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## **Dedication A**

This work is dedicated to my parents, especially my mother, who left and never got the chance to see me becoming the woman she ever wanted. Thank you **Mom**, be proud!

To my sisters and brothers, **Wafa, Hadjer, Amine** and **Ayoub** for being the walls I put my back on. I will never forget your support and encouragement. To my nephews, **Abdelmoumen, Youcef**, and **Iyad**. You are the little infants from whom we take the light and hope. To my friends, **Bachir, Rahwa, Amina, Amel** and **Nour Elhouda**. I really appreciate you being there when needed. It is also dedicated to the people around me, my teachers, friends and mates. Thank you for being a part in my life journey.

**Djaidja Rim**

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I humbly dedicate this work with love and affection to my dearest parents who sacrificed their lives to make the best out of me. To my dear sisters and precious brothers.

To all my friends and everyone who in a way or another backed me up.

To all those people who have dedicated their works and their lives to peace.

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## **Abstract**

### **Abstract**

The modern American drama has brought new concepts and emerged modern thoughts to the American theatre. Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* has marked one of the most influential and interesting plays in American history and literature. This thesis examines if Willy Loman, the Protagonist in *Death of a Salesman*, is a modern tragic hero. It investigates how and why Willy Loman is a tragic hero and how he was emerged to be a tragic hero although he is a common man. The paper also depicts the causes which led to Willy Loman's suicide at the end of the play. Willy Loman is a common man, struggles for his success, suffers and lives the pain of his failure, and ends his life in the end of the play to benefit his family, presents him as a "modern tragic hero" in modern tragedy by Arthur Miller's concept. Basically, Willy's denial, disappointment of not being capable to cope and his illusion about how the world has become and his past memories have led to his death. Willy has tragic life. He could never accept his failure and could not accept the way things have become. Eventually, this led to his downfall. This play portrays a modern tragedy with a common person who struggles to fit in a modern world with modern mentality.

**Key words:** modern man, modern tragedy.

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## **General Introduction**

### **General Introduction**

American literature and theater have been influenced by the early 20th century changes. Many American writers and dramatists adopted new styles of writing. Moreover, there was a shift towards depicting and portraying the psyche of their characters. Modern American drama was derived from the European drama, but the former focused on real situations extracted from the society. At that time, there were two trends: anti realism and realism. American writers and playwrights tried to find some struggles and problems of common people. Many themes were tackled at that time including the tragedy of modern man. Many writers tend to depict the tragic downfall of modern man. This theme is portrayed in Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. This play reveals how Willy Loman faces his harsh reality and the reason behind his tragic downfall. Death of a Salesman is considered as a masterpiece in American Literature.

Many researchers have been analyzed the themes as well as the characters of Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. Willy Loman, the main character of this play, was studied and analyzed by a researcher named Kristin Paulson (2016) from the University of Gavle. She used Freud's psychoanalytical theory to examine Willy's mind in her BA thesis entitled: Ben's Lead Role in Willy Loman's Suicidal Mind: Exploring Death of a Salesman via Freud. Furthermore, H.T.Rahman (2016) used the historical and sociological approach to investigate the personal tragedy in Death of a Salesman in his MA thesis entitled: A Study from a New Historicist Approach of Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. He saw that the playwrights depict their social environments and experiences and each work is a result of the writers' biography and real life.

## General Introduction

From the above discussion, we may ask some questions that will guide our research. The main question of this research is the extent to which Willy Loman is considered as a modern tragic hero. This research also aims at finding the main reasons that led to the downfall of the protagonist Willy Loman.

In order to answer the above questions, we can suggest some hypotheses. We may hypothesize that Willy Loman is considered to be a tragic hero to the extent that he ends his life in a car accident, and he could not keep up with the harsh conditions of his life. Moreover, lack of self-reliance, social problems, and disappointment affected the psychology of Willy Loman; this may lead to his tragic end.

This dissertation seeks to achieve certain aims and objectives. It aims to tackle the play *Death of a Salesman* to show the problems, harsh conditions and the psyche of modern man in the contemporary world. Thus, its main interest is to analyze the reasons behind the tragic downfall of the main character who is named Willy Loman. Through this dissertation, many objectives are sought to be fulfilled. First, to show how depicting the tragedy of modern man is widespread in American drama by using Arthur Miller's play as an example. Second, helping the reader to understand and analyze the minds of characters in any work. The last objective is to draw a picture of the ambiguous and hidden secrets behind the protagonists' tragic ending.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter gives some definitions of some terms related to the topic. This chapter offers a historical background and conceptual framework for this research. The key terms of this work are discussed from different perspectives in this chapter. The second chapter tackles the background and contextualization of *Death of a Salesman*. Moreover, it will investigate the stylistic and linguistic techniques of Arthur Miller. This chapter portrays how Arthur Miller had been influenced by the European playwrights. The last chapter contains the core of this dissertation. It will examine the theme

## **General Introduction**

of the tragedy of modern man and how his psychology led to his end. In addition, this chapter will portray the reasons behind the protagonist's tragic failure. In this dissertation, the main outcomes that we get from our analysis will be reported. Moreover, we will see this research's contribution in social sciences and humanities.

# **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

### **Introduction**

This Chapter represents a background for the study and has two sections. The first section includes historical settings for the United States after the Second World War. It traces the American society after the war, the economic system, and the social interaction. The second section of the chapter consists of theoretical context for some concepts. It represents a definition of Modernism, American modernism and drama, and it spots light on the influence of the European drama on the American one. The section also attempts at defining tragedy in both concepts of real life and literature. It extends to illustrate the meaning of modern tragedy, and it finally concludes with a glance on Sigmund Freud's analytical theory.

### **Section One: Historical Context**

History is important in literature. The specific events in any era have always affected literary works. In usual context, it is history that influences people's life and what they say and write. In other prescriptive, it is the authors who influence and affect people's life by their writings, and hence, affect history. The United States of America has always been a center for many events. Many wars remains have proved that literature cannot be detached from history.

#### **1- The American Society Post World War 2:**

War changes people and their lives. Throughout history, many countries went through war for political reasons in the most, and whether they won or lost, there was a huge loss. The Second World War extended from 1939 till 1945. It has many belligerents divided in two parts: Axis which included Germany, Japan and Italy; and the Allies which were the United States, Soviet Union, Britain and France. These were the main economic and political powers at that era, which really made a world war (Royde-Smith and Hughes 2020). The great loss that all countries encountered during this conflict has affected the beliefs and lives of their people.

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

Although the Allies won the war, the United States, as a belligerent, has been deeply influenced by the war events and results. The American society swung between prosperity of the war success and failure of social life. Many Americans have lived a rich life after the war. Some laws that the US government declared during the war offered soldiers and their families the opportunity to get to university and buy houses and properties. Their lives became better to a great extent. This change had demographic results consequently. People who grew affluent had moved to suburbs where better chances exist, leaving cities centers which consists of less comfortable circumstances (Postwar). When moved to the suburbs, Americans created what has been called suburbanization.

The development of the United States had extended to all life aspects. Children got better education and more schools and universities were built. Engineering and cinema was improved. Hospitals and health centers were taken care of and working conditions got bettered (Pierce 2009).

However, this luxurious chance was not the life of all Americans. Although the worldwide economic and political changes improved, social issues like poverty and racial conflicts remained the same (Postwar). On the other hand, souls were hurt. The Americans who went through the war were emotionally wounded for the horror they have been through. Their families have experienced their death or their loss for themselves through blood and weapons.

The American society has significantly changed in term of roles after the war. Before the war, American community was a masculine society who had always define woman as a housewife who should take care of her husband and children, cook, wash and clean. There was a very small minority of women who worked or had political or important positions in US. But the war took men as it demanded every man who was over 18, black or white; for the war asks for souls in order to win. When men went to the war, women stayed alone. Their

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children needed to feed and they needed to work. As the years went by, the female workforce had increased in so much it became rarely to find non-working woman. At that time, they worked at factories, mills, and every possible work to make living including jobs that demand huge physical strength. After the war, women had taken better positions and had more acceptances to work outside their houses (Sullivan 2008).

### **2. The Economic Status**

The war always costs a lot. It takes souls, ruins economy, creates social breakups, and usually ruins cities and causes destruction of belligerent which takes time to recover from. The American experience in WW2 was an exception in many ways. The American lands for example were not a field for any battle. Two important fronts to challenge the change were society and economy. Societal America post war had some changes that affected it both positively and negatively, but American economy made an interesting surprise.

The American government was just pepping up from the great depression in the late 1930s when it went through World War 2. The great depression was an economic crisis that hit the American economy and trading heavily. This issue led mills and shops to close. Financial stability was uninsured in US for mostly ten years and millions of Americans were jobless by 1939. Yet, the government got involved immediately after declaring the war. Interestingly, US became the first supplier of the weapons and arms to fight Germany. People start to work and factories reopened. In less than three years, the economic crisis fell and employment increased rapidly, and consequently economy raised (O'Callaghan 2004 100-103).

By the end of the war, American beliefs of economy had changed because of the suffering in the depression years. Economy that became stable during the war served the country as a whole, which led to raising salaries. The portions and waiting line they waited in

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ten years before made Americans think twice before spending their money. They turned from buying luxuries to purchasing necessities including houses and cars (Iesh 2000, 3).

### **3. World Interaction**

The world changed rapidly in the early 20th century. Inventions and creativity invaded the cities and countries, especially those who got involved in the world. Photography for example became popular. Radio became more used, during the war, for people needed to hear what was going on (Ackermans).

### **Section Two: Conceptual Framework**

#### **1-Modernism**

Literary works and periods have always characterized nations' culture. Whether works affected people's way of life; or people's interaction that inspired and led authors to write, literary movements described, analyzed and changed people way of thinking at some point of time. Modernism has marked as a special movement in the world. It represented a period of time, from the very late 19th century till the mid-20th century, when cultural, social, literary, and historical changes occurred. Starting from its beginning in Europe, modernists have called for, as the name implies, a modern world. However, the real state for a modernist world appeared after World War 1, characterized by a "sudden and unexpected breaks with traditional ways of viewing and interacting with the world" (Modernism).

In the late 1800s, political and philosophical ideas, scientific inventions and social construction were dull and a problem for many people. The Victorian way of life had obliged others to commit to certain rules and morality. The call for modernist world started from the call to new ways of expression. Art, architecture, design, literature, and the life style were to a great extent old. Even the start of the following century, the situation remained the same. Significantly, the First World War brought as much horror as consciousness to the globe. Throughout the years, no single war had terribly affected people and souls as the war

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

extended from 1917 till 1919 (Kuiper 2020). The things that soldiers and families saw the war had changed something in them. Loss, blood and destruction increased their desire for change, for novelty, and for a modern world.

Literature in specific had been a center of change in Modernism. The call for modernity did not only apply for art, architecture, design and style of living; but extended to the way of writing. The appearance of new techniques used by authors characterizes the modernist literary works. The sense of disillusionment and fragmentation that people felt after the war would be found in literary works postwar. In addition, as industrialization and mechanization had lower people self-esteem and degrade human worth, more focus was taken to human self-state itself. Individual had taken more interest from authors for they sought to define themselves and real people around them rather than speaking about the world's misery. In terms of structure and content, a modernist novel, in its simplest terms, would include fragmentary images allusion. The novel would be also extremely detailed, containing what has been called stream of consciousness in literature. The sense of continuity would be absent in a modernist work because modernist authors like Virginia Woolf refused the chronological order of ideas and sentences. Modernism presented new ways in writing novels. Because truth became relative and no trust in the world, there became Unreliable narrator instead of the Omniscient. The focus on the state of mind of humans had increased, in addition to the appearance of the psychoanalytical theories of Sigmund Freud. Both the latter introduced a better understanding of human. In addition, a sense or a call for individualism and Experimentation in the novels was felt clearly while it was discouraged in the past (Patrick 2017).

Many authors led the European Modernism in literature. Ezra Pound gave it the base by writing his famous poem containing two lines and which has been a center of debate for years. However, he was not the only. Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, T. S Eliot and Joseph Conrad

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were considered to a great extent the leaders of modernist works. Their works, extremely detailed and fragment, marked the best literary novels in the world at that time and till now.

Contrasting to Romanticists, Modernist authors cared more about souls than nature. The inner state of human being became the center of authors' interest. Along with the Second World War, another shock hit the globe. Deepening in human soul, writers extended their focus to the psychological status, and what controls it in society. Interestingly, a sense of optimism showed up into literary works and arts after the WW2. However, modernists continued in the same track in the few years after 1945, calling for new and rejecting the old (what is modernism).

### **1- 2 American Modernism and Drama**

The shock of the WW2 affected the whole world, including writers. Many American intellectuals, authors and artists who specifically witnessed the war hell, came back to their homes, broken, hurt and with empty souls. For that, they were called the lost generation. Consequently, they left and lived abroad. They decided to search for light and spiritual peace after the war chaos. The war destroyed their beliefs, their faith, and the meaning of life for many of them. They no longer related their own identities to their great history or great nation as America used to treat her children. Truth became relative, for they did not know now who to believe or what to trust. People throughout the war became more conscious of the world around them, more careful and disappointed (Modernism in literature 2013).

As any trend which appears as a motive or continuation to other movements, American modernism came as a reaction to the European Modernism. Authors like Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald, artists and other intellectuals mainly brought Modernism to the United States after the end of the World War 1. Fitzgerald's Masterpiece *The Great Gatsby* is considered to be the best example for the American society during Modern Era in the 1920s.

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The call for novelty, rebelling against tradition and conservation, and enjoying life against government rules may really show how modernist Americans were right after the war.

There was also the Second World War when US was a belligerent, and its people went through the war, again! As people were astonished again by the horror of the fight, authors fell again in their thinking whirl. Their confirmed that the world was never as they were told. However, they also thought, as modernists, that the world can only be what they say it would be. It was the dream that kept them fighting and arose their inner state. No matter how far and impossible it was, dream made Americans had some sense of living the life they wanted. Their pursue now was to seek a better life, knowing the tragic circumstances around them, to only exist. (Drama).

### **1-2-1 Modern American Drama**

Drama has the sense that old Greek gave it: action. It is among the genres that became popular within the time of late Modernism. Drama is a genre of narrative that is performed, usually on a theater stage and a live audience. It includes actors and scenes. The stories performed on the stage are called play and its author a playwright. Probably the most famous plays in the world are those of William Shakespeare.

With the lights and on stage, people became more attached to theater. Their immediate interactions helped plays to arise. As their feelings involved more with actors' tears and laughs, tragedy and humor became main themes in American drama. Many playwrights had a really dramatic plays, like Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee and Eugene O'Neil (20th century 2012).

American Drama had emerged early in 1800s but it grabbed more interest of people in the 20th century. With the time of slavery and discrimination, many plays reflected the way of life and society structure. It represented some parts of social life that were hidden for many. In the late 1940s, drama showed real attachment to society. More innovation and cultural aspects

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

were shown. As the Modernist had more focus on the individual rather than nature and the whole society, many tragic stories were played and clapped for (Drama).

### **1- 3- The Influence of European Drama on American Drama**

It is controversial how the European Modernism affected America, and American drama in specific. In general, it was the European cultural movement that gave birth to the American one, and hence, inspired the American Modernism.

To a great extent, American drama was such an imitation of that of Europe and Britain. Mostly, stolen plays of Europe dominated the American theater. This considerably attracted the audience rather than the local plays (20th century).

Eugene O'Neil, who is considered the father of American Drama, was influenced by the Europeans Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg. Before him, American drama was more about excitement. When Eugene shed lights, drama became more realistic, more naturalist and expressionist. Actually, the credit goes for Eugene O'Neil for Modernist drama, because he came with the new thought of relating old Greek subject with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory. Probably, without Eugene's thought affected by Greek and European culture, American drama would never achieve success (ibid).

### **2 - The Notion of Tragedy**

Tragedy exists in all people's life, the king, the noble and the ordinary. Human beings life has being characterized by welfare and suffering for a long time. A miserable situation where people need the least condition of a good life. Paulo Coelho once said, "Tragedy always brings radical changes in our lives, a change that is associated with the same principle of loss." As many may argue that money and welfare are not essential for a good happy life, the real world has a totally different concept. The huge need to some principal stuff to provide better conditions usually results in poverty, financial suffering, and the lowering of self-esteem for the person.

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

### **2-1 Tragedy in Real Life**

Tragedy is anything that causes despair and destruction, spiritual or abstract, to human being. It can be an event, an accident or a life stage that affects people negatively and dives them into disappointment and sadness. Natural catastrophes can be also considered as tragedy because they leave such destruction on the globe.

Examples of tragedy can be the death of close friend or family member, loss of someone by breaking up with them, being poor or losing money. Tragedy can be sensed too. As people may lose their paths in determining the goals of their lives, living may became tragic for them. As the war was a tragedy for those who witnessed it, its remains were also tragic. The empty souls and dead people that the world lost was a tragedy.

### **2-2 Tragedy as a Literary Genre**

As a literary genre, tragedy is defined as "a form of drama in which there is a display of human suffering and often catharsis for the audience"(Oxford English Dictionary). People who attend tragic plays may usually cry during and at the end of it. For those tragedy plays show human sadness, despair and hard struggle. To a great extent, tragedy can be related to usual human life. It catharsizes audience feelings because it strongly reflect parts of the life people go through each day.

There are many definitions for tragedy, but have the same context. According to the dictionary, tragedy is "a drama or a literary work in which the main character is brought to ruin or suffers a great sorrow. Especially as a consequence of a tragic flaw, moral weakness, or inability to cope with unfavorable circumstances" (Tragedy). Accordingly, the protagonist of the play in tragedy has a painful life where he suffers things he could not accomplish or overcome. Usually tragedy play has a painful plot.

As many literary terms and forms, tragedy is originally Greek. The word itself means "goat song". Substantially, Greek used to sing and dance as a competition. The winner would

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

get a goat. The irony is that winners were rewarded by goats, but those goats would be sacrificed later.

### **3- The Modern Tragedy**

Modern Tragedy is the type of drama tackling the protagonist's suffering, and were performed starting from the twentieth century. The genre contains real settings and timing, with ordinary people and common problems. This tragedy has also multiple plots. Modern Tragedy is limited by time and place. In addition, characters are only middle class in the play. As the focus in Modernism turned to the individual, tragedy sheds the light on characters' state of mind and being. Flaws and characteristics of the protagonist are important. Because time is limited; the time passed by hours, days or years is defined by flashbacks or pauses. The narrator may also tell the audience about the changing time and place. The subject of modern Tragedy is basically about normal people having problems, hopes, dreams and bad conditions. Usually, playwrights of modern Tragedy concentrate on "the flaws in characters". Although they may use irony or sarcasm during the story, the ending is sad (Carlson 2019).

### **4-The Difference between the Classical Tragedy and Modern Tragedy**

As tragedy can be defined as a play with sad tone, there are two types of tragedies: the classical and the modern. On the one hand, Classical Tragedy, back in the ages, tackled only noble's life. There a unified plot and the settings are technically royal: crowns and riche member from the upper class. Classical Tragedy has also one basic and ultimate main character. The one which the whole story is about. In some plays, he is a hero with tragic end. Mainly, in classical Tragedy, the hero protagonist attempts at saving the things around. He is the light of people and should keep peace. As there is one plot in classical Tragedy, a sense of "divine power and fate" exists. It also has a violent part. In addition to the protagonist, there are plenty of other characters in the classical Tragedy. They are not essential and usually have

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

no specific effect, Like king guardians (Hasa 2017). A good example of classical Tragedy can be the play of Romeo and Juliet for William Shakespeare.

On the other hand, modern Tragedy, as the name refers, has been emerged in the modern Era, typically in the 20th century. The modern Tragedy has changed its focus from noble to normal people life and conditions. People from middle class with hopes and dreams, problems and usually bad circumstances were the characters. In modern Tragedy, plots can be many. There can be many stories in the one play at the same time. Settings are ordinary and real, including real names of cities and places. This type of tragedy can also have many main characters as it can one tragic protagonist. Around the protagonist, there are very few people who define his society or his environment and family. This protagonist is also surrounded by misery and self-struggle. His main aim is to solve his problems or achieve his dream, which in context, are very realistic. There are no natural forces or superstitious beliefs. In modern Tragedy, there is only human beliefs and faith. In addition, the main character' struggle can tragically end up with death (Carlson 2019).

There are hiatuses in the periods and movements that, one should search and distinguish the genres and types of literary works. The classical Tragedy may have some different part of that of the modern one. However, they contribute the same: they are both performed plays, they both interact with audience sensitive part. Eventually, they are both dramatic stories, and they both have tragic ends.

### **5- Freud's Analytical Theory**

The inner conflicts and psychological development of human being have always been a matter of discussion for many specialists. Sigmund Freud is a well-known scientist and analyst who worked on human nature and psychology and their relations. As he analyzed people character, he created and set some definitions and theories for human identity and their psychological growth over the years since childhood. He also has explained and illustrated in

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

conflicts and dilemmas. Freud has distinguished dimensions, disciplines and behaviors, and the constructions of human character. One of his famous theories is the psychoanalytical theory.

The Freud's psychoanalytical theory, or the structural theory of personality, tackles development of the psychic status of human. Freud ideas came as a revolution against the belief in supernatural forces. He conceptualized that human thoughts and behaviors come firstly from the mind. The psychoanalytical theory states primarily that the human mind has three components and these components are responsible for any action occurs (Lumen learning). The interaction between the Ego, the Superego, and the ID consequently drives human to act and behave consciously or unconsciously according to the situation.

Throughout his research, Freud suggests that three principal psychic parts of human brains are involved in making any decision or taking any actions. He first offers that the Ego, Superego and ID as fundamental portion of the mind, have conflicts, and human tries to balance these three structures as each one of them tends to control some part of human character or personality (Ackerman).

### **5-1- The Ego**

The Ego is the one part of the human psyche, which Freud suggests that it controls the factual part of human and manages his desires and aims. As human beings have their deep desires, and their higher goals and perscriptives, the Ego interposes to create a balance between the two. It seeks to provide inner peace where neither desire drive human, nor his big dreams fail him. Additionally, it attempts at working a compromise to satisfy human needs and wants. In the same time, it tries to provide an acceptable environment for human, realizing his dreams and accomplishing society principals. Ego is basically related to society norms. Moreover, it leads human how to behave accurately. As a result, a sense of happiness would be created, for it teaches human to avoid pain and reduce pressure. Sometimes, the Ego

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concept is not related to" right or wrong; something be good simply if it achieves its end of satisfying without causing harm". Finally, the Ego is more like the inner voice of human, leading him to behave according to his happiness (McLeod 2018, 7).

### **5.2- The Superego**

A Superego is a supposed aspect of the human nature which represents the higher principals and rules of society. It shapes those standards that human wants to stand for. Rather, the Superego symbolizes the perfection and perfect world that all humans want to live in. An ideal realm where happiness is everywhere and rules are never broken is the image that superego draws to human. Superego provides information about what is correct and accurate, and what is wrong and unacceptable. The rank that society pictures to a person, the dreams that his parents are waiting from him to be and the path that he is supposed to take are all included in the Superego of human. Literally, the Superego seeks to "perfect" human beings behaviors (Cherry 2019)

### **5.3-The ID**

In Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the ID is the portion of human psyche that is responsible for human drives and desires. The ID is related to human instinct. Further, it represents the unconscious part of human personality where only needs and wants are expressed. Normally, the ID part contains even sexual needs as a "pure instinct" of human nature. Accordingly, the ID never Changes, for human desires and needs are always the same. He wants to eat, to drink, to achieve dream, to get married, to have children, to make money and all those are introduced by the Freudian ID. Those desires seek to be fulfilled, or at least satisfied even for a period of time. Satisfying them, therefore, creates safety for the person, but also intense greed because human never get filled. In contrast to Ego, the ID does not care about realistic values. It only wants to be in satisfaction. Although it cannot be separate from

## **Chapter One: Historical background and conceptual framework**

the Ego and Superego, the ID can be considerably the dangerous part of human being, because it shows his most honest and darkest wishes (Vinney 2019).

The three mentioned elements, as a model of personality for Sigmund Freud 1923, work together in order to save human by satisfying his psyche and controlling his behavior. The three of them develop and contribute equally to create human personality. However, sometimes when one of the Ego, Superego or Id may shake the balance of human, an odd action may occur. Not only action, but even human psychology and inner state gets affected by the fact that one element is on control rather than the three together.

### **Conclusion**

The first chapter served as a background for the study. It contained two sections. The first part tackled the related context historically, starting from the United States situation after the Second World War and ending up with the social interaction. The second part was dedicated to the literary concepts. It firstly defined Modernism, American Modernism and drama, and shed light on the effects of European movement on the American theater. Second, it turned the focus on the term of tragedy in real life and as literary term. The section also interpreted the definition of modern Tragedy and the difference between it and the classical Tragedy. Finally the section concluded with Freudian psychoanalytic theory.

## **Chapter Two: Background and Contextualization of Death of a Salesman**

### **Chapter Two: Background and Contextualization of Death of a Salesman**

#### **Introduction**

The second chapter sheds light on the contextualization of *Death of a Salesman*. It intended to analyze in the first part, giving a brief summary about the play and exploring the characters and emphasizing the major characters such as Willy Loman, his sons Biff and Happy and his wife Linda Loman. The second part of this chapter is intended to analyze the main themes. At the end of the chapter, the important symbols that are used by the author are discussed.

#### **1. Summary and Analysis of Miller's "Death of a Salesman"**

Arthur Miller is one of the most renowned American playwrights in the history of American literature, and an icon of cinema for 61 years. He is considered one of the giants of contemporary American theater, and he was one of the greatest defenders of intellectual freedom, denouncing all forms of oppression, and one of the advocates of the idea of theater within the reach of the public. Miller wrote a large number of diverse literary works that were the most prolific in theater, and his writings varied between plays, novels, short stories, articles, poetry and prose, among his famous works is the play of "*Death of a Salesman*". (Bigsby)

Arthur Miller's "*Death of a Salesman*" was first staged on Broadway in 1949, only a few years after World War 2 ended in 1945 and within a decade of the end of the Great Depression (1929-1939). Both eras had a significant impact on the work of Miller and on "*Death of a Salesman*" in particular, which is set in the late 1940s in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Boston. (M. Saalh, H. Srayisah 91)

The play contains many powerful themes, such as the 'American Dream', the anatomy of truth, and betrayal. Miller also uses symbolism throughout the play to support central themes.

## Chapter Two: Background and Contextualization of Death of a Salesman

Symbols, such as distant lands, stockings, seeds and a flute support the visual nature of the work, which is intended to be viewed and experienced rather than read. (Maldonado)

At the beginning of the play, Willy Loman comes home early from the road for lack of sales; he nearly crashed the car several times. Mental confusion is a new norm for Willy. It appears in his conversation with Linda: "*WILLY: No, it's me, it's me. Suddenly I realize I'm going sixty miles an hour and I don't remember the last five minutes. I'm—I can't seem to—keep my mind to it*" (Bigsby. Act I, 37); Willy's adult sons Biff and Happy are in home, Biff has just returned from the West unsettled and unsure of his career path. Willy slides back between present reality and flashbacks his mind takes him back to moments of optimism and hope about the future, but Willy is also haunted by his infidelity. He also flashes back to his brother Ben -now dead- who traveled to Africa and became rich. As a young man, Ben's success is a nagging reminder of Willy's own failures. "*BEN: Opportunity is tremendous in Alaska, William. Surprised you're not up there*". (Bigsby. Act I, 76)

As part of the rising action Lynda explains Willy's deterioration to her sons, including the fact that he lost his salary and he is secretly borrowing money from Charley. Linda also tells them he tried to kill himself in the car and she shows them a rubber tube she found in the basement which suggests Willy might asphyxiate himself .She pleads with her sons to reestablish their relationships with their father, a family talk about Biff's future becomes a pie in the sky plan to seek out an old employer for financial backing to start a sporting goods store with happy. "*LINDA: Well, it seems she was walking down the road and saw his car. She says that he wasn't driving fast at all, and that he didn't skid. She says he came to that little bridge, and then deliberately smashed into the railing, and it was only the shallowness of the water that saved him.*" (Bigsby. Act I, 93)

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At the end of act one, Willy decides to ask his boss for a salaried position in New York. The next day both Willy's and Biff's meetings go poorly. Bill Oliver refuses to see Biff and Willy's boss fires him for lack of sales. When Happy, Biff and Willy meet that night to celebrate nobody feels successful. Biff and Willy argue and the sons leave Willy in the restaurant overwhelmed by memories of Biff's discovery of his affair the place climax makes clear that Biff's disillusionment stems from the shock of his father's lies and infidelity. Back at home Willy confusion continues as he is plant seeds in the backyard.

In the falling action Willy has a delusional conversation with his dead brother who reminds him about his twenty thousand dollar life insurance policy.

Willy and Biff have a final confrontation and Biff in tears says he's leaving the family for good moved by his sons emotion and in the thick of his hallucinatory conversation with Ben, Willy decides to carry out his plan after everyone else has gone to bed, Willy leaves the house and speeds away in the car.

By the end the family gathered around a grave in the Requiem, the Loman family and Charley reflect on Willy's life. Biff recognizes that his father had the wrong dreams. Happy remains unchanged and committed to Willy's dream to be number one man in the resolution .A grieving Linda wonders why Willy did it she tells him she paid off the house and they are free and clear of debt." *LINDA: Forgive me, dear. I can't cry. I don't know what it is, but I can't cry. I don't understand it. Why did you ever do that? Help me, Willy, I can't cry. It seems to me that you're just on another trip. I keep expecting you. Willy, dear, I can't cry. Why did you do it? I search and search and I search, and I can't understand it, Willy. I made the last payment on the house today. Today, dear. And there'll be nobody home. [A sob rises in her throat.] We're free and clear. [Sobbing more fully, released] We're free. [BIFF comes slowly toward her.] We're free . . . We're free . . .*" (Requiem 201)

## **Chapter Two: Background and Contextualization of Death of a Salesman**

### **2. Characterization in Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman**

#### **2.1. Willy Loman**

*"He had the wrong dream. All, all wrong...He never knew who he was"* (Bigsby. Act II, 103)

Willy has become confused often blurring past and present, much of the place sadness stems from watching this character struggle to fend off reality. He lost his salary and demoted to straight Commission and is no longer making any sales. He borrows money from his neighbor and pending bills. Emphasize his failures as well as his deep disillusionment with the trajectory of his life. Willy's the father of two adult sons Biff and Happy; Willy's own father abandoned him when he was still young and his older brother Ben led a life of adventure in Alaska and Africa, during a trip to find his father Willy met Dave a single men a successful traveling salesman and he determined to become one himself .He hoped to gain financial success and a reputation frequently away from home. Willy had an affair with another woman when his son Biff discovered his infidelity, their relationship changed forever. Willy's delusion builds the play progresses and he eventually commits suicide to provide his family with the payout from his life insurance policy. (Bradford)

#### **2.2. Linda Loman**

Linda's primary role is to support and defend her husband. She is aware of many of Willy's secrets and she works diligently to maintain the illusion of his success. In their marriage she allows him a level of authority and controls that. He does not enjoy in his professional life and this makes her an equal partner in the family's delusions; Linda seems to believe that the lies are responsible for keeping Willy alive to this end. She tries to repair the relationship between Willy and their two sons going as far as to tell Biff that his life is in your hands.

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(Death of a Salesman: Analysis of major characters).

### **2.3. Biff Loman**

Biff is the Loman's older son 34 years old, at the time of the play as a child idealized his father and worked hard to please him especially through his high school football career taking after his father. Biff as a young man valued being liked more than adhering to ethical rules and he became a petty thief something Willy overlooked, but the discovery of his father's infidelity caused a lifelong rift and Biff struggles against the image of his father as a phony and a fake. If he is also like his father in his love of the outdoors, he is not yet settled in life because business leaves him unfulfilled. Biff's desire to change to come clean and face the realities of the past and also to follow a different path to happiness causes conflict with everyone else in his family, but especially with his father . (Bezukhov).

### **2.4. Happy Loman**

Happy the Loman's younger son is a 32 years old womanizing deceiver who shares many of his father's worst characteristics. Happy seldom presents the truth about himself and he is driven by a desire to be superior which means sexual conquests and infidelities that humiliate executives. Happy shows none of Biff's desire for change even after Willy's suicide. Happy remains committed to his father shallow dream to come out number one man. (Bezukhov).

### **2.5. Charley**

He is a successful businessman, a good and honest friend lives next door to Willy, he lends Willy money during the play and never gets his money back. He has a son named Bernard who was a smart student and is now a successful lawyer, he tries to give really good advice;

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He seems to sympathize with Willy's struggles to make a living. He does not blame Willy for his faults. (Death of a Salesman: Analysis of major characters).

### **2.6. Willy's Father**

Willy's father disappeared when Willy was a baby. Father headed for Alaska to participate in the gold rush of the late 1800s and never returned some mystery .Ben and Willy has no idea if their father lived or died. According to Ben Willy's father supported his family by selling flutes from town to town. The father was very successful at it, this may be part of why Willy wants to sell things. The narration often describes the sound of a flute playing this is a reference to Willy's father. (Death of a Salesman: Analysis of major characters).

### **3. Flashbacks and Analyzing some important passages from Miller's' 'Death of a Salesman''**

Much of the play takes place in Willy's mind or memory, because he is struggling with issues from his past. Thus this play includes numerous flashbacks; when the play moves from the present to the past and from the past to the present many times during the play.

#### **3.1 Passage One**

*''WILLY: I'm tired to the death. [The flute has faded away. He sits on the bed beside her, a little numb.] I couldn't make it. I just couldn't make it, Linda.''*(Act I, 36)

There is a lot of repetition in this play and when things are repeated, it is a sign to pay attention and the author is trying to focus on something important ;So Willy is the first one in

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the play to mention the word 'death' which is in the title of the play. The author is keying into a theme or the main idea, and when he says "I just couldn't make it I just couldn't make it Linda" part of his problem as Linda will say later on in the play is that he is tired he is tired beyond words, but he is not just physically tired he is emotionally and psychologically tired of dealing with some issues are trying to repress some issues that have been on his mind.

### 3.2. Passage Two

*'HAPPY...I sit in my apartment—all alone. And I think of the rent I'm paying. And it's crazy. But then, it's what I always wanted. My own apartment, a car, and plenty of women. And still, goddammit, I'm lonely.'* (Act I, 50)

Happy his name is ironic, because by end of this quote, this is a man who does not seem happy at all he has everything that he says he wanted as a young man he has an apartment, his own place which is a sign of Independence a car the American icon of freedom and plenty of women because he is young, single and wants to be able to date whoever he wants. But there is something hollow something empty about his American dream that ultimately is not fulfilling the things he always thought he wanted it turned out to be kind of meaningless and deep down inside he knows it and that's why he's lonely because he's not completely fulfilled by the acquisition of the things he wants.

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### 3.3 Passage Three

*“BIFF: Well, I spent six or seven years after high school trying to work myself up. Shipping clerk, salesman, business of one kind or another. And it’s a measly manner of existence. To get on that subway on the hot mornings in summer. To devote your whole life to keeping stock, or making phone calls, or selling or buying. To suffer fifty weeks of the year for the sake of a two-week vacation, when all you really desire is to be outdoors, with your shirt off. And always to have to get ahead of the next fella. And still—that’s how you build a future”*

(Act I, 59)

This is really Biff looking at his life and what is and how he sees the society and why he is not happy or satisfied in society. So when he says to devote your whole life to keeping stock and making phone calls and selling and buying that is basically what he is describing his Willy's life to suffer 50 weeks of the year for the sake of two-week vacation, he finds that the American paradigm of the working life to be unacceptable and he does not want to get trapped in it .He sees that his father has been trapped in it all his life and he does not want it, he says when all you really desire is to be outdoors with your shirt off that is the kind of life he is been living out in the world West working on a ranch but now he has to come home and try Willy's life but deep inside he knows that it is not going to work for him ;This is a sign of internal conflict and also a sign of man versus society.

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### 3.4 Passage Four

*‘BEN [patting BIFF’S knee]: Never fight fair with a stranger, boy. You’ll never get out of the jungle that way.’* (Act I, 81)

It is from a flashback when Ben came to went to Africa and came out rich he because of diamonds it wasn't through honesty and integrity because he was in a land full of strangers and he says never fight fair with a stranger the word 'jungle' also becomes a metaphor for society itself.

### 4. Symbolism in Miller’s “Death of a Salesman”

**4.1. Distant Lands:** in several of Willy's flashbacks, his brother Ben asked him to go to Alaska a wide-open land of opportunity. In the end Ben ends up in Africa another wild and lush location rich by the age of 21 in Africa's diamond mines Uncle Ben in far-off geographical locations represent the material success that Willy has aspired to but not achieved. They also symbolize freedom and possibility in contrast to the confinement and death of New York City; Biff has his own symbolic pull toward the West and his dream of a cattle ranch, both father and son experienced this pull and though Willy commits suicide with unfulfilled dreams the plays ending suggests that Biff might succeed when his father failed. (Frey 2019)

**4.2. Stockings:** Miller's choice of stockings is significant. During World War II, the materials used to make stockings: silk, nylon and rayon were rationed for the war effort making this staple of a woman's wardrobe hard to get. This context clarifies that the gift Willy gives his lover is rare and valuable something he can't also give to his wife , both the silk stockings and the woman's laughter symbolized Willy Loman's betrayal and deception .They also represent the place central rift between Willy and Biff . (Lee 2013)

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**4.3. Seeds:** the seeds symbolized Willy Loman's longing for nature, something he cannot get in his urban environment ; His desire to plant seeds reveals a healthy need to nurture growth but near the end of the play when a delusional Willy is planting seeds in the backyard they represent a desperate hallucinatory effort to become successful and fruitful .Overall Willy's character does not match the symbol he fails at raising his sons just as he has routinely failed to grow a garden without sunlight. (Frey 2019)

**4.4. Flute:** the play begins and ends with the melody of a flute and music is used frequently in stage directions. The sound of the flute signals to the audience that on stage the past is about to overtake the present, in the narrative of the play Willy's father was a flute maker in salesman, though he dragged his family across the country and abandoned them when Willy was a small boy Willy remembers his father as a model he tells Ben. That is just the way I'm bringing up my boys rugged well liked. In this way the instrument represents a profoundly sad symbol of Willy's nostalgia mixing his sense of abandonment with fatherhood and a longing for family connection. (Lee 2013)

### **5. Themes in Miller's "Death of a Salesman"**

#### **5.1. The American Dream and Disillusionment:**

*"The American Dream lies at the heart of the play and serves as an underlying theme"* (Nahvi 28)

A key component to the American Dream is the idea that financial prosperity is available to anyone who works hard enough for it, Willy Loman experiences is the lie of the stream. Even as he watches his brother Ben, his neighbor Charley and Charley's son Bernard succeed financially.

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For Willy there is also a second part to the American Dream which is social admiration for financial success. Willy mistakenly measures his value according to the recognition of others and he passes this belief on to his sons. (Nahvi)

### 5.2. Illusion versus Reality:

*“Tell you a secret, boys. Don’t breathe it to a soul. Someday I’ll have my own business, and I’ll never have to leave home any more”* (Act I.30).

flashbacks confused Willy Loman's mind making the tension between illusion and reality central to the play structure as well as its main character .Willy struggles to maintain the lies on which his sense of self depends the lies that allow him to see himself as respected well-known well-liked successful ;He spins the facts about his sales earnings to hide his financial instability and serial mistruths prop up the illusion of his sons successes .Central is the illusion of his fidelity to Linda and linked to this the illusion , that his broken relationship with Biff has nothing to do with his cheating ,with the exception of Biff the entire Loman family functions under the illusions of happiness and pending success as if to protect themselves from the hard reality that the American Dream isn't universally attainable.

**5.3. Betrayal:** as young man Willy and his brother Ben were abandoned by their father, this first betrayal unravels Willy's idea of family and of a father's responsibility to provide emotional and material stability. Ben later abandoned Willy when he moved to Africa and Willy also feels left out of Ben's success and wealth. Family history seems to influence Willy's own betrayals of his family as a traveling salesman he abandons his son for trips and he betrays Linda in his affair with the woman. In the end suicide is Willy's final abandonment, but it is also ironically the only financial support he could offer. (Bigsby)

**5.4. Nature versus Man-made Environment :** in addition to Willy Loman strive to be a successful well-liked salesman glimpse his longing for nature and a country life; Traveling

## **Chapter Two: Background and Contextualization of Death of a Salesman**

allows Willy to feel a sense of freedom and participation in the natural world even just driving through it, when feeling is worst Willy wishes for fresh air ,a garden and the outdoor life, part of the play as profound sadness is Willy's belief that real success comes from working in a man-made environment and this keeps him chained his life in New York City and his dead-end job. Biff inherits Willie same love of nature as well as his inner conflict, he loves working on a farm in the West but he is been so indoctrinated by his father's ideas that he does not allow himself to embrace what he most enjoys. Biff's change provides hope to the ending of this otherwise deeply sad play. ("Death of a Salesman. (Pink Park)

The most prominent thing that can be learned from this play, which is the element that gave it its charm and power, is that ;the values whose protagonist Willy Loman is guided by are very similar to the values of the American society, therefore the fall of Loman refers at the same time to his individual downfall, as well. It goes back to what has to do with the fall of those same values. Hence, Willy Loman, the way he lives and the way he dies expresses the slow act of self-destruction that a society is experiencing in which shows how the illusory promises made to us by propaganda not only spoil our professional lives, but also our personal relationships, in a society. He became obsessed with the idea of success. Here, in parallel with those social promises, all the promises Willy is making to his wife Linda and his two sons Happy and Biff will also seem futile. According to Miller, As Ronald Hayman says, "There is nothing worth the family in our lives. However, the idea that guides Willy Loman in raising his two children is centered on making the most of personal charm and good looks,

### **Conclusion**

The second chapter gives a thorough study of the play Death of a Salesman. In this chapter, a plot summary of the play is given. Then, the main characters are discussed. Moreover, this chapter emphasizes some important and major symbols including: distant lands, stockings, seeds, and flute. At the end of this chapter, major themes are tackled and discussed.

## **Chapter Three: The Tragedy of Modern Man: Thematic Analysis**

### **Chapter Three: The Tragedy of Modern Man: Thematic Analysis**

#### ***Introduction***

The third chapter represents the core of the study. It will examine the theme of the modern man tragedy on Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman*. First, the chapter will spot the light on the protagonist Willy Loman as the modern man and the hero of the story. Second, the chapter offers a reading of Sigmund Freud to the character of Willy Loman. Hence, it attempts at analyzing Willy's psyche using the Psychoanalytical Theory. The title includes an emphasis on Willy's Id, ego and superego. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis of the reasons leading to Willy Loman's death.

#### ***1. Willy Loman as a Protagonist***

Willy Loman's personality, the protagonist of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, is a combination of his contradictions, his memories, and his living situation in the new world. As the play is told about his last day before his death, Miller exposes an important issue of the modern man, about his life and his treatment to the situations around him. As any ordinary person, Willy has a problem which he probably thinks he can deal properly, but he does not. A tragic story of Willy Loman is told in the play.

#### ***2. Willy Loman: the Modern Man***

In the old classic tragedies, Aristotle assumed that the hero of Greek tragedies is one of high class. However, the modern man, according to Jung, "the man that we call modern...is the average man" (1928, 1). In other words, the modern man is the common man in daily life. An ordinary individual having the same common life of most of his society. In this spot, Miller believes that "the common man is as apt a subject for tragedy in its highest sense as kings were." (1949, 3). Just like the tragic heroes in the classic tragedies, normal person with

### **Chapter Three: The Tragedy of Modern Man: Thematic Analysis**

common life can also be hero for tragedies and have tragic life. A hero who is common man, not a king or a noble. In the play of Death of a Salesman, Willy Loman is "the salesman... is past sixty years of age" (Miller 1948, 2). A normal man in the American society, not so rich or noble. Willy used to be a salesman working in New England and earning a lot of money. However, lately with getting older, he started to work on commissions only which may not always be financially good. Back in that time, 1948, this was a common life that most people in the American society shared after the war.

The modern generation may seem to be less caring about the life they have, especially the people who witnessed the horror of the war. Whether involved in it or not, war had changed people's way of seeing the world. As Vaclav once assured, "The tragedy of modern man is not that he knows less and less about the meaning of his own life, but that it bothers him less and less". Mainly, Miller may have symbolized a modern man's tragic life who started to care less about his life meaning. Willy Loman in the play seems to care more about society's view of him rather than been actually successful and grab attention. For example, After Willy got fired; he goes to his neighbor Charley to borrow some money in order to pay the bills. Charley gives him the money. He also offers him a job to save his situation. Interestingly, Willy refuses this opportunity though the huge need for it and feels angry for the job offered» Who the hell do you think you are, better than everybody else? "(Miller 1948,). Carelessness is shown here out of pride. He would rather prefer staying jobless, with bills not paid, than getting job thanks to Charley. By this action, he leaves himself in debt and instability. Willy Loman seeks to provide safety, protection and comfort. However, he is unable to do such things in this new world. The world now, at 1948, demands success, efforts, and prosperous businessman. Even the Second World War brought fears and uncertainty, the inventions within it established modern vision to the world: letting go with working hand.

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People who lived in the modern world during the great depression era had experienced the insecurity and fears. This hesitation about the world's reality had taken a space in Americans' hearts after the war. In one of his memories, Willy asks his brother, Ben Loman, for advice about how to raise children. Willy confesses to Ben that he feels insecure (Miller 1948,). In addition, he did not come with gains from his last trip. For Willy, the world should pave the way for his success. He believes he deserves to be wealthy and admired. Nevertheless, Instead of thinking in a solution to pay the bills, Willy Loman spends time in the kitchen, comparing himself and his two sons to his neighbor and his son. The neighbor, Charley and his son Bernard are successful in job and study. However, for Willy, they lack the charismatic personality that the lomans have (Miller 1948,). Apparently, the world around Willy made him look helpless, and mostly, it is his thoughts about the new world which had made him feel helpless with his situation.

The modern man is someone who lost the desire to put an effort to be something in the world. Yet, he refuses to be just a passing person. Miller further illustrates that the modern man has “unwillingness to remain passive in the face of what he conceives to be a challenge to his dignity, his image of his rightful” (tragedy and the common man 1949, 3). As the play continues, Willy tells Linda in the first scene that he had contributed to the building of the company he is currently working for. However, after getting older, he no longer sells goods as he used to do. Therefore, Willy believes he deserves respect and appreciation for his old accomplishments in the company. Somehow, these beliefs might have been counted for in the past. However, things have changed in the modern world which Willy lives in now, and such values do not count that much, especially with his young boss, Howard, who seems to appreciate more work at the current time.

### **Chapter Three: The Tragedy of Modern Man: Thematic Analysis**

Miller explains in his essay that having flaws is not necessarily a bad thing. Any one has flaws (1949, 4). To think about one's flaws means that the person should accept themselves for what they truly are, and not trying to be someone else. Miller illustrates "...the tale always reveals what has been called his tragic flaw, a failing that is not peculiar to grand or elevated characters. Nor is it necessarily a weakness" (1949,3), that is to say; a modern man should be flawsome. In *Death of a salesman*, Willy seems unable to accept his reality. As the play goes on, Linda's continuous encouragements, even reminding obligations; in addition to Biff's frank statements about his father being a common man, do not drive Willy to swallow the bitter reality for him. This, the rejection of reality, is symbolized too in his pride. While his search for dignity, he refuses two job offers, along the play, and gets angry for receiving them although the great need for a job. Willy strives to be rich, accepted and loved by society, but he never accepts facts. That he is a common man, dreaming, and not achieving his dream in the modern world. This refusal for reality is tragic.

Mostly, Miller represents Willy as a common man living in denial. A situation that in specific encountered the lost generation and many people who suffered the war horror and its outcomes. After the war, many people, including lost generation, had a psychic or mental situation that they compared the time before and after the First World War and how their life had changed. In The play, Willy always recalls memories, mostly when he was a successful salesman. He remembers conversations and stories about his prosperous brother Ben, who left at a young age and made a fortune in Africa. At some point, it is noteworthy that Miller was one of the lost generation and that, when he created Willy's character, it can be a reflection to his true ideas and real life experience. As Miller felt the Contradiction between the world as it used to be before the war and after, Willy contradicts the facts after his failure.

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The rejection of Willy Loman for his reality, eventually, led him to his death. As his son proclaims, yelling "I am not a leader of men, Willy, and neither are you. You were never anything but a hard-working drummer who landed in the ash can like all the rest of them!..." (Miller 1948, 106). For the family, it was the first time the truth is told frankly and out loud. In addition to Willy's last conversation with Ben after his fight with his son Biff, he could not resist the truth, that he is a common man, and that he will be nothing more than an ordinary salesman.

### *3. The Salesman's Memories and Illusion*

Willy lives in the past. He reminisces most of the time and somehow, he started to forget some memories. Therefore, he is manipulating his memories and recreating conversations to please himself. At first, when he is in the kitchen with his wife Linda, he mixed her voice and talk to a past memory with "the woman". The woman is someone whom Willy had affair with in Boston years ago and got caught by his son Biff. (Miller 1949, scene 1). Also, Willy tends to recall memories where he is idealized and appreciated. As in the third scene, the memory includes him and his sons who consider him as a hero (ibid scene 3), who is traveling south and north and having adventure. The memory shows that they had plans and their father, the authority as he considers himself, is telling them how to do things. This pleases Willy to a great extent as he compares it to his situation now.

Willy also remembers the affair. Whenever he is with Linda, he is reminded by the woman he betrayed his wife with. In scene 5, a past memory, the woman laughter comes to Willy's mind while he is having conversation with Linda, and the woman is talking to him saying "Willy. I picked you... I did. I've been sitting at that desk watching all the salesmen go by, day in, day out. But you've got such a sense of humor, and we do have such a good time together... Because you're so sweet. And such a kidder" (Miller 1948, 26). A mixed, rather

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manipulated, memory that Willy had no control over. The affair reminds Willy of his betrayal to his beloved wife. As he mixed memories, Willy faces a big problem differentiating between reality in past and present. The affair is considered a big deal in Willy's life and mind. It truly is, because whenever he is with Linda, he remembers it. He remembers the woman laughter, the woman's words and dialogue, and he remembers that he gave Linda' stockings to this woman. He is full of guilt that he is reminded by his infidelity while he is with his supporting wife.

Again, running from his angry on his son Happy because of his money and how he wastes it, Willy recalls Ben's memories, which are also significant and important to Willy. Ben is Willy's brother who has left in an early age to Africa and made a fortune. When the play goes back to reality in scene 8, Willy remembers Ben. When he remembers that he rejected his brother's offer to go to Alaska for work, he extremely regrets that. Later in the same evening, when Charley comes to Willy to play cards, Ben appears again. Here for the first time, Ben ghost is having conversation with Willy. A completely created /made-up dialogue by Willy's mind. As Willy got angry out of the imaginary conversation between him and Ben and him and Charley separately at the same time, he accuses Charley of cheating. Of course Charley does not see Ben and therefore, he receives answers for questions he did not ask, which were directed to Ben. Once again, his unacceptance for his mental state (that he manipulates memories and creates some hallucinations) has driven him crazy. Consequently, he directs his anger on the neighbor who does not understand anything.

In addition, Willy's anger is due to the fact that the job offer for Alaska or for Ben is not available anymore. He refused it in the past but now he lost it forever. So, in Willy's mind, he will never be the successful salesman he has always dreamt of.

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In a memory about his brother, Willy talks to Ben before he leaves. . He asks Ben for advice in raising the boys. Ben tells Willy his story, about the fortune he made youngly out of Africa. Willy enjoys hearing that. For him, not only Ben Loman has that success. It's his success too because Ben offered him a job before. Even if he refused it, the job offer means that Ben needed Willy and his accomplishments at a point of time, which makes Willy Loman successful too in the view of Ben. Ben's opinion is so important to Willy. Probably this is the first time where the reader/audience knows the weakness of Willy Loman.

### *4. Willy's Contradiction*

In many scenes in the play, Willy criticizes Linda and has different opinion than hers. Although she is always supporting him, he rarely shows her appreciation. There are rare moments which include that Willy may show interest for Linda. Moreover, Linda always justifies everything around Willy. For example, Willy criticizes his son Biff for working in a farm away from home. Linda defends Biff declaring that their son still trying to find himself. However later, in the same conversation with Linda, Willy appreciates Biff and thinks he is a hard worker. Further, he even contradicts his first opinion "Biff is a lazy bump"(Miller 1948, 5) with "there is one thing about Biff Loman-he is not lazy" (ibid, 6). He also adds some compliments on Biff's accomplishments back in the past when he was a high school student.

It can be said that Biff's disorder about his life now is a result for Willy's contradiction. In many situations, the father did not use his heaviness to act correctly. For example, in the past when Happy tells Willy that Biff stole the ball, Willy asks his son to return the ball at first. However, Willy later praises Biff because Biff stole the football to practice, play well in the game and please his father. In addition, from a past memory in scene 4, Bernard tells Willy that Biff is up to fail if he does not study well and may not graduate. Instead of punishing Biff, pushing him to study, advising him or even asking him about the problem,

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Willy mocks at Bernard with his two sons when he leaves. He actually tells Biff to study, but he believes that the good looking of Biff Loman and his being well-liked would guarantee him the success he deserves. Also, in an old memory when Bernard comes to tell Linda about Biff's action and study, Willy asks Bernard to help Biff cheating. He asks him to deliver Biff the exams' answers. As Bernard confesses that he has been helping Biff, the woman voice comes again to Willy's head and he grows angry. He orders Bernard to leave the house and declares, to Linda, "... Biff is fine" (Miller 1948, scene 7).

The situation reveals many things. As Willy is upset with himself whenever the woman comes to his mind, he feels his failure towards his family. Instead of admitting, Willy denies his betrayal as a fall down, he gets angry on Biff's failure to have accepted marks and behave well. However, he later praises his son, even though the failure, in a trial to justify himself.

Willy remembers the past, but he never learns from it. Instead of doing something beneficial, looking for a second job or working harder, Willy believes that any man, who is attractive, has charisma and handsome deserves success. In this regard, he also believes that the world will pave the way to such people to success. Willy encounters neither wisdom nor good plans for prosperity.

Willy's contradiction continues when Willy is building a garden (a future plan) and discusses suicide in the same time with Ben's ghost. Planting seeds is usually helpful, telling someone is up to life and dreams, and waiting the seeds means hopes and cheering about life.

The fifth scene is also a past memory. At the beginning, Willy makes a statement about his car saying that it "... The greatest car ever built..."(Miller 1948, scene 5). Then, Linda asks Willy about the money from the commission of New England. At first Willy exaggerates and lies but then he admits the real number after Linda starts to calculate his earnings. After his lie is disposed, Willy complains about the car he appreciated earlier. (Miller 1948). At first,

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Willy tries to show off in front of Linda, pretending he got a huge earning. After Linda finds out the truth, the lie is revealed and Willy is ashamed. Therefore, he tries to cover by contrasting his first compliment on the car.

One only attempt that may show Willy tried to make his life better is when he goes to Howard's office to ask for a job in New York. Howard is Willy boss and he is the son of the previous boss. The old boss was a friend of Willy. When Howard declares that there are not chances to work in New York, Willy starts to beg Howard. He reminds Howard that he named him when he was a baby. After discussion, the boss fires Willy. Again, things were not as planned for Willy even though he tried. But even this trial, to get a work in New York, did not come out of Willy's will and own desire. It was out of Linda' suggestion "Willy, dear. Talk to them again. There's no reason why you can't work in New York."(Miller 1948, 4). She was the one who told Willy to look for a job in New York instead of traveling each week as a salesman.

Modern man cares less and less. In the play, Willy always shows that he feels insecure, and complains that things did not go as planned. In return, he is not doing anything to make things go as planned. He refuses the job offered by Charley. He does not care about the love of his family. He also does not take it as a backup to work harder and ignore it. Linda, for example, "has developed an iron repression of her exceptions to Willy's behavior—she more than loves him, she admires him, as though his mercurial nature, his temper, his massive dreams and little cruelties..." (Miller 1948, 2). She has shown him interest and help during his rough times. In the kitchen, she told him he is handsome "you are the handsomest man in the world... To me you are". She admires me and appreciates the person he is. In the play, when Happy and Biff leave him in the restaurant, Linda gets mad over her two sons.

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Probably the only thing Willy Loman did for his future out of his beliefs is being a salesman. Back in the play, he talks about a salesman who got appreciation when he died; he told Howard "Do you know? When he died- and by the way he died the death of a Salesman, in his green velvet slippers in the smoker of the New York, New Haven and Hartford...hundreds of salesmen and buyers were at his funeral. Things were sad on a lotta trains for months after that "(Miller 1948). But Willy never worked hard in his job to get the same appreciation and gratitude which that salesman had after his death. Willy believed that only being a salesman, in addition to the charismatic Loman personality, will get him to the success he wants to achieve.

This also was obvious in the memory about Ben in scene 9. Willy orders his sons to steal some sand. Ben gives a wrong advice to Biff. And when Charley warns Willy about his children's wrong behavior, Willy insults Charley. It was only Linda who got upset. Actually, Willy gets upset too, but after the watchman catches his sons stealing. First, as Willy is looking for Ben's admiration, he asks the children to behave incorrectly. Later, when the boys are in danger to be caught, Willy feels upset and angry. However, Willy did not feel sad for the sake of his children or his behavior. Rather, he lost Ben's interest when Bernard tells Willy that the watchman is about to catch Biff. This can be proved when Willy turns happy as Ben compliments Biff later.

### ***5. Willy's American Dream***

Willy has a vision. He has his own version of the American dream. The salesman believes that having a charismatic looking, a good wife, children, a home, a good job and being well liked by the people around represents the dream which anybody at that time wanted to obtain. Willy's idea here is mostly correct about the concept of the American

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dream. What Willy cannot understand, or has a wrong idea about is how to attain this stuff and achieve his dream.

Willy Loman does not have the idea that he needs to put an effort upon something to make it work. He does not think that success is related to hard work, or small achievements or even doing something. As he advises his two sons "all you need is to be well-liked" (Miller 1948,). Willy accurately believes that having some values, which in reality people do not have control on, is an enough reason to be prosperous in society and accomplish the American dream.

However, Willy also has normal dreams. As the second Act opens with the beginning of a new day, it shows Willy excitement in his way to achieve his dreams. He believes that Howard, his boss, will give him a work in the town. He will no longer travel. He will stay close; have the chance to plant vegetables in his yard. Also he assumes he will make money and build a bigger house for his boys' families when they get married. However again, Willy believes that all he has to do is to get Howard's acceptance. Again, Willy's dreams and wants, for him, rely on his old accomplishments in the company and his contributions as he tells Howard later. He believes he deserves success, even though he does nothing.

At the end, Willy's memories, his failure, his contradictory behaviors and his unacceptance to the reality he currently lives in make him care less and less about his own life. His lack for success, his rejection to him being a common man makes him the perfect Modern man. A man who lost his prosperity and instead of recovering, working hard or accepting the situation, he tends to run to his memories. His pride drives him to wait for nature to assert for him the exact place he deserves because of his charisma rather than accepting work offers. Miller's Willy Loman has created his own vision of his American dream, yet he could not make it come true.

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### **6. Psychoanalytical Reading to Willy Loman**

Freud has theorized that the id, ego, and superego are contained within the one person. They oblige, make and drive the person to do things according to his desires and the rules he is committed to while living in society. Freud also announces that the three human parts of nature can be symbolized by the environment of the person himself. As there are things that drives his wants and desires (id), things that strict him and oblige him to commit and raise up to principles (superego), and elements in which he lives and have this struggle (himself, the ego). In *Death of a Salesman*, the play written by Arthur Miller in 1948, Willy Loman has been living in unstable state of mind,

#### **6.1. Willy Loman' Superego**

As the play begins, and after a short discussion about the car, Linda, Willy Loman's wife suggests that Willy asks for a job in New York, where he currently lives. Willy emphasizes his ability to work and achievement. He declares proudly "I am the New England man!" (Miller 1948, 4). However, Linda opposes that stating "But you're sixty years old. They can't expect you to keep traveling every week" (ibid). She reminds her husband of the very common rule in the society: his old age forbids him to travel each week. But even when Willy ignores her comment, she insists he asks Howard, his boss, for a work in New York. Then, Willy starts to recite his accomplishments with his old boss Wagner, Howard's father. Hence again, Linda demands him to tell these accomplishments to Howard so he can get a job close where he lives.

Linda also tries to create a balance in Willy's life. After her husband gets angry about his son, Biff, who works in a farm. Linda tells Willy that his son is trying to find himself. However, "Not finding yourself at the age of thirty-four is a disgrace!" Willy reveals (Miller 1948, 5). Nonetheless, Linda continues justifying Biff and convincing her husband till he

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finally assures "Biff Loman is lost. In the greatest country in the world a young man with such—personal attractiveness, gets lost. And such a hard worker. There's one thing about Biff—he's not lazy (Miller 1948, 6). Willy is finally convinced and satisfied by his son, thanks to Linda.

In addition, Linda offers Willy a change. It begins when she suggests an American cheese instead of the American he used to eat. Willy gets angry. He refuses the change. Later Linda emphasizes "I just thought you'd like a change... [ ]... Well, after all, people had to move somewhere."(Miller 1948, 6-7). Linda calls for changes because she is aware of what the modern world has become, Unlike Willy who is drawn into his past memories, which brings him pleasure and satisfaction. On the other hand, Linda is also strict with her children about their father. She emphasizes the family bond to Biff and Happy and its value. Linda assures that Willy feels so happy when knowing Biff is coming home. She declares that Willy is not crazy, but exhausted. When Biff starts to comment on his father. She warns him whether he respects his father or he leaves home (Miller 1948, scene 10).

Linda knows. She knows Willy lies to her about the bills and that he borrows money from Charley. She knows Biff is lost and feels insecure about his father the world around. She knows that Happy cannot be controlled about his relationships with women. Unlike Willy, Linda is not in denial. She knows her family members are lost in somehow. But Linda seeks her family to be better. Even in Willy's illusion, she encourages him. She tries to bring order. Even by not showing her true feelings about Willy's mental situation and Biff's offensive comments, Linda acts correctly.

In many ways, Linda is quiet, determined, sometimes angry, submissive, and straight. She knows the truth and true values. She aims at grabbing Willy to the right side and her children to the right behavior. She knows the truth about the world. More likely than not, she

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believes it. As she tells facts to Willy, urges him to pay the bills, reminds him of his duties towards his family, and criticizes his satisfaction with his current situation at work, Linda tries to pave the way for Willy to accept it.

### ***6.2. The Id***

Considerably, the circumstances around Willy Loman are good. He is charismatic, the Lomans are successful by nature, and he lives in Brooklyn which has "great outdoors" (Miller 1948,). As a result, he feels obliged to succeed. As he looks up to his brother Ben, who made a fortune of diamond in a young age, Willy created the illusion that he must be successful too. Ben is an idol for Willy. He left the country courageously. He went into the African jungles. He made a fortune out of diamonds and came back home at the age of twenty one. Ben represents everything Willy has ever wanted: success. As he failed as a salesman, as a father and as a husband, Willy is reminiscenced in the memories of Ben to feel relief.

### ***6.3. The Salesman's Reality.***

The rejection and acceptance boundaries in the salesman world make him unstable in his thoughts and life. He is not satisfied by what he is and who he is. As his beliefs and dreams cannot be realized or achieved in his life, he gets confused, upset and fragment between reality and memories.

Willy attempts to be the model father. At least as he used to be in Biff's eyes. When Happy tells Willy that Biff intends to stay and make a business there, Willy feels extremely delight. He starts to give advice to Biff. He tells him how to act and behave and demands him to show trust and self-confidence (Miller 1948, scene 11). Biff seeks honesty with Willy. However, Willy interrupts him in every chance Biff declares something. It seems to the audience that Willy is afraid of facing the truth. Even when Linda and the boys tell true things

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about Biff's job, Willy tends to prefer his imaginary thoughts. Willy seems at peace as he acts as true father to Biff. He tells him how to win interest and look worthy of the job. It was one of the rare moments that Willy actually seemed okay, not living in memories or fantasy, but in reality.

When Linda reminds Willy of his age and that he cannot travel every week to work, Willy ignores her. He directly changes the topic. Instead, he pretends remembering some work and he assures that he can sell goods in that work.

### *7. The Analysis of the Reasons Leading to the Downfall of Willy Loman*

There are not many reasons that led to Willy's death. Basically, it was Willy's beliefs and depression that drove him to killing himself. But beyond that depression, illusion and probably beyond even the dreams he drew for himself, lays the reality of Willy Loman tragic flaw.

Both Willy's continuous Contradiction, in actions and attitude, has led to his mental situation, which led eventually to his committing suicide. Willy has dreams. Those dreams did not look to be realized soon. Willy never attempts to make them real also. He relied on his charismatic look and old accomplishments. This Contradiction affects his true life. He loved his wife, but never could appreciate her as she deserves. He loved his sons and gave them a model to follow, but he destroyed it in Biff's eyes when he acted improperly.

As mentioned before in scene 9 of the play of Death of a Salesman, Willy recalls a memory about his brother Ben. In this scene, He tells him that he needs someone to talk to. As Willy does not remember really his father, he has some emptiness inside. Willy declares to Ben in the old memory "Dad left when I was such a baby and I never had a chance to talk to him and I still feel—kind of temporary about myself" (Miller 1948,). Miller reveals that Willy lost

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something in the past. That is the connection with his father. To a great extent, this might be one of the reasons he is lost now. Along with the play, Willy seems unable to know what to do. A helpless man seeks to be something in an aggressive world. Rather, he wants to be everything: successful in his own business, a good father, a nice husband and a wealthy man.

Willy's refusal to the new world is also a reason in his mental collapse. Willy feels as if he is racing with this materialist environment he lives in. Everything needs money: the car, the refrigerator, the house and the bills. It is true. The modern world, starting from the 1920s and concentrating on post war II, made more focus on materialistic items. The society Willy which lives in gives more interest to rich and successful businessman rather than normal salesman who acts merely crazy. It can be said that Willy lives in shock, which leads him later to contradict himself and find difficulties accepting himself and the world around him. This leads later to his true collapse.

In many ways, and through many scenes and memories in the play, it appears that Willy's main disturbing element that he is not satisfied with his children deeds, at least as he claims. However, Willy's "his true sickness originates from his own personal flaws, those mainly being his poor judgment and weak character"(schoolwork helper 2019). His rejection to the world, his own beliefs and his own version of the American dream were the tragic flaw that mainly led to his destruction in the end

### ***Conclusion***

The third chapter introduced the thematic analysis of the playwright Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman Play as a tragedy of the modern man. The Analysis targeted Willy Loman, the protagonist of the play. The chapter stated that, Willy Loman is a modern man with a tragedy. The memories he lived in and the imbalance between rejection and acceptance for himself in his society has driven him to live in a mental breakdown between present and

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the past. Next, the chapter provided a Freudian reading of Willy Loman from a Psychoanalytical view. As Willy lived in an imbalance, the study aimed at discovering the two parts he swung between. From one side, the dreams and the success he looked up to are represented in his Id, his brother Ben, who was everything Willy wanted. From the other side, the image that Linda, his wife, has drawn for him and the demands she insisted he accomplished are, with no words, his superego. Willy himself, the salesman, could not resist the fact that he is a failure. He could neither achieve what his brother made, nor could he raise up to the image his family expected from him, especially his wife Linda. In the end, the chapter concluded with discussing the reasons that led Willy Loman, the Protagonist, to suicide at the end of the play.

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## General Conclusion

### General Conclusion

Death of a Salesman Play (1948) is an interesting example of the modern American drama which introduces a realistic picture of the way life has become to most people in the United States after the crisis of the great depression (1939) and the Second World War (1945). The new life had led many people to rethink of how world was presented for them. In other terms, the way that life had changed had also affected people in many ways. The discussion about this play cannot end as it really depicts, analyzes and criticizes the modern world concepts. At least, it sheds lights on the modern man's concepts. The harsh life after a long success cannot be accepted for the main character in the play. As he lives the Contradiction between his thoughts and his reality, he finally could not resist such failure and suicides.

Arthur Miller has brought a new concept not only to the American theatre but also to drama in general. The old understanding of tragic heroes by Aristotle as being noble, rich or high is denied by Miller. Miller has claimed that not only wealthy people can have tragic life and live a tragedy. Normal people also can have tragic life. They suffer, struggle, have dreams, but eventually, their tragic flaw leads them to death. By this illustration. Arthur Miller has presented Death of a Salesman (1948) as a modern tragedy with Willy Loman as a "modern tragic hero".

Willy's obsession of being like Ben Loman, his brother, has overwhelmed his entire life.

Willy Loman could never accept the fact that he is an ordinary man; his memories and illusion have led him to create some peaceful space for him. However, this never paves the way for Willy to achieve his dream. This was Willy's tragic flaw; his inability to accept things as they are. His eager to be someone in this materialistic world, and his refusal to be just a normal man have eventually led to his death which makes Willy Loman a modern tragic hero. He was not noble or high estate, Willy Loman was a common man with dreams in a world

## General Conclusion

that does not recognize such people anymore. Willy strived to make his family happy and to be rich. He could never figure the way to do that. Eventually, as he killed himself to assure his family the insurance money to afford the house, he paid his life as the price to his dream.

Indeed, Miller has introduced Willy Loman not as a tragic hero as defined in classic tragedies. Rather, he presented him as a modern tragic hero in modern tragedy who seeks to define himself in postwar 2 America. The new world's new conditions and difficulties around Willy Loman have led him to want eagerly to be someone who has position and enjoy the luxuries of life. It was Arthur Miller who really defined the modern tragic hero. A new hero for tragedies who is not a noble, not rich but only common man. An average man, Willy Loman, who seeks to be wealthy in a world of complexities and new concepts. A man who suffers, struggles, and assumingly fights for his family. As his past comes to challenge him and his present and future dreams, Willy Loman fails in facing such personal obstacles. He denies that he is no longer loved, successful or well-liked. Eventually, his denial leads him to his falling.

Willy's past success led primary to his death. His denial and as his situation got worse, he is eager to his old success, when he was, as he supposes, a perfect husband, a model father, and the prosperous salesman who traveled north and south. However, partially, Willy Loman past personal life also led to his denial. As he lacked the presence of his father to lead him, to guide him and to be there for him in every time he was in struggle, Willy Loman failed in giving a constant great example for his children. Additionally, as he always looked up for his brother and his brother's success, he could never draw a picture for himself as an independent successful man. Independent from his thoughts and his imaginary image of wealth and prosperity, Willy's illusion has defeated him. Mainly, it was Willy Loman's, the modern tragic

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hero in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, way of seeing things his tragic flaw. This tragic flaw led eventually to his end.

Finally, Arthur Miller's modern tragedy, *Death of a Salesman* 1948, has proved that not only the Aristotelian concept of a tragic hero can last for good. Miller creates a normal man with normal life who has failed to prove himself in front of a materialistic world and because of harsh circumstances. A modern tragic hero who has hopes and dreams and suffers from misery and self-struggle. Willy tragically commits to follow his dreams, but his own struggle and illusion has led him to his end.

## **Limitations of the Research and Further Recommendations**

### **Limitations of the Research and Further Recommendations**

As researchers in the field of Literature, the type of research demands a wide range of reading and deep investigation on the topic itself. The subject tackled in this research, the modern man tragedy in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, is considerably rich of resources. The researchers did not face difficulties in finding information about the play or the author. However, it was hard for them to define the modern man as a term according to experts and specialists. The researchers also aimed at analyzing Willy Loman Psychoanalytically. However, due to the huge collection of data found in addition to the time limited and limitations of pages numbers, they provided only what can be considered as the needed analysis about Willy Loman's psyche in this study. Therefore, they recommend future researchers to dedicate a whole thesis to analyze only the psyche of Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman* according to Freudian theory. This topic can be joyful and interestingly beneficial.

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## Appendix A

### Appendix A

#### Biography of Arthur Miller

The Michigan university graduate, Arthur Miller, is an American playwright and essayist. He was born in 1915 in New York City. He died of heart failure at his home in Connecticut in 2005 leaving a work body which continues to be performed and adapted till today. He is considered to be one of the greatest playwrights of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Among his most popular plays are *All My Sons* (1947), *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *The Crucible* (1953), and *A View from the Bridge* (1955, revised 1956). He wrote several screenplays and was most noted for his work on *The Misfits* (1961). Miller's plays have become American classics that continue to speak to new generations of audiences. *Death of a Salesman* alone has had numerous screen adaptations and has been numbered on the short list of finest American plays in the 20th century and won the Pulitzer Prize. ("Arthur Miller." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 8 Aug. 2020, 05:52AM, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur\\_Miller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Miller).) ("Arthur Miller." *Biography.com*, A&E Networks Television, 5 Feb. 2020, 6:13 PM, [www.biography.com/writer/arthur-miller](https://www.biography.com/writer/arthur-miller).)

## Appendix B

### Appendix B

#### A plot Summary of Death of a Salesman

Miller had the idea of the death of a salesman long before it was first published. Each time he developed a more comprehensive perspective to the characters to finally end up with a magnificent stream-of-consciousness story. The play reveals the past family hopes and the betrayals which culminated in Willy's death along with his present circumstances. A strong believer in the American dream, He spent the last days of his life trying to accomplish what could never be accomplished. He was haunted by his brother's soul and tempted to pursuit wealth regardless of how it could be done: however, his wife always managed to fight back those temptations. He was desperately trying to provide his family with the life he thought of as suitable, but he never could, at least not when being alive. Throughout the play, suicide was developing steadily; it started as a possible idea, it then became the sole solution, and finally, it became an inevitable outcome. There were some flashbacks of good old times Willy used to enjoy; when he could have the pleasure he wanted without having to worry about its cost, when he could afford a living. These flashbacks happened to emphasize the heavy cost of the pursuit of the American dream. . The desperate trials to pursuit the American dream, the family who had to be taken care of, the bills which needed to be paid, the two sons who seemed not to last if not guaranteed a fine living, all of these culminated in his death, as the only money he could actually provide was the insurance money. (Bigsby, Christopher. *Arthur Miller: A Critical Study*. Cambridge University Press, 2005. 100-1) (*The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller (Cambridge Companions to Literature) (1997-11-13)*. Cambridge University Press, 2020. 60-1)

## Résumé

Le drame Américain moderne a introduit de nouveaux concepts et de nouvelles idées dans le théâtre Américain. Un exemple de ceci est 'Mort d'un Vendeur' d'Arthur Miller, qui est considéré comme l'une des pièces les plus importantes et les plus influentes de l'histoire et de la littérature Américaines. Cette thèse traite de la question de savoir si Willie Lowman, le protagoniste de la Mort de Vendeur, était un héros tragique contemporain, comment il pouvait être considéré comme un héros tragique et à quoi il ressemblait alors qu'il était un homme normal. Cet article décrit également les raisons qui ont conduit au suicide de Willie Lowman à la fin de la pièce. Willie Lowman semble être juste un homme normal, qui se bat pour son succès, souffre et vit la douleur de son échec, puis sacrifie sa vie à la fin de la pièce au profit de sa famille. Arthur Miller, avec son propre concept, le présente au lecteur comme un héros tragique qui vit une tragédie moderne. Fondamentalement, ce qui a conduit à la mort de Willie Lowman était son déni et sa déception face à son incapacité à faire face, et son illusion sur ce que le monde est devenu autour de lui, en plus de ses souvenirs passés, il n'a jamais pu accepter son échec et l'état que des choses lui sont arrivées, ce qui a rendu sa vie tragique, à la fin c'est ce qui cela a conduit à sa chute. Cette pièce dépeint une tragédie moderne vécue par une personne ordinaire qui lutte pour trouver une place dans ce monde moderne, avec un esprit moderne.

**Mots clés:** L'homme moderne, Tragédie contemporaine.

أضافت الدراما الأمريكية الحديثة مفاهيم جديدة وأفكار حديثة إلى المسرح الأمريكي. من أمثلة ذلك هي مسرحية "وفاة بائع جوال" لأرثر ميلار، والتي تعتبر من أهم وأكثر المسرحيات تأثيراً في كل من التاريخ والأدب الأمريكيين. تتناول هذه الأطروحة ما إذا كان ويلي لومان، البطل في مسرحية "وفاة بائع متجول"، بطلاً مأساوياً معاصراً وكيف ولم يمكن اعتباره بطلاً مأساوياً، وكيف بدا كذلك على الرغم من كونه رجلاً عادياً. يصف هذا البحث كذلك الأسباب التي أدت إلى انتحار ويلي لومان في نهاية المسرحية. يبدو ويلي لومان رجلاً عادياً يكافح من أجل نجاحه يعاني ويعيش ألم فشله، ثم يضحى بحياته في نهاية المسرحية لفائدة عائلته. لكن آرثر ميلار، وبمفهومه الخاص، يقدمه للقارئ كبطل تراجيدي يعايش مأساة حديثة ومعاصرة. في الأساس ما أدى إلى وفاة ويلي هو إنكاره وخيبة أمله لعدم قدرته على التأقلم، ووهمه حول ما أصبح عليه العالم من حوله بالإضافة إلى ذكرياته الماضية لم يستطع أبداً تقبل فشله والحال الذي آلت إليه الأمور مما جعل حياته مأساوية. في النهاية هذا ما أدى إلى سقوطه. تصور هذه المسرحية مأساة معاصرة عاشها شخص عادي يكافح من أجل أن يجد له مكاناً في هذا العالم الحديث بتفكير حديث ومعاصر.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الرجل المعاصر، المأساة المعاصرة.