relation to society so that he can excuse unethical business practices that keep his manufacturing company financially sound and his family secure. But his calculation turns into nightmare. At the end, all the family members, Kate, Chris and Larry feel the full impact of Joe's anti-social action. Deeply shamed by his father's crime, Larry commits suicide in combat after writing his fiancée of his decision to take his own life. By the end of the play, Joe realizes that the pilots who flew those planes were, as he says: ". . . they were all my sons. And I guess they were, I guess they were" (69). Tortured by his guilt and unable to deal with his shame in his son's eyes, Joe decides to escape from his intolerable situation by putting a bullet in his head.

Immediately preceding the sound of Joe's gun, Chris, here spokesman for the playwright sums up his mother the necessity of being ruled by conscience, that is, of acting in accordance with the standard of values that embodies man's responsibility to his fellow beings: 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 away your son because that's why he died (69-70). Joe commits suicide. He is forced to accept responsibility of his suicide and it is necessary to restore the moral order of the universe, and allow his beloved son, Chris, to live, free from guilt.

Critique of Miller's *All My Sons*

In *All My Sons*, Miller examines the morality of the man who places his narrow responsibility to his immediate family needs above his wider responsibility to the men who rely on the integrity of his work. In this context, Miller's affinity with Ibsen is also visible in many aspects of the play. Like in Ibsen's play, there is the constant conflict between individual desire and social responsibility in this play.

Miller sees the play in a social context, as he explains in the introduction:

Joe's trouble. . . is not that he can't tell right from wrong but that his cast of mind can not admit that he, personally has any viable connection with his world, his universe, or his society. He is not a partner in society, but an incorporated member, so to speak, and you can not sue personality the officers of corporations. I hasten to make clear that I am not merely speaking of a literal corporation but the concept of a man's becoming a function of production or distribution to the point where his personality becomes divorced from the actions it propels. (qtd. in Weales, *Arthur Miller* 317)

Joe asserts that he is more an individual rather than a unit of the society. He justifies his deeds by giving higher priority to family and personal issues than his social responsibility. Martin while reading *All My Sons* relating with public issues and private tension remarks: “Miller posed a major dramatic question that reflected the public issue and the private tension between family members that result in a betrayal of either a legal or social aspect of the American dream” (98). The clear conflict between private tensions and the public issues is vividly exposed in the play. Hence, the protagonist happened to betray the society as well as the country to achieve private economic benefit.

Martin regards the play as the dislocation of the family that results when public and private issues threaten to disrupt its essential unity, tradition, and harmony. Martin regards it as social and legal conflicts intertwined and irreducible beyond the point of free will and moral choice. Martin’s argument is that success the play focuses the issues of materialistic success versus the success of fatherhood are constructed so that nothing but death can result from the tensions that result since they are, philosophically at least, irreconcilable.

Thus, the attack on the anti-social consequences of bourgeois is more forcefully expressed in *All My Sons*. Joe’s crime drives from the amoral nature of capitalist competition. He has acted according to the ideology of the competitive economic environment that he is familiar with and is largely unaware, during the major part of the play, of how his conscience has been corrupted. Joe along with his wife try their best to hide the truth but his secret is finally brought light and he has to confess to his son Chris that he was the one who told his partner to ship out the faulty engine parts. It regards himself as one of the factors to victimize him from the capitalistic ideology.

Joe well knows that there is no mercy in the market place and that ruin means disaster, pure and simple. Bourgeois American society, great depression of American economy and the free ideology are responsible for his extreme individualism and abdication of all responsibility for anyone but himself and his family. Miller marshals his attack showing us that murder, betrayal and family disintegration and deprivation can result due to ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses. Finally, Joe has to face the fact that his actions have had terrible consequences. He no longer disregards his guilt. He is so overwhelmed by remorse that he shoots himself. Both the death of Joe and Larry causing family disintegration and deprivation are portrayed as direct results of bourgeois ideology merciless enough to drive a man to his abominable acts.

While one could discuss the central theme in *All My Sons* exclusively in terms of its social context and its call for socially responsible behavior, the play fails to do justice to its complexity and fascinating exploration of universally significant questions about the enigmatic nature of the self's relation to others. For Bigsby accurately observes that it is about more than success or failure at achieving such a connection. Further, he describes:

This is also a play about betrayal, about fathers and sons, about America, about self-deceit, about self-righteousness, about egotism presented as idealism, about a fear of mortality, about guilt, about domestic life as evasion, about the space between appearance and reality, about the suspect nature of language, about denial, about repression, about a kind of despair finessed into hope, about money, about an existence resistant to our needs, about a wish for innocence when, as Miller was later so say in his autobiography, innocence kills,

about a need for completion, about the gulf between the times we live in and the people we wish to believe ourselves to be, about the fragility of what we take to be reality, about time as enemy and time as moral force and so on. (51)

In this way, *All My Sons* is a play about both paradox and denial. Moreover, it is about a theme that Miller has described as the paradox of denial. The crimes against society committed by Joe derive from the same instinct for self-preservation and self-assertion.

Miller's critique can be summed up as follows. Bourgeois ideology is inhuman in its glorification of private property and its exclusive orientation toward profit making. Mostly families are disintegrated due to social norms and values through which one is guided. Here, Joe's family is detached because of American social norms giving more priority to the money and materialistic life style. In Bourgeois ideology, ruthless competition is the norm. People's moral character is threatened. They may become scoundrels, or rendered insane and suicidal. It gives birth to egocentric individualism and society fosters no sense of responsibility to anyone beyond self and family. The capitalist controls most of the cultural life of society and the media, spreading their conservative political views. The false value of materialism and cult has been successful to decay a well run family. Ideology rules turning people into mere cogs in machine of production, and even enjoyment of good family life becomes hard to obtain.

Chapter Four

Joe Keller's Depression and Deprivation

Joe, the protagonist of Miller's *All My Sons*, is the victim of American bourgeois ideology. The ideological state apparatuses prevail in such a way in the character Joe that he works in favor of materialistic and the dominant ideology in pursuit of material happiness even causing his own death. He frequently feels that he has no option other than to earn money to support his family and to get respect in society. He ships faulty cylinder heads to American Air Force having self motive to rise economically. However, he is partially in fear for the act of his contract with American Air Force. In his act of selling faulty cylinder parts, Ideological State Apparatuses like family ideological state apparatus, cultural ideological state apparatus, communication ideological state apparatus, etc. play vital role where repressive state apparatuses too have supporting role. When he acts according to the ideology of 'ruling class' is being motivated by those apparatuses, he becomes the cause of death of twenty-one pilots and suicide of his own elder son, Larry. In his regular attempts to prove himself innocent, he understands the evil consequences of capitalistic ideology and commits suicide.

The family disintegration and deprivation of Joe's family is not only due to their private weaknesses but also due to social structure of contemporary American society. The social, economic, psychological, political and cultural environment of the World War America has taken this innocent family under the grip of capitalistic ideology through different apparatuses.

Joe fails to understand the role of different ideologies which prevailed in contemporary society. Joe thinks that when he obtains release letter from the 'court' he can get previous respect in the society but he is wrong in his expectation what he

get. He gets only hatred from the society and his own family. The response of the family and society is sufficient enough for Joe to realize his guilt despite the clean cheat of the court. Similarly, Kate gets afraid of Steve's son, George, due to his occupation of lawyer for the criminal act of her husband. Joe also realizes that due to his guilt because his business partner, George, is still imprisoned. Thus repressive state apparatuses like army, police, and court etchant American social structure victimize Joe. Finally, due to these apparatuses Joe kills himself.

The social structure of the then American society to earn more money to support the family is the mainstay of Joe's family disintegration. Likewise different ideological state apparatuses such as family ideological state apparatus, cultural ideological state apparatus, legal ideological state apparatus, communication ideological state apparatus etc. play the important role for Joe's depression and his own suicide. Joe and his family members' psychology construct according to the social ideology and the culture of the society. Joe ships faulty cylinders not just for his individual progress but for his whole family to rise economically and get due respect in the society. The cultural ideology of the society and American dream of getting material comfort make Joe criminal, the cause of family disintegration and deprivation.

The communication ideological state apparatus is another cause of his depression. It is the then news report which reminds Joe his guilt whereas, his own wife Kate blindly believes on news. They fail to understand that communication agencies are run to disseminate ideology of 'ruling class' over innocent people.

In this way, the main cause of Joe's suicide is ideology of American bourgeois society. He and his family members act according to ideology of the competitive economic environment and become the victim of the same. It is American society and

its ideological play in which Joe commits crime and causes death of twenty-one American pilots and suicide of his own son Larry. Finally, he understands his guilt and evil consequences of bourgeois and commits suicide. Joe shoots himself dead in his own home whereas younger son Chris denies inheriting his parental property due to its evil source. Finally the well run family disintegrated when its members are guided by the ideology of bourgeois society. Man's obligation to assume his rightful place in a world unified by love and sense of responsibility is the central thesis of the play *All My Sons*. Tragedy occurs, as shown in the play, when a man fails to recognize his place in society or he gives it up because of false values. The central character of the play is the representative product of the complex modern world, where man finds it difficult if not impossible to identify himself with society except in the form of a truce with it. The best we have been able to do is to speak "duty" to society, and this implies sacrifice or self-deprivation. To think of an individual fulfilling his subjective needs through social action is difficult for us to understand. Such man is threat to the society. Man can retain his integrity of "conscience" only if he is a part of the world of "feeling responsibility" for others.

The other vital determining factors to shape and form the concepts, beliefs, ideas, or identities in society are the national political systems, bureaucratic system, religious beliefs, great depression, socio-economic policy and popular cultural value systems with which the individual gets accustomed from the beginning of his or her life. A family within such society exists maintaining its own familial norms, values, and faiths to live together with familial happiness and prosperity for all its family members. Families have always been builders of society or a community, which is the reason a family, is the first foremost solid ground for the up growth and development of the personality of an individual and society as a whole. Societal interaction prevails

familial boundaries. That is the reason an individual personality and psyche is formed or gets shaped by the interactive convergence with his or her familial or social experiences. This way an individual human personality and social behavior is not an out inborn phenomenon rather it is made through the experiences that one encounters in life around his or her social and familial milieu. When a functioning system of a society, of an institution, or of a family ceases to function in its normal way, then the situation falls into a corrupted and inadaptible state as shown in the play *All My Sons*.

Miller's *All My Sons* is successful in the sense that it is able to represent the false dream aspect of American society of the contemporary time. People in America are significantly distinct by their economic standing. In this play, a protagonist driven to suicide, a family in despair, and illusion shattered a burden of guilt and shame, father son conflicts, wayward children, rampant unemployment, cruel and irresponsible industrialists and so on. Joe is seeking for a kind of ecstasy in life, which the machine civilization offers. In fact, he is engaged in the fairy tale of get-rich-and-become-famous-quickly project which covers them. The question may arise whether people do not need ideals to survive. Kipping enthusiasm is not wrong with the protagonist of this play. No achievement is possible without it. But important thing is that it should be handled with intelligence. It is like the fuel that drives an automobile. It can destroy and kill, as well as produce useful power. But Joe cannot distinguish between reality and the obsessions that come to dominate his life.

In the play, Joe is trying his best to accomplish assigned task. But at last he turns to be unfit in his mission and becomes a pathetic victim of economic crisis. Finally, he is recognized by his awareness of being in a false position, so constantly haunted by the hollowness of all he had placed his faith in, so aware that, he stake his very life on the ultimate assertion. Joe learns late that he has been contaminated by the

position in the social sea. Miller's goal as a serious dramatist, in this play, is to point man towards the world in which the human beings can live as a naturally political, private, and engaged person. This play advocates about an individual's responsibility to his society.

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