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ARTHUR MILLER AND THE IDEA OF MODERN TRAGEDY

"ANYONE WHO DARES TO DISCUSS the making of tragedy," cautions Maxwell Anderson, "lays himself open to critical assault and general barrage"—a warning that has not deterred modern scholars, if we are to judge by the many books and articles on the subject. On reading the critical literature on tragedy, one is impressed by the number of widely differing definitions. One finds the assertion, for example, put forward by Joseph Wood Krutch and others, that virtually no modern play is tragic because the protagonist is not of exalted rank. At the other extreme, we find more tolerant critics who are willing to accept as tragedies almost any serious play that must perforce involve conflict and suffering. F. L. Lucas, in his book *Tragedy*, says that if we attempted to remould the Aristotelian definition in the light of the history of tragedy, we would get something like this tautology: "Serious drama is a serious representation by speech and action of some phase of human life." And he adds, "If there is an unhappy ending, we may call it tragedy; but if the play is a serious attempt to represent life, it makes no great difference whether or not good fortune intervenes in the last scene." In many articles during the past ten or eleven years Arthur Miller has attempted to formulate an acceptable modern definition, and an examination of his plays and his essays on tragedy will not only reveal the terms of his definition, but may also indicate something of the relation between modern tragedy and that of earlier periods.

As the twentieth century approached, various forces were making for realism in drama with its emphasis on people and situations drawn from ordinary life. In part this interest reflected the growth of democracy and the extension of education to the masses which introduced the era of the common man. Perhaps an even more important aspect of the new drama was the post-Darwinian emphasis on environment as a shaping force in life. Man was seen as the product, and from one point of view the victim, of his surroundings. Increasingly, writers became preoccupied with social institutions, political and economic issues, and these they presented as

best they could objectively, or "scientifically." The primary concern was with the external factors that operated on the protagonist, rather than with the inner crisis experienced by him when challenged by his conditions. In Ibsen's *A Doll House*, for example, the central concern is with the social forces that unfortunately made women dependent and limited. We are not invited to witness and vicariously participate in a personal tragedy with universal application, but rather we are directly involved and made aware of our guilt, our responsibility for the social milieu that makes for tragedy. A blow is aimed at us; the dramatist uses his characters to compel us to consider a social problem. Shaw, following in this pattern, makes his purpose clear in his Preface to *Plays Unpleasant*. He writes,

I must, however, warn my readers that my attacks are directed against themselves, not against my stage figures. They cannot too thoroughly understand that the guilt of defective social organization does not lie alone on the people who actually work the commercial makeshifts which the defects make inevitable, and who often, like Sartorius and Mrs. Warren, display valuable executive capacities and even high moral virtues in their administration, but with the whole body of citizens whose public opinion, public action, and public contribution as ratepayers, alone can replace Sartorius's slums with decent dwellings, Charteris's intrigues with reasonable marriage contracts, and Mrs. Warren's profession with honorable industries guarded by a humane industrial code and a 'moral minimum' wage.

This concern with the social problem, the social injustice and its effect on the lives of the characters, is found in Miller's plays too. The economic basis of social mischief is as obvious in *All My Sons* as in Shaw's *Widowers' Houses* or Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*; in *Death of a Salesman* the common man is crushed by forces outside himself and by illusions, false ideals, spawned by those forces; and in *The Crucible* the political motif is clear. Miller refused to regard this emphasis as in any way negating the high seriousness of his plays or diminishing their tragic quality.

On the other hand, it is sometimes charged that such plays are not really tragic because they rub our noses in the social mire and depress rather than exalt; because they end with a stated or implied call to action rather than with a feeling of catharsis, a sense of "all passion spent"; or because they conclude with a note of question rather than with a sense of our being reconciled to life. According to such a view, the tragic hero through his struggle and the recognition of his own shortcoming reveals man's essential or potential nobility, and we are ennobled, uplifted by the spectacle. While this view undoubtedly holds true for some of the finest tragedies ever written, we may not only doubt its comprehensiveness but even ques-

tion its application to plays that are unquestionably accepted by these same critics as tragedies. Are we, for example, reconciled to the death of Othello or uplifted by it? Here is a good man whose goodness has been imposed upon. Though he recognizes his error, there is no evidence of amendment or opportunity for it. He has already killed Desdemona, so any effective amendment in that direction is obviously impossible. His suicide indicates that he accepts his guilt, but certainly the compounding of corpses cannot reconcile us to the tragic situation. While it is true that the action brings out a flaw in Othello's character, it is not of such a nature that it merits his death: the punishment does not fit the crime or, rather, weakness. Our sense of justice is shocked—or ought to be; we are morally offended at the disparity between what we consider just and what "fate" metes out. Furthermore, even if we accept Othello's death as just, what about the death of Desdemona, the innocent? What about the death of Cordelia, of Duncan, of Lady Macduff and her children? The superb poetry at the end of *Hamlet* and *Lear*, which diverts us and cushions the shock of the horrors revealed, does not really change the fact that this is a world in which Hamlet is treacherously poisoned and Cordelia is found hanging. On what basis can we be reconciled to such a scheme of things? Within the terms of our earthly existence, only by confirmed pessimism, bitter or passive stoicism, and a kind of grim satisfaction—or a sense of exaltation if we are romantics—at our capacity for struggle and endurance. But even where such a sense of exaltation or reconciliation existed in the traditional tragedy, it could be achieved only by focusing on the hero and ignoring the world in which he moved, for in that world there is injustice and unmerited suffering—unless one postulated a God or gods whose ways, though incomprehensible to us morally, were accepted as just. This kind of reconciliation the modern dramatist, with the exception perhaps of T. S. Eliot, is unwilling to accept. But, at the same time, he is not willing to accept the initial situation, that of man in a sorry world, as fixed and final. He makes no clear distinction between the order of things and man in the order. For him there is a continuing inter-relationship, a possibility of development. The dramatist, as Arthur Miller insists, must not conceive of man as a private entity and his social relations as something thrown at him, but rather he must come to see that "society is inside of man and man is inside society, and you cannot even create a truthfully drawn psychological entity on the stage until you understand his social relations and their power to make him what he is and to prevent him from being what he is not." Man is seen as constantly in the process of becoming, shaped and not merely stimulated by his environment, his fate. But there is nothing fixed about his fate—it too

is subject to change; it has no eternal metaphysical basis. Tragedy, says Miller, must question everything; from the total questioning we learn. Hence the onslaught on social conditions in post-Ibsen drama and the optimistic premise underlying the tragedy: earth and high heaven do not ail from the prime foundation, and the troubles that beset us are not visited on us from on high by mysterious or vengeful deities. Implied is the social reformer's call to take up arms against our troubles, and his confidence that we can by opposing end them. The possibility of a way to the better, however, does not alter the fact that the full look at the worst, at the moment, reveals tragedy.

In one of his earliest essays on drama, "Tragedy and the Common Man", Arthur Miller formulated his position on the nature and function of tragedy. The tragic feeling, he writes, is evoked in us when we are in the presence of a character who is ready to lay down his life, if need be, to secure one thing—his sense of personal dignity. From Orestes to Hamlet the underlying struggle is that of the individual attempting to gain his rightful place in his society. Sometimes he is displaced, sometimes he seeks to attain it for the first time, but the fateful wound from which all events spiral is the wound of indignity. Man's failure to achieve or to maintain this needed sense of personal dignity is, according to Miller, the fault of society. He cautions us not to exclude the personal factor, for the hero must not be flawless, nor ought we to exclude social factors and seek the source of misery solely in our minds. His emphasis, however, is undoubtedly on the social forces, not on the hero's inner weakness. Tragedy need not preach revolution, but since its theme is man's need to wholly realize himself, whatever confines man and stunts his growth is "ripe for attack and examination." Man's destruction in his effort to evaluate himself and to be evaluated justly, says Miller, "posits a wrong or an evil in his environment." This truth, he adds, is the morality of a tragedy and its lesson, and the enlightenment of a tragedy consists in this discovery of the moral law, not the discovery of some abstract or metaphysical quality. This emphasis on social forces is seen also in Miller's brief but revealing comment on the nature of the tragic flaw. Since the tragic action stems from the questioning of the stable and stifling environment, the importance of the personal flaw is diminished. Indeed, for Miller, this factor in the hero's composition is not necessarily a weakness. It is, he says, man's inherent unwillingness to remain passive in the face of what he conceives to be a challenge to his dignity, his image of his rightful status. Only the passive or submissive are flawless. Thus the accepted notion of the tragic flaw as a shortcoming in the hero's character which precipitates the catastrophic

action and which, theoretically at least, makes morally tolerable his defeat, is transformed by Miller into what would seem to be a condition of the hero's greatness.

Thus, for the most part in this essay, Miller sees the human situation as the product of forces outside the individual person and the tragedy inherent in the situation as a consequence of the individual's total onslaught against an order that degrades. The function of tragedy is to reveal the truth concerning our society, which frustrates and denies man his right to personal dignity; and the enlightenment of tragedy is the discovery of the moral law that supports this right. Basically the aesthetic position formulated in "Tragedy and the Common Man" is influenced, perhaps even determined, by Miller the social critic, and while the terms of this definition of tragedy are acceptable, they are also limited.

Miller's first play, *All My Sons*, reveals this concern with social issues. It is most clearly and simply in the tradition of the social problem plays of Ibsen, Shaw, and Galsworthy. An aspect of the tragedy arises out of the character of the son, Chris Keller, out of an inner conflict between the affection and loyalty he had for his father and his concept of justice and universal brotherhood which the father offended. The persons in the play, however, exist mainly to illustrate the unhappy consequences of a disaster generated by a selfish, materialistic society which respects economic success as it flaunts underlying moral law. At the climax of the play, Joe Keller comes to realize that all the young soldiers killed or endangered by his selfish action are his sons as much as are his own two boys for whom he was building up his business. And in reply to the mother's cry at the end of the play, "What more can we be?", Chris, the remaining son, says, "You can be better! Once, for all, you can know there's a universe of people outside and you're responsible to it, and unless you know that, you threw away your son because that's why he died." The play advances clearly to this punch-line.

In *Death of a Salesman* we find the same emphasis on social forces as the source of tragedy, though the issue here is somewhat confused by Miller's attempt to make of Willy Loman a tragic hero. The essay "Tragedy and the Common Man", published in 1949, the same year that *Death of a Salesman* appeared, has obvious application to the play. Miller in general terms defends the use of the common man as a fit subject for tragedy in the highest sense, as rank is not a measure of human greatness. Insistence upon rank, he says, is but a clinging to outward forms of tragedy. In the conflict the hero gains "size", that tragic stature that is spuriously attached to the high born in our minds. The commonest of men may take on that stature to the extent of his willingness to throw all he has into

the contest—the battle to secure his rightful place in his world. The idea that a tragedy can be based on the lives of ordinary folk is not new in the modern period. Ibsen's drama and Synge's *Riders to the Sea* are obvious examples. What is interesting here is that Miller in the essay makes a case for the common man protagonist, the low man, as tragic hero. He is a man who struggles against "a seemingly stable cosmos" to secure what he conceives his rights, to preserve his dignity. This is closer to the traditional view of tragedy, with its focus on the individual. But, while we may be prepared to accept the argument that a common man, that is, one without rank, may achieve heroic stature, the tragic nature of *Death of a Salesman* does not stem from this possibility. Willy Loman does not gain "size" from the situation. He is seen primarily as the victim of his society; his warped values, the illusions concerning the self he projects, reflect those of his society. His moments of clear self-knowledge are few, and even fewer are the moments when he asserts with strength and dignity his worthwhileness—that of the common man—as he does when he angrily rejects Biff's estimate of himself and his father ("Pop, I'm a dime a dozen and so are you") with his cry "I am not a dime a dozen! I am Willy Loman and you are Biff Loman!" Though there are occasions, too, when Willy emerges from the fog of self-deception and illusion, when he sees himself clearly—and at the end he does realize that Biff loves him for himself alone—he goes to his death clinging to his illusions. He is a pathetic figure, yet Miller in his essay written at this time says that there is no place for pathos in real tragedy. Pathos, he remarks, is the mode for the pessimist, suitable for the kind of struggle where man is obviously doomed from the outset. And earlier in the essay Miller postulated that tragedy must be inherently optimistic. In Miller's view of the nature of tragedy and his expression of it in his plays, there seems to be some confusion that needs to be examined.

In *All My Sons* we have a tragedy in the manner of the modern problem play. After this Miller seemed to be moving towards a greater emphasis on character. In "Tragedy and the Common Man" not only does he say that the common man may have heroic stature, but he implies that in tragedy he must have it, and that the tragic effect stems from the hero's struggle against the conventions, persons, and institutions ranged against him. But Miller's concern is still largely with those forces which he wished to condemn and with establishing the underlying moral law or a principle that could serve as an alternative to the prevailing social condition which shapes, or rather maims us. This is made clear in a passage in the Intro-

tion to his *Collected Plays*, where Miller says that the tragedy in *Death of a Salesman* grows out of the fact that

Willy Loman has broken a law without whose protection life is insupportable if not incomprehensible to him and to many others; it is a law which says that a failure in society and in business has no right to live. Unlike the law against incest, the law of success is not administered by statute or church, but it is very nearly as powerful in its grip upon men. The confusion increases because, while it is a law, it is by no means a wholly agreeable one even as it is slavishly obeyed, for to fail is no longer to belong to society, in his estimate. Therefore, the path is open for those who wish to call Willy merely a foolish man even as they themselves are living in obedience to the same law that killed him.

And so in *Death of a Salesman*, though Willy is as prominent as a tragic hero in the action, he never achieves heroic stature because of Miller's too strong concern with criticism of his society. The social problem play that would express this criticism leads him to present Willy as a nearly always deluded victim rather than as a sufficiently clear-sighted heroic challenger.

The same dichotomy persists in *The Crucible* between the concept of tragedy evidenced in the problem play, with the focus of interest on social conditions that are expressed through characters and their interactions, and the pre-modern, or what has been called the Christian tragedy, in which the focus of attention is on the tragic hero and the social context is given what significance it has through its bearing on him. Though *The Crucible* is a very powerful drama, structurally it suffers from Miller's failure to resolve this confusion. The introduction which outlines the social context, the opening scene, and large sections of the play later provide more than a background before which the protagonist acts. They have a significance greater than necessary for the playing out of the tragedy of John Proctor. The diffusion of the tragic force that results from the dramatist presenting the evil in society crushing Giles Corey, Rebecca Nurse, and others, as well as John Proctor, supports this view. Miller is clearly interested in showing the larger social effects of the particular blight that concerns him here. Even though we can agree with him that *The Crucible* is not merely a response to McCarthyism, or an attempt to cure witch-hunting, any more than the intention of *Death of a Salesman* is to improve conditions for travellers, nevertheless the concern with the political problem was obvious when the play appeared in 1953. Indeed Miller, in an article on *The Crucible*, reiterates his earlier statement that the dramatist cannot consider man apart from his social context and the problems that his environment presents. "I believe," he writes, "that it is no longer possible to contain the truth of the human

situation so totally within a single man's guts as the bulk of our plays presuppose." It is not merely that man and the environment interact, but that they are part of each other—"The fish is in the water and the water is in the fish." We in the twentieth century, Miller adds, are more aware than any preceding generation "of the larger units that help make us and destroy us The vast majority of us know now—not merely as knowledge but as feeling, feeling capable of expression in art—that we are being formed, that our alternatives in life are not absolutely our own, as the romantic play inevitably must presuppose." Then, with specific reference to *The Crucible*, he says further, "The form, the shape, the meaning of *The Crucible* were all compounded out of the faith of those who were hanged. They were asked to be lonely and they refused It was not good to cast this play, to form it so that the psyche of the hero should emerge so 'commonly' as to wipe out of mind the process itself, the spectacle of that faith"

And yet the play, after the opening scene, becomes increasingly concerned with the role of one man, John Proctor, and the crisis that is inner, though prompted by outside forces. The intensity of the tragedy results from this increasing concentration on the individual, the tragic hero, who, in his dilemma, epitomizes the whole tragic situation. Whether Miller intended it or not, the play compels us to focus on Proctor (unfortunately not always), and through him we realize most clearly Miller's theme, which, as he also tells us, is "the conflict between a man's raw deeds and his conception of himself; the question of whether conscience is in fact an organic part of the human being, and what happens when it is handed over not merely to the state or the mores of the time but to one's friend or wife. The big difference, I think, is that *The Crucible* sought to include a higher degree of consciousness than the earlier plays." This higher degree of consciousness is very important, as it raises the stature of the hero, makes him a worthier protagonist, and renders more significant the role of will. Only if the hero knows the issue and sees clearly his position can his struggle become a clear expression of will and character. Only when the will is conscious can it be heroic and the protagonist become more than a victim like Willy Loman, whose will to resist degrading conditions is really nullified by his acceptance of them—an acceptance made possible by his very limited vision.

Though *The Crucible* was undoubtedly prompted in part by a contemporary political situation for which the Salem witch-hunt was an apt counterpart, and though Miller may well have intended to write a tragic problem play, he seems to have become increasingly concerned with and even carried away by the tragedy in

individual human terms. Indeed in the Introduction to his *Collected Plays* Miller tells us that it was an individual's crisis, not a social issue, that precipitated the play:

I doubt that I should ever have tempted agony by actually writing a play on the subject (the Salem witch-hunt) had I not come upon a single fact. It was that Abigail Williams, the prime mover of the Salem hysteria, so far as the hysterical children were concerned, had a short time earlier been the house servant of the Proctors and now was crying out Elizabeth Proctor as a witch; but more — it was clear from the record that with entirely uncharacteristic fastidiousness she was refusing to include John Proctor, Elizabeth's husband, in her accusations despite the urgings of the prosecutors.

Miller's increasing concern with the individual rather than with the social issue, or rather his attempt to express the issue primarily through a clearly and intensely conceived character with heroic qualities, while evident in *The Crucible*, is carried even further in *A View from the Bridge*. Here too fate is seen to some extent as external to man, a condition of environment. But here it is expressed largely through individual persons rather than conventions and institutions, through a coming together of persons whose presence takes on dramatic significance only in relation to the protagonist. And Miller has no easy explanation for the fateful interplay. In an article which appeared in the *New York Times* (September 25, 1955), he wrote:

There was such an iron-bound purity in the autonomic egocentricity of the aims of each of the persons involved that the weaving together of their lives seemed almost the work of a fate. I have tried to press as far as my reason can go toward defining the objective and subjective elements that made that fate, but I must confess that in the end a mystery remains for me.

The illegal immigrants, the two women in the play—Eddie's wife and his niece—important as they are to the plot, even the moral law by which Eddie lives and of which he runs afoul, all take their importance from the way in which they precipitate Eddie's passion and are the agency of his destruction. Eddie's attractiveness or unattractiveness, his rightness or his essential wrongness become relatively unimportant. What counts is that here is a man who, as Miller says, "possesses or exemplifies the wondrous or humane fact that he too can be driven to what in the last analysis is a sacrifice of himself for his conception, however misguided, of right, dignity, and justice." Unlike the ending of *All My Sons* with its moral tag that we are all one family and that a selfishness which is prepared to destroy others leads to self-destruction, and unlike the ending of *Death of a Salesman* with Charley's concluding remarks blaming society ("Nobody dast blame this man. A salesman is got to dream, boy"), the conclusion of *A View From the Bridge*, spoken by Al-

fieri, who serves as a Chorus in the play, emphasizes the tragedy potential in man himself:

Most of the time now we settle for half and I like it better. But the truth is holy, and even as I know how wrong he was, and his death useless, I tremble, for I confess that something perversely pure calls to me from his memory — not purely good, but himself purely, for he allowed himself to be wholly known and for that I think I will love him more than all my sensible clients. And yet, it is better to settle for half, it must be! And so I mourn him — I admit it — with a certain alarm.

It is interesting to note that in his early essay, "Tragedy and the Common Man", in which Miller stresses the external factors as the source of tragedy, he mentions only the emotion of terror as provoked by the spectacle of the "total onslaught by an individual against a seemingly stable cosmos." He makes no mention of pity. Here, however, in the last play, where his emphasis has shifted and tragedy is seen not as in the problem play as a product of a social condition that can be altered by resolute action but rather as a condition of a great man's nature, the feeling of pity is powerful.

In an essay that appeared in 1945, W. H. Auden remarked that at the end of a Greek play we say "What a pity it had to be this way", while at the end of a Christian tragedy we say "What a pity it had to be this way when it might have been otherwise." In this pithy but somewhat oversimplified generalization Auden points to a significant distinction between the tragedies of the two cultures. In Greek drama the sense of fate, residing for the most part in forces outside of man, is overwhelming. The destiny of the hero is foretold by oracles, or, as we are often reminded, made the consequence of actions by the gods—of their quarrels and judgments. Their action, moreover, is prompted often by events for which the hero is not responsible. In Christian tragedy there is a sense of greater personal freedom implied—man is free, according to a basic assumption commonly accepted, to act morally. The battleground, in the main, is in the hero's soul. In Greek drama the situation is given, fixed, and the dramatist concentrates on the way in which his characters respond to the grip events have on them. In Christian tragedy the situation is not given, or its givenness is irrelevant; the situation is created and destiny is not known beforehand. But there is a fixed system of moral imperatives resting on divine authority, there is an established order, and the tragedy works itself out largely in terms of the hero's conscious or accidental violation of that order. Arthur Miller in his plays combines elements of both. As in Christian drama the situation is not given; but as in Greek drama, the forces making for tragedy are often outside the protagonist—he is caught in circumstances not of his own making. But

unlike Greek drama, these forces that determine or are the fate of the protagonist are not beyond his reach. Hence the possibility of decisive action is held out, and the will of the hero is called into play. Furthermore, Miller becomes decreasingly concerned with external factors until in *A View from the Bridge* the focus of attention is almost entirely on the central character, Eddie Carbone, and the way in which he confronts his situation. Yet in other respects *A View from the Bridge* is the most classical of Miller's tragedies. The use of the engaged narrator, or Chorus, to underline the generalized significance of the play and the depiction of the hero as a man almost possessed, driven beyond the ultimate bound of caution to destruction by an overwhelming force, strongly reminds us of Greek tragedy. But we do not feel that he is destined to defeat. As in Christian drama, we feel that the possibility for self-mastery is there—that is, it might have been otherwise.

Miller's tragedies then tend to fluctuate, often uneasily, between Greek drama with its emphasis on external causes (though Miller tries to avoid its fatalism) and Christian drama, which involves freedom and responsibility and which seeks the source of tragedy in the individual. His drama is unlike both in that for the most part it rejects a religious framework. Miller, like most modern tragedians, has been seeking a new explanation of the human situation with its tragic aspects. He seeks it in naturalistic and humanistic terms, not transcendental ones. Our ignorance, our lack of consciousness, is remediable. Our man-made ethical system, though incomplete and faulty, can be improved. Our environment, which restricts and defeats us, which prevents us from realizing ourselves (a failure which to Miller is the heart of the tragic experience) can be changed—if we will. The modern dramatists have to postulate a free will in what appears as an otherwise mechanistic world. This is one of the dilemmas faced by the writers of problem plays. Insofar as they regard external factors as the source of tragedy and regard man as largely the product and victim of his environment, they would seem to negate the idea of an effective free will. But this they are disinclined to do. For the most part the determinism that is implied in the naturalist view of man is ignored, and instead the view is presented that man is not merely a part of nature, but apart from it; that he is not simply subject to its laws and forces, but can and should resist his environment or fate and seek to change it. The underlying position is optimistic: that man, an object of nature, is more than nature; that Willy Loman, for example, can somehow be more than the force that made him. The dilemma, which is clearly seen in *Death of a Salesman*, was recognized by Arthur Miller in the concluding paragraphs of his recent and fullest statement, the Introduction to his *Collected Plays*:

A drama worthy of its time must first, knowingly or by instinctive means, recognize its major and most valuable traditions and where it has departed from them. Determinism, whether it is based on the iron necessities of economics or on psychoanalytic theory seen as a closed circle, is a contradiction of the idea of drama itself as drama has come down to us in its fullest developments. The idea of the hero, let alone the mere protagonist, is incompatible with a drama whose bounds are set in advance by the concept of an unbreakable trap. Nor is it merely that one wants arbitrarily to find a hero and a victory. The history of man is a ceaseless process of overthrowing one determinism to make way for another more faithful to life's changing relationships. And it is a process inconceivable without the existence of the will of man. His will is as much a fact as his defeat. . . .

The idea of realism has become wedded to the idea that man is at best the sum of forces working upon him and of given psychological forces within him. Yet an innate value, an innate will, does in fact posit itself as real not alone because it is devoutly to be wished, but because, however closely he is measured and systematically accounted for, he is more than the sum of his stimuli and is unpredictable beyond a certain point. A drama, like a history, which stops at this point, the point of conditioning, is not reflecting reality. What is wanted, therefore, is not a poetry of escape from process and determinism, like that mood play which stops where feeling ends or that inverted romanticism which would mirror all the world in the sado-masochistic relationship. Nor will the heightening of the intensity of language alone yield the prize. A new poem will appear because a new balance has been struck which embraces both determinism and the paradox of will. If there is one unseen goal toward which every play in this book strives, it is that very discovery and its proof — that we are made and yet more than what made us.

On this note of faith, which well reflects the direction in which Arthur Miller has been moving, it might be well to end. In most respects Miller's position now is what it was ten years ago. He has been consistent in rejecting an exclusive preoccupation with the individual in terms of his neuroses or other purely private concerns, or with an exclusive preoccupation with social forces. He was always conscious not merely of their interplay, but of their fusion. But there has been an appreciable alteration in his angle of vision that has resulted in a sharper focussing on the individual and the subordination of the social issue to the inner crisis. As he moves towards greater emphasis on character, Miller has been making the protagonist a worthier opposite to the forces he struggles against. He has been giving his common man tragic stature, and the result has been a strengthening and an intensifying of the tragic quality in his plays.