

Chapter - I

Introduction

This research work will basically attempt to justify the Loss of Family Values of American society by depicting the problem of Tyrone family and generalizing it to the entire society.

The Long Day's Journey into Night focuses on the Tyrone Family, where the once close family has deteriorated over the years, for a number of reasons: Mary's drug addiction, Tyrone, Jamie and Edmund's alcoholism, Tyrone's stinginess, the boys' lax attitude toward work and money and a variety of other factors. James Tyrone, the father figure's stingy and self-centered tendency leads to the destruction of the bond and unity of the whole family and each of the family members passes through an alienated and hopeless life. Why can the father figure not control the family? Why do family members appear individualistic, alcoholics and addicts? This dissertation will focus on familial problems and confrontations and try to find out the root cause for these problems through a study of American culture and its impacts on the family and society.

O' Neill's keen perspectives on the culture and conventions of the American family is a subject worthy to study with proper justice. To find out the reason behind the failure of characters to establish integrative family relations is the central effort of this dissertation. This research adopts the hypothesis that O'Neill depicts the situation of the disintegration of family values by showing the characters' failure to perform their respective roles. To justify the hypothesis, the research takes socio-cultural study of America, especially, puritan culture to post-modernism and studies the effects of its degradation on society and family, its sources of the ideal American Dream and the causes of its failure.

This dissertation's focus is directed more towards the relationship between an individual, his action, thoughts and behavior according to the cultural pattern and structure because the concerned culture inevitably shapes the ideas, values, acts and even emotions. These are all indeed cultural products. Moreover it describes the consequences that arise if the cultural system or life saving mechanism is no longer capable of maintaining consistent pattern or structure, citing evidence from Tyrone's family. It discusses only a few major cultural schools basically in relation with the concept of counter-culture, displacement or alienation as according to E. Fromm, "Man leads an alienated life when he does not experience himself as the center of his world, as the creator of his own acts but his acts and their consequences have become his master, whom he obeys, or whom he even worships". (Fromm 120)

Consisting of altogether four chapters, Chapter two establishes, first, the general concept of family, its evolution and some major modes of the dis/integration of family values; and then the study is directed towards the survey of American cultural genealogy and the ultimate decadence of puritan culture. Chapter three which is the central part of this dissertation is the textual analysis of the play from the perspective of family values and their disintegration in the materialistic void of the existence of Tyrone family with reference to the views of critics. The excessive lust towards materialism and failure of American idealism in the life of the Tyrone family are seen as causes of the disintegration of family values. These have been foregrounded. Chapter four ultimately sums up what is elaborated in all three chapters.

Long Day's Journey into Night is the most powerful autobiographical masterpiece of prominent American playwright, Eugene O'Neill. The promise and the depth of his legacy is nowhere more apparent than in this extraordinary psychological epic that follows the Tyrone family through the dark night of its

collective tortured soul.

This play was written in 1940 but published posthumously, for the core of this play is the manifestation of his own family tragedy, torture and suffering. So, he had a desire not to publish this play until he and all his family died. It is a very lively and complex play consisting of four acts and five scenes. The play was first staged on the evening of 10th February 1955 in the Royal Dramatic Theatre. It has brought him the plaudits of a new generation of theatergoers and drama critics wherever it was presented whether in Stockholm, where it was first unveiled or in New York, where it induced the Pulitzer judges of 1956 to bestow a posthumous prize, or in London where it impressed another Nobel Prize Winner, T.S. Eliot, as “one of the most moving plays” he had ever seen. Everywhere it led to the revival of other plays by O'Neill and in New York it also led to the naming of a theatre in his honour.

In *Long Day's Journey into Night*, O'Neill has presented the face of fragmented, alienated and resigned despair of American society and family values experimented with his own family. This play focuses on a dysfunctional family trying to come to grips with its ambivalent emotion in the face of serious familiar problems, including drug addiction, alcoholism, moral degradation, deep rooted fear and guilt, and life-threatening illness. It is a play written with the theme of alienation and emptiness caused by economic crisis, which has fragmented the unified family. It basically deals with how the inevitable tragedy of life can trigger self-destructive behaviour in people, and whether human happiness depends on denial through consoling lies or confrontation with reality.

Long Day's Journey into Night is O'Neill's biography to art. It is a depiction of his own family tragedy, family wounds and suffering caused by 'scarcity' and deprivation. When the basic needs and services are not fulfilled, conflict in ideas and

disjoin in unity naturally occurs. Here, in the portrayal of the Tyrone Family, James Tyrone, the father is stingy and self-centered and this nature turns his wife into a morphine addict, and the sons alcoholic and irresponsible towards their duties. Each of the characters is alienated from the rest and faces life in great terror and horror of uncertain future that brings about family failure and deterioration in the end. In fact, poverty and scarcity have appeared as root causes for complete shattering of family bond. The Great Depression 1940s and the time of World War II have badly affected society. The emptiness of hopes and dreams in this play largely prevail due to the Great Depression and the World Wars. O'Neill, presenting his own frustrated and fragmented family damaged by commerce and fear of poverty, is trying to show the pain and problem, the terror and horror of all Americans. O'Neill's own family stands for overall decay and deterioration of Americans, failure of the American dream and loss of family values.

Eugene O'Neill developed his dramatic career along with "Little Theatre" movement, which was established as the first independent theater in Boston by William Dean Howells and Hamlin Garland. Both of them were realist novelist but also active in the attempt to modernize American theatre. Its purpose was "To encourage truth and progress in American Dramatic Art".

The "Little Theatre" movement began around 1912. It was a revolt against the big theatres such as those on Broadway in New York City, whose main interest was making money. The "Little Theatre" were to be art theatres. Between 1912 and 1929, there were over a thousand "Little theatre" across the country. The first among these were the Washington Square Players in New York city's Greenwich Village and the Provincetown Players in Massachusetts. These two theaters are important in literary history of drama because they introduced the world to Eugene O'Neill, the real

inaugurator of modern American drama.

With O'Neill, American drama developed into a form of literature. He freed it from the character types of Melodrama. Through his many plays he brought a wide range of new themes and style to the stage. Each play is an exploration of the human condition. The theme of each O'Neill's play goes beyond the surface of life to study the "Force behind Life".

In all of O'Neill's work, fate is one of these forces. In *Anna Christie (1920)* and many other plays, fate is symbolized by "that ole devil sea". Psychology is another of these "forces behind life". In fact, O'Neill often uses the new psychology of Freud to deepen his dramas. He was one of the first playwrights to study the struggle inside a character's mind between conscious motives and unconscious needs. While most of his plays are realistic in form, he experimented with anti-realistic techniques. He sometimes "distorted" reality in order to "express" the inner meaning or problems in a play. He enriched his dramas with new and renewed techniques. O'Carroll believes he had a "compulsion to express deeper than surface reality. (9)" *The Emperor Jones (1920)* and *The Hairy Ape (1922)* are important examples of this "expressionism".

The form of each of O'Neill plays is based upon the special dramatic needs of the play. As one critic notes, "he never echoes" from play to play. In *Strange Interlude (1928)*, the play's most important "action" happens inside the mind of the main character. O'Neill takes the stream of consciousness technique from the novel and "dramatizes" it. The characters allow the audience to hear their inner thoughts. Although the experiment is successful, we find no "echo" of it in the author's later works.

Desire Under the Elms (1924) is a completely realistic drama set in nineteenth century New England. Its theme is sexual desire and the desire for land. The structure of

this tragedy is like a Bible story. But O'Neill gives the story Freudian meaning. O'Neill also used themes and techniques from Greek tragedy in such plays as the *Great God Brown* (1926) and *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931). In his last years, the plays became increasingly autobiographical. *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (1952) explores the spiritual problems of the American Family, Probably O'Neill's own.

Long Day's Journey into Night (1956) is considered by many critics to be a triumph of realistic drama and O'Neill's finest play. In it, O'Neill performs dramatic auto-surgery on himself and an autopsy of his family. In writing this play, O'Neill has attempted to exorcise from his soul the bitterness, anger and hatred he felt for his family. The poison of resentment and hatred engulfs this family. Each family member has darkness, denial, jealousy and revenge that bring about disintegration of family values. It is a play about human responsibility and love-hate relationship within the family. There is conflict and counter conflict, torture, misunderstanding, misguidance and mistreatment of each family member by the rest. Their self-imposed guilt leads them to remain in alien and isolated situations even within the family by taking to drugs and alcoholism. The action takes place on a single day. All four members are nostalgic; they bitterly discuss the past, their hopes and dreams in the past. When night comes, we recognize it as a kind of tragic "night of the soul". Metaphorically to speak, this night is the tragic night of the American soul represented by Tyrone Family.

The twenties and thirties were a high point in American drama as O'Neill wrote most of his plays in between these years. The plays he wrote in the 1920s are mostly guided by psychological aspects and the plays of the 1930s are guided by socio-political realism.

He is important because he broke completely with the trivial naturalistic

tradition, which ruled and still rules Anglo-American Theatre. In his numerous materialistic Plays, he mixed symbolism and melodrama in which he rendered life and speech authentically. His search for an expensive form to incorporate modern ideas and notions about life and dramatic art, led him to undertake numerous experiments and adopt two radically disproportionate types of drama: the short one act play and normal ones; as well as two styles: that of realism and expressionism. He also experimented with symbolic figures, split personalities, masks, interior monologues, scenic effects, choruses, schematization, and rhythms and sound effects.

His plays are not about a glorious struggle against fate or heroic pursuit of the unattainable. They are concerned with desperate illusions, which are the acknowledgement of defeat. In them, he looks for “meaning of life” and attempts to give a pattern to the diverse ways of life and thought. But he always shows the tragic struggle between the littleness of man and the vast nature of culture and universe. Occasionally he concerns himself with social and cultural realism, and also gives much focus to individuals in relation to great forces, which function outside. He never focuses merely on individual characteristics. He has a sense of human need, so he analyzes the social structure and while doing so he presents the individual against the background of his cultural, biological and environmental heritage. There is no consistent ideological pattern in his dramas; rather there are many ideas or discussion of ideas, which keep on changing from play to play. They indicate chaos and helplessness. His best plays are genuine, powerful expression of spiritual anguish, helplessness, lies, feeling of void and mutual human destruction. O’Neill’s *Long Day’s Journey into Night* meets all these themes.

O’Neill in the earlier phase of his play writing produced plays which were poetic in tone, somewhat melodramatic in substance and essentially romantic. But he

was no longer content with either romantic, poetic or tragic melodrama. Passionately dissatisfied and restlessly seeking for some reliable ground of theatrical artistry, he frequently took resort to Strindbergian nihilism and Freudianism. His massive study of Freud, Jung and Adler paved the way toward dramatizing the inner struggle and conflict that govern the search for existential meaning.

As a victim of nihilism O'Neill saw life without any consistency and foundation. Human relationships were equally discordant for O'Neill. An iconoclast in the theatre, he reacted in his own way to the dehumanization and the spiritual vacuity of the modern wasteland. He finds human existence itself as the source of eternal suffering. While other American playwrights were committed to compromising optimism, O'Neill devoted himself to uncompromising pessimism; while they were reformatory, O'Neill was rebellious. For this distinctive tendency, a critic approves his pessimism as "salutary defiance of facile American optimism or as existentialist truth". (Gassner 5) As a pessimist, the abiding theme of his plays is the tension between illusion and reality, fate and will, faith and skepticism. These tensions are always connected with his struggle against alienation. As a "Poet of the theatre", he always seeks to transmute his "Angst", sense of personal agonies and desolation into something richly strange. (Downer 35)

O'Neill's vision of life is undoubtedly tragic and pessimistic. Human predicament is the theme of his plays. As a dramatist, he believes life is a continuous struggle.

Long Day's Journey into Night (1956) is a famous O'Neillian Pulitzer Prize winning play. This play is open to interpretation on different level like most of his plays regarding its technique of amalgamation as well as the treatment of the subject-matter. Many have seen it as a mystical drama in which there is amalgamation of

subject, mode, style, technique, insight etc. Some commentators have limited themselves to a consideration of the realistic surface layer or have read into the play a topical meaning never intended by the dramatist. Others have studied it with psychological approaches in relation with human fear and terror. Gerald Weales, while interpreting this play has said “This play is one of the most frightening family plays since Oedipus Rex”. Some scholars have read this play from the naturalistic perspective. Again some few critics focus on the study of phenomenological and existential aspects of the play. While analyzing this play, T.S. Eliot, the renowned critic says, “*Long Day’s Journey into Night* was the greatest American event in the American theatre of the fifties”. He characterizes the play as an “overwhelming drama, something with all the thrust of great theatre and all the convincingness of life”. But nobody has made an extensive study of this play from the socio-cultural aspect. So this dissertation endeavors to focus on the socio-cultural aspects.

Literature Review

Eugene O’Neill’s *Long Days’ Journey into Night* has become the focus of discussion among many critics, writers and scholars soon after its publication in 1940. This play has won great fame and recognition because of the exploration of human nature by digging up unfathomable parts of the human psyche. The play sheds light on how the integrated family has become fragmented and disjointed due to poverty, which turns each family member into an alienated and solitary creature. The play’s main thrust – ‘loss of family values’ has received comments from different critics. It will be fruitful to cite the relevant views.

While observing the theme of the play, Gerald Weales in his book *American Drama since World War II*, says:

The play is simply the depiction of the Tyrone family- the mother’s

addiction, the father's avarice, Jamie's alcoholism, Edmund's tuberculosis and the slow descent of the four of them crying shame and asking forgiveness, into the particular night. . . its strength lies in the powerful depiction of the family, the abrasive interrelationship in which the love and guilt of each one helps to destroy all the others. (82)

Here Gerald Weales has exposed family members as indulging in addiction, alcoholism and the life-threatening illness of tuberculosis. The mother gets addicted to morphine because she is very unhappy. Tyrone is constantly blamed for his own stinginess, which may have led to Mary's morphine addiction when he refused to pay for a good doctor to treat the pain caused by childbirth. She has entirely been alienated throughout the play from her family members. She, on the other hand, is never able to let go of her past ambition, either to be a nun or a professional pianist or admit to the painful truth of the present, the truth that she is addicted to morphine and her youngest son has tuberculosis. The sons appear as alcoholic because of the father's irresponsibility towards the family. He is stingy and stubborn in nature, tries to guide his family through economic control. Edmund, the younger son, has tuberculosis but the father does not pay attention to his problems. Instead of taking him to qualified doctor and the hospital, he rather prefers to invest on land and the estate. He has no fear of his son's health but rather the fear of poverty and worships success. The father himself becomes an alcoholic for he sees Jamie and Edmund, his sons' failure.

Similarly, another noted critic Henry Hewes, comments in his essay "The Long Day's Journey into Night" in *O'Neill and his play*, how the father has become irresponsible and indifferent toward his family members because of his stingy attitude thus:

Each of the quartet advances from morning's surface jocularity into

evening's soul-shaking revelations of self-truth. Each tries to blame others for his or her failures. Mary Tyrone takes to narcotics with excuses of her sons' health, her husband's unwillingness to spend money on a good doctor instead of the quack who first gave her morphine after a difficult childbirth, and his failure to supply his family a decent home life ... that an incurable self-centeredness is the heart of this famous actor's trouble. As for the two sons, Edmund confesses that only on certain occasions at sea did he ever feel ' "The Joy of belonging to a fulfillment beyond men's lousy, pitiful, greedy fears and hopes and dream." He will always be a "a stranger who never feels at home, who does not really want and is not really wanted, who can never belong, who must always be a little in love with death!" The other, Jamie at the height of drunkenness reveals that while he loves his brother he also has the subconscious wish to destroy him. (217-218)

This unified family has broken down and degenerated due to the father's inability to bring family love, cure, treatment and a decent home life. This collective family has been torn by individualistic tendencies due to uncertainty of life, despair and shattered dreams. There is jealousy and hatred within the family that destroys other members like the hatred of Jamie towards Edmund.

In similar vein, Harold Clurman, in his essay "Long Day's Journey into Night" in *Eugene O'Neill and his play*, analyzes this play in terms of family disintegration.

Thus he remarks:

All characters suffer it in one form or another - and a corresponding sense that the guilt feeling is in itself a sin or at least a fatal blemish accompanies constant alternation of moods. Every character speaks in

two voices, two moods - one of rage, the other of apology. This produces a kind of moral schizophrenia. (215-216)

Anyway, he means to say that all the family members experience a sense of self-imposed guilty feeling, which leads them into a state of confusion. The play has since escaped those limitations and stands as one of the most frightening family plays. The journey of the life of each character in the play is at once linear and circular. As the play moves along a descending line - morning to night, light to dark, sunshine to fog, possibility to despair - the action comes full circle; this is the process the four principal have gone through before. The cyclical sense of the play is enforced by the pattern of emotional involvement among the four Tyrones who obviously love each other even more than they hate one-another. With each of them, love leads to suspension, hate, cruelty, guilt, protectiveness, love and this again leads to. . . This is how all the characters of the play are entrapped within and outside of themselves. Each of them has been alienated from the rest and face the uncertainties of life, terror and horror.

Regarding the theme of the play, Harold Blooms, in his "foreword" to Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* illustrates the pitiable and miserable plight of family members stricken by unhealed pathos hidden deeply beneath each of the family members, thus:

The helplessness of the family love to sustain, let alone heal, the wounds of marriage, of parenthood, and of sonship, have never been so remorselessly portrayed, and with a force of gesture too painful ever to be forgotten by any of us. (xii)

It is the revelation of the fact that no family member remains untouched by the sorrow that paralyzes the family bond. The play shows helplessness and lovelessness among family members. The wounds of marriage that the family members have inflicted upon

one another makes them pass through a hopeless life of alienation sometimes collectively and sometimes individually.

Likewise, Joseph Wood Krutch, in his book *The American Drama since 1918*, comments on the father's character:

The actor father is a congenital bohemian talented but unstable and without self-knowledge or artistic integrity. He is lavish with his boon companions and reckless in making foolish investments, but niggardly with his family incapable of understanding that wives and children need some kind of stability in their lives. (333)

It shows the father's irresponsibilities and misunderstandings towards his family. The father is very miserly and self-centered in nature. He does not pay money for good doctors for treatment of his wife after delivery nor does he spend on treatment for his son who suffers from tuberculosis. Instead he desires to invest on land and estates. He wants to get immediate return out of his investment. He tries to hold his family under his control not by understanding their wishes or intension and helping them attain a successful career, but imposes work ethics on them. His foolish nature further helps to deteriorate the united family.

In such manner, Gary Seibert, in his article "O'Neill: The Tragic and The Comic" opines:

In writing the play, O'Neill attempted to exorcise from his soul the bitterness, anger and hatred he felt for his family. In the course of the play, the plays' idealistic hero, Edmund, a writer like O'Neill, is diagnosed with tuberculosis, a disease that killed his mother and father. The core of the play's action is the father's, brother's and mother's reaction to this discovery. Just as the fog rolls in over their Connecticut

house, the poison of resentment and hatred engulfs this family, condemned to be forever locked in the embrace of resentment, denial and revenge. (64)

It brings forth the love and hate relationship, anger and jealousy, attitude of denial and revengeful feelings and the illusive temperament of each family member, which have dismantled the family bond and unity.

In a similar way, Herald Weales, in his essay “Drama” in *Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing*, calls this play the best reflection of the then age and time of the American cultural movements of 1930s and 1940s -The Great Depression Era and the Catastrophic World War II respectively, thus:

None of the post war works of the other playwright from the 1920s and 1930s approximates the power of *Long Day's Journey into Night*, and most of it is less impressive than the plays by which those dramatists earned their reputation in earlier decades. (399)

In fact, it is a mirror text that reflects the impression of the 1930s and 1940s. The great economic collapse and terrible casualties brought by the Second World War in the entire socio-economic life of Americans. This play presents the uncertainties of life. There seems little doubt about what is going to happen. This Tyrone family has been fragmented due to commercial crisis, lack of fulfillment of the needs and wishes of every member in the family, loss of hope and confidence among themselves.

This is how different critics have given their perspectives in distinct ways. Unlike them, being a bit dissimilar, this dissertation aims to study the text from the perspective of the Loss of Family Values based on socio-cultural aspects of American life.

Chapter-II

Cultural Codes and Family Values

General Introduction to the Concept of Family

A family consisting of a husband, wife and children is a primary social unit. It is instituted because of the need for affection between husband and wife. Generally, it begins with the love between two persons of opposite sex with the ideal expectation of

living happily ever after. The cultural importance of the family is emphasized in the *Old Testament*. In Christianity the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph is regarded as the sacred model for domestic life. The followers of Christianity assume that God instituted the family and that it has certain spiritual functions to perform. The earliest codified scriptures of Hinduism like the *Rig-Veda* and the *Manusmriti* devote much attention to the institution of the family and its integration.

Different Approaches to the Family

The family is a complex institution with the combination of multiple values and needs as the underlying basis of it. The biological basis of the family has been accepted by thinkers of different ages as the fundamental force for organizing a unit of society. For the fulfillment of basic biological needs like sexual desire, two individuals of the opposite sex come together to be wife and husband. The biological relation between the two naturally gives birth to new offsprings. So, children are the natural biological products of parents. Tracing the biological basis of the family, Aristotle in his book *Ethics* further focuses on the friendship and common goals between wife and husband which differentiates human family from the family of other animals:

With the other animals the union extends only to this point (reproduction), but human beings live together not only for the sake of reproduction but also for the various purposes of life . . . both utility and pleasure seem to be found in this kind of friendship. (Adler and Doren 145)

Aristotle hints at the cultural and cooperative value of marriage and family. Thus the family institution is an integral part of culture. It is a cultural unit, which the biological force contributes to. Ernest W. Burgess and Paul Wallin emphasizes the role of culture

encountering the biological force in a family:

The most obvious needs are sexual impulses and the sustenance and the socialization of the offspring. The needs both of the parents and of the offspring are modified by cultural forces and these account for the variations of the family in different societies. (Burgess and Wallin 13)

The family is the locus where multiple values, hopes and responsibilities converge. The conventionally accepted notion is that “happiness” in the family relationship can be attained only if there is strong sentimental and spiritual affection among members. The mutual affection and sentiment creates culture. Culture constitutes the codes for perpetual integration and order in the family. About the inseparable relationship between the family and the culture, Mabel A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill affirm. “Norms connected with the family are so firmly embedded in the culture that their violation is very disorganizing to the family”. (341) The desire for a good and harmonious family has been upheld by creative writers and thinkers of all ages. Homer in his epic *Odyssey* highlights the desire for the harmonious family from the mouth of Odysseus:

And may the gods accomplish your desire: a house, a husband and a harmonious converse with him the best thing in the world being a strong household in serenity where man and wife agree - woe to their enemies. (Adler and Doren 144)

In such literature and cultural codes the view is often expressed that a society loses its strength if people do not fulfill family obligations. Happiness and prosperity prevail if everyone behaves ‘correctly’ as family members and if no one lags behind in filial obligations.

But it is different in Plato's postulation of the family in his Utopian ideal state

reflected in his book *Republic*. His postulation breaks down the normal sanctions of family. He takes the family as institution that obstructs the potentiality of an individual and corrupts him. So, he develops the concept of communal family in which filial obligations and roles would be delegated to the state. But a leading sociologist William J. Goode, in the contrary, says. “Many family roles and responsibilities cannot usually be delegated to others...”. (Goode 6) Mutual affection and obligations are inseparable in the family, which are the integrative forces between an individual and the family.

Freudian psychoanalysis points out the fundamental disintegrative force ever present in a family relationship. Freud shows that there is always the “horror of incest” in the family relationship. When a child cannot sublimate his/ her unconscious sexual desire with the parent of opposite sex due to social morality, s/he unconsciously intends to demolish the whole family norms. He further remarks about family relationship, which nourishes utopian dreams:

The mother can transfer to her son all the ambition, which she had to suppress in herself and she can hope to get from him the satisfaction of all.... Even the marriage is not firmly assured until the woman has succeeded in making her husband into her child and in acting the part of a mother towards him. (Adler and Doren 172)

Freud implies that family is a common locus where every member nourishes some Utopian desire. The family equivalent to a Utopian institution contains the underlying desire of integration and harmony to achieve the optimum of happiness.

Arlene Skolnick states: “The family as a little social system also fits the model of utopian harmony and consensus. There is basic agreement on values and how these values are to be achieved in practice”. (Skolnick 44) In a family there are certain values

to which all family members agree, and thus, integration in the family becomes possible.

Bases of Family Integration

Integration of the family is a source of happiness to an individual as a member of family. The integrated family can be viable if there is complete faith and intimacy among family members. Faith and intimacy are the corollaries of successful and honest performance of respective roles and obligations codified by respective culture in the family. Then what each type of family shares is a commitment to care, a unique sense of belonging, and a degree of intimacy. When it fails to retain these values, it ceases to function as a family. Mabell A. Elliott and Francis E. Merrill highlight familial norms and roles as integrating sources, "A family is an actual group of persons in mutual familial relationship. The family on the other hand, is the overall pattern of institutional norms and values that prescribe the familial roles within all particular families whatsoever". (Elliott and Merrill 341) Elizabeth Porter in her celebrated book *Building Good Families in a Changing World (1995)* formulates some measurements of an integrated family like inclusiveness, faithfulness among members, truthfulness, forgiveness, mercy, affectionate care and intimacy, independence, and mutual obligations as prerequisite conditions to make an integrated family. When a family lacks any of these conditions family disintegration comes to the fore.

Causes of Family Disintegration and Loss of Values

The integrated family is a 'unified' group consisting of its members having the sense of filial responsibilities and common interest. But when a family is disorganized because of conflicting interests, it naturally fails to perform its function as a unified family. In American and European societies the decline of religious authority has

modified the philosophy of family life. New attitudes towards family life are thus replacing some conventional attitudes such as 'the father is the head of the family' and 'children should be obedient to their parents', which had provided the basis for family life; and their dissolution threatens the consistency of family values to a certain extent.

Development of the concept of individualism has also helped destroy broader family networks. Individualism ranks self-interest and self-preference as the highest priorities. Elizabeth Porter takes individualism as a responsible factor for family disintegration:

Individualist tendencies destroy much of their commitment, and prevent families from acting as a social cement, no longer giving a concrete base to family members, and no longer acting as cohesive social units that help to sustain social bonds. (Porter 15)

Generation conflict is still another basis for disintegration of family values. The family is the locus where two conflicting values encounter. The old generation of parents endeavours to perpetuate their control over the young generation with the help of conventional cultural norms. The new generation, on the other hand, wants to escape the conventional cultural network to be 'happy' in the freedom from the old generation and old culture. 'Reverence for the old' was the basic family code in Western society. But the modern progressive society that has shaped its ideals about progress can never place its affairs in the hands of the old and respect them.

At the transitional phase of life when an individual attains biological as well as social maturity, s/he deliberately breaks conventional norms and cultural values at the same moment when they obstruct his/her desire of happiness and freedom. At this juncture, the existing relationship between the two generations ceases to function harmoniously. Robin M. Williams, Jr. in this connection says, "In a complex society

the authority of the parents is continually challenged by youth. This clash of authorities is a specific manifestation of the broader problem of cultural conflicts and lack of integration". (Williams, Jr. 67)

Thus, the family always contains the disintegrative force within itself. Family disintegration is the consequence of the failure among members to achieve expected 'happiness' and 'satisfaction' of any kind in the relationship between wife and husband, parents and children. It leads to family discord, divorce, and deviation from duties, which sets forth a norm for eroding family values ensuring in family disintegration.

American Puritan Culture and Family

Heavily indebted is American civilization to the European root. American civilization sprouted in England of Queen Elizabeth I. The final decades of the sixteenth century were a period of intense religious turmoil in England. Puritan non-conformists found that the reformation had not gone far enough and that the Anglican church still bore too much resemblance to Roman Catholicism and had not been purified enough. Infused by the ideas of Protestant theologian John Calvin, the Puritans believed that their faith would transform them and give them a new way of life.

The Protestant reformation of Martin Luther and John Calvin caused some major shifts in the relationship between the family and religion. It condemned the monastic and celibate virtues of Catholicism and defined the home as a 'school of faith'. Not only this, by restricting the rituals and social dimension of the Church, reformers paved the way for the development of home-centred religion. Daily family prayer and Bible reading, preaching to children, and even mutual confession of sin between husband and wife were important activities in Puritan home life. This kind of religious

dimension of family strengthened the family relation. Family religions not only imparted spiritual happiness among all members of the family but also defined their 'sacred' roles as responsible members of the family i.e. the father as the bread -winner patriarch and spiritual leader who led the other members towards spiritual salvation, the mother as the housewife for child rearing and domestic drudgeries; and children obeying their parents for their moral and virtuous maturity. They had strong faith among each other in the family for they had strong faith in God. They believed that violation of these 'sacred' duties would amount to violation of the God's honour.

But after the restoration of the British monarch and even before it, the Puritan frontier of faith and family piety was fatally shaken by religious tussles and political turmoil. The radical religious sectarians helped undermine the need for family religion. Puritanism had tried to be more than a religious system in England. As Calvin had taught, moral conduct and social organization were integral dimensions of godly community. The Puritans wanted to establish godly community with the covenant of God in which the family would be a harmonious institution with 'sacred' duty and moral awareness as well as intimacy among all; and in which society would be perfectly integrated. When both the Anglican Church and the English government looked upon the Puritans unfavourably, many Puritans decided to go to America. With the pain of dwindling family values the Puritans left for New England to found colonies which were more hospitable to family religion. The English Puritans who first went to America across the Atlantic Ocean and settled in New England had carried Puritan hopes and dreams about all sorts of social harmony and family happiness. In their dreams, New England was to be a cleansed and moralized copy of Old England by a careful establishment of uncorrupted Christian institutions. For the Puritans, America was the Promised Land-the land that had already existed in the Bible. Their settlement

in New England was, for them, God's will revealing itself in history as they regarded their exodus and settlement as a fresh start for history and religion.

Scarcely any of the leaders of the first Puritan exodus expected any earthly perfection. They were resolute to found and foster a covenanted community' - a community founded on truth, dedicated to righteousness, and strong in resistance to all overt heresy and disobedience. John Winthrop, the governor of new Massachusetts Bay Colony, while preaching to his fellow-passengers in the first hour of the new settlement, prophesied:

Wee shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our God in this worke we have undertaken and so cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. (Boorstin 3)

This historical proclamation of Winthrop outlined the Puritan morality and code of the community. The Puritans were uncompromising moralists. Their moralism was more applicable than abstract, more practical and progressive. Paul K. Conkin remarks:

"Puritan moralism was always projected outward as well as inward.

It embraced the whole society and engendered ceaseless attempts to turn the city of man into a near replica of the City of God". (Conkin 12) Conkin illustrates that the Puritans were more concerned with right conduct than with contemplative truth, with useful beauty than with elegant decoration.

Thus, Puritan ethics was more concerned with establishing the replica of the City of God on earth, a Good Society with the covenant of God than the promotion of individual self-assertion. The Puritan 'self was dedicated to the collective good of family and society. Warren I. Susman in his book *Culture as History (1984)* sketches the four major characteristics of Puritanism which are: self-restraint and control over

appetite and emotions, dedication to harmonious community, morality evident in the obedience to the law of state as well as the law of God and finally attitude toward success in a material sense with the belief in toil, industry and thrift. Thus Puritan ethics was community-oriented for the higher purpose rather than for self-interest. They were devoted to the integral family and community. More concerned with establishing Puritan domestic virtue and family 'sacredness', the new settlers were serious the issue of preaching to their children the Puritan morality and making the new community a real covenanted community with social and family harmony. As there was lack of Puritan ministers on the one hand, and the fear of the possibility of damnation on the other, family worship again became essential. Hambrick-Stowe, emphasizing the significance of Puritan family worship says, ". . . Puritan family worship, far from being emotionless, was a means of grace . . . through which the redemptive drama was re-enacted and experimented". (McDannell 5) Parents preached to their children and thus Puritan family religion and intimate family relations was revitalized in the new Puritan community. Puritan morality was the binding thread that harmonized and unified family virtues and integrated relations.

According to Daniel J. Boorstin, "Puritan New England was a noble experiment in applied theology". (Boorstin 5) The New England Puritans were more rigid, and refused to develop a theory of toleration because they were first and foremost community-builders who had to be very rigid in Puritan morality, for formulation of the Good Society. The violation of any Puritan morality and code was severely punishable. Any word questioning or cursing the Authority of God was taken as blasphemy. Social and the family sanctions were to be observed painstakingly. The *individual* was subordinate to family and social harmony. The family was the institution created by the will of God for Salvation. The domestic piety and confession

between wife and husband made them fully attached to each other. All were, as a whole, 'happy' because there was the underlying optimism of salvation in the honest observance of cultural norms.

American Family Against the Background of increasing Secularism

In Puritan society, the family was a major institution because of family religion. There was complete faith and fidelity among all family members and "what held them (Puritans) together was not a unified administrative structure but a common quest, a common way of life". (Boorstin 17) The New England Puritan society was initially rural and agrarian. All family members contributed to the collective effort for production of family livelihood.

Because of their perseverance, and honest toil, the Puritans gradually got material prosperity. So the patriarchal agrarian life style of Calvinist New England was already beginning to change by the end of the seventeenth century. Growing material prosperity gradually led to deviation from sacred Puritans Puritan morality for the collective goodness of the community. Increasing material affluence was the self-erasing outcome of the Puritan commitment, and it gradually denuded its own root - the Puritan cultural innocence. As early as 1702, the Puritan divine Cotton Mather regretted "... religion brought forth prosperity and the daughter destroyed the mother". (McDonnell 5) The gradual inclination towards individual prosperity led American culture towards secularism. New England Puritans gradually became more inclusive and receptive of new European thoughts: more secular and scientific launched by the empirical philosophy of John Locke, Edmund Burke and David Hume; the natural philosophy of Newton, the religious philosophy of Deism and such other movements towards secularism. The proponent of American Enlightenment, Benjamin Franklin replaced metaphysical conceptualization of Puritan morality for the service of the rigid

Puritan God by the ethics of self-management and social service. His monumental book *The Autobiography (1771- 1788)* was a declaration of the experimental ethics and the codes of common life. Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury also depict the transition of Puritan culture into more materialist sophistication, “. . . the older Calvinist mode of spiritual growth is now adapted to worldly purposes, to a materialist ‘pilgrim’s progress’, for service to God is now service to man, and morality and issue of social utility”. (Ruland and Bradbury 43)

Rarely was eighteenth century culture untouched by the neoclassical English poet Alexander Pope’s dictum “The proper study of mankind is man”. The Puritan God as the centre of Faith was shifted to ‘Man’. The glorification of Man promoted the sense of self and individuality. People started feeling relieved from the hands of the Calvinist angry God and rigid Puritan codes as they gained material prosperity and the sense of individual strength. By the same token, the Utopia of an integrative family tightened so long by the girdle of Puritan culture founded on faith and piety started to be relaxed with increasing secularism.

American society went on progressing, headlong in materialistic, scientific and industrial goal, winning, but along this path they dropped their cultural values, and the Puritan dream of Good Society along with integrative family piety. Because of their excessive focus on human reason and intellect rather than on faith and intuition, the dream of spiritually ‘purified’ society and integrative family gradually dwindled. No doubt, it led them toward material prosperity, released them from Puritan orthodoxy, but at the same time it took them on the path of cultural decline. When religious enthusiasm waned, so did family piety among American Puritans just as in Old England.

By the mid-nineteenth century, material progress was ascending high in American society. Ralph Waldo Emerson comes to lament it. The loss of faith and intuition, and the dominating mark of reason and institutional religion were precisely the centre of target, which Emerson's Transcendentalism had to struck. With the publication of his *Nature* (1836), he not only repudiated the material orientation of American society, which was the death-knell of Puritan values and family piety but he also decried the residual Puritan values and faith as institutional religion. Warren I. Susman remarks about Emerson's anti- Puritan inclination. "Emerson belongs with those intellectuals haunted by a Puritan past who began the modern search for meaningful readjustment and fuller expression of self. (Susman 16) Emerson's philosophy of transcendental self, and his vision against history, which was the bulwark of historic Puritanism all proved an additional brick to individualism. His excessive emphasis on I in his *Nature*: "I become a transparent eyeball. I am nothing, I see all" not only severed the American individual from the material connection but also detached him from history, and family relations and piety. When the 'self became important the family values and integration were shaken. Individual became more aware of his/her self-potentiality and salvation not by family piety and institutional religion like Puritanism but by self-striving.

By the mid-nineteenth century, American society was attaining industrial economy. The establishment of the textile industry in New England in 1820 introduced the model of industrial economy. Industrial mass production slowly replaced traditional cottage industries. The change from an agrarian life-style to an industrial one was gradual. In the progressive mode of industrialization, separation of the work place from the home was inevitable. Industrialization developed a wage-earning system and impersonal labour economy. Individual job specialization separated family members

confusing them to respective work places. When they left home for earning wage, they automatically lost traditional family values. Colleen McDannell says. "As men left their homes, they became distanced from domestic activities". (McDonnell 79) The traditionally retained roles of family members became a nostalgic distant memory. All became independent because of the labour market and wage-earning. So members of a family lost their love, respect, fidelity and responsibility towards each other.

Slave trade was another inseparable characteristic of contemporary American economy. The prosperity of the agrarian economy of American plantation owners depended on slave labour and the slave trading business became dominant. Puritan plantation owners brought the blacks from Africa as slaves and employed them in their plantation. The industrialization of America further promoted slave trade. The encounter between the two different sets of cultural values: one, African black cultural values, the other, the Puritan culture deteriorated to a significant degree the cultural purity of both. Traditional Puritan family values and marital morality could not prevail for ever when Puritan white males had illicit sexual relations with black slave women. The black slave women gave birth to children from white illicit males. This trend of sexual perversity and overt exploitation destroyed the cultural piety of Puritan family values, and also promoted social injustice as black slave women were constrained to keep their fatherless children. Epoch making American novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe depicted this picture of social injustice and sexual perversity of the white lord in her most famous revolutionary novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). This book shows the loss of old Puritan theme of fundamental laws of love, family and true feeling, and instigates the rebellious spirit among African Americans, which launched the massive Civil War in the 1860s.

The years between the Civil War and America's entry into the World War I were the linchpin for the development of American culture, they were the years that divided the past from the present. The economy underwent a profound change and the religious ideas, the remnants of Puritanism in the American psyche, could not survive in their original form. Puritan ideology had to face the apocalypse of the war and then the brutalities of rapid industrialization after the war. Growing skepticism geared by the scientific theories of Darwin shattered conventional Puritan faith. Darwin's theory of the "survival of the fittest" was applied to socio-economic relations. Since Puritan ideology was still the undercurrent of American society, the social Darwinists interpreted Darwinism with Puritan religious overtones. They spread the propaganda that honest toil and industry were activities worshipping the Puritan God. Then if they were dutiful to God, the God would reward them with wealth in this world and salvation in the next. Even Franklinean moral science supported Social Darwinism. It was accepted that if a decent man had a sober set of habits, if he worked hard and fulfilled his moral responsibilities then he would be rewarded with plenty of wealth. Social Darwinists like Herbert Spenser viewed that since money was the reward from God to the moral person and poverty was the punishment for the sinful one, charity and taxation were against the law of God. Social Darwinism gave way to rapid industrialization and laissez faire economy in American culture. It reduced 'cultural man' to an 'economic man' who lost his sense of spiritual faith and family morality. On the cultural vacuity of materialistic society, Warren I, Susman says, "In a world where Economic-Man dominates, there can be no truly good society no art worthy of the name, no culture". (Susman 46) What prospered was the thought of individual prosperity as divine providence. Harmony in the American family was most badly affected because of excessive material-orientation and frequent economic depression.

Twentieth Century Culture and American Family Value

American civilization has always been the outcome of tension between history and reality, past and present, nostalgia and novelty. From the very Puritan origin of American civilization, the new settlers had to synthesize these opposite values. On the one hand, they had the Biblical history, which they took as Puritanical history where the new Promised Land already existed. But on the other hand, there was a vast wilderness in the Promised Land and it was their mission to establish a new settlement, harmony and morality to make the dream of the Promised Land viable on earth.

Another attribute of the American psyche is that Americans are nonconformists. This tendency has given them the sense of alienation. They always want to change the existing social trend, and implant a new one, which would be more liberal than the existing one. America has become the Promised Land not only for Puritans but also for other immigrants of different ages. With industrial advancement, material affluence and urbanization, the rate of immigration from other countries to America became intense at the end of the nineteenth century. Their settlement in America has always been marked by tension between past and present, nostalgia and novelty. Ethnic communities of Asian, African and European origins faced the problem of maladjustment between the existing American culture and diverse other new cultures of other ethnic immigrants. So, on the one hand, they had the dream of new progress and happiness, but on the other hand, the problem of cultural assimilation, which created the sense of nostalgia for the bygone culture and society. The isolation from their own identity in an alien society is the underlying sense of alienation in them. About the problem of assimilation Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean remark:

American society is the melting pot of diverse cultural and ethnic assimilation - indigenous and immigrants. They tried to forget the past

diversity to be harmonious ... Assimilation stressed the denial of ethnic difference and the forgetting of cultural practices in favour of Americanisation. (Campbell and Kean 44)

The trend of cultural assimilation obliterated cultural purity and value of any culture. Conventional cultural purity, social system and family values could not exist with cultural hybridity. Immigrant ethnic groups could neither return to their own cultural past nor could they accept the American Puritan culture. Their cultural pluralism created the situation of 'deterritorialization' in the word of Gilles Deleuze.

Summarizing the idea of Deleuze, Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean write:

America is concerned with 'deterritorialization' or the movement across lines and boundaries, unafraid to flee to new land or leave old ones behind. He (Deleuze) writes of the American passion for 'departure, becoming, passage' in its creation of a New Earth. (Campbell and Kean 33)

Deleuze points at the American tendency towards innovation and new creation in uncertain euphoria dismantling the old cultural foundation that he calls 'deterritorialization'. This very American tendency brought forth cultural chaos. The opening decade of the twentieth century is marked by cultural radicalism and social anarchy, which challenged conventional values and social order. The 'alienated' new generation lost all faith in the convention and started a completely new avenue of culture and society. The precursors of European modernism like Nietzsche, Emile Zola, Henrik Ibsen and Sigmund Freud all challenged Victorian moralism and hinted at the new avenue for fresh spirit of the new era. Nietzsche's proclamation that 'the God is dead' brought a radical upsurge to the libertarian movement of the Decadence. The movement of European Decadence like the experiment with drugs, intoxication,

unnatural and illicit sexual perversity, the deliberate rejection of the Victorian status quo and conventional values, and “the systematic derangement of all the senses” in terms of the French poet Arthur Rimbaud all swayed the old conventions. (Abraham 43)

Contemporary American society was receptive of this radical movement of Decadence. As the new avant-garde movement affected the cultural, aesthetic, social and intellectual scene, the old certainties faded, a new explosive attitude came - to the fore and American society moved with new freedom at the expense of all moral institutions and conventions. Warren I. Susman sees Freudian influence as the cause of the avant-garde movement:

With the introduction of Freudian thought into American intellectual life, the theme emerged of liberation, self-expression, the need for art and beauty and the denunciation of Puritanism as repressive and hostile to expression, beauty and even to nature itself. (Susman 45)

Susman takes Freudian psychoanalytical concept of individual desire as a means of gratifying the unconscious self-expression by destroying conventional norms as responsible for cultural change in America.

But no single factor is responsible for escalation of the avant-garde movement. As the gentle Victorian tradition of the middle class failed by the end of the nineteenth century, it was the end of American innocence. Avant-garde radicals were iconoclasts of everything conventional and adherents of everything new. About the avant-garde direction towards new creation Richard Ruland and Malcolm Bradbury remark. “As the nineteenth century synthesis shattered, as the tradition collapsed and the underlying value systems that had shaped centuries of art were challenged or dissolved, the whole basis artistic enterprise had to be recreated”. (Ruland and Bradbury 240)

All conventional values, social order, and family integrity faded in the hope of new libertarian society. The enthusiastic youth circle enjoyed this liberty. But still the 'American Dream' of order, social harmony, family integration and 'happiness' was undercurrent in the American psyche. People were restless and dissatisfied with the prevailing social anarchy, cultural chaos, deterritorialization and derangement. With the dream of restoring cultural consistency, and economic prosperity they had the nostalgic longing for the lost past. But their effort to restore the past in the 'present' proved futile, first, with American involvement in World War I, and then with the industrial, technological and material advancement of America in the post-War decade. The war further destroyed the repository cultural and social values. The integral family was shattered when most of the young people went to fight in the war and most of them died there. Even those who survived lost faith in the social order, morality, ethics and family integrity as those values could not protect them from the disaster of the war. American society was constrained to accept the situation of cultural decay. F. Scott Fitzgerald typically writes about the post war chaotic era in his novel. *This Side of Paradise* (1920), "... all gods dead, all wars fought, all faith in man shaken". (Ruland and Bradbury 273)

Material affluence in the war-hit American society after World War I further brought down the sentimental, spiritual and cultural values of family and society. American society, which was once dreamed as God's Covenanted Community, moved towards the opposite pole that worshipped material prosperity instead of spiritual happiness. The family, which was once taken as a school of faith and institution of righteousness broke down, and was fragmented into individual separation, deviation from family morality, and by the same token towards complete disintegration. It is by unwanted deviation of the American family towards

disintegration caused by Puritan cultural loss, and growing material affluence and social radicalism.

American literature of the early decades of the 20th century handles the theme of disillusionment and dilemma of rejection and acceptance of cultural radicalism and material affluence. The mixture of experimental excitement about the new, and anxious awareness of historical loss made modern American life confusing. Most American creative writers just after World War I who are known as the 'Lost Generation'- the term first used by Gertrude Stein- reflected the American's lamenting disillusionment of the post-War era. T.S. Eliot in his *The Waste Land* (1922) reflects the representative picture of personal and cultural sterility, the loss of spiritual values and turning of modern society towards eternal disintegration in the achievement of material prosperity. F. Scott Fitzgerald and Eugene O'Neill are writers of the era who reflect the failure of the American dream.

The economic collapse of 1929 destroyed the happy, confident mood of America in the "Jazz Age" of the twenties. "It was borrowed time anyway", F. Scott Fitzgerald remarked. Millions of Americans lost their jobs as the nation entered the Depression Era. Uncertainties and emptiness of hopes and dreams prevailed due to the Great Depression. There seemed little doubt about what was going to happen. "It was a time to fear poverty and worship success." Everything was disastrous. Americans believe that Money (material comforts) can buy love and happiness. But the failure of American idealism- peace, prosperity and pursuit of happiness turns them into tragic figures. America was entering a new period of social anger and self-criticism. The writing of Dreiser, Dos Passos, Upton Sinclair and Sherwood Anderson now had a strong "leftist flavour". Instead of experimenting with "modernist" literature, most writers turned to a new kind of social realism and naturalism. It showed the struggles

and tragedies of ordinary people. In the early thirties, the first reaction to the depression was a literature of social protest. There was a powerful Marxist “Proletarian Literature” movement. It described the terrible reality of the world: The grip of capitalism and the alienation of workers and individuals, the dirty streets and the poor houses, the gangsters, prostitutes and factories with awful working conditions. Marxist ‘Proleterian Literature’ is the literature of social realism and social consciousness. Edward Dahlberg’s *Bottom Dogs* (1930) and Jack Conroy's *Disinherited* (1933) are similar autobiographical novels written in the same spirit of social realism.

In his novels, John O’Hara the renowned writer of “Proleterian Literature” shows a similar interest in “documentary” realism. They are tough, realistic descriptions of the upper-middle class world. *Appointment in Samarra* (1934) is considered his best novel. Its fast moving story holds the reader until the main character kills himself in the end: did society cause his death or did he die for more private reasons? In his novel, O’ Hara creates an honest picture of twentieth - century Americans. They are driven by money, sex and struggle for higher position in society. O’Hara in almost all of his works recorded the changing American scene from World War I to the Vietnam War.

In the thirties, society was guided by fear, hunger, sex, disasters of nature and evils of capitalism. Social crimes often resulted because of these forces. Exploitation of the individual by capitalism had shocked the nation. There was no hopeful future for workers. Society was slowly and gradually turning towards indifference and individualism. Most writers described people struggling against the social and economic problems of their times. Nathanael West, a great writer of the thirties, depicts the difficulties of the time in his noted novel *Miss Lonely Hearts* (1933). In it, his character says, “ I sit and look at myself all day and cry”, a sixteen year-old says, “I

have a big hole in the middle of my face that frightens people, even myself". No one could justify or even explain the suffering of the time.

The historical and cultural developments of the forties and fifties in America reveal the ugliness and horror of the war in a realistic manner. After the war, America entered an "Age of Anxiety". The politics of America was influenced by two great fears; first the fear of the Bomb and Second, the fear of communism. They were seen as a national sickness and threat to capitalism. American authors in the fifties show that they are very unconformable in the post-war world. The new political fears (of communism and the Bomb) are less important to them than their own psychological problems in the new American society. It is not a period of important experiments in style. The concern is to develop new and important themes of time. Many writers in this period try to find new answers to old questions, "Who am I? Many black Americans and Jewish - American writers find the answer by looking at their own cultural and racial background. Others explore the ideas of modern philosophy and psychology. The young "Beat" writers use oriental themes for the same purpose. The central theme of their work however is often loneliness and "The Search for the Self".

Robert Lowell, a renowned writer of the time was talking about the "ill-spirit" of the entire nation. He was relating his private trouble to the troublesome of the era. Lowell speaks for all of us. The ill-spirit of the fifties was an important theme for the "Beats" movement. They were the new rebel-heroes. They called themselves "Beats" because they felt beaten (defeated) by society, and because they loved the strong free beat of Jazz rhythms. For them, fear of the future was part of the illness of modern society. They lived for the joy of the "enormous present". They enjoyed drugs, sex and wild trips around the country. For all the 'Beats', creating literature was a kind of performance. It showed other people how deeply they were shocked and alienated in

society. Allen Ginsberg's master work *Howl* (1956) is itself the exemplary work of the Beat movement challenging American mainstream culture. The poetic work has message: defending drug-taking and homo-sexuality or attacking American society and politics. Thus, after the 1930s, the individual appeared an 'alienated' person: he had the feeling of not belonging to any group. He was the lonely person, separated from society and other people. The writing and literary work of this time depicted individuals as "types" (the immigrant, the "average citizen", the rich man etc). When their ideal dream for material peace, prosperity and happiness failed, they fell into their own solitary confinement slowly and gradually practicing counter cultural activities like drinking, whoring, homosexuality, drug-addiction, alcoholism and so on. This was all done to sustain their unhealed mental wounds produced by the Age.

Development and growth of twentieth century culture and family values of America deviated into disintegration and sense of loss. It was the turning point in American society towards an undesired direction. Once it was the home of idealism and centrality but now the old values are gone, there is nothing to replace them. But again the American dream still remains dominant in the American psyche as 'collective unconsciousness' to use the terms of Carl Jung. This dream remained however, always abstract and never actualized, ever present and never fulfilled. American society always has the passion to establish a harmonious and integrated social and family institution but it is moving towards deviance and inconsistency because of society's material orientation. Materially and culturally, American society could not grasp the grand success and thus remained forever unsatisfied. The pain of this failure is recurrent in them and that is why American society is dominated by frustration and fragmentation. Dealing with this situation, E.A. Robinson uses nineteenth century poetic form to

express twentieth century fears and problems. Robinson's belief was that man's fate is wrapped in the "black and of the night". He shows character, getting lost in life" awful Chaos'. Now each individual must stand-alone and face the dark tideless floods of nothingness (death). There is an existential threat in modern life - Is life still worth living? Aloneness is the predicament of modern life.

The same kind of dilemma and dissatisfaction with existence is reflected by Eugene O'Neill in the Tyrone family of *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1940). Each of the family members struggles for a prosperous life in vain. It is the Tyrone family's quest for 'happiness' which is a vital part of the American dream - Jeffersonian as well as puritan dream - and which terminates in the nightmarish disillusionment of the impossibility of achieving it. Each character's existential quest for 'happiness' consequently leads them towards a situation of complete disintegration of family values. The Great Depression of 1929, and the capitalistic exploitation and consequences of the world war lead the Tyrone family as well as the entire society towards disharmony, chaos and disintegration. And thus, slowly and gradually the people and society, like each character of the Tyrone family, distort towards individualistic form, celebrating alien world with a nostalgia for old life, norms and values. O'Neill arrests this perplexed American modernity experimenting with life in *Long Day's Journey into Night*.

Chapter -III

Study of Loss of Family Values in *Long Day's Journey into Night*

Loss of Family values is mainly related to situation of a family having many conflicts of interests among the members. It is the condition of lack of sentiment, emotional and spiritual attachment among family members. In such a situation, family disintegration occurs. When the family is disorganized, it naturally fails to perform its function as a united family. Sense of individualism, generation gap, cultural clashes within a family and many mutual gaps and misunderstandings are some major conditions and symptoms of family disintegration and loss of values. Disintegration of family values is the outcome of the failure among family members to achieve expected 'happiness' and 'satisfaction' of any kind in relations between husband and wife, parents and children and among family members. It leads to family discord, divorce and deviation eroding family values, bond and unity.

The family is the locus where multiple values, hopes and responsibilities

converge. Happiness and prosperity prevail if everyone behaves correctly. There comes the family misery and disharmony when the sentiment, love and affection among the family members are broken. A family/society loses its strength if an individual does not fulfill family obligation. Thus, mutual affection and obligation, are inseparable in the family as these comprise the integrative forces between individuals in the family. On the other hand, anger, rage, jealousy, resentment and hate are disintegrative forces that lead to loss of family values, dooms and destruction. Sense of mutual belonging and degree of intimacy become completely shattered and the family fails to attain the ultimate goal of success, peace and prosperity. When there is disintegration of the individual or among family members, it directly affects society and culture too because society/culture is the unity of different individuals.

O'Neill's Long Day's Journey into Night is the portrayal of the fallen family of Tyrone. All the family members in the play are frustrated, fragmented and alienated from the rest. Everyone in the play seems unhappy and puts the blame on others. It depicts the fall of the family due to lack of co-operation, co-ordination and mutual responsibility. The Tyrone family which was once close, has deteriorated over the years with numerous problems like Mary's morphine addiction, Tyrone's, Jamie's and Edmund's alcoholism, Tyrone's stinginess and stubborn nature, the boys' recklessness and indifferent attitude towards work and money, and many other factors. No one bears responsibility for these problems, instead they accuse one- another and fight among themselves. They create many conflicts and counter-conflicts that ultimately leads them towards the family failure, disintegration and loss of values. **Breakdown of Family Relationships and Responsibilities**

O'Neill sets this play with the background of the Tyrone Family where family norms and values have been dropping and the family is already sick due to unhappiness

and disloyalty within it. Frequent attempts are adopted to establish a new healthy family from new avenues of life with fresh awareness of mutual responsibilities. But all efforts prove futile as family members fail to play out the desired roles, and the family becomes a dispersed one. It is all due to the failure of economy (depression), cultural faith and ideals that the family fails to cope with the problem of the modern individual. Because of the self-erasing and self-contradictory existence of modern individuals and their intense longing to attain the soothing ideal of the innocent past, and at the same time the limitations set by reality, happiness becomes unattainable, and individual existence is itself always fragmented between the two. So, all attempts to establish harmony and integration in the family lead to inevitable disintegration. All the characters drop their responsibilities because one fails to be a reliable support in the attainment of other's happiness.

In the depiction of the Tyrone family all the characters have severe faults and all are capable of great cruelty. This family is slowly decaying because it is trapped in mutual suspicions and disbeliefs.

From the very opening of the play, it is observed that James Tyrone, the father has intense desire to invest on land and estate. He has a strong notion that investment on land, industry and business will bring a prosperous life and secure future:

TYRONE. I wouldn't say that, Mary. After all, he was the one who advised me to buy that place on Chestnut Street and I made a quick turnover on it for a fine profit.

MARY. I know. The famous one stroke of good luck I'm sure McGuire never dreamed - never mind, James. I know it's a waste of breath trying to convince you. You're not a cunning real estate speculator.

TYRONE. I've no such idea. But land is land and it's safer than the

stocks and bonds of Wall Street Swindlers. But let's not argue about business this early in the morning. (O'Neill 720)

Tyrone's field of interest is always guided by profit motive. It is business oriented and utilitarian in perspective. He always searches ways for prompt investment and outcome. But, Mary, his wife is quite dissimilar in his interest and blames that he is not concerned with the home and family. She is in conflict with her husband and says Edmund has been suffering from cold and cough for a week, which is later on revealed as "Consumption" but he is not serious about providing treatment and she is upset because of Edmund's health.

Jamie, the elder son also worries to see Edmund's health deteriorating gradually. He doubts it is a fatal disease and accuses his father who does not care to call a qualified doctor:

JAMIE. He thinks it's consumption, doesn't he, papa?

TYRONE. He said it might be.

JAMIE. Poor kid! God damned it! It might never have happened if you'd sent him to a real doctor, which has first got sick.

TYRONE: What's the matter with Hardy? He's always been our doctor up here.

JAMIE: Everything is the matter with him! Even in this hick burg he's rated third class! He's a cheap old quack!

TYRONE. That's right! Run him down! Run down everybody!

Everyone is a fake to you! (O'Neill 729)

This exchange shows clash between father and son. Both of them suspect that Edmund has consumption (tuberculosis) but the father is not concerned about bringing qualified doctor for treatment. This is due to the miserly nature of father. Jamie and Tyrone argue

over the appropriateness of Edmund's doctor, Doc Hardy, who charges very little for his services. The father apparently benefits from rather than the son. He accuses him of getting the cheaper doctor, without quality. It is because he is a penny-pincher and charges less than a dollar that makes he thinks he is a fine doctor. Tyrone, being sad countercharges Jamie as the worst among everyone. Jamie does not understand the value of a dollar because he has always been taking comfortable living for granted. Tyrone, by contrast, has to work his own way up from the street. He has long experiences of life under poverty and economic crisis. Jamie only squanders loads of money on whores and liquor in town:

TYRONE. No, you can't. You've taught me that lesson only too well. I've lost all hope you will ever change yours. You dare tell me what I can afford? You've never known the value of a dollar and never will You've never saved a dollar in your life! At the end of each season you're penniless! You've thrown your salary away every week on whores and whiskey! (O'Neill 730)

This is the tendency of the elder son Jamie, which is his father, reveals with extreme anger. He is totally workless, reckless and irresponsible and devoid of morality. He only comments on other people. Moreover, Tyrone accuses Jamie of laziness and criticizes his failure to succeed at anything. Jamie was expelled from several colleges in his younger years because of his ill-spirit, he recalls:

TYRONE. That's a lie! You made no effort to find anything else to do. You left it to me to get you a job and I've no influence except in the theatre. Forced you! You never wanted to do anything loaf in barrooms! You'd have been content to sit back like a lazy lunk and sponge on me for the rest of your life! After all the money I'd wasted on your

education, and all you did was get fired in disgrace from every college you went to! (O'Neill 730-731)

James Tyrone, the father is a man of strong work ethics. He prefers hard life and struggles to success. He is an actor, a man of theatre. So, he has interest in making his son work in the theatre and earn his living. But Jamie has ill-spirit and evil character, wants to pass life doing nothing at all. Because of his evil nature, he is displaced from every college. He enjoys most the life of a loafer in barrooms, drinking whiskey and spending time with whores. He never shows any gratitude towards his father. His father's intense desire is that he holds a job in theater but the son opposes his interest and says "I never wanted to be an actor. You forced me on the stage". (O'Neill 730)

In this familial confrontation between father and son, Tyrone believes that Jamie does not appreciate the value of money, meaning of life and the importance of hard work. Jamie has taken too much for granted. He on the other hand, thinks that his father is a Penny-Pincher so he ignores his father as a barrier to every success. Nevertheless, in such bitter disappointment and conflict, James Tyrone has more optimism and maintains that his son still has to make career and grasp grand success:

TYRONE. If you'd get ambition in your head instead of folly! You're young yet. You could still make your mark. You had the talent to become a fine actor! You have it still. You're my son -! (O'Neill 731)

In each treatment of Tyrone to his family there is love and hate relationship. But his love for his family leads towards suspicion, cruelty, guilt, jealousy, anger, resentment and unprotectiveness. He hopes to make his son himself but instead the son chooses to rebel against him. This shows that ideologically the guiding principle of their life is completely distinct and dissimilar. When Tyrone sees Jamie a failure in life, he thinks that he is a bad influence on Edmund, his younger son:

TYRONE. It's the truth! You've been the worst influence for him. He grew up admiring you as a hero! A fine example you set him! If you ever gave him advice of it! you made him old before his time, pumping him full of what you consider worldly wisdom, when he was too young to see that your mind was so poisoned by your own failure in life, you wanted to believe everyman was a knave with his soul for sale, and every woman who wasn't a whore was a fool! (O'Neill 732)

Such conflicts among family members have broken the cohesive relationship in the family. Due to lack of co-ordination and realization of their faults they have committed in the past, family relations in the present has turned apart.

From the hot discussion and conflicts of ideas among family members, Edmund's illness is revealed. He is a victim of tuberculosis because of lack of proper care and medical examination. For this other family members blame Tyrone. Mary is still taking morphine developing it as habit because she is mistreated by the Tyrone family. Many secrets of the family have not been revealed to her. Even the illness of Edmund i.e. tuberculosis is not revealed to her till the end of the play. She is not happy with her husband's nature and attitude. His stingy and self centered nature causes destruction in the life of every member in the family. Her ambitions, high hopes and dreams of life begin to crumble when there rises the cloud of suspicion and conspiracy. Her husband and sons, not wishing her to get worried while she is supposedly recovering, help her delude herself by keeping Edmund's sickness from her as best as they can:

TYRONE. Yes, this time you can see how strong and sure of herself she is. She's a different woman entirely from the other times. She has control of her nerves - or she had until Edmund got sick. Now you can

feel her growing tense and frightened underneath. I wish to God we could kept the truth from her, but we can't if he has to be sent to a sanatorium. What makes it worse is her father died of consumption. She worshipped him and she's never forgotten. Yes, it will be hard for her. But she can do it! She has the will power now! We must help her, Jamie, in every way we can! (O'Neill 734)

She is treated like an abnormal person. But her manner is nervously self-conscious. Her morphine addiction has brought disappointment among the family members. She is not happy in the present life under the confinement of her husband's guidance and male authority and desires to live in the fantasy world and morphine helps to accomplish this.

Mary is very often sad, hopeless and alienated. Her dream of life of high standard society and comfortable life is never realized due to the indifference and stingy attitude of husband towards family responsibility. Her longing for sublime life, decent family, successful career of children remain forever unfulfilled. The conflict originates between husband and wife when he cannot maintain the family atmosphere can provide good guardianship, family love, care and treatment. Naturally, there emerges the situation of depression, frustration and disintegration:

MARY. I've never felt it was my home! It was wrong from the start. Everything was done in the cheapest way. Your father would never spend the money to make it right. It's just as well we haven't any friend here. I'd be ashamed to have them step in the door. But he's never wanted family and friends. He hates calling on people or receiving them - All he likes is to hobnob with men at the club or in a barroom. Jamie and you are the same way, but you're not to blame. You're never had a chance to meet decent people here? I Know you both would have been

so different if you'd been able to associate with nice girls instead, You'd never have disgraced yourselves as you have, so that now no respectable parents will let their daughters be seen with you. (O'Neill 738-739)

This is the family situation so painfully presented by Mary where infidelities and irresponsibilities of the father lead the united family towards resigned despair. She is feeling lonely and alienated without any friend and family attachment. Mary has specific idea of what a "home" is. More importantly, she does not feel it is like her house. She has never actually had a house with Tyrone, because they have lived their lives touring on the road. She mourns the life in street. This lament is one of the manifestations of Mary's romantic vision of life that has been destroyed by the reality of her present situation. Unfortunately for her, Mary can never voice her concern until too late in life. She always moves along with Tyrone wherever he goes with little comment. Thus, it is seen that communication within the family is deeply flawed. This is also evident in Mary's continual refusal to admit the truth, and in the men's refusal to tell her the truth. None of the characters reveals the truth of what they want and feel until it is too late. They suffer in communication lapses, psychological gaps, horror and suspicion:

MARY. It makes it so much harder, living in this atmosphere of constant suspicion, knowing everyone is spying on one, and none of you believe in me, or trust me. (O'Neill 740)

This is the plight or position of Mary at home. None of the men, for instance, are willing to believe Mary because she has the symptoms of drug addiction and has already broken so many promises in the past. Everyone doubts and suspects but there is no solution. They don't think why she is still taking heavy dose of the drug?

Mary realizes that their approach towards her is doubtful in every aspect so she appeals

them “Stop suspecting me! Please, dear! You hurt me! (O’Neill 741) In such a situation, Tyrone seems more responsible for Mary’s initial morphine addiction. He is blamed by the rest of the family members for he refused to pay the high cost of a good doctor, hiring instead a cheap quack who solved Mary’s pain without regarding the long-term consequences. Moreover, he has escaped from family roles and responsibilities. He has lack of understanding of the woman’s heart and psychology. His stubborn nature makes him lead his family with his own interest but his family meets tragic consequences in the end.

Mary’s feeling of hopelessness, helplessness and homelessness frequently haunts her psyche. She is with her family, husband and sons but always feels alienated, empty and alone. She says“ Your father goes out he meets his friends in barrooms or at the club. You and Jamie go out. But I’m alone. I’ve already been Alone”. (O’Neill 740) She remarks, she is detached from family love, harmony and togetherness. She is entrapped within the suffocated and resigned world of the Tyrone family.

In this familial confrontation, all the characters have severe faults, cruelties and deceptions. The family is slowly decaying and all the characters are living hopeless lives and facing a dreadful future. In between and among their disputes, accusations and mistreatment, love and hate relationship is apparently dominant. But their love leads to suspicion, crime, cruelties, betrayal, pathos, protectiveness and again love. The chain of their love-hate relationship in the family is both linear and circular.

Mary, all the time in the play, denounces her husband. She opposes him calling him stingy, self-centered and stubborn. She dislikes him for all the time but again when the sons stand against the father she shows her virtue and defends him:

MARY. It's you who should have more respect! Stop sneering at your

father! I won't have it you ought to be proud you're his son! He may have his faults. Who hasn't? But he's worked hard all his life. He makes his way up from ignorance and poverty to the top of his profession! Everyone else admires him and you should be the last one to sneer - you, who thanks to him, have never had to work hard in your life! Remember your father is getting old, Jamie. You really ought to show more consideration. (O'Neill 748-749)

His life has gone through the poverty line, pain and suffering. He has strong notions of the value of work and time. So, even in difficult times he has existed. But the sons have adopted nothing from the father's life. They never work but rather make ridiculous comments on others. Mary is not content with her sons, who just loaf around and do no work:

MARY: Because he is always sneering at someone else, always looking for the worst weakness in and everyone. But I suppose life has made him like that, and he can't help it. None of us can help the things life has done to us. They're done before you realize it, and once they're done they make you do other things until at last everything comes between you and what you'd like to be, and you've lost your true self forever. (O'Neill 749)

This is Mary's expression of the fatalistic view of life that most events are somehow predetermined that human beings have little control over their own lives. Human nature is always governed by destructive instincts and thus gets defeated in life. Progress, happiness and attainment are not human desires but rather predestined.

Mary thinks a happy life, decent family, love and affection of children are the sources for attaining absolute happiness. Her approach to life is determined by

materialistic comforts. But when she does not realize these affluences in her practical life, then there begins the tussle in the life of the couple:

MARY. . . . And your father won't even pay the wages the best summer help ask. So, every year I have stupid, lazy greenhorns to deal with. But you've heard me say this a thousand times. So, has he, but it goes in one ear and out the other. He thinks money spent on a home is money wasted. He's lived too much in hotels never the best hotels, of course. Second rate hotels. He doesn't understand a home. He doesn't feel at home in it. And yet, he wants a home He's even proud of having this shabby place. He loves it here. It's really funny, when you come to think of it. He's a peculiar man. (O'Neill 749 - 750)

This is an accusation on Mr. Tyrone as an incapable and irresponsible family head who can never work for the happiness and prosperity of the family. Poverty, disease, scarcity and insufficiency are the root causes of the family problems, she indicates. Escaping from familial obligations and duties, James Tyrone runs after barrooms, whisky and whores. He chooses this life due to economic crisis:

MARY . . . Oh, I'm so sick and tired of pretending this is home! you won't! help me! you won't put yourself out the least bit! You don't know how to act in a home! You don't really want one? You never have wanted never since the day we were married! You should have remained a bachelor and lived in second- rate hotels and entertained your friends in barrooms! Then nothing would ever have happened. (O'Neill 752-753)

It is her bitter experience of married life where she gets nothing but boredom and anxiety. She is very tired of marriage and goes back to her past ambitions, childhood

memories and happiness. Her husband cannot access her desires and very consciously runs his family but is charged of being a failure and an incapable and irresponsible husband and father. None of the characters tries to know the difficulty of the family and of the time. He is himself passing life mournfully taking alcohol when does not see family union, peace and prosperity. The father is helpless and despair from the family relationship and the social surrounding. When Mary, all the time blames for not understanding what a decent home, wife and children mean Tyrone says “I understand that I’ve been a Goddamned fool to believe in you. (O’Neill 754) This is the expression of his extreme anger towards his wife and family. He is also detached from his marital and familial life. Mary yearns for a home because “home” is a center of life, hope and secrecy, shelter and permanency. In a real home one cannot feel alone and troubled:

MARY. . . . You’ve always referred the club or a barroom. And for me it’s always been as lonely as a dirty room in a one - night stand hotel. In a real home one is never lonely. You forget I know from experience what a home is like. I gave up one to marry you - my father’s home . . .
(O’Neill 756)

It is Mary’s state of sense of loss, longing for childhood, life at home with parents but now she is homeless, running after dirty rooms of hotels time and again like nomadic people. There is no stability and permanency of life. James Tyrone has never been thoughtful about family contentment or he never understood the family. He is self-headed. His absence at home and lack of family love and compassion turns the entire family towards fragmentation with each of them living for oneself. Each day passes with dispute and discord:

MARY You will all be leaving me soon.

TYRONE. It’s you who are leaving us, Mary.

MARY. I? That's a silly thing to say, James. How could I leave? There is nowhere I could go. Who would I go to see? I have no friends.

(O'Neill 763)

This is Mary's position of detachment in their relationship. The bond of marriage, conjugal as well as familial relations are only compromises up to the point of understanding, which can be continued forever or can be broken at any moment.

Mary's nostalgic feeling haunts her every moment. She frequently moves back to her past because she is passing her present life very painfully. She entered in life of an actor hoping that it was a highly dignified profession but in reality she found married life with actor a burden:

MARY. ... At the convent I had so many friends. Girls whose families lived in lovely homes. I used to visit them and they'd visit me in my father's home. But naturally, after I married an actor - you know how actors were considered in those days - a lot of them gave me the cold shoulder. And then, right after we were married, there was the scandal of that woman who had been your mistress, suing you. From then on, all my old friends either pitied me or cut me dead. I hated the ones who cut me much less than the pitiers. (O'Neill 764)

All her hopes and expectations die when she Mary experiences married life. Now, she thinks her position in the Tyrone family is like that of a refugee. She has neither home, land, any self-respect nor friends, relatives and homely environment. Such a plight alienates her. Her desire to become a nun or a professional pianist is totally shattered after marriage:

MARY. I was so healthy before Edmund was born. You remember James. There was not a nerve in my body. Even traveling with you

season after season, with week after week of one - night stands, in trains without Pullmans, in dirty rooms of filthy hotels, eating bad food, bearing children in hotel rooms, I still kept healing. But bearing Edmund was the straw. I was so sick afterwards, and that ignorant quack of a cheap hotel doctor -All he knew was I was in pain. It was easy for him to stop the pain. (O'Neill 765)

Delving into the past, Mary tells Tyrone the true - story of getting addicted to morphine when Edmund was born. She implicitly blames Tyrone for her addiction because he would only pay for cheap doctor who knew of no better way to cure the childbirth pain. She painfully reveals that James only thinks of money. Thus, morphine as her part of life continues to kill all her mental wounds and worries.

In such a situation, James Tyrone has also faded away from his life. He interrupts her and says:

TYRONE: Mary! For God's sake, forget the past!

MARY. Why? How can I? The past is the present, isn't it? It's the future, too. We all try to lie out of that but life won't let us. I blame only myself.
(O'Neill 765)

Mary comments that she cannot dissociate from the past because it is her present painful truth. What is at present is the outcome or circumstance of the past. Here she further suggests the repetitive nature of life in the Tyrone family. The events of the past are continually repeated in the present, just as the events of each individual day are repeated in a cyclical fashion based on alcoholism and morphine.

Mary's hatred for Tyrone's materialistic lust always comes forth as he gives prime importance to generating money, property and income sources rather than family welfare:

MARY. . . . Tyrone never is worried about anything, except money and property and the fear he'll end his days in poverty. I mean, deep worried. Because, he cannot really understand anything else. My husband is a very peculiar man, Catheline. (O'Neill 775)

This is a very detached response or expression of Mary to Tyrone's materialistic tendency. As Mary comments, he is very much obsessed with money, has strong longing for economic prosperity but never attains it. He tries to bring forth the family happiness and struggles forever in life but he has been the victim and suffers due to age factor and hardships of the time.

Mary, being unhappy with Tyrone family, always takes heavy doses of drug and delves into past memories of her life and family:

MARY I? What put that absurd notion in your head? I was brought up in a respectable home and educated in the best convent in the Middle West. I met Mr. Tyrone I hardly knew there was such a thing as a theatre. I was very pious girl. I even dreamed of becoming a nun. I've never had the slight desire to be an actress. (O'Neill 775)

James Tyrone, an actor, cannot meet the family's needs. Her search for the stability of better life is never realized throughout her married life of thirty-six years. She had two great dreams in life: to become a nun and famous professional pianist. These dreams evaporate when she encounters Tyrone and falls in love. Her unsatisfied family life in the painful present haunts her more vividly and leads to reminiscence of childhood.

Mary again bitterly mourns looking at the inability and irresponsibility of the fatherhood of Tyrone towards their sons Jamie and Edmund. She resentfully accuses Tyrone making his sons hopeless failures. His excessive alcoholism and indifferent attitude towards family life brings about the loss of family bond and unity. She blames

the sons for being unsuccessful and aimless and inclined to alcoholism due to the mistreatment and misconduct of father:

MARY. Who would have thought Jamie would grow up to disgrace us. You remember, James, for years after he went to boarding school, we received such glowing reports. Everyone liked him. All his teachers told us what a fine brain he had and how easily he learned his lesson. Even after he began to drink and they had to expel him, they wrote us how sorry they were, because he was so likeable and such a brilliant student. They predicted a wonderful future for him if he would only learn to take life seriously. It's such a pity. Poor Jamie! It's hard to understand - No, it isn't at all. You brought him up to be a boozier. Since he first opened his eyes, he's seen you drinking. Always a bottle on the bureau in the cheap hotel rooms! And if he had a nightmare when he was little, or stomachache, your remedy was to give him a teaspoonful of whiskey to quiet him.

TYRONE. So I'm to blame because that lazy hulk has made a drunken loafer of himself? Is that what I came home to listen to? I might have known! When you have the position in you, you want to blame everyone but yourself!

EDMUND Papa! You told me not to pay attention. Anyway it's true. You did the same thing with me. I can remember that, teaspoonful of booze every time I woke up with a nightmare. (O'Neill 781-782)

This shows how the father's failure has led to failure for the entire family. In this dispute, the mother and son comment on the father about his negligence and inability to understand what a family is. As Mary argues, sons start being involved in alcoholism

after learning from the father and due to this evil habit Jamie has been expelled from school and college. Mary has taken a heavy dose of morphine as the play smoothly runs ahead.

She seems totally sad, hateful, frustrated and alienated from the rest of the family. She cannot escape from such family wounds and tortures. The love - hate relationships among the family members emerged simultaneously throughout the play. She says “And I love you, dear, in spite of everything”. (O’Neill 783) It refers to her moment of unhappiness with the Tyrone family for all the years of her married life. Her love for him is not emotional or spiritual but rather mechanical. She hates his habits of drinking too much, wasting time in brothels, cheap hotels, whiskey and whores. She denounces his irresponsible manner of living. As she gets nothing from Tyrone, she most often appears under the influence of drugs and in a confused state of mind. Her desire of becoming a pious nun and a concert pianist turns her toward suffering. Tyrone has an appeal “forget the past”. (O’Neill 784) But her past fantasy, bitter moments and realities of life comes forth being very alive and active in such a way, she mourns “No, Dear but I forgive”. (O’Neill 784) Her confession justifies that she can never be detached from the past but trying to forgive. Due to the detachment of the family, James Tyrone has also been sad, bewildered and broken throughout the play.

When all the family members have existed with conflicting of ideas and are involved in drugs and alcoholism, they argue desperately time and again accusing one another. To console himself, Edmund opines “... It's the time to be drunken! Be drunken; neither if you would nor be martyred slaves of time be drunken continually! With wine, with poetry or with virtues, as you will. (O’Neill 797) It is the celebration of pain engulfed by poverty, starvation, economic crisis and the difficulties of the times itself.

The conflict in the family also comes forth with the concept of intellectualism, religion and spiritual faith. Edmund prefers German philosopher Nietzsche and French poet Baudelaire whereas the father prefers Shakespeare. He wants to make him an actor but he desires to be an artist/writer. The parents do have the faith and religious notion of Catholicism and they have a fear of God. On the other hand, the sons appear skeptical and believe in Nietzsche's existential philosophy "God is dead":

TYRONE. Morbid filth! Where the hell do you get your taste in literature? Filth and despair and pessimism! Another atheist, I suppose when you deny God, you deny hope. That's the trouble with you. If you'd get down on your knees - (O'Neill 798)

Tyrone has strong religious notions and persuades his sons to be on the same path. For Tyrone, to remain in a Godless universe is like being in a state of madness. He argues "To deny God means to deny sanity". (O'Neill 798) This shows breakdown of Tyrone family values from one generation to the next whereas Tyrone was raised on Shakespeare, Irish writer and the Bible, his sons have spurned that same upbringing turning towards different types of literature and lack of faith:

TYRONE. Where you get your taste in authors - that damned library of yours! Voltaire, Rousseau, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Ibsen! Atheists, fools, and madmen! And your poets! This Dowson, and this Baudelaire, and Swinburne and Oscar Wilde, and Whitman and Poe! Whoremongers and degenerates! Pah! When I've three good sets of Shakespeare there you could read.

EDMUND. They say he was a souse, too.

TYRONE. They lie! I don't doubt he lived his glass it's a good man's failing- but he knew how to drink so it didn't poison his brain with

morbidness and filth. Don't compare him with the pack you've got in there your dirty Zola! and your Dante Gabriel Rossetti who was dope fiend! (O'Neill 799)

This conflict of father and son in terms of intellectuality and spiritual faith creates generation gap. The rejection of old ways by the second generation is difficult to accept for the Tyrone couple. It reminds that they are an aging couple being replaced by new Americans.

Another important segment of conflict in the play is also between the brothers - Jamie and Tyrone. Both of them have been failures in making their career in the course of the play. They are facing the same situation and difficulties caused by the family and society. They don't want to see one another progress and achievement. Jamie has been a bad influence on Edmund, and he says he does it on purpose. Jamie admits that he has always been jealous of Edmund, and he wants Edmund fail. He sets a bad example intentionally and tries to bring Edmund down. He warns Edmund saying, "I'll do my damnest to make you fail". (O'Neill 821)

It reveals that all members in the family have a sense of guilt and revenge. They are engulfed by the darker aspects of the human psyche, hate, jealousy, greed, lust, anxiety and resentment. They are themselves responsible for loosening family values, love and sentiments. The breakdown of their family is due to constant fighting and misunderstandings. The root cause of the family breakdown is the father's stinginess and stubbornness as Mary and the sons blame again and again. His mistreatment of the family is the cause of failure.

As Edmund comments, the cause behind morphine addiction is lack of proper care and treatment in time:

EDMUND. Because you've never given her anything that would help

her want to stay off it! No home except this summer dump in a place she hates and you've refused even to spend money to make this look decent, while you keep buying more property, mine, or a silver mine or any kind of get rich-quick swindle! You've dragged her around on the road, season after season on one - night stands, with no one she could talk to, waiting night after night in dirty hotel rooms for you to come back with a bun on after the bars closed! Christ, is it any wonder she didn't want to be cured. Jesus, when I think of it I hate your guts.

(O'Neill 803)

This is Edmund's accusation on his father's attitude towards his mother and family. The tendency of the father to invest more on land, estate and mines and less on the family has made everybody sad and hopeless. Mary's marital life remains miserable and pathetic forever. Her wishes never get priority due to her husband. She passes her entire life under the control and domination of her husband. Her frequent attempts to have a happy and decent family life, family harmony and prosperity, love, care and good treatment of children go in vain. Neither has she good relations with her husband nor her two sons. She is always kept under suspicion and horror all the time. She does not see her position in the family so she starts taking drugs more and more to kill all her mental wounds and agonies. She is very much in despair in the hellish life of Tyrone family. She is totally empty, frustrated and aloof from the rest of the family. Her nostalgia makes her suffer much. So, with extreme excitement and the intoxication of the heavy dose of morphine, she gets salvation forgetting her family, familial bonds, relationships, boundaries and exposes her desire to be a nun. She deepens her drugs more and feels lonely, alienated and isolated forever. When Edmund finally reveals he is suffering from tuberculosis, his terrible illness, she does not show her response of

love and sympathy because she thinks she is no more his mother now. She has become a nun by going back to her past:

EDMUND. Mama It isn't a summer cold! I've got consumption:

MARY. No! You must not try to touch me. You must not try to hold me. It isn't right, when I'm hoping to be a nun. (O'Neill 826)

It is her complete renouncement of family boundaries, physical love and compassion and submission of herself to the spiritual world. Her longing to become a nun is a way towards her Salvation. So, in a very terrifying voice she threatens there is no more relation of mother and son, husband and wife. She is sunken to the past and hopes to become nun. It is her search for her 'true-self'. Her voice in the end makes everybody bewildered, helpless and motionless.

Such is the relation in the text of broken family and shattered familial norms, values and integrity. Each of the characters in the family is more or less responsible for destroying the family. It is because none of the members of family has fulfilled the family ideals, duties and responsibility properly. Observing their familial relationship and responsibilities, the human beings nature, character and fate, Joseph wood Krutch remarks:

Each member is determined to exculpate himself, to lay the blame elsewhere. The mother blames the father for the parsimony and irresponsibility, which have driven her to drugs. The wastrel brother blames both for having given him no example and no home. The poet – to be blames them for all this plus the neglect of his illness, which have driven him to despair. But is it or not still true that, in his own way each one is guilty because he has used the characters and the actions of the others as an excuse for his own failures? Why does one son succumb to

circumstances and the other triumph over them? Is the fault in the stars or in ourselves that we are thus and so. (Krutch 334-335)

All characters' failure in understanding each- other, their self-destructiveness activities among modes of nervousness, loneliness, anger, nostalgia, accusation, rage and drugs lead to complete disintegration of family values. This family is the true representative of the loss of family values in all of America during the period of economic depression and world wars. Depicting the loss of Tyrone family Harold Bloom, the renowned critic depicts the loss and terrifying aftermath of the American family life and the entire western world. He opines:

One cannot deny the power of the mimetic art of *Long Day's Journey into Night*. No dramatist to this day among us has matched O'Neill in depicting the nightmare realities that can afflict American family life, indeed family life in the twentieth century western world ... It is a terrifying distinction that O'Neill earns. He is the elegist of the Freudian "Family romance" of domestic tragedy of which we all die daily, a little bit a time. (Bloom xii)

In fact only an artist of O'Neill's extraordinary skill and perception can draw the curtain on the secret of his own family to make every Americans peer into their own with full of tears, pain and suffering.

Chapter- IV

Conclusion

The individual, family and culture are inter-related. Culture in a society emanates the family codes and values for institutional integration. Culture becomes the centripetal force and provides certain codes as operative values and dynamics for the family. If family members play honest and responsible roles as per cultural codes, the integrity of family values becomes viable. But when cultural codes dwindle and deviate from the normal track, it invites family disorganization.

Almost all cultures in the human society highly value the basic family norms like mutual trust, co-operation, unambiguous family relationship, sense of responsibility and love, respect and happiness. But once the family or society is shaken by some cultural turmoil or social trauma, this violent shudder sweeps away all the conventional spiritual faith and family system becomes the victim of disorganization and individual self-interest comes forth dominantly.

The American Society is typically the bearer of self-contradiction from the very roots of its civilization. The first puritan settlers had arrived to the American wilderness with the spiritual faith that the newly found land was the promised land of the Bible, and they could establish integrity in the new society as well as consistent family system based on the spiritual faith full of domestic piety performing the role of the church. So, in the family, all cultural norms were observed. Family integration, and the Jeffersonian dream of 'happiness' propping the puritan dream remained unfulfilled as American

society contradictorily left the spiritual track in the euphoria of material prosperity and even when they never attained or realized material prosperity, there appeared chaos in society and disharmony in the family. The remnants of cultural values and material affluence further lost after the traumatic experience and the anxiety of the great economic depression and the world wars.

Even in this chaos and anxiety, the dream of happiness and integrity is still undercurrent in the nostalgic American psyche. So, frequent efforts are made to regain the lost harmony but to no avail because of the collapse of the economy and cultural foundation. Thus, the desire for prosperous family remains with the breakdown of family values.

O'Neill has given expression to the problems of individual in relation to family and society. In *Long Day's Journey into Night*, O'Neill's finest play, he is not simply describing the experience of a single family of individuals. He is really telling a great national tragedy and loss of family values in America through the experience of one family - the Tyrone family. In it, O'Neill has presented the face of the frustrated, alienated and resigned despair of American society. This play deals with the problems of modern life focusing on a dysfunctional family trying to come to grips with its ambivalent emotion in the face of serious familial problems, including drug-addiction, alcoholism and moral degradation. It deals with theme of alienation and emptiness where family members are entrapped and suffocated within the family. Portraying the Tyrone family as an example, O'Neill has studied the decay of family values in America where society is victimized by the "great economic collapse, crisis and scarcity. All the characters in the family have been addicted to alcoholism and morphine and face an uncertain future. The economic collapse of 1929 in America destroyed the happy and confident mood of the Americans. Millions of Americans lost

their job. The nation entered the Depression Era. Uncertainties and emptiness of hopes and dream prevailed in every family. There seemed little doubt about what the future held. It was a time to fear poverty and worship success. Everything was disastrous. Americans do believe that money (material comforts) can buy love and happiness. But the failure of American idealism- life, liberty and pursuit of happiness turns them into tragic figures. In fact, poverty, scarcity and economic deprivation have appeared as root causes behind the complete shattering of family integrity. The time of the great depression and world war II badly affected society rendering million of people unemployed. Industry, commerce, trade, schools, colleges collapsed. O'Neill presents this frustrated and fragmented family damaged by commerce and fear of poverty to show the frustration of all the Americans and disintegration of family values.

In O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*, James Tyrone's stingy and self-centered behaviour leads to the destruction of the bond and unity of the family and each of the family members passes through an alienated and hopeless life. Throughout the course of the play, all the members of the family indulge in alcoholism and drug addiction. It is slowly revealed that Mary is still addicted to morphine, due to the disappointments from her family members. So, she continues with morphine to heal her mental wounds and agonies though it was given to her to kill her pain during pregnancy by the cheapest unqualified doctor. Edmund, the younger son has tuberculosis. The responsibility of father was to consult quality doctor and provide quality treatment. But his tendency is to invest money on land and estate rather than family care, destroys the family. The son has not progressed in life and ultimately turns to alcoholism. Jamie, the elder son also does not take life seriously and chooses to live a life with whores and alcohol prominently. These have happened because of the lack of proper fatherly love, affection and treatment.

Revelation of these two medical disasters of the mother and the son on the one side and the approach of the father towards his family on the other are in fact the central to the play due to which all the characters or family members are involved in exchanging accusations until the disintegration of the whole family. As the play is set, the parents are aging, and while they always hope that their sons will achieve great things, the hope is being replaced by resigned despair.

The play also creates a world in which communication has broken down. One of the great conflicts in the play is the characters inability to communicate despite their constant fighting. For instance, the men often fight amongst themselves over Mary's addiction, but no one is willing to confront her directly. Instead, they allow her to lie to herself about her own addiction and about Edmund's illness. Edmund and Jamie do not communicate well until the last act, when Jamie finally confesses the jealousy he has towards his brother and desires to see him fail. Tyrone, likewise, can only criticize his sons, but his stubborn nature will not allow him to accept criticism.

The family constantly revisits old fights and opens old wounds left by the past, which the family members are never able to forget. Mary in particular cannot forget the past and all the dreams she once had of being a nun or pianist. Tyrone too has always had high hopes for Jamie and Edmund, who have been a continual disappointment. All the conflicts and problems of the past cannot be forgotten, and in fact, they seem doomed to be relived day after day. It is important to note that *Long Day's Journey into Night* is not only a journey forward in time, but also journey back into the past lives of all the characters, who continually dip back into their old life style, pain and sorrow. It is realized that the family is not making progress towards betterment, but rather continually sliding down into despair. As they remain bound to past, they can neither forget nor forgive.

The play is all the more tragic because it leaves little hope for the future. All the four Tyrone- father, mother, and two sons have gone through suffocating and terrifying battle, separately and together. Each member blames the other for his/her miseries. Tyrone is constantly blamed for his own stinginess, which may have led to Mary's morphine addiction when he refuses to pay for a good doctor to treat the pain caused by childbirth. She often regrets marrying him because all her hopes and dreams of life have broken down entirely when she fell into married life. This same tendency leads his sons towards alcoholism and whoring. Jamie has an aimless life, and solely relies on his parent for support. He dropped out of several colleges and is least ambitious. Edmund, the younger one has illness not treated well due to his father's miserly nature. He and Mary blame the father for his failure. James Tyrone, the father does not accept the charge that he 'stingy' but rather calls it economic prudence because he was born and brought up in a poverty -stricken socio-economic background. He had a hard life and painful experience of life throughout and he further says that life is still going through hard times. So he is a man of strong work ethics and wants to see other people work. That is why he wants his family's economic control. But his approach to the family is badly affected. He is misunderstood. Everyone hates him and passes their life indifferently. Thus, all of them face a terrible future. The poison of resentment and hatred engulfs the family. Each family member has feelings of denial, jealousy and revenge. There are conflicts, tortures, misunderstandings and mistreatment of family members. Their self-imposed guilt leads them to remain in alien and isolated situation even within the family. The father's hearty alcoholism, the elder son's plunge into self- destructiveness, mother's drug addiction and the younger son's "consumption" lead the family finally towards disintegration and loss of family values.

The 'family' is one among the many themes that O'Neill discusses in his

numerous plays. Critics and students see O'Neill dealing with family issues from the perspective of psychoanalysis. But the attribute of this research is that it sees O'Neill's theme of the disintegration of family values from the socio-cultural perspective. This research has touched upon the cultural genealogy of America from the first puritan settlement to the contemporary cultural and material crisis. Despite our general acknowledgments to O'Neill's universal theme of enduring human problems of loneliness and existential struggle for establishing some order, this dissertation limits itself to the modern American family's cultural and material crisis.

Thus, this study has looked at *Long Day's Journey into Night* as a dramatization of countercultural activities, fear, horror and terror of the Americans during the era of economic depression and world war, which completely shatters the family norms and leads the family towards disintegration and loss of values.