The Ultimate Fox in Lillian Hellman's The Little Foxes

Instructor: Marwa Ghazi Mohammed

University of Baghdad

College of Education for Women

Department of English

Abstract:

Lillian Hellman was an American playwright whose name was associated with the moral values of the early twentieth century. Her plays were remarkable for the moral themes that dealt with the evil. They were distinguished, as well, for the depiction of characters who are still alive in the American drama for their vivid personalities, effective roles and realistic portrayal.

This paper studies Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes* as a criticism of the American society in the early twentieth-century. Though America was a country built on hopes and dreams of freedom and happiness. During the Great Depression, happiness was certainly not present in many people's lives. The presence of alternate political ideas, decay of love and values increased life's problems, and considered a stress inducing factor were popular themes to be explored during the Great Depression. America, the land of promises, became an empty world revolving around money and material well-being and which turned the people bereft of love, and human values. Hellman's play presents the real fox, represented by the political and material world, as the one responsible for the raise of new kind of people, the little foxes, and the decline of human value.

Lillian Hellman (1905-1984) was a playwright who made a place for herself in the male dominated dramatic canon. She experienced immense commercial and critical success with her plays, especially *The Children's Hour* (1934), *The Little Foxes* (1939), a Pulitzer finalist that year, *Watch on the Rhine* (1941), and *Toys in the Attic* (1960), which both earned top New York Drama Critics Circle Awards. However, Hellman battled to gain the recognition which her male contemporary dramatists received. She has remained in the shadow of many of them, especially Tennessee Williams. Feminist scholars sought to celebrate her place in dramatic history, but they debated whether or not she could be considered a feminist writer (Barlow, p.67). She was "the first American playwright to make productive use of the mores of the changing South in the theater" (Goodman, p.138). Her experiences and work served both as a model of contemporary women playwrights writing about the South. Hellman's plays present the social conditions, as unjust and ugly, most notably the capitalist greed and gender and racial oppression (Lederer, p.102).

The Little Foxes (1939) is Hellman's second success and one of her finest plays. It was performed 410 times and ran for about two years in the country. Due to its excellent qualities, the play remains a dramatic and classic masterpiece of the American theatre and the most revived of Hellman's plays (Bloom, 89). The title, suggested by Dorothy Parker, is taken from the Bible "Song of Solomon 2:15, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes" (Falk, p.51).The title foxes refers to the Hubbards for " [i]n fact, in no Hellman play is there a single protagonist; hence the titles are either thematic or symbolic references to a group of characters" (Lederer, p.41). The biblical citation can be interpreted as a symbolic reference to the vicious natures of the Hubbards. It indicates that greed devastates human's sense of humanity, wrecks the mild natured people, and causes havoc for the greedy people themselves. Hellman's play is set in three acts with the setting of the aristocratic house of rich southerners (Lewis,p. 63).

The story of the play is set at the beginning of the twentieth century in a small town in the South when the American society was developing a rapid indulgence in materialistic and capitalistic interests. The members of Hubbard family, Regina Hubbard Giddens and her two brothers Ben and Oscar Hubbard, embody the new generation of Americans who are exploiting others and even each other for the sake of materialistic gains. They plan to cooperate with a rich man from Chicago, William Marshall, to erect a cotton mill in which the poor workers will be exploited in hard working and low wages.

They need the financial help of Regina's heart-sick husband, Horace Giddens, to make Regina a partner in the business. But Horace's knowledge about the Hubbards' cheating in business and ruthless nature prevents him from sharing them their business. At curtain rise, the black maid Addie is tidying up, Cal, the black porter, is setting out a bottle of the best port. Birdie Hubbard, a wellbred but faded woman enters from the dinner party offstage, obviously tipsy. Her husband Oscar follows, scolding her for boring their special guest. His sister Regina Giddens and brother Ben enter with Mr. William Marshall of Chicago, enjoying light-hearted banter after closing a deal to build a new cotton mill that will make all of them wealthy. Marshall is pleased by the Hubbards's promise to prevent labor problems. One family member who stands to gain from the transaction is missing—Horace Giddens, Regina's husband, a banker. He is in Baltimore under the care of specialists for a heart condition. Leo, Oscar's toady son, has been taking care of his bank. Mr. Marshall and Regina flirt openly, and she promises to visit him in Chicago. Apparently her brothers approve of this potential affair, as it cements the business deal.

After Mr. Marshall leaves, the Hubbard family members speculate about how they will spend their millions. Regina's grand plan is to move to Chicago and become a member of high society. Ben interrupts the wish-making to suggest they assume a fifty-one percent controlling interest, with an investment of $225,000. Ben and Oscar push Regina to get her third of the investment money from Horace, who has not responded to Regina's letters. Regina shrewdly manages to turn their skepticism to her benefit by fabricating that Horace is holding out for a larger share. The brothers grant their sister this coup just to keep the deal in the family. The difference will come out of Oscar's share. In return Oscar wants Regina's daughter Alexandra (Zan) to marry his son. Regina promises only to think about it. Birdie promises Alexandra that she will not allow the family force her to marry Leo, and this earns her a slap on the face from her husband, which Birdie conceals from Zan. Regina announces that Alexandra is to leave the next morning to bring her father home. The curtain closes on Alexandra looking puzzled and frightened.

One week later, the family nervously awaits Horace's arrival. Cal makes an offhand remark about the meat Oscar is wasting, but Oscar cuts him off with an ominous threat. Leo and Oscar concoct a scheme to "borrow" $88,000 worth of Union Pacific bonds from Horace's safe deposit box, giving them

two-thirds of the investment, thus turning the tables on Ben. They would replace the bonds before Horace discovers them missing. Ben arrives and the siblings discuss Horace's delay over breakfast offstage.

Addie rushes hopefully to the door at the sound of voices; it is Horace, looking completely exhausted, and Alexandra, covered in soot from the trip. Alexandra asks not for her mother, but for Aunt Birdie. Addie and Horace happily reminisce for a moment, and then Horace asks her why he has been called home. She tells him about the plan and to marry Zan to Leo, Horace refuses the whole plan. It is not long, however, before the problems between Horace and Regina emerge again. She forces a discussion of the investment, in spite of his obvious fatigue. Horace discovers that the Hubbards have promised Marshall low wages and no strikes; he dryly observes that Ben will certainly accomplish this by playing the workers off against each other. Horace intends to obstruct the Hubbards: by not allowing Leo to marry Zan and not giving Regina his money. Regina pursues him as he retires upstairs, even though Ben urges her to wait. With their angry voices audible, Oscar puts forth his plan to circumvent Horace and Regina by "borrowing" $88,000 from a friend of Leo's. Ben, guessing the friend's identity, encourages them to proceed but refuses to shake Leo's hand good-bye. Regina returns downstairs unsuccessful and barely acknowledges Alexandra's plea to stop causing stress to her father. Regina turns instead to Ben, who shocks her with the news that everything is settled and that Oscar is going to Chicago. When Horace comes downstairs to relish the Hubbards's dispute, Regina cruelly accuses him of wishing her ill because of his own impending death. Horace responds that he refuses to help the Hubbards.

On a rainy afternoon two weeks later, Birdie and Alexandra contentedly play a piano duet while Horace is nearby. Abruptly, Horace tells Cal to run to the bank with a puzzling message meant for Leo's ears—that he has received the safe deposit box and now wants the manager to bring an attorney over that evening. Birdie's indulgence in elderberry wine causes her to reminisce about the happy days when Horace used to play the fiddle. In her inebriated gaiety, Birdie relates that her mother would never associate with the Hubbards. She explains that she married Oscar because Ben wanted the Lionnet cotton. Birdie hopes Zan will not turn out like herself, unhappily trailing after the power holders.

When Regina comes in, Horace announces that they have, after all, invested in the cotton mill. At first she thinks that Horace has decided to join her and she feels triumphant, but she has misunderstood. Horace will let the brother keep the stolen money, her only legacy in the new will he is about to write. In retaliation, she tells him that she has never loved him, that his impending death pleases her. This shocks Horace enough that he reaches for his heart medicine, but he drops the bottle and it breaks. He cannot even call to Addie for another bottle, and Regina makes no move to help him. He falls and is carried upstairs. When the brothers and Leo arrive, Regina divulges that she knows of their crime, and Ben and Oscar let Leo take the blame. Now she and Ben seem almost to relish fencing for the upper hand. If Horace lives, Ben and Oscar will win, but if he dies, Regina will triumph and send her brothers to jail. Betting that Horace will die, Regina blackmails them for a seventy-five percent share. Ben and Oscar are ready to give it to her to save themselves when Zan comes downstairs. Her posture indicates that Horace is dead; Regina has won. Regina reminds them of her sway over Mr. Marshall, who will abort the deal rather than risk a scandal—the brothers had better behave. Ben and Regina make amends, being cut of the same cloth. Only after Oscar departs does Ben deal his final blow: he shares Zan's suspicions about Horace's death. Before the end of the play, Regina is going to have another blow when Alexandra refuses to accompany her to Chicago because she wants to prevent the evil people like her mother and her uncles from eating the earth. She becomes aware of the threats of such people who are ready to hurt even their families in order to get money and power.

The Hubbards represent the ruthlessness that characterizes the new age and also exemplify "the inhumanity and vices of capitalism", and for such reasons and many others "[i]t would be difficult to find a more malignant gang of petty robber barons than Miss Hellman's chief characters"(Nagamani, p.47). The Hubbards embody those white southerners who set aside loyalty to their region for personal financial gain and collaborated with northern speculators during the Civil War and after the fall of the South (Wakefield, p.57). One reviewer identified the Hubbards right away, explaining:

they who spoil the vines are the greedy, crooked, petty, grasping remains of the South after the Civil War […] who exploited the country below the Mason- Dixon line for all the good, hard cash it was worth, replacing black slavery with economic slavery for black and white, defacing their country

sides with grim soot from mills that were rapidly erected with the moneybags from the North, blind to all the codes of human decency. (Ross, p.491)

In the Hubbards' profit-driven world, there is no allegiance to neighbors, region, or the past, and women are commodities to be bought and sold along with land and cotton.

Regina represents both the main evil doer and character of the play. She is a beautiful woman of forty. Her beauty is not her only feature for, throughout the events, she proves to be a skillful manipulative woman ambitious and anxious to have power represented by money and authority over her brothers and her surroundings: "There'll be millions, Birdie, millions. You know what I've always said when people told me we were rich? I said I think you should either be a nigger or a millionaire. In between, like us, what for?"(*The Little Foxes*, 21). Regina never accepts what is little or less than the share of others, she always wants the bigger share; she does not want to be in-between. It is her ambitions that make her consider money as a sign of dignity. That is why she plans to leave to Chicago when the cotton mills bring them the great money for Chicago is the big world that she aspires to. Hellman makes Regina the female with a quick understanding who is able to overcome her brothers in their viciousness (Wright, 79). When the brothers get bored with Horace's silence, she turns her husband's unresponsiveness into a deceptive tactic; she demands a very big percentage and suggests being the reason behind Horace's unresponsiveness. She uses different masks to play her role well; the role of an innocent woman who does not know about business (Smiley, p.112), and who cares about her husband's interest:

Well, *I* don't know. I don't know about these things. It would seem that if you put up a third you should only get a third. But then again, there's no law about it, is there? I should think that if you knew your money was very badly needed, well, you just might say, I want more, I want a bigger share. You boys have done that. I've heard you say so. (*The Little Foxes*,p.33)

In her plans of the arranged marriage of her daughter to her brother's son, Regina repeats the same cycle of greed; since Regina herself was forced by her father and brothers to marry Horace Giddens, an arrangement Regina must be referencing when she tells her daughter Alexandra: "Too many people used to make me do too many things" (*The Little Foxes*, p.78). However aware she is of her own status as a victim of exchange among men, Regina does

something very surprising in this play. She inserts herself into the communicative framework of her male kin, not only engaging in financial dealings with them, but even offering her own daughter up as a gift in marriage to her brother's son, Alexandra's cousin Leo, as part of their agreement in these dealings. Regina needs her husband Horace's third of the money to participate in her brothers' deal, so she schemes to bring him home from his five-month stay at the hospital in order to procure the money (Moody, p.97). She sends Alexandra, unaccompanied, to fetch her father, a southern transgression that horrifies even their African American maid Addie, "Going alone? Going by herself? A child that age!" (*The Little Foxes*,p.71).

Regina steps into a financial exchange among men and continues to deal as it leads to the potential exchange of a woman—her own daughter. Because she knows that her husband's $88,000 is the necessary component to the fruition of their deal, Regina ups the stakes with her brothers, asking for twice the profits they had originally agreed upon, and admits as part of the arrangement she would consider giving Alexandra in marriage to Leo. Regina cannot convince Horace to invest his money in time for the deal to go through, so her brothers and nephew come up with a new plan. Leo, an employee of his uncle's bank, has access to his uncle's safe deposit box with the bonds they need for their investment (Barlow, 84). Unbeknownst to Regina, Leo "borrows" Horace's bonds to give to Marshall, and the men plan to pay them back within five months when Horace will check the box again. However, Horace learns of the theft and goes to Regina. He tells her he will keep quiet about the theft until his impending death, when he plans to leave the 88,000 in bonds to Regina and the rest to Alexandra. Regina's brothers have, in effect, stolen her share of her husband's inheritance, leaving her destitute. In the course of their conversation, Horace has an attack of his heart trouble, and Regina watches him mercilessly as he grabs desperately for his medicine, refusing to help him as he falls down the landing to his death. To regain power, Regina then blackmails her brothers for seventy-five percent of the profits, threatening to go to the authorities and report the bonds stolen if they do not give in to her demands. Regina emerges as another fox, joining the Hubbard men and beating them in their own game (Nagamani,pp. 63-4).

The way that Hellman punishes her evil characters is not by making them die or surrender. Her punishment for Regina is that to let her remain a lone. Regina is likely to get the share she wants but she is no longer a wife and a mother. She "is biologically the mother, she doesn't fulfill the traditionally defined maternal / feminine role of comforting her children" (Wakefield, p.52). She loses her daughter's affection and respect because

Alexandra decides to go away from her because such a malicious personality is not worth to be her mother. Also because she "has no maternal instinct---only her avaricious instinct of outdoing her brothers in their 'race' to become rich. Regina has no true love for her husband and daughter “they are commodities or things…to be used to gain wealth"(Ibid). And thus, it is quite evident that Regina's notion of love is literally equated with matter or 'things' and this materialistic notion of life actually comes as an aspect and "a result of the value system propagated by a capitalistic American society"(Ibid,p. 52) in which everything in life is reevaluated according to its materialistic significance (Ibid,p. 54).

Benjamin or Ben Hubbard, the bachelor brother, is equal to Regina in his viciousness. He is "fifty-five, with a large jovial face and the light graceful movements that one often finds in large men"(*The Little Foxes*,p.6). Ben shows no interest in the spiritual side of life; shows no desire or interest in love, emotion, and the other human relations. What catches his attention is what can be used to achieve material gains. In his small southern town he has exploited and cheated the workers. And in his new business with Mr. Marshall he assures him about the profits; promising low wages and no strikes for he (the predatory capitalist) knows how to use the workers against each other (Galens, p. 164). Ben's character differs from his siblings in being funny and extremely harmful, and as Hellman describes him in her notebook, he is "rather jolly and far less solemn than the others and far more dangerous"(Lederer, p. 42). His threat of danger lies in his hypocritical manner; the ability to observe others and plot against them without showing his real feeling or, in other words, lies in his ability to play tricks on them (Wright, p. 57). When Oscar gets furious at reducing his share to be given to Regina, Ben easily persuades everyone:

My, my. I am being attacked tonight on all sides. First by my sister, then by my brother. And I ain't a man who likes being attacked. I can believe that God wants the strong to parade their strength, but I don't mind it if it's got to be done. … You ought to take these things better, Oscar. I've made you money in the past. I'm going to make you more money now. You'll be a very rich man. What's the difference to any of us if a little
more goes here, a little less goes there---it's all in the family. And it will stay in the family. I'll never marry. (*The Little Foxes*, p.37)

Along with Oscar and Leo, Ben plans for the robbery and hides everything from Regina. But when Regina outwits them by telling them about their act of theft; threatening to send them to jail or to have a bigger share and larger profits, Ben reacts in a more cruel way but typical of the Hubbards. Thus, he threatens his sister to accuse her of killing her husband since he hears Zan asking or indirectly accusing her mother of killing her father. He employs this speech for his own benefit, using it as a means to defend himself against Regina's attacks. Ben and Regina are foxes fighting each other to get the best always; each one is as dangerous as the other. They are similar in their poisonous thoughts and devious ways of getting what they want. They are ready to ruin each other in order to win the big money. Ben is evil and his evil has a face of hypocrisy in addition to many devilish faces (Bloom, pp.76-7). He is hypocritical and "a part of the hypocrisy is so practical and usual that he is no longer aware of it"(Adler,p.21). Hence to cure Ben or save him from his evil nature is a controversial matter that Hellman does leave open.

Oscar may be a shade less powerful than Regina and Ben. But he too is a fox. He, like Regina, married Birdie only for money. He is an introvert who advised his son "it's every man's duty to think of himself" (*The Little Foxes*, p.158). With the help of his son he stole the bonds which belonged to Horace and pretended as if he did not know anything about it. A very complex character, Oscar's main trait is sadism. He inflicts pain on others especially Birdie. Hunting provides an outlet for his sadism. He has missed only one day of hunting in eight years and he will not allow the starving Negroes to shoot the animals for food (Alder, p.61). The Hubbards' exploit both the impoverished Negroes and the aristocratic ones. The maid Addie is a helpless witness to their degradation. The cultured aristocrats are also the Hubbards' victims (Ibid, p.62).

Leo, the little fox, is "a lying toady with all of the greed and deceitfulness of his father and none of his mother's cultural refinement"(Galens, p. 164). He is also a villain and has an evil nature but unable to outwit his father and uncle when they put the blame on him when the theft is revealed. Thus, Hellman's portrayal of the Hubbard clan shows the depth of their corruption. Her "emphasis is upon the characters who in a material sense make a success of living, but who are as void of social or moral or spiritual values as a nest of vipers"(Dusenbury, p. 143). The Hubbards have their root in Hellman's imagination and memory of her relatives. She has the image of her mother's family dinners when she writes about Regina and her brothers (Going, p.112).

When viewed generally the play has no heroes and heroines; only victors and victims. The only aristocrat in the family is Birdie. She is repeatedly belittled by her family. She is weak and pathetic and completely at the mercy of the Hubbards. She drinks in private to kill her memories of a gentle lovely life at the Old Plantation. It is she who advises Alexandra to be aware of evil motives and methods of the Hubbards. She hates her own son and warns Alexandra against family dependency. She feels that after twenty years she would be treated like her. She reveals the true nature of the Hubbards, that they ―made their money charging awful interest to ignorant niggers and cheating them on what they bought. The mild and ailing Horace is also a victim who dies at the hands of Regina (Lewis, p.86).

The time of writing the play in 1939, in the wake of the Great Depression, is important since the world witnessed a drastic decline in its economy. And hence the subject of money and its dangerous influences constituted a great part of Hellman's interest. In the play Hellman chooses the Hubbards to illustrate how greed and personal pursuit of wealth can damage the greedy people and their surroundings (Smiley, p.104). *The Little Foxes*, as Wright states, "is an angry denunciation of greed, the ruthlessness it inspires and the havoc it spreads"(p.44). Watching or reading the play, the audience and the readers become aware that the overwhelming desire to have more and more money is a ruinous desire since it deteriorates the humane side of the psyche. And what happens with the Hubbards is that in their plan to get wealthier they lose every sign of humanity; they violate each other's right, they forget and betray their duties, and even they kill whoever stands in their way. Though they have a comfortable financial life, the Hubbards sacrifice everything to get richer. In their business deal with Mr. Marshall each one of them dreams about his or her life after getting money. *The Little Foxes* reflects the anger and frustration of the social playwrights of the thirties. The middle class was corrupt and power-mad and exploitative (Moody, p.69). A critic comments that “the play itself is a demonstration , as it concentrates on showing us the graceless behaviour of a society in which the more ambitious become scoundrels and the more decent stand by and let them get away with exploiting the poor”(Bloom, p.86).

Hellman situates her play in the South at the very beginning of the twentieth century because she knows about the south and its people, relying on her mother's relatives. The beginning of the twentieth century, 1901, was a period in which workers were exploited and fortunes were piled ruthlessly by different tools. Depicting the family life of the Hubbards, Hellman sheds light

on significant subject matters; the effects and consequences of the civil war, industrialization, and capitalism (Wakefield, p.58). She illustrates what money can do to the mentality of the people in an age of changes in the different fields of life. She portrays the underlying vicious motives of "unscrupulous industrialists who infiltrated the New South and nourished a form of predatory capitalism that [she] considered a threat to the American ethic"(Galens, p.164). Hellman depicts the story of the Hubbards and their exploitation of the poor workers; she shows the audience how they persecute those who are in need of money. Thus, The Hubbards are the capitalists who creep to spread persecution and dominate the lower classes (Lederer, p.46). They use the power of money to control their surroundings and as Sam Smiley says:

-Regina, Ben, Oscar, and Leo--represent the rising industrial capitalists in the South around 1900. They display the rapacious nature of those responsible for the beginning of
contemporary capitalism. With this play Hellman attempted to alert the audience to the
significance of ambition and greed in the capitalistic system, and she tried to stimulate her audience to ask what can be done to control such evils (Smiley, p.100).

To raise the issues of capitalism and its corrupted means, Hellman raises questions about the ways that can end the corruption and stop its
increasing damage. But what is more interesting about the play is that"[t]hrough its thoughtful indignation *The Little Foxes* becomes a scornful and heartfelt parable of the rise of the industrial South in all its ruthlssness"(Nagamani, 88). And hence the play "admirably reflects the devastating effects of those socio-economic changes in both the old families and the wealthy new families"(Wakefield, p.46) represented by Birdie and the Hubbards respectively. Birdie, from the old families, has been "enslaved by the new breed of entrepreneurs" (Ibid), while the new wealthy families "like the Hubbards did turn on each other"(Moody, p.104). Capitalism as an evil power which swept over the world caused great damage for the helpless and financially weak people. And as a social playwright Hellman finds it necessary, as a part of her responsibility, to protest and condemn such evil powers (Bloom, p.112). Thus it comes to express: "the truism that the advance of capitalistic exploitation is made possible by people who are greedy, rapacious, and selfish. Uncontrolled capitalism" (Alder,p.57), hence, “will continue to destroy the weak and the meek. Love is no deterrent, for it is lacking in the exploiters” (Wakefield, p.68).

The universality of the Hubbards case is clearly meant by the author. In this regard Hellman states in *Pentimento* ," I had meant the audience to recognize some part of themselves in the money-dominated Hubbards"(p.180). She also clarifies that, though Southerners, the Hubbards can be found everywhere: "I simply happened to write about the south because I knew the people and I knew the place….but I didn't mean it to be just for the south"(Wakefield, p.59). She wants to suggest that "[i]n the world of business without ethics 'these fictional turn of the century robber barons bear an all too close resemblance' to greedy 'fine gentleman' of any time and place"(Ibid). It is the duty of the people to stop the Hubbards of the world because to prevent the little foxes "to go freely…is all mankind's responsibility, and the tragedy of Zan…is the tragedy of all gentle people who fall prey to the predatory and of all those who merely stand by"(Going, p.158). Hellman invites the people to take action; not to stand by or to be silent, to prevent the evil to spread. She sends a message through Addie's speech; "Sometimes I think it ain't right to stand and watch them do it"(*The Little Foxes*,p.110). Alexandra's rejection of her mother at the end asserts that there will be fighters, even if few in number, fighting the earth eaters, the villains who forget everything about the spiritual side of life and indulge in its materialistic side. The fighters are the defenders of righteousness and justice (Going, p.160). The play "is a demonstration", Henry Hewes says, because " it concentrates on showing us the graceless behavior of a society in which the more ambitious become scoundrels and the more decent stand by and let them get away with exploiting the poor" (Lederer, p.40). It is the responsibility of the whole society to stand against the despoilers. Hellman uses and condemns passivity "in its variegated forms as a catalyst for truth-telling, deception, and most importantly, self-deception: all recurrent themes in her plays"(Alder, p.19). Like her own manner in life, she wants people to act; to stand against the evil doers whose number increases day after day (Ibid).

The Little Foxes is a reaction against the corruption of the early twentieth century America. Hellman as a social playwright condemns the evils that emerge individually and spread their poison in society, and encourages the bystanders to take action. Hellman as a social playwright succeeds in diagnosing the main diseases of her society and her age. Through the portrayal of the Hubbard's family, Hellman points out to the ultimate fox that creates those little foxes; it is the materialistic world, the system of capitalism. The playwright calls for instant remedies because allowing the foxes, of which the Hubbards are and might get out of control.

Works cited:

-Alder, Thomas P. "Lillian Hellman: The Conscience of the Culture." *American Drama1940-1960: A Critical History of American Drama Series*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994.

-Barlow, Judith. *Plays by American Women: 1930-1960*. New York: Applause, 1993.

- Bloom, Harold. *Dramatists and Drama*. New York: Chelsea House, 2005.

-Dusenbury, Winifred L. *The Theme of Loneliness in Modern American Drama*. Florida: The University of Florida Press, 1960.

-Falk, Doris V. *Lillian Hellman*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1978.

-Galens, David ed. *Drama for Students* vol. 3. Detroit: Gale Research, 1998.

-Going, William T. Essays *on Alabama Literature*. Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1975.

-Goodman, Charlotte. "The Fox's Cubs: Lillian Hellman, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams." *Modern American Drama: The Female Canon*. Ed. June Schlueter. Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1990.

-Hellman, Lillian, *The Little Foxes.* New York: The Viking Press, 1971.

_____. *Pentimento: A Book of Portraits*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973.

-Lederer, Katherine .*Lillian Hellman*. Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1979.

-Lewis, Allen. *American Plays and Playwrights of the Contemporary Theatre.* New York: Crown Publishers, 1965.

-Moody, Richard. *Lillian Hellman: Playwright.* New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1972.

-Nagamani, T. *The Plays of Lillian Hellman: A Critical Study*. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 2001.

-Rose, Al. *Storyville, New Orleans, Being an Authentic, Illustrated Account of the Notorious Red-Light District*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1974.

-Smiley, Sam. *The Drama of Attack: Didactic Plays of the American Depression*. Colombia: University of Missouri Press, 1972.

-Wakefield, Thaddeus. *The Family in Twentieth _ Century American Drama*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2004.

-Wright, William. *Lillian Hellman: the image, the woman*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.

الثعلب المطلق في مسرحية "الثعالب الصغار" للكاتبة ليليان هيلمان

م. مروه غازي محمد

جامعة بغداد/ كلية التربية للبنات

إنَّ ليليان هيلمان كاتبة امريكية مسرحية، ارتبط اسمها بالكتابات عن القيم الاخلاقية في بداية القرن العشرين. تتميز مسرحياتها بأفكارها الاخلاقية و شجب الشر، كما تتميز المسرحيات بتجسيدها لشخصيات حية في المسرح الامريكي وذلك لتنوع شخصياتها، و ادوارها الفعالة، و التصوير الحقيقي لها.

يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة مسرحية "الثعالب الصغار" للكاتبة ليليان هيلمان ، تنقد المسرحية المجتمع الامريكي في اوائل القرن العشرين. بالرغم من امريكا بلد بني على احلام السعادة و الحرية. في فترة الاحباط الاقتصادي حيث لم تكن السعادة في متناول الافراد. كثير من مصاعب الحياة ازدادت بوجود افكار سياسي متقلبة و انحدار القيم والحب، لهذا تعد فترة التوتر حقيقة سائدة ليتم تناولها كأفكار في الكتابة عن التدهور الاقتصادي و اثاره. ان امريكا التي تعد ارض الوعود، اصبحت عالم فارغ يدور في محور المادية التي غيرت افكار الناس بخصوص الحب و القيم الاخلاقية. تقدم مسرحية هيلمان الثعلب المطلق المتمثل بالأفكار السياسية و المادية، الذي يعد المسؤول عن اعداد الثعالب الصغار وتدهور النظام الاخلاقي.