

T.C.
KADİR HAS UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE

**MAMETIAN PARADOXES IN “AMERICAN BUFFALO”
AND “GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS”**

M.A. THESIS

BAHAR ÜZÜMCÜ

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ÖZET

Bu tezde David Mamet'in American Buffalo ve Glengarry Glen Ross isimli iki oyununda yer alan karakterlerin, Amerikan iş dünyasında başarılı olmak uğruna nasıl kimlik kaybına uğradıkları irdelenmiştir. Sadece erkek karakterlerden oluşan bu iki oyun, Amerikan Rüyası sorunsalının sosyal bir eleştirisidir. Toplumda var olabilmek uğruna karakterlerin birbirini kandırmaları ve aslında kandırılanların kendileri olmaları iki oyununda özünü oluşturmaktadır. İki oyunda da kazanan ve kaybeden kişiler aynıdır ve bu Mamet'in oyunlarına yansıttığı bir paradokstur. Adı geçen iki oyunda kullanılan maskülen dil, oyun yazarının kapitalist düzene eleştirisidir. Gelir dağılımının eşitsizliği yüzünden karakterlerin çıkmaza sürüklenmesi iki oyunun sosyo-kültürel bir problemidir. Bu tez insan ilişkilerinin maddi alanda başarılı olmak uğruna nasıl bozulduğu problemine odaklanmıştır.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how the characters in David Mamet's plays, American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross, experience an inner conflict in their attempt to survive/succeed in the American business world. The plays feature male characters only, and reflect a social criticism of the American Dream. Both Glengarry Glen Ross and American Buffalo present a quandary in that the characters must trick one another in order to survive. They failed to realize that the American business world tricks them as part of the system. Mamet highlights the paradox of the characters simultaneously winning and losing. In addition, he criticizes the capitalist system by utilizing a masculine code in language. As a result of income disparities within society, the characters are desperate and are forced to engage in immoral actions such as deceiving others at all costs in order to close a deal. This thesis focuses on the social dilemma of the degenerated human relationships that stem from the necessity to achieve financial success.

INTRODUCTION

David Mamet's name is generally correlated with the masculine gender of business ethics because of his male-cast plays such as Glengarry Glen Ross and American Buffalo. Mamet is interested in his male performers' rivalries and deceptions. Glengarry Glen Ross (1983) and American Buffalo (1975), the two plays that will be analyzed in my thesis, highlight the male characters who were succeeded through the use of profane and patriarchal language, particularly in the world of work.

Mamet is famous for his distinctive language that is crafted in the dialogue of his plays. He uses abusive language as a tool to reveal the corrupted world of American business. The language of the plays originates from the characters' inner worlds. The performers are always furious and this aggression is performed by a code language which is a means to survive. By the help of this speech pattern, we enter the world of these characters. The behavior of the actors is shaped by the coarse speech. Therefore Mamet's dialect is at the center of American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross in terms of needy male figures. Mamet's characters employ abusive language to mask their frustration. The language becomes a defence mechanism for these vulgar actors. The paradox is that the characters, such as Teach and/or Levene, think they are winners but are actually losers in the business world. They commit a crime to gain money, however even stealing does not let them advance. Mametian idioms illustrate this paradox through the use of insulting utterances.

From 1978 to 1979, Mamet held the position of associate artistic director at the Goodman Theatre, the oldest theater in Chicago. Between the years 1978 and 1984,

Mamet was a significant playwright-in-residence at the same theatre company.

The Goodman Theater played a crucial role in Mamet's career because the American premieres of both American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross were held in this leading theater.

Robert Falls, who is the current artistic director of the Goodman Theatre and who directed Mamet's American Buffalo, states that "Chicago theatre is a big shouldered theatre. At its best, it is very muscular... It's not polite. It has rough edges. It's not polished. But there is a tremendous energy in it" (quoted in Tekinay 45). Falls's comment explicitly underscores the masculine motives of Mamet's male figures who want to be successful in a very challenging city.

In American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross, Mamet dramatizes the state of man and his existence in a corrupted and remorseless business world through obscene and colloquial conversations with staccato rhythms. Although both of the plays are dominated by men, there is a considerable difference between them, as Anne Dean notes "In American Buffalo, Mamet portrays a group of small-time crooks who thought themselves legitimate businessmen; in Glengarry Glen Ross, his subjects are businessmen but they all behave like crooks" (195-196). Mamet tries to underscore the pitiable impotence of his so called businessmen in a highly sarcastic manner.

Despite the fact that the plays structurally differ, the characters in both plays represent the same fiddle. Mamet's two plays take place in Chicago, but the characters are in different lines of work. The junk shop in American Buffalo and the real estate agency in Glengarry Glen Ross stand for a similar degeneration in

business practices. The characters do not hesitate to undertake illegal actions such as theft and betrayal to succeed in this defective system. The destructive system is created by other dominant individuals who live in the same society. Therefore, our scoundrels do not con each other since they are already cheated by the capitalist system in terms of self-delusion. Worst of all, they are not aware that they are the victims of this paradox of betrayal. The winners and losers are the same characters in both plays because the theme of self-deception occurs to a great extent with the male figures. The main story in both plays centers around individuals without economic freedom and their fight to survive. The characters are weakened by the corrupt system in the plays. Capitalism consumes many that are trying to chase the American Dream. The system forces them to cheat and lie in order to exist.

The Mametian paradox could be rooted in Mamet's problematic childhood. He and his sister, Lynn, went through a rough period and were exposed to emotional breakdowns when they moved to live with their mother and her new husband in a suburb of Chicago. Before Mamet was well acquainted with contemporary American Theatre, he held several odd jobs including working at a roadside diner and laboring as a maintenance man. He was obliged to earn a living and for a while he worked as a real estate agent in Chicago where he explored the ways of dupery with regards to the sale of property. Most people would argue that in Glengarry Glen Ross, Mamet depicted the amoral and vulgar sides of business that he observed in his early years in Chicago. As Robert Falls claims above, Chicago theatre is full of hardships so Mamet's drama is affected by this impolite atmosphere. David Mamet's childhood was impacted by restraint and turmoil, and his plays were influenced by this.

1. AMERICAN BUFFALO

David Mamet's gripping play American Buffalo takes place in a Resale Shop owned by Don Dubrow, who is in his late forties. Mamet highlights the inner world of the three burglars, Don Dubrow, Walter Cole and Bob, whose aim is to steal back the coin Don sold to a well-dressed customer beforehand. Walter Cole, also called Teach, is a friend of Don. He insists on going into the customer's house instead of Bob, the sidekick of Don, since Bob isn't smart enough to overcome this kind of formidable job. Teach does not hesitate to manipulate the Resale Shop's owner because he represents the vulgar and paranoid side of the human soul. Don permits Teach to break into the house only if Fletcher, who is never on the stage throughout the play, takes a part in the burglary too. The violent and frantic Teach attacks Don verbally since he does not want the money to be scattered. While these prospective petty thieves wait for Fletcher to show up to initiate the robbery, Bob walks in the junk shop carrying a buffalo nickel but not the one they are going to steal. Bob is suspected of stealing the nickel by the furious and vicious Teach who bursts with anger because of their inadequacy to accomplish the deed. Since Teach cannot tolerate weakness, he cannot stop himself from knocking down the poor boy, Bob. Don has a soft spot for Bob, who is desperately in need of medical help, and takes him to the hospital before the curtain is drawn.

1.1. MAMETIAN PARADOX: LOSER WINNERS

In his poignant and assertive work, Mamet portrays a distorted image of American business with the help of the three failed pilferers. These so called burglars represent the corrupted ethical values in terms of masculinity and self-deception. The loser characters of American Buffalo represent a collapse in life that lead them to betrayal. Since Mamet is a master at providing vicious attacks on the degenerated business world, he inserts his vision of virility in his play. According to Mamet, the term masculinity necessarily belongs to men who are manipulative, seductive and deceptive in order to survive in the intricate world of business. If a man lacks these masculine motives, he cannot find his place in this male class. The Mametian paradox, which is self deception of the male characters, can be regarded as Mamet's primary concern in his play.

In American Buffalo, Teach symbolizes masculine and imposter visions of mankind because from beginning to end he is in search of victory that is pillage. Teach's anxiety over identity is underscored. Despite not being a business man, Teach often lectures others about the business world. By portraying "stealing" as an ordinary business practice, he creates chaos. He has to strike it rich since if he cannot he will feel powerless, defeated and, worst of all, less masculine. Through Teach, Mamet tries to emphasize that masculinity is a must in the male dominated business world. Unwittingly, Teach believes that if he performs highly masculine, he will obtain his goal. This idea is reflected in Michael S. Kimmel's claim:

American white men bought the promise of self-made masculinity, but its foundation has all but eroded. Instead of questioning those ideals, they fall back upon those same traditional notions of manhood- physical strength, self-control, power- that defined their fathers' and their grandfathers' eras, as if the solution to their problem were simply "more" masculinity. (218)

Mamet's characters, who behave in a masculine manner, need to maintain their family. According to Mamet masculinity not only requires muscle strength but also supporting a family. As Michael S. Kimmel states: "Between 1810 and 1820, the term *breadwinner* was coined to denote [the] responsible family man. The breadwinner ideal would remain one of the central characteristics of American manhood until the present day" (15). While the characters try to win their bread, they are involved in a crime. Teach is in favor of stealing the old coin alone since he does not want to share his bread with anyone else.

According to Mamet's masculinity, feminine notions, such as friendship, affection and fidelity are not welcomed in business world. The following lines from Teach exemplify this.

TEACH: We're talking about money for chrissake, huh? We're talking about cards. Friendship is friendship, and a wonderful thing, and I am all for it. I have never said different, and you know me on this point.
 Okay.
 But let's just keep it *separate* huh, let's just keep the two apart,
 And maybe we can deal with each other like some human beings. (Mamet 15)

After being insulted by the unseen female characters of the play, Gracie and Ruthie, Teach argues with Don, who is a more indulgent male than him. Grace and Ruthie

are belittled because Teach believes that they disgraced him. Teach is so full of masculine motives that he has problems with Don's behaviour towards this lesbian couple. Mamet stresses that business equates to money, and goodwill in marketplace should be ignored or else a collapse is inevitable.

According to Mamet, American business is highly linked to a masculine community. In the play, the two female characters are always kept behind the curtain. The absence of women in Mamet's plays indicates that feminine values, such as tolerance and softness, are not appropriate for the relentless world of American business since they signify weakness and impotence. Moreover, the theme of betrayal belongs to male hegemony in the world of business. That's why American Buffalo contains fevered scenes and slang words that signify unethical profit. In Act 1, when Don and Bob talk about Fletcher's success in winning four hundred dollars, Don discloses his understanding of achievement.

DON: You take him and put him down in some strange town with just a nickel in his pocket, and by nightfall he'll have that town by the balls. This is not talk, Bob, this is action. *(Pause.)*
 BOB: He's a real good card player.
 DON: You're fucking A he is, Bob, and this is what I'm getting at. Skill. Skill and talent and the balls to arrive at your own *conclusions*. (Mamet 4)

Once more Mamet points out that lack of manhood, which is "balls", prohibits you from succeeding. In other words, in order to make a living in a distorted business world, one has to have male subversiveness. In "Every Fear Hides a Wish: Unstable Masculinity in Mamet's Drama" Carla McDonough points out that, "If a job is what defines a man, then failure in business is what defines the not-man, the woman. It is

precisely the differentiation of these two positions that offers any sense of identity” (202). Mamet creates and shapes his characters in a truly masculine manner since success can solely be achieved by male identity. For Mamet’s drama, a prosperous businessman needs to be illicit to achieve his goal. Unfortunately, this defect ends without a resolution at the end of the play. Don highlights that the business world is competitive and it can only be overcome by virility. The muddleheaded Bob is encouraged to be a “standup” guy like Fletcher. Mamet underscores that streets are where men can fulfill their action. This idea is reflected in Don’s claim:

DON: ... And this is why I’m telling you to stand up.
It’s no different with you and with anyone else.
Everything that I or Fletcher know we picked up on the streets.
That’s all business is... common sense, experience, and
talent. (Mamet 6)

Mamet depicts streets (the business world) as an environment that is out of bounds for women because women generally spend time indoors. Muliebrity is a threat according to the oppressive capitalist system. According to Mamet, even Bob, the most innocent male of American Buffalo, can accomplish something that an ordinary woman cannot if he wants it deep inside. This perspective leads Mamet to shape his characters in a highly masculine manner.

In American Buffalo, the characters are created with the concept of manhood. Therefore, some useful questions for analyzing the role of deluded masculinity in the play include the following: What does Mamet understand from masculine notion? What is Mamet’s agenda? Why does he choose his characters from the male world?

In other words, do crime, brutality or betrayal belong to manhood? Do the characters beguile others or themselves? These questions point out/reflect Mamet's style as a playwright. He uses male characters only in his plays to communicate his masculine style. The characters become slaves to the American system because of their mistakes. They fall in a trap while trying to trick others. In general, the masculine gender role is concerned with tangible male intensity. The conventional wisdom is to push womanhood to the background. In a hypermasculine community, the role of man requires steady income while the woman nurtures her children at home. Mamet tends to base his work on this perception. In American Buffalo, Teach exemplifies the hypermasculinity with his maladaptive psychology. The loser Teach tries to recapture the old coin by an illegal act which is trickery. The reality is that he is the one who is cheated by the degenerated capitalist system. This paradox is shaped by Mamet in order to display how the characters are subject to a loss of identity.

There is always a place for characters like Teach in this devious business. He represents the pejorative side of humankind since he has to survive in the sea of mischief. Oddly enough, he is not aware of the fact that he is defeated by depraved business life. His aggression, physical strength and machismo constitute the fundamental principles of survival. He values growth and strength the most in life. Therefore, he rejects the idea of breaking into the house with the help of Fletcher. He simply does not favor the idea of sharing his masculine identity with someone else.

TEACH: We don't need this guy, Don. We don't need him. I see your point here, I do. So you're thinking I'm out there alone, and you're worried I'll rattle, so you ask me how I in. I understand. I see this, I do. I could go in the second floor, climb up a drainpipe, I could do *this* ... (Mamet 51)

Teach is held captive to the logic of Don's common sense. Don performs as the capitalist manager in the play (because he is the one who knows the spotted guy's house) and thus Teach is obliged to work with another devious character, Fletcher. Teach acknowledges the partnership with Fletcher involuntarily since the decision is Don's.

TEACH: Wrong, wrong, you make your own right and wrong. Hey Biiig fucking deal. The shot is yours, no one disputing that. We're talking about business, let's *talk* business: you think it's good business call Fletch in? To help us.
DON: Yes.
TEACH: Well then okay. (Mamet 52)

The above dialogue reveals how Teach feels pathetic and demoted in the eyes of opinionated Don. As far as the "shot goes", no one can rebel against Don since money talks. The dramatic acceptance of Teach points out how the depraved business system humiliates even the most perverted character of the play.

TEACH: Three-men jobs.
DON: Yeah.
TEACH: You, me and Fletcher.
DON: Yeah.
TEACH: A division of labor.
(*Pause.*)
(Security. Muscle. Intelligence.) Huh?
DON: Yeah.
TEACH: This means, what, a traditional split.
Am I right? We get ten off the top goes to Earl,
And the rest, three- way split. Huh? That's what
we got? Huh?
DON: Yeah. (Mamet 14)

Thanks to Don, the use of staccato rhythms enables Mamet to highlight the merciless side of American business. Although Teach plays his trump card by not sharing his allotment with Fletcher, he is hopeless since Don has the upper hand. Unlike the money, Teach will share his maleness and power with Fletcher. This leads to terrorism and causes him to leap further in the dark. The offensive act of Teach is at the center of the play. His aggressive behavior sets the paradox of failure in life since he represents the tyrannical destitute of American Buffalo. By the help of Teach, Mamet strictly attacks the corrupted capitalist system that his nation is supported by since the ideological background of American business is comprised of the suppressed manners.

Mamet highlights the characters who are built upon seditious and patriarchal language, particularly in the workplace. By portraying exclusively male characters, Mamet displays American business as being abusive, energetic and violent using the theme of self-deception. These intractable characters present assertive behavior, which is generally associated with men, due to the corrupted capitalist system. In the

harsh and competitive business world, the term masculinity requires mercilessness. This is why male characters with dark sides appear in both of the plays. Why do these characters show us their gloomy and coarse sides? Do they not have some kind of philanthropic aspect? The business world consists of countless traps and requires the characters to unveil their dark sides in order to survive. Despite this darkness, a few still remain unchanged. Bob is one them.

TEACH: You buy a coin for fifty dollars, you come back here.

(Pause.)

Why?

DON: Go get your fucking car.

TEACH: Why would you do a thing like that?

BOB: I don't know.

TEACH: Why would you go do a thing like that?

BOB: For Donny.

(Pause.)

TEACH: You people make my flesh crawl. (Mamet 99)

Mamet created Bob to be a sharp contrast to Teach. Bob is a token of fidelity. He demonstrates fidelity when he comes to the junk shop with his ordinary nickel. Bob does not con or waiver despite being beaten and debased by Teach. Bob is the victim of Don in the play. The reader and audience become empathetic to Bob as he is the innocent guy who has not deceived or conned throughout the play. The theme that friendships can be destroyed for personal gains is evident as Bob covered in blood apologizes to his father figure Don. Apologetic, childlike Bob stands out amongst the other characters as Mamet's dialogue demonstrates that ethics or conscious has no place in big business.

BOB: I fucked up.
DON: No. You did real good.
BOB: No.
DON: Yeah. You did real good.
(*Pause.*)
BOB: Thank you.
DON: That's all right.
(*Pause.*)
BOB: I'm sorry, Donny.
DON: That's all right. (Mamet 106)

Although Bob is desperately in need of medical aid due to the bleeding in his ear, he apologizes for messing up everything. Despite all of the violent speeches we encounter throughout the play, Bob's innocence impresses us profoundly. Mamet once more underscores that there is no place for ethical values in male dominated big business.

1.2. MAMETIAN PARADOX: LANGUAGE

David Mamet, whose use of language is so idiosyncratic, differs from other contemporary playwrights. Language plays a crucial role in order to create characters distinctively in his works. When the male characters speak, they usually speak in a frantic colloquial dialect. This dialogue tool lets the conversations reveal characters failures. Mamet portrays certain characters as losers by using slang in his dialogue.

American Buffalo is famous for its different narration. The use of regional language is an essential part of Mamet's drama. The playwright, does not hesitate to employ abusive and nasty utterances throughout, befitting a unique narration technique. Mamet himself creates a drama inside his drama. His linguistic talent is outstanding, as stated below by Gregory Mosher in the introduction part of American Buffalo:

Mamet worked iambic pentameter out of the vernacular of the underclass, he made it sound like people talking, and he made it funny. The language was an immediate sensation, and over the years it's made a lot of audiences very happy and a lot of actors very crazy. (qtd. in Mamet xi)

Mosher considers Mamet an experienced narrator who employs a scurrilous manner of storytelling without indulging in pornography. Mamet employs abusive and obscene language as a tool in order to mask the frustration of his characters.

In Act 1, Teach walks around the junk shop and enters the stage with the following line: "Fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie, fuckin' Ruthie" (Mamet 9). Readers are puzzled since they are not accustomed to the

way Teach speaks, but their astonishment fades because Teach continues to curse Ruthie in the following lines. It is hardly surprising that Teach is keen on swearing. Indeed, if he does not revile, the readers start to wonder if something bad will happen to him. Teach's offensive language sets the paradox in Mamet's drama. Mamet lets Teach employ insulting words because he is a sign of failure. In the game of American business, womanly temperament is eminently proscribed and muliebrity is seen as a sin. According to the male characters, being a woman in a male dominated unethical business world is a shame. However, if one of these women strikes it rich, which happens once in a blue moon, then that woman should be insulted. In the opening act, Teach struggles to digest the news that Ruthie won two hundred dollars playing poker at Don's place.

DON: The only one won any money, Fletch and Ruthie.

TEACH: (*Pause.*): Cunt had to win two hundred dollars.

DON: She's a good card player.

TEACH: She is not a good card player, Don. She is a mooch and she is a locksmith and she plays like a woman.

(*Pause.*) (Mamet 14)

Teach is greatly bothered that Ruthie makes lots of money as a woman. Ironically enough, Teach condemns Ruthie for playing "like a woman" although she is a woman. As a matter of fact, if a woman wins more than a man in the market place, she may not be welcomed. Throughout the play, the obstinate loser Teach scolds Ruthie for being a lesbian and winning a lot of money. If Ruthie could not win at poker, whether or not Teach would be inflamed to this extent, is debatable.

The use of obscene expressions allows Teach to gush out hatred stemming from his failure in his so-called business of burglary and life in general. Teach's antipathetic behavior is a reflection of his inefficacy in life. Teach's anger toward Ruthie stems from being angry with himself since he is a failure. This is an efficient paradox set by David Mamet. In the play, Teach and Don try to con Bob to get more money, however they are being deluded by the harshness of big business. Masculine behavior in the play is generally associated with profanity against female characters. Therefore, the violative tone of Teach implies that Ruthie and Gracie are scapegoats inherently.

From beginning to end, Teach takes the prospective theft seriously and does not want Bob to break into the house because he thinks the job is not suited to him. Teach behaves as if he is talking about a crucial business deal. Teach frequently humiliates and insults people who are superior to him. He is condescending to Ruthie because she is a good card player. In addition, he does not want Fletcher to work with them because he is more brilliant than him. He is also unconsciously jealous of Bob since he still has humanistic dignity and is cherished by Don who is worried about his breakfast. Bob, who represents the innocent side of the human soul, is being scorned by fraudulent Teach.

DON: Go get your car.

TEACH: I am not your nigger.

I am not your wife.

DON: I'm through with you today.

TEACH: You are.

DON: Yes. (Mamet 100)

According to Teach, women and niggers live in the same gutter. According to Teach, only niggers and women can be forced to do something. Since he is a white male, he

feels that he has the right to defy Don. This is evident when Don asks for Teach's car at the very end of the play and Teach refuses. Mamet masterfully emphasizes mankind's decay while he allows the characters to speak a highly colloquial language in terms of irony. Teach represents a contemptible aspect of the human soul when accusing Ruthie and Bob of being detestable. Therefore, the dark side of humankind is being portrayed with this hatred towards so-called inferior classes. While Teach feels rage towards another, it is very obvious that he bears a grudge against himself.

Mamet's drama exhibits male dominance since he conceals the female identity from the stage. Most of his employed slang is ascribed to masculinity, and that is why the stage only portrays male identity. According to Mamet, profanity belongs to men, but clean language is the provenance of women. Sexually seductive and vulgar expressions are associated with masculine modality, and this is why the male dominant society acquires a bad reputation. As a reader, it is a pity that we do not have a chance to hear a woman's voice in American Buffalo. Whether Mamet's unseen female characters would employ vernacular is an interesting question.

David Mamet is famous for his syntax. His unique language shapes and unearths the play. This idea is reflected in Anne Dean's claim: "All playwrights are obviously language playwrights in one sense, but Mamet's poetic and rhythmic gifts enable the language to become much more than a dialogue - it becomes the shape of the play itself" (15). Mamet's characters speak the language of the playwright. Mamet's elaborated language is based on a very ironic and oxymoronic street language. His short dialogues and staccato harmony generate the subtext for the play. The reader/audience can infer that the play is full of unfilled dialogues. The characters

cannot converse accurately, and therefore the conversations are usually cut. As Harold Clurman emphasizes in the below statement, throughout the play you sense that the pieces of the puzzle are not combined.

In American Buffalo, the characters express themselves in the debris of our language: words and sentences have become eroded... If the play finally achieves eloquence it is through the inarticulate. No ideas or statements are ever completed, conversation is chiefly carried on in a series of muddled or explosive ejaculations. One often doubt whether the characters themselves know what they want to say. Hardly anything is fulfilled. There is something about the characters and their values as effaced as the American buffalo in the old coin. We perceive only their lineaments. (Introduction)

The dialogues are cut and disconnected. You feel the abyss of the characters in terms of their missing language. Apart from this, none of the dialogues reach the bottom line, just like the robbery plan. From beginning to end, Teach and Don talk about the prospective burglary. However, they cannot execute it since Fletcher does not show up until the end of the play. Indeed, the missing language employed in the play resembles the plot of the work. The cheaters are unable to break into the house since they are not capable of talking to each other exhaustively. American Buffalo, which takes place in a small circle, may be regarded as an unfinished work caused by the incomplete language. Ironically enough, this deficiency aids Mamet in creating a literary work which is laden with verbalism.

2. GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS

Glengarry Glen Ross, which takes place in a real estate agency in Chicago, depicts the breakdown of social structure in terms of an exploitative business system. The Pulitzer Prize winning play narrates how interpersonal relations decay in the characters' attempts to survive in the violent world of work. Glengarry Glen Ross, known as Mamet's pivotal and highly masculine play, portrays the economic institution of American business as being corrupted. Anne Dean portrays the issue of the play very vividly as such:

The premise upon which Glengarry Glen Ross is based is, in a way, a paradigm of capitalism. The company's bosses have organized a sales competition in which the salesman with the highest "grosses" –financial profit- wins a Cadillac and is automatically guaranteed the best "leads" (addresses of prospective land buyers), the runners-up win a set of steak knives, and the losers are sacked. That the successful salesman is given the best leads while the runners-up are forced to accept inferior leads from the "B" list or are even dismissed, underlines the unfairness of a system that penalizes those who are weak and needy but rewards those who least need such support. (192)

As Dean suggests, Mamet stresses that the hardships of the American business world requires a male dominated workforce. The salesmen must try hard to overcome obstacles in order to earn a living. Unfortunately, most of them give up their dignity.

The play consists of two acts. The first scene starts with a conversation between the oldest man in the office, Shelly Levene, and the manager, John Williamson.

Since Levene has not closed a sale recently, Williamson refuses to give the premium

Glengarry leads to him. The second scene takes place in a restaurant booth where Dave Moss and George Aaronow grumble about their exploitative bosses, Mitch and Murray, and their unrealistic demands. Moss, who represents the manipulative side of humankind, suggests that Aaronow steal the premium leads in order to revolt against the corrupted system. Aaronow agrees to go along with the prospective burglary idea for the very same reason why he has to fulfill the mission on Moss's terms. The third scene reveals the play's most rhetorical speech given by Ricky Roma. As he is the most talented salesman in the office, it is hardly surprising that James Lingk, who represents weak personality, will be his prospective client. In the second act, we find out that the office was robbed. All precious reports, contracts and even typewriters were stolen. Detective Baylen interrogates everyone in the office in search of the criminal. Levene, nicknamed The Machine, comes in cheerfully since he has closed a deal just like in the old days. Roma, who is the smartest man in the office, gets mad since his contracts are missing and Lingk wants to cancel the deal. Everything is mixed up and everybody acts crazy. Ultimately, detective Baylen proclaims the thief and Levene offers a bribe to Williamson to stop him from saying anything. The play starts with Levene and Williamson negotiating over money and ends in the same way.

2.1. MAMETIAN PARADOX: LOSER WINNERS

David Mamet creates a visionary office atmosphere in which a team of businessmen try hard to survive. Ironically enough, this imaginary ambiance is so convincing that the reader tends to feel pity for these corrupt people since they resemble our modern society. In Mametian style, his characters are men from the lower middle class. The salesmen of the play, representing depravity, portray an analysis of a free-market capitalist system. As Anne Dean notes, the system does not work efficiently for the weak, and Mamet's all male cast are an outcome of the suppressed business world. Glengarry Glen Ross is exhaustively occupied with Mamet's attack on degraded American capitalism. The system, which forces an old man to steal the premium leads for his sick daughter, highlights the degree of corruption that exists. The amoral businessmen emphasize the horrid barrier that must be overcome to earn a living.

The play starts with the practical sales maxim, "ALWAYS BE CLOSING" (Mamet 13). This motto discloses tainted business ethics since, in order to close a lead, the salesmen "close" all their humanitarian values. Throughout the play, the ravenous salesmen endeavor to close a lead or manipulate a client by employing seductive words. Customers are beguiled by the salesmen's masterful smooth talk. Every character in the work has a valid reason for acting this way since the goal is making money. Therefore, closing a sale means exploiting and deluding a customer without any boundaries. Since these debauched salesmen must make money, they do not hesitate to get engaged in such obnoxious affairs.

Mamet prohibits unmasculine motives in his business setting. He composes his play in an exceptionally virile manner since he believes that work belongs to male identity. An ordinary woman cannot find a proper place for herself in a corrupted office since she lacks masculine impetus to be involved in things such as robbery, aggression and the use of profanity. As in American Buffalo, Mamet highlights the necessity of male dominance in the workplace since work requires stability and deception. According to Mamet, feminine values such as courtesy and integrity are not welcomed in a world of defeatists. In addition, the controlling idea of business consists of robbery, fraud and manipulation which pertain to masculinity. As the male characters are the victims of the defeated system, the unseen female presence stays in the background. The playwright announces his opinion by the help of the following lines:

Men generally expect more of women than we do of ourselves. We feel, based on constant evidence, that women are better, stronger, more truthful, than men. You can call this sexism, or reverse sexism, or whatever you wish, but it is my experience. (24)

In spite of the fact that Mamet intends to glorify femininity, both American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross only have off-stage female characters. Although women are more reliable than men, they are not given a chance in the business world. Mamet excludes women in his plays since he wants to shield them from all the ugliness of the business world. Since women are more determined than men, they can comfortably stand against the depraved business world. Nevertheless, American business is involved in an erosion of precious values by suspending women from the business world. As stated before, Glengarry Glen Ross is based on a true story which

is experienced by most of individuals. The fortunate ones win a reward from the wheel of fortune, and the unlucky ones are punished. In Glengarry Glen Ross, the wheel of fortune can be regarded as a metaphor for the depraved American Dream.

The wheel of fortune determines the characters' destinies. If our salesmen are lucky enough, they will win a Cadillac. However, if they are not lucky enough, they will be punished by being fired.

In the first scene, Levene The Machine and Williamson discuss how desperately Levene needs some leads. Williamson, marshalling the leads according to the sale contest board, flatly refuses to give Levene any leads since he does not have a hundred dollars on him.

Levene: You fucking asshole. (*Pause.*) I haven't got it.
 (*Pause.*) I haven't got it John. (*Pause.*) I'll pay you
 tomorrow. (*Pause.*) I'm coming in here with the sales,
 I'll pay you tomorrow. (*Pause.*) I haven't got it, when
 I pay, the gas... I get back the hotel, I'll bring it in
 tomorrow. (Mamet 25)

Levene, a fallen idol of marketing business, begs Williamson to let him have the premium leads. While Williamson plays the role of God, Levene acts subservient. Ironically enough, both are called businessmen by their colleagues, however they are financially strained. The dark view of the American Dream, which is seen as a delusion, is widely portrayed in Mamet's drama in terms of depraved human relations. Levene's pathetic manner continues as such:

Levene: I'll give you thirty on them now,
 I'll bring the rest tomorrow. I've got it at the hotel...
 Williamson: No.
 Levene: I'm asking you. As a favor to me? (*Pause.*)
 John. (*Long pause.*) John: my *daughter*...
 Williamson: I can't do it, Shelly. (Mamet 26)

Levene, playing his last card, asks for a favor. He is worried about his sick daughter and not having any money. Despite all that, Williamson does not help him as is befitting the driving forces of capitalism. In this twisted system, philanthropic values such as empathy and sensibility are strictly prohibited. Williamson represents the declaration of destructive power whereas Levene emphasizes the victimized soul. With the help of Levene, Mamet depicts a picture of a man who goes through a severe trauma that terminates his tale with a disgraceful offense. Mamet attacks the injurious side of consumerism, which is American business, since he, himself, is influenced by it.

Levene is reborn from his ashes and comes back to the office with news. He has sold eight Mountain View units to Nyborgs and won the sale contest. As a result, he maniacally wants Williamson to put his name at the top of the board.

Levene: Get the *chalk*. Get the *chalk*... get the
 chalk! I closed 'em! I *closed* the cocksucker.
 get the chalk and put me on the *board*. I'm
 going to Hawaii! Put me on the Cadillac board,
 Williamson! Pick up the fucking' chalk. Eight
 units. Mountain View. (Mamet 63)

With this exhilarating news, Levene gains his self-confidence again. He has his “balls” back since he has deluded the customers. Although Levene acts as if he won a victory, he is in reality pretending in order to soothe himself. He deceives himself

since he knows that he hasn't sold anything. On the contrary, he has taken the leads from the office by committing burglary. It is possible for the reader to feel sorry for Levene as Mamet captures the deluded soul of the American Dream adroitly. In this stimulating and treacherous business sphere, the customers are abused by the salesmen who act according to their views of masculinity. Levene does not hesitate to employ scurrilous utterances when the subject matter is his so called customer. Once more, Mamet reveals the energetic and highly abusive tone of Chicago salesmen with regards to trickery and disloyalty.

Although the play is founded on male dominant values, some of the characters are controlled by humanistic values. For instance, James Lingk, the prospective client of Ricky Roma, comes back to the office the day after the robbery. The off-stage character, Mrs. Lingk, wants Roma to repeal the contract in three business days. Representing the humble identity, James Lingk cannot object to his wife's request. Therefore, he despondently asks for his money back. With his stimulative speech, Roma struggles to deter him from revoking the business deal.

Roma: ... I want to tell you something. Your life is your own. You have a contract with your wife. You have certain things you do jointly, you have a bond there... and there are other things. Those things are yours. You needn't feel ashamed, you needn't feel that you're being untrue... or that she would abandon you if she knew. This is your life ... (Mamet 93)

Roma, the most cunning in the office, cannot convince Lingk to reverse his decision. Roma's tirade reveals that Lingk suffers from an identity crisis. Mr. Lingk lacks a masculine impetus, and therefore, he suffers from anomie as a male who cannot

make his own decisions without consulting his wife. By shaping Mr. Lingk's character, Mamet underscores the role of a yielder male in the business community. As Levene does, Roma tries hard to deceive his client. However, he cons himself since James is going to abolish the deal. He desires to sell a property that James does not even need but Roma's ambition will be ruined by Mrs. Lingk. As stated above, Lingk is under the influence of his wife and does not want to talk with Roma anymore. Mrs. Lingk is a strong-willed woman. She is under the influence of male motives and she, instead of her husband, signifies masculinity. However, Mamet portrays Mr. Lingk as a male who has more feminine values than masculine ones because James is under the sway of his wife. James is extremely passive and easily fooled.

The salesmen are free to work, as well as to exploit the clients unmercifully. Thanks to Lingk, Mamet questions a male character's masculinity. When Lingk utters that he does not have "the power to negotiate" (Mamet 92) with his wife, Mamet gives him a womanly quality which is not welcomed in the male controlled business world. Mr and Mrs. Lingk symbolize inconsistency in terms of gender roles.

While Baylen, the detective, interrogates the salesmen in the office, Williamson emerges informing Lingk that his check has been already cashed. Roma goes mad since this disclosure costs him a lot of money and a brand new car. Despite the fact that Lingk is convinced by Roma, he apologizes.

Lingk: Oh, Christ ... (Starts out the door.)
 Don't follow me... Oh, Christ. (Pause. To Roma)
 I know I 've let you down. I'm sorry. For..
 Forgive... for... I don't know anymore.(Pause.)
 Forgive me. (Mamet 95)

Through the use of the character, James, male identity collapses in a piteous manner in Mamet's drama. Unintentionally, Lingk has committed a crime since a male never apologizes for letting his friend down. Although Roma has never been his friend, Lingk is desperately in need of male bonding. Mamet vividly delineates his character's inner world and drives his drama with the internal conflict. The apology of Lingk's reminds us of Bob in American Buffalo. Mamet's two distinct characters originate from one common trait, the humanistic value. At the end of American Buffalo, Bob apologizes for letting his friend down much the same as Lingk does in Glengarry Glen Ross. Since Bob demonstrates an emasculative notion, he has been eliminated from the burglary and Lingk is so oppressed by his wife's dominant power that he does not abstain from being effeminate. Bob and Lingk do not lie and hurt others and, therefore, do not experience any emotional depression and/or guilt.

In Glengarry Glen Ross, there is another male character who is also not suited to the unethical business world. Aaronow is constituted as a man who prevents himself from felonious attempts. The other salesmen in the office are involved in crimes, as Andrea Greenbaum reflects:

Moss lies to Aaronow about the amount of money he's getting from Jerry Graff, originally telling Aaronow that they were going to split five thousand. After Moss accidentally reveals that his take is five thousand, and Aaronow questions him, Moss remarks casually, "I lied. My end's my business."(pg. 46) Williamson lies to Roma when he tells him that the contracts went out and were not stolen; and Roma lies to Lingk about his check not being cashed. (7)

As is demonstrated in Greenbaum's statement, Aaronow does not get involved with any illegal affairs, unlike his colleagues. He does not lie, cheat or find customers of

whom to take advantage. Therefore, Mamet distinguishes him from other salesman and characterizes him in the same way he characterizes Lingk. Aaronow represents the unmasculine motive of the business world who avoids indulging in skulduggery. Since he does not cheat any clients, he cannot close a lead and this makes him feel worthless. The characters like Bob in American Buffalo and Lingk and Aaronow in Glengarry Glen Ross are Mamet's manifestation of anomie. These characters are famous for being conscientious, which is regarded as a feminine value, and portrayed in opposition to the destructive forces of American business. These characters are not influenced by the business world since they do not value personal gains over everything else.

Mamet criticizes a deluded world in which people lose their identity. The black market profiteers, excluding Bob, Lingk and Aaronow, put all their energy in their work and delude others. In fact, these brawlers deceive themselves since none of them can prosper at the end of the play. In this chronic delirium, the bullies become addicted to unscrupulous practices and exploitation. Ironically enough, these so called prosperous businessmen are not aware of the fact that they are the ones who are being exploited by the savage capitalist system. These simple men cannot lead a regular life and that renders them captive to powerful interests. When Moss endeavours to persuade Aaronow into breaking into the office and stealing the premium leads, he puts forward the failure of the so-called American Dream pathetically.

Moss: ... you find yourself in *thrall* to someone else.
and we *enslave* ourselves. To *please*. To win some fucking
toaster... to... to... and the guy who got there first made up
those...

Aaronow: That's right...

Moss: He made up those rules, we're working for him. (Mamet 35)

Despite the fact that Moss responds reasonably and criticizes the unseen bosses, Mitch and Murray, for exploiting their employees, he himself tries to convince Aaronow to indulge in misconduct. Moss, victimized by the corrupted system, manipulates his colleague in order to survive. Moss is aware of the fact that all the salesmen in the office are slaves of Mitch and Murray. Regardless, he revolts against them with a disgraceful offense. Mamet presents the fallen American dream in terms of a team of salesmen who are being ridiculed.

The United States of America, the country of opportunities, is founded on the principle of freedom, as Teach declares in American Buffalo. People dream of achieving economic freedom and equality through hard work. This is an ageless ethos of American society. Over time, exploitation has taken the place of hard work and inequality has occurred. The poor have become poorer and the wealthy have grown wealthier. As George Orwell highlights in his well known allegorical novel, Animal Farm, "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (112). This is informative in the case of the characters in Mamet's plays. It can be inferred that in Glengarry Glen Ross, the salesmen of the wrecked office are equals. However, the unseen bosses who represent power and authority are more equal than their workers. The system has collapsed, and unfortunately, the crime rate has gone up. The failure of the dream has not merely affected the United States of America adversely. The principle of equality has declined universally. The echo of the

continent's dream is heard in Europe as well. Therefore, the inequality in life has affected every single individual in the world. The breakdown of the system has created losers such as the characters of American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross. The dream has turned into a nightmare for needy and weak people. The salesmen in Glengarry Glen Ross and the trio of burglars in American Buffalo represent the ruined American Dream since they suffer from income disparity. In our world, physical and mental labor are not appreciated anymore, and unfortunately, the only way to survive is now based on hypocrisy.

After enjoying the exhilaration of Nyborg's victory, Levene starts to talk about his triumph in the office, but Moss refuses to listen. When Moss refuses to listen to Levene, Roma stands behind The Machine.

Roma: ... Your *pal* closes, all that comes out of your mouth is bile, how fucked up you are...

Moss: Who's my pal ...? And what are you, Ricky, huh, what are you, Bishop Sheean? Who the fuck are you, Mr. Slick ...? What are you, friend to the *workingman*? big deal. Fuck you, you got the memory a fuckin' fly. I never liked you. (Mamet 71)

Moss knows that there is no place for friendship in terms of business. This is why he rhetorically asks who his pal is. It is ironic that crafty Roma insists on protecting his so-called friend Levene. Roma calls Levene a friend and tries to protect him. At the end of the play though, he wants to take over Levene's leads. Mamet points this out as a paradox because of the conflicting behaviors. Roma's insincere statement can be seen as a reflection of self-delusion since he definitely knows that co-workers cannot be close friends. As stated above, Mamet relegates the essence of the business world

to a spurious relationship. His salesmen are all imprisoned by their low self-esteem. The masculine mannered salesmen are under pressure to protect their identity constantly. Therefore, their persistent attitude towards work life is being shaped by their subconscious.

In spite of the fact that Roma protects his pal, he actually stabs Levene in the back. Roma discusses Levene's share with Williamson.

Roma: ... I GET HIS ACTION. My stuff is *mine*, whatever *he* gets for himself, I'm taking half. You put me in with him. ... Do you understand? My stuff is mine, his stuff is ours. I'm taking half of his commissions- now, *you* work it out. (Mamet 107)

Mamet portrays Roma as a character who is a double-dealer. The advocate of Levene turns out to be his fraudulent opponent. Roma's exclamation reveals how money and personal interest are superior to everything in the capitalist system. Levene's failure turns out to be Roma's success. Glengarry Glen Ross tends to be regarded as a social criticism of the American business world.

Winners and losers are crafted into a single character by Mamet. Roma does not hesitate to betray his colleague when the subject matter is the premium leads. According to Mamet's distinctive drama, the dark side of the financial system exploits and corrupts human relations. If an individual is strong and wealthy, he survives, however, if he is not, his failure will be wretched. The salesmen of Glengarry Glen Ross perpetrate any kind of crime in order not to fail. That is why Roma wants Levene's leads. Roma lacks a philanthropic vision, so he is not interested in Levene's sick daughter and need for gas money. Duplicity takes place

on the surface whereas sincerity is situated in an abyss. A play takes place in a play.

Mamet himself comments on Glengarry Glen Ross as such:

The play concerns how business corrupts, how the hierarchical business system tends to corrupt. It becomes legitimate for those in power in the business world act unethically. The effect on the little guy is that he turns to crime. And petty crime goes punished; major crimes go unpunished. (qtd. in Roudane 74)

As Mamet asserts, people lose their dignity in this imbalanced system. Unless they find a proper place for themselves in society, the exclusion from the group will be inevitable. This isolation frequently culminates with an erosion of social principles. As Mamet indicates, big brothers have the right to indulge in malfeasance without a penalty, yet little ones are charged for simple wrong-doings. It is inevitable that the person on top always wins and the person at the bottom always loses while chasing the American Dream.

2.2. MAMETIAN PARADOX: LANGUAGE

There is a glib, breathtaking momentum in the speech rhythms that Mamet has devised for this pathetic flotsam of the capitalist system. As they talk of the deals and leads and contracts, their conversation is charged with resentment, anger and frustration of failures. (Shulman 26)

David Mamet's dramatic intelligence can be widely seen in Glengarry Glen Ross. Mamet is distinguished from other narrators in terms of his poetic tricks. Both of his plays are full of obscene dialogues as befitting his seductive conversational pattern. His dialogues are smartly shaped in conformity with a vulgar language since his world of business consists of depraved economic prosperity. Mamet is famous for his fast, manipulative and clipped colloquy which has led him to create his own manner of expression that is called "Mamet Speak". Mamet's language is developed from distinctive linguistic patterns and it is at the center of his paradoxical play. In Glengarry Glen Ross Mamet underscores his syntactic ability with the help of his bully characters. Despite the fact that he is criticized for using dirty speech, his ribald characters thrive on it. Failure in the business world, instability in life, mobbing a workplace, isolation due to financial problems and economic imprisonment are dispersed semantically in Mamet's drama with the help of his unique speech style.

In Mamet's drama, the verbs "talk" and "speak" can be utilized for manipulative purposes. The dialogue between Moss and Aaronow emphasizes how the meanings of words may be altered in order to deceive.

Moss: No. What do you mean? Have I talked to him about *this* (*Pause.*)
 Aaronow: Yes. I mean are you actually *talking* about this, or are we just...
 Moss: No, we're just...
 Aaronow: We're just "*talking*" about it.
 Moss: We're just *speaking* about it. (*Pause.*) As an *idea*.
 Aaronow: As an idea.
 Moss: Yes.
 Aaronow: We're not actually *talking* about it.
 Moss: No.
 Aaronow: Talking about it as a...
 Moss: *No*.
 Aaronow: As a *robbery*.
 Moss: As a "robbery?!" No. (Mamet 39)

David Mamet highlights the semantic variability in terms of a criminal act. For Moss and Aaronow, it is permissible to speak about an illicit crime. However, if they talk about it, they will definitely be in trouble. The dialogue that takes place between Moss and Aaronow is a good example of a manipulative conversation. Moss endeavours to con Aaronow by playing with words. Aaronow is the most innocent character and thus Moss chooses him as a victim. Throughout the play, he struggles economically and keeps failing, regardless he never once thinks about cheating or doing the wrong thing regardless. He does not let subconscious dictate his actions.

As stated before, seductive language is an essential part of Mametian dialect. The third scene opens with a tirade from Roma, whose only aim is to deceive a client. Lingk, representing the enticed client, will be ensnared by Roma's ridiculing speech.

Roma: ... When you *die* you're going to regret the things you don't do. You think you queer ... ? I'm going to tell you something: we are *all* queer. You think that you're a *thief*? So what? You get befuddled by a middle-class morality...? Get shut of it. Shut it out. you cheated on your wife...? You did it, live with it... (Mamet 47)

Roma does not hesitate to talk to a stranger at a restaurant since his job requires cunning in order to snare a client. Roma is fortunate since his prospective prey will be seduced by his uncouth talk. In business, puissance plays an active role in achieving the bottom line. Lingk listens to Roma attentively since Roma displays the action of talk. Like his counterpart, Moss, in the second scene, Roma is being shaped by the language of negotiation. Thanks to his perverted syntax, Lingk is unconsciously fooled. The following lines illustrate this assertion.

Roma: James. I'm glad to meet you. (*They shake hands.*) I'm glad to meet you, James. (*Pause.*) I want to show you something. (*Pause.*) it might mean nothing to you ... and it might not. I don't know. I don't know anymore. (*Pause. He takes out a small map and spreads it on a table.*) What is that? Florida. Glengarry Highlands. Florida. "Florida. Bullshit." And maybe that's true; and that's what I said: but look here: what is this? This is a piece of land. Listen to what I'm going to tell you now ... (Mamet 51)

It is hardly surprising that Lingk is manipulated. He is not a good example of masculine identity in terms of Mamet's masculine approach. Lingk is duped by Roma easily. Despite the fact that Lingk is not in urgent need of a piece of land, Roma's sharp wit alters his opinion. Lingk does not want to invest in property, but regardless, he does not avoid buying it. Roma's rhetoric serves the purpose and he sells a property to Lingk that he does not need. In a ferocious business world, the cadence of

abusive language helps the salesmen to survive. Roma tries to take advantage of Lingk but on the contrary, he himself is restrained by the dynamics of American Dream. Similar to American Buffalo, Glengarry Glen Ross employs a vulgar language in order to portray the city's energetic and virile atmosphere. His insulting language comes from the failure of his characters. The salesmen, like Teach in American Buffalo, swear in all circumstances. Mamet tends to draw attention to male dominance with regards to the loser characters.

In act two, Roma's frustration with Williamson fulminates since he tells Lingk that his check has been cashed. Because Williamson throws a monkey wrench in the works, Roma swears unreservedly.

Roma: ... What are you going to do about it, asshole.
 You fucking *shit*. Where did you learn your
trade. You stupid fucking *cunt*. You *idiot*. Whoever told you
 you could work with men? ... You *fairy*. You company man...
 You are a shithead, Williamson... (Mamet 96)

Roma attacks Williamson with pejorative utterances and accuses him of not behaving like a real salesman. According to Roma, a prosperous businessman should persevere and should never surrender. Williamson is accosted with female-specific expressions in terms of masculine discourse. Mamet once more highlights the fact that feminine posture is not appreciated in a debauched system. As Williamson sits in the office all day long not closing any deals, Mamet depicts him as an unmasculine figure. Since there is no place for women in the battle of work, there is no place for Williamson in the office as well. Roma's atrocious attack on Williamson can be interpreted as Mamet's recurrent obscenity reflective of masculine identity.

Mamet's male characters lead themselves into a metaphorical cul de sac. In spite of the fact that they want to progress, they end up degenerating. The failure of the dream turns them into abusive figures. These vulgar characters cannot succeed in the big business. Mamet's paradoxical approach creates a severe vicious circle for the characters in Glengarry Glen Ross.

CONCLUSION

Mamet is in favour of using a male point of view to define the American business world as one of self-deception. Mamet's outrageous dialogues reinforce the notion that he attacks atrophied human relations in a work place. Both American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross examine burglary, coercion and betrayal. Mamet explores the concept of manhood in terms of distorted business ethics. Other themes are communal indecency, personal downfalls and manipulation. In Mamet's drama, identity of characters is comprised of deception and confusion. The necessities of the unethical business world such as trickery, deception and provocation spark a conflict in characters' internal worlds. The irresistible desire to survive functions incorrectly as the characters are victimized by the disproportionate force of the capitalist system. As the American Dream has been notoriously distorted by corruption and inequality, the furious characters of American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross are fooled by it. When the characters cheat their clients, they actually deceive themselves since they do not gain control of anything. It can be argued that the real victims of Mamet's drama are his male characters. The winning and losing take place simultaneously and this sets the paradox of self-delusion in both of Mamet's plays. The characters are full of holes because the degenerated business system is full of false hopes. Employers capitalize on their employees, and in the same way the employees make use of their customers for the sake of survival.

Mamet's significant plays present a dramatic irony in terms of betrayal, and this thesis highlights the issues of duplicity and self-delusion. This thesis focuses on the respective identities of the deceitful male characters defined by their slang conversational patterns. Chaos and cogent performances of the characters are rooted at the center of this thesis. This project analyzes the deceptive behavior of the tricky male characters in these expressive plays.

In the first chapter of this thesis, the theme of betrayal and loyalty in a junk shop is broadly examined. In spite of the fact that American Buffalo consists of minor thieves, the decline of humanitarian values is a major theme. The story of the play is centered around Don Dubrow. At the beginning of the play the friendship between Don and Bob is admired since Don looks after his Bob like a real father. For example, Don is worried about Bob's skipped breakfast and missing vitamins. In addition to this, he advises Bob to use Fletcher as a model since he is a successful businessman. However, their friendship is ruined when Teach hears about the old coin which he thinks is very precious. In the rest of the play, readers encounter Don's betrayal of his friend Bob. It can be clearly seen that fidelity takes a back seat to monetary issues. Pure and naive Bob is deluded since he is not capable of committing an illicit action. In contrast with Bob, Teach is unfamiliar with themes such as affection and loyalty thus he cannot understand how people feel sympathy towards others. Teach is under the effect of illusion since he is in favour of breaking into a house to gain wealth. However, he deceives himself because he loses all his moral values as well as the old coin. He avoids helping Bob since he is a reflection of

frustrated male identity. At the end of the play, Teach is not aware of the need for a humanistic approach, while Don accepts his fault and Bob can be regarded as a means of catharsis for the protagonist.

In the second chapter of this thesis, Mamet relates the betrayal theme from a different perspective. From beginning to end, Glengarry Glen Ross is founded on unfaithfulness. The salesmen do not recognize that they are under the sway of self-deception. Roma beguiles Lingk and Williamson deceives Roma. Moss induces Aaronow to steal the premium leads since he is the most indecisive character of the play. Levene robs the office but he tries to convince his colleagues that the Nyborgs have bought the land. He cannot see reality, therefore, he is fooled by himself. Ironically enough, he cheats himself instead of his friends since the tragic elements of the play such as poverty, betrayal and corruption lead him into darkness. Indeed, all these characters are ridiculed by the unseen bosses for the sake of a Cadillac and a set of knives. In spite of the fact that the play cannot be regarded as a tragedy, dramatic aspects accelerate the characters' downfalls. Mamet does not let his characters wake up from the corrupted dream at the end of the play. It could be argued that the target is audience, not the characters, and thus Glengarry Glen Ross tends to be a semi-cathartic play. Mamet employs a classical approach since the readers are awakened at the end.

American Buffalo and Glengarry Glen Ross address the problem of a corrupted society. The characters of both plays are victims of their livelihoods, therefore, delusion of poverty is inevitable. Even though the salesmen dress smartly and work at an elegant office, they suffer from financial trouble. This trouble culminates in dramatic reactions such as anger, intolerance and infidelity. Their vulgar language is

in contradiction to their stylish outfits. When the salesmen talk to customers, they speak more politely, however, in the real estate agency, the same salesmen use vituperative language. This is another paradox set by Mamet in terms of double-speak. The junk shop and real estate agency reveal the disappointment of the self-deception of Mamet's characters. The losers of both plays cannot win anything except for isolation and alienation. The Mametian paradox of deception is portrayed wisely in terms of pecuniary benefit in both plays.

Consequently, Mamet emphasizes that personal interests push characters over the edge. It creates a society that is controlled by the business world and the relationships become least important. The characters do everything they can to disguise the truth and fail to see themselves falling into a trap. They turn into puppets of the American Dream. The corrupted system pushes the characters into a corner forcing them to trick their friends or customer. In reality, they trick themselves since they are the ones at the bottom. This betrayal is universally pointed out in Mamet's plays. Despite the fact that a long time has gone by since these plays were written, the same message still holds true. The characters cannot see through this betrayal. Only the audience sees the truth. It can be concluded that goodwill of the audience is attacked by the help of loser characters and their dirty language.

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