

## *The Father-son relationship*

"All My Sons" is a realistic social play written by Arthur Miller. The play depicts the American society during the World War and the Great Depression period. People became so materialistic. They care about nothing except their own business. Everyone wants to survive, even on the expense of others. Miller goes deep into the psychology of those people in order to show the relationship between each other. This sheds light upon the main themes of the play which is the father son relationship.

On the one hand, Chris' relationship with Keller is seen to be a strong one. However, each of them handles this relationship from his point of view. Chris regards it from his idealistic point of view. He thinks so highly of Keller. He considers him to be his hero. He always calls him Joe McGuts which means man of courage. Unlike his father, Chris is a caring person who is willing to sacrifice for the sake of others. On the contrary, Keller regards the relationship from a materialistic point of view. He thinks that in order to show his love to his son, he has to get money without caring about its source. As an irresponsible person, Keller cares about nobody except his family and himself. He does not feel responsible for the death of the 21 pilots because of the broken cylinder heads.

On the other hand, Chris' feelings towards Keller have utterly changed after the truth is revealed. He starts to look down upon his father. He feels that he has been cheated for a long time. The image that he has for his father is destroyed as well as his idealism. The heroic statue of his father in his mind is broken down. He can hardly believe that his father has committed such a crime. He feels that he wants to kill his father or hit him with his fists. He cannot maintain the image he has of his father and himself. His sense of personal honour and dignity has depended on the ideal image of his father which is broken. As a result, he finds himself living alone in a world like a zoo where man kills another just as animals. On the contrary Keller's trouble is that he cannot connect himself to the world, but only to his family. That is why he does not feel guilty, even when the truth is revealed. He does not understand why Chris is suffering and why he is to blame. His conscious is only awakened by the catastrophe of Larry's suicide. This shows that Keller's materialism has made him lose his both sons. His relationship with Chris has turned upside down. It has changed from being a strong relationship into a weak breakable one.

The other father son relationship is the one between George and Ann, and their father, Steve. This relationship also sheds light upon another theme of the

play which is crime and punishment. After the trial, Steve has gone to jail instead of Keller. He is accused of the murder of the 21 pilots. Both George and Ann regard him as a criminal. That is why they have punished him by not going to visit him while being in prison. They feel ashamed of their father as he is a culprit; they have rejected him. On the contrary and after the truth is revealed, George's attitude towards his father has utterly changed. He goes to visit him in prison. He also goes to the Kellers in order to prove his father's innocence and to prove that Keller is the real criminal. He does not want Ann to marry Chris as her father is in prison because of Keller's fault. This shows that George's relationship with Steve has totally changed but in a different way from that of Chris and Keller. It has become so strong that George is willing to do anything in order to clear his father's name.

To sum up, people have changed after the war. Even the father son relationship is not strong anymore. Everyone is responsible for himself without caring about anybody else. This is considered one of the main consequences of the World War.