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THE THEME OF HEROISM
IN MODERN PARAHISTORICAL DRAMA.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to analyze how the theme of heroism is conveyed in four modern parahistorical plays: Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, Robert Bolt's *A Man For All Seasons*, Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, and Bertold Brecht's *Life of Galileo*. The term parahistorical is due to the appropriation of historical heroes (John Proctor, Thomas More, Joan D'Arc and Galileo Galilei) by these playwrights. The dramatic recreation of these characters reflects a search for the meaning of heroism in the world today. The plays also denounce authoritarianism specially in terms of its interference in the individual's conscience. In order to understand the role of the hero in the plays, a discussion of the main features of this intriguing figure is necessary. This is done in the first chapter, in which the role and influence of the hero are presented in some relevant fields of knowledge: mythology, psychology, history, religion, and literature. The same chapter presents some considerations about the adversities the hero has to undergo, specially in his interaction with authorities and common men. The analyses of the plays attempt to demonstrate how the behavior of these characters makes them be considered heroes. Through the difficulties each of them has to undergo, his/her personality is revealed, and his/her moral choice is the last step towards this revelation. The hero's conduct does not have individual repercussions but collective ones. This happens because, even if he does not notice, the hero has a tremendous influence upon the people who admire or fear him. The role of language as a means to manipulate and legitimize power is discussed in the last chapter. Three aspects of this arbitrary use are focused: the obligation of the heroes' confession, the fallacious argumentation used by the authorities, and the authority of written or published works. In a last analysis the hero's strife is to keep his integrity. In a way or another he also fights for the benefit of his people. On the other hand the authorities' main concern is to eliminate any kind of opposition to their interests. It is easy to realize that the collision between these antagonic forces is not possible to be avoided. It is exactly this conflict that the playwrights convey in their works. All of them share the belief in the didactic role of the theater as a means of transforming society. Through their heroes, they try to rescue the values they embody in a world which is clearly in need of heroic virtues. At the same time they denounce authoritarian practices which assault the individual's freedom of choice and conscience.

RESUMO

O objetivo desta tese é analisar de que maneira o tema do heroísmo é apresentado em quatro peças teatrais parahistóricas modernas. Estas peças são: *The Crucible* de Arthur Miller, *A Man For All Seasons* de Robert Bolt, *Saint Joan* de Bernard Shaw e *Life of Galileo* de Bertold Brecht. O termo 'parahistóricas' se deve à apropriação de heróis históricos (John Proctor, Thomas More, Joan D'Arc e Galileo Galilei) por estes dramaturgos. A recriação dramática destes personagens reflete uma busca do sentido do heroísmo no mundo atual. As peças também denunciam o autoritarismo, especialmente no que diz respeito a sua interferência na consciência individual. Para se entender o papel do herói nas peças, uma discussão a respeito das principais características desta figura intrigante é necessária. Esta discussão é feita no primeiro capítulo, no qual o papel e influência do herói são apresentados em alguns relevantes campos de conhecimento: mitologia, psicologia, história, religião e literatura. O mesmo capítulo tece considerações sobre as adversidades que o herói tem que enfrentar, especialmente em sua relação com as autoridades e com os homens comuns. As análises das peças procuram demonstrar como o comportamento destes personagens os fazem ser considerados heróis. Pelas dificuldades que cada um tem que passar, a sua personalidade é revelada e a sua escolha moral é o último passo em direção a esta revelação. A conduta do herói não tem repercussão individual mas coletiva. Isto acontece porque, mesmo que ele não perceba, o herói tem uma enorme influência sobre as pessoas que o admiram e o temem. O papel da linguagem como um meio de manipular e legitimar o poder é discutido no último capítulo. Três aspectos deste uso arbitrário são analisados: a obrigação da confissão dos heróis, o uso de argumentação falaciosa pelas autoridades, e a autoridade de trabalhos escritos ou publicados. Em última análise o esforço do herói é para conservar sua integridade. De uma forma ou de outra ele também luta pelo bem do seu povo. Por outro lado, o principal objetivo das autoridades é eliminar qualquer tipo de oposição aos seus interesses. É fácil concluir que o conflito entre estas forças antagônicas não tem como ser evitado. É exatamente este conflito que os dramaturgos apresentam em suas peças. Todos eles acreditam no papel didático do teatro como um meio de transformar a sociedade. Através de seus heróis eles tentam resgatar os valores por eles encorporados em um mundo que está claramente necessitando deles. Ao mesmo tempo eles denunciam as práticas autoritárias que assaltam a liberdade individual de escolha e consciência.

INTRODUCTION

Visionary individuals, those who are able to see beyond what their contemporary fellows do, are really fascinating. Progress is built upon the discoveries and ideals of people who stood out in History. They were men and women whose mentality did not fit into their time, and for that reason, they had to pay a price. They became victims of their own geniality and prominence. Their ideas, most of the times, shook the basis of their society. Most of their contemporaries were either not prepared for, or did not want, any change in their way of living and thinking (invariably to maintain personal interests). Ultimately, the elimination of these characters and/or their 'dangerous' ideas became necessary. They were geniuses, saints, martyrs, people of faith, common people, people who were faithful to their beliefs and/or their consciousness. These characters came out of the history books and stepped onto the stage, recreated by playwrights of different countries. The aim of this thesis is to analyze four modern[1] plays which attempt to recreate historical situations portraying a hero at odds with his times. These plays are: Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*, Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* and Bertold Brecht's *Life of Galileo*.[2] These plays share relevant similarities which will be pointed out and discussed in this work.

Firstly, they recreate historical situations. Even the period described in them is close in time - the end of the Middle Ages and beginning of Modernity. The relationship between history and drama [3] needs to be clarified in terms of the analysis of the plays in this thesis. It is clear that the historical narratives to which we have access now are discursive constructions of past events. We do not have access to the facts themselves but to the narratives which try to recreate

them. In this sense historical and literary texts might be paralleled for both are kinds of narratives. David Lodge points out that history "may be in a philosophical sense fiction".[4] Hegel compares history and literature suggesting "that history be contemplated as a work of art, for in retrospect it 'reads' like a novel: its end is known."[5] The limits between history and literature become even more difficult to be recognized when historical characters are the source of inspiration to literary works. From her research on metafictional texts, in particular the ones which introduce real people or events, Patricia Waugh recognizes this difficulty. Such works, according to her

> expose not only the illusion of verisimilar writing but also that of historical writing itself. The people and events here may 'match' those in the real world, but these people and events are always recontextualized in the act of writing history. Their meanings and identities always change with the shift in context. So history, although ultimately a material reality (a presence), is shown to exist always within 'textual' boundaries. History, to this extent, is also 'fictional', also a set of 'alternative worlds'.[6]

As historical events are the background to the plays which will be analyzed in this thesis, it is necessary to emphasize that, being a theatrical recreation, they are not historical any longer; they become parahistorical [7]. In this way, although some historical contextualization will be helpful to the analysis of the plays, my focus will be the dramatic action and characters and not the historical ones. I will not discuss the lives, behaviour and motivations of the historical characters John Proctor, Thomas More, Joan D'Arc and Galileo Galilei, but of the parahistorical creations (or recreations) of them in the plays.

Another characteristic common to the four plays is that the main characters portrayed in them share features which elevate them to a heroic stature. The role of the hero and his influence upon people is central in this analysis. Todorov comments about the main characteristics that make the hero admired and feared at the same time:

> o heroísmo está claramente do lado da liberdade e da vontade. Onde, aos olhos das pessoas comuns, tem-se uma situação que não comporta nenhuma escolha, na qual se deve, simplesmente, dobrar-se às circunstâncias, o herói insurge-se contra as aparências, e, exatamente por um gesto que sai do comum, logra forçar o destino. O herói é o contrário do fatalista, está do lado dos revolucionários e em oposição aos conservadores, uma vez que não tem nenhum respeito particular pelas regras já existentes, e pensa que qualquer meta pode ser atingida, por menos que seja dotado de uma vontade suficientemente forte. [8]

The hero is a revolutionary, a freethinker, a non-conformist and a restless figure. Every established system aims at self-preservation, so any kind of menace which might lead it to a possible destruction should be eliminated. Individual freedom of thought is taken as a menace because it can lead to the analysis and questioning of the status quo. This aspect makes freedom very dangerous specially in totalitarian regimes. Because of the interests of those in power (in the plays represented by the Church and the State) freedom must be denied to the individual when it represents a threat to them. The heroes in these plays represent this kind of menace because, in one way or another, they question the values of their societies.

The result of this tension between the hero's action and interests of the authorities leads us to the third characteristic common to the four plays: these heroes are presented in their moment of crisis, a moment in which they are forced to take a vital decision, a moral choice. As the behaviour, ideas or personal values of these characters are seen as a menace the society they are part of, it becomes necessary for the authorities to exclude either the heroes' ideas or the heroes themselves. These circumstances force these characters to decide whether to keep their ideals or their lives. The obligation of taking a moral choice demonstrates the interference of the society in general and of the authorities in the individual's freedom of thought, conscience and action. It is important to stress that the ideas or values for which the characters fight and

even die are not to be questioned in this thesis. It does not matter whether they are coherent, convincible or pertinent. They are relevant in this analysis only in the sense they are at the center of the conflict between the authorities and the hero.

In the context of the plays, language assumes a vital role. It becomes an instrument to exercise and legitimize power. Three aspects concerning the arbitrary use of language by the authorities in the plays will be discussed in this thesis. First, the manipulation of facts by the authorities is achieved through the hero's confession. Actually they are forced to 'confess' that they are wrong in what concerns their beliefs even if they and everybody else know that they aren't. This confession, a lie used simply to escape death, achieves its purposes, for, in a way or another, it gains power when it is put into words, accomplishing what the authorities wish. The second aspect concerns the kind of arguments developed by the authorities. When the circumstances are not favorable to them they distort the facts by means of convincing but fallacious argumentation. Finally, the third aspect concerns the authority of the written word. Books and written documents are respected and feared at the same time. The circulation of published works or documents is suppressed or encouraged by the authorities depending on the interests involved. In the four plays these aspects are conveyed and will be discussed.

Besides these similarities in the plays, the playwrights share important conceptions about the dramatic form and its social role. They advocate didacticism without neglecting aestheticism. Drama is more than an artistic form to them. It is an efficient means to transform society for the better. In Shaw's Preface to *Three Plays for Puritans* the playwright comments on the close relationship between reality and art. He states that "since man's intellectual consciousness of himself is derived from the description of him in books, a persistent misrepresentation of humanity in literature gets finally accepted and

acted upon."[9] Shaw openly revolts against the kind of art which is practiced without social responsibility. He also expresses his disappointment that society follows the principles or habits preached in art without any kind of criticism:

> I have noticed that when a type of feature appears in painting and is admired as beautiful, it presently becomes common in nature; (...) the people, now that their compulsory literacy enables every penman to play on their romantic illusions, will be led by the nose far more completely than they ever were by playing on their former ignorance or superstition.[10]

That is the chief reason that makes Shaw share with Miller, Bolt and Brecht a deep sense of responsibility in exercising his form of art. The four playwrights are aware of the impact that the theater exerts upon people. They all preach a theatre as a means of social transformation not as an alternative but as a 'necessity'. These didactic principles make Brecht, Shaw, Bolt and Miller manipulate historical characters to serve their purposes in their plays. These playwrights seem to be engaged in a search for the meaning of heroism in the contemporary world, and even more important, to reflect upon contemporary society. As Ruby Cohn comments, the appropriation of historical heroes by contemporary playwrights has a strong impact on us and serves for today's purposes:

> Contemporary playwrights, significant and insignificant, have returned to heroism in drama, but they have been self-conscious about that return, often seeking heroes in history and myth. Playwrights rather than scholars, they have sought theatrical excitement rather than documentary fidelity, and the most impressive of these plays are precisely those which are most relevant to us. As Jan Kott interprets Shakespeare to be our contemporary, playwrights quarry their cultural heritage for men who are convertible to contemporary heroes, who can provide moral guidance for us. Through the impact upon the people in their dramas, they reach us.[11]

Although Proctor, More, Joan and Galileo have lived in the past, the dramatic recreation and problematization of their lives, as well as of their

society, make these heroes very familiar and contemporary to us. This happens because the circumstances they have to overcome are recurrent in any period of History. Totalitarianism, obscurantism, lack of freedom and of moral values are not buried in the past. They were also characteristic of the time in which the plays were written, and they can be easily observed in our world everyday. The playwrights themselves had to go through situations in which their freedom was menaced and in which all aspects were conducive to both self-betrayal and lack of commitment to others. These plays represent a kind of manifest against totalitarian practices whose main objectives are, in Carl Sagan's words, "concentrar mais poder em menos mãos e suprimir a diversidade de opinião".[12] The figure of the hero is vital in this context. His courage to fight for freedom, his efforts to keep his integrity and his faith in what he believes to be the truth are heroic virtues which serve as a model of moral conduct to anyone of us.

NOTES

[1] The use of the term 'modern' in this thesis is based on Collins which defines it as something "relating to the period of history that you live in, for example relating to the present decade or to the present century." (Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary. London: HarperCollins, 1994.) In this way 'modern' in this work is used as a synonym for the twentieth-century. The term 'contemporary' as used by Ruby Cohn stresses the second half of our century, the post-war period (although she mentions some previous plays as contemporaries). In this way, although her work is very helpful in this thesis, the term, as applied by her, is not adequate because one of the plays analyzed here, Shaw's Saint Joan, was written in 1929. However, when I quote her or any other text which brings the word 'contemporary', I am referring to the plays which were written in this century, particularly the four plays analyzed here.

[2] All the quotations from these plays in this thesis will refer to the following editions:

MILLER, Arthur. The Crucible. London: Penguin, 1968.
BOLT, Robert. A Man for All Seasons. New York: Vintage, 1962.
SHAW, George Bernard. Saint Joan. London: Penguin, 1957.
BRECHT, Bertold. Life of Galileo. In: MANHEIM, R. & WILLET, J. eds., New York: Vintage, 1972. v.5.

[3] In this thesis I will use the terms 'theater' and 'drama' interchangeably. Massaud Moisés, among other experts, mentions many details which can distinguish both terms. Even so, the point in which the definitions converge is the relevant aspect to be analyzed here. Both terms imply, in a way or another, the combination of text and representation. The discussion in this thesis may sometimes focus on the text, and sometimes on its representational aspects. It is not possible, however, to ignore that the full accomplishment of a play is in the combination of text and action, and it is in this sense that both terms will be used here.

[4] *Apud* WAUGH, Patricia. Metafiction. London: Methuen, 1984, p.16.

[5] *Apud* WAUGH, p.48.

[6] WAUGH, p.106.

[7] I borrow the term 'parahistorical' from Ruby Cohn. The term implies (the author does not define it) something that is close, compared or paralleled to history but which is not historical any longer.

[8] TODOROV, Tzvetan. Em Face do Extremo. Campinas: Papirus, 1995, p. 14.

[9] SHAW, George Bernard. Three Plays for Puritans. London: Constable, 1952, p.xviii-xix.

[10] *Ibid.*, p.xix.

[11] COHN, Ruby. Currents in Contemporary Drama. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1969, p.125-26.

[12] SAGAN, Carl. O Mundo Assombrado pelos Demônios. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996, p.393.

2. THE HERO

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world, the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.

George Bernard Shaw

2.1 A Hero with Many Faces.

If we want to understand more fully the tendency to portray the heroism of past times in contemporary plays, we need first to analyze the hero's role and meaning as well as the influence he exerts upon people. Sidney Hook points out some of the reasons why people from different cultures and times have interest in heroes. First, there is the need of leadership which is essential in any social organization. This is the kind of admiration that has historical motivations and relevance because, in Hook's words, "onde tão poucos aparentemente podem decidir tanto, não é de surpreender que o interesse pelo significado histórico dos notáveis fosse forte."[1] In society our lives are many times dependent on the decisions of our leaders. They are the ones who help to determine the historical directions and events. Influential personalities also encourage the younger generations to build their patriotic feelings. Therefore, great men, either real or mythical, are taken as symbols of a country, of a nation. The figure of the hero is also associated to the idea of salvation. It does not matter in what sphere (historical, literary, mythical, psychological) the hero seems to be the only one who is able to save us from situations from which we cannot escape by ourselves. Consequently, cult and reverence to such figure is what clearly follows. The role of the hero is very relevant in historical terms, too. History has traditionally been narrated on the basis of the actions of great men; it does not matter if they are product of their circumstances or if they determine such

circumstances. Although this view of history is much contested nowadays, it is not possible to deny the importance attributed to great man.

Psychology tries to understand and explain the people's need to admire and even worship a heroic figure. This behaviour can be understood as a need of psychological security. In times of crisis or oppression, we tend to search for and project the security and comfort promoted by the father-figure or mother-figure in other leaders. The success of popular figures is psychologically shared by their admirers. This explains why people search for compensation of personal and material limitations in their heroes. Finally, there is also the tendency of escaping from responsibility. Few people want to assume positions of power, so they avoid taking decisions, leaving them to their leaders.

But what characterizes a hero? What are his basic features? The dictionary defines a hero as: "1.1 the main male character in a book, play, film, etc. who is usually admired or respected for his good qualities. 1.2 someone who has done something brave, new, or good, and who is therefore greatly admired by a lot of people."[2] From this definition it is possible to notice two basic characteristics of any heroic figure: his outstanding character and his influence upon people. Todorov considers Aquiles the 'original hero' because he embodies the main heroic characteristics and motivations: he fights for a model of heroic perfection; he is physically and morally strong; he is powerful and courageous. According to Todorov "Aquiles é o herói puro, a encarnação do que poderíamos chamar de heroísmo antigo; outros heróis seus contemporâneos conservam apenas algumas facetas do modelo, ou o modificam à sua maneira."[3] He fights to fulfill an internal yearn for excellence which is externally translated into the glory attributed to him. The hero who fights for his land or country, the sage, the saint, the martyr, among others, are taken as variations of this primary model of heroism. The influence of the figure of the hero is observed in several fields of knowledge such as, for example, history, psychology, mythology, and literature.

2.1.1 The mythological hero and his psychological implications.

The figure of the hero is central in mythology. According to specialists in the human psyche, myth and the human unconscious are intrinsically related. Campbell states that "Freud, Jung, and their followers have demonstrated irrefutably that the logic, the heroes and the deeds of myth survive into modern times."[4] Everyone has his heroes. We tend to adopt them as models because we admire them. Our choice of one hero or another might reveal our weaknesses, which we tend to compensate for in our hero's strength. According to Cottler and Jaffe, the heroes "are those whom we admire so much that if our dreams came true, we should be like them."[5] These considerations make it easy to understand why Umminger defines mythology as the 'cult of personality'. According to him, "o homem só se torna interessante como super-homem."[6] We are the common man. We need a 'super-man' to admire and imitate. This figure becomes a myth.

The mythic conception of hero is that he is the savior of his people. The trials which he has to undergo reaffirm a certain moral order. Joseph Campbell summarizes the hero's steps of adventure:

> The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: *separation - initiation - return:* which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth. *A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.*[7]

In this conception, the hero is a courageous being who faces the unknown. His victory over it means not only an individual victory but a collective one. The knowledge gained in such adventure blesses us all. Cottler and Jaffe say that when the hero wins, the victory is extended to his followers: "everybody wins; the whole world, now and to come, wins."[8]

The ancient Greek heroes had a mixture of human and godly features. It was exactly this semi-divine aspect which connected their lives to suffering before "passing to the playful existence of the 'easily-living' gods."[9] According to Kerényi the mythic heroes (not the historical ones) stand as prototypes. "Their existence", he states, "is a special kind of quasi-existence, which is both less and more than the ordinary existence of human beings - more, because it includes also their postumous life in cult."[10] For Carlyle it is exactly this divine aspect of the hero which connects him to 'cult'. Although not all the heroes are connected with cult (as Homer's heroes, for example, who are deprived from it and are portrayed simply as 'noble gentlemen') many heroic figures become objects of reverence. According to Carlyle people admire a hero, and even worship him because they recognize "que en la presencia de un hermano nuestro se revela algo divino".[11] The hero shares his human characteristics with mankind, but at the same time possesses a transcendental aspect which makes him admired and followed. According to Carlyle, people desire to participate of the grandeur and truth of the hero. The cult connected with the Greek mythological heroes is not a worship but a reverence, a tribute to them, and is associated with the salvation brought by them. This salvation is liberating, and for that reason, provokes joy and enthusiasm.

Kerényi points out another characteristic of the hero's personality. Like Carlyle, he stresses the idea that the hero must be a 'firm' figure: "Far more than by any peculiarity, the heroes in all their legends are marked by their substantiality, by a remarkable solidity, which they share with the divine figures"[12] Thomas Carlyle associates the personality of the hero to individuality. The authenticity of a hero is to contrast with all kinds of hypocrisy.

2.1.2 The historical hero.

The focus of traditional historical texts has always been the deeds and personality of great men. This focus has changed since the first half of this century specially with a new trend in historical studies known as 'New History'. The term corresponds to a new approach which began to be advocated by the French group of 'Annales', and after that by other historians, who proposed many changes in the conventional way of writing History. One of these changes was the fact that the historical narratives should recapture the voices of the common people, the women, the children, the working classes, the Blacks - those who were excluded from the traditional texts. However, in this discussion it becomes relevant to understand how historians have traditionally viewed the relationship between the great men, the heroes, and History.

For Carlyle, who holds a nineteenth-century conception of History, such relationship is so deep that, in his opinion, history is nothing else than the record of the hero's deeds. For him the very idea of History cannot be dissociated from individual outstanding figures. He affirms that "Ningún grande hombre vivirá en vano. La Historia del Mundo no es sino la Biografia de los Grandes Hombres."[13] The French physicist Henri Poincaré attributes a vital importance to individual action and thought in determining historical directions. Commenting about opportunity in History, he states: "A maior oportunidade é o nascimento de um grande homem."[14] This view is also shared by Sidney Hook. According to him, the hero in History "é um indivíduo a quem podemos com justiça atribuir influência preponderante na determinação de um desfecho ou acontecimento cujas consequências teriam sido profundamente diferentes se ele não agisse."[15] Walter Umminger stresses the fact that the hero 'must' be an outstanding person. In his analysis of historical record in relation to men's deeds, he states:

> A História não tem consideração pelo comum dos mortais; ama e preza os ambiciosos que alcançam o impossível. No relato dos grandes acontecimentos internacionais apresenta, antes de tudo, a contribuição daqueles cujas realizações superaram o comum: são os heróis, os deuses, os super-homens.[16]

Although Hook finds it difficult to define a hero, his attempt to do so corroborates Umminger's view. Hook understands that:

> Todos os sentidos do termo "herói", tal como é usado pelos adeptos das interpretações heróicas da História, pressupõem que, quem quer que seja o herói, ele se destaca de um modo qualitativamente único dos outros homens na esfera de sua atividade e, ainda mais, que o registro das realizações em qualquer setor é a história dos feitos e pensamentos de heróis.[17]

Hook also establishes a difference between 'homem-momento' and 'homem-época". This distinction is important because, according to him, it tries to "fazer justiça à crença geral de que um herói é grande não somente em virtude do que ele faz, mas em virtude do que ele é."[18] In this sense the true hero is qualified by his intrinsic merits and not by chance. The grandeur of the hero, Hook states, "é algo que deve envolver extraordinário talento de alguma espécie, e não meramente a sorte composta de existir e estar no lugar certo num momento feliz."[19] A hero is to be measured not only by the consequences of what he does but by the qualities he makes use to do it. According to Hook it is "o herói como homem-época que deixa a marca positiva de sua personalidade na História - uma marca que ainda se observa depois de ele desaparecer do cenário."[20] The hero is not shaped or produced by the circumstances. He is the one who possesses the inner qualities, and makes use of them, to determine the events.

2.1.3 The literary hero.

Literature is a fertile field for heroes. In literary works their social role is most of the times foregrounded. The hero's relationship with his social environment, his influence on people, and the outcome of his decisions or

actions are central in his characterization. The hero in Carlyle's conception has his role completely related to his social environment. He is to be taken as a moral model of conduct in an age of skeptic people who have the worst kind of doubt: the 'moral doubt'. The hero becomes a kind of guide to the people of his time and of the future ages. The consequences of the hero's deeds never affect only himself. Even if he fights for a personal cause, the impact of his behaviour, personality, and beliefs affects the others. "The hero", Kerényi observes, "as he meets us in his 'legends' assuredly embodies (...) a teaching to mankind."[21] As we could observe in the mythical description of the hero's adventure, his last step is to "bestow boons on his fellow man." His adventure and victory over terrifying powers grant him special powers to do so. We can conclude that the hero is a special figure, someone whose qualities surpass ours. This is Aristotle's view of the tragic hero, a character who should not be perfect (since his tragic fate is consequence of a flaw) but who should be better than the common people. We are supposed to learn and improve ourselves by observing him. This idea of 'learning from the hero' is also posited by Maxwell Anderson. In his opinion the hero in a play "must not be a perfect man." In fact the hero "must have some variation of what Aristotle calls a tragic fault".[22] The playwright stresses the idea of transformation of the hero through the dramatic action in a recognition scene. Anderson shares Aristotle's opinion that this discovery is the essence of drama. The hero makes a central discovery during the action of the play, and, when he makes it, "he must change both in himself and in his action - and he must change for the better. (...) it is necessary that he must become more admirable, and not less so, at the end of the play."[23] The audience is to learn from the hero's process of improvement. Joseph Conrad has another view of the hero's personality and his role towards the audience. He stresses not the superior personality of the hero but his identification with us. "The tragic hero" in Conrad's words "is 'one of us'. He is not necessarily virtuous, not necessarily

free from profound guilt. What he is is a man who reminds us strongly of our humanity, who can be accepted as standing for us."[24] In a way or another, all of these definitions stress the importance of the hero's influence over mankind, over us.

2.1.4 The hero as a saint and a genius.

At times the figures of the saints are taken as heroic mainly because of two aspects: they are outstanding, and they have a tremendous impact upon people. Besides that, there is the postumous cult of their personalities by their followers. Todorov establishes a relationship between heroes and saints specially in terms of their revolutionary attitude. According to him:

> Assim como o herói, o santo é um ser excepcional, não se submetendo às leis da sociedade em que vive; não reage como os outros, e suas qualidades extraordinárias (a potência de sua alma) fazem dele um solitário, que se preocupa pouco com o efeito que seus atos têm sobre os próximos. O santo, no limite, não conhece a luta interior, e tampouco o sofrimento. Como o herói, ele não admite o compromisso; conseqüentemente, está sempre pronto a morrer por sua fé, o que não é o caso dos outros habitantes da cidade, por mais devotos que sejam.[25]

These considerations about the saint as a hero are specially relevant to the analysis of two plays discussed in this thesis: *A Man for All Seasons* and *Saint Joan*. The historical characters Thomas More and Joan of Arc were canonized. Both Bolt and Shaw discuss this subject in the preface to their plays. Bolt states that he portrays Thomas More not as a Catholic martyr but as a hero of selfhood. In the play, More's fight is not so much for his beliefs themselves but for 'his right' to believe.

Shaw relates the word saint to heroism and geniality. It is interesting to compare the common definition of the word 'saint' and Shaw's. According to the dictionary a saint is "a dead person who has been officially recognized by a Christian church as deserving special honor, because their life was very good or

holy."[26] In the preface to *Saint Joan*, Shaw states that "a saint may be defined as a person of heroic virtue whose private judgment is privileged."(p.29) He stresses the idea again by stating that a saint "is one who having practiced heroic virtues, and enjoyed revelations or powers of the order which the Church classes technically as supernatural, is eligible for canonization."(p.10) Although Proctor and Galileo did not become saints in the Catholic sense, they fit into another definition in which Shaw relates the word saint not only to heroism but to geniality:

> A genius is a person who, seeing farther and probing deeper than other people, has a different set of ethical valuations from theirs, and has energy enough to give effect to this extra vision and its valuations in whatever manner best suits his or her specific talents. (p.10)

The four characters see what others can't, and they obviously suffer because they are not understood. Even so, they wish and really try to make their contemporaries share their awareness and, in Joan's case, 'prophetic' views.

2.1.5 The hero as a martyr.

The hero's influence upon people is paradoxically strengthened with his death. Kerényi points out that the "glory of the divine, which falls on the figure of the hero, is strangely combined with the shadow of mortality."[27] At times the heroes end up dying for their beliefs and become martyrs. A martyr can be defined as "a person who suffers or is killed because of their religious or political beliefs, and therefore gives strength to people who share those beliefs."[28] This definition leads us to conclude that, even if the hero is materially attacked, his ideals and his faith survive the dissolution of his physical body. This explains why the hero cannot be destroyed. Death only amplifies the role and influence of the hero on us because, as Campbell states, then he "has died as a modern man; but as eternal man - perfected, unspecific, universal man - he has been reborn."[29]

Todorov points out that the hero does not admire death in itself, but that some values are more important than life for him: "No heroísmo, a morte tem de fato um valor superior à vida. Só a morte (...) permite atingir o absoluto: sacrificando-se a vida, prova-se que se adora mais o ideal do que a própria vida."[30] Again, and even more strongly, the idea that the hero must teach us a lesson, or to 'bestow boons' on us, is emphasized. Death is not strong enough to prevent the hero from doing so. According to Campbell, the hero's "second solemn task and deed therefore (...) is to return then to us, transfigured, and teach the lesson he has learned of life renewed."[31] The heroes triumph in life and in death. More in death, for time is the great helper of the hero's influence. About this aspect, Carlyle considers

> de qué modo, si un hombre há sido grande mientras vivia, viene a ser diez vezes mayor cuando muerto. Qué enorme *cámara obscura* amplificadora es la Tradición! Como crece una cosa en la Memoria humana, en la humana Imaginación, cuando el amor, el culto y todo lo que reside en el humano Corazón, se reúne para fomentarla (...).[32]

It is important to remember that, when the heroes can no longer avoid death, it is not faced negatively by them. No hero desires death. Their fight is for life, and a good and fair one. But once they have to face death, they do it consciously and bravely. Campbell points out that "the hero would be no hero if death held him any terror".[33] The persecution and adversity these men of virtue suffer, which at times lead to death, is the price of their dignity and glory. It is not seen as a final point but as a transformation process.

2.2 The Hero and Antagonism.

The hero might be a warrior, a visionary, a saint, a genius, a martyr. It does not matter the role he might assume; his most important feature is that he is, or becomes, an outstanding figure. He possesses characteristics that differentiate

him from the majority of his contemporaries. From these considerations arise one of the main problems the hero will have to endure: the difficulty to fit his own times. The hero is hardly understood, and his views are difficult to be accepted by his fellowmen, who, most of the times, are not as mature as him. His limitations come from the resistance of his time to his behaviour and thoughts. The figure of the hero is vital in a world lacking virtue. He brings victory, sincerity and faith to it. It is possible to conclude that the tension between the virtuous individual and the world of vice is certain. For Carlyle, the hero's constant strife is against lie and hypocrisy which are disguised as truth and virtue. The hero's main concern is to unmask this. Sidney Hook comments that progress in the historical scene is due to individuals, or group of individuals, whose ideas are accepted or understood a long time after they preached them. Hook concludes that "a madureza de hoje é consequência da ação heróica de ontem."[34] Carlyle corroborates the same view. According to him, the world is never prepared for the visionary figure of the hero: "Desde tiempos remotos, el Héroe há tenido que constreñirse a formas harto raras: el mundo nunca há sabido qué hacer com él, tan forastero resulta su aspecto en esta Tierra!"[35]

Hook also comments about the tension between the hero's individuality and the pressures of his times. These pressures, he states, are basically three: social, economical, and political. In certain historical circumstances, he states, "quanto mais intensa a descarga de tensões sociais acumuladas, tanto mais se apagam as peculiaridades pessoais dos atores."[36] Individuality is simply taken apart in situations like that. In Trotsky's words, "sob o impulso de acontecimentos demasiado grandes e inexoráveis as resistências são esmagadas e os limites da 'individualidade' perdidos."[37] Hook interprets Trotsky's commentary assuming that "há situações históricas nas quais as forças libertadas varrerão quem quer que procure detê-las."[38] In the case of the plays discussed here, two characters are crushed because they try to detain the power of their circumstances: John

Proctor and Thomas More. They try to stand steadfast in a period of crisis. Joan and Galileo, on the other hand, seem to be responsible for the changes. They, in a way, provoked the clash because they preached something that the others were not prepared to accept. In a way or another, the four characters determined their own fate.

Robert Whitman, commenting about Joan's interaction with the other characters, explains the paradox involving the impact of the personality and behaviour of the genius upon people. The heroes suffer because they are outstanding. "Mean-minded men", Whitman states, "cannot tolerate those with superior powers, and the very confidence that brings Joan victory alienates those for whom the victory was won."[39] The heroic stature that not only Joan but Proctor, More, and Galileo achieve make them admired and feared, holy and devilish, heroes and villains.

In the preface to *Saint Joan* Shaw compares his heroine to Socrates: they were both victims of jealousy and anger because of their mental superiority in relation to the people of their time. Shaw understands that it "is always hard for superior wits to understand the fury roused by their exposures of the stupidities of comparative dullards."(p.8) Like Socrates it was difficult for Joan to understand why the fellows for whom she fought, and whom she thought she was serving, feared, and even hated her. The crucial difference between Socrates and Joan, according to Shaw, was the way they approached people. While Socrates, through argument, operated "slowly and peacefully on men's minds", Joan "was a woman of action, operating with impetuous violence on their bodies."(p.8) This is, according to the author, the reason why Socrates died at seventy and Joan before she left her teens. It is interesting that in *A Man for All Seasons* Thomas More is also compared to Socrates. The comparison is made by one of his antagonists in relation, probably, to his wisdom and knowledge. But Thomas More is aware of the deep relationship between too much wisdom and

martyrdom, as in Socrates' case. As More does not want to die, he wisely replies to Chapyus that he does not have a taste for hemlock. More loves his life and will do whatever is possible not to give it in.

Joan is also compared to Napoleon because of the realistic warfare she preached and practiced. Contrary to Joan and Socrates, Napoleon knew that his death would cause relief on people. The great warrior was aware of the stature he reached and its consequences. "Napoleon was so great a fighter", Cottler and Jaffe mention, "that thousands of families never forgot him in their curses."[40] As the heroes are outstanding figures, they are loved and admired by some and hated by others. It does not matter if the 'heroes' work for the benefit of mankind; the fact is that their superiority frightens people. In his preface Shaw comments about this aspect:

> it is not easy for mental giants who neither hate nor intend to injure their fellows to realize that nevertheless their fellows hate mental giants and would like to destroy them, not only enviously because the juxtaposition of a superior wounds their vanity, but quite humbly and honestly because it frightens them. Fear will drive men to any extreme; and the fear inspired by a superior being is a mystery which cannot be reasoned away.(p.9)

Joan was a conqueror and became a saint. About these two roles Shaw states "it is far more dangerous to be a saint than to be a conqueror. Those who have been both (...) have found that it is the conqueror who must save the saint, and that defeat and capture mean martyrdom."(p.9)

Joan's behavior in relation to the tension created between her beliefs and the interests of the authorities is completely different from Thomas More's in *A Man for All Seasons*. While More takes refuge in a silence which is almost irritating, Joan does not measure her words at all. She does not seem to feel the need of controlling her tongue and exposes her views and beliefs openly. More knows about the danger words might produce. Joan is too innocent to acknowledge such power. Ironically none of the attitudes the hero and the

heroine adopt saves them from death. More's flaw was to believe that his silence under the law would protect him, and Joan, in the Inquisitor's words, was "a young and innocent creature crushed between these mighty forces, the Church and the Law."(p.139) Thomas More was neither young nor innocent, but he was the victim of the same 'mighty powers' anyway.

If the tension between the heroes and their antagonists seem cruel on one hand, on the other it is the obstacle needed by these heroes to make their inner characteristics bloom. Todorov comments that moments of crisis, of suffering, seem to bring people to truth. They get more mature and learn when they have to go through difficult situations. But suffering can cause different reactions depending on the people's character. In Todorov's opinion "o sofrimento é ambivalente: eleva uns e degrada outros".[41] In other words, it is exactly this confrontation with adversity which defines the heroes and differentiates them from the ordinary man. In this way, antagonism is a positive aspect because it is essential for the development of the heroic qualities. We cannot recognize a hero if the circumstances are always pleasant and favorable to him. The very idea of a tragic hero cannot be dissociated from suffering for, in Diomedes' words, tragedy is "a narrative of the fortunes of heroic (or semi-divine) characters in adversity."[42] The hero has to endure suffering as a result of the tension between the circumstances involving him and his inner qualities or beliefs. Such suffering or trial makes him change, and change for the better. His personality, revealed through his behavior in times of crisis, has a strong impact upon the people. Through suffering, the hero's excellence is to be achieved and the human spirit is to be exalted.

The tension between the hero and authority was of particular interest to Miller specially in the sense that the self, in his opinion, is defined "in terms of opposition to that authority".[43] Although Proctor despises the authorities of Salem, his integrity will only be defined and foregrounded in his confrontation

with them. Our natural tendency is to see the evil manifested through such authorities as something which has to be eliminated. What Miller attempts to show is that this evil "becomes simply an implacable force against which the individual defines himself."[44] When people have to undergo their own crucible their strength or weakness is revealed.

According to Hegel, in order for humanity to achieve any kind of improvement (of evolution as he puts it), tension or contradiction is fundamental. "Without contradiction", Hegel affirms, "there would be no life, no movement, no growth, no development; everything would be dead existence, static externality."[45] This same idea is expressed in the preface of *Saint Joan* specially in the section entitled 'Catholicism not yet catholic enough'. In it, Shaw's commentary reminds us of the paradox which in Miller's opinion was the cause of the tragedy in Salem. Shaw states that "no official organization of mortal men whose vocation does not carry with it extraordinary mental powers (...) can keep pace with the private judgment of persons of genius (...)." (p.32) Freethinkers have no place in such institutions. Shaw also mentions a letter that he received from a Catholic priest. In it the priest writes about *Saint Joan*:

> In your play, I see the dramatic presentation of the conflict of the Regal, sacerdotal, and Prophetical powers, in which Joan was crushed. To me it is not the victory of any of them over the others that will bring peace and the Reign of the Saints in the Kingdom of God, but their fruitful interaction in a costly but noble state of tension. (p.32)

Shaw agrees with these considerations and concludes that it is necessary to "accept the tension, and maintain it nobly without letting ourselves be tempted to relieve it by burning the thread."(p.32) The religion of life preached by Shaw consisted in faith in the strife for a continuous process of betterment of human life. It is the source of vitality and energy of his heroine. As no improvement can be attained without tension, his play portrays the tension between her and her

contemporaries as positive, for it could reveal Joan's stature. Joan, like Proctor and More, got stronger each time she had to face an antagonist. When they faced their last one, death, they became immortal.

The character of the hero is revealed specially in relation to two kinds of characters: the authority and the common man. The authority, as we could see, becomes a force against which the hero will define himself. The common man will, by contrast, make the noble qualities of the hero be exalted. In this sense both also deserve attention in their relationship with the hero.

2.2.1 The hero and authority.

"All secular power makes men scoundrels."(p.118) With these words The Inquisitor in Shaw's play denounces one of the main problems concerning any authority: corruption resulting from the exercise of power. Todorov mentions that there is a kind of pleasure which is only satisfied in terms of the other's submission. This is what Todorov calls 'gozo do poder', the '*libido dominandi*'. "O indivíduo", Todorov states, "aspira a realizar sua soberania total, porque afirma assim o seu eu; o meio mais radical de fazê-lo é negar o outro infligindo sofrimento e, no limite, a morte."[46] The pleasure that power gives is not material. It is an end in itself. This characteristic is more marked in totalitarian systems, but it can be observed in any time or circumstance: "Em todas as relações sociais, o detentor de um poder, por mínimo que seja, pode se aproveitar dele para que o saiba a pessoa sobre o qual ele se exerce".[47] This need of power is, at times, in the center of the authorities' actions of repression. However, another important aspect should be taken into account considering the motivations of the authorities' repressive behaviour: the need of unity and elimination of diversity as a means to protect the community.

In his famous book *The Prince*, Machiavelli develops an objective (taken as cruel by many people) analysis of human nature. Machiavelli's book is right to

the point in commenting the role of the conquerors and the conquered, of the common people and the authorities. Among his many discussions about the way an authority should govern, conquer, make war and keep his domain unified, Machiavelli opens a chapter asking whether it is better for a prince to be loved or to be feared, whether he should be considered cruel or humane. His conclusions are very interesting. The author proposes that it would be ideal that the Prince should be both loved and feared, but if it becomes necessary to choose, it is better for him to be feared because it is safer. Machiavelli explains his reasons for thinking so:

> Não deve, portanto, importar ao príncipe a qualificação de cruel para manter os seus súditos unidos e com fé, porque, com raras exceções, é ele mais piedoso do que aqueles que por muita clemência deixam acontecer desordens, das quais podem nascer assassínios ou rapinagem. (...) E os homens hesitam menos em ofender aos que se fazem amar do que aos que se fazem temer, porque o amor é mantido por um vínculo de obrigação, o qual devido a serem os homens pérfidos é rompido sempre que lhes aprouver, ao passo que o temor que se infunde é alimentado pelo receio de castigo, que é um sentimento que não se abandona nunca. [48]

These considerations lead us to a better understanding of the reasons why the authorities interfere with individual conscience as it happens in the plays analyzed. The complete and unrestricted freedom of thought and the maintenance of absolute power by the authorities simply cannot coexist. This is very well illustrated in one of the dialogues in Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People.* When Mr. Stockmann is inflexible in his responsibility of defending the truth (a truth which menaces the interests of the authorities) he is reminded by the city mayor:

> THE MAYOR: As a member of the staff you have no right to personal convictions. (...) As a private individual - that's of course another matter. But as a subordinate in the employ of the Baths you have no right openly to express convictions opposed to those of your superiors. [49]

The Mayor's words are a clear example of a totalitarian way of ruling. In Todorov's words: "A submissão ao chefe, a lealdade a ele são fundamentais na ética totalitária."[50] For Mr. Stockmann, as for any freethinker at any time, it is very difficult to accept such reasoning. At a certain point, John Proctor, Thomas More, Joan D'Arc and Galileo Galilei represented a menace in the eyes of the authorities for they shook the stability of the system by subverting its accepted order. They dared to demand more freedom to live according to their conscience. They were critical of their society and its foundations. From a totalitarian point of view, the freedom to choose, think, and expose their views should be limited or even prohibited. When the circumstances demanded, these individuals had to choose between their ideas or their lives. This kind of procedure is another characteristic of totalitarianism. In Todorov's words "o regime totalitário equipara os atos de repressão e de extermínio à defesa da pátria."[51] When the authorities attempt to restrict individual freedom and when the individual questions the established order the tension is sure to rise. This balance between individual freedom and the 'safety of the community' is a paradox. In Miller's opinion it is exactly this paradox that caused the tragedy in Salem. In his notes to *The Crucible* he states that:

> all organization is and must be grounded on the idea of exclusion and prohibition (...). Evidently the time came in New England when the repressions of order were heavier than seemed warranted by the dangers against which the order was organized. The witch-hunt was a perverse manifestation of the panic which set in among all classes when the balance began to turn toward greater individual freedom. (p.16)

In the preface of his play Shaw also addresses this subject. He states that the "degree of tolerance attainable at any moment depends on the strain under which society is maintaining its cohesion."(p.36) The heroes' behaviour and reasoning indicated a level of freedom which could not be tolerated, for they

menaced the cohesion of the political and religious organizations. They were for the Church as well for the State "a spreading of damnation and anarchy"(p.35) which obviously had to be suppressed. Shaw proceeds in his reasoning stating that it becomes necessary to "face the fact that society is founded on intolerance."(p.35) In other words "society must always draw a line somewhere between allowable conduct and insanity or crime, in spite the risk of mistaking sages for lunatics and saviors for blasphemers."(p.35-6)

In the preface to *The Crucible*, Miller shows his disapproval in relation to the authorities' behaviour in Salem. On the other hand, he shows his awareness that measures of repression of individual freedom are necessary to maintain the order because "in unity still lay the best promise of safety."(p14) Machiavelli also equates order to safety. It is far more difficult to conquer a community which is united. In this context he mentions that if the sovereign wishes to conquer a community, he should search in it for "descontentes ou gente desejosa de fazer inovações".[52] These people would be very helpful to the conqueror because they could open the kingdom to him and make his victory easier.

This balance between the safety of the community and individual freedom is really a problem for the authorities especially because the figure of the hero is attached to the idea of revolution or anarchy. He is thought to be the one who menaces the order. These considerations lead us to another point: the difficulty of controlling the hero when he is in action. He is generally a free-thinker and sees things that the majority does not. The others do not go along with him in the same speed of his reasoning. In this sense the hero goes against the democratic belief that the majority is always right. Actually, he is very likely to belong to the minority, since he is more secure and talented, his impulse to act is stronger, and his vision is wider. All of these characteristics demand to be openly expressed. These considerations are illustrated in one of the speeches of Ibsen's main character in *An Enemy of the People*. Knowing that he is right about important

issues that the majority of his townspeople simply refuse to see, Dr. Stockmann concludes:

> DR. STOCKMANN: The majority is never right - never, I tell you! That's one of those social lies against which every free, intelligent man ought to rebel. (...) The majority has the power, unfortunately - but right is on the side of people like me - of the few - of the individual. It's the minority that's always right! [53]

In this sense a hero is a complex figure, admired and feared at the same time. Hook explains: "Se definirmos o herói como um homem-época que redetermina o curso da História, segue-se imediatamente que uma comunidade democrática deve estar sempre em guarda contra ele."[54] Hook quotes a Chinese proverb which says, "um grande homem é uma desgraça pública."[55] The proverb expresses a general truth: great men do not promote peace. Actually, "diante de uma calamidade o povo reza por um salvador." However, Hook concludes, o "domínio do salvador de hoje pode ser uma das calamidades de que, amanhã, eles rezem para se libertar."[56] Joseph Campbell points out the same situation when he states that the "hero of yesterday becomes the tyrant of tomorrow, unless he crucifies *himself* today."[57] Carlyle does not agree with the idea that the hero destabilizes the order of the world. He defends the opposite. In his opinion, the hero is "el missionario del orden."[58] He is a gifted being who is able to see things more clearly and can detect the disorder of things. "Precisamente" Carlyle states, the hero "se presenta para convertir lo desordenado y caótico en cosa gobernada, ordenada."[59]

But what are the limits of these two opposite forces: individual freedom and repression in the name of order, unity and safety? In *The Crucible* Miller shows his critical view of society when it 'assaults' the integrity of the self. The playwright denounces and criticizes moments "when, in the name of social unity and a conformity of views, authority seeks to purge itself of those whose

independence constitutes a threat to publicly defined notions of order."[60] What generally happens is that the fight between the authorities and the heroes is not a fair one. For the authorities it becomes necessary to take this character, who might be taken as a redeemer of the people, out of action. It becomes necessary to calumniate the hero. The hero's intentions must be turned upside down, and they will search for the right people to betray him. In other words: the hero must be destroyed. Carlyle describes the tension between the hero and his antagonists. The strong and powerful, as he calls them, feel the need to corrupt the hero in order to make him think like the majority: "Hay que atraer a aquel loco, o aquel tonto o fantástico, que *no sabe vivir*, al terreno vilmente conciliador de las conveniencias, de las componendas a que ellos, que creen saber vivir, están acostumbrados."[61] Convenience and conscience will prove to be antagonists in the plays. The heroes will fight to keep their conscience intact. The authorities will do whatever it is possible to adapt the heroes' behaviour and thought to the convenience of their interests. The authorities seem to win at the end of the four plays. They seem to have the power to silence and control the heroes. However, the heroes' words and attitude cannot be silenced even by death. The lines of a poem by Cecília Meireles in her *Romanceiro da Inconfidência* illustrate this paradox:

ROMANCE XXVII
ou
DO ANIMOSO ALFERES

Que importa que o sigam
e que esteja inerme,
vigiado e vencido
por vulto solerte?
Que importa, se o prendem?
A teia que tece
talvez em cem anos
não se desenrede!
[...]
Que a língua se cale.

Que os olhos se fechem.
(Lá vai para frente
o que se oferece
para o sacrifício,
na causa que serve.
[...]
Venham, venham, matem:
ganhará quem perde.
[...] [62]

How can one who dies win? It depends on the kind of death one has. It will be easier to understand this if we confront all these considerations with the title of one of the plays analyzed here: *The Crucible.* Crucible means 'a severe test or trial'. A test is in fact the center of the four plays. The four main characters are forced to undergo their own crucible, and, as they go through each phase of it, aspects of their integrity are revealed. Although the specific circumstances of each is different, the nature of this test will be the same for all of them: a moral choice. As the hero's ideas shake the stability of his society, the authorities, in Carlyle's words, "le invitarán *buenamente* a la retractación, a la abjuración, siquiera en público, aunque en privado siga creyendo lo que él quiera."[63] The heroes' impact upon people is so strong that they are forced to deny their views in public. They need to confess something in which they do not believe, and that, therefore, compromises and shakes their integrity. Their lives become worth a number of well-phrased words with definite purposes. Their refusal to confess means their death.

Their personal beliefs or values are important in the sense that they motivate the heroes to their final choice, and this behaviour is what is important for this discussion. For us, it is not relevant if such beliefs are wrong or right, true or false, if they are worth their lives or not. The important issue is that the courage of the hero cannot be dissociated from his faith in what he believes to be true. In Carlyle's words "El Héroe es valiente porque tiene fe en su idea; porque

la evidencia de su idea le comunica una fuerza sobrehumana".[64] This has a tremendous impact upon the people who are not supported by a strong faith in anything. The physical body of the hero might perish but his ideas do not. On the contrary, they become stronger, and the hero's personality is recognized as worthy of admiration and reverence. That makes Cecília Meireles' lines more meaningful to us: "Venham, venham, matem: /ganhará quem perde."

2.2.2 The authorities as portrayed in the plays.

The four playwrights recapture in their plays periods of History marked by the link between the Church and the State, or religious and political power. One of the worst consequences of this link is the totalitarian attitude of demonization of the 'other'. In other words, there is no place for plurality. If an individual is not in favor of the system he/she is counted against it. This individual becomes the embodiment of evil and, therefore, must be eliminated for the 'benefit' of the community. Although nowadays in the West the link between religion and politics is not as strong as in the past, practices which attempt to eliminate the 'other' appear from time to time, and they are generally attached to the idea of a supposed 'moral' cleansing. In his notes to *The Crucible,* Miller illustrates these considerations giving an example of his own country and time when communism was seen as the embodiment of evil:

> in America any man who is not reactionary in his views is open to the charge of alliance with the Red hell. Political opposition, thereby, is given an inhumane overlay which then justifies the abrogation of all normally applied customs of civilized intercourse. A political policy is equated with moral right, and opposition to it with diabolical malevolence. Once such an equation is effectively made, society becomes a congerie of plots and counterplots, and the main role of government changes from that of the arbiter to that of the scourge of God. (p.38)

This political reasoning is very dangerous. The abusive use of power by the authorities represented by the State and/or the Church historically had one of its

basis on the ancient belief of the divine right of the rulers. Once authority is established by God, rulers gain almost infinite powers to reign. For this reason the authority should be respected and obeyed as God should be. In the same way if someone resists the authority he/she is resisting God. Anyone who affronted him was acting, very likely, according to the devil's command. As the interpretation of the Bible was the exclusive domain of the Church, it began to manipulate its teachings in the way which was more convenient to its interests. The words of Pope Innocence III illustrate the power attributed to the Church:

> Deus criador do mundo, pôs no firmamento dois grandes astros para iluminar: o Sol que preside ao dia, e a lua que preside à noite. Do mesmo modo, no firmamento da Igreja universal instituiu Ele duas altas dignidades: o Papado, que reina sobre as almas, e a Realeza, que domina os corpos. Mas o primeiro é muito superior à segunda. [65]

Doing things in the name of God made everything possible. Religion becomes a useful instrument to justify the abusive use of authority by the Church and the State. Religious and political power had little or no distinction at all. The authorities' motivations were not only political or religious but a combination of both. Besides that, it was taken for granted that the Church authorities were supposed to think for its followers. The individual was forbidden the right of questioning 'universal truths' which were based, most of the times, on superstition and faith rather than on reason and fact.

In the plays, many situations show that the ministers of the Church and the state authorities believe to have divine rights. In *The Crucible* Reverend Parris says that he should not be contradicted because "a minister is a Lord's man..."(p.33) and therefore 'demands' obedience of the people of Salem. Only "the godly wisdom of the court"(p.65) was able to judge what was happening in the village. Even the stage directions foreground the idea of this blending of State and Religious power. The opening of the third act shows the place where

the court was set: "*The vestry room of the Salem meeting house, now serving as the anteroom of the General court.*" and "*the meeting house proper, where the court is being held.*" (p.77) In *Saint Joan* the heroine is persecuted because the Church does not accept her 'personal' relationship with God and the saints without the mediation of the Church, but she is captured because of political reasons. The same happens with Thomas More in *A Man for All Seasons,* who demands his right to be faithful to his conscience both in political and religious aspects. The authorities do not accept this individualism. They also manipulate the Scriptures and use God to justify their deeds according to their interests. In Brecht's play Galileo fights to see his theories accepted. But he fails because he is accused of contradicting Aristotle, the philosopher whose teachings supported the dogmas of the Church.

Although the playwrights convey all these totalitarian characteristics in relation to the authorities, they try, in different ways, to avoid manicheism. At the same time that the authors are very critical of the authorities' attitude, they attempt to analyze the motivations of both sides. *The Crucible* and *A Man for All Seasons* are certainly the plays in which the roles of heroes and authorities are more distinctively portrayed. Shaw is undoubtedly the most sympathetic to the authorities he portrays in *Saint Joan.* The identification between the playwright and his heroine is clear. At times Joan stands as his 'spokeswoman' in the play. However, Shaw is aware of what she might have provoked in her contemporaries. He also understands that Joan's judges tried to save her life within the limits allowed by the patterns of that age. In short, Shaw tries as much as he can to focus on the conflict itself rather than choose manicheism. For Shaw conflict in drama

> is not between clear right and wrong: the villain is as conscientious as the hero, if not more so; in fact, the question which makes the play interesting (when it is

> interesting) is which is the villain and which is the hero. Or, to put it another way, there are no villains and no heroes. [66]

In the preface to his play Shaw points out his desire to make his characters more reliable, more natural, more real. He avoids, by all means, portraying Joan as a melodramatic heroine, and at the same time, does not agree with the tendency to portray her judges as villains. According to him, Joan's trial, considering her times and circumstances, was more than fair. In his opinion both the Church and the Inquisition acted according to the law.

Brecht also rejects manicheism. In the notes to *Life of Galileo* he makes it clear that he intends to avoid a direct attack against the Church. The Church, through its representatives, is to be portrayed simply as 'authority' in the play. With this, the audience is supposed to understand that the authority of the Church in the play should stand for the present-day authority, ecclesiastic or not. Actually, in *Life of Galileo* it is the figure of the hero that is reduced because of what Brecht considers his cowardice. All the antagonism suffered by Galileo reveals his weaknesses instead of his virtues. He plays tricks on the authorities as much as he can. When he can no longer resist the pressure, he submits to the authority of the Church.

2.2.3 The hero and the common man.

The role of the hero is more fully understood if compared with the one of the common man. The hero is an outstanding figure who contrasts with the majority of the people who surround him. It is very difficult for the common people, as we are calling them, to understand the character of the hero. In *A Man for All Seasons* the words of the Common Man about Thomas More illustrate such difficulty: "The likes of me can hardly be expected to follow the process of a man like that . . ."(p.39-40) Even more difficult for them is to act in the same

way the heroes do. The hero is faithful to his ideals and to himself. In this sense, according to Todorov, the hero is "o contrário do traidor: não trai jamais, quaisquer que sejam as circumstâncias".[67] The common men, on the other hand, do not suffer, or refuse to suffer, the accusations of their conscience as the heroes do. They are not steadfast and change their position according to personal interests and fear. They do not seem to find anything in themselves to which they could attach themselves. They tend to approach the ones who hold the power to keep safe. They do not seem to have a sense of self which would offer them guidance, as the heroes do. The heroes are, or strive to be, faithful to themselves, to their own values, to their faith, whatever the circumstances or the people involved. The majority, the common men, have little sense of justice, but mostly of self preservation and maintenance of personal interests. This obviously leads these men to an attitude unthinkable for a hero: to sell themselves. They will be a proof of Rich's words in Bolt's play: "every man has his price!"(p.4)

Another poem by Cecília Meireles which is also part of her book *O Romanceiro da Inconfidência* illustrates the attitude of the so-called common man when facing a moment of crisis. By contrast we can have a better idea of the meaning of heroism:

ROMANCE XLIV
ou
DA TESTEMUNHA FALSA

Que importa quanto se diga?
Para livrar-me das algemas,
da sombra do calabouço,
dos escrivães e das penas,
do baraço e do pregão,
a meu pai acusaria.
Como vou pensar nos outros?
Não me aflijo por ninguém.
Que o remorso me persiga!
Suas tenazes secretas
não se comparam à roda,

à brasa, às cordas, aos ferros,
aos repuxões dos cavalos
que, mais do que as majestades,
ordenarão seus ministros
com tanto poder que têm.

Não creio que a alma padeça
tanto quanto o corpo aberto,
com chumbo e enxofre a correrem
pelas chagas, nem consiga
o inferno inventar mais dores
do que os terrenos decretos
que o trono augusto sustêm.
Não sei bem de que se trata:
mas sei como se castiga.
Se querem que fale, falo;
e, mesmo sem ser preciso,
minto, suponho, asseguro . . .
É só saber que palavras
desejam de mim. - Se alguém
padecer, com tanta intriga,
que Deus desmanche os enredos
e o salve das conseqüências,
se for possível: mas, antes,
salvando-me a mim também.

Talvez um dia se saibam
as verdades todas, puras.
Mas já serão coisas velhas,
muito tempo passado . . .
Que me importa o que se diga,
o que se diga, e de quem?

Por escrúpulos futuros,
não vou sofrer desde agora:
Quais são torpes? Quais honrados?
As mentiras viram lenda.
E não é sempre que se faz celebridade . . .

Há mais prêmios neste mundo
para o Mal que para o Bem.

Direi o que me ordenarem:
o que soube e o que não soube . . .
Depois, de joelhos suplico
perdão para os meus pecados,
fecho os olhos, esqueço . . .
- cai tudo em sombras, além . . .

Talvez Deus não se conforme.
Mas o inferno ainda está longe,
- e a Morte já chega à praça,
já range, na ouvidoria,
nas letras dos depoimentos,
e em cartas do reino vem . . .

Vede como corre a tinta!
Assim correrá meu sangue . . .
Que heróis chegam à glória
só depois de degolados.
Antes, recebem apenas
ou compaixão ou desdém.

Direi quanto for preciso,
tudo quanto me inocente . . .
Que alma tenho? Tenho corpo!
E o medo agarrou-me o peito . . .
E o medo me envolve e obriga . . .
- Todo coberto de medo,
juro, minto, afirmo, assino.
Condeno. (Mas estou salvo!)
Para mim, só é verdade
aquilo que me convém.[68]

The kind of behaviour described in these lines serve to illustrate the way different people in the four plays will act: the common man portrayed by Bolt in *A Man for All Seasons*, whose main concern is to keep out of trouble, and Rich who does everything to have a better position in life even accuse his friend with lies; Tituba and the girls who find out that accusing others is their best defense, and Cheever, who learns to dance according to the tune in *The Crucible;* everyone who abandons Joan at the end of the play and refuse to accept her return to Earth after her canonization; and finally in *Life of Galileo,* all Galileo's counterparts who do not understand his thirst for knowledge, or refuse to do so because of their interests. Brecht also reduces the scientist himself to this position of a simple common man, who lost the grandeur of the hero when he submitted science to the authority of the Church.

In the role of More's Steward, the Common Man tells the audience the conversation he had with Cromwell and Chapyus about More. He was given some money to answer some questions about his master. Our first reaction is to despise this character and classify him as the worst kind of human being. However, his words make us think that we, the audience, are not free from acting in the same way he did:

> STEWARD: (...) The great thing's not to get out of your depth ... What I can tell them's common knowledge! But now they've given me money for it and everyone wants value for his money. They'll make a secret of it now to prove they've not been bilked ... They'll make it a secret by making it dangerous ... Mm ... Oh, when I can't touch the bottom I'll go deaf, blind and dumb. *(He holds out the coin)* And that's more than I earn in a fortnight. (p.24-5)

Like him, at times we avoid commitment. At times we do whatever is possible to save our skins and to make money. The Common Man makes no secret of his feelings and thoughts. This sincerity makes us sympathize with him and search our minds to see if we share some of his characteristics. When, for example More is imprisoned, he, in the role of the jailer openly states: "You know the old adage? 'Better a live rat than a dead lion'".(p.73) With these words he affirms his awareness both of his insignificance and his acceptance of such condition because it is safer. This complete lack of commitment is even more emphasized by Bolt's Common Man in his last role as the headsman. After killing More he addresses the audience as the common man and says:

> COMMON MAN: (...) I'm breathing ... Are you breathing too? ... It's nice, isn't it? It isn't difficult to keep alive, friends - just don't *make* trouble - or if you must make trouble, make the sort of trouble that is expected. Well, I don't need to tell you that. Good night. If we should bump into one another, recognize me. (p.94-5)

His last words seem to be a kind of criticism Bolt addresses through his character to the audience. They aim at making the audience recognize the characteristics of the Common Man in themselves. Actually, as Bolt comments in the preface to the play, his intention in naming this character 'Common Man' was to "indicate 'that which is common to us all'".(p.xvii) This character, according to him, "was intended to be something with which everyone would be able to identify."(p.xvii) The fact that the Common Man addresses the audience as his equal conveys the idea that everybody is like him. The lack of commitment and the selfishness as a primary concern in life, which this character conveys, were to make the audience more aware of such characteristics in themselves.

The Common Man's last role shares many similarities with the one of The Executioner in *Saint Joan.* Soon after Joan was burnt, he tells Warwick that his orders "have been obeyed."(p.143) Like the Common Man he is an ordinary person who obeys the authorities and avoids being involved. This attitude will be emphasized in the epilogue. When Joan tells him about her intention to come back to Earth, his reply is easy to anticipate: "As a master in my profession I have to consider its interests. And, after all, my first duty is to my wife and children."(p.158-9) He withdraws before Joan has time to say anything. But it is not only The Executioner that acts in this way. In the epilogue all of Joan's antagonists talk to her after her death praising her and asking for forgiveness, or giving her accounts of what her influence has done to France and to the world. Nevertheless, when she mentions her desire to come back to life, everyone is frightened and she is left alone once more. According to Alexander Woolcott it "is the implication of this scene that the very generation which has canonized Joan would burn her at the stake again if her like were to come again on earth."[69] Similar to the end of *A Man for All Seasons*, the end of *Saint Joan* is a direct attack on the audience. It is forced to put itself in the course of the events and

ask 'What would I have done if I were there?' and not only sympathize with the martyrs and hate the murderers. Woolcott comments on the impact of this last scene on the audience:

> It is as though Shaw were to step out into the audience and shake the fat fellow in the front row whom the play has worked up into such a glow of sympathy, such a flutter of easy pity - shake him and whisper in his ear: 'If you had been in Rouen that day are you sure you would not have voted with the Bishop of Beauvais and run with the witch-burning mob to see the torch applied!'"[70]

Shaw, Bolt, Miller and Brecht seem to extend the criticism of this attitude from the stage to the audience. Their plays are an attempt to make us think about our roles in everyday life. It does not mean only that we should seek for heroic virtues. It is more than that. All of the playwrights seem to be asking the audience what their, what our, attitude would be if we were confronted with these or any heroic figures. Would we try to save our savior from persecution? Would we help his antagonists to destroy him? Or would we be in our most common position: to keep neutral, waiting for the outcome?

2.3 The Heroes in the Plays.

John Proctor, Thomas More, Joan D'Arc and Galileo Galilei are characters with differing features. In a way or another, however, all of them share heroic characteristics in their behaviour and attitude. The aim in presenting the analysis of the plays in this thesis is to show how these characteristics are conveyed in each character by the playwrights. It also attempts to show how the heroes and the heroine react in adversity, having to interact with the authorities and the common people of their times. Finally, it will present the heroes' final decision (moral choice) as the expression of their virtues or weaknesses. The analysis will also mention the most important theatrical concepts of the playwrights. Besides that, a historical background of the time of the plays (and the one of the

playwrights when relevant) and a summary of each play are included to make their discussion easier.

NOTES

[1] HOOK, Sidney. O Herói na História. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1962. p.14.

[2] Collins Cobuild - English Language Dictionary. London: Harper Collings, 1994.

[3] TODOROV, Tzvetan. Em Face do Extremo. Campinas: Papirus, 1995, p.56.

[4] CAMPBELL, Joseph. The Hero with a Thousand Faces. New York: Princeton, 1973, p.4.

[5] COTTLER, Joseph & JAFFE, Haym. Heroes of Civilization. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1959, p.2.

[6] UMMINGER, Walter. Heróis, Deuses, Super-Homens. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1968, p.8.

[7] CAMPBELL, p.30.

[8] COTTLER, p.348.

[9] KERÉNYI, C. The Heroes of the Greek. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981, p.xxi.

[10] *Ibid.*, p.1.

[11] CARLYLE, Tomás. Tratado de los Héroes. Barcelona: Obras Maestras, 1946, p.251.

[12] KERÉNYI, p.2.

[13] CARLYLE, p.63.

[14] *Apud* HOOK, p.188.

[15] HOOK, p.130.

[16] UMMINGER, p.7.

[17] HOOK, p.29.

[18] *Ibid.*, p.130.

[19] *Ibid.*, p.131.

[20] *Ibid.*, p.133.

[21] KERÉNYI, p.3.

[22] *Apud* OLSON, Elder. Aristotle's Poetics and English Literature. A Collection of Critical Essays. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965, p.117-8.

[23] *Apud* OLSON, p.117-8.

[24] *Apud* LEECH, Clifford. Tragedy. London: Methuen, 1970, p.42.

[25] TODOROV, p.57.

[26] Collins Cobuild - English Language Dictionary. London: Harper Collings, 1994.

[27] KERÉNYI, p.3.

[28] Collins Cobuild - English Language Dictionary. London: Harper Collings, 1994.

[29] CAMPBELL, p.19-20.

[30] TODOROV, p.19.

[31] CAMPBELL, p.19-20.

[32] CARLYLE, p.59.

[33] CAMPBELL, p.356.

[34] HOOK, p.89.

[35] CARLYLE, p.200.

[36] HOOK, p.97.

[37] *Apud* HOOK, p.97.

[38] HOOK, p.97.

[39] WHITMAN, Robert F. Shaw and the Play of Ideas. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977, p.271.

[40] COTTLER, p.2.

[41] TODOROV, p.50.

[42] LEECH, p.2.

[43] BIGSBY, p.194.

[44] *Ibid.*, p.195.

[45] *Apud* WHITMAN, p.287. Like Brecht's, Shaw's work is greatly influenced by Hegel's philosophy. Shaw had a particular taste for paradox in his thought and work. Whitman points out the relationship between this characteristic and Hegel's philosophy: "the paradox is not only basic to Shaw's wit, it is also an essential part of his thought and underlies the structure of his plays. And paradox, in the sense of a statement or situation where two opposites and contradictory things both seem true at the same time, is basic to the principle that lies at the heart of Hegel's philosophy - the principle of dialectic." (WHITMAN, p.120) These considerations are very important because of Shaw's conception of the theater's function: to convey ideas and arise a critical response from the audience. Whitman states that "the use of paradox for Shaw was not just another way of saying 'smart things'; it was a rhetorical strategy designed first to startle the reader into alertness and then to force him into thought."(WHITMAN, p.169) These characteristics approximate Shaw and Brecht for both playwrights are influenced by Hegel's dialectical principle not only in relation to its essence but also purpose (didacticism). In *Saint Joan*, Hegel's influence can be recognized mainly in Shaw's attempt to avoid portraying the characters either as heroes or villains.

[46] TODOROV, p.221.

[47] *Ibid.*, p.224.

[48] MACHIAVELLI, Niccolò. O Príncipe. Rio de Janeiro: Tecnoprint, p.107-8. This book might be read as a kind of manual of absolutism. Through it, the Italian political writer attempted to promote Italy's unification, which has only been accomplished 300 years later, in the 19th century. The idea of the consolidation of the royal power is the guiding line of the book.

[49] IBSEN, Henrik. An Enemy of the People. in: Six Plays by Henrik Ibsen. New York: Random House, 1957, p.191. The play tells the story of Dr. Stockmann, a physician at the Baths in a Norwegian town. He had his suspicions confirmed that the water resorts of the place, considered good for the health, were in fact filth and poison either ingested or in contact with the body. As these waters were the main source of income to the city, the authorities, in the play embodied by Peter, the Mayor and Dr. Stockmann's brother, refuse to accept such "reality" and manipulate the people to think and act in the same way. The action is full of ironic reversals and Dr. Stockmann, who is able to renounce his and his family's security and comfort for the good of society, ends up being considered 'an enemy of the people'. Some excerpts of this play will be quoted to illustrate relevant topics of discussion in this thesis. Although this play is not my focus of analysis, it becomes important in the sense that it inspired Miller to write *The Crucible.*

[50] TODOROV, p.230.

[51] *Ibid.*, p.233.

[52] MACHIAVELLI, p. 49.

[53] IBSEN, p.226.

[54] HOOK, p.190.

[55] *Ibid.*, p.191.

[56] *Ibid.*, p.191.

[57] CAMPBELL, p.353.

[58] CARLYLE, p.251.

[59] *Ibid.*, p.251.

[60] BIGSBY, C.W.E. A critical introduction to twentieth-century American drama. Cambridge - v.2: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.189.

[61] CARLYLE, p.26.

[62] MEIRELES, Cecília. Romanceiro da Inconfidência. São Paulo: Círculo do Livro, p.96-7.

[63] CARLYLE, p.26.

[64] *Ibid.*, p.25.

[65] SILVA, Francisco de Assis. História Geral: Antiga e Medieval. São Paulo: Moderna, 1985, p.126.

[66] BROWN, John Russell & HARRIS, Bernard. (ed.) Contemporary Theater. London: Edward Arnold, 1978, p.58.

[67] TODOROV, p.17.

[68] MEIRELES, p.137-9.

[69] *Apud* EVANS, Gareth Lloyd. The Language of Modern Drama. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1977, p.277.

[70] *Apud* EVANS, p.277.

3. THE CRUCIBLE

... we can't distinguish night from day anymore.

Tennessee Williams

3.1 Miller and the Theater.

"A good play is a good thought; a great play is a great thought."[1] Miller's words in relation to his art as a playwright demonstrate why his plays, like Shaw's, are classified as 'plays of ideas'. Drama for Miller is a public act and its essence is to know more. Although his plays have a strong emotional impact upon the audience, it is not possible to dismiss the importance the playwright attributes to the ideas he intends to convey in them. At the same time the playwright emphasizes that the ideas must not be dissociated from aesthetic beauty. In his introduction to the *Collected Plays* he comments that two ironic propositions come out of this dichotomy of idea and aesthetic value:

> The first is that a play's "idea" may be useful as a unifying force empowering the artist to evoke a cogent emotional life on the stage, but that in itself it has no aesthetic value, since, after all, it is only a means to an end. The second is that since every play means something - even the play which denies all meaning to existence - the "idea" of a play is its measure of value and importance and beauty, and that a play which appears merely to exist to one side of "ideas" is an aesthetic nullity. [2]

It is not that the theater has to announce new discoveries, new philosophies, ethical ideas, or social concepts. The purpose is not to launch a brand new idea into the world what would require years of study and sufficient proof to support it. The dynamism of theater cannot cope with such demands nor is its function to do so. What is important to Miller is to lead people to a deeper awareness of reality. Through his plays he wishes to tell the public: "'This is what you see every day, or think or feel; now I will show you what you really

know but have not had the time, or the disinterestedness, or the insight, or the information to understand consciously.'"[3]. In his plays Miller attempts to unveil a "truth already known but unrecognized as such."[4] In this aspect the role of the audience is crucial. In no other form of art there is this immediate response to the work as in the dramatic one. The spreading out of ideas depends directly on how the audience is to receive or even to want them. Miller states that "where no doubt exists in the hearts of the people, a play cannot create doubt: where no desire to believe exists, a play cannot create a belief."[5] It is this closeness of author, play and audience that makes the theater a dynamic art, the art of the present more than any other. This is the function of the theater for Miller, to reveal the individual in the audience to himself so that he may find himself able to interact more meaningfully to his fellows, and that is the reason Miller considers the theater a 'serious business'.

Two of the major influences in Miller's work are Dostoevski and Ibsen. From their works Miller had a higher notion of the writer's role who was, in his opinion, "the destroyer of the chaos"[6]. From *The Brothers Karamazov* Miller's taste for questioning was nourished. As the Russian writer, Miller wanted to see things not as they seemed to be but to venture into their essence, what is, in general terms, the philosopher's task. From the book Miller learnt that

> "There is a hidden order in the world. There is only one reason to live. It is to discover its nature. The good are those who do this. The evil say that there is nothing beyond the face of the world, the surface of reality. Man will only find peace when he learns to live humanly, in conformity with those laws which decree his human nature." [7]

Ibsen influenced both Miller and Shaw in terms of form and structure but specially of content. For Ibsen the theater is not a place for entertainment only, but a place in which attention must be paid, a "place of truth, of ruthless analysis", in which not only the interpreters but the audience too is demanded

"the most absolute concentration".[8] Miller, and Shaw as well, absorbed Ibsen's idea that the theater 'had' to teach. For both playwrights Ibsen's most significant influence is that "a play must be a significant statement".[9] Miller considers Ibsen's central force "his insistence, his utter conviction, that he is going to say what he has to say, and that the audience, by God, is going to listen."[10] This conception of theater as the place of ideas is shared openly by Miller who considers Ibsen a master in this kind of theater. The playwright, according to Miller has "the right to entertain with his brains as well as his heart. It is necessary that the public understand again that the stage is *the* place for ideas, for philosophers, for the most intense discussion of man's fate."[11] The relationship between the individual and the society in which he is or attempts to be integrated is one of Ibsen's main concerns. For Ibsen the worth of a community was measured "according as it helped or hindered a man in being himself."[12] Miller's concepts seem to echo Ibsen's when he states that the main fault of the tragic drama "is commensurate with the fracturing and the aborting of the need of man to maintain a fruitful kind of union with his society."[13] Ibsen's influence over Miller's work and theater conceptions is due particularly to his adaptation of *An Enemy of the People* to English. This adaptation is relevant in terms of its effects in Miller's work, specially in his elaboration of *The Crucible.* Both plays share the same basic concepts of integrity and responsibility to the community.[14]

3.2 Historical Background.

The Salem witch-hunt [15] of Massachusetts, which began in 1692 is the historical background Miller used to write *The Crucible*. The details of the events which took place in Salem and their causes are not completely clear, and the available information about the historical characters are few. Miller himself writes in his notes to *The Crucible* that "little is known about most of them

excepting what may be surmised from a few letters, the trial record, certain broadsides written at the time, and references to their conduct in sources of varying reliability."(p.11)

Miller also comments on the use he makes of history. He mentions that he changed many details but the essence was by all means to be preserved. On the other hand, Miller comments that even though the play is not history, "the reader will discover here the essential nature of one of the strangest and most awful chapters in human history".(p.11) Such nature was the author's motivation in dramatizing this event. At the end of this note he states that, although the characters' fate and role are very similar to their historical counterparts, they are to be considered his artistic creations, a result of the best of his ability as a playwright.

Miller manipulates the historical facts according to his own purposes. His play reflects the incongruities and absurdities which resembled the ones of his own time. When he wrote *The Crucible* America was enduring the period of McCarthyism, a conservative political reaction against communism. This name had its origin in the movement's main articulator, Senator Joseph MacCarthy, who led a kind of anti-Communist witch-hunt during the forties and fifties. Bigsby comments that the Senator's career, "like those of certain Puritan divines three centuries or so before, was based on his supposed skills in detecting demoniac threats to the state."[16] The hysteria and the witch-hunt characteristic of the times Miller registered in his play (Salem in 1692) were also part of his own historical context (the 1950's). Miller's words explain his choice of a source of inspiration in a distant time and also its relationship with his time: "I was drawn to this subject because the historical moment seemed to give me the poetic right to create people of higher self-awareness than the contemporary scene affords."[17] The parallel between the events of Salem as recreated in *The Crucible* and MacCarthyism is clear. Consequently, in the play's first

performances its intrinsic values were overshadowed by the connection of its main theme to the present situation in the country. Some critics limit the validity of the play only in terms of this connection. This is obviously an underestimation of the artistic merits of the play. Bamber Gascoigne states that "*The Crucible*'s validity in no sense depends on the validity of the parallel, though it is understandable that the date of its appearance, 1953, should have made its firsts critics judge it by the narrow standards of topicality."[18] Miller defended himself from this kind of criticism stating that life is the source of inspiration to the artist, and it brings in its own complexities the material for such analogies and that before "a play can be 'about' something else, it has to be about itself."[19] What impressed Miller is that the political manifestation of his time was underlined by a kind of tragic process:

> It was not only the rise of "MacCarthyism" that moved me, but something which seemed much more weird and mysterious. It was the fact that a political, objective, knowledge campaign from the far Right was capable of creating not only terror, but a new subjective reality, a very mystique which was gradually assuming even a holy resonance. [20]

Miller was amazed by how these circumstances were capable of paralyzing men's ability to think, making them accept the mood of mystery and suspicion surrounding them. It was the formation of a new religiosity, a "mechanism of confession and forgiveness of sins which until now had not been rightly categorized as sins. New sins were being created monthly."[21] When irrational explanations are attributed to rational facts the patterns and the perspective from which these facts are judged change completely. This same mood of Miller's time is reproduced in the play, where people seem to forget their neighbors' whole life of dedication to God and accept the idea, from night to morning, that they are inspired by evil. What starts to happen, in Miller's words, is that when "irrational terror takes to itself the fiat of moral goodness, somebody has to

die"[22] and the question of death in circumstances like these is associated to the question of one's integrity, an integrity that is not only moral but of the whole personality. There are forces that fight against such integrity and Miller's constant effort is to unveil them. This was his frame of mind to write *The Crucible*. The author mentions that the play was written in a period in which:

> a kind of personification of disintegration existed among us again. But it was an attempt to create the old ethical and dramaturgic order again, to say one couldn't passively sit back and watch his world being destroyed under him, even if he did share the general guilt. In effect, I was calling for an act of will. I was trying to say that injustice has features, that the amorphousness of our world is so in part because we feared through guilt to unmask its ethical outlines. [23]

Miller is aware of his role in relation to his own society. He wishes that the ones touched by his work should think over about their own integrity and responsibility to others. One of the most meaningful links between the historical context of the play and his own lays in the way the people of Salem thought and behaved. "They knew who they were."[24] He views it as a "terrible marvel that people could have such a belief in themselves and in the rightness of their consciences as to give their lives rather than say what they thought was false."[25] Miller was amazed at their self-awareness, something he strives to help man to find through his plays, and something he considers very rare in his own times.

3.3 A Summary of the Play.

Betty Parris, the Reverend's daughter, is ill, and as even the doctor advised him to "look to unnatural things for the cause of it"(p.18), the rumor of witchcraft is spread all over the village. Parris relates this sickness to the fact that he had found some girls, including his daughter and his niece, Abigail, dancing in the forest. They were involved in a kind of ritual led by Tituba, the servant the Reverend brought from Barbados. Parris is afraid of the people's reaction to such rumor, for most of them, without hesitation, attribute Betty's illness to the

"Devil's touch" which "is heavier than sick."(p.21) It is very embarrassing and even dangerous for Parris as a reverend to have his own daughter bewitched. He reveals his fear when he asks Abigail about what happened in the woods: "If you trafficked with spirits in the forest I must know it now, for surely my enemies will, and they will ruin me with it."(p.19) In order to solve these supernatural affairs Reverend Hale, an expert in exorcism from Beverly is called. To get rid of the accusation of "black allegiance" Tituba and the girls led by Abigail confess their fault, what shows their supposed repentance, and start an uncontrolled process accusing other people of witchcraft. A court is set in Salem, led by Judge Hathorne from Boston and the Deputy Governor Danforth. The girls' accusations are taken for granted by the authorities and the accused are forced to make a choice: they either confess their dealings with the devil, demonstrating they want to break the evil influence upon them, or are hanged.

The main character of the play is John Proctor, a farmer who is respected and even feared in the village because of his critical attitude. However, the hero of the play is a sinner. His sin was fornication with Abigail, when she was the servant of his wife Elizabeth. Proctor is deeply upset because of this mistake and regrets it, but Abigail still loves and wants to marry him. This leads her to accuse Elizabeth of witchcraft. At a certain point the authorities themselves are not so sure as in the beginning about the authenticity of the accusations. In spite of this, as many people have already died, they have to proceed in order to support the previous acts of the court in the witch-hunt process. At the end of the play Proctor has to endure his own moral choice because he was also accused of dealings with the devil. He will have to confess his supposed fault or die. He is imprisoned and tortured and after a long period of hesitation he signs his confession in order to save his life. When he finds out that the authorities will show his confession publicly he tears it. The cause that leads him to his final choice is his name, the expression of his character. Although he wants to keep

his life and is aware both of the absurdity of the accusations and of the hypocrisy of the accusers, at the end he is not able to "give a lie to dogs"(p.118-9) This is Miller's hero, a sinner, a hesitant man, who at the end makes the right choice according to his own pattern of decent conduct.

3.4 The Hero.

The introduction of John Proctor in the play is followed by the author's commentary about him which foreshadows the inner qualities of a hero. Proctor could not bare hypocrites, and this made him treat them in a "sharp and biting way".(p.27) He was "not easily led" and in his "presence a fool felt his foolishness instantly"(p.27). We are also introduced to the guilt that troubles his soul, his adultery. It makes him suffer not only because it was a terrible fault according to the religious and social rules of the community, but because he was a sinner in his own eyes, a sinner "against his own vision of decent conduct."(p.27) This weakness might be considered the hero's tragic flaw, which will give place to the future events in the play culminating in the tragic end: his and other people's deaths.

In spite of his inner guilt, the sin which he will confess only at the end of the play, Proctor does not comply with the hypocritical society which surrounds him. His manners show no "hint" of his sin, but a "quiet confidence and an unexpressed, hidden force."(p.27) Based only on these first considerations, it is easy to notice that Proctor does not fit into the patterns established by the society of his times. Proctor's critical attitude is a problem to the authorities. As he openly exposes his opinions about his fellows, he becomes more and more dangerous in the eyes of those who do not want the order, and consequently the unity, of the community to be broken. He is one of the few people in the village who notice the absurdity of what is happening in Salem. He makes this clear when he talks to Reverend Hale of Beverly, summoned to detect and hunt the

supposed witches of Salem. The way Proctor treats and talks to Hale when he arrives shows that he differs from the majority of the Salemits. While everybody seems to worship the reverend who came to shed some light onto such supernatural affairs, Proctor tells him: "I've heard you to be a sensible man, Mr Hale. I hope you'll leave some of it in Salem."(p.41) With these words Proctor asserts his view of the people of the village and also makes clear his attitude towards Hale. He is aware of their inconsequent behavior, but he does not seem to believe it will lead to the tragic consequences at the end. Proctor's words are able to embarrass Reverend Hale who is previously shown as a very confident person, proud of being invited to this important mission in Salem.

Reverend Parris is another target of Proctor's criticism. Proctor openly questions his authority because, among other things, Parris was the first minister to ask for the ownership of a meeting house, demanding a written document to guarantee the deed. When questioned why he is not attending the meetings in the church Proctor exposes his dislike of Parris' sermons which hardly mention the name of God. His attitude is very audacious for the kind of society he lives in. Parris is astonished with this sign of insubordination and tells Proctor:

> PARRIS: You people seem not to comprehend that a minister is the Lord's man in the parish; a minister is not to be so lightly crossed and contradicted (...) There is either obedience or the church will burn like Hell is burning! (...) It is not for you to say what is good for you to hear! (p.35)

This kind of reasoning will be restated by Parris himself and by other authorities. These words show that the common man is not given the right or authority to decide on subjects which are considered the exclusive domain of the religious ministers. Another situation in which Proctor gives his opinion about 'religious matters' and is censured for doing so, is when Reverend Hale goes to his house to investigate his and his family's religious behaviour. When Hale asks him why only two of his three children are baptized, Proctor's answer shows that

he believes he is able to decide about the religious matters concerning his family and himself:

> PROCTOR: (...) I like it not that Mr Parris should lay his hand upon my baby. I see no light of God in that man. I'll not conceal it.
> HALE: I must say it, Mr Proctor; that is not for you to decide. The man's ordained, therefore the light of God is in him. (p.63)

Soon after this conversation Ezekiel Cheever arrives. He is an honest tailor who had submitted to the business of the court. He brings the Deputy Governor's warrant which says that Elizabeth is charged with witchcraft. Proctor cannot control his anger and rips it. Hale had previously told Proctor that his wife was not going to be charged. All the evidences prove that Elizabeth is a religious and honest woman. Her innocence is hard to be denied, and even so Hale does nothing to avoid her imprisonment. Hale's attitude of constant hesitation makes Proctor burst at him: "You are a broken minister.(...) Pontius Pilate! God will not let you wash your hands of this. (...) You are a coward! Though you be ordained in God's own tears, you are a coward now!"(p.72-3)

The only way for Proctor to save his wife from the accusation is to confess his adultery with Abigail, revealing her hidden intentions in acting in a hysterical way. According to Bigsby this is a "pivotal scene" because Proctor, who until now has not wanted to take part in the whole process of witchcraft, or in the life of his society, "is forced to expose his private self in a public arena."[26] He goes to the authorities and states about Abigail: "She thinks to dance with me on my wife's grave!" (p.98) His efforts are in vain, for Elizabeth is called to sustain his version, but in order to protect her husband, and unconscious that he had already confessed, she denies it, stating that he had not committed lechery. Abigail's integrity is somewhat shaken, but the authorities still prefer to rely on her testimony. Miller does not portray the judges in the play as blood-thirsty men, or as the embodiment of evil because their beliefs and fears are the same as the

common people's. Their fault, however, is exactly the outcome of this scene which shows "their continued prosecution of a case which was slowly revealed to be false, in their permitting their early honest error to be extended and compounded."[27]

It is not only Proctor who has his wife imprisoned. Giles Corey and Francis Nurse are frightened with the possible condemnation of their wives Martha and Rebecca. They also attempt to give their opinion and their version before the authorities but are reminded of their inability to do so. The situation becomes even worse when they question the decisions and conclusions of the court. It happens, for instance, when Giles tries to talk to the Deputy-Governor Danforth about Martha's innocence. Giles searches for the authorities' help to free his wife: "They be tellin' lies about my wife, sir (...)." Danforth reminds him that, as a common man, he is not given the authority to consider what is true or false: "Do you take it upon yourself to determine what this court shall believe and what it shall set aside?"(p.79) Francis Nurse is also desperate because his wife is in jail. He tells Reverend Hale about Rebecca and Martha Corey: "My wife is the very brick and mortar of the church, Mr Hale - [*indicating GILES*] - and Martha Corey, there cannot be a woman closer yet to God than Martha."(p.62) Their effort is in vain, for the authorities avoid facing facts which are not convenient for them. Ironically, Proctor, Nurse and Corey, respected workers in Salem, are taken for rebels who want to disturb the court's procedures. Parris observes: "All innocent and Christian people are happy for the courts in Salem. These people are gloomy for it."(p.85) [28]

A tense situation is created and two groups are formed: the ones who support the decision of the court, either because of their personal interests or because of fear, and the ones who do not agree with its proceedings and determinations. This tension does not allow any possibility of a middle ground for anybody. This idea is expressed by Danforth when he talks about the court

which is set to judge the ones accused of witchcraft. He states that the people have to decide whether they agree with the court's decisions or not. The ones who do not "must be counted against it, there be no road between."(p.85) Once more the individual has to submit his wit and reason to an authority 'competent' to think for him. This tension is the result of a paradox: the desire for freedom and the necessity of repression to promote the unity of the community. In Miller's opinion, this paradox caused the tragedy in Salem. A conversation between Reverend Hale and Danforth illustrates this paradox clearly. When Hale finally notices that the court is more feared than respected by the people of Salem, he tries to talk to Danforth and becomes aware that, even though he is a reverend, he is not given the right to question the decisions of the court:

HALE: We cannot blink it more. There is a prodigious fear of this court in the country -
DANFORTH: Then there is a prodigious guilt in the country. (...) Reproach me not with the fear in the country; there is fear in the country because there is a moving plot to topple Christ in the country!
HALE: But it does not follow that everyone accused is part of it.
DANFORTH: No uncorrupted man may fear this court, Mr Hale! None! (p.88)

Danforth's last words are very ironic because many uncorrupted people were accused of witchcraft. As the play proceeds to its climax the paradox described by Miller becomes more and more evident. The court which was set to cast the devil out of the village, to preserve the power of the theocracy in Massachusetts and to protect the people, observes the signs of destruction it caused. Hale comments on some of the outcomes of the court's decisions:

HALE: Excellency, there are orphans wandering from house to house; abandoned cattle bellow on the highroads, the stink of rotting crops hangs everywhere, and no man knows when the harlots' cry will end his life - and you wonder yet if rebellion's spoke? Better you should marvel how they do not burn your province.(p.114)

Even Reverend Parris becomes sad and cries because of what happened. In the last act we see Hathorne and Danforth worried about the Reverend's strange behaviour. They wander what might be leading Parris to be so sad. Cheever explains to them:

> CHEEVER: There be so many cows wanderin' the highroads, now their masters are in the jails, and much disagreement who will they belong now. I know Mr Parris be arguin' with farmers all yesterday - there is great contention, sir, about the cows. Contention make him weep, sir; (...) (p.109)

What troubles Parris' soul is fear. The fear he reveals in the very beginning of the play when he talks to Abigail is now worse because his niece had robbed all the money of the church and vanished from Salem. The Reverend is also worried about the news in Andover where a similar court was thrown out by the people who refused to confess their involvement in witchcraft. Parris fears the influence of such facts upon Salem. He knows that the "high satisfaction in the town" which took place "at every execution"(p.111) is now diminishing. The court is now more feared than praised, and he is afraid of a riot in Salem influenced by what happened in Andover. The ones who had confessed until then were people of little importance: Tituba had no Christian upbringing and she confessed as soon as she understood it was the 'formula' to save her live; the girls were afraid of the consequences of the 'black ritual' they took part in and also confessed to save their skins; Sarah Good was a jabberer and did not measure her words when she was questioned by the court and confessed; Goody Osborn was a tramp and was sentenced to death for she could not remember all the commandments. Parris is afraid of the village's reaction because reliable and influential people are accused now. They are going to be hanged if they do not confess their dealings with witchcraft. Rebecca Nurse was praised by Hale when he arrived in Salem because of her acts of charity which were heard of in

Beverly. Hale had never seen her before, but he addresses her saying in his opinion she looked "as such a good soul should."(p.40) Ironically this good soul is now accused and will be hanged because she will not confess. Giles Corey did not confess and was tortured to death asking for 'more weight' as heavy stones were laid on his chest. Like Thomas More, Giles knew the law, a "proper lawyer" according to Danforth, and he was aware that legally "he could not be condemned a wizard without he answer the indictment, aye or nay."(p.118) He was also aware of the consequences for himself and for his family in case he denied his charge: "they'd hang him surely, and auction out his property. So he stand mute, and died Christian under the law. And so his sons will have his farm."(p.118) His wife Martha Corey did not confess either. After months in prison, John Proctor had not yet confessed. Throughout the play Parris openly expressed his dissatisfaction with Proctor's insubordination. However, Parris is aware of the impact his death might cause upon the village. The apparently confident Reverend now openly expresses to Danforth and Hathorne his fear for his own life:

> PARRIS: Judge Hathorne - it were another sort that hanged till now. (...) I would to God it were not so, Excellency, but these people have great weight yet in the town. Let Rebecca stand upon the gibbet and send up some righteous prayer, and I fear she'll wake a vengeance on you. (...) Tonight, when I open my door to leave my house - a dagger clattered to the ground. (...) You cannot hang this sort. There is danger for me. I dare not step outside at night. (p.111-2)

Parris changes his behaviour because of his own interests and because of his fear. Hale changes his because of his conscience. Actually, Hale is the character who experiences the deepest change in his conscience and behavior throughout the play. In the beginning he is very proud for being the only expert in supernatural phenomena. Expertise seems to give him power. Miller's commentary about his character makes his attitude clear in the beginning: "on

being called here to ascertain witchcraft he felt the pride of the specialist whose unique knowledge has at last been publicly called for."(p.37) But Hale's conscience starts bothering him when he is not sure anymore about the reliability of the court's proceedings and decisions. When he realizes that the authorities refuse to admit the truth because of personal interests, he quits the court. He then starts begging the prisoners to confess in order to save their lives. He is completely aware of what he is doing: "I come to do the Devil's work. I come to counsel Christians they should belie themselves."(p.114) He is also aware of its consequences for he believes that "damnation's doubled on a minister who counsels men to lie."(p.115) Despite his awareness of his sin, he is not able to allow people to die for a cause he found out to be fake. He also feels guilty for such outcome: "There is blood on my head!"(p.114). This makes him go to Elizabeth in the hope she can persuade Proctor to say what the authorities want to hear and save his life: "I would save your husband's life, for if he is taken I count myself his murderer."(p.115). In contrast with Hathorne and Danforth, Hale is courageous and humble enough to recognize his mistake. Through his words to Elizabeth we see that his concept of faith and law have changed: "cleave to no faith when faith brings blood. It is mistaken law that leads to sacrifice. (...) it may well be God damns a liar less than he who throws his life away for pride."(p.115) Hale's attitude, although noble, shakes the authority of the court and the judges could, under these circumstances, be accused of murder. That is why the confessions of the people who have not been hanged yet become more desired than their deaths. All the authorities, therefore, want the accused to confess but with different purposes. Proctor's and the others' confessions would corroborate the court's decisions to the public opinion; their deaths would arouse anger and cause riot among the people.

Elizabeth agrees to talk to her husband. At this point we get to know more about her personality. Her behavior and words show that she is a righteous and

honest woman but very cold at the same time. When she talks to Proctor in the crucial moment of the play it is easy to realize that although she loves her husband, she is very hurt because of his treason. Her words have a tremendous influence upon him, but she does not tell Proctor whether he should confess or not. Proctor does not want to die. He does not consider himself a man of principles and goodness like the others who have already died or been sentenced to death. Therefore it would not be so difficult to confess anything to escape death:

> PROCTOR: I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud. I am not that man. (...) My honesty is broke (...). Nothing's spoiled by giving them this lie that were not rotten long before.
> ELIZABETH: And yet you've not confessed till now. That speak goodness in you.
> PROCTOR: Spite only keeps me silent. It is hard to give a lie to dogs.(...) I'd have you see some honesty in it. Let them who never lied die now to keep their souls. It is pretence for me, a vanity that will not blind God nor keep my children out of the wind.(p.118-9)

At this moment we see a shaken Proctor searching for reasons, for values, for 'truths' to help him to decide his own fate. Elizabeth finally opens her heart to him sharing her part of guilt in Proctor's sin:

> ELIZABETH: I have read my heart this three month, John. (...) I have sins of my own to count. It needs a cold woman to prompt lechery. (...) I counted myself so plain, so poorly made, no honest love could come to me! Suspicion kissed you when I did; I never knew how I should say my love. It were a cold house I kept. (...) Do what you will. But let none be your judge. There be no higher judge under Heaven than Proctor is! Forgive me, forgive me, John - I never knew such goodness in the world! [*She covers her face, weeping.*] (p.119)

Elizabeth's words make Proctor decide that he wants his life, and he knows that it means he will have to confess. This desire to live makes him overcome his hesitation, and he finally decides to confess. He is amazed, however, with his

judges' reaction to this. They praise God in relief and excitement when they know about his decision. Proctor asks them: "Why do you cry it?" He turns to Elizabeth searching for some guidance: "It is evil, is it not? It is evil"(p.120) Elizabeth gives him no answers. At this moment Proctor feels completely alone. The only guidance he will have is his own. He tries to decide what is right or wrong to do in a moment like this. He is forced to take a decision which will determine his fate. He cries for God in the hope he will find some light in his circumstances: "God in Heaven, what is John Proctor, what is John Proctor? (...) I think it is honest, I think so; I am no saint. (...) Let Rebecca go like a saint; for me it is fraud!"(p.120) Danforth does not wait for Proctor to change his decision and promptly prepares the record of his confession. Proctor does not like that it should be written, but he signs it. The turning point happens when he learns that his signed testimony will be publicly shown, serving as proof to the village of the righteousness of the court's proceedings. In other words, Proctor realizes that his confession is not for the salvation of his soul as the ministers preached, but that he is being manipulated according to the interests of hypocritical authorities, and he rebels against it: "You will not use me! I am no Sarah Good or Tituba, I am John Proctor! You will not use me! It is no part of salvation that you should use me!"(p.124) Although he is determined to save his life through the confession, he understands that he has a compromise with the others. His decision will not only determined the course of the events of his own life but of his friends, of his sons, and of everyone who would take him as an example: "I have three children - how may I teach them to walk like men in the world, and I sold my friends? (...) I blacken all of them when this is nailed to the church the very day they hang for silence!"(p.124) Proctor's words resemble Dr. Stockmann's in Ibsen's play *An Enemy of the People*. Facing growing adversities, Stockmann gives one of the reasons for his sticking to what he considers honest and right: "When my boys grow up to be free men, I want to be able to look them in the face!"[29] The

authorities do not understand why Proctor does not want his confession to be publicly exposed. Proctor's explanation is a moment of revelation both for the audience and the hero himself:

> PROCTOR [*with a cry in his soul*]: Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life! Because I lie and sign myself to lies! Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name! (p.124)

With these words Proctor admits that his confession is a lie to save his life, but Danforth will not accept such reasoning. He demands an honest confession from Proctor, or he will not keep him "from the rope."(p.124) These circumstances do not leave any alternative to Proctor because his 'honest' confession is that he has nothing to do with witchcraft, but this version the authorities will not accept. Proctor cannot bear this situation any longer and tears the written confession. Like Dr. Stockmann, besides being faithful to his family and friends, Proctor finally realizes the importance of being honest to himself. Miller's hero's words seem to echo the ones of Ibsen's when the physician concludes that a "free man has no right to wallow in filth. A free man has no right to debase himself to the point of wanting to spit in his own face!"[30] Proctor finally decides to die instead of selling his name for lies to keep his life. His name is the expression of his character and if it is blacken, he will blacken himself for life. By giving up his name Proctor would be showing that he has no self-respect and that he does care for his integrity.

His behaviour from now until the end of the play is completely different, and he loses all hesitation. Proctor's confidence is back, but now he is aware of the price he will have to pay for this. He stops searching from others' guidance for now he has his own. He also stops focusing on the others' lack of integrity and makes his decision to focus on the need of maintaining his own. With his

eyes full of tears Proctor tells his judges that they have performed their "first marvel" when they pushed him into such decision and he explains why: "You have made your magic now, for now I do think I see some shred of goodness in John Proctor. Not enough to weave a banner with it, but white enough to keep it from such dogs."(p.125) Danforth's last words in the play show again the irony present in the majority of his statements: "Hang them high over the town! Who weeps for these weeps for corruption."(p.125) According to Hogan "this moment of decision and commitment, is that climax toward which every incident in the play tends."[31] Hale does not accept Proctor's last attitude and comments with Elizabeth: "It is pride, it is vanity. (...) What profit him to bleed? Shall the dust praise him? Shall the worms declare his truth?"(p.125-6) But the idea of tragic victory so sought by Miller is emphasized at the end with Elizabeth's words as *the new sun is pouring in upon her face*: "He have his goodness now. God forbid I take it from him!"(p.126)

Proctor's death is very likely to shake the power and the probity of the authorities. That is why it is so feared by them. Proctor calls them dogs who should not be praised or trusted anymore. His death corroborates Miller's belief in the world as a place for committed people, "a world in which once again a true tragic victory may be scored."[32] Contrary to Willy's death in Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, Proctor's cannot be pitied. His death is conveyed as a victory, a triumph over hypocrisy and the interference of the authorities upon individual conscience.

3.5. The Witches of Salem.

The Crucible and *Saint Joan* are the plays in which some of the important facts are given supernatural explanations. As Shaw, Miller attempts to give rational explanations for what seems to be the result of unnatural forces. The motivation of most of the characters in *The Crucible* is "rationalized by material

or sexual jealousies and compounded by a desire to sustain one's own innocence by accusing others."[33] Many dialogues in the play and Miller's commentaries prove this. Adultery, jealousy, land-lust, greed, envy and other sins were in the root of a society that preached their holiness in the surface. Firstly, we have Proctor's adultery which in the play is suggested to be the starting point of the general hysteria. Although Proctor's sin is central to the action of the play, it is not outstanding in the sense that he is a man who searches for integrity and regrets his fault. On the other hand, some characters will take advantage of the situation to expose publicly their bad feelings towards others. Miller comments about these hidden sins in the beginning of the play:

> Long-held hatreds of neighbours could now be openly expressed and vengeance taken, despite the Bible's charitable injunctions. Land-lust which had been expressed before by constant bickering over boundaries and deeds, could now be elevated to the arena of morality; one could cry witch against one's neighbour and feel perfectly justified in the bargain. Old scores could be settled on a plane of heavenly combat between Lucifer and the Lord; suspicions and the envy of the miserable toward the happy could and did burst out in the general revenge. (p.17)

This idea is stated by Proctor when his wife is arrested. The court's decisions are taken on the basis of the accusations only and the accusers are not investigated in their faults. On the other hand, people of unquestioned religiosity are taken as monstrous witches. Proctor exposes all his anger to Hale. His words show the inversion of values that has happened in Salem in the span of a few months:

> PROCTOR: (...) Is the accuser always holy now? Were they born this morning as clean as God's fingers? I'll tell you what's walking Salem - vengeance is walking Salem. We are what we always were in Salem, but now the little crazy children are jangling the keys of the kingdom, and common vengeance writes the law! This warrant is vengeance! I will not give my wife to vengeance!" (p.72)

Little by little these hidden antagonisms are revealed and foregrounded in the play. Ann Putnam simply cannot accept her fate. She had delivered seven babies who died in her arms "the very night of their birth."(p.23) And now her only daughter, Ruth, is also sick. She does not believe it was a fatality, but that they were murdered. The fact that Rebecca Nurse had raised eleven children and twenty-six grandchildren aroused Mrs Putnam's jealousy. The behavior of her husband, Thomas Putnam, is motivated by his desire for more land. Giles has evidence that Putnam is killing his neighbours because of their lands: "My proof is there! (...) If Jacobs hangs for a witch he forfeit up his property - that's law! And there is none but Putnam with the coin to buy so great a piece."(p.86-7) In vain Francis Nurse tries to persuade Danforth: "Excellency, we have proof for your eyes; God forbid you shut them to it. The girls, sir, the girls are frauds." (p.79) Even so the authorities prefer to rely on the false evidences they have.

One of Dr. Stockmann's statement in *Enemy of the People* describes what happened in Salem: "They turn every idea upside-down; they make a hotch-potch out of right and wrong; they take lies for truth and truth for lies."[34] Again Ibsen's influence on Miller's writing of *The Crucible* becomes clear. The ironical reversal of values in Salem is expressed by Proctor when the Judges prefer to rely on Abigail's version instead of on the integrity of the accused: "You are pulling Heaven down and raising up a whore!"(p.105) Miller comments that "it is no mean irony that the theocratic prosecution should seek out the most religious people for its victims."[35] Ann Putnam should be accused by the severe laws of Puritanism for she wants Tituba to talk to the dead to know who caused the death of her other seven babies. She confesses this openly. Instead, the Putnams become the accusers and people of charity and good fame end up being hanged for witchcraft. Proctor, who is a simple man, seems to have much better common sense than a theologian, and he tells Hale about Rebecca when she is charged with witchcraft: "I - have no knowledge in that line. But it's

hard to think so pious a woman be secretly a Devil's bitch after seventy year of such good prayer."(p.62) The court hearings reveal the real motivations and character of each villager.

3.5 The Question of the Name.

The name as a synonym of one's character and integrity as well as the need to be faithful to one's friends are themes which pursue Miller's career. One of the scripts he wrote for the radio at the beginning of his career in the 1940's, *The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber Who was a Man,* deals with the same subjects. The speech of one of the characters, the cat Tom, foregrounds one of Miller's major concerns which he would develop in his mature works: "... the one thing a man fears most next to death is the loss of his good name. Man is evil in his own eyes, my friends, worthless, and the only way he can find respect for himself is by getting other people to say he's a nice fellow."[36] The need of this respect is one of the causes of Proctor's final choice. This concern chased Miller not only on stage but also in his own life. When hauled before the House of Un-American Activities Committee he was asked to name the ones he knew had any link with communist ideology. He was faced, then, with a situation similar to Proctor's. Miller avoided naming others and his answer to the Chairman seems to paraphrase the words of his hero to Danforth when Proctor said that he would speak only of his own sins and could not judge others:

> I am not protecting the Communists or the Communist Party. I am trying to, and I will, protect my sense of myself. I could not use the name of another person and bring trouble on him ... I take the responsibility for everything I have ever done, but I cannot take responsibility for another human being. [37]

This situation is ironic also in the sense that this time art did not imitate life but the other way around. Miller had written the play three years before he was forced to play in real life the role of the character he created. The importance

Proctor attributes to his name in the end of the play, is related to his sense of himself, to his family, his fellows, and even God. Until the end he tried (and that is the cause of his hesitation) to convince himself that he was no saint, no good man, and therefore, did not deserve the others' respect. In the end, however, he understands that he does need it and recants his lie. With this act he commits himself to a cause, something that he has avoided since the beginning of the play. The question of commitment becomes central in the discussion of the play. Actually, it seems really difficult for Proctor to fit into a manichean system like the Puritan. He could not tolerate hypocrites, but at the same time did not consider himself a saint, a religious person. At the end he is pushed into a decision. He wants to keep neutral, but he finds out that it is not possible. By telling a lie he would save his life, but with this action he would be aligned with the hypocrites he hated. By telling the truth, he would corroborate the purity in the hearts of his neighbours and consequently his own. With either decision he would be committing himself to one side. By telling the truth, according to Elizabeth, Proctor had finally gained or found his goodness. Proctor's final decision illustrates Miller's constant attempt to show how the individual is given, from integration with his society, "his reason for existence, his personal significance, and his morality."[38] Miller's works in one way or another foreground the aspect of moral responsibility. Proctor's apathy will be forced to turn into commitment.

The main conflict in *The Crucible*, for Miller, was not the tension between social classes. In other words, the conflict was not between the poor and the rich but between the authorities' power and the individual's conscience. And even more specifically, a conflict between a man's actions and his conception of himself. Miller brings up 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."[39]

Miller's ideas are an indictment of the time in which he was living. The political persecutions of the McCarthy era promoted the atmosphere of alarm and fear which he conveys in *The Crucible.* A situation like this prompts the appearance of men of magnitude, who fight for their sense of an integral self, but at the same time produces men ready to sell whatever they have to save their skins, and their conscience is among the items for sale. Miller comments about the horrors he observed in his time. He says that above all, the one he considered worst is that he saw "accepted the notion that conscience was no longer a private matter but one of state administration. I saw men handing conscience to other men and thanking other men the opportunity of doing so."[40] Miller does not hide his intentions of a moral renewal of his own country, and consequently, the restoration of its liberal principles. Such restoration, however, is not to begin with the authorities but with the individual.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the idea of the necessity of tension. When people have to undergo their own crucible, their real self is revealed. When there is only a calm breeze, to which everyone is used, the deepest desires and sins of the heart are hidden, but when God's icy wind begins to blow they come to the surface, and we come to know who is who. In Proctor's case, through his crucible, he came to know who he was.

NOTES

[1] MARTIN, Robert A. (ed.) The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller. New York: Viking, 1978, p.23.

[2] *Ibid.*, p.119.

[3] *Ibid.*, p.122.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*, p.180.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] IBSEN, Henrik. An Enemy of the People. in: Six Plays by Henrik Ibsen. New York: Random House, 1957, p. xiii.

[9] HOGAN, Robert. Arthur Miller. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964, p.25.

[10] MARTIN, p.16.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] IBSEN, p.xii.

[13] MARTIN, p.62.

[14] *An Enemy of the People* is not considered one of Ibsen's most important achievements and that makes Miller's choice to adapt it intriguing. It was not only important in terms of the innovations Miller did in it but specially in its influence upon his writings. According to Robert Hogan more "interesting than Miller's innovations in Ibsen's script is his choice of this particular play and the light his choice throws upon his own work."(HOGAN, p.24) This influence is so clear that even some speeches in the crucial moments of Miller's play seem to echo some of Ibsen's. As Proctor, Ibsen's main character according to Miller "clings to the truth and suffers the social consequences."(HOGAN, p.25) Ibsen's play suggest, that "when the times are out of joint, the individual must to himself be true."(HOGAN, p.25). That is what Proctor does at the end. In *An Enemy of the People* and *The Crucible* "those who attempt to warp the truth for ulterior purposes must inevitably become warped and corrupted themselves."(HOGAN, p.26) The manipulation of truth according to personal interests is foregrounded in both plays and it becomes one of the central points of discussion.

[15] The procedures of witch-hunt in America followed the same steps and had the same characteristics of the practice in Europe. The belief in demons dominated the Medieval times but the obsession about them was strengthened in 1484 when the Pope Inocêncio VIII declared the existence of witches who caused many calamities. Carl Sagan states: "Com esta bula, Inocêncio dava início à acusação, tortura e execução sistemáticas de inúmeras 'bruxas' em toda a Europa."(SAGAN, p.124) Such beliefs were shared by humanists as Erasmus of Rotterdam and Thomas More. Kramer and Sprenger, induced and supported by the Church, wrote the *Malleus maleficarum* a kind of manual to detect and hunt witches. Sagan summarizes its content: "O que o *Malleus* significa, mais ou menos, é que se a pessoa for acusada de bruxaria, ela é uma bruxa. A tortura é um meio infalível de demonstrar a validade da acusação. O réu não tem direitos. Não há oportunidade de acareação com os acusadores. Pouca atenção é dada à possibilidade de que as acusações sejam causadas por objetivos ímpios - inveja, vingança ou a ganância dos inquisidores, que rotineiramente confiscavam para seu proveito pessoal as propriedades do acusado. (...) Quanto mais as pessoas, sob tortura, confessavam participar de bruxarias, mais difícil ficava sustentar que toda a história não passava de fantasia. Como cada uma das 'bruxas' era forçada a implicar outras, o número crescia exponencialmente. Tudo isso constituía 'provas assutadoras de que o Diabo ainda está vivo', como mais tarde se afirmou na América do Norte por ocasião dos julgamentos das bruxas de Salém." (SAGAN, p.126)

[16] BIGSBY, C.W.E. A critical introduction to twentieth-century American drama. Cambridge - v.2: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.189.

[17] *Ibid.*, p.200.

[18] GASCOIGNE, Bamber. Twentieth-Century Drama. London: Hutchinson, 1974, p.178.

[19] MARTIN, p.295.

[20] *Ibid.*, p.153.

[21] *Ibid.*, p.154.

[22] *Ibid.*, p.295.

[23] *Ibid.*, p.229.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[25] *Ibid.*, p.29.

[26] BIGSBY, p.199.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 196.

[28] The difficulty Proctor, Nurse and Corey find to defend their wives from accusations of witchcraft illustrate the main features of this kind of trial. Carl Sagan

comments about them: "Nos julgamentos das bruxas, evidências atenuantes ou testemunhos de defesa eram inadmissíveis. De qualquer modo, era quase impossível apresentar álibis convincentes para as bruxas acusadas: as regras de evidências tinham um caráter especial."(SAGAN, p.127)

[29] IBSEN, p.195.

[30] *Ibid.*, p.243.

[31] HOGAN, p.28.

[32] *Ibid.*, p.9.

[33] BIGSBY, p.196.

[34] IBSEN, p.238.

[35] MARTIN, p.160.

[36] HOGAN, p.8.

[37] BIGSBY, p.191.

[38] HOGAN, p.12.

[39] BIGSBY, p.193.

[40] *Ibid.*, p.190.

4. A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

My deepest, my most sacred convictions were to be sacrificed for purely personal ends.

Henrik Ibsen

4.1 Robert Bolt and his Concept of the Theater.

Bolt did not wish *A Man for All Seasons* to be a naturalistic play. For this reason he makes use of symbolism and imagery and, as he calls it, a "bastardized version" of Brecht's 'epic style'. In the preface to his play Bolt claims to be one of Brecht's disciples. Even so, he agrees with Eric Bentley, in that, contrary to what Brecht expected, "the proper effect of alienation is to enable the audience (...) to deepen, not to terminate, their involvement in the play."(p.xvi) In this way Bolt intends to arouse a critical response from the audience in relation to the action of the play. In *A Man for All Seasons,* his most important tool to achieve this aim is the character of the Common Man who links the scenes, providing relevant historical information and commentary on them. This character does that by playing different roles during the action of the play. Bolt's intention is not to shock the audience but to make them judge what is going on on the stage.

4.2 Historical Background.

The historical period which concerns the action of the play is the Reign of Henry VIII, more precisely, his break with The Church of Rome. Among other causes, the Reformation in England was due to the King's decision to divorce Queen Catherine of Aragon and marry his lover Anne Boleyn. As the Pope did not allow the divorce, Henry VIII decided to elect himself the Head of the Church in England to get things done according to his will. The historical facts

seem plain when told in this way. But, as Bolt observes, when institutions collide, it is in fact "living men who collide".(p.ix) From this perspective the details of such 'collision' become vital to the complete understanding both of the historical events and mainly of the action of the play.

Catherine was originally married to Arthur, Henry's brother. This marriage was an arrangement between Spain and England. Arthur died, but the two countries wished to maintain the allegiance, so Henry married his brother's widow. As the Christian law forbade this kind of marriage, the permission of the Pope was asked and given. But Catherine could not give the King a son. This became Henry's main reason to divorce her and he began to attribute this failure to a kind of divine punishment for his 'illicit' marriage. It became necessary to annul the previous marriage in order to allow a second one with Anne Boleyn, for then a son between them would be considered a legitimate heir of the throne. Only the Pope could give that permission. Then a game of interests begins. While England pressed the Church to consider the marriage null, Spain pressed it in the opposite direction. Henry did not get the Pope's permission this time, and in these circumstances, there was only one way out in his opinion: to break with the Church of Rome and appoint himself the 'Supreme Head of the Church of England'. Denunciations of corruption in the Church intensified his decision. The King's reasoning for the break is exposed by Bolt in the preface to the play:

> The Bible, he found, was perfectly clear on such marriages as he had made with Catherine; they were forbidden. And the threatened penalty was exactly what had befallen him, the failure of male heirs. He was in a state of sin. He had been thrust into a state of sin by his father with the active help of the Pope. And the Pope now proposed to keep him in a state of sin. The man who would do that, it began to seem to Henry, had small claim to being the Vicar of God. And indeed, on looking into the thing really closely, Henry found (...) that the supposed Pope was no more than an ordinary bishop, the Bishop of Rome. This made everything clear and everything possible. (p.viii)

But the authority of the King as the Head of the Church in England should be legitimized and accepted by the people. For this reason influential people were to take an oath stating their approval of the King's new role. High Treason was the charge for the ones who refused to do so. Thomas More, Lord Chancellor, was one of the people who refused to take this oath and for that reason he was executed in 1535.

Before *A Man for All Seasons* Robert Bolt had written two plays in which he tried "with fatal timidity, to handle contemporaries in a style that should make them larger than life."(p.xv) Bolt regrets that he could not achieve this goal successfully in them. The historical setting of *A Man for All Seasons*, in Bolt's words, was taken "in the hope that the distance of years would give me Dutch courage, and enable me to treat my characters in a properly heroic, properly theatrical manner."(p.xv) If the historical background helped Bolt to deal with the theme of heroism more efficiently, undoubtedly the choice of Thomas More as his main character was more than helpful.

It is interesting to observe that Robert Bolt, as Arthur Miller, had to undergo a moral choice in his own life. Miller underwent a situation similar to Proctor's some time after he wrote *The Crucible*. In Bolt's case, his 'crucible' preceded the makings of *A Man for All Seasons*. After leaving the Communist Party, Bolt participated in protests against the atomic bomb. He was imprisoned because he refused to be bound over to keep the peace. In other words, he did not want to comply with the ideals against which he was fighting. However, he was persuaded to do so by the producer of *Laurence of Arabia,* the script Bolt was writing at the time. He was ashamed of his retraction and that obviously influenced him in the makings of *A Man for All Seasons*. Contrary to the playwright, Thomas More was firm until the end and did not betray his conscience.

4.3 The Play.

In Bamber Gascoigne's opinion Bolt's play has an ambitious task: "Since its central character is Sir Thomas More and its subject Integrity, it aims high".[1] Thomas More's attitude during the most crucial moment of his life is the focus in the play. The steps he takes towards his own moral choice are motivated by his conscience. More was loyal both to his King and to the Church of Rome. His loyalty to the Church, though, had strong religious principles, for he believed the Pope to be the Vicar of God, who had to be obeyed even by the Kings. Bamber Gascoigne comments on how Bolt conveys his main character in his play: "According to Bolt, More's Roman Catholicism was unassailable and his opposition to the Reformation was therefore a matter of absolute certainty."[2] But More did not want to become a hero; he did not want to die. He enjoyed his social life and both loved and was loved by his family. More was admired and respected by all, including his enemies. Like Proctor, he avoided by all means to commit himself. He wished to keep his neutrality in relation to the King's decisions. But, also like Proctor, he is forced to make a moral choice which will lead him to martyrdom.

More will be in the center of tension caused not only by one but by two kinds of authorities: the Church and the English State. In the play the Spanish Ambassador Chapyus stands for the interests of the Church and, obviously, of Spain. He will attempt to have More's support to his cause. More's most significant antagonist, however, is Secretary Cromwell, who defends the King's interests. Cromwell will use all the strategies he can to press More to support the King's decision to break with the Church of Rome. More will repel both figures and their attempts. By embracing either of the causes, he would be betraying either his country (the King) or his faith (the Catholic Church). This is the tension More will have to undergo throughout the play. In this moment of crisis, he will have to choose between individual conscience or collective interests.

Actually More does not have any doubt about it because, to him, his conscience is what matters. The play will show, therefore, his constant attempts to avoid commitment by sticking to the law. In Gascoigne's words:

> The play shows Secretary Cromwell's police-state attempts to bully or wheedle More into giving his approval to Henry VIII's divorce, but this court-room drama evokes no corresponding struggle in More's soul. As he has no personal doubts and no inclination for the heroic stance, More's fight is one long attempt to avoid execution by a series of legal quibbles.[3]

The situation becomes more difficult to him when the King demands that an oath be taken by his important subjects. Its purpose is to show public approval to the King's decision. Although More was a personal friend of the King, he agreed neither with his divorce nor with the consequent break with the Catholic Church. He believed that, if he kept silent in relation to these matters, the law would protected him. In this way he would not go against the King nor betray his conscience. At the end he realized that the law provided him with a weak shelter because it can be manipulated by those in power and is, in fact, an expression of that power. Condemned with false accusations, More was beheaded.

The action of the play presents a lot of foreshadowings, hints of the future events. It is also full of ironical reversals. It is interesting that, although More is intelligent and clever, highly contrasting with the others, it is from his mouth that the most poignant ironical reversals come from.

4.4 The Hero.

Of the four heroes analyzed in this thesis, More is the only one who is steadfast in relation to his conscience from the beginning to the end of the play. He does not hesitate in any moment, although he suffers a lot with this inner struggle and his final seclusion from his family and social life. Bolt's hero was a

man "with an adamantine sense of his own self."(p.xi). Although he was socially adjusted, admired and loved specially by his family, he could not go on living if he were not faithful to his deeply rooted principles.

Robert Bolt himself writes, in the preface to the play, that some of the speeches of his main character were borrowed from its historical counterpart: "I was guaranteed some beauty and form by incorporating passages from Sir Thomas More himself. For the rest my concern was to match these as best I could so that the theft should not be too obvious."(p.xv) Anyway, More's attitude and character is revealed to us through his way of talking and also by his silence, for it shows his self-control and cleverness. Many situations from the beginning to the end of the play illustrate that.

The play starts with the Common Man commenting about his own role. He is More's Steward. Since this first and short dialogue between More and his servant, we begin to grasp important characteristics of the hero's personality. Before More's entrance, the Steward tastes his master's wine. More enters and asks for it. Like Proctor, More 'is not easily led'. Noticing that Matthew had drunk the wine of his jug, he asks him: "Is it good?"(p.3) Although Mathew answers that he does not know, denying his weakness, his master's cleverness becomes evident.

Soon after this brief interaction, More is shown in a conversation with Rich, a young and completely unreliable person who is visiting More in search of a job. The central theme of the play, integrity, is introduced by a proposition made by him to More.

> RICH: (*Enthusiastically pursuing an argument*) But every man has his price!
> MORE: No-no-no-
> (...)
> RICH: But yes! In money too.
> MORE: (*With gentle impatience)* No no no.
> RICH: Or pleasure. Titles, women, bricks-and-mortar, there's always something.

MORE: Childish.
RICH: Well, in suffering, certainly.
MORE *(Interested)*: Buy a man with suffering?
RICH: Impose suffering, and offer him - escape.
MORE: For a moment I thought you were being profound.
(...)
RICH: No, not a bit profound; it then becomes a purely practical question of how to make him suffer sufficiently. (p.4)

More's conversation with Rich helps us to get more details of his personality. It also prepares the audience for the future events of the play, for, ironically, Rich will end up being an example of his own words: he has his price. Rich wants More to indicate him to someone who would give him a good job. He is disappointed, however, when More mentions he could have a job as a teacher. More tells him why: "A man should go where he won't be tempted."(p.5) Once more Rich's and More's destinies in the play are foreshadowed, for Rich will work exactly where he will be tempted to betray More. When the Duke of Norfolk arrives, More tells him about Rich's desire of a job. Norfolk's commentary shows the importance people attribute to More's opinion: "Well, if you recommend him."(p.9) More's reply reveals at the same time that he is honest and is aware of Rich's weak personality: "No. I don't recommend him; but I point him out."(p.9) More also gives Rich a goblet. This seems a harmless action but Rich will use it against More by the end of the play. The goblet was a gift from a litigant, and More knew it was a kind of bribe. He did not wish to keep it and, as Rich was in need of money, he gave it to him. Though More knows about Rich's unreliable character, he does not seem to realize that he could bring any danger upon him.

Rich is the opposite of More in everything. He can be understood as a kind of foil to More. More values friendship to the point of risking his life for it. Rich, on the other hand, treats friendship as something useful and easy to discard when it is not necessary or when it becomes dangerous. When, for example,

Rich talks to him about his need of employment, he establishes a parallel between this and his friendship with More:

> RICH: (...) Also, of course, the friendship of Sir Thomas More. Or should I say acquaintance?
> MORE: Say friendship.
> RICH: Well, there! "A friend of Sir Thomas and still no office? There must be something wrong with him."
> MORE: I thought we said friendship ... (p.5)

More has influence, is socially adjusted and respected. Rich 'needs' this influence to get a job. Later, in other circumstances in which Sir Thomas is starting to face his difficult situation of a moral choice, Rich's attitude in relation to him will be very different. Rich is then the Duke of Norfolk's librarian. Master Cromwell, in a kind of test, talks to Rich about Sir Thomas. Rich's reaction contrasts with that in the beginning of the play:

> CROMWELL: (...) yet the new Lord Chancellor's an old friend of yours. (...)
> RICH: (*Uncertain)* He isn't really my friend. . . .
> CROMWELL: Oh, I thought he was.
> *(He gets up, prepares to go)*
> RICH: In a sense he is.(p.21)

Rich does not know much about More's circumstances, but he feels the danger and does not hesitate to deny his friendship. In another occasion, Rich tells Cromwell he would never report their conversation because it was something "said in friendship" and repeats to him the same question he asked More in the beginning of the play: "may I say 'friendship'?"(p.41) Sooner than expected, though, Rich reveals to Cromwell that he has his price. In fact, he would report anything Cromwell wanted, or even lie, as he does at the end. His behaviour makes him an example of his first words in the play: "It would depend what I was offered."(p.41) What Rich is offered is a job as a Collector of Revenues, and the price he has to pay is to reveal the details about the gift More

gave him: the goblet. At the end of the play he will 'sell More for Wales'. He will commit perjury against More in exchange for an important position in Wales.

In the transition from the first scene to the next, the Common Man, in the role of the Steward, comments about his master's giving the goblet to Rich as a gift. It foreshadows More's fate:

> STEWARD: (...) My master Thomas More would give anything to anyone. Some say that's good and some say that's bad, but I say he can't help it - and that's bad ... because some day someone's going to ask him for something that he wants to keep; and he'll be out of practice. (...) There must be something that he wants to keep. That's only common sense. (p.10)

Actually, common sense is what will be demanded from More by Cardinal Wolsey in this scene. In their conversation, the tension created by the main conflict of the play is more clearly introduced. Cardinal Wolsey has summoned More in order to get his support in the case of the King's divorce. As he does not obtain it, he gets angry at More: "You're a constant regret to me, Thomas. If you could just see facts flat on, without that horrible moral squint; with just a little common sense, you could have been a statesman."(p.11) This conversation reveals that More treats religion and morality with much more seriousness than the Cardinal. While More is concerned with not betraying his conscience, the churchman is concerned with convenience. The conversation becomes humorous because More wants Wolsey to be specific. Wolsey asks More about the King's impossibility to have a son with the Queen: "The King wants a son; what are you going to do about it?"(p.12) For a question like that More could have no other answer: "I'm very sure the King needs no advice from me on what to do about it."(p. 12) Although More's plodding irritates Wolsey, it makes him aware that More is clever and cannot be manipulated. This attitude forces Wolsey to repeat the question. More's answer reveals that he wants to be left out of the matter:

WOLSEY: Then the King needs a son; I repeat, what are you going to do about it?
MORE: (...) I pray for it daily. (...)
WOLSEY: (...) Catherine's his wife and she's as barren as a brick. Are you going to pray for a miracle? (...) You'd like that, wouldn't you? To govern the country by prayers?
MORE: Yes, I should. (p.12-3)

Wolsey has no other alternative but to be plain in relation to what he wants from More. This is the first time More and also the audience is openly exposed to the moral question More will have to endure: "Pray. Pray by all means. But in addition to prayer there is effort. My effort's to secure a divorce. Have I your support or have I not?"(p.12) More answers it with another question: "A dispensation was granted so that the King might marry Queen Catherine, for state reasons. Now we are to ask the Pope to - dispense with his dispensation, also for state reasons?"(p.12) With this reply More does not commit himself to any of the sides but exposes his dissatisfaction with this game of interests and manipulation involving important religious and state issues. Wolsey reveals his weakness concerning his own principles when he reminds More that convenience is more important than conscience:

WOLSEY: (...) your conscience is your own affair; but remember you're a statesman! (...) England needs a heir; (...) Now explain how you as Councilor of England can obstruct those measures for the sake of your own, private conscience.
MORE: Well ... I believe, when statesmen forsake their own private conscience for the sake of their public duties ... they lead their country by a short rout to chaos." (p.13)

More's reply exposes the deep relation between private conscience and public responsibility. It is also very critical because it illustrates exactly what the King is doing with the country he rules. Through all his conversation with

Wolsey, More did not speak a word against Henry. More respects and honors his sovereign, but does not place him above his conscience, his faith.

Their conversation ends with Wolsey stating that he is More's open enemy as long as he does not come along with the 'country's interests'. While he waits for a boat to take him home, More is shown suffering pressures from both sides. Both Cromwell and Chapyus, in turns, ask him how his conversation with Cardinal Wolsey was. More does not give them the details they want, but they deduce according to their interests. Similarly to Joan in Shaw's play, More is at the center of the tension of two kinds of authority with different interests. The difference is that in *Saint Joan* the English State and the Church wanted her to confess the same thing, what would fit their different purposes. More is pressured by the representatives of the King and also of Spain. Each side needs his support because of his reputation. More has problems of conscience to adhere completely to either side. He knows his only alternative is to remain neutral, protected by his silence under the law. Ironically, this position will destroy him, for the shelter of the law is not as firm and faithful as he thought.

When More gets home, William Roper, a young man who wants to marry his daughter, is waiting for him. Roper is the character who brings a comic relief to the play. He appears most of the times after moments of high tension. In this sense he is a very useful character to lessen the serious and heavy tone of the play. Besides that, through his character we come to know more about More's personality, for even under difficult situations, he can be tolerant, affable and ironical. More does not approve of Roper's intention to marry Margaret because of his 'heretic' ideas. William openly attacks the Church for its corruption. He is engaged with Luther's ideas: "The Church is heretical! Doctor Luther's proved that to my satisfaction!"(p.18) Although William's attitude sounds very revolutionary, More understands that he has no rooted principles. He seems only a person who likes to argue and needs a cause for that sake. More knows that

William is young, immature, ready to embrace any cause. More himself points out to him that two years before William was a "passionate Churchman" and now he is a "passionate Lutheran"(p.18). As Roper leaves, More realizes he should use another tactic with him because it's "no good arguing with a Roper". He tells Margaret: "Old Roper was just the same. Now let him think he's going with the current and he'll turn round and start swimming in the opposite direction."(p.19) More's observations are confirmed in Roper's next appearance in the play. He is so excited and eloquent that More compares him to "Joshua's trumpet".(p.35) William feverly exposes his views on the Church Reforms which "have somewhat modified."(p.35) More and Margaret exchange a smile, for More had already anticipated Roper's inconstant behaviour. William now defends some reforms in the Church but "an attack to the Church herself" is now for him a disguise for "an attack to God -" which he sees as the "Devil's work."(p.35) More disapproves of Roper's words, for they mean an attack on the King. Roper's initial reformist attitude will finally change radically. In the opening of the second act, Roper appears dressed in black and wears a cross as a way to show his 'allegiance to the Church' against the attacks it is suffering. More tells him he looks like a Spaniard because of his anti-reformist campaign. To this Roper replies: "All credit to Spain then!"(p.47) Again, it is a difficult moment for More, but he is able to use his satire against Roper: "You wouldn't last six months in Spain. You'd have been burned alive in Spain during your heretical period."(p.47) More likes Roper but not his ideas. More does not like his radicalism in relation to his principles. Ironically, at the end of the play, it is More who will stick to his principles, while Roper abandons them completely. Because of his affection, Roper will beg More to swear the oath and save his life.

Of the four plays analyzed here, *A Man for All Seasons* is the only one which shows the hero mostly in his familial context. Galileo and Joan are more

solitary figures. Proctor's whole fate develops because he was not faithful to his wife. Besides that, his interaction with her and his children is minimal. Thomas More, on the other hand, enjoys being with his family. He is very fond of his daughter, Margaret, who is also a scholar. Although, at times, his family does not understand his attitude, they cannot help admiring him. We get to know a great deal about his personality in the interaction with the members of his family. When he gets home from his conversation with Wolsey, for example, Margaret gives him a cup with some medicine for his cold. As he does not want to drink, Alice forces him to do so. His wife's words reveal her care and admiration for him: "Drink it. Great men get colds in the head just the same of commoners."(p.20) More does not like such kind of "leveling talk" but Alice's words are right, and they foreshadow the events of the next scene. In fact More is a great man. Here another ironical reversal happens in relation to More's own words. He mentions to Margaret that he does not want to be Chancellor when Wolsey dies. Soon after this the Common Man reads from a book:

> COMMON MAN: "England's next Lord Chancellor was Sir Thomas More, a scholar and, by popular repute, a saint. His scholarship is supported by his writings; saintliness is a quality less easy to establish. But from his willful indifference to realities which were obvious to quite ordinary contemporaries, it seems all to probable that he had it."(p.20)

More did not really wish to become the Lord Chancellor because this would make things more difficult for him. He knows that loyalty and responsibility towards his country will be demanded of him. This will bring More even nearer a definition and he will need more self control specially in relation to his words.

More's choosing silence shows his moderation, prudence and tactfulness, very important characteristics for a man in his position. Although he is very eloquent and his words have a tremendous dramatic impact, he is more an observer. Every word of his is measured and planned before uttered. Unlike

Shaw's Joan, More does what he can to control his tongue. He is cautious with his friends and with his family. This happens not because he does not trust them, but because he fears for their lives. In case they are forced to talk, they will have to tell the truth or risk perjury, which is a crime and a damnation of the soul. If he does not say a word about his affairs, they will have nothing to report. His family does not understand his reasons for not talking with them and his constant refusal to answer their questions about his conversation with other important characters. Alice compares More's subtlety to God's: "He's not said one simple, direct word to me since this divorce came up. It's not God who's become subtle! It's him."(p.38) When Norfolk tells More he interprets his silence as cowardice, More asks him why he does not consider what is going on in England a 'Reformation': "this is a war against the Church! (...) Our King, Norfolk, has declared war on the Pope - because the Pope will not declare that our Queen is not his wife."(p.52) When Norfolk asks his opinion about it, More says he will answer it only to the King and in privacy. Norfolk has no other alternative but to conclude: "Man you're cautious."(p.52) In More's place he simply 'has' to be cautious.

Indeed, More's prudence is a great helper to him. The Common Man, for instance, in different roles is asked to report More's words. First, in the role of More's Steward, he is questioned both by Cromwell and Chapyus about More's words in his privacy. The Steward could not give them the details they wanted, as he answers them: "Sir Thomas doesn't talk about it."(p.23) Later, when he plays the role of the jailer, Cromwell also asks him whether he has heard More speak about the divorce or the break with the Church. His answer is again: "No, sir, not a word."(p.78) Actually, More's silence will not protect him but postpone his moment of choice, a moment which begins to be more and more emphasized. Chapyus and Cromwell comment about it when they talk about the

King's plans to visit More. They know it is not a simple visit of courtesy or friendship:

> CROMWELL: (...) they'll talk about the divorce. (...) The King will ask him for an answer.
> CHAPYUS: *(Ruffled)* He has given his answer!
> CROMWELL: The King will ask him for another.
> CHAPYUS: Sir Thomas is a good son of the Church!
> CROMWELL: Sir Thomas is a man. (p.22-3)

King Henry's visit to More's house in Chelsea is considered one of the most important scenes of the play. In it the figure of the King is shown to the audience. In fact, the whole play is motivated by the issue of the King's divorce. He is talked about all the time, but it is only in this scene that the audience has the opportunity to see him acting and talking with the main character.

The King is about to arrive and Thomas cannot be found. Alice, Margaret and Norfolk are worried. Norfolk is anxious and angry at Thomas because of such behaviour:

> NORFOLK: *(Quietly displeased)* Lady Alice, Thomas'll get no good of it. This is not how Wolsey made himself great.
> ALICE: *(Stiffly)* Thomas has his own way of doing things, my lord!
> NORFOLK: *(Testily)* Yes yes, Thomas is unique; but where is Thomas? (p.25)

As always, Thomas' 'uniqueness' is admired but not understood. We get to know that Thomas was in the church. He is aware that he will need God's guidance in this important meeting. He knows also that the King's motivation in coming to his house is to ask More for a definition in relation to his divorce. When he gets home in a cassock minutes before the King's arrival, Norfolk reproaches him:

> NORFOLK: *(Indignantly)* My Lord Chancellor! (...) What sort of fooling is this? Does the King visit you every day?
> MORE: No, but I go to vespers most days. (...)

NORFOLK: (...) d'you propose to meet the King disguised as a parish clerk. (...) You dishonor the King and his office!
MORE: (...) The service of God is not a dishonor to any office. (p.26)

More's words illustrate that, although he is deeply faithful to the sovereign, his devotion to God is more important. More is tense but aware of his duty to God, to the King, and to his conscience. A fanfare announces the King's entrance. Some details in the King's behaviour and words reveal important characteristics of his personality. He had been by the river for this was the day on which he launched his ship, the "Great Harry". And he came, in 'his' river as he says. He comments about the pleasure of sailing on the ship: "A great experience. (...) I shall not forget the feel of that (...) A man could sail clean round the world in that ship."(p.29-30) The King's words demonstrate his desire for more power, freedom and autonomy. It gives him pleasure to be in control of situations or things. The ship is generally understood as a symbol for the state. The King enjoys to control and govern the people. He believes in his right to control their will and their wit too. Henry is also proud of having mud on his shoes. This detail is very meaningful if we consider Wolsey's observation when he talked about the King's love affair with Anne Boleyn. In that occasion he told More: "He's been to play in the mud again."(p.12) The mud here might be understood as the King's irresponsible behaviour, his adultery, which is causing all this tension in England.

The King's conversation with More is full of ups and downs succeeding each other. Henry goes from less relevant subjects, like the ship, the music, etc., to the crucial question of his divorce, and vice-versa. For the first time in the play, the King asks More personally about the question of his divorce:

HENRY: Touching this matter of my divorce, Thomas; have you thought of it since we last talked?
MORE: Of little else.
HENRY: Then you see your way clear to me?

MORE: That you should put away Queen Catherine, Sire? Oh, alas. As I think of it I see clearly that I can not come with Your Grace, that my endeavor is not to think of it at all.

HENRY:Then you have not thought enough! ... *(With real appeal)* Great God, Thomas, why do you hold out against me in the desire of my heart - the very wick of my heart?

MORE: *(Draws up his sleeve, baring his arm)* There is my right arm. (...) Take your dagger and saw it from my shoulder, and I will laugh and be thankful, if by that means I can come with Your Grace with a clear conscience. (p.30-1)

The King is really touched by More's submission and respect for him. He admires More for his honesty and sincerity, which for him is "water in the desert"(p.32) However, he does not understand More's reasons not to agree with him in the question of his divorce. The King himself is a man of conscience and has reformist views. This is emphasized in his question to More: "Thomas, does a man need a Pope to tell him he's sinned?"(p.31) The King's conscience bothers him because of his 'illicit' marriage with Catherine. He does not have, though, problems of conscience in relation to the break with the Church. This is where More's conscience cannot be violated. The King wants 'his' conscience to be respected, but has difficulty to understand why More wants 'his' to be respected too:

HENRY: (...) How is that you cannot see? Everyone else does.

MORE: (...) Then why does Your Grace need my poor support?

HENRY: Because you are honest. What's more to the purpose, you're known to be honest ... There are those like Norfolk who follow me because I wear a crown, and there are those like Master Cromwell who follow me because they are jackals with sharp teeth and I am their lion, and there is a mass that follow me because it follows anything that moves - and there is you. (p.31-2)

This dialogue shows that it is exactly More's integrity that makes his support so important to the King. He talks to him very friendly and also seems to understand More's reasons for behaving as he does. But suddenly the tone changes. The King, who had promised not to pressure More in this matter, now

reminds him of his duty. Henry ends the conversation demanding no opposition. More is once again pressured to opt between his conscience and what is convenient for the country. Again the idea that, in the power arena, friendship is nothing else than a game of interests is stressed.

The King leaves More's house before eating and that is a clear sign of his displeasure. Alice had prepared a superb dinner and gets angry with her husband for having crossed the King. In her opinion More is standing between the King and his lover, Lady Anne, whom he wants to marry. This kind of reasoning shows that Alice recognizes her husband to be a great man but does not understand his intriguing behaviour. More's reply to his wife is wise but too modest: "I? What stands between them is a sacrament of the Church. I'm less important than you think, Alice."(p.34) The irony is that at the end of the play More's fate will prove that he is more important than he thought. Alice does not like More's 'stubbornness' in relation to the King. She tells her husband: "Be ruled!" If you won't rule him, be ruled!"(p.34) She admires her husband but cannot understand his motivations to act as he does. Again More's reply shows his modesty: "I neither could nor would rule my King."(p.34) His next words are very important because they reveal the main reason for his behaviour: "But there's a little area ... little area ... where I must rule myself."(p.34) More is not a rebel. On the contrary. He is happy in being modest and submissive both to the Church and to his King. But we get to know that there is something much more important to him: his right and desire to be faithful to himself. In order to calm down his wife, who starts to fear for his life, More says something which will turn out the opposite at the end of the play: "Set your mind at rest - this *(Tapping himself)* is not the stuff of which martyrs are made."(p.34) At the end of this scene he declares to his family: "I truly believe no man in England is safer than myself."(p.39) The action of the play will prove, ironically, that, in these circumstances, there is no man in more peril in England than More.

From the first to the second act many things have changed. The second act starts with the Common Man exposing to the audience the important facts that happened during this period. From him we learn that two years have passed. Now More and his family live in poverty, and the tone of the play becomes more tense. More is waiting for some news: the official break of England with the Church of Rome. When Norfolk arrives and communicates to him that 'the connection with Rome was severed', More resigns his chancellorship. Although More does not mention his reasons, he cannot help the interpretation that his resignation is a sign of his dissatisfaction with the King's measures. This is openly stated by Chapyus. The Spanish ambassador tells More that his resignation would confirm More's choosing the side of the Church and, therefore, his support to Spain. Chapyus tells More his resignation would serve as a "signal" which "would be seen and understood."(p.50) and even gives More the stature of saint telling him he is "not free from some suspicion of saintliness."(p.49) Roper understands in More's hesitation to resign an outrageous support to England's attack on the Church. His wife sees the resignation as a betrayal to his own abilities and a lack of wisdom. Norfolk sees it as cowardice. Everyone interprets More's attitude according to their own views and interests.

More firmly believes his silence will be his security, but he does not realize the impact his behaviour has on people. Throughout the play More's attitude is interpreted according to the people's position and interests. Therefore, the pressure around him is intensified. When Roper tells him that with his resignation he made a "noble gesture", Thomas is alarmed. It was not his intention to make any gesture. He simply, as he said, "was not able to continue. I would have if I could! I make no gesture! (...) My God, I hope it's understood I make no gesture!"(p.54) More seems naive in this aspect because his reputation and position make people take anything that he does as a 'gesture'.

More understands that his silence, which extends to his family, will be even more necessary from now on. He explains why: "when they find I'm silent they'll ask nothing better to leave me silent; you'll see."(p.56) The next scene presents us with the ironic reversal of More's beliefs. Cromwell tells Norfolk that for a man with More's reputation, his silence is 'noisy': "this 'silence' of his is bellowing up and down Europe!"(p.57) The King, who left More's house demanding only no opposition from him, now demands a definition. In Cromwell's words the King now wishes "either Sir Thomas More to bless his marriage or Sir Thomas destroyed."(p.69) More has not realized yet that the law can be manipulated. This is exactly what Cromwell will do. He will make use of a lawyer's trick to get More. As he had tried to find, or make up some weakness in More, and failed, he now changes his strategy. He reveals this in a conversation with Rich: "Sir Thomas is going to be a slippery fish, Richard; we need a net with a finer mesh. (...) it must be done by law. It is just a matter of finding the right law. Or making one."(p.60) The final trap to catch More is the oath he and other people will have to take attesting their support to the King. The penalty for not taking it is High Treason and a traitor is punished with death.

When More knows about the Act of Parliament that approved this oath, he is anxious to read it in order to see if he can escape it. Again the reversal is immediate, and the next scene begins with the Common Man who assumes the role of a jailer and admits More into jail. We understand that More's moment of choice is near. But Bolt's style does not allow a direct emotional impact to hit the audience. The Common Man tells the real outcome of some of the historical characters of the play, mentioning the kind of deaths each one had. It is an effort to arouse a critical attitude from the audience by breaking the illusion of the play. Instead of directing our pity to More who has gone to prison, and we know will die, the common man's commentary serves to foreground the importance not of death itself but of More's choice. Death comes to everyone sooner or later,

but the emphasis lays upon the kind of death everyone has to face. When he mentions the deaths of More's antagonists (as Cromwell, accused of High Treason and even the King, who died of syphilis) the attention is called upon the triumph of More's death. Sadness is supposed to be left apart or at least diminished. More's integrity is the cause of his death, as, on the other hand, Rich's lack of any is the cause of his long and wealthy life. Rich and the Common Man (he comments even on his own death) lived long because they did not commit themselves, did not get involved. Rich was a crook who did anything to save his skin, even selling the others. The Common Man (who stands for all of us) adapted to the circumstances and did not compromise. He was neither good nor bad, just flexible and was able to survive these moments of tension.

In prison Thomas is questioned by Norfolk, Cromwell and the Archbishop Cranmer. More remains quiet about his position. He is still completely dependent on his integrity and on the law. They assume More is committing treason. More's reply shows that he is still taking refuge in the law: "The law requires more than an assumption; the law requires a fact."(p.76) They wonder whether he is not conscious of the danger of his position. More, however, demonstrates he is aware of his rights and the penalties for his behaviour:

> MORE: (...) For refusing to swear, my goods are forfeit and I am condemned to life imprisonment. You cannot lawfully harm me further. But if you were right in supposing I had reasons for refusing and right again in supposing my reasons to be treasonable, the law would let you cut my head off. (p.76)

It is this reason More will not give them because he is aware of the peril of his life. When Chapyus compared More to Socrates he wisely remarked that he had "no taste for hemlock".(p.49) Like Proctor, More wants to remain neutral. Neither hero wishes martyrdom, but is pushed into a decision. More's situation is similar to Proctor's and Joan's. The authorities (in Joan's case the religious

ones) do not wish their deaths but their confessions. Similarly, Cromwell states about More: "if I bring about More's death - I plant my own, I think. There's no other solution. He must submit."(p.79) Like Joan, More is imprisoned but not tortured. Like Proctor's judges, who sent Elizabeth to try to persuade him to confess, Cromwell sends More's family to visit him in prison. It is interesting to compare Proctor's last conversation with his wife Elizabeth and the one between More and his family. In Proctor's case the one who is more religious is Elizabeth, so she does not seem to make much effort to convince Proctor to confess and save his life. Besides her religiosity, her cold behaviour might be understood as a result of her pain for Proctor's previous lechery. Even so, Elizabeth changes in this scene. She is not self-righteous anymore and admits her part in Proctor's sin. In More's case the situation is completely different. More is the one with strong religious principles. Alice, Margaret and Roper do what they can to convince him to swear the Act of Succession. They all love, admire, and miss him a lot and do not want him to die. While Proctor searches for a kind of guidance from Elizabeth, More refuses his family's entreaties and is sad because of them. Margaret does not accept More's decision and tells him: "if you elect yourself to suffer for it, you elect yourself a hero."(p.81) It is in More's reply to his daughter's statement that the audience is made even more aware of Brecht's influence in Bolt's work:

> MORE: (...) If we lived in a State where virtue was profitable, common sense would make us good, and greed would make us saintly. And we'd live like animals or angels in the happy land that *needs* no heroes. But since in fact we see that avarice, anger, envy, pride, sloth, lust and stupidity commonly profit far beyond humility, chastity, fortitude, justice and thought, and have to choose, to be human at all . . . why then perhaps we *must* stand fast a little - even at the risk of being heroes. (p.81)

This speech is a clear echo of Galileo's words after his recantation. Both Galileo and More do not want to be heroes. They want to go on living. They both

have passion for what they do. The only difference is that while More simply cannot give in, Galileo cannot bare the idea of torture and death.

Heroism is something which is imposed on More, and he cannot help it. Alice does not accept his choice and this makes More suffer. Contrary to Elizabeth, who found Proctor's goodness in his death, Alice states to her husband: "Your death's no 'good' to me! (...) I don't believe this has to happen."(p.83) In this moment Alice opens her heart to him. Throughout the play she seemed not to understand her husband's motivations which contrasted with the others' and which led him to his behaviour. She was always condemning it. Now she states her great admiration for him: "I understand you're the best man that I ever met or am likely to".(p.84) She misses him and not only her previous financial security. She does not want him to die, but she has no other alternative than painfully support her husband's decision. More's steadfastness in a moment like this can only be understood in terms of his heroic personality. As a hero, More praises something more than life. He loves his family but his beliefs are a priority to him. More is a hero of selfhood, but his sense of self is closely related to his faith, to his fear and love for God. Todorov comments that the hero (as a saint) possesses a love for God which is stronger than the love for others. According to him "O amor de Deus preenche o coração do santo, sem deixar espaço para um, amor comparável pelos homens".[4] Bolt does not stress the religious motivations of his hero, but as a saint, More attaches himself to values more important than anything else to him. Both More and Proctor decide in favor of their conscience instead of their desire to go on living with their families. This does not happen because they do not love them but because, in Todorov words "Deus [or their faith/conscience] é um fim em si mesmo e é escolhido em detrimento dos seres humanos particulares."[5] But More is worried with his family and tells them to escape because he is certain that there will "be no trial". He believes so because his judges, according to him,

"have no case."(p.82) Again the ironical reversal is immediate for the following scene presents More's trial. They charge him of High Treason, for which the penalty is not imprisonment but death. More feels that his moment of decision is imminent and tells his judges that it is impossible to avoid death, and that one day or another everyone will have to suffer it:

> MORE: Death comes to us all, my lords. Yes, even for Kings he comes, to whom amidst all their Royalty and brute strength he will neither kneel nor make them any reverence nor pleasantly desire them to come forth, but roughly grasp them by the very breast and rattle them until they are stark dead! So causing their bodies to be buried in a pit and sending *them* to a judgment ... whereof at their death their success is uncertain.(p.87)

This talk about death show us that, in case More must decide on something, he will die instead of betraying himself. He who had so far shown himself so confident in the protection of the law, will watch Cromwell destroy his two pillars of defense: his recourse to silence and his integrity in relation to the law. First, Cromwell argues that More's refuge in silence is a betrayal to his King and his country. Cromwell's second strategy is to calumniate More. He manages to make Rich give a false testimony against More. Rich reported a conversation he had with More in prison. According to him, More denied the King's title of Head of the Church. More denies this version, but he realizes law has been manipulated. He learns that Rich bargained his perjury for a job as Attorney-General for Wales. More's commentary shows Rich's lack of integrity and religiosity: "For Wales? Why, Richard, it profits nothing to give his soul for the whole world ... But for Wales!"(p.92) This commentary also emphasizes the gap between Rich's character and More's.

The play finally reaches its climax. When More officially knows he is considered guilty of High Treason, he asks for his right to speak before he dies. It is the most expected moment for he openly exposes his views and his reasons for the firm attitude he had throughout the play:

> MORE: (...) Now that the Court determined to condemn me, God kwoeth how, I will discharge my mind ... concerning my indictment and the King's title. The indictment is grounded in an Act of Parliament which is directly repugnant to the Law of God. The King in the Parliament cannot bestow the Supremacy of the Church because it is a Spiritual Supremacy! And more to this immunity of the Church is promised both in Magna Carta and the King's own Coronation Oath!(p.92)

The foundation that served as support to More's conduct has been removed. Neither the law of God nor the law of men is respected by his fellows any longer. After this short speech, Cromwell states: "Now, we plainly see that you are malicious!"(p.92) This commentary makes More, like Joan, state his final reason to prefer death to life in the way it is 'offered' to him: "I am the King's true subject, and pray for him and all the realm ... I do none harm, I say none harm, I think none harm. And if this be not enough to keep a man alive, in good faith I long not to live".(p.93) More's honesty and faith in the society he lived have been betrayed. His society was not prepared for the kind of relationship he wanted to have with it.

From the beginning to the end of the play there is a subtle change in the emphasis in More's motivations. First his personal freedom and conscience is more emphasized than his religious beliefs. As the play reaches its conclusion, More's religiosity begins to be stressed. Many situations in the play illustrate this shift. First we have More striving to be respected in his individuality. In a conversation with Norfolk, this is well illustrated. When the Duke asks him if the Pope is the people's link with Christ, More makes clear that, more important to him than his beliefs, is his right to believe in whatever he wants. He suffers because this right of being faithful and honest to himself has now been denied. He tells Norfolk: "what matters to me is not whether it's true or not but that I believe it to be true, or rather, not that I *believe* it, but that *I* believe it ..."(p.53) More and Norfolk are very fond of each other. Norfolk will use their friendship

to ask More to submit to the King. Once more More states that his conscience is more important: "To me it has to be, for that's myself! Affection goes as deep in me as you think, but only God is love right through, Howard; and that's my self."(p.70) Again his individuality is foregrounded. But as the adversities grow around him his faith comes forth. When More is in prison, Norfolk begs him to swear the oath for their fellowship. More is really moved, but his answer appeals not to the law but to his faith: "And then when we stand before God, and you are sent to Paradise for doing according to your conscience, and I am damned for not doing according to mine, will you come with me, for fellowship?"(p.77) As he contemplates the possibility of death, his reasoning shows his identification with Christ. When his judges threatened him with death he compares his fate to His Master's: "dare we for shame enter the Kingdom with ease, when Our Lord Himself entered with so much pain?"(p.87) During the trial Cromwell once again asks More his reasons for not supporting the King's decisions. For the first time in the play More does not mention his self, but his soul. He attributes his behaviour to the "very and pure necessity for respect of my own soul."(p.89). Even Cromwell seems surprised for he checks More's statement: "Your own self, you mean!"(p.89) More's reply shows clearly the equation between self and soul in his way of reasoning in these circumstances: "Yes, a man's soul is his self!"(p.89) He avoided martyrdom as much as he could. His attitude resembled Christ's in His moments of agony before His death when He begged God: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."[6] More, like the Son of God, wants to avoid this difficult moment. At the same time, however, he is ready to do anything not to give in like his fellows. This becomes even clearer in More's reaction when he knows he is to take the oath. He tells Roper then:

> MORE: (...) But Man he [God] made to serve him wittily, in the tangle of his mind! If he suffers us to fall to such a case that there is no escaping, then we may stand to our tackle as best as we can, and yes, Will, then we may clamor like champions ... if we have the spittle for it. (...) But it's God's part, not our own, to bring ourselves to that extremity! Our natural business lies in escaping (...). (p.73)

Thomas did what he could to escape his fate. Now that he is sentenced to death, he completely assumes his role of a martyr and even his way of talking becomes very similar to Christ's. Specially in the final moments, the religiosity behind More's motivation is stressed. More's selfhood had been emphasized, but now, it seems that Bolt cannot help giving place to the Christian martyr. Moments before his execution Norfolk approaches him and offers him some wine. More's reply shows that now that he has to endure his fate, he will do it the best way he can: "My Master had easel and gall, not wine, given him to drink. Let me be going."(p.93) Margaret comes to him in despair and in this difficult moment it is More who comforts her: "Have patience, Margaret, and trouble not thyself."(p.94) And, once more, he talks about the subject of death as something of much lesser importance than integrity and faith: "Death comes for us all; (...) even at our birth, death does but stand aside a little. And every day he looks towards us and muses somewhat to himself whether that day he will draw nigh. It is the law of nature, and the will of God."(p.94) His steadfastness did not abandon him at this moment, but serenity is added to it. During the whole action of the play More's soul was in constant fight. Now we see him in rest. This makes him talk to the Headsman so confidently that it provokes envy in Cranmer: "Friend, be not afraid of your office. You send me to God."(p.94) His last words are his final affirmation of his faith, for he is very sure God "will not refuse one who is to blithe to go to him."(p.94) Although Bolt almost apologizes for having taken "a Christian saint, as a hero of selfhood"(p.xiii), at the end he cannot help allowing his hero to exalt his

faith. It is very difficult for us to acknowledge death if its transcendental aspect is not taken into account. In More's case it is taken for granted.

4.5 A Hero for All Seasons.

Ralph Waldo Emerson states: "The hero is he who is immovably centred."[7] This definition fits Bolt's words about his hero, for when his self was menaced he "set like metal, was overtaken by an absolute primitive rigor, and could no more be budged than a cliff."(p.xi) In this sense, More is the opposite of Galileo. And it is exactly for this reason that Galileo is a more complex character: he is not completely virtuous nor evil; he adapts to the situations if this fits his purposes; and his final choice reveals the incongruities of every human being, not the steadfastness of a hero. More, on the other hand, is the embodiment of virtue. He has no doubts and defends his integrity with super-human forces. According to Bolt, Thomas More finally decided to die. He did that because he "found something in himself without which life was valueless and when that was denied him was able to grasp his death."(p.xi, xii) We can understand Thomas More's fate as the result of a steadfast personality in times which demanded flexibility. This characteristic is illustrated in many circumstances in the play. In the beginning of the second act, for example, the Common Man comments about relevant facts which happened during the last two years. The most important was obviously the establishment of The Church of England which was achieved without "bloodshed". But, he continues, only "an unhappy few were found to set themselves against the currents of times, and in so doing to court disaster."(p.47) Thomas More was of course one of these few. When More is summoned to answer some questions, Cromwell, his main antagonist, tells him about this characteristic of his personality: "You know it amazes me that you, who were once so effective in the world and are now so much retired from it, should be opposing yourself to the whole movement of the times?"(p.66)

More's reply shows his own helplessness in relation to his attitude: "It amazes me too."(p.66) It is only in times like these that he could demonstrate, even to himself, how firm he was. Adversity serves to reveal the essence of the self. In *The Prince,* Machiavelli comments on the problems one might have in not behaving according to what his/her times requires:

> Também julgo feliz aquele que combina o seu modo de proceder com as particularidades dos tempos, e infeliz o que faz discordar dos tempos a sua maneira de proceder. (...) Concluo, portanto, por dizer que, modificando-se a sorte, e mantendo os homens, obstinadamente, o seu modo de agir, são felizes enquanto esse modo de agir e as particularidades dos tempos concordarem. Não concordando, são infelizes. [8]

The historical More was a scholar. In this sense he might be understood as a Renaissance man. On the other hand, he had medieval religious and state views. This provoked a clash. In Bolt's More, individualism is foregrounded and it is understood as the main cause of the 'disaster'.

One of Cromwell's statements about Thomas More is very illustrative in terms of the character of heroes or saints in general. It shows that people of exemplar conduct and character do not fit this quite imperfect world:

> CROMWELL: Well, there are these men - you know - "up right," "steadfast", men who want themselves to be the constant factor in the situation; which, of course, they can't be. The situation rolls forward in any case. (...) If they've any sense they get out of its way. (...) What, none at all? Well, then they're only fit for Heaven. (p.43-4)

Like Joan, More is fit only for Heaven, for the world is not prepared for people like him, at any time in history. Like Joan, also, More loved life. In Bolt's words, More "was a person who could not be accused of any incapacity for life, who indeed seized life in great variety and almost greedy quantities".(p.xi) However, More praised his self, his freedom to be faithful to himself, without which his life became meaningless. And for Bolt when this freedom was denied

More, death became his only alternative. Similarly to Joan, life had to be fully and freely given to him. Otherwise it was not worth to be lived.

NOTES

[1] GASCOIGNE, Bamber. Twentieth-Century Drama. London: Hutchinson, 1974, p.204.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] TODOROV, Tzvetan. Em Face do Extremo. Campinas: Papirus, 1995, p.58.

[5] *Ibid.*, p.59.

[6] Holy Bible. King James' Version. Nashville: National Publishing Company, 1978, Luke 22:42.

[7] KERÉNYI, C. The Heroes of the Greek. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981, p.2.

[8] MACHIAVELLI, Niccolò. O Príncipe. Rio de Janeiro: Tecnoprint, p.148-9.

5. SAINT JOAN

I want everything of life, I do; and I want it now! I want it total, complete; otherwise I reject it.

Anouilh

5.1 Shaw's Concept of the Theater.

Shaw expected that his plays would arise criticism in the audience, stimulating thought, awareness, and mainly, discussion of relevant moral and social issues. His open didacticism and strong wish to reform society made him intentionally disturb his audience, to which he openly denies any kind of rest. He stated such concepts in his preface to *Man and Superman*: "It annoys me to see people comfortable when they ought to be uncomfortable; and I insist on making them think in order to bring them to conviction of sin."[1] According to Styan, "Shaw takes an Irish delight in refusing us comfort."[2] Discussion was at the center of his conception of dramatic art, and the audience was supposed not only to watch it, but to be involved in it as if the stage were turned into a forum. To master both theatrical invention (form), and moral didacticism (content) is not an easy task and, according to Shaw, it should be the playwright's main concern. A. R. Jones explains this idea:

> The 'weapons of dramatic genius' were the ability to manipulate the discussion of interesting moral problems within the framework of a naturalistic drama so as to involve the audience, so that the audience 'are not flattered spectators killing an idle hour' but 'guilty creatures sitting at a play.' They are involved not in the enjoyment of a pastime or entertainment but are involved as if watching a murder trial - and a murder trial, in fact, in which themselves are seated in the dock. [3]

Such didactic purposes made him a target of criticism for his characters' lack of inner life and psychological depth. Most of the times the conflict conveyed in Shaw's plays is between ideas, and this makes his characters less

credible. Actually, it is his characters "who are moved about the ideas and not the ideas which arise out of the dramatic conflict between characters."[4] Winston Churchill wrote in an article about Shaw that his drama did not depend on the

> interplay of character and character, or of character and circumstance, but on that of argument and argument. His ideas become personages, and fight among themselves, sometimes with intense dramatic effect, and sometimes not. His human beings, with a few exceptions, are there for what they are to say, not for what they are to do.[5]

Shaw's characters are provided with a moral profile and become "types" standing for certain social attitudes which are to be analyzed and judged by the audience through the action of the play. According to A. R. Jones this is Shaw's main purpose in relation to theatre, for he "uses the stage as a court of morals in which the folly of his times is exposed" bringing, in this way, "human behaviour into question and through discussion and debate of conflicting attitudes, involves the audience in the final judgment."[6]

Shaw's attack on the audience was admired by Brecht, who advocated the same concepts. This attack is also one of the great influences of Ibsen upon Shaw's work. As Miller, Shaw is influenced by Ibsen in many aspects[7] but specially in his bringing new ideas onto stage [8] as a form to stimulate the audience's critical attitude. Whitman states that what was important for Shaw,

> was the act of bringing ideas into the theater - and even more, bringing them into collision with one another, hence making the conflict essential to drama a conflict of ideas - [this act] was itself contributing to the intellectual, and therefore the spiritual, development of his audience. [9]

This taste for 'new truths' is stated by Shaw in his preface to *Three Plays for Puritans*. In it he corroborates Stuart-Glennie's affirmation that "there can be no new drama without a new philosophy."[10] Shaw mentions that one has only to observe the facts to realize that craft and effort are useless without new ideas:

> every generation produces men of extraordinary special faculty, artistic, mathematical and linguistic, who for lack of new ideas, or indeed of any ideas worth mentioning, achieve no distinction outside music halls and class rooms, although they can do things easily that the great epoch maker did clumsily or not at all. (...) new ideas make their technique as water makes its channel; and the technician without ideas is as useless as the canal constructor without water, though he may do very skillfully what the Mississippi does very rudely. (...) the epoch maker himself has generally begun working professionally before his new ideas have mastered him sufficiently to insist on constant expression by his art.[11]

The artist needs to see the old facts in a new light in order to succeed. Shaw states that the new ideas presented in his plays might make it difficult for the audience to identify with the action and characters. Shaw considers it a quality which would grant him some years of immortality. But, he says, "the whirligig of time will soon bring my audiences to my point of view; and the next Shakespear that comes along will turn these petty tentatives of mine into masterpieces final for their epoch."[12] In relation to this characteristic, Holbrook Jackson commented that "Shaw's great contribution to the theater was the introduction of philosophy to drama, while his great contribution to philosophy was the 'concentration of will into the energy of life.'"[13]

Shaw's desire to make theatre more naturalistic comes mostly from his rejection of late-Victorian stage. He intended to revive its wit and intelligence relating drama to the realities of his time. A. R. Jones states that, in "a period in which the theater had become marginal, a place for relaxation and fantasy, Shaw insisted on drama as a serious art form."[14] And he makes it serious without denying us his good humor and refined irony.

5.2 Historical Background.

The historical background of *Saint Joan* is the Hundred Years' War between England and France. The conflict which lasted from 1338 until 1453 had political and economical causes. Politically there was a dispute for the

succession of the throne of France between the French and the English. The economic cause of the war was another dispute between the two countries for Flanders which was a prosperous economic and industrial center. During this period the war had many truces, but peace was never completely achieved. Hunger, plagues, deaths and revolutions are among the problems it generated. In the last phase of this war a young village girl from Domremy, Jeanne of Arc, amazed her contemporaries affirming that she had orders from God to crown the Dauphin king and to free France from the English attempts to conquer its territory. She accomplished many of her propositions but was betrayed and burned as a heretic and sorceress. Peace was attained only 22 years after Joan's death. Her death intensified the patriotic feeling of her nation, and for France she became a symbol of courage and freedom. In 1920 the Catholic Church canonized her.

Shaw wrote *Saint Joan* after the First World War. The advent of the War had its influences upon his work. His focus changed from the society to the individual. Shaw was an optimist and saw his role as an important tool in the restoration of the moral values and intellectual life of the society he lived in. A. R. Jones concludes that when "society failed to realize the ambitions he had for it, he looked to individual men of intelligence and power as the source of regeneration."[15] For Shaw, as for Brecht, the war was a terrible proof of the bad consequences of science. Shaw's critical view of science is very similar to Brecht's as he particularly expressed in *Life of Galileo*. Robert Whitman comments that Shaw

> was keenly aware of, and fascinated by, recent advances in science, but he was troubled by its amorality, and profoundly resented the cruelties of its experiments, the unimaginativeness of its goals, and the mindlessness of its theories of natural selection.[16]

Both Brecht and Shaw wrote their plays in the post-war period, and it is not possible to deny the relevance of these circumstances in the creation of their works. Shaw is explicitly didactic, and his identification with his heroine becomes clear in many aspects. As a thinker and dramatist Shaw saw his role, like Joan, as a self-appointed prophet. One of Whitman's commentaries about Shaw reminds us of Joan, as portrayed by him, and her restlessness in relation to the way people thought and behaved in her time:

> Politicians, scientists, theologians, and thinkers, to say nothing of the great middle classes, were seen by Shaw as the prisoners of formulas, habit, doing things or thinking things because that was the way the world had always been dealt with or conceived of. Tradition and convention, as the first line of defense of the status quo, were to him among the most serious obstacles in the path of human development. [17]

Joan, as Shaw, was a visionary and almost utopically sought to save a society which was not prepared for the kind of salvation she offered. In *Saint Joan* "the lonely individual, alienated by her genius both from the Church and from the State, is martyred by the society she wished to save."[18] Joan is many times compared to Shaw specially in terms of her relation to life. Luigi Pirandello wrote about Shaw's reaction when he watched the performance of *Saint Joan*: "Joan like Shaw, cannot exist without a life that is free and fruitful."[19]

Shaw seems to have searched and found in a past age what we might call a parable of his own. The ability the playwright has in relating past and present times is illustrated by Whitman's commentary:

> He possessed a valuable ability to recognize the uses of the past without becoming overawed by it and at the same time to distrust the past without either arrogance or an indiscriminate admiration for everything new. (...) Much of Shaw's strength lay in his having found a way of looking at the world that accommodated both past and present and that was at the same time both skeptical and optimistic.[20]

This might be one of the reasons for Robert de Flers' commentary after he saw Shaw's play. Joan of Arc as portrayed by Shaw was in his opinion "living history" which "has not been dredged up out of books, but that it has been brought to life by the imagination of a visionary spirit."[21] This visionary spirit both of author and heroine is present throughout the play and is our focus of analysis.

5.3 The Play.

Saint Joan opens with a conversation inside the castle of Vaucouleurs. Captain Robert de Baudricourt is mad at his steward because his hens stopped laying eggs with no apparent reason. The steward believes that they are under a kind of spell, and therefore, that they are bewitched. He is convinced that there will be no eggs, and soon there will be no milk either, as long as Joan, the Maid, stands at their door. She is there waiting for Robert's permission to go to the Dauphin (the eldest son of the king of France) in order to crown him king. Obviously, Baudricourt finds it nonsense, but after Joan's insistence he allows her to leave with his men. He also gives her a soldier's costume as she requested. But he is only totally convinced Joan was really God-sent, as she claimed, when his hens start laying eggs again at the exact moment she leaves.

Joan stated that she listened to and obeyed voices that came from God, Saint Catherine, and Saint Margaret, which told her to fight for her country. By divine orientation, the young girl was engaged in repelling England's attempts to conquer French territory. In this way, she incensed the English authorities, for she led the French army to important victories over the English and succeeded in crowning Charles, the Dauphin, at Rheims Cathedral. For the clergyman, Joan also represented a menace to the unity of the Church because she ignored its decisions. Besides that, her credibility among the people was strengthened because many people believed she performed miracles.

Joan is finally accused of sorcery and heresy and is forced to confess such accusations in order to save her life. When she is shown the instruments of torture, she affirms that she would tell anything to stop the pain, for she cannot bare it. It is only in the last moment that she convinces herself that she will really die if she does not confess. Only then she signs her confession. However, when she finds out that her confession will not free her from imprisonment for the rest of her life, she tears it. What leads Joan to her last decision is her love for life. She could not go on living without enjoying the beauty and freedom of life and prefers to die.

The play does not end with Joan's death. Contrary to what happens in *The Crucible* and *A Man for all Seasons*, Shaw provides his play with an epilogue in which Joan is presented talking to the other characters after her death. It breaks the illusion and relieves the tension of the previous scene, in which she was executed. Therefore, the epilogue is supposed to arise the audience's criticism. Its main purpose is to demonstrate that Joan's personality did not change, and that her influence was strengthened after her death. At the same time, it shows that people are never prepared for the geniuses and saints their age produces.

5.4 The Heroine.

Shaw sought for a naturalistic portrayal of his characters. For that reason, he refuses to portray Joan as a melodramatic heroine. In his opinion, she was a genius and a saint not a "lovelorn beautiful parasite on an equally beautiful hero".(p.10) In this way Joan is presented to us as an intelligent, although illiterate, girl. She is not ugly, but not romantically beautiful. She is not even feminine, and is not involved in any kind of love affair. Joan of Arc as portrayed by him is a young, naive, and at the same time determined village girl who behaved and talked as if she herself were the church, God's ambassador, or heaven-sent angel whose duty was to save France and its people from the

English domain. To some people she became a rebel, a free-thinker, a hell-sent girl who menaced the power of the authorities. She became dangerous both for religious and political reasons.

Her personality is revealed by the other characters' commentaries about her and by her own words and behaviour. The contrast between her real conditions and her aims is so deep that only her amazing self-confidence, faith and persuasiveness explain her success in accomplishing them. Such characteristics explain why she is shown in constant conflict with the other characters. In the first scene the conversation between Robert de Baudricourt and his steward shows that the young girl is not like others of her sex, age, social, and cultural level. When de Baudricourt demands that his servant get rid of her, his commentary shows important characteristics of the heroine: her courage, faith, and mainly, the power she exerts on people through her words. The steward says that Joan does not seem to be afraid of anything and that she puts courage into the ones she talks to. Actually, de Baudricourt will only believe in Joan's power to influence people when he talks to her. Before knowing Joan personally, de Baudricourt is only worried about how to keep himself out of trouble. He comments about the people of Joan's social class who, according to him, "may be of no account socially; but they can give a lot of bother to the authorities. That is to say, to me."(p.55) He is worried because he is her father's lord, and therefore, he is responsible for Joan's protection. Anything that happens to her might generate trouble to him.

Joan's self-confidence and power of persuasion which will accompany her throughout the play is foregrounded since this first scene. In this way, the audience already has an idea of Shaw's Joan, who is introduced to it even before her appearance on the stage. Besides the commentaries which precede her entrance, her first speech in the play foregrounds her incisive and over-confident personality. When de Baudricourt is finally convinced to allow her to enter the

castle, she does not wait for permission and is the first one to talk. Her persuasiveness becomes clear. She has *"normally a coaxing voice, very confident, very appealing, very hard to resist."*(p.52) Without any kind of ceremony she only bobs a curtsey and says: "Good morning, captain squire. Captain: you are to give me a horse and armor and some soldiers, and send me to the Dauphin. Those are your orders from my Lord."(p.52) Like anybody else, the captain at first thinks she is mad. Joan also tells him that she intends to raise the siege in Orleans according to her orders from God. The captain is even more amazed when he finds out that she had already managed to convince some soldiers to go with her. Among these men are the squire Bertrand de Poulengey and Monsieur John of Metz. Everything is arranged; Joan only needs his orders. He is astonished by her attitude and realizes he is entrapped: "Well, I am damned!"(p.54) She tells the captain that his name would be remembered for ever as her first helper. This commentary shows Joan's certainty that she is an indispensable character in history, and she takes both her role and her performance for granted. De Baudricourt calls Poulengey. He wants to know his reasons for accepting to go with the Maid to the Dauphin. Poulengey replies: "There is something about her. (...) There is something. Something. It may be worth trying."(p.56) Actually Joan's strategies are quite right, for the coronation of the Dauphin is central to strengthen the power and unity of the country and to beat the English. But even the Queen considers the Dauphin a bastard, and that makes his chances of becoming king very slim. Poulengey comments that France's situation is so terrible that only a miracle could save them. He did not believe in miracles anymore until he talked to the Maid. In fact, he came to believe her to be "a bit of a miracle."(p.57) Joan's influence upon the people is stated by Poulengey when he says that her "words and her ardent faith in God have put fire into" him.(p.57) The squire is convinced that they have no other alternative: "she is the last card left in our hand. Better play her than throw up

the game."(p.57) His reply to the captain when he says he is as mad as the girl is one of the many examples in the play of Shaw's speaking through his characters: "We want a few mad people now. See where the sane ones have landed us."(p.57) After many counter-arguments, Robert allows Joan to leave with his men and sends a letter telling Charles, the Dauphin, about Joan and her propositions.

Charles is at first enthusiastic when he knows Joan is coming. He thinks of her as a new toy. He feels like having his own living saint. He tells the Archbishop about De Baudricourt's letter: "he is sending me a saint: an angel. And she is coming to me: to me, the king, and not to you, Archbishop, holy as you are. She knows the royal blood if you dont."(p.67). Through the figure of the Archbishop, Joan's relationship with the Church will be illustrated. Before meeting Joan, the Archbishop is nervous about Charles' excitement and asks him: "I speak in the Church's name. (...) Do you dare say she shall?"(p.68) In the beginning, the Archbishop, like De Baudricourt, is inflexible in his judgment of Joan's reliability. He openly shows his disapproval for her way of behaving and dressing. After finishing reading De Baudricourt's letter and hearing the others' commentaries about her, he is not so rigid anymore. Even so, he still does not like the idea of Joan's talking to Charles and restates his authority over hers: "The Church must examine the girl before anything decisive is done about her."(p.69) But when Joan meets the Archbishop for the first time, she addresses him in such a respectful and reverential manner that he is touched. She does not dare look at him, and on her knees, she asks for his blessing. Like the other characters', his initial attitude towards her changes completely after talking to her and, when she asks to speak to the Dauphin alone, he tells the others: "Come gentlemen. The Maid comes with God's blessing, and must be obeyed."(p.74) However, the Archbishop's attitude to Joan will change later in the play.

When Joan talks to Charles for the first time, he reveals his fragility and lack of interest in the country's affairs. Although he is the Dauphin, who is to be crowned king by Joan, he greatly contrasts with the 'grandeur' of the heroine. His own words reveal his awareness that he has the characteristics of a common man:

> CHARLES. Yes: I am afraid. It's no use preaching me about it. It's all very well for these big men with their armor that is too heavy for me, and their swords that I can hardly lift, and their muscle and their shouting and their bad tempers. They like fighting (...); but I am quiet and sensible; and dont want to kill people: I only want to be left alone to enjoy myself in my own way. I never asked to be a king. It was pushed on me. So if you are going to say 'Son of St Louis: gird on the sword of your ancestors, and lead us to victory' you may spare your breath to cool your porridge; for I cannot do it. I am not built that way; and there is an end of it. (p.75)

Joan finds a weak king but does not get discouraged. She believes she can instill courage upon him. The problem is that Charles does not want to be changed. He does not want to "live in continual terror of being killed or wounded."(p.76) He asks Joan to put courage into the others and let them boast of their adventures in war. He only wishes not to be disturbed but to enjoy his life and "sleep in a comfortable bed."(p.75) In other words, he openly repels any kind of commitment to his country and its people. Charles will not suffer any meaningful change until the end of the play. His behaviour contrasts with Joan's who gives herself completely to her country (and she does that willingly, against many people's disapproval). Charles' attitude will create a tension when confronted with Joan's "*dominating urgency*". Soon he will reveal his dislike for Joan's motivations in coming to him. When Joan tells him she has a message from God to him, he reveals what he really wants from her: "I dont want a message; but can you tell me any secrets? Can you do any cures? Can you turn lead into gold, or anything of that sort?"(p.77) Charles was excited in the

beginning because he thought of Joan as a personal amulet, a kind of fortune teller, his servant, and not somebody who would demand of him that he be the courageous, responsible, and committed King of France. Joan's reply shows her maturity and perseverance that contrast with the Dauphin's irresponsibility: "I can turn thee into a king, in Rheims Cathedral; and that is a miracle that will take some doing it seems."(p.77) Although Charles did not like the idea, Joan managed to get his permission to command the French army against the English. He gives her autonomy in her war strategies.

Joan goes to Orleans where Dunois waits for her. Dunois commands the French troops. His men are down the River Loire, and they cannot row up against both the current and the wind. He has to wait until the direction of the wind changes for him to proceed with his men to beat the English in Orleans. Once more we are introduced to circumstances in which only a miracle can save the situation. The very moment Joan arrives, in "*splendid armor*"(p.81), the wind stops blowing, although nobody notices. As it happened in her meetings with de Baudricourt, Charles and his mates, her way of talking to Dunois seems terribly arrogant. She asks him: "Do you know that I bring you better help than ever came to any general or any town? (...) the help and the counsel of the King of Heaven."(p.82) She embodies the role of God's ambassador. She does not want to wait a minute longer and restlessly forces Dunois to go fighting against the English. She thinks he is afraid and tells him: "I will deliver you from fear."(p.82) It is easy to understand why she was so difficult to live with: a young girl who thinks she is wiser and stronger than an experienced and brave commander of the army. This time Joan did not meet a stupid or weak person. Dunois' reply shows that he has himself in better account than the others had: "Come! Let me begin to make a soldier of you."(p.82) Up to this point he is not irritated and patiently exposes the situation to her. The kind way in which Dunois treats her, although she boasts all the time, is due to the fact that he does

not welcome her as a soldier, but as a saint. He wants a miracle, the part he cannot perform. But he listens to her military advise with sympathy and admires her courage. He does not want to take her to fight with him, although she firmly states that it is 'she' who is going to lead 'his' troops. As in the first scene, this also closes with a 'miracle': the wind changes. Dunois then gives the command of the troops to Joan declaring himself her soldier.

In these first scenes Joan is shown in victory after victory. She managed to convince everybody of what seemed crazy at first thought. The next scene shows the repercussion of her success through the conversation of Warwick, an English nobleman, and De Stogumber, an English Chaplain. In the preface to the play, Shaw comments that Joan's kind of leadership was likely to produce two contrasting reactions on people: it was either to be hailed or hated. Joan hardly asked for anything but ordered everyone about, from the common man to the king, with the same 'divine' authority. Leaders like her, according to Shaw, had "no trouble with some people, and no end of trouble with others. Either they are messengers of God, or they are blasphemous impostors."(p.38) Such contrast was emphasized by the medieval belief in witchcraft. It explains the different reactions to 'Joan's miracles' which "proved the divine mission to the credulous, and proved a contract with the devil to the skeptical."(p.38) This ambiguity is expressed in the play by the reaction of the different characters as well as the countries or institutions they represent. The facts the French attribute to miracles, the English attribute to witchcraft and sorcery.

What really happens is a game of interests. The Chaplain seems to be convinced of Joan's evil inspiration, but Warwick is worried about the English defeats because of Joan's leadership. As the English cannot bring any political or military accusation against Joan, they search for some in the realm of religion. If Joan were not involved in the war and leading the French to victories, the English would have no reason to prove whether her voices came from God or

not, or whether she was a saint or just a crazy girl. For the English the problem was that the French, under The Maid's command, were winning. They won the battle in Orleans and in many other places. Besides that, they already knew that Charles was to be crowned. These are some of the reasons why the English plan to have her arrested and burned as a witch. Warwick and the Chaplain call Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, and expose their views. The Chaplain believes, or prefers to believe, that the English were unfairly beaten because of sorcery. Warwick tells the Bishop about the Chaplain's beliefs: "Our friend here takes the view that the young woman is a sorceress. It would, I presume, be the duty of your reverend lordship to denounce her to the Inquisition, and have her burnt for that offence."(p.89) Warwick also points out the menace that Joan's attitude represents to the interests of the feudal aristocracy. The notion of a country like France or England, with a particular people, like the French or the English, is a concept that was beginning to take shape at the end of the Middle Ages. Joan is compelled to fight because, according to the voices she hears, each people belong to their country. According to her, the Englishmen have to return to the country they belong to. In these circumstances the power of the king is strengthened, and consequently, the power of the feudal lords as well as that of the Church is likely to be diminished. Warwick expresses to the Chaplain his fear for the consequences of this new kind of reasoning:

> THE NOBLEMAN. (...) Are these Burgundians and Bretons and Picards and Gascons beginning to call themselves Frenchmen just as our fellows are beginning to call themselves Englishmen? They actually talk of France and England as their countries. (...) What is to become of me and of you if that way of thinking comes into fashion?
>
> THE CHAPLAIN. Why, my lord? Can it hurt us?
>
> THE NOBLEMAN. (...) Men cannot serve two masters. If this cant of serving their country once takes hold of them, goodbye to the authority of their feudal lords, and goodbye to the authority of the Church." (p.87)

Warwick in the play stands for the feudal aristocracy and both, the Chaplain and Cauchon, for the Church, two important institutions that are menaced by the natural changing of the times. In the play Joan embodies and emphasizes these changes as expressed in Warwick's words:

> WARWICK. (...) there are temporal institutions in the world as well as spiritual ones. I and my peers represent the feudal aristocracy as you represent The Church. We are the temporal power. Well, do you not see how this girl's idea strikes at us? (...) Her idea is that the kings should give their realms to God, and the reign of God's bailiffs. (...) It is a cunning device to supersede the aristocracy, and make the king sole and absolute autocrat. Instead of the king being merely the first among his peers, he becomes their master. (...) If the people's thoughts and hearts were turned to the king, and their lords became only the king's servants in their eyes, the king could break us across his knee one by one (...) (p.97-8)

That is the reason Warwick searches for Cauchon's support to get rid of Joan. In one sentence he sums up their reasons for doing so: "Well, if you will burn the Protestant, I will burn the Nationalist".(p.99) The term Protestantism is also new for the age. The term is defined by Warwick as "the protest of the individual soul against the interference of priest or peer between the private man and his God."(p.98-9) Very well phrased, very well put. But at the time it was worth the fire for it was considered heresy. In Cauchon's view, Joan is a heretic and not a witch, what makes a lot of difference for him. The problem with Joan, in his opinion, is the way she treats religion as something personal. Her direct contact with God and saints, as she states, without the mediation of the Church, is what frightens him. Joan also places her country above the 'holy Catholic Church', and these are the causes which lead her to her tragic death. Cauchon exposes what is, in his opinion, Joan's most terrible fault:

> CAUCHON. (...) She acts as if she herself were The Church. She brings the message of God to Charles; and the Church must stand aside. She will crown him in the cathedral of Rheims: she, not The Church! She sends letters to the king of England giving him God's

> command through her to return to his island on pain of God's vengeance, which she will execute. (...) Has she ever in all her utterances said one word of The Church? Never. It is always God and herself. (...) What will the world be like when The Church's accumulated wisdom and knowledge and experience, its councils of learned, venerable pious men, are thrust into the kennel by every ignorant laborer or daymaid whom the devil can puff up with the monstrous self-conceit of being directly inspired from heaven? (p.94-5)

Like Thomas More, Joan does not wish to disrespect the authorities, but places the authority of God, the King of Heaven, as she says, above the authority of any other king or institution. Both might be called Protestants because of that stance. Our modern view of individual freedom of choice, guaranteed by law, makes us think why Joan could not go on living with her religious beliefs; it does not matter if they were right, wrong, legitimate or insane. In the preface, Shaw develops a discussion around this idea:

> The Church should have confined itself to excommunicating her. There it was within its rights: she had refused to accept its authority or comply with its conditions; and it could say with truth 'You are not one of us: go forth and find the religion that suits you, or found one yourself.' It had no right to say 'You may return to us now that you have recanted; but you shall stay in the dungeon all the rest of your life.' Unfortunately, The Church did not believe that there was any genuine religion outside itself; and it was deeply corrupted (...) by (...) the propitiation of a dreaded deity by suffering and sacrifice. Its method was not cruelty for cruelty's sake, but cruelty for the salvation of Joan's soul. Joan, however, believed that the salvation of her soul was her own business (...). (p.31)

Cauchon considers these 'procedures' of the Church a "painful duty", but, in his opinion, they are "less than nothing"(p.94) if compared with heresy. Warwick makes use of these 'procedures of cruelty', common to the Medieval Church, to press Cauchon to eliminate Joan:

> WARWICK. (...) we must burn the woman.
> CAUCHON. I cannot burn her. The Church cannot take life. And my first duty is to seek this girl's salvation.
> WARWICK. No doubt. But you do burn people occasionally. (p.92)

Warwick's last reply is very ironic, but Cauchon explains that the Church only judges the so-called heretics, and after that, they are handed to the secular arm, that does what pleases it.[22] Warwick knows that 'he' is the secular arm in the case and is ready to do what pleases him: burn Joan. Cauchon states that his main concern is to save Joan's soul from perdition. Warwick's interests are shown in his commentary about Joan's 'salvation': "God grant that her soul may be saved! But the practical problem would seem to be how to save her soul without saving her body. For we must face it, my lord: if this cult of The Maid goes on, our case is lost."(p.94) Cauchon is aware that the English are trying to accuse Joan of witchcraft because, in fact, she has been a good soldier. He makes Warwick aware of it: "I am afraid the bare fact that an English army has been defeated by a French one will not convince them that there is any sorcery in the matter."(p.90) His kind of reasoning is very ironic and realistic. Shaw does whatever is possible not to adopt a manichean perspective. This allows a character like Cauchon to rationally analyze Joan's actions in war and contrast them with the English ones: "What do her victories prove but that she has a better head on her shoulders than your swearing Glass-dells and mad Talbots, and that the courage of faith, even though it be a false faith, will always outstay the courage of wrath?"(p.92)

Cauchon's observation reveals his awareness of Joan's ability in warfare. In his preface, Shaw compares Joan to Napoleon in her dealings with war because she treated such affairs in a realistic way and not as a kind of sport as many did at her time. Joan was aware that one of the main problems in relation to the French troops was the lack of patriotism. In this way the French army became weaker and was easily defeated in battles against the English. She exposes these views when she talks to Baudricourt:

> JOAN. (..) Our soldiers are always beaten because they are fighting to save their skins; and the shortest way to save your skin is to run away. Our knights are thinking only of the money they will make in ransoms: it is not kill or be killed with them, but pay or be paid. (...) (p.61)

It is interesting that in *The Prince* [23] Machiavelli mentions similar problems concerning warfare. He states that a king should avoid by all means depending on mercenary troops. According to him, they were among the worse problems in terms of war strategy. The soldiers of this kind of troops are cowards because they fight for the sake of money and not for the love of the nation. Joan, a young and illiterate girl, besides being aware of such problems, does not hesitate in stating her obligation to 'teach' the soldiers to fight: "You soldiers do not know how to use the big guns: you think you can win battles with a great noise and smoke."(p.83) It becomes easy for us to understand that Joan was ahead of her times and that is the reason she bothered so many people.

Joan is viewed in different ways by different people. Many contrasting and complementary terms are used to describe her: an excellent soldier, a saint, a witch, a heretic, a Protestant, a Nationalist, among others. The Chaplain concludes she is a rebel, and he exposes his reasons for doing so:

> THE CHAPLAIN. (...) I know as a matter of plain commonsense that the woman is a rebel; and that is enough for me. She rebels against Nature by wearing man's clothes, and fighting. She rebels against The Church by usurping the divine authority of the Pope. She rebels against God by her damnable league with Satan and his evil spirits against our army. And all these rebellions are only excuses for her great rebellion against England. (...) (p.100)

His way of reasoning reveals the fear this young girl was producing on the English and on the Church as well. This tension promotes the circumstances that will lead her to an inevitable moral choice. In the play this choice is firstly stated by Cauchon who exposes Joan's need to recant and the consequences if she does not: "if she does not recant in the dust before the world, and submit herself to the

last inch of her soul to her Church, to the fire she shall go if she once falls into my hand."(p.96) What will be difficult is to convince Joan of the need of recantation.

Actually, Joan starts to realize that her great accomplishments, contrary to what she expected, do not make her popular, and she feels more and more alone. This becomes very apparent after Charles' coronation. Joan should be happy because she has already accomplished her most important tasks. However, she is sad because she does not understand why the authorities do not love her for her victories. Dunois' explanation for their reaction illustrates the tension between any hero or genius and the people of his/her times: "(...) Sim-ple-ton! Do you expect stupid people to love you for shewing them up? (...) I should be jealous of you myself if I were ambitious enough."(p.102) In this scene Joan will find out that her loneliness is more than a feeling. Joan intends to proceed with her war strategies and take Paris from the English. But she does not get the King's support. Charles, now the cowardly King of France, wants a treaty with the English for he is afraid their 'luck' may change. The Archbishop and Dunois state she will be disowned by the Church and by the Army if she does not submit to the authority of both. Joan's attitude is very proud and, in Dunois' words, "she thinks she has God in her pocket."(p.109) Joan also learns that there is a reward for the soldier (enemy or not) who takes her to the English, and neither the Army nor the Church will pay the ransom for her in case she is caught. Besides that, the accusation of witchcraft lays upon her, and it will be very difficult to save her from burning for that charge. Joan finally realizes that her attachment to what she thinks is right leaves her completely alone. [24] She understands she shares the loneliness of God and of her country:

> JOAN. (...) Yes: I am alone on earth: I have always been alone. (...) Do not think you can frighten me by telling me that I am alone. France is alone; God is alone; and what is my loneliness before the loneliness of my country

> and my God? I see now that the loneliness of God is his strength (...) Well, my loneliness will be my strength too; it is better to be alone with God (...) (p.112)

In the preface to the play, Shaw comments that Joan was left alone by both sides:

> Joan was burnt without a hand lifted on her own side to save her. The comrades she led to victory and the enemies she had disgraced and defeated, the French king she had crowned and the English king whose crown she had kicked into the Loire, were equally glad to get rid of her.(p.9)

However, Joan knew that in case she had to endure her tragic death, she would make her influence on people stronger: "You will all be glad to see me burnt; but if I go through the fire I shall go through it to their hearts for ever and ever." (p.112) Consciously or not, with these words she anticipates her role as a martyr. At the end of this scene each of Joan's antagonists makes a commentary about her. We see that Joan differs from the people who surround her, and this disturbs them in ways that vary according to each character. When Bluebeard asks "what are you to do with such a character?"(p.112) he is exposing the difficulty that common people have in dealing (or simply living with) geniuses, saints, or heroes of any time and place. The Archbishop's commentary: "there is a dangerous power in her outbursts."(p.113) foreshadows the future events in the play for Joan is really betrayed and will be judged by the Inquisition.

What is interesting in the trial scene is the authorities' attitude towards Joan. Contrary to the other plays, in *Saint Joan* they strive for the girl's salvation and to avoid her death. In the preface to the play Shaw states that, considering the historical context, Joan had a fair trial. This idea is expressed by her judges before the trial starts. Cauchon will do whatever is possible so that Joan "shall have a fair hearing."(p.116) The Inquisitor corroborates the same idea: "Never there has been a fairer examination within my experience (...) The Maid needs no lawyers to take her part: she will be tried by her most faithful friends, all

ardently desirous to save her soul from perdition."(p.116) These commentaries demonstrate Shaw's attempt to portray complex characters avoiding to adopt a manichean view. The playwright allows the Inquisitor to deliver a long speech before Joan enters. In it he establishes the grounds on which the girl will be judged. He insists that the minor issues are left aside and the only charge that is to lay upon her is 'heresy'. Heresy is so feared because it, in the Inquisitor's words, may "wreck both Church and Empire if not ruthlessly stamped out in time."(p.121) He complements that the unity of these institutions is menaced by "vain and ignorant persons setting up their own judgment against the Church, and taking upon themselves to be the interpreters of God's will."(p.122) At the end of his speech the Inquisitor explains that his main duty is to repel any kind of heresy, even if it is painful. In it, once more, Shaw attempts to convey that Joan's counterparts do not behave in a tyrannical way:

> THE INQUISITOR (...) if you hate cruelty, remember that nothing is so cruel in its consequences as the toleration of heresy. (...)The heretic in the hands of the Holy Office is safe from violence, is assured a fair trial, and cannot suffer death, even when guilty, if repentance follows sin. (...) though the work I have to do may seem cruel to those who do not know how much more cruel it would be to leave it undone, I would go to the stake myself sooner than do it if I did not know its righteousness, its necessity, its essential mercy. I ask you to address yourself to this trial in that conviction. Anger is a bad counsellor: cast out anger. Pity is sometimes worse: cast out pity. But do not cast out mercy. Remember only that justice comes first.(p.123)

If we take this speech into account we are forced to agree with Shaw's idea about the 'comparative fairness of Joan's trial'. In his opinion, if she were to be judged today her charge would be the same of any of our contemporary fellows who "cross the line we have to draw, rightly or wrongly, between the tolerable and the intolerable."(p.27) But, although Shaw, more than Miller, avoided portraying the authorities which oppose his heroine as villains, it becomes

impossible to avoid the tension between them. Like Proctor, More, and Galileo, Joan was imprisoned. Shaw's text states that she was not tortured, but also that her "*long imprisonment and the strain of the examinations which have preceded the trial have left their mark on her.*"(p.125) Contrary to the other heroes analyzed in this work, she does not fathom the seriousness of this moment in court. In fact this is what Shaw considered the "tragic part of her trial". Joan was so obstinate with her ideals, so young and naive that she simply "did not know what they were accusing her of."(p.27) When she is brought before the court, contrary to the formalities, she is the first to ask questions about her conditions in prison: "Why do you leave me in the hands of the English? I should be in the hands of the Church. And why must I be chained by the feet to a log of wood? Are you afraid I will fly away?"(p.125) Through her way of talking we see that her vitality and lack of moderation in speaking did not abandon her. The authorities' answer to Joan's questions reminds us of the one repeated to Proctor and his friends when they attempted to question the court of Salem. D'Estivet harshly tells her: "Woman: it is not for you to question the court: it is for us to question you."(p.125) But Shaw's authorities are more flexible than Miller's or Bolt's, for, after this censure, Courcelles gives her some answers. He says she is chained because, when she wasn't, she tried to escape, a version which Joan openly confirms. They demand that she tell the truth, but her pert and insubordinate answers irritate the judges who mention she will be tortured in case she continues to be obdurate. Like Galileo, Joan has been shown the instruments of torture and cannot bare pain. She openly tells the court that she would say anything they wanted to stop the pain and would negate it afterwards. They decide not to torture her, but the tension increases, for Joan cannot accept to declare that her visions, voices and revelations were fake. The heart of the conflict is that Joan wants to be obedient to the Church, but not if it negates her personal contact with God. The Church wants to save her but cannot conceive

such reasoning because it considers itself the voice of God on Earth. In Shaw's words, Joan was

> in a state of invincible ignorance as to the Church's view; and the Church could not tolerate her pretensions without either waving its authority or giving her a place beside the Trinity during her lifetime and in her teens, which was unthinkable. Thus an irresistible force met an immovable obstacle, and developed the heat that consumed poor Joan. (p.28)

Actually there will be no need to torture her because, as Cauchon states, she has "said enough to burn ten heretics."(p.129) Joan finally realizes that she will burn if she does not submit to the authority of The Church and confess her heresy. At the same time she has to endure the most terrible situation: her voices, which said she was not going to be burnt, seem to have deceived her. In despair she confesses what the judges want her to: "Oh, it is true: it is true: my voices have deceived me. I have been mocked by devils: my faith is broken. I have dared and dared; but only a fool will walk into a fire".(p.134) As in *The Crucible* her recantation has to be written and she has to sign it. She makes her mark on it (she cannot write) after it is read to her. She does not complain and is decided but is "*tormented by the rebellion of her soul against her body.*"(p.136) It is only after this that she learns that she will not die but will not have her freedom either. She is condemned to "eat the bread of sorrow and drink the bread of affliction to the end of" her "earthly days in perpetual imprisonment."(p.137) Joan does not give it a second thought and promptly decides to die. Of course Shaw allows her to give her reasons for her last decision. Joan had so much energy, so much love for life, and more than that, for her freedom to live, that imprisonment was worse than death to her. As Shaw comments, Joan's "death was deliberately chosen as an alternative to life without liberty."(p.20) Whitman corroborates the same idea. He states that when Joan "discovers that the alternative to the fire is a life in prison, she knows that life

and vitality mean much more than bare survival, and she willingly chooses the stake".[25] Joan cannot understand the fact that The Church attempted to take the freedom and beauty of life from her. For this reason she states: "I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God."(p.138) Joan's presumption does not abandon her and her last words before her death show her awareness of her superiority. She states that it is God's will that she go to the fire because He wants her to go to His bosom. And this, she states, because "I am His child, and you are not fit that I should live among you."(p.138)

The people's reactions to Joan's death are immediate and foreshadow her influence upon the future generations. The Inquisitor calls her innocent because she was ignorant of the Law and of The Church. He mentions: "She did not understand a word we were saying. It is the ignorant who suffer."(p.140) Cauchon's conscience starts to bother him, and he considers whether they acted according to the law or not in Joan's trial and execution. But the character who suffers the most apparent change in behavior is the Chaplain. After watching Joan's execution he cannot control his tears, for he feels terribly guilty. The sight of the fire clings to his mind, and he is distressed: "O Christ, deliver me from this fire that is consuming me! (...) She is in Thy bosom; and I am in hell for evermore."(p.141) But through Ladvenu's words Joan's power is foregrounded. He states about her death: "This is not the end for her, but the beginning."(p.142) Besides that, from the Executioner we learn that her heart had not burnt. All these commentaries and reactions show that Joan's influence on people did not end in the stake. They also emphasize that, although the heroine dies at the end, *Saint Joan* is a play which focuses on the triumph of life. Whitman comments on this paradox about the issues of death and life in the play:

> In a literal historical sense, to be sure, the power of Warwick and Cauchon, of the status quo, of tradition, of human institutions, defeats Joan - as in the real world

> death always wins in the end. Yet the energy and vision and commitment of Joan's faith in life, gaining force from opposition, transcend death (...).[26]

Indeed, according to Whitman, it is because of death that her example of courage and daring continues to influence people. In other words, she is a martyr because her death strengthened the people who shared the same beliefs for which she died.

In the epilogue Shaw proves that her influence upon the people did not diminish with her death. The scene takes place twenty-five years after her burning. It is the year in which she was rehabilitated by The Church. Charles is shown, as he always wished to be, comfortably in his bed. Joan appears to him in a dream and they have a conversation. Through it, Joan is seen possessing the same characteristics as when she was alive. Her way of reasoning has not changed. It is not surprising then that in one of her speeches we find expressed the difference between her and the others: "my head was in the skies; and the glory of God was upon me; and man or woman, I should have bothered you as long as your noses were in the mud."(p.148) As always Joan does not measure her words and again she does not intend to hurt anybody. She cannot help being honest and does not even realize the others might see her as snobbish or over-confident. Through this conversation between Joan and the other characters who, one by one, appear in the scene, we get to know Joan's influence upon this period: Charles became more courageous and engaged in some battles; the sentence of heretic which condemned her was annulled and her judges were considered corrupted, and the English were gone from French soil. She also knows about her canonization in 1922. The news is brought from a gentleman from the future. Dunois's commentary points out the irony in the whole situation: "Half an hour to burn you, dear Saint: and four centuries to find the truth about you."(p.156) From this point on, the irony will come from the action

itself. All her counterparts, one by one, start to praise Joan for her deeds and influence. However, when Joan mentions she attempts to "rise from the dead and come back" to live among them again, she realizes she would burn again in case she could accomplish her desire. One by one, the characters exit, stating they are inapt to live with her. The gap that always existed between Joan and her contemporaries did not diminish after her death. Whitman comments that in the epilogue we realize that "the qualities that made her a saint survive the dissolution of her physical body, and each of her old antagonists or betrayers acknowledges his own inadequacy or incompleteness before the impulse embodied in Joan."[27] The play ends with Joan's question: "O God that madest this beautiful earth, when will it be ready to receive Thy saints?"(p.159) The answer, we know, is never. Peace is granted to the saint and the world, when he/she is dead. While he/she is living, peace is an impossible dream.

5.5 A Heroine in a World of Heroes.

Among the heroes analyzed in this work it is not possible to deny that Joan has an extra burden to carry. The simple fact that she is a woman complicates things for her. First of all, there is the prejudice against a woman who does not only want to, but decides to live as a soldier, and worse, among soldiers. It is not difficult to understand the amount of prejudice Joan was to suffer considering her historical context. Joan is shown to face it throughout the play. In the first scene, for instance, the steward tells his master that Joan is always either talking to the soldiers or praying. De Baudricourt's commentary about her (without even knowing her personally) illustrates his prejudice towards her: "Praying! Ha! You believe she prays, you idiot. I know the sort of girl that is always talking to soldiers."(p.52)

Joan wanted to and did dress as a soldier. She had to face the problems it generated because most of the people did not accept such option. Therefore, one

of the accusations that would lay on her was that her way of dressing was against nature. Joan gives a rational explanation for dressing as she does. We see that Joan is not a rebel for rebellion's sake. She does not want to offend anybody or to cause polemic. In her situation, it was only more rational to wear a soldier's armor. The authorities themselves could not help accepting that her way of reasoning made sense. During her trial, the Inquisitor shows his disapproval because she does not dress 'as become her sex'. She replies:

> JOAN. (...) what can be plainer commonsense? I was a soldier living among soldiers. I am a prisoner guarded by soldiers. If I were to dress as a woman they would think of me as a woman; and then what would become of me? If I dress as a soldier they think of me as a soldier, and I can live with them as I do with my brothers. (p.132)

Joan is a 'transformist'. She embodies the external signs and the behaviour which characterize a soldier in order to become one. Machiavelli states that civil and military life differ a lot. The way of dressing of each one is only one of the elements which distinguish them:

> one often notices that if a person plans to excel in military life, he not only immediately changes his way of dressing but also his habits, his customs, and his voice, thus setting himself apart from every civilian custom. For he cannot believe that he who seeks to be ready for any sort of violence can wear civilian clothes; nor can civilian habits and practices be followed by one who judges these practices to be effeminate and these customs to be useless to his profession; nor does it appear suitable to retain normal behavior and speech when he wishes to terrify other men with his beard and curses. [28]

Two points are worth considering in relation to Machiavelli's commentary. Firstly, it corroborates Joan's reasons to dress and to behave as she does. She is aware that she must be ready for any attack. Her armor is more practical and appropriate for her purposes, and her military behaviour helps her both to be feared by the enemy and respected by her troops. The passage also illustrates the prejudice attached to both military and civilian customs. Military life is supposed

to be endured by men. Civilian life undoubtedly bears a feminine connotation according to the text. In this sense, Joan's attitude was against all the patterns accepted by the society of her times. She wanted to be treated and act simply as a person and not as a woman. But daring and achievement are characteristic of the world of men. If a woman wants to enjoy them, she, at times, has to do it disguised, physically or mentally, as a man. That is what Joan did. Actually, Joan's attitude made her respected among the soldiers. In the first scene, for example, Poulengey tells Robert about the soldiers' behaviour towards Joan: "there hasnt been a word that has anything to do with her being a woman."(p.56) They treated her as a soldier or as a saint; not as a woman. La Hire was so overwhelmed by Joan's 'holiness' that he tells his friends that she "was not a soldier, but an angel dressed as a soldier."(p.64) But the main reaction to Joan's behavior was certainly astonishment. Before meeting Joan, the Archbishop did not like the idea of Charles receiving Joan as his personal saint. He tells the Dauphin:

> THE ARCHBISHOP: This creature is not saint. She is not even a respectable woman. She does not wear women's clothes. She is dressed like a soldier, and rides round the country with soldiers. Do you suppose such a person can be admitted to your Highness's court? (p.67)

When Joan arrives to talk to Charles, she appears dressed as a soldier and the ladies in the room laugh at her hair. This reaction does not seem to bother Joan because they mean nothing to her if compared to her higher goals.

The first time Joan talks more explicitly about her woman condition is in a conversation with Dunois which touches the topic of marriage:

> JOAN. [*matter-of-fact*] I will never take a husband. (...) I am a soldier: I do not want to be thought of as a woman. I will not dress as a woman. I do not care for the things women care for. They dream of lovers, and of money. I dream of leading a charge, and of placing the big guns. (p.83)

Shaw's Joan could not think otherwise. In the epilogue *laughing heartily* Joan tells Charles: "Ha ha! I was no beauty: I was a rough one: a regular soldier. I might almost as well have been a man. Pity I wasnt: I should not have bothered you so much then."(p.148) Her words reveal her awareness that being a woman made things more difficult to her and for the others too.

Shaw's plays at times portray intriguing female characters. He has a critical attitude of women in general. It is possible to notice that when he writes about the kind of women who attended the theaters and what they wanted to find in them. His female characters seem to be a kind of protest against women concerned only with beauty and charm and who generally are not interested in developing their intellectual skills or fighting for any cause. Shaw insists that Joan, and any women in history, must be faced without "sex partialities" and undressed of romanticism. A woman, according to him, must be regarded as "the female of the human species, and not as a different kind of animal with specific charms and specific imbecilities."(p.11) It is undeniable that Joan fits Shaw's propositions.

Commenting about the traditional role women are supposed to adopt, Carolyn Heilbrun mentions that "what has been forbidden to women is anger, together with the open admission of the desire for power and control over one's life (which inevitably means accepting some degree of power and control over other lives)."[29] We see that Joan did not accept the traditional female role. She fought as much as she could in the 'public arena' a place that is not considered fit for women even nowadays. But Shaw's Joan was not a feminist, at least not explicitly. She did not fight because of an individual goal or because she rebelled against her condition as a woman. Her fight was a patriotic and religious one. All her courage came from a metaphysical power, stronger and more important than her. Joan's behavior is not as original as it might seem. Patricia Spacks observes that many times when women dared to speak out publicly it was due to

a religious cause: "One must be called by God or Christ to service in spiritual causes higher than one's own poor self might envision, and authorized by spiritual call to an achievement and accomplishment in no other way excusable in a female self."[30] What allowed Joan to fight publicly was a spiritual call. She often made clear that she acted according to the voices she heard and not according to her own will, even though such spiritual call might, according to Spack, work as a disguise for women's inner desire for more freedom to expose thoughts in public. The archbishop's words to Joan seem to reveal exactly that. Irritated with her behavior, he tells her: "all the voices that come to you are the echoes of your own wilfulness."(p.110) As we can see in the play, if this is true, not even Joan was aware of that.

Anyway, the courage and skill to fight publicly is exactly what defines one's personality. According to Heilbrun, "woman's selfhood, the right to her own story, depends upon her 'ability to act in the public domain'."[31] The most difficult step towards selfhood is public power and control. Joan achieved in her times what many women today will never even dream of. Again, from this perspective, it is easy to understand why the clash between her and her times was unavoidable.

The opposite of freedom to fight publicly is enclosure which is always connected with safety. It leads to the other extreme: the destruction of personality. When women were forbidden anger, according to Heilbrun, they "could find no voice in which publicly to complain: they took refuge in depression or madness."[32] According to Heilbrun such 'safety' is not good for women because it deprives them of a more fully life experience:

> Safety and closure, which have always been held out to women as the ideals of female destiny, are not places of adventure, or experience, or life. Safety and closure (and enclosure) are, rather, the mirror of Lady of Shallot. They forbid life to be experienced directly. [33]

Joan amazed all her contemporaries. She simply refused this kind of safety. She demanded freedom, and she loved life. She was stronger, more courageous and more intelligent than the King. She taught the soldiers how to fight and led them to victory in many battles. In this way she frightened the others. According to Heilbrun, "women who acquire power are more likely to be criticized for it than are the men who have always had it."[34] In the Middle Ages, such conduct was generally attached to witchcraft. When a woman adopted a conduct which 'did not become her sex', she was very likely to be a witch and die as one, exactly as happened with Joan.

The over-confident way in which Joan talked to and about the people of her times is similar to the texts and prefaces Shaw wrote. The similarities between the author and his heroine are obvious both in terms of their thoughts and how they expressed them. Whitman comments that Shaw "saw himself, like Joan, locked in mortal combat with the vested interests and established institutions of his day, the State, the Church, and above all capitalist middle-class morality."[35] Shaw comments in the preface to *Saint Joan* that her death was due most of all because of her "unwomanly and insufferable presumption."(p.7) Joan saw things that her contemporaries did not see and did not comprehend. She made use of all her energy to bring them to the way she thought things should be. What she did not realize, however, is that her contemporaries did not wish the salvation and guidance she offered them. And this is a characteristic of the heroes and/or saints.

5.6 Miracles.

Similarly to *The Crucible*, in *Saint Joan* the supernatural is taken for granted. It explains strange situations and is evoked to solve difficult problems. But Shaw does not allow this aspect to be stronger than rationality. The play is built on this balance between reason and faith. A. R. Jones observes that in

Shaw's plays everything "is declared, open and above board, everything is capable of rational explanation and there is a reasonable solution to every problem." He also comments that in Shaw's works "life has few mysteries. Even religion is a matter of applied science."[36] These characteristics are foregrounded in *Saint Joan.* There is a rational or social explanation for the miracles in general and the ones which 'seem' to be performed by Joan.[37] What is very ironic is that such explanations are given by religious ministers. When everyone is curious about Joan's possible power of performing miracles, the Archbishop is calm and has a rational explanation to them. This attitude amazes the others and the religious man says: "You are not so accustomed to miracles as I am. It is part of my profession."(p.70) The situation becomes even more ironic when the Archbishop gives his definition of a miracle:

> THE ARCHBISHOP. A miracle, my friend, is an event which creates faith. That is the purpose and nature of miracles. They may seem very wonderful to the people who witness them, and very simple to those who perform them. That does not matter: if they confirm or create faith they are true miracles. (p.70)

La Trémouille, soldier and diplomat, is not completely convinced by this way of reasoning, specially because it comes from a man of the Church. He openly expresses his distrust and "*scratching his neck in his perplexity*" tells him: "Well, I suppose as you are an archbishop you must be right. It seems a bit fishy to me. But I am no churchman, and dont understand these matters."(p.70)

Among the four plays studied in this thesis, *Saint Joan* is the one in which the religious authorities are portrayed as closer to the common men. They seem more likely to receive criticism and the reaction to that criticism is not frightening as in the other plays. This attitude makes the Archbishop proceed with his reasoning to La Trémouille:

> THE ARCHBISHOP. (...) the Church has to rule men for the good of their souls as you have to rule them for the good of their bodies. To do that, the Church must do as you do: nourish their faith by poetry. (...) Parables are not lies because they describe events that have never happened. Miracles are not frauds because they are often - I do not say always - very simple contrivances by which the priest fortifies the faith of his flock. (...) if they feel the thrill of the supernatural, and forget their sinful clay in a sudden sense of the glory of God, it will be a miracle and a blessed one. (p.71)

This reasoning undermines the 'miracles' attributed to Joan. The play suggests they are 'contrivances', circumstances expected by people. When they come true, they are taken as miracles. Joan herself does not consider her deeds as miracles as Cauchon tells the Chaplain: "All these things that you call witchcraft are capable of natural explanation. The woman's miracles would not impose on a rabbit: she does not claim them as miracles herself."(p.92) Two conversations between Joan and other characters prove that Cauchon is right. In the first scene she tries to convince Robert de Baudricourt of her intentions because she has a divine orientation:

> JOAN. I hear voices telling me what to do. They come from God.
> ROBERT. They come from your imagination.
> JOAN. Of course. That is how the messages of God come to us. (p.59)

Also, Dunois mentioned to her that she seemed mad to him at first. But as she gave him sensible reasons for her strategies, he had to accept them. Joan's reply shows that saints also depend upon rationality: "I have to find reasons for you, because you do not believe my voices. But the voices came first; and I find the reasons after: whatever you may choose to believe."(p.103) The Archbishop believes that her voices are simply expressions of her inner desires, even if they are noble ones.

Miracles are also related to economic interests in the play. According to La Hire, Dunois was "tired of paying the priests to pray for a west wind."(p.69)

They are also believed to belong to the past as stated in De Baudricourt's words: "Miracles are all right, Polly. The only difficulty is that they dont happen nowadays."(p.56) The irony present in all these instances is another example of Shaw's wit and humor, characteristics which force the audience to judge the facts and get its own conclusions.

NOTES

[1] STYAN, J. L. The Dark Comedy. The Development of Modern Comic Tragedy. London: Cambridge University Press, 1974, p.124.

[2] *Ibid.*, p.128.

[3] *Apud* BROWN, John Russell & HARRIS, Bernard. (ed.) Contemporary Theater. London: Edward Arnold, 1978, p.59.

[4] *Ibid.*, p.60-61.

[5] *Apud* EVANS, T. F. Shaw-The Critical Heritage. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976, p.311-12.

[6] *Apud* BROWN, p.72.

[7] One of the Norwegian playwright's influence upon Shaw was in terms of the 'retrospective method' which promoted analysis and diagnosis. This is the method "by which the main action out of which the play arises is completed before the curtain goes up". (BROWN, p.60)

[8] Both Shaw and Miller stress the need of bringing 'new ideas' onto stage. Shaw emphasizes this concern by stating that this is what differentiates the great artist from the mediocre. Some speeches of Dr. Stockmann in Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* seem to come out of Shaw's mind. Dr. Stockmann says: "There's only one fundamental truth, in my opinion - and that is that Society cannot live a healthy life based on truths that become old and spineless."(p.227-8) Miller refused such relativism in relation to 'truth'. Shaw, on the other hand, preached it as the essence of genius. If Shaw attempted to write an adaptation of Ibsen's play, he certainly would not exclude the kind of reasoning implicit in these speeches as Miller did: "DR. STOCKMANN: (...) I'm thinking of the few - those rare spirits among us who have had the vision to recognize the truth in new ideas, new ways of thought - and have made those ways their own. These man are the vanguard - so far ahead that the solid majority can't begin to reach them; and there they fight for new-born truths - too new and too daring to be accepted by that sacred majority of yours. (...) I intend to revolt against the lie that truth belongs exclusively to the majority. And what are these truths the majority worships? They are truths so old and worn - they're practically decrepit. and when a truth reaches that age you can hardly tell it from a lie! (...) A normal, ordinary truth is good for, say, seventeen or eighteen - at most twenty years; seldom more. (...) These tired old truths are as rancid and moldy as last year's bacon; they're the cause of all that moral scurvy that plagues Society." (p.226-7)

[9] WHITMAN, Robert F. Shaw and the Play of Ideas. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977, p.27.

[10] SHAW, George Bernard. Three Plays for Puritans. London: Constable, 1952, p.xxxii.

[11] *Ibid.*, p.xxxii-iii.

[12] *Ibid.*, p.xxxv.

[13] *Apud* EVANS, p.13.

[14] *Apud* BROWN, p.75.

[15] *Ibid.*, p.71.

[16] WHITMAN, p.18.

[17] *Ibid.*, p.19.

[18] *Apud* BROWN, p.71.

[19] *Apud* EVANS, p.284.

[20] WHITMAN, p.18.

[21] *Apud* EVANS, p.296.

[22] John Passmore establishes a relationship between this practice of the Church and Ethics in Scientific research, an issue which is also very relevant in the analysis of *Life of Galileo*. In *Science and its critics* Passmore writes: "A Inquisição espanhola procurava evitar a responsabilidade direta pela execução dos hereges na fogueira, entregando-os ao poder secular; queimá-los ela própria, explicava com piedade, seria totalmente incoerente com seus princípios cristãos. Poucos de nós permitiríamos que a Inquisição limpasse assim tão facilmente o sangue de suas mãos; ela sabia muito bem o que iria acontecer. Da mesma forma, quando a aplicação tecnológica das descobertas científicas é clara e óbvia - como, por exemplo, quando um cientista trabalha com gases que atacam o sistema nervoso -, ele não pode propriamente alegar que 'nada tem a ver' com essas aplicações, sob o pretexto de que são os militares, e não os cientistas, que usam os gases para aleijar ou matar." (SAGAN, Carl. O Mundo Assombrado pelos Demônios. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996, p.278)

[23] MACHIAVELLI, Niccolò. O Príncipe. Rio de Janeiro: Tecnoprint.

[24] It is interesting that at the end of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, Dr. Stockmann discovers that the great man is the one who stands alone, for he watches everyone from whom he had once got support abandon him. Similarly to Joan he is abandoned by the ones he wished to save. Like the heroine he does not give up and clings to the truth he fights for.

[25] WHITMAN, p.271.

[26] *Ibid.*, p.285.

[27] *Ibid.*, p.272.

[28] MACHIAVELLI, Niccolò. The Art of War. London: Penguin, 1995, p.1.

[29] HEILBRUN, Carolyn G. Writing a Woman's Life. New York: Ballantine Books, 1989, p.13.

[30] *Ibid.*, p.23.

[31] *Ibid.*, p.17.

[32] *Ibid.*, p.15.

[33] *Ibid.*, p.20.

[34] *Ibid.*, p.16.

[35] WHITMAN, p.274.

[36] *Apud* BROWN, p.73.

[37] Simple facts related to Joan are taken as miracles. In the first scene the steward believes that De Baudricourt's hens are bewitched and they start laying eggs when Joan's requests are answered (it becomes her first 'miracle' in the play). Then, Foul Mouthed Frank is dead for swearing. Joan also finds out who the Dauphin is among his mates. The wind changes its direction after Joan's arrival. All her victories, coherent strategies and her persuasion contribute to turn Joan into a performer of miracles: a saint.

6. LIFE OF GALILEO

The business is, to make the Earth move
without a thousand inconveniences.
Galileo Galilei

6.1 The Playwright's Concept of the Theater.

When one mentions the German theater it becomes almost impossible not to think of Bertolt Brecht. His career as a playwright and a man of the theater brought upon great changes in terms of theatrical theory and performance which can be better understood if two definite moments of his life are taken into account: the one before and the one during his exile from Germany.

His first phase was marked by a deep desire for experimentation and innovation. Together with the director Piscator, he developed the idea of "epic theater". It was a special kind of drama which intended primarily to lead to a more critical response from the audience which was supposed to maintain an emotional distance from what was taking place on the stage.[1] This was the so called "didactic theater" advocated by Brecht. By eliciting this objective attitude from the audience, the theater would instruct and arouse criticism without neglecting the aspects of pleasure and delight.

In 1933, Brecht left Nazi Germany and lived in exile in other countries until he returned to East Berlin in 1948. During this period, his talent continued to produce masterpieces, and he maintained all his ideas concerning the epic theater. But this phase was marked by some modifications in his previous theories specially the concept of the "dialectical theater".[2] His idea of the dramatic action articulated as a dialectical process was to induce the audience to a more elaborate critical attitude.

Actually, his aims were never completely achieved for the audiences responded emotionally to his plays. Even so, his theoretical output remains one of the most important contributions to modern drama.

It was during this more mature phase that he wrote *Life of Galileo* (*Leben des Galilei*) which is his most rewritten play - three versions over a period of seventeen years. In each one of these versions the main character Galileo is portrayed differently by slight changes in his characterization. In the first version Galileo's cunning is more apparent, and consequently he is shown close to the dimension of a hero: his recantation allowed him to carry on his work and smuggle one copy of his *Discorsi* out of Italy. In the two last versions his cowardice and lack of scruple are brought to surface, and he can be considered a criminal, who has made science subservient to the authority of the Church.

This change in characterization is connected with the historical period Brecht lived when he wrote the play. The Second World War, and specially the advent of the atomic bomb led the playwright, as many of his contemporaries, to mistrust the role of Science. In his notes to the play, Brecht comments about the reasons for the different versions. His first aim when he wrote *Life of Galileo* was "to give an unvarnished picture of a new age".[3] Years later, he and Charles Laughton began to prepare an American version of the play. In Brecht's own words, the "'atomic' age made its debut at Hiroshima in the middle of our work."[4] It became impossible not to rethink the role of science, and in particular, of Brecht's main character. "Overnight", comments the playwright, "the biography of the founder of the new system of physics read differently. The infernal effect of the Great Bomb placed the conflict between Galileo and the authorities of his day in a new, sharper light."[5] It became necessary to alter some aspects of the play. Although the Americans won the war, Brecht could testify their own astonishment about the way it was won. In Brecht's words, this "was victory; but there was a bitter savour of defeat about it."[6] The atom bomb (and

its use for military purposes) was done in secrecy, a fact that infuriated the intellectuals of the time, for it proved that the "freedom of research, the exchange of information about discoveries, the international fellowship of scientists were clamped down on by officials who were deeply mistrusted."[7] The analogy and relationship between the present situation of the world and Galileo's could not be denied. With his recantation, Galileo was able to continue his studies leaving them to posterity. However, Galileo's decision left its negative marks upon the future generations. In Brecht's opinion "Galileo enriched astronomy and physics by simultaneously robbing these sciences of a greater part of their social importance."[8] The playwright compared Galileo's recantation to a kind of "'original sin' of modern natural sciences" because, after it, these sciences "never again regained their high position in society, neither did they ever again come into such close contact with people."[9] In this sense Galileo's attitude was criminal, for the atom bomb was, in Brecht's view, "the classical end-product of his contribution to science and his failure to society."[10]

For all this, Galileo loses the heroic dimension in Brecht's play. But he is not a villain, obviously. Nor is the Catholic Church. In the play the Church stands for Authority. This would help the audience to relate that situation to the present. In Brecht's words "as types the dignitaries of the Church should resemble our present-day bankers and senators"[11] and the action should focus on Galileo's attitude in relation to authority.

It is now more than half a century after the atom bomb was dropped on the two Japanese cities. Brecht's feelings and thoughts are not very different from most of mankind nowadays because we still view science both with hope and discredit. It can save and it can kill. In an article about the fifty years after the bomb entitled *O dia em que a ciência anunciou a fórmula do genocídio instantâneo* its authors comment that this event destroyed both the notion of freedom and the ideal of the scientist as a benefactor of society. Galileo Galilei is

considered the father of modern physics, the science which permitted the development of the atom bomb. The authors state that the final result of the atomic war is "um herdeiro maldito de Galileu."[12] One of the builders of the atom bomb, Robert Oppenheimer, wisely predicted: "Os físicos conhecerão a vergonha."[13] He was aware of his 'crime' but said he would do everything again if necessary. This attitude, the authors conclude, "rompe com a ilusão da neutralidade da ciência e assume as contradições em que os mais destacados gênios podem sucumbir."[14] The father and the sons of modern physics are examples of such contradictions. It is exactly this ambiguity concerning Galileo's character that Brecht attempts to portray in his play.

6.2 Historical Background.

Galileo Galilei is one of the most ambiguous figures in World History. His life as a scientist was marked by discoveries and research but at the same time by the menace they represented at the time. His investigations concerning astronomy proved, among other things, that the Earth was not the center of the Universe, but described an orbit around the sun. The Church did not accept his theories. When summoned by the Inquisition and threatened with torture and death, Galileo recanted his scientific discoveries.

It is important to know why Galileo's investigations were so feared by the Church. In many moments of Brecht's play the authorities state that they prefer to rely on Aristotle's theories than on Galileo's discoveries. Historically, this happens because the teachings of the Greek philosopher did not contradict the Church's interpretation of the Bible. The historian Theodore Rabb gives details about the tension between such 'old' and 'new' beliefs. According to Rabb, Galileo's discoveries and theories were feared because they were

> a threat to an entirely different assumption about the universe. For centuries theologians, reinforced by Aristotelian teachings, had claimed that the heavens were pure precisely because they were no subject to the change and decay that were visible on the vile and flawed Earth. The results of Galileo's observations challenged that assumption directly. The satellite moons that orbited Jupiter were just like the Earth's moon (...); the passing spots on the surface of the sun revealed change in the heavens; and, most devastating of all, the shifting areas of light and dark on the moon were caused, he said, by the moving shadows of mountains (...). Where was now the essential distinction between heaven and Earth? [15]

The central place of the Earth in the universe was very convenient to the Church. The Pope's authority would suffer if the discoveries were accepted as true. On the other hand it would be maintained if things were kept as they were and, specially, 'where' they were: the Earth in the center of the Universe, the Church in the center of the Earth and the Pope in the center of the Church.

6.3 The Play.

In his third version of the play, which is the one analyzed in this work, Brecht attempts to transform the famous scientist of history, the hero for his cunning in ludibriating the Inquisition, into a criminal. In the play Galileo states two main discoveries: the finding of some new stars and also the fact that the Earth is not center of the Universe. He can prove these discoveries scientifically. Even so, they are not accepted by the powerful authority of the Church because they are not convenient to it.

Galileo is the only one among the four main characters analyzed in this thesis who does not become a martyr; in other words, he does not die for what he believes. He recants his discoveries when he is shown the instruments of torture. The ambiguity concerning Galileo comes from this recantation. With this attitude Galileo can be viewed either as a hero or as a coward. He could use his cunning to proceed in his studies and leave more of his genius to posterity. Brecht, on the other hand, emphasizes that cowardice motivated Galileo's final choice. With his

gesture, the scientist made Science subservient not to its own moral and ethical values, but to the interests of another kind of authority which held power, in this case the Church.

6.4 The Hero.

Although his attitude in the moment of choice differentiates him from the other heroes analyzed in this work, that is, Proctor, More and Joan, Brecht's Galileo shares with them some heroic characteristics. Like them, he lives among people who do not share nor understand his geniality. Galileo is a man with his eyes directed towards the future. He hails Science as the bridge for a new age. And he, as a man of Science, is aware of his role in this process of transition. Like Joan, though, Galileo is naive in relation to the tension created between him and the people of his time.

The first scene of the play reveals Galileo's most important characteristics. Since his first sentence, Galileo makes known his main concern in life. He is in his study when his little pupil, Andrea, arrives with some milk. Galileo tells him: "Put the milk on the table, but don't shut any books."(p.3) His desire for knowledge will prove to be a passion for him. It is exactly this that blinds him to the others' lack of interest in it. Galileo is a 'sensualist'. He loves knowledge as much as food, wine or comfort. Knowledge, however, comes first to him. That's why he works and buys "expensive books instead of paying the milkman."(p.6) Galileo is eager for novelty. His new discoveries become his life. For him, the old ages are gone and a new one is beginning. Galileo is shown excited by his discoveries. His theories proving that the Earth is not the still center of the Universe make him enthusiastically foresee a new phase in World History and he delivers a long, inspiring speech to Andrea:

> GALILEO: (...) old times are gone, and this is a new age. (...) A rumor has sprung up on our old continent: that there are new continents. (...) Every day

> something new is being discovered. Even men a hundred years old let youngsters shout at their ears to tell them about the latest discoveries. (...) The old times are over and this is a new day. (p.4-5)

In his notes to the play, Brecht comments about the kind of feeling that invades Galileo. "Glorious", he says, "is the feeling of beginning, of pioneering; the fact of being a beginner inspires enthusiasm."[16] Galileo does not measure his words to expose his joy. He sees the desire for novelty in all the aspects of human life: "Our ships sail far out into the ocean, our planets revolve far out in the space, and even in chess nowadays the rooks range over many fields."(p.6) His concerns involving novelty can be observed even in little details like the chess movements. It is interesting that this detail is used also to illustrate the difficulty the people of his time have to apprehend novelties in the same speed as the scientist. Seven years later, for example, when he is invited to come to the house of Cardinal Bellarmine, while waiting in the vestibule, he notices the way two secretaries play chess. These are tense circumstances for him. His theories are either to be accepted or rejected by the cardinal. But his fascination with novelty is stronger, and he asks without any kind of hesitation, but with the authority of a master: "How can you go on playing chess the old way? Too confined. As it's played now the larger pieces can range over many fields. (...) You must go with the times."(p.48) The two secretaries do not seem to desire any change in their way of playing chess at the moment. His visit to Bellarmine's house is in 1616. It is only in 1633 that we see Galileo's pupils - Federzoni and The Little Monk - playing "the new chess with its sweeping movements."(p.81) Galileo does not seem to realize that it is he that is ahead of his times. He 'thinks' people are eager for novelty as much as he. Little by little he will acknowledge his mistake in believing so. His words in the beginning of the play will prove to be a poignant irony: "The people of our cities are always eager for novelty, they will be glad to hear that in our new astronomy the earth

moves too."(p.5) Like Joan, Galileo is happy to offer his society something it is not prepared or does not wish to receive.

Details like these prove again that Galileo was a man concerned with the future. As he did not fit in the patterns of his society and became an outstanding figure, he would more and more represent a menace to the established order. This, obviously, frightens the authorities, and the tension between them cannot be avoided. In this way, Galileo's attitude anticipates the main reason which makes him feared by the authorities: his new discoveries make him hail 'doubt' rather than 'dogma'. Talking to Andrea, he praises his new discoveries, which are result of his previous doubts, contrasting them with the "old-fashioned" concerns of his time, such as faith and superstition:

> GALILEO: (...) Cities are narrow, and so are minds. Superstition and plague. But now we say: Since things are thus and so, they will not remain thus and so. Because, my friend everything is in motion. (...) Because where faith had ruled for thousand years, doubt has now set in. (...) The most sacred truths are being looked into. Things that were never held in doubt are being doubted now. (p.4-5)

While the common man sees science as 'knowledge-holder', Galileo desmistifies this belief: "The aim of science is not to open the door to everlasting wisdom, but to set a limit to everlasting error."(p.64) Galileo praises doubt and places it as the center of the scientific method. This shift from faith to doubt is a characteristic of the Renaissance, the period in which Galileo lived. It was a period of transition from the medieval world to modernity, from a close symbolic system to an open symbolic system. Galileo shares this attitude towards doubt with his students:

> GALILEO: My aim is not to prove that I've been right, but to find out whether or not I have been. I say: Abandon hope, all ye who enter upon observation. (...) And if there's something we hope to find, we'll regard it with particular distrust when we do find it. (p.69)

Galileo is firmly convinced that, as Brecht comments, "a new age is dawning".[17] Because he is anxious to find out new truths, he assumes that the people of his time share his feelings and convictions. His fellows, in his opinion, were not used to doubt; they simply accepted what was told them, but now he believes that "a great desire has arisen to find the causes of all things".(p.5) Based on his own feeling, Galileo infers that the people of his time "are no longer satisfied with what it says in the ancient books."(p.5) All his assumptions, though, will prove to be too farfetched. He is a genius and for this reason his contemporaries do not think or behave in the same speed as he does.

By giving a new and privileged position to 'doubt', Galileo might be allowing a social revolution. When people start to doubt the 'place' and 'order' of things, they are very likely to want to change them. In this sense his new views pervert the medieval concept of the 'Great Chain of Being'.[18] According to this medieval theory, every being had its fixed position in a kind of hierarchy. The order of earthly beings was believed to be a reflection of the order of celestial beings in heaven. Michel Foucault comments on these schemes of reflections and similarities as a means to understand how the world was organized:

> Até o fim do século XVI, a semelhança desempenhou um papel construtor no saber da cultura ocidental. Foi ela que, em grande parte, conduziu a exegese e a interpretação dos textos: foi ela que organizou o jogo dos símbolos, permitiu o conhecimento das coisas visíveis e invisíveis, guiou a arte de representá-las. O mundo enrolava-se sobre si mesmo: a terra repetindo o céu, os rostos mirando-se nas estrelas e a erva envolvendo nas suas hastes os segredos que serviam o homem. [19]

Foucault is specific when he mentions the correspondence, which was taken for granted, between human beings and celestial bodies: "a simpatia faz comunicarem-se o corpo e o céu e transmite o movimento dos planetas às aventuras dos homens."[20] When Galileo questions "the eternal immutability of

the heavens"(p.43) by means of his discoveries, he is openly defying this accepted order. The fact that the Earth is not still and not at the center of the Universe makes everything moveable and inconstant, including man's social structures. This seems to level all men independently of their birth:

> GALILEO: (...) For two thousand years men believed that the sun and all the stars of heaven were circling around them. The pope, the cardinals, princes and scholars, the captains, merchants, fishwives and schoolchildren, all thought they were sitting motionless inside this crystal sphere. (p.4)

The motion of the planet involves the motion of the people who live in it: "the earth rolls merrily around the sun, and all the fishwives, merchants, princes and cardinals, and even the pope, roll with it."(p.6) This induces to a change in the established order and in the organization of the planet's inhabitants. Their fixed place is no longer secure or immovable. Galileo equates the lowest and the highest. All his discoveries and theories, according to him "stirred a breeze that lift even the gold-braided coats of princes and prelates, revealing stout or spindly legs, legs just the same as ours."(p.5) Galileo is right because freedom is mostly attained through knowledge. He truly believes that it will not take longer and "people will talk astronomy in the market place. Even the sons of fishwives will go to school."(p.5) Galileo will do whatever he can to find proofs, not only for the high classes of society, but "for everybody from Mrs. Sarti to the pope."(p.26) This 'democratization' of knowledge which Galileo's mostly wishes, and which he takes for granted, goes against everything the Church had always preached. Knowledge was the exclusive responsibility of the Church. It is easy to understand the fear caused by the revolutionary figure of Galileo in this context. This fear is well illustrated in the words of The Philosopher, one of Galileo's antagonists: "If we let them they'd smash the whole universe."(p.43) Galileo's discoveries did not have the power to smash the universe. They could,

however, smash the way in which the world was understood, and consequently, menace the interests of the authorities. Galileo's revolutionary attitude throughout the play, but specially in this scene, is a clear manifestation of Brecht's Marxist views. Brecht saw in the Marxist philosophy a weapon against fascism and all the social injustices it caused. In the same way Galileo sees his knowledge as a weapon to combat the misery which the authority of the Church attempts to maintain. Galileo sounds like Brecht's spokesman concerning the playwright's attempt to organize the popular resistance against authoritarian practices, as well as to reorganize the social and economical structures of society.

Thomas More believed that law would protect him. Joan trusted her voices. In the same way Galileo trusts Science. The reversal of all his expectations does not take long to happen. Mrs. Sarti, Galileo's servant and Andrea's mother, does not like the scientist to teach her son such "nonsense". She tells Galileo he should be ashamed to teach her boy all that "sinful stuff".(p.7) Galileo does not realize that the simple folk of his time are mainly concerned with everyday problems like, for example, how to pay the milkman. That is why it is so difficult for them to understand Galileo's passion for knowledge.

Galileo is a teacher of mathematics at the University of Padua. He does not like to teach because it leaves him no extra time for his studies. He had asked for a raise in his salary and the procurator of the university comes to his house to tell him it has been denied. Their conversation shows the clash provoked by their contrasting views. According to the procurator, Galileo's misfortune is his field of study. Mathematics is not praised, and its 'economical' value is not understood: "Mathematics doesn't pay."(p.10) Philosophy and theology are the hailed sciences at the time. The procurator reminds Galileo that in Padua he has "freedom of inquiry", and this introduces the most difficult obstacle the scientist will have to face: the Church. Astronomy and heresy walked side by side at the

time. Such freedom would be valued by Galileo since he was "working in a field where the doctrines of the church have not been held in due respect of late."(p.11) The peril of Galileo's position is made clear when they mention Giordano Bruno in their conversation. He was burnt by the Inquisition for professing the teachings of Copernicus, which are the same Galileo preaches. Galileo is told that he has to produce another "clever" invention to get some money. Galileo "is thirsty for more knowledge"(p.11) and this 'passion' leads him to accept such work conditions.

In order to increase his income, contrary to his will, he accepts another pupil, Ludovico. His new pupil's words illustrate the way people in general view science: "in science everything's the opposite of common sense."(p.9) Ludovico does not like this field, but as everybody is "eating and drinking science nowadays"(p.10) he feels the need to study it. Ludovico will be a useful character to show us another of Galileo's characteristics. Contrary to Thomas More, Galileo is not steadfast concerning his integrity. What matters to him is to proceed with his scientific research, and sometimes he makes use of dishonest means to achieve that. Ludovico tells Galileo about a gadget he saw in Holland: the telescope. In need of money, Galileo builds one attesting it was another of 'his' inventions. This illustrates that Galileo is not a bad person, but that he has no strong principles. He has an easy conscience which allows him to act without scruples.

Galileo's conversation with Andrea after the procurator's remarks shows that he is not completely unaware of the danger of his research. He starts to realize that it is risky to speak about his ideas:

> GALILEO: Don't mention our ideas to other people.
> ANDREA: Why not?
> GALILEO: Our rulers have forbidden it.
> ANDREA: But it is the truth.

GALILEO: Even so, they forbid it. (p.14)

But he still believes his discoveries are refused because he has not got sufficient proof to support them. The invention of the telescope, more than providing him some extra income, will be very useful for him in order to prove his theories. He shares his most recent discoveries with his friend Sagredo. They look at the moon through the telescope, deducing both the Earth and the moon are celestial bodies that receive light from the Sun. Sagredo is amazed with this new 'reality'. His observation illustrates the importance of what Galileo is doing: "But that contradicts all the astronomy of two thousand years."(p.19) The poetic way Galileo talks about this fact shows that his is aware of the importance of his discoveries: "This is the tenth of January, 1610. Humanity notes in its diary: Heaven abolished."(p.19) Galileo's excitement contrasts with his friend's fear. Galileo has no doubts that his theories will be accepted when he finds proof for them. Sagredo does not doubt the astronomer's discoveries, but he is aware that truth is not as strong as the authorities' interest. Galileo does not understand his friend's hesitation when they "discovered the truth."(p.23) Sagredo states that he is "trembling for fear the truth."(p.23) He knows that it does not matter if Galileo's investigations are true or not. The problem is that nobody will like to hear that "the earth is a planet and not the center of the universe".(p.23) Galileo dissociates his science of religion. This is not, however, the view of his contemporaries:

SAGREDO: (...) But where does that put God?
GALILEO: What do you mean?
SAGREDO: God! Where's God?
GALILEO: (*furious*) Not out there! (...)
SAGREDO: Where is God then?
GALILEO: Am I a theologian? I'm a mathematician.
SAGREDO: First of all you're a human being. And I ask you: Where is God in your world system?
GALILEO: Inside us or nowhere!

Galileo is a man with the eyes in the future, and this blinds him to the present. He cannot understand his immediate society. The problem is that Galileo's reasoning is considered as heretical as the Copernican system, for they oppose the "Ptolomaic system as advocated by the church and confirmed by the scriptures on which the church is grounded".(p.23) For years Galileo knew the Ptolomaic system was wrong, but he taught it because he had not proofs to deny it. Galileo truly believes that his proofs will make all "the difference in the world!"(p.23) As Thomas More asserted his belief in the law, Galileo asserts his belief in reason: "I believe in the gentle force of the reason, in the long run no one can resist it."(p.24) He is sure that even the simple folk cannot deny the truth when they are presented to it, because the "seduction of proof is too strong."(p.24) Galileo believes everybody else behaves and thinks according to his own patterns. As he praises and loves knowledge above anything, he takes for granted that thinking "is one of the greatest pleasures of human race."(p.24) Like More's, Galileo's words will turn out to be a bitter irony.

Galileo decides to move to Florence in hope he can have more free time to study. Sagredo did not like his friend's idea because Florence was ruled by monks, but the scientist is convinced that even "monks can be seduced by proofs."(p.27) Galileo's words confirm again that he is very naive. Sagredo is much cleverer when it comes to knowledge of human nature. He admonishes the scientist:

> SAGREDO: Galileo, you're in a dangerous path. It's bad luck when man sees the truth. A delusion when he believes in the rationality of human race. Who do we say walks with open eyes? The man who walks to perdition. How can the mighty leave a man at large who knows the truth, even if it's only about the remotest stars? Do you think the pope will hear your truth when you tell him he's wrong? No, he'll hear only one thing, that you said he's wrong.(p.27)

The common sense which Galileo lacks abounds in Sagredo's warnings. But we know that lovers lose their common sense. It is not different with Brecht's main character. The ironical reversal of his expectations is easy to be anticipated. Galileo does not give credit to Sagredo's words. They will, however, prove to be flawless. In Florence Galileo still has to teach at the University. After months of investigation, he is ready to show his 'new' stars to the Grand Duke, who is only nine years old. A philosopher, a mathematician, among other people, come with him. In order to please and to get support from the Florentine young duke, Galileo calls his new stars the "Medicenian Stars". He confesses he has no rooted principles to follow. He despises "men whose brains are incapable of filling their stomachs."(p.26) Since the beginning of the play it is easy to notice that Brecht mixes Galileo's cunning and his lack of scruples. Galileo's 'historical' and traditional role as a hero is little by little removed from him. In this way the audience is somewhat prepared for Galileo's last moments of decision.

Before allowing the visitors to look through the telescope Galileo is confident that they will understand the logic and simplicity of his propositions. He tells them that he will present them something different from the Ptolomaic's system which is very old and "seems to be in agreement with philosophy but unfortunately not with the facts."(p.31-2) Contrary to Galileo's expectations, however, his visitors will simply refuse to look at such stars through the telescope. This happens not because they do not believe Galileo's version, but because they 'do not wish' to believe it. Galileo proposes a drastic change in people's mind, and they are not prepared for it. Reason, hailed by Galileo as the solution for his problems, is simply left apart in their conversation to a level that it becomes comical, and, at times, almost absurd. The philosopher is right when he says that "it will be not so simple."(p.32) Actually Galileo will make use of all his efforts to convince them to confirm the truth simply by looking at it. The

philosopher asks the kind of question that is very characteristic of his field: "Can such planets exist?"(p.32) This question corroborates Sagredo's foresight that they would refuse to see the truth. Galileo is not interest in 'talking' about it. He does not want to deal with hypotheses any longer. He worked hard because he wanted support for his theories. He is a scientist and simply wants to demonstrate the results of his studies. He insists that they should see for themselves. Nevertheless, they persist on the debate: "Are such stars necessary?"(p.32) asks the philosopher. He also states that the universe as described by Aristotle is "an edifice of such order and beauty that we shall be well advised not to disturb its harmony."(p.33) Galileo firmly requests that they accept the facts and not theories: "Your Highness, would you care to observe those impossible and unnecessary stars through the telescope?"(p.33) This kind of reasoning sounds crazy if the circumstances and interests are not taken into account. The conversation reaches an absurd level exactly because Galileo does not consider these interests. Both sides are speaking from different standpoints. There is no common ground under their feet. This leads the mathematician to ask for Galileo's "reasons for supposing that there can be free-floating stars moving about in the highest sphere of the immutable heavens."(p.33) The little duke asks whether there is something wrong about 'his' stars. One of the ladies in his party answers: "Your Highness' stars are fine. The gentlemen are only wondering whether they really and truly exist."(p.34) All this incongruous kind of logic shows Brecht's attempts to expose how difficult it was for Galileo to live among the narrow-minded people of his time. Although the playwright attempts to turn the hero into a coward, he cannot help sympathizing with him in his conflict with his contemporaries.

The visitors do not want any proof, truth, or reasoning that could interfere with their convenient order of things. For this reason they simply refuse to consider Galileo's discoveries. They do not want to subvert the order of 'The

Great Chain of Being', in which people are supposed to have their proper and unchangeable place in the world. This explains their dealings with irrelevant and incoherent questions such as the "reasons" for the truth (p.33) or "where" the truth may lead (p.35). Galileo's objective behaviour, taken to be the quintessence of modern science, contrasts with the other scholars' who mix each and every concept of theirs with superstition. Galileo demands that his colleagues adopt an empirical behaviour, but it is waste of time. They leave Galileo's house without even touching the telescope, frustrating his expectations.

All these adversities do not diminish Galileo's devotion to science. He attaches himself to the belief that truth "is the child of time not authority."(p.35) He begins to understand that when "truth is too weak to defend itself, it has to attack."(p.27) However, the enthusiastic astronomer of the very beginning of the play comes to know that truth is not always convenient. According to the situation it becomes dangerous to be expressed. He understands that the authorities do not fear his discoveries themselves but their repercussion:

> GALILEO: It's not the motions of some remote stars that make Italy sit up and take notice, but the news that doctrines believed to be unshakeable are beginning to totter, and we all know that of these there are far too many. Gentlemen, we oughtn't be defending shaky doctrines.(p.36)

Again, he thinks he can convince the authorities by giving them proof, making them see with their own eyes. He does not realize that they do not want to change a reality that asserts their power. That is why they preach that they believe their eyes reading Aristotle - because the theories of the Greek philosopher did not contradict their dogmas and their interpretation of the Bible. Galileo is advised about such attitude by the procurator in the first scene. When he tries to convince Galileo to stay in Padua, the procurator mentions that in other universities "no one cares how the pebble falls, but only what Aristotle writes about it. The eyes have only one purpose: reading. What use are the new

laws of gravity when law of suavity is all that matters?"(p.13) Old books were more convincing and appropriate than observable facts.

Galileo is more encouraged when Clavius, chief astronomer of the Collegium Romanun, the research institute of the Vatican, examines and confirms his theories. Galileo could finally witness that "reason has prevailed!"(p.46) But the scientist's thrill of victory will not last long. There are stronger interests menaced by Galileo's views. These interests are well illustrated in a conversation between Galileo and The Little Monk. Although the monk agrees with Galileo's theories, he finally realized "how dangerous unrestricted inquiry can be to mankind"(p.55) and that truth is not always convenient. This leads him to give up astronomy. The Little Monk states that people need faith to survive. They need to believe in something transcendental to accept their miserable condition. Their belief that the Earth is in the center of the Universe grants them that they are central in God's attention. On the other hand, the church needs the 'order' these people are used to having, to control them. The monk is afraid of what might happen to these people if their faith is shaken. Doubt, hailed by Galileo, is the potential danger for the church. The monk defends the idea that when people no longer attribute divine explanations to their sufferings they will lose the sense of their lives. Galileo does not accept such view. The scientist is conscious of the Pope's motivations for refusing the heliocentric theory: "Why does he put the earth at the center of the universe? Because he wants the See of St. Peter in the center of the world! That's the crux of the matter."(p.57) In Galileo's way of thinking, the church, and science as well, should work to erase misery, and not to make it acceptable by attributing virtue to it. His excitement in reproaching the church's acceptance of people's misery is the speech of a hero. Again Brecht allows his character to reveal his heroic attributes. But he also exposes Galileo's flaws: "If I agreed to keep silent, my motives are rather sordid: an easy life, no persecution, and so on."(p.58) The

monk tries to convince Galileo to keep silent by saying that if something is true it does not need others' backing to prove it. Galileo reassures his responsibility for truth: "Truth prevails only when we make it prevail."(p.58) Galileo wishes that the "divine patience" of the people who accept misery would turn into "divine wrath". Galileo is aware that scientific research became a passion for him. He himself compares it to a sin: "What I know I must tell others. Like a lover, a drunkard, a traitor. It's a vice, I know, and it leads to ruin."(p.59) The Little Monk ends up becoming one of Galileo's pupils. Galileo, against his will, is finally forced to withdraw his investigations in the 'forbidden field'. He realizes that the "proof" he provided is not so strong as he thought, and he agrees to keep silent - for some time.

Although Galileo resents the idea of keeping silent, he is aware that it is what he must do. Galileo knows it is safer to move to other ground of research: 'Floating bodies'. Even Andrea teases him to proceed with his astronomic investigations. With his master's reputation, everybody wants to know his opinion about astronomic issues. Andrea urges him to break his silence. Galileo knows the reason of his reputation: "Rome allowed me to build a reputation because I've kept silent."(p.62) Galileo loves science, but he does not want to die. He feels encouraged to fight for his ideas again when a new Pope, Urban VIII, former Cardinal Barberini, ascends to the throne. He believes then that "things will start moving"(p.65) for the new Pope is a mathematician and Galileo's admirer. But the Pope also suffers pressures. He limits Galileo's researches and the Inquisition finally summons the astronomer for interrogation.

Like the other heroes analyzed in this work, this is the most important moment for Galileo. It is the moment of his moral choice. Galileo is imprisoned for twenty-three days and an answer from him is expected. His pupils and his daughter Virginia are waiting for an outcome. They learn that at five o'clock of the same day the "big bell of St Mark's will be rung and the wording of the

abjuration will be proclaimed publicly."(p.83) The pupils do not believe their master will recant. The Little Monk is sure that no "force can make what has been seen unseen."(p.83) Three minutes after five o'clock the bells had not yet been rung. The pupils realize Galileo resisted the pressure and did not recant. It is in their commentaries upon this belief that Brecht attempts to show the consequences of Galileo's not submitting his theories to the authority of the Church. The friends are *wildly happy*. Andrea is proud of his master: "Stupidity is defeated".(p.83) Federzoni celebrates: "Now the age of knowledge will begin in earnest. This is the hour of its birth."(p.83) He comments that if Galileo had recanted it "would have been as if morning had turned back to night."(p.84) The Little Monk thanks God for Galileo's decision. Andrea comments on the effects upon humanity of Galileo's resistance: "But now everything has changed. Man is lifting his head, tormented man, and saying: I can live. All this is accomplished when one man gets up and says No!"(p.84) The reversal is poignant and immediate. The bells start ringing and Galileo's abjurance is heard. After this recantation the stage is meaningfully left in darkness. When the light grows, the mood is completely different from the previous excitement. Andrea is disappointed with his teacher's attitude and says: "Unhappy the land that has no heroes."(p.84) Galileo, deeply distressed by the trial and imprisonment, comes and hears Andrea's words. Galileo's reply demonstrates another interpretation of the same circumstances: "No! Unhappy the land that needs a hero!"(p.85) These two statements question the role of the hero from different perspectives. People need a hero but few people wish or can be one.

"Not to know the truth is just stupid. To know the truth and call it lie is criminal."(p.60-1) These words are uttered twice in the play. The first time, Galileo uses them to reproach one of his previous students who denied the movement of the earth because of the pressure of the church. Galileo is angry at him and has no mercy accusing him of a 'crime'. The second time it is Andrea

who utters the same words when Galileo himself is found in the center of the church's pressure. Before Galileo recanted his doctrines, Andrea was sure he would not do it and quotes his master's words. He attaches himself to Galileo's teachings. Galileo would, in Andrea's reasoning, become a criminal if he denied the truth he found out. When Andrea listens to the abjurance he feels betrayed. He treats Galileo with the same lack of mercy with which Galileo treated that student. Although his pupils suffer with the idea of Galileo's probable death, their suffering is increased by his abjurance.

Galileo's recantation allowed him to keep his life, but he spent the rest of it as a prisoner of the Inquisition. Later, during this period, Andrea goes to Galileo's house to tell him he is traveling to Holland. Andrea does not show admiration for the old man. Galileo tells him that his 'ingrained' vice did not abandon him. He has finished his book *Discourses Concerning Two New Sciences: Mechanics and Local Motion,* but it is in the hands of the church. In secret, however, Galileo wrote a copy of it and wants Andrea to take it to Holland. Because of this fact Andrea's view in relation to Galileo's recantation changes. He realizes that cunning, and not cowardice, motivated his master's actions. By abjuring his discoveries he could continue his studies and leave his precious theories to mankind. However, Galileo's opinion about himself is very harsh. He refuses Andrea's view and tells him: "I taught you science and I denied the truth."(p.91) He is very critical of his attitude. He sees himself as a criminal because he recanted not for a noble cause but because he was afraid of physical pain when he saw the instruments of torture. He is aware of the virtues he lacked as a scientist: "the pursuit of science seems to call for special courage."(p.93) Brecht's didacticism is transparent in the last words of his hero/criminal. Galileo comments on the repercussion his attitude might have in the world of science and for humanity. He wonders how the world of science will judge his recantation:

> GALILEO: (...)The misery of the many is as old as the hills and is proclaimed in church and lecture hall to be as indestructible as the hills. Our new art of doubting delighted the common people. (...) can we turn our backs on the people and still remain scientists? (...) What are you scientists working for? To my mind, the only purpose of science is to lighten the toil of human existence. If scientists, browbeaten by selfish rulers, confine themselves to the accumulation of knowledge for the sake of knowledge, science will be crippled (...). The gulf between you and humanity may one day be so wide that the response to your exultation about some new achievement will be a universal outcry of horror. As a scientist I had the unique opportunity. In my time astronomy reached the market place. (...) For a few years I was as strong as the authorities. And yet I handed the powerful my knowledge to use, or not to use, or to misuse as served their purposes. (...) I have betrayed my calling. A man who does what I have done, cannot be tolerated in the ranks of science. (p.93-4)

Galileo knows that science is "involved in both battles"(p.94), the universal and the individual. Science for the sake of accumulation of knowledge is useless. It has to make people's life better. Galileo thinks that if he had held out, his example would make future scientists be more compromised with the good of mankind. He is aware that in moments of tension like his "one man's steadfastness might have had tremendous repercussions."(p.94) Through the words of his character, Brecht proposes that knowledge should serve, help and save, not destroy as it happened with the atomic energy which produced the atomic bomb, a kind of "outcry of horror" Galileo mentioned.

This last speech to Andrea contrasts with Galileo's initial excitement. In the very beginning of the play he exposes his theories to Andrea with enthusiasm. Galileo planted the seed of interest and love for science in Andrea. The scientist's great enthusiasm made Andrea praise reason, truth, investigation, doubt, and everything his master taught him. Now Galileo seems defeated by the circumstances. The truth that Galileo wished to spread in the open air in the beginning, now goes abroad hidden under Andrea's coat. In the notes to the play Brecht comments about Galileo's previous excitement in contrast with his

disappointment at the end: "Terrible is the disappointment when men discover, that they have fallen victims of an illusion, that the old is stronger than the new, that the 'facts' are against them and not for them, that their age - the new age - has not yet arrived."[21] If Galileo were not so enthusiastic about truth and his discoveries, his disillusionment would not be so deep. He fought with all his might but did not achieve victory. This makes him die everyday. The 'new' which pervaded Galileo's initial speeches was not so strong as he believed it to be. On the other hand, the 'old', which was supposed to be already buried, is now, in Brecht's words, "taking revenge" on him.

The last scene of the play shows Andrea at the Italian border. While waiting for his papers to be examined he reads the manuscript Galileo gave him. Some children are playing around. They are afraid of an old woman whom they suppose is a witch. In this way, everything frightens them because they attribute it to the supernatural, to the devil. After crossing the boarder, Andrea's words to the children sound like Galileo's. They have asked him whether someone can fly on a broomstick. Andrea reproaches them for their belief in superstition instead of facts, and gives them the answer:

> ANDREA: You must learn to use your eyes. (...) No one can fly through the air on a stick. Unless it has some sort of machine attached to it. Such machines don't exist yet. Maybe they never will because man is too heavy. But of course, we don't know. We don't know nearly enough (...). We've hardly begun. (p.98)

This situation illustrates the obscurantism of the time. It also shows rationality's restless effort to succeed over it. But, as Galileo wisely pointed out, it is man's responsibility to make truth prevail over superstition and misery. This ending shows that Galileo's teachings were fruitful. Brecht seems to have used this scene to relieve Galileo from his complete sense of guilt. His work after the recantation has produced fruits after all.

6.5 Science as a Candle in the Darkness.

Mrs. Sarti says something about Galileo's work which illustrates how the common folk were taught not to think for themselves: "If these discoveries amounted to anything, the reverend fathers would know it, wouldn't they?"(p.28) Frightened with the possibility of Galileo's returning to his 'heretical' researches Mrs. Sarti asks him: "You're not going back to those abominations, Mr. Galilei?"(p.66) She is worried because her son Andrea is Galileo's faithful disciple. Instead of being pleased because her son is a pupil of the famous scientist, she is worried: "I've watched my son fall into sin for the sake of these 'experiments' and 'theories' and 'observations,' and I haven't been able to do anything about it."(p.67) Now she is concerned about her own "eternal salvation" because in her way of thinking she stands "by a heretic"(p.67) because of Galileo's investigations.

Mrs. Sarti's fear illustrates the power of the church at the time. As it held knowledge, what was right or wrong, good or bad, was a question for the church to judge. It explains the dissatisfaction of the clergymen in 'sharing' knowledge with the astronomers and the common men. It also explains this fusion between religious and scientific issues. "Science is the legitimate and most beloved daughter of the church".(p.52) With these words Bellarmine asserts the church's control over science. What they want is Galileo's prestige and support to the church. In this way Galileo's researches are limited to the 'innocuous' fields.

Everything that was not known or understood was related to supernatural issues. The commentaries of the churchmen and of the common people about Galileo's propositions illustrate this. The telescope is called by another astronomer the "devil's tube."(p.44) Copernicus is considered a heretic because of his 'scientific' theories. Bellarmine confirms that the dogmas of the church cannot be changed by Galileo's discoveries: "We disapprove only of doctrines that put scripture in the wrong."(p.49) In their opinion there's no "reason to

question the eternal immutability of the heavens".(p.43) The authorities of the church accuse Galileo of contradicting the Bible. They consider this an offense to God. That is why they openly state that they "consider reason inadequate"(p.50) in matters of faith. What these authorities simply refuse to take into consideration is the possibility that they might be wrong in interpreting the Scriptures. Galileo tries to show this to them: "after all we can misinterpret not only the movements of the heavenly bodies, but the Bible as well."(p.51) With these words Galileo shows that he is humble in relation both to Science and to Religion. Galileo does not want to rebel against the church. Actually he considers himself a "faithful son of the church".(p.51) His favorite books, according to himself, are the Bible and Homer. However, he dislikes the religious dogmas which interfere in his researches. When Galileo is forced to talk about religion we see that his reasoning is that of a Protestant, for he finds himself able to interpret the Scriptures and ways of God without the mediation of the church. This view of religion obviously does not please the Catholic Church because "the interpretation of the Bible is the business of the Holy Church"(p.51) and not an individual's responsibility.

It is the fear of God that maintain people subservient to the church. The priests need God to maintain their control over people. This idea is stated by Barberini when he says: "If God did not exist, we should have to invent him."(p.52) This fear is not achieved through reason but through faith, exactly what Galileo questions.

6.6 The Hero as a Misfit.

Brecht worked carefully in the characterization of his Galileo. According to Styan the playwright "did not hesitate to manipulate historical fact to emphasize Galileo's social betrayal".[22] He was able to stress or diminish any motivation and give it his personal interpretation, according to his critical view of society, of the

world of his time. According to Brecht's concept of 'Didactic Theater', the stage has to instruct and arouse a critical attitude from the audience. This play was written "against the growing terror of atomic warfare".[23] That is why Galileo is shown not as the "idealized scholar and scientist of history"[24] but as a sensualist. For him, discoveries were the greatest sensual pleasure, almost an instinct. The Pope's words about Galileo illustrate that: "He gets pleasure out of more things than any man I ever met. Even his thinking is sensual. He can never say no to an old wine or a new idea."(p.80) The consequence of this attitude is a proof of Ludovico's warning to the scientist: "You'll always be a slave to your passions."(p.69) This passion makes him forget his scruples: he plagiarizes the invention of the telescope; he despises Medice but he calls the new stars he discovered the 'Medicenian Stars' because he needs his support; finally he recants his theories, as he himself admits, out of cowardice. His last speech shows that he admits being a coward whose work would not provide benefits for mankind but, in Esslin words, "whose cowardice has set the pattern for centuries to come. He has made Science the servant of authority rather than asserting its right to transform the world to the benefit of mankind."[25]

According to Esslin, Galileo is a criminal because he "has established the tradition of scientists subservient to the state."[25] It was this tradition that, according to Brecht, culminated in the production of the atomic bomb. This idea is somewhat foreshadowed in Galileo's last words in the play. He comments that if Science has no compromise with humanity but only with knowledge "the best we can hope is a generation of inventive dwarfs who can be hired for any purpose."(p.94)

Actually, Brecht was in "pain to transform the hero of history into a criminal"[27] but his didactic purpose was stronger. Esslin writes about Brecht's main character:

> Galilei is shown as a man who is right, one of the great heroes of the following five hundred years, who sweeps all obstacles, but then collapses and becomes a criminal. That is one of the great difficulties: to bring out the criminal element in the character of the hero. In spite of all, he is a hero - and in spite of all - he becomes a criminal ... [28]

Brecht openly exposes Galileo's flaw in relation to his moral choice. It is interesting, however, that Brecht, like Miller and Bolt, also had to endure his own moment of definition, his own a moral choice. While he was in exile in the United States, Brecht was another 'victim' of the witch-hunt of McCarthyism. In 1947 he was summoned by the Un-American Activities Committee and questioned about his relation with communism. His attitude during the hearings resembles Galileo's 'cunning' in ludibriating the Inquisition. What was certainly expected from Brecht in these circumstances can be summed up in Erwin Leiser's statement about the playwright: "É possível que um dia se admire a sua arte de sobreviver em dias tenebrosos sem trair seus princípios."[29] In this occasion, though, Brecht, like Galileo, really betrayed his principles and the expectation of his friends. The communist Brecht openly denied his involvement with the party both in Germany and in the United States. In Sérgio Augusto's words, the playwright:

> [n]ão se livrou da "caça às bruxas" . Nem havia como. Era tido como comunista e por mais de 13 anos foi vigiado pelo FBI. Ao contrário do que seus amigos esperavam, comunista (filiado ao partido, de fato não era), levou charutos para comprar a simpatia de seu principal interrogador e um intérprete para se escudar em erros de tradução.[30]

Brecht was able to escape the accusations but was deeply shaken. He left the country in the same night. It seems that Brecht demanded from his Galileo a courage, steadfastness, and faithfulness to his principles that the he himself was not able to show in moments of crisis.

But, although Galileo as portrayed by Brecht loses much of his dimension of a hero, it is not possible to ignore characteristics in his behaviour and speeches which give him heroic stature. He is fascinated with science because he views it as a redeemer of the people (from the poorest to the richest and from the most ignorant to the wisest). From this perspective Galileo fits Campbell's description of what he calls the 'artist-scientist hero'. According to Campbell such hero is

> that curiously disinterested, almost diabolic human phenomenon, beyond the normal bounds of social judgment, dedicated to the morals not of his time but of his art. He is the hero of the way of thought - singlehearted, courageous, and full of faith that the truth, when he finds it, shall makes us free. [31]

Galileo dedicates himself to his field of study with an amazing passion. His hope in the truth and in the freedom it will bring gives him strength to carry on his research and to overcome his obstacles. What he lacks, though, is courage to defend his truth up to the ultimate consequences. In other words, Brecht's play suggests that he should, as Proctor, More and Joan, bear torture and even death for his ideals. This is not, however, how Hook understands the heroic character. According to him

> o herói é um indivíduo que faz seu trabalho bem e traz uma contribuição original ao bem público. É puro preconceito acreditar que a grandeza e nobreza associadas à vida humana podem ser encontradas apenas em carreiras para as quais contam o sangue e o sofrimento humano.[32]

Taking Hook's view into account it is not possible to consider Galileo a criminal, but a hero. Actually, this was Brecht's main purpose: not to give us ready conclusions but to make us draw our own from the action of the play. Among the four heroes analyzed in this thesis, Galileo is the only one who does not become a martyr. Is it because he was not a real hero? Or is it because he is a hero who was not strong enough to battle against his own weaknesses? One

thing is certain. Brecht's attempt to transform him into a criminal, showing us his flaws and the consequences of his actions, makes us more sympathetic to him. At the same time that we become more critical of Galileo's character, we also become more aware of his human side. It seems that instead of distancing Galileo from the audience, Brecht made him more intimate to it. We might reproach some of Galileo's actions and we may feel sorry for him. But it is very difficult to ignore his heroic impulses and motivations. Is he a criminal or a hero? Brecht leaves the ambiguity on purpose. He has the characteristic of both in his personality. Maybe the main problem concerning Galileo is that he was a victim of his own geniality. This idea is well expressed in The Inquisitor's words about the scientist: "It's so easy to lose oneself in the universe which is so very immense if one happens to be a great man."(p.53) For the innovators the dimensions of the earth are not big enough because they, in The Inquisitor's words, "live on a very grand scale."(p.54) Only Galileo and a few more in his time could apprehend and accept the importance of his discoveries and study. This is the reason Ludovico tells the scientist: "Mr. Galilei, you have a marvelous brain. Too bad."(p.68) Galileo was much ahead of his times and had to be strong to bear the unavoidable clash. The basic difference between Galileo and the other heroes analyzed in this thesis is that, contrary to them, he valued life more than belief. He made a different choice and had to pay a price for it as the others had to pay for theirs.

NOTES

[1] In this way many alienation devices had to be observed: the actor was to maintain a certain emotional distance from the character he performed - many times addressing the audience (as in the Chinese Theater where the illusion of the forth wall is broken); the structure should be episodic as narrative and historicization was desirable; common and natural events were to be shown in such a way that the audience would find them strange - the idea of "de-familiarization"; realistic conventions of time and place were to be avoided in order not to make the audience feel empathy (the only emotion Brecht wanted to avoid) towards the characters, and also not to be involved by the illusion of reality maintained during the performance.

[2] Like Shaw, Brecht was influenced by Hegel's philosophy, which is one of the greatest influences for the development of the concept of 'dialectical theatre'. According to Brecht's own words, Hegel's thought "could not (...) conceive (...) order without disorder ... He denied that one equals one, not only because everything that exists is continually turning into something else, namely its opposite, but because generally nothing is identical to itself." (ESSLIN, Martin. Brecht, A Choice of Evils. London: Heinemann, 1977, p.148) This paradoxical view of things became for Brecht the essence of his art. Everything is ambiguous and is not what in fact it seems to be. Brecht was also acquainted with the principles of the Marxist dialectics which claimed that actions with the same meaning acquire different values according to the context or circumstances in which they are shown.

[3] The Author's Notes on 'The Life of Galileo', in BRECHT, Bertolt The life of Galileo. Trans. Desmond I. Vesey. London: Methuen, 1974, p.8.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*, p.9.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Ibid.*, p.9-10.

[9] *Ibid.*, p.10.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] *Ibid.*, p.14.

[12] CHIARETTI, Marco & DIEGUEZ, Flávio. O dia em que a ciência anunciou a fórmula do genocídio instantâneo. Superinteressante, nº 7, p. 56-67, julho de 1995, p.67.

[13] *Ibid.*, p.66.

[14] *Ibid.*, p.67.

[15] RABB, Theodore K. Renaissance Lives. Portraits of an Age. New York: Pantheon, 1993, p.164-5.

[16] BRECHT, p.5.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] The notion of 'The Great Chain of Being' is accounted for by several authors of the Renaissance in TYLLIARD, E. M. W. Shakespeare's History Plays. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969. The immovable place each being has in the Chain is mentioned by Sebonde in Natural Theology. He states that such order is "more pleasing than can be expressed." He continues his explanation of this "marvelous arrangement among material things" by saying that "some of these are higher, others lower and others in the middle."(TYLLIARD, p.23) The King's divine right to rule is inspired on its correspondence with God in the heavenly dimension. In the hierarchy of the Chain, man's position is close to deity, and, for this reason, he is supposed to assume a kind of transcendental purpose in his life on Earth. John Fortescue emphasizes the harmony through which all the things and beings are 'arranged' in the Chain. He says that there is not one single element "which the chain of this order binds not in most harmonious concord." (TYLLIARD, p.19-20) By this belief, it is a divine wish that each creature be in some way superior and inferior in relation to the others in the Chain. If one single element of this order is changed, all the structure of the Chain is disturbed. It is easy to understand the negative reaction to Galileo's propositions. By perverting such 'harmonious order', man would refuse to accept his place as rigid and unchanging. It becomes much more difficult to rule people who do not comply any longer with the order they are supposed to be part of.

[19] FOUCAULT, Michel. As Palavras e as Coisas. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1990, p.33.

[20] *Ibid.*, p.44.

[21] The Author's Notes on 'The Life of Galileo', in BRECHT, Bertolt The life of Galileo. Trans. Desmond I. Vesey. London: Methuen, 1974, p.6.

[22] STYAN, J. Modern Drama in Theory and Practice. London: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 155.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] ESSLIN, Martin. Brecht, A Choice of Evils. London: Heinemann, 1977, p.226.

[26] *Ibid.*, p.227.

[27] *Ibid.*, p.226.

[27] *Ibid.*

[29] LEISER, Erwin. O homem do 'não'. Apontamentos sobre Brecht e a política. Bad Godesberg: Inter Nationes, 1966, p.15.

[30] AUGUSTO, Sérgio. O pobre Bertolt Brecht no mercado de mentiras. Folha de São Paulo. 2 de julho de 1995, p.7.

[31] CAMPBELL, Joseph. The Hero with a Thousand Faces. New York: Princeton, 1973, p.24.

[32] HOOK, Sidney. O Herói na História. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1962. p.198.

7. LANGUAGE

Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Proverbs 18:21

Patricia Waugh states that "through language it is possible to create environments radically different from those supported by political and social systems."[1] From this perspective it is possible to accomplish the power which can be exerted through language, specially in the political sphere. This power can be observed in the four plays analyzed in this thesis. All of the plays denounce authoritarianism, a form of ruling which makes use of all kinds of devices to erase opposition. The role of language, as conveyed in the plays, is either to enforce power or to deny it. The cohersive use of language aims at eliminating opposition or difference. In this way, language becomes a very useful instrument manipulated to legitimize the status quo. In this chapter three ways in which the manipulation of facts through language is done in the plays will be discussed. The first one concerns the obligation of a confession by the heroes, which, even if it is known to be false, will fulfill the purpose of consolidating authoritarianism. The second is the use of fallacious argumentation by the authorities to achieve their aims. Finally, in all the plays we can notice the importance of and the fear caused by the 'published' or 'written' works such as books, letters, as well as the confessions which must be written and signed.

The purpose of this chapter is to point out these characteristics of language as they are conveyed in the four plays, analyzing the tension they create between the heroes and their antagonists. It is important to stress that the hero's resistance to this cohersive manipulation of language is socially relevant. He fights for the truth while everybody else can be easily convinced by lies. In this way, once more, he offers moral guidance to his people.

7.1 The Obligation of the Heroes' Confession.

Na mesma cova, as palavras,
o secreto pensamento,
as coroas e os machados,
mentira e a verdade estão.
Cecília Meireles

In all the plays the heroes had the obligation to confess something. What is curious is that their confession became necessary even if it was not true. It seemed that the utterance of a combination of words was able to materialize a desired reality. Damian Grant and John Austin discuss this intriguing kind of relationship between language and reality. Both authors stress the need to understand the ideas of reality and truth, before analyzing its relationship with language.

In his book *Realism* Damian Grant affirms that many answers have been given and different approaches have been used in order to define 'truth'. Grant's study focus on two approaches which are at the same time contrasting and complementary. In his literary studies he noticed that the works could, in general terms, be classified into two large groups considering their treatment of language. The first group corresponds to one kind of theory defined as *Correspondence Theory.* According to this perspective, truth is seen as a scientific object. We have access to it by means of knowledge. Through an empirical process we get to know the facts, the 'truth' that surrounds us. It is also called *Semantic Theory.* The second group corresponds to the *Coherence Theory.* According to it, truth is not seen from a scientific perspective but from a poetic one. Truth is not discovered but built by linguistic discourse. This is also called the *Syntactical Theory.* Grant states that this is a more sophisticated theory because it:

> sees language not simply as an image of reality but as an instrument in which reality is realized - made real, carrying within its own declarative structure the material of truth. Truth and falsehood become properties of language alone, to which Reality - that impossible hypothesis - is both indifferent and irrelevant.[2]

The fact that language carries within itself the material of truth and falsehood makes us think of language as an instrument of building, not only carrying, meanings. The coherence theory does not question the phenomenon itself, but our perception of it by means of language.

In his book *Philosophical Papers* Austin mentions his concerns with truth. He shows the difficulty in defining ideas such as freedom and truth. "Like freedom", he states, ""truth is a bare minimum or an illusory ideal...."[3] Actually the relationship between language and truth is not simple at all. Austin comments:

> It is essential to realize that 'true' and 'false', like 'free' and 'unfree', do not stand for anything simple at all; but only for a general dimension of being a right or proper thing to say as opposed to a wrong thing, in these circumstances, to this audience, for these purposes and with these intentions. (...) ... the question can arise (...) not in the sense of whether it was opportune or expedient, but whether (...) it was the proper thing to say.(...) The truth or falsity of a statement depends not merely on the meanings of words but on what act you were performing in what circumstances. [4]

Steinmann also states that the truth of an argument might be ignored according to the circumstances. He quotes one of Shaw's characters to demonstrate that. In *Major Barbara* Aldophus Cusins is advised by Lady Britomart: "You ought to know better than to go about saying that wrong things are true. What does it matter whether they are true if they are wrong?"[5] Such reasoning leads us to Austin's theory of the 'performative utterance'. The philosopher defines it as "a kind of utterance which looks like a statement and grammatically, I suppose, would be classed as a statement, which is not nonsensical, and yet is not true or false."[6]

The heroes' adversities in the plays are examples of this complex relationship between language and facts. Many times, the words the characters utter do not correspond to facts but are suitable at the moment. In the same way, the confessions the heroes have to utter are not true, but they can save their lives and produce effects on people which are desirable for the authorities. This discussion about truth is relevant in the analysis of the plays because it is a vital subject to the heroes. Proctor's conscience was in doubt about 'giving a lie to dogs' and save his life. Thomas More had no doubts about this. As the court demanded him to swear the oath he firmly stated: "Is it my place to say 'good' to the State's sickness? Can I help my King by giving him lies when he asks for truth? Will you help England by populating it with liars?"(p.89) His statement also shows his reasons to act as he does. He loves his society and his own life. By giving them this lie he would be betraying both. Galileo sees that the abjurance of his theories is a betrayal to the simple folk. He tells The Little Monk who tries to convince him to stop his investigations: "You want me to lie to your people?"(p.57) With this question Galileo demonstrates that he feels the need to open the others' eyes, to show them the truth that will grant them a better life.

By the end of *Saint Joan*, the heroine reveals that she is as naive as Galileo in relation to what she considers the 'truth'. Both think it will protect them while, in fact, it becomes the potential menace to their lives. When the Archbishop exposes the danger her behavior might bring upon her, she tells him: "They could not burn a woman for speaking the truth."(p.110) Although Joan's words anticipate what will happen, at this point Joan simply cannot conceive such a thought. Her 'truth', indeed, leads her to be considered a witch and to die for it. But she shares another characteristic with Galileo: she is also an idealist in relation to the 'truth'. Both in Brecht's and in Shaw's play, 'truth' is not viewed as something absolute. It depends on the perspective and interests of each side.

This kind of relativism is revealed in this conversation between Joan and her counterparts. Dunois states that the truth is that she has to obey the counsels of the Church and of the Army and not her voices. Her reply reveals that, although truth can be manipulated, she fells responsible to defend it: "Where would you all have been now if I had heeded that sort of truth?"(p.112) By the end of the play Joan becomes more cautious. When the authorities demand that she tell them the truth she replies that she "cannot tell the whole truth: God does not allow the whole truth to be told."(p.126) She is very smart, and although until now she has not believed she will die, she states: "It is an old saying that he who tells too much truth is sure to be hanged."(p.126) In fact this 'old saying' foreshadows Joan's fate, for at the end, she will tell 'her' truth to them and die for it. But Joan's final decision to die is motivated not because she is deprived of her truth but of her freedom. These examples show that, in the plays, truth is not seen (or desired) as something which simply mirrors reality, but as something which is convenient according to the circumstances.

Truth is generally viewed as something corresponding to facts. However, Austin proposes that many times the sentences we utter are not said with this purpose. According to the author, when we utter a sentence without the intention of having it correspond to facts we are making use of a performative utterance. Austin argues that it "is simply not the business of such utterances to 'correspond to facts'".[7] The effects of these kinds of utterances are very relevant in this thesis. According to Austin if "a person makes an utterance of this sort we should say that he is doing something rather than merely saying something."[8] The example Austin gives, although it differs a lot in terms of content in relation to the confessions of the heroes, shares with them the same purpose: "when I say 'I do' (sc. take this woman to be my lawful wedded wife), I am not reporting on a marriage, I am indulging in it."[9] In the same way it is possible to affirm that in case the heroes confessed their fault, or took their oath, they would not only be

saying it but indulging in it. That is why Galileo feels and talks as if he were a criminal after his recantation. In saying something, the heroes are doing something. In the preface of his play Bolt also uses the example of marriage to comment on the importance of a vow. The promise made in an oath or in a marriage is more than a simply utterance of words. Something is invested in the act of swearing such vows. This is why More's antagonist wants a "declaration of his loyalty to the present administration."(p.57) The guarantee of this declaration would be More himself.

In *How to do things with words*, Austin explains the function of the 'perlocutionary acts', which is exactly this: "what we bring about or achieve *by* saying something".[10] In other words, it is the case when "*by* saying something we do something."[11] The effect of words are more important than their meaning, their correspondence to fact:

> Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of the other persons: and it may be done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them (...).[12]

In *The Crucible*, for example, Tituba, Abigail and the girls, among others, have confessed that they have dealt with witchcraft. For those who confessed, the words they said meant that, through them, they were able to save their lives. For the authorities the confessions had the purpose of legitimizing their power in the public eye. Their words did not intend to correspond to facts but to achieve certain purposes. Their first concern was not the meaning of the words but what the simple act of uttering them would get for them. Once the rules of the 'game' were set, the accused started to behave according to them. They needed to learn them fast in order to save their skins by saying what the accusers wanted to hear. And it is exactly in this moment of confession that the difference between the characters is foregrounded. Some of them will simply confess for their lives'

sake. Their lives seem to be of more importance than the meaning of the words they say. Others, for one reason or another, will struggle not to confess and will die instead of confessing something they have not done. They seem to know the weight of the words.

The absurdity of this aspect in the play becomes evident when Hale himself finds out that the words have the only purpose of saving people's lives and not proving that they dealt with witchcraft. The purpose of the words, rather than their meaning is stressed. Hale pleads that the accused confess to save their lives. He is aware the confessions are lies, but he wants to avoid the deaths of innocent people. Reverend Parris is anxious for the confessions. It does not matter for him if these people are innocent or not, but that through their confessions the legitimacy of the court's decisions be granted:

> PARRIS: Now Mr Hale 's returned, there is hope, I think - for if he bring even one of these to God, that confession surely damns the others in the public eye, and none may doubt more that they are all linked to Hell. This way unconfessed and claming innocence, doubts are multiplied, many honest people will weep for them, and our good purpose is lost in their tears.(p.112)

The authorities praise God when people confess their 'black allegiance'. Proctor's supposed allegiance with the devil is not a thing to be glad for, but when he confesses they celebrate this as if he were a saint. His words are more important for what they can cause, for their impact upon the people of the village, than for what they really mean. His confession will confirm the authority, wisdom and righteousness of the court. His death would prove the opposite; that is why it was so dangerous.

In *A Man for All Seasons,* when More is told about the oath, he wants to know about its wording. Ropers' answer reveals the power of language that goes beyond words.

> ROPER: We don't need to know the (...) wording - we know what it will mean!
> MORE: It will mean what the words say! An oath is made of words! It may be possible to take it. Or avoid it. (p.72)

Thomas More is aware of the commitment he is to make by simply uttering the words of the oath. It is possible to notice this in a dialogue with his daughter. Margaret does not want her father to die, so she proposes that he could simply utter the words of the oath without believing in them:

> MARGARET: "God more regards the thoughts of the heart than the words of the mouth." (...) Then say the words of the oath and in your heart think otherwise.
> MORE: What is an oath then but words we say to God? (...) When a man takes an oath, Meg, he's holding his own self in his hands. Like water. (...) And if he opens his fingers *then* - he needn't hope to find himself again. (p.81)

Although Thomas More wants to save his life he does not follow his family's advice to swear the oath without believing in it because he understands that, 'his word is his bond'. One example given by Austin illustrates Margaret's request to his father: "There is the case of Euripides' Hippolytus, who said 'My tongue swore to, but my heart did not'- perhaps it should be 'mind' or 'spirit' rather than 'heart', but at any rate some kind of backstage artiste."[13] Austin states that it is possible for someone to utter something without its correspondence to fact, intention or belief. This kind of conduct, however, reveals a weak and immoral personality:

> 'I promise that I shall be there, but I haven't the least intention of being there'. Once again you can of course perfectly well promise to be there without having the least intention of being there, but there is something outrageous about saying it, about actually avowing the insincerity of the promise you give. [14]

Robert Bolt emphasizes the same idea when he mentions the importance of an oath : "There is a special shrug for a perjurer; we feel that the man has no self

to commit, no guarantee to offer."(p.xii). For his main character perjury has other consequences: it is a crime and damnation of the soul. It is exactly this attitude of More which attracted Bolt. The playwright was intrigued by the reasons that led a man with so much passion for life to give it in. His question is mine too, 'Isn't life worth a lie?' This is the same problem that afflicted Proctor: 'Why was it so difficult to give a lie to dogs?' And it is worth reminding ourselves that Proctor was not so steadfast as More. Bolt's focus was not in More's beliefs, but in his attitude. Not being a Catholic and not a Christian "in the meaningful sense of the word" Bolt questions himself: "by what right do I appropriate a Christian saint to my purposes?"(p.xii) Bolt then inverts the order of the question: "why do I take as my hero a man who brings about his own death because he can't put his hand on an old black book and tell an ordinary lie?"(p.xii) The playwright is aware of Thomas More's reasons for doing so. It is only possible to understand it if we consider what an oath consists in, or what it implies. An oath is a commitment, and life is the guarantee of the statement. "A man takes an oath", Bolt states, "only when he wants to commit himself quite exceptionally to the statement, when he wants to make an identity between the truth of it and his own virtue; he offers himself as a guarantee. And it works."(p.xii) Besides his own sense of self, Thomas More had transcendental beliefs, his religiosity. The commitment involved in an oath is related both to his own self and to God, because it was "an invitation to God, an invitation God would not refuse, to act as a witness, and to judge; the consequence of perjury was damnation".(p.xii) Bolt exposes his view about the relationship between words and the reality they might bring to existence: "It may be that a clear sense of the self can *only* crystallize round something transcendental"(p.xiii) This makes it easier to understand why someone commits himself to something irrational.

One of More's questions to his antagonists illustrates the main problem that afflicts Galileo in Brecht's play: "Some men think the Earth is round, others think it flat; it is a matter capable of question. But if it is flat, will the King's command make it round? And if it is round, will the King's command flatten it?"(p.77) With this proposition More states the idea that against facts there are no arguments. This is the same view held and defended by Galileo in Brecht's play. What the scientist and More did not expect is that the authorities of their time did not wish to change a world view convenient for them. As they could not change the facts themselves they changed them through discourse. If the authorities of the church (and even Galileo when he is forced to deny publicly his discoveries), state that the Earth is the center of the universe, this is their truth and this becomes their reality. If we consider the world of facts, it is clear that words cannot change things. If the Earth is round it will change nothing if I say it is flat. But in terms of discourse, words might change many things, specially according to whom states them. If the Earth is round but someone with authority enough and influence upon people states it is flat, the interpretation of the world is shaped by those words. In this last sense, according to the interests involved, words build or shape the interpretation and the perception of the world.

In *Saint Joan* the young girl's irony about her confession illustrates the idea of 'performative' acts described by Austin. Her recantation is read aloud before she signs it. The Inquisitor asks Joan if such charges are true and she answers: "It may be true. If it were not true, the fire would not be ready for me in the market-place."(p.136) Austin discusses the relationship between truth and falsity in language and, more specifically, in statements:

> the more you think about truth and falsity the more you find that very few statements that we ever utter are just true or just false. Usually there is the question are they fair or are they not fair, are they adequate or not adequate, are they exaggerated or not exaggerated? Are they too rough, or are they perfectly precise, accurate, and so on? 'True' and 'false' are just general labels for a whole

> dimension of different appraisals which have something or other to do with the relation between what we say and the facts. If, then, we loosen up our ideas of truth and falsity we shall see that statements, when assessed in relation to the facts, are not so very different after all from pieces of advice, warnings, verdicts, and so on.[15]

For Joan her confession is not to be true or false, but appropriate in her circumstances.

It is necessary to point out that for a performative act to 'work', to be valid and satisfactory, some rules have to be obeyed. If any of these rules is not observed the performative act would not work; in Austin's words it would be an 'infelicity'. First of all the convention which is invoked must exist and be accepted. The circumstances and objects must be appropriate and the person who is in charge of such procedures must have the authority to do so. A marriage, for example, can only be legitimated by a judge and/or a priest in special circumstances. In the same way, if a man wants to divorce his wife, it would be no use if he simply said to her: 'I divorce you.' Even if he wants to commit himself to the words he uttered, the circumstances and place, and even the person who spoke them, are not appropriate. The act simply cannot be consolidated, performed in this way. In the case of the plays, this rule is obeyed concerning the heroes' confession. All the community shares the same beliefs and the convention is accepted by all. The circumstances and people involved in the occasion corroborate the legitimacy of the confession. A kind of ritual is prepared and their confession becomes a performance in which the audience is necessary. There would not be the legitimization otherwise. If More, for example, read the words of the oath in his bedroom and nobody heard him, the oath would not have validity to the community. The same happens with the other heroes. All of them were supposed to confess in appropriate places and circumstances with appropriate judges. In *Life of Galileo*, the scientist's

abjurance had even a specific time set. The bells of the Church rang before his abjurance which was read aloud for all the people to hear it.

Another rule mentioned by Austin is very relevant in the analysis of the plays. The author mentions that most of the linguistic or verbal procedures "are designed for use by people who hold certain beliefs or have certain feelings or intentions."[16] When people, in Austin's words "use one of these formulae when [they] do not have the requisite thoughts or feelings or intentions then there is an abuse of the procedure, there is insincerity."[17] Insincerity disavows the verbal act because there is not a commitment between the words spoken and the speaker. The performative utterance is not valid if it "commits the speaker to future conduct of a certain description and then in the future he does not in fact behave in the expected way."[18] That is why it is so difficult for the heroes to confess something which is not true. At the same time the common people, the ones without scruples or rooted beliefs, do not hesitate much when they have to confess the same thing to save their lives. In Galileo's case, he had to pay a price for his choice. His beliefs did not correspond to the words he uttered in his confession. His life became almost unbearable for him, for he wanted to continue his researches and prove his truth but he was forbidden.

Finally, an important rule to be respected for the performative utterances to be valid is that we should not utter them when "we may be doing so under duress or in some other circumstances which make us not entirely responsible for doing what we are doing."[19] All of the heroes in the plays were either tortured or threatened with torture to confess. This would make their confession not valid. Even so it gained power and granted power to the authorities.

7.2 Fallacious Argumentation.

> *O raciocínio é um argumento em que, estabelecidas certas coisas, outras coisas diferentes se deduzem necessariamente das primeiras.*
>
> *Aristóteles - Lógica*

The use of fallacious argumentation is another means through which the characters, in special the authorities, manipulate the facts to defend their interests. But what is a fallacious argument? Before answering this question it is important to know what 'good' arguments consist in. According to Steinmann an argument "is a series of statements consisting of (1) one or more premises and (2) a conclusion. The premises are given as reasons for accepting the conclusion, and the conclusion is drawn from the premises."[20] For a conclusion to be accepted the argument must be valid and its validity depends on whether it follows a "valid rule of inference." Besides that, for a conclusion to be accepted, it is also necessary that "the premises of the arguments are true."[21] Steinmann defines fallacy in argumentation as "an invalid rule of inference. To an argument that follows it, it guarantees nothing and permits everything."[22] Irving Copi in his *Introduction to Logic* gives his definition of fallacy:

> No estudo da lógica é costume reservar o nome de "falácia" àqueles argumentos ou raciocínios que, embora incorretos, podem ser psicologicamente persuasivos. Portanto, definimos falácia como uma forma de raciocínio que parece correta, mas que, quando examinada cuidadosamente, não o é. [23]

Many of these fallacies can be observed in the plays. It is important to recognize them because fallacious arguments are most of the times very convincing and seem valid at first. The fallacies can be didactically classified to make their study and identification easier.

In *The Crucible* it is possible to affirm that the whole tragedy had its roots in a fallacious kind of reasoning. As it was stated, a conclusion to be true must be drawn from true premises. In Miller's play, the main problem is that the authorities, and the people in general, act based on premises that are only hypothetical. However, they take them for granted. Danforth exposes their way of reasoning which is the heart of all the tragic events which took place in Salem:

> DANFORTH: (...) In ordinary crime, how does one defend the accused? One calls up witnesses to prove his innocence. But witchcraft is *ipso facto*, on its face and by its nature, an invisible crime, is it not? Therefore, who may possibly be witness to it? The witch and the victim. None other. Now we cannot hope the witch will accuse herself; granted? Therefore, we must rely upon the victims - and they do testify, the children certainly do testify. As for the witches, none will deny that we are most eager for all confessions. Therefore, what is left for a lawyer to bring out? (p.90)

Danforth's argumentation might be convincing but it is fallacious. He, and the other authorities, did not take in consideration the possibility that the girls could be lying. They rely on accusations which are, as Miller conveys, the pretense of hysterical girls and envious people. [24]

The authorities of Salem also use the amount of evidence they have as one of their reasons to believe they are acting in the right way. Such 'evidence' for them are the confessions: "There is too much evidence now to deny it."(p.62) They base their conclusions on the number of people who have already confessed. They seem to be blind to the fact that the amount of evidence they have does not prove their legitimacy. By the end of the play they use the same kind of reasoning but this time it is easier to detect the fallacy. They mention that they cannot change the procedures now because of the number of people who have already died. They maintain their previous conclusions even knowing that

the premises are not reliable anymore. When Hale pleads for Danforth to pardon the prisoners who are going to die Danforth's answer illustrates his fallacious reasoning: "You misunderstand, sir; I cannot pardon these when twelve are already hanged for the same crime. It is not just."(p.113) Hale then begs a postponement of the hangings so he would have more time to convince the prisoners to confess. Danforth's answer leaves no doubts that he chose this kind of reasoning in order to protect himself and is not concerned with the authenticity of the confessions:

> DANFORTH: (...) Them that will not confess will hang. Twelve are already executed; (...) Postponement now speaks of floundering on my part; reprieve or pardon must cast doubt upon the guilt of them that died till now. While I speak God's law, I will not crack its voice with whimpering. If retaliation is your fear, know this - I should hang ten thousand that dared to rise against the law, and an ocean of salt tears could not melt the resolution of the statues." (p.113)

Danforth's attitude leads us to one of the most recurrent kinds of fallacy not only in *The Crucible* but in the other plays as well. Steinmann calls it the ***argument to authority***, which means that the authorities make use of their position to build their argumentation. They draw conclusions about a certain subject, based simply on the premise that they, as authorities, say the conclusion is true. Most of the times the authorities demonstrate that the efficacy of their argumentation is based on the fact that they are 'the' authorities of the subject. They ruled based on the premise that they had authority given by God. This made everything possible. Besides that, the belief in supernatural forces made the common legal proceedings be replaced by other ways of judging the case. In *The Crucible,* for example, Danforth holds the authority and is considered a "weighty judge". The problem is that he makes use only of his reputation to support his arguments. When questioned about the proceedings and decisions of

the court, he appeals to this kind of fallacious argumentation. When Francis Nurse goes to the Court and tells him he has proofs that the girls are deceiving him and the people of the village, Danforth replies:

> DANFORTH: (...) Do you know who **I** am, Mr Nurse?
> FRANCIS: I surely do, sir, and I think you must be a wise judge to be what you are.
> DANFORTH: And do you know that near to four hundred are in jails from Marblehead to Lynn, and upon **my** signature?
> FRANCIS: I -
> DANFORTH: And seventy-two condemned to hang by **that** signature? (p.80)

In another situation, but in similar circumstances, Danforth will make use of the same kind of argument to get things done his way. Proctor takes his servant Mary Warren to the court to tell the judges that the girls are frauds. She is weak and frightened, and she ends up accusing Proctor of dealings with the Devil. Danforth insists that she must tell the truth and advises her: "You will confess yourself or you will hang! [*He turns her roughly to face him*] Do you know who **I** am? **I** say you will hang if you do not open with me!"(p.103) Reverend Hale also notices that his good arguments have no efficacy against the arguments of Danforth for the latter possesses authority to judge the cases according to **his** will and knowledge. When Hale's conscience starts to bother him, he tells Danforth he cannot sign any more death warrants until they have more proofs to do so. Once more Danforth's reply stresses 'his' authority and not the legitimacy of the arguments: "Mr Hale, you surely do not doubt **my** justice."(p.89) He advises Hale to calm down because he is doing everything for the people's good and challenges him: "Unless you doubt **my** probity."(p.90) Obviously at this point Hale could not dare doubt Danforth's probity, but at the end he is sure about the mistake done because of this kind of fallacious reasoning.

Another fallacy observed in the authorities' argumentation is what Steinmann calls ***argument to the people*** which is "is the fallacy of drawing a conclusion from the premise that most people believe that that conclusion is true."[25] Danforth commits this fallacy when he tells Proctor: "Do you know, Mr Proctor, that the entire contention of the state in these trials is that the voice of Heaven is speaking through the children?"(p.81) They believe the girls are telling the truth because the majority of people think so. This kind of fallacy is closely related to another. When Danforth states: "I have until this moment not the slightest reason to suspect that the children may be deceiving me"(p.83), he is drawing a conclusion resulting from a fallacy Steinmann calls ***argument to ignorance***. It is the fallacy "of drawing a conclusion from the premise that no one has proved, or can prove it false."[26] Since the people ignore whether the girls' version is true or at least probable, and nobody proves it is false, then it is taken for the truth. In *The Crucible* a terrifying situation results from this kind of fallacy. As the belief in supernatural forces was 'ruling' the reasoning and judgements, the legal premise that everyone is innocent until the contrary is proved was turned upside down. In Salem, anyone who was accused of witchcraft was guilty until the contrary was proved. The problem is that they had no ways of proving their innocence. Their only way out was a confession. Only a lie would save their lives.

A similar inversion happens in *A Man for All Seasons.* Cromwell argues that More's refuge in silence is a betrayal to his King and his country. For More, "silence is not denial."(p.87) But Cromwell develops a kind of reasoning which intends to prove exactly the opposite. Silence can, Cromwell says, "according to circumstances, speak."(p.88) He concludes that Sir Thomas More's kind of silence "was not silence at all but most eloquent denial."(p.88) The general belief that 'silence gives consent' was turned to the opposite 'silence denies' according to the interests and circumstances.

In *Life of Galileo* The Little Monk tries to persuade Galileo to quit his investigations. The monk knows that Galileo's theories are correct. However, he is also convinced that it would be harmful to the poor and simple people if his theories were proved. If they found out that their planet was not at the center of the universe, and as a consequence, man was not God's privileged creature, they would lose their only reason to go on living. They would no longer attribute divine explanations and virtue to their sufferings either. As these people need faith to survive, the monk is afraid of what might happen to them when all these beliefs, which serve as their ground, are removed. This is a clear example of an ***argument to pity*** which is "the fallacy of drawing a conclusion from the premise that rejecting [and, in this case, accepting] that conclusion will have a pitiful or otherwise undesirable effect".[27] In *A Man for All Seasons* the King does not hesitate to make use of this kind of fallacy to make More support his decisions. Henry tells More that he is in a state of sin because of his 'illicit' marriage. Thomas would prove his friendship to the King if he helped him to escape this situation through the divorce. The King tries to convince More that his refusal to support his decisions would have a pitiful effect for the King and for the whole nation. This situation makes More victim of another fallacy called ***argument to man, circumstantial***. According to Copi, this kind of fallacy "diz respeito às relações entre as convicções de uma pessoa e as suas circunstâncias."[28] He illustrates this kind of fallacy with a proposition:

> Numa disputa entre dois homens, um deles pode ignorar totalmente a questão relativa à verdade ou falsidade de suas próprias afirmações e tratar de provar, em contrapartida, que o seu antagonista deve aceitá-las, por causa das circunstâncias especiais em que se encontra.[29]

Thomas More is Lord Chancellor and, for this reason, should support the King's resolutions for a question of loyalty and for the benefit of the country.

The authorities keep on reminding him of the responsibility of his position not considering his personal beliefs.

More also suffers the consequences of another kind of the same fallacy: the ***abusive***. It consists in attacking a person rather than his/her argument. Thomas More is an experienced and honest lawyer. He trusted and respected the law which was the basis of all his arguments. Actually, More's arguments can be taken as models of correct elaboration for they are legally correct. As the authorities cannot attack More's arguments, which are precise, they will attack More himself. Thomas More has not a single fault against him. He does what he can to "keep his affairs regular."(p.67) As he does not have anything to be accused of, the authorities simply make up one accusation. Rich is induced to lie in order to accuse More of High Treason. As it was not possible for them to destroy the man's arguments they destroyed the man. This same fallacy can be observed in *The Crucible*. Hale questions the families in Salem to know about their religious life and habits. Their conduct would corroborate their culpability or not concerning possible accusations of witchcraft. Hale does not search for the accuracy of their arguments but for their conduct. The religious or moral behavior of a person does not guarantee the legitimacy of his/her arguments. Undoubtedly, Shaw's heroine is the character who most suffers this kind of attack. The authorities conclude that Joan cannot be listening to the voices she claims to hear because she dresses like a man, is too young and illiterate. Besides that her arguments are hardly taken seriously because of her sex. The majority of the people who give some credit to her are the ones who believe her to be a saint. This leads us to the last kind of fallacy to be treated here: the fallacy of the ***false cause***. As many interesting facts happen after Joan's appearances, they are taken for miracles by the people. But Shaw's text is clear in neither connecting nor disconnecting them from Joan's interference. Joan herself does not believe she performs miracles. They might be simple coincidences and for this reason this

kind of reasoning is fallacious. In Copi's words "o mero fato de coincidência ou sucessão temporal não basta para estabelecer qualquer relação causal."[30] Did Joan caused the 'miracles'? Nobody knows. To infer that she did is a fallacious logic, or an act of faith. To attribute Betty's illness to witchcraft in *The Crucible* is another example of this kind of fallacy. The same happens in *A Man for All Seasons* when Henry attributes his failure of having male children to a divine punishment for his illicit marriage.

All of these examples of fallacious argumentation in the plays show that language is used to eliminate pluralism and difference, which are very dangerous to authoritarian regimes. The ones who hold the power use language to place truth not on the side of facts but on the side of their interests. The heroes' steadfastness in moments like these, attaching themselves to what they consider the truth, corroborates the questioning of the moral values of their communities.

7.3 The Authority of the Written Word.

> *... you might perhaps feel ready to write us a few words of apology, admitting your mistake (...) it would be greatly to your advantage to have a signed statement from you to that effect.*
>
> *Henrik Ibsen*

The manipulation of truth through language has its complete realization in its written form. In the plays this attribute of language is best illustrated by the fact that the heroes were supposed to sign a document attesting the validity of their oral confession. It should legitimize their words and the righteousness of the authorities' veridicts. In *The Crucible* Miller shows the importance and implications of this act. Proctor confessed a lie to save his life but he falters when he knows that he has to sign his 'testimony':

> DANFORTH: (...) Come, then, sign your testimony. (...) Come, then, sign it.
> PROCTOR: [*after glancing at the confession*]: You have all witnessed it - it is enough.
> DANFORTH: You will not sign it?
> PROCTOR: You have all witnessed it; what more is needed?
> DANFORTH: Do you sport with me? You will sign your name or it is no confession, Mister. (p.123)

This tension provoked by Proctor's avoiding to sign his confession and Danforth's forcing him to do so, reveals a power which is exclusive to the written word. A spoken confession is not enough in this case, but a signed, written one becomes a powerful document in the hands of the authorities.

In this context Foucault's statement about the role of the written word is very meaningful: "Somente ela [a Escrita] detém a verdade."[31] After the Renaissance, according to him, "a linguagem tem por natureza primeira ser escrita. Os sons da voz formam apenas sua tradução transitória e precária."[32] Foucault points out some reasons which led the written language to assume this privileged position:

> Esse privilégio dominou todo o Renascimento e, sem dúvida, foi um dos grandes acontecimentos da cultura ocidental. A imprensa, a chegada à Europa dos manuscritos orientais, o aparecimento de uma literatura que não era mais feita pela voz ou pela representação nem comandada por elas, a primazia dada aos textos religiosos sobre a tradição e o magistério da Igreja - tudo isso testemunha, sem que se possam apartar os efeitos e as causas, o lugar fundamental assumido, no Ocidente, pela Escrita. [33]

The four plays analyzed in this thesis explore the relevance and the constant fear related to the written words, specially when they are published or circulated. The reading or writing of books, letters, documents, etc., is viewed both with admiration and distrust. It is not difficult to understand this fear if some historical facts are taken into consideration. The Medieval Church was a powerful organization not only in economical and political terms. It also controlled the intellectual life of people. The churchmen were practically the only

educated people. They were in control of the schools and universities, and the majority of the books were written by them. But one of the most important controls exerted by the Church upon people was the fact that it decided what they should or should not read. It was the duty of the Church to teach what any citizen was supposed to do and even to think. Carl Sagan describes a case which illustrates the interests which were menaced by the circulation of books among the simple folk:

> No século XVI, o erudito William Tyndale teve a temeridade de pensar em traduzir o Novo Testamento para o inglês. Mas se as pessoas pudessem ler a Bíblia em sua própria língua, e não em latim arcaico, talvez formassem opiniões religiosas próprias e independentes. Poderiam conceber sua própria comunicação privada com Deus. Era um desafio à segurança de emprego dos padres católicos romanos. Quando Tyndale tentou publicar sua tradução, foi caçado e perseguido por toda a Europa. Acabou capturado, garroteado e depois, por boas razões, queimado na fogueira. Seus exemplares do Novo Testamento (...) foram então procurados de casa em casa por destacamentos armados.[34]

Therefore, it is not difficult to understand why the authorities of the Church in the four plays were so worried and even afraid of people whose concerns included their intellectual life and their education. The fact that some people chose and read books on their own also amazed the common people. A responsibility which lay only in the hands of the church, little by little begins to lie on the hands of individuals. As knowledge is power, these individuals would gradually become dangerous to the most powerful institution at the time.

In *The Crucible* the importance and also the mystery attributed to books is first noticed when Reverend Hale arrives with his heavy books. Hale states that they must be heavy for "they are weighted with authority."(p.40) Later in the play Giles will unconsciously lead his wife to be accused of witchcraft. As he does not understand Martha's interest in reading he asks Hale: "what signifies the reading of strange books?"(p.43) The simple fact that Martha was "so taken with books"(p.79) aroused suspicion about her character. At the end Giles

regrets his commentaries about his wife but then it is too late for she is sentenced to death.

The hero of *A Man for All Seasons* is a learned and intelligent man who is respected for these qualities. The King had wisely asked for More's help to write his book "asserting the seven Sacraments of the Church"(p.28) and also made him Lord Chancellor. Henry wanted More on his side because it would be very dangerous if he were against him, or simply remained neutral. The King knows that More's knowledge can be useful but dangerous at the same time as he reveals in this conversation:

> HENRY: (...) I'll have no opposition. (...) No opposition, I say! Your conscience is your own affair; but you are my Chancellor! (...) Lie low if you will, but I'll brook no opposition - no noise! No words, no signs, no letters, no pamphlets - Mind that, Thomas - no writings against me! (p.32-3)

The King is aware of the power of the published word, even more if a person like Thomas More is the author. More's writings are feared even though he does not write against the King. More is aware both of the power of written word and of his personal influence on people because of his reputation. He reveals this awareness when he tells Margaret: "I write! And that is enough in times like these."(p.65) Little by little More is denied the right to write and even read books when he is in prison.

Although Margaret is not the focus of attention in the action of the play, the fact that she is a scholar like her father amazes and frightens the other characters. When the King talks to her and asks her some questions in Latin, he is not very pleased that her Latin is better than his. He tells More: "Take care Thomas: 'Too much learning is a weariness of the flesh, and there is no end to the making of books.'"(p.28) Norfolk is also surprised with Margaret's learning. He is a nobleman who has "never found much use in Aristotle" and has only

heard commentaries about Machiavelli. He is amazed when he knows that Margaret had read the Italian writer's book:

> NORFOLK: You read it? Amazing girl, Thomas, but where are you going to find a husband for her?
> MORE: *(MORE and MEG exchange a glance)* Where indeed? (p.8)

The reading of so many books and the knowledge acquired through this practice seem to frighten the authorities in general. It is not so easy to govern learned and critical minds.

In *Saint Joan* Shaw also portrays the very common illiteracy, or at least, the very little study of the people who were not part of the clergy. But Shaw could not help portraying this in a light and funny tone. In the opening of the fourth scene, for instance, we see the 46-year-old nobleman sitting inside an English tent. While the chaplain is shown "*hard at work writing*", the nobleman enjoys himself turning over the pages of a book. The nobleman's commentaries about the book show his ignorance about its content. He describes the book only in terms of its outward appearance: "Now this is what I call workmanship. There is nothing on earth more exquisite than a bonny book, with well-placed columns of rich black writing in beautiful borders, and illuminated pictures cunningly inset."(p.86) Even more interesting than this description of the merits of the book is the Nobleman's observation about books in general: "But nowadays, instead of looking at books, people read them."(p.86) Shaw does not idealize even his heroine. The author conveys her illiteracy in a realistic way. Joan could not read or write; the letters she sent were dictated, and she could not sign her confession. Although she was a clever girl, she did not have access to any kind of education.

The four plays convey the concern with written works, but it is certainly in *Life of Galileo* that it becomes central in the action of the play. This question is

so important in the characterization of the hero that it is also related to his moral choice. All the tension between Galileo and the authorities of the Church happens because of their different attitude in relation to science and religion. The Church preached faith, and Galileo praised doubt. Doubt was seen positively by Galileo because he made use of the scientific method, attempting to demonstrate his new theories by means of visual proofs (something that was not usual at his time). Galileo knew that doubt could open ways to 'new truths'. His attitude reveals truth as something transitory, capable of being changed.

It is exactly because of this way of reasoning that Galileo's research and texts are never free from suspicion of being heretical. Galileo's passion for astronomy gives him courage to proceed with his studies against all odds. Galileo is completely irreverent in keeping and writing books in a period and place where this attitude could cost his life. Brecht worked carefully in Galileo's characterization and was very demanding in terms of his character's faithfulness to his beliefs. This characteristic, though, does not seem to be part of the playwright's personality. Like his character, Brecht was also aware of the power of books and written material of any kind. Marxism was in the center of Brecht's convictions and work. It was a passion for him like knowledge was for Galileo. Nevertheless, when the playwright went to the United States as an exile in 1941, he threw Lenin's books in the ocean to avoid complications with the customs. He also denied that many of his writings were based on Lenin's and Marx's philosophy. In this aspect Brecht's hero seems more courageous than the playwright himself.

Galileo's attitude towards books is complex and even paradoxical. He is thirsty for knowledge, and for that reason, buys expensive books and studies them a lot. But at the same time he distrusts them. He does not treat the books as sacred, as we can notice since the beginning of the play in his enthusiastic speech: "Today everybody is saying: Yes, that's what the books tell us, but we

want to see for ourselves."(p.5) His critical attitude towards the contents of the books is the heart of his scientific work. A new idea or hypothesis or even old and accepted ideas should 'undergo' a rigorous examination to prove their legitimacy. His attitude alarms the authorities because they praised certain books believing that they brought the 'truth' in their pages. They would rather believe in these books than in new 'discoveries' which would not give them any profit. This view is illustrated in The Procurator's words when he criticizes the universities which have no interest in the empirical method to understand the world but accept only "what Aristotle writes about it, the eyes have only one purpose: reading."(p.13) This clash is also shown when Galileo and Federzoni, Galileo's friend and lens grinder, attempt to demonstrate their discoveries to some visitors through the telescope:

FEDERZONI:	You'll be surprised, but there is no crystal sphere.
THE PHILOSOPHER:	Any textbook will tell you there is (...).
FEDERZONI:	Then we need new textbooks.
THE PHILOSOPHER:	(...) my colleague and I are supported by no less an authority than the divine Aristotle.
GALILEO:	(...) belief in the authority of Aristotle is one thing, observable facts are another. (...) I humbly beseech you to trust your own eyes.
THE MATHEMATICIAN:	(...) I'm in habit of reading Aristotle now and then, and I can assure you that when I read Aristotle I do believe my eyes. (p.34-5)

In this dialogue the tension between the old and a new order becomes clear. The visitors say that the stars Galileo discovered simply "cannot" exist according to the books. The force of bookish tradition is so strong in them that they refuse to see anything that could change the 'reality' that was stated by Aristotle. As the books functioned as depository of order and truth, the authority of the texts became more important than the observable facts.

Besides his critical attitude towards the texts of the time, Galileo writes his own books and theories. The spreading of Galileo's ideas is very dangerous in

the eyes of the authorities. That is why, even after his recantation, the scientist becomes a prisoner of the Inquisition. It is an irony that Galileo, the man who was restlessly "fighting for the freedom to teach new knowledge"(p.75) had all his writings observed and taken from him by the Inquisition. When he finally managed to produce a copy of his *Discorsi*, it was secretly smuggled out of Italy by his pupil Andrea.

Galileo's recantation had also repressive effects in the work of his contemporaries. Andrea tells him that since his "submission no work containing any new hypothesis has been published in Italy."(p.89) His act affected other countries too. It discouraged, for example, the work of Descartes about the nature of light. In the same way that the hero's steadfastness encourages his contemporaries, the hero's submission affects them in the opposite way.

To sum up, it is possible to conclude that the written language can be manipulated to legitimize authoritarianism and eliminate opposition. The burning of books is a common practice in authoritarian regimes. Freethinking and the dissemination of new ideas (which are always viewed as revolutionary) should be controlled and preferably prohibited because they are very dangerous to such regimes.

Cecília Meireles' poem *Das Palavras Aéreas* closes this chapter. Its lines capture the power which can be exerted through language specially in relation do the heroes' fate:

Romanceiro da Inconfidência
Cecília Meireles

ROMANCE LIII
ou
DAS PALAVRAS AÉREAS

Ai, palavras, ai, palavras,
que estranha potência, a vossa!
Ai, palavras, ai, palavras,

sois de vento, ides no vento,
e quedais, com sorte nova!

Ai, palavras, ai, palavras,
que estranha potência, a vossa!
Todo o sentido da vida
principia à vossa porta;
o mel do amor cristaliza
seu perfume em vossa rosa;
sois o sonho e sois a audácia,
calúnia, fúria, derrota . . .

A liberdade das almas,
ai! com letras se elabora . . .
E dos venenos humanos
sois a mais fina retorta:
frágil, frágil, como o vidro
e mais que o aço poderosa!
Reis, impérios, povos, tempos,
pelo vosso impulso rodam . . .

Detrás de grossas paredes,
de leve, quem vos desfolha?
Pareceis de tênue seda,
sem peso de ação nem de hora . . .
- e estais no bico das penas,
e estais na tinta que as molha,
e estais nas mãos dos juízes,
e sois o ferro que arrocha,
[...]

Ai, palavras, ai, palavras,
mirai-vos: que sois, agora?

- Acusações, sentinelas,
bacamarte, algema, escolta;
- o olho ardente da perfídia,
a velar, na noite morta;
- a umidade dos presídios,
- a solidão pavorosa;
- duro ferro de perguntas,
com sangue em cada resposta;
- e a sentença que caminha,
- e a esperança que não volta,
- e o coração que vacila,
- e o castigo que galopa . . .
[...]

Ai, palavras, ai palavras,
que estranha potência, a vossa!
Éreis um sopro na aragem . . .
- sois um homem que se enforca! [35]

The discussion about language in the plays is summed up in these lines. Language is not a neutral means to convey information, feelings and thoughts. It is a powerful instrument which can be used with an infinity of ends. It can save and it can kill. It can calumniate innocents and exalt criminals. It can provoke the deepest joy and at the same time the most terrible pain. Through language the heroes try to illuminate the world. Through language their mighty opponents attempt to silence them. Fortunately, the words of a hero cannot be silenced even by death. And this is again a powerful attribute of language.

NOTES

[1] WAUGH, Patricia. Metafiction. London: Methuen, 1984, p.50.

[2] GRANT, Damian. Realism. London: Methuen, 1978, p.11.

[3] AUSTIN, John L. Philosophical Papers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979, p.130.

[4] *Ibid.*, p.145.

[5] *Apud* STEINMANN, p.255.

[6] AUSTIN, Philosophical Papers, p.235.

[7] *Ibid.*, p.131.

[8] *Ibid.*, p.235.

[9] *Ibid.*, p.235.

[10] AUSTIN, John L. How to do things with words. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977, p.109.

[11] *Ibid.*, p.91.

[12] *Ibid.*, p.101.

[13] AUSTIN, Philosophical Papers, p.236.

[14] *Ibid.*, p.248.

[15] *Ibid.*, p.250-1.

[16] *Ibid.*, p.238-9.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] *Ibid.*, p.240.

[20] STEINMANN, Martin Jr. Words in Action. New York et al.: Horcount Brace Jovanovich, 1979, p.237.

[21] *Ibid.*, p.240-1.

[22] *Ibid.*, p.253.

[23] COPI, Irving M. Introdução à Lógica. São Paulo: Mestre Jou, 1974, p.73.

[24] Carl Sagan's words illustrate the kind of reasoning which led the authorities of the Church to so many mistakes: "Eles não podiam estar errados. As confissões de bruxaria não podiam ser alucinações, por exemplo, nem tentativas desesperadas de satisfazer os inquisidores e interromper a tortura. Nesse caso (...) a Igreja católica estaria cometendo um grande crime ao queimar as bruxas. Aqueles que apresentam tais hipóteses estão, portanto, atacando a Igreja e *ipso facto* cometendo um pecado mortal. Puniam-se os que criticavam a morte das bruxas na fogueira e, em alguns casos, eles próprios eram queimados. Os inquisidores e os torturadores estavam fazendo a obra de Deus. Estavam salvando almas. Estavam derrotando os demônios." (SAGAN, Carl. O Mundo Assombrado pelos Demônios. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996, p.129)

[25] STEINMANN, p.254.

[26] *Ibid.*, p.253.

[27] *Ibid.*, p.255.

[28] COPI, p.76.

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*, p.83.

[31] FOUCAULT, Michel. As Palavras e as Coisas. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1990, p.55.

[32] *Ibid.*, p.54.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] SAGAN, Carl. O Mundo Assombrado pelos Demônios. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996, p.129.

[35] MEIRELES, Cecília. Romanceiro da Inconfidência. São Paulo: Círculo do Livro, s.d., p.163-5.

CONCLUSION

Our final question concerns the validity of the heroes' action and ultimately the importance of their martyrdom. Have their lifelong fight for something really produced any kind of benefit for themselves and for mankind? Didn't the authorities win at the end? After all "what good is right against might?"[1] asks Mrs. Stockmann to her husband in astonishment for his obstination in defending the truth. My point is that the heroes' actions and their outcomes are meaningful and essential even if the others' reaction is not favorable to them. Although the hero's deeds are admired, his motivations are hardly understood by the common folks specially in what concerns the price he pays for his ideals. It does not matter if the hero's choice is supported by, as H. A. Smith calls, a "positive faith or intellectual conviction",[2] most of the times it is not understood by the others. This is because, in Smith's words, "faith must necessarily seem foolishness to those who have never experienced it."[3] Hale's words in *The Crucible* express the general concern in relation to the value of life: "life is God's most valuable gift; no principle, however glorious, may justify the taking of it."(p.115) This is not, however, the reasoning of the hero. In Todorov's words "o herói sempre adora algo mais do que a própria vida".[4] The importance of the hero's excellence surpasses the meaning he attributes to life. According to Maxwell Anderson this is one of the essential characteristics of Greek tragedy, a tradition which, consciously or not, our theatre has followed. Anderson states that "Greek tragedy was dedicated to man's aspiration, to his kinship with the gods, to his unending, blind attempt to lift himself above his lusts and his pure animalism into a world where there are other values than pleasure and survival."[5] Todorov corroborates this view: "O ponto de partida do herói, tal como a poesia épica dos gregos nos legou, é a decisão de atingir, custe o que custar, a excelência, um ideal de que ele

mesmo tem medida, e isto é essencial."[6] This conduct, this search for excellence, will lead the hero to death, as Todorov points out: "A morte está inscrita no destino do herói."[7] The hero is an outstanding figure. His virtue and ideals differ from the majority's. Besides that, his decision to fight for them until death is difficult to be understood and accepted by the simple folk. Todorov comments: "Em tudo isso o herói é diferente dos outros homens. Dotado de uma potência excepcional, já se encontra distante das pessoas comuns; escolhendo a morte em lugar da vida, afasta-se delas mais ainda."[8] This does not mean, though, that the hero wishes to die. "O herói escolhe a morte não porque a aprecie em si mesma (não se trata de morbidez), mas porque ela é um absoluto, o que a vida não é".[9] With these considerations in mind we come to a better understanding of the heroes' situation in the plays. We conclude that it was not death that was imposed unto them, but choice. In Todorov's words, the hero's choice is "entre a vida sem glória e a morte gloriosa."[10] Through their choice the integrity of their personalities is revealed because we come to know what their most important motivations for that choice are.

Hogan's words about the relationship between Proctor's situation in *The Crucible* and traditional tragedy also illustrates the situation of the other heroes analyzed:

> Two points connect this situation with the tradition of austere tragedy. First an individual is pushed to definition, forced to irreclaimable and self-destructive action. That self-destruction is, paradoxically, an affirmation of morality, for it asserts that belief is more important than life. Second, the individual discovers his need to choose, and his agony comes from his awareness. Reason, said Milton, is but choosing, and Proctor's aware choice is the choice of a reasoning man. [11]

Bigsby points out the emphasis given by Miller to the relationship between the self and choice. According to Bigsby, the self in Miller's works "exists only in relation to choices made and the results of those choices are as real as the

choices themselves."[12] Kierkegaard privileges this moment of choice as a moment in which the individual defines or even recognizes himself. According to the philosopher "the choice itself is decisive for the content of the personality, through the choice the personality immerses itself in the thing chosen".[13] If the individual refuses to choose he loses the sense of his own self.

Kierkegaard's reasoning touches one of the crucial points which lead people to choose. In choosing committedly, or ethically, one chooses the absolute which, for Kierkegaard, is "I myself in my eternal validity."[14] The heroes analyzed here found this out. Their choice was the expression of their selves and such right could not be denied them. Kierkegaard defines the *self* as "the most abstract of all things, and yet at the same time it is the most concrete - it is freedom."[15] One of Thomas More's speeches in *A Man for All Seasons* illustrates this 'equivalence' between his choice and his own self. Norfolk tries to convince More to comply with the King's decision. More explains why he cannot do it, comparing a man's life to the one of a special kind of dog, the 'water spaniel':

> MORE: (...) what you do with a water spaniel that was afraid of water? You'd hang it! Well, as a spaniel is to water, so is a man to his own self. I will not give in because I oppose it - I do - not my pride, not my spleen, nor any other of my appetites but *I* do - *I!* (p.71)

With this comparison More emphasizes the idea that a man who is not faithful to himself is not worth living. More important than his beliefs is that such beliefs are *his* and he has the obligation to fight for the freedom of keeping them. When this freedom is denied to someone, it is his/her self which is denied. That is the kind or reasoning that leads Proctor, More and Joan to their final choice. Galileo goes on living but without freedom, and consequently, if we follow Kierkegaard's reasoning, without the sense of his own self. The four paid the price for their choices.

In his *Introduction to Collected Plays,* Arthur Miller wrote about the relevance of the individual's experience in this moment of choice. He expresses the playwright's need "not only to depict why a man does what he does, or why he nearly didn't do it, but why he cannot simply walk away and say to hell with it."[16] It is exactly the kind of commitment which the four main characters analyzed in this thesis are forced to take.

According to Miller, the conflict between the individual and his need to choose is very important because through it, the meaning of a character is to be measured. This meaning "consists of the kind of commitment he makes to life or refuses to make, the kind of challenge he accepts and the kind he can pass by."[17] The structure of the four plays leads ultimately to the discovery and clarification of this conflict. To Miller all the elements in a play contribute to foreground this moment of commitment, a moment when

> a man differentiates himself from every other man, that moment when out of a sky full of stars he fixes on one star. I take it, as well, that the less capable a man is of walking away from the central conflict of the play, the closer he approaches a tragic existence. In sum, this implies that the closer a man approaches tragedy the more intense is his concentration of emotion upon the fixed point of his commitment. [18]

Only Galileo seems to be able not to commit himself and 'walk away' from the central conflict. Galileo's choice can be describe in Kierkegaard's terms as an 'aesthetic choice' which contrasts with the 'ethical choice' that the other characters made. Kierkegaard contrasts these two kinds of choices. According to him, the aesthetic is not even, in the strictest sense, considered a choice because it is done according to feelings or because of the forces of the circumstances. The act of choosing implicates commitment and it is

> essentially a proper and stringent expression of the ethical. Whenever in a stricter sense there is question of an either/or, one can always be sure that the ethical is

> involved. The only absolute either/or is the choice between good and evil, but that is also absolutely ethical.[19]

The one who has to choose ethically has a harder task to endure and the act of choosing becomes very important to him. Kierkegaard also states that through the effort one makes to choose, the "personality announces its inner infinity, and thereby, in turn, the personality is consolidated."[20] Galileo's choice is the only one which betrays the chooser's most important and personal values. According to Kierkgaard, "he who after the ethical has manifested itself to him chooses the aesthetical is not living aesthetically, for he is sinning and is subject to ethical determinants even though his life may be described as unethical."[21] This description fits Galileo who chose wrongly (as Brecht conveys his choice) not because he is ignorant of the right choice but because he was too weak to endure its consequences. The philosopher describes the price one pays for this kind of choice:

> this is the pitiful thing to one who contemplates human life, that so many live on in a quiet state of perdition; they outlive themselves, not in the sense that the content of life is successively unfolding and now is possessed in this expanded state, but they live their lives, as it were, outside of themselves, they vanish like shadows, their immortal soul is blown away, and they are not alarmed by the problem of its immortality, for they are already in a state of dissolution before they die. [22]

The way Brecht portrays Galileo in the end of the play makes Kierkgaard's words more meaningful to us. The price he pays for his choice is very high. The church limited and censured his research. He becomes unable to have self-esteem, for he is deeply upset with his behaviour as a man of Science. At the end of his life he is almost blind and living in poverty. His humiliation seems to be a kind of punishment for his lack of commitment which Brecht emphasizes at the end.

The idea of death is paradoxical. How can death, something seen so negatively, turn into a triumph? According to Miller the tragic victory is

> a question closely related to the consciousness of the hero. One makes nonsense of this if a "victory" means that the hero makes us feel some certain joy when, for instance, he sacrifices himself for a "cause," and unhappy and morose because he dies without one. To begin at the bottom, a man's death is and ought to be an essentially terrifying thing and ought to make nobody happy. But in a great variety of ways even death, the ultimate negative, can be, and appear to be, an assertion of bravery, and can serve to separate the death of man from the death of animals; and I think it is this distinction which underlies any conception of a victory in death. [23]

The same paradox involving death is explored by Shaw in his play. Whitman comments that, although Shaw glorifies life in *Saint Joan* as well as in other plays,

> yet we can never get very far away from that central paradox of the necessity of death - the notion that there is no vitality without tension , that for life to be alive it must have opposition, contradiction, something to both wrestle with and triumph over and use some 'other' in which it can know itself. [24]

In this sense death, as the ultimate consequence of the heroes' moral choice, seems to function as an affirmation of the self. While Galileo's 'yes' to his recantation might be taken as a negation of his self, Proctor's, More's and Joan's 'no', is in fact an affirmation of theirs. The self, in Smith's words, when

> pushed to the point at which its inviolability is threatened, it feels impelled to cry: 'Here I stand. I can do no other.' And just because the impulsion to make the stand is so irresistible, the self craves desperately for an order of absolute values which will both fortify it and make it explicable.[25]

It is this 'order of absolute values' that gives the hero courage and hope to face death and that makes his death meaningful. The hero's choice of death shows that he values something more than life. But it is necessary that this 'higher value' exist because, in Todorov's words, when "o objetivo está ausente

ou é insignificante, a bravura transforma-se em bravata: arrisca-se a vida sem extrair desse gesto nenhum resultado."[26] The hero's choice would not be positive at all if death were understood as the end of all things.

Smith points out that when the tragic hero remains within the ethical "his sacrifice will arouse pity and terror, but his motive will be universally applauded and understood."[27] For this to happen there must be a kind of 'intelligible heaven', something which transcends life in which to believe, to base one's faith. That is why, for example, Sartre points out the difficulty of making choices in a context lacking meaning as the existentialists claim: "The existentialist finds it extremely embarrassing that God does not exist."[28] If none of the three martyrs had a faith in something which transcends life, something to which they were, in a way or another, obliged to and thankful for, their deaths would certainly be meaningless and unfruitful. They would be not "the hero or saint, climbing to a superhuman wisdom" but "the fool, obsessed by the most fatal of illusions".[29] That is why in the three plays in which the heroes die, as they approach death, the transcendental aspect is more and more foregrounded. There must be a hope that transcends death, and the playwrights convey such hope. More and more all of them achieve a kind of 'oneness' with God. The authors convey that there really must be a higher 'order of absolute values' to which the heroes have to be faithful and that will reward them.

But the reward of the heroic choice is not an individual one. It is not only the hero that is blessed, but the world. Commenting about Joan in Shaw's play, Whitman states that some saints (or heroes) have an amazing vitality and "will destroy themselves by opposing society's established institutions with an energy that lift both the saint and the society to a new stage of evolution and being".[30] What these heroes do is an expression of what Todorov calls dignity. For him dignity is "a capacidade de satisfazer por seus atos os critérios interiorizados. A dignidade tornar-se-ia, então, um sinônimo do respeito por si próprio; quero que

minha ação seja satisfatória aos olhos do meu julgamento."[31] But Todorov points out that the harmony between ideals and behaviour does not garantee that the behavior will have 'moral' dignity. He states, "não basta que haja harmonia entre os atos e os ideais, é preciso, ainda, que esses ideais não se choquem com o bem da humanidade."[32] Many people, such as the authorities portrayed in the plays, at times acted according to their values, but their behaviour did not contribute for the benefit of mankind. In this sense the heroic and the totalitarian attitudes are contrasted. In totalitarianism there is no place for plurality. The 'other' has to be eliminated. The one who is different or opposes the system is a threat, and his/her elimination is accepted in favor of the many who need the community to be united and protected. The 'witch-hunt' is the symbol of the elimination of the 'other'. Carl Sagan analyzes the motivations and the consequences of practices like this :

> A caça às bruxas é vergonhosa. Como é que fomos capazes disso? Como pudemos ser tão ignorantes sobre nós mesmos e nossas fraquezas? Como isso foi acontecer nas nações mais "adiantadas" e mais "civilizadas" da Terra? Por que foi resolutamente apoiada pelos conservadores, monarquistas e fundamentalistas religiosos? Por que foi combatida pelos liberais, pelos quacres e pelos adeptos do Iluminismo? Se temos absoluta certeza de que nossas crenças estão certas, e a dos outros erradas; de que somos motivados pelo bem, e os outros pelo mal; de que o Rei do Universo se dirige a nós, e não aos adeptos de credos muito diferentes; de que é pernicioso confrontar as doutrinas convencionais ou fazer perguntas desafiadoras; de que nossa principal tarefa é acreditar e obedecer - então a caça às bruxas vai voltar a acontecer em suas variações infinitas até os tempos do último homem.[33]

Variations of witch-hunts in our century can be found in Nazism, Stalinism, McCarthyism, all kinds of dictatorships, and racial and ethnic cleanings. In a final analysis the plays discussed in this thesis denounce totalitarianism and a moral crisis, not so much at the time of the plays, but in our times. The lack of moral values might be seen both as the consequence and as the cause of authoritarian practices. In this context the hero is the individual

whose fight will at the same time oppose totalitarianism and produce a kind of moral renewal. He is courageous to endure this battle of which the majority is afraid. In our world, dominated by apathy, refusal to commitment and responsibility, heroes seem to have disappeared. Todorov points out some of the reasons for this tendency:

> com o advento triunfante do individualismo como ideologia, por volta do fim do século XVIII, o modelo heróico declina a olhos vistos nos países europeus: já não se sonha com proezas e glórias, cada um aspira à felicidade pessoal, até mesmo uma vida prazerosa.[34]

The heroic ideal and motivation are replaced by an inclination to personal desire for comfort and security. Through their plays, Miller, Bolt, Shaw and Brecht attack these characteristics. By searching for heroes in the past they attempt to rescue the meaning of heroism in contemporary society. The didactic principles advocated by them imply that theatre should be a powerful instrument to rethink and transform society. This importance attributed to the social role of the theatre is shared by G. W. Brandt who states that:

> a doctrinal theater is needed today as much as ever it was, seventy years or seven hundred years ago: a theater which will do more than render men harmlessly happy, although incidentally it will render them (purposefully, rather than harmlessly) happy as well: a theater once again become a *speculum vitae,* a lens for focusing the mind and energy of the nation, a forum, a temple and a song. [35]

The fact that the playwrights use historical situations to comment on the present scene seems to corroborate Harold Robbins' belief that "only if one is self-consciously aware that 'history' like 'fiction' is provisional, continually reconstructed and open-ended can one make responsible choices within it and achieve a measure of freedom."[36] The plays discussed in this thesis reintroduce us to heroes whose virtues seemed forgotten and meaningless in the present days. The heroes' attitude and decision in moments of tension, their faithfulness to

their values and their commitment to others are to offer us a model to be admired and followed. This is their most precious boon for us.

NOTES

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[2] *Apud* BROWN, John Russell & HARRIS, Bernard. (ed.) Contemporary Theatre. London: Edward Arnold, 1978, p. 140.

[3] *Apud* BROWN, p.142.

[4] TODOROV, Tzvetan. Em Face do Extremo. Campinas: Papirus, 1995, p.56.

[5] *Apud* OLSON, Elder. Aristotle's Poetics and English Literature. A Collection of Critical Essays. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965, p.119.

[6] TODOROV, p.55.

[7] *Ibid.*, p.56.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] HOGAN, Robert. Arthur Miller. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1964, p.30.

[12] BIGSBY, C.W.E. A critical introduction to twentieth-century American drama, v.2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p.136.

[13] ELLMAN & FEIDELSSOHN Jr. (eds.) The Modern Tradition. Background of Modern Literature. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965, p.829.

[14] *Ibid.*, p.831.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Apud* MARTIN, Robert A. (ed.) The Theater Essays of Arthur Miller. New York: Viking, 1978, p.117.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] ELLMAN, p.830.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*, p.830-1.

[23] *Apud* MARTIN, p.146-7.

[24] WHITMAN, Robert F. Shaw and the Play of Ideas. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977, p.287.

[25] *Apud* BROWN, p.156.

[26] TODOROV, p.17.

[27] *Apud* BROWN, p.148.

[28] *Apud* BROWN, p. p.156.

[29] *Apud* BROWN, p.143.

[30] WHITMAN, p.270.

[31] TODOROV, p. 76.

[32] *Ibid.*, p.81.

[33] SAGAN, Carl. O Mundo Assombrado pelos Demônios. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996, p.399.

[34] TODOROV, p. 58-9.

[35] *Apud* BROWN, p.55.

[36] *Apud* WAUGH, Patricia. Metafiction. London: Methuen, 1984, p.125.

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