

Class Hate into Sexual Hate
in Look Back in Anger

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Letters
and the Institute of Economics and Social Sciences
of Bilkent University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in
English Language and Literature

By

Emel Özlük
January 1993

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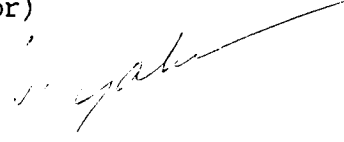
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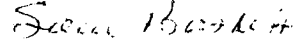
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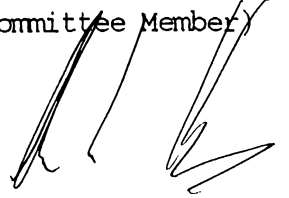
Asst. Prof. Dr. Hamit ÇALIŞKAN
(Advisor)



Prof. Dr. Sam BASKETT
(Committee Member)



Prof. Dr. Christine KURUÇ
(Committee Member)



Approved for the
Institute of Economics and Social Sciences



Director

Abstract

Class Hate into Sexual Hate in Look Back in Anger

Emel Öztürk

M.A. In English Literature

Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Hamit Çalışkan

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The purpose of this thesis is to consider John Osborne's Look Back in Anger from the point of view of the function of gender. This involves the playwright's depiction of gender contradiction which results from the need for the family members to re-adjust to the public and private roles they had before the war. In the play the male character's dilemma lies in the fulfilment of expected social and sexual roles. He is the main focus of the play in a domestic setting where he can sublimate his sense of class hatred into sexual hatred. He is allowed enough space and tools to destroy his 'feminine' wife in an effort to rediscover his own potency. Thus, this thesis mainly focuses on the question of 'virility' along with the play's fundamental misogynist and patriarchal nature which reflects the sexual hatred of the Angries generation and Osborne's sense of his time as a transition period.

MLA style sheet has been followed throughout the thesis.

Özet

Look Back in Anger'de Nefret

Emel Öztürk

İngiliz Edebiyatı Yüksek Lisans

Tez Yöneticisi: Yar. Doç. Hamit Çalışkan

Ocak, 1993

Bu tezin amacı John Osborne'nın Look Back in Anger adlı oyununda cinsiyete dayalı rollerin önemini incelemektir. Bu inceleme aile bireylerinin savaş öncesinde sahip oldukları sosyal ve kişisel rollere yeniden uyum sağlama çabaları sonucunda ortaya çıkan cinsiyet çatışmasını da kapsamaktadır. Oyunun erkek kahramanı toplumun ondan beklediği cinsel ve sosyal rolleri üstlenme çabasındadır. Bu karakter oyunun odak noktasıdır. Uygun bir aile ortamında sınıf ayrımına ilişkin nefretini cinsel nefret olarak yansıtmakta ve kendini kanıtlamak uğruna karısına zarar vermektedir. Böylece bu tez erkeğin baskınlığına ilişkin çelişkinin yanında kadın düşmanlığını ve ataerkil yapıyı (ki savaş sonrası "Öfkeliiler" döneminin bir geçiş dönemi olmasından kaynaklanmaktadır) incelemektedir.

Tezde MLA yazım ve araştırma kuralları izlenmiştir.

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Introduction

This paper mainly concentrates on Look Back in Anger from the point of view of the function of gender, and in the achievement of this purpose firstly attempts to place the play in its social and theatrical context in Chapter I. Chapter II includes a thematic discussion of Look Back in Anger, as well as a consideration of its structural development and the language.

The main points of concern of Chapter I will be the social transformation families experienced as an inevitable consequence of war-time conditions; and secondly the cultural transformation in the British theatre during the post-war decade. During the pre-war period women were faced with patriarchal attitudes, both at work and at home, and were typically considered to be mere dependents; men were, on the other hand, not only given the priority in work areas but also considered the supreme heads of their families. The advent of the Second World War seemed to bring changes to women's position in both the job arena and domestic life. Married women experienced a drastic change as regards job opportunities as a result of the war-time shortage of male workers. Thus in the domestic sphere most women were no longer just housewives or mothers but workers as well. Similarly, men--not actually on the battle fronts--experienced a social transformation during the war. They were not only the breadwinners but were dependent upon themselves for satisfying their domestic needs--an image contradicting that of a military

hero. This disruption of conventional gender roles both at work and at home, however, was temporary. As a result, the post-war decade was a period of transition as far as these roles were concerned. Both men and women were expected to return to their conventional family life structures and, therefore, had to readjust to the pre-war patriarchal gender roles. This created a feeling of uncertainty and uneasiness in both sexes about their social roles in society. Women found it difficult to find contentment through domestic chores after experiencing a sense of independence during the war. Likewise, men experienced tensions since they had to fulfil the image of the "virile" heroic male even as they encountered a changed conjugal situation.

At the same time, in the post-war period the theatre was experiencing a cultural transformation. A group of young dramatists were experimenting with a new kind of drama which aimed at portraying in an articulate language working-class life styles in realistic settings. These dramatists became known as the "Angry Young Men," as they inevitably reflected the post-war social transition and the conflict concerning the familial roles; and they were notorious for their misogynist attitude. Among them we can take John Osborne as the most representative with his Look Back in Anger.

Chapter II mainly concentrates on Look Back in Anger in order to illustrate how gender orientations function in drama during this transition period especially in the approach of John Osborne, who reflects his sense of his time as a period of

transition. This will be examined by exploring the setting as it emerges out of stage presentation, the characters' self-contradictory attributes as they reflect ambivalence on the part of the playwright as well, and the language which is closely related to the notion of gender and contributes to the development of the central character.

The first focus of Chapter II will be on the stage directions, as they are significant in the establishment of a fully domestic setting where characters have patriarchal attitudes. Their interpersonal relations within this space reveal a typical "macho" husband trying to establish his authority in the household. The stage presentation of the female of this domestic setting also conforms to the rules of a perfect "feminine" wife, lacking in individuality, an object of oppression.

Although Osborne establishes such a conventional family setting with its characteristic patriarchal attitudes, he is ambivalent in his treatment of the sexes. It seems that he cannot help reflecting the tension as far as gender-related roles are concerned, which is the characteristic of the post-war decade. Thus, the characters are portrayed in such a way that they are rendered uneasy about their sexual/social roles. Jimmy Porter is supposed to be the representative of the "virile" male with his "manly" qualities: the breadwinner with a need for heroism and authority. However, while trying to rediscover his own potency he reveals his deep sense of insecurity and

uneasiness about his social and sexual identity. For his political rage is transformed into a sexual hatred. The "feminine" wife on the other hand becomes the object of this hatred. Her female power is what he is scared of because he is in fear of losing his dominance in the household. Thus he desires Alison's ultimate humiliation and wants her sexuality and capacity for motherhood to be simultaneously destroyed. In the end when she returns to him having lost the child she was carrying, he is quietly triumphant and hence able to be tender.

The third and last concern of Chapter II will be the biased approach of Osborne in his handling of the characters. He portrays the male "hero" as the central character of the play and this quest for heroism and sexual identity is the main focus of his well-made play. Therefore, the other characters have structural functions--such as contributing to the development of Jimmy Porter's character and the theme by merely passing information. Jimmy, on the other hand, is equipped with a powerful tool--his language--so that he can speak his mind, reveal his dilemma, resolve his problem, and in short develop fully.

Hence, in Look Back in Anger gender functions centrally in the way the play is structured and conveys its social and sexual messages. The character chosen to embody the conflict of the time perfectly serves this purpose in simply being an angry male hero. On the one hand he reveals the biased approach of Osborne in favour of the male character, but on the other hand he becomes

the most representative of the "Angry Young Men" generation who manifest their class turmoil in their antagonism toward higher class women.

Chapter I

The Second World War and British Society

A. Women and Social Change

The Pre-war Period

The history of women's employment and domestic life prior to the Second World War is of great importance in the account of women during the war since it forms the setting in which the "mobilisation"¹ of women for war took place. Clarification of the employment patterns before the war is crucial in understanding the transfer of women to wartime jobs. Equally, the characteristics of the domestic life of women, the official policy that regulates this life and the effects of combining paid work with domestic work are worth considering since they form the background to women's social position in the war.

In the 1930's there was a considerable proportion² of women employed in paid work; however, they were substantially confined to the lowest paid and unskilled jobs. For example, over one-third of women were employed in domestic service with low payment, poor accommodations, long working hours and restricted social life.³ Therefore, there was a growing sense of dissatisfaction among these women, who wherever possible, sought alternatives despite the risk of reprisal. For instance, at the end of the First World War many rejected offers of domestic placement after having been made redundant by munitions firms. They were consequently threatened with refusal of

unemployment benefits and were violently criticised in the press because they wanted to stay in the factories.⁴ Throughout these years domestic service was seen as a "natural" sphere of employment" for women, and it was again and again recommended, in and out of Parliament, as a solution to women's unemployment between the wars.⁵

In some areas domestic service was the only employment opportunity for women, but even in places where there was industrial work available for young women it often offered temporary employment and required no acquired skill or training. For instance, women were employed as production line workers in sweet factories, shopgirls or tea-trolley girls in factories. This was not quite true of the industries in which women worked in larger proportions than men, such as clothing, textiles and pottery. In these industries training was acquired through family, not through special training, and they were offered relatively regular employment at least until marriage.⁶

However, the textile industry was losing its importance in the 1930s and expansion was occurring in the industries such as commercial services, food, drink, tobacco, distribution, chemicals, vehicles, transport, engineering and metals. The number of women employed in these industries was increasing but this expansion of women's employment occurred "within a sex-segregated pattern."⁷ For example, there was a rise in the number of women only in the light metal trades, pottery, bread and biscuits, tobacco, electrical fittings and scientific apparatus.

The explanation of this situation was that women were "inherently suited to the new, simplified process introduced in such industries as a result of technical changes."⁸ Therefore, women were confined to semi- or unskilled work: it was seen as unnecessary for women to acquire skill since marriage--which brought withdrawal from paid work--was "assumed to be their universal destiny and women were believed to be intrinsically unsuited to heavy, dirty or wet work."⁹

Another characteristic of this period was women's employment in white collar jobs. Although employment opportunities expanded in these white collar occupations, the jobs "suitable" for women, such as stenography, typewriting and work on adding machines, were considered the least skilled and called "women's work" unsuitable for men "who clung to the higher status [and] higher paid branches."¹⁰ Even well educated women faced difficulties if they tried to move out of these sectors labelled "women's work" into "the higher reaches of the professions."¹¹ Therefore, women were concentrated in the lowest status professions with the lowest pay, such as elementary school teaching.

The general picture was that even though the number of women in employment was increasing between the wars, women workers were limited to a few industries and occupations and the trend was to restrict them to the work labelled "women's work" and considered "non-skilled." On the one hand there was the employer's demand for women's cheap labour and on the other the resistance of male workers to competition and undercutting. Meanwhile it was widely

claimed that prejudiced placement of women in employment areas was "the natural result of their innate characteristics and inevitable destiny."¹²

In spite of the relatively large proportion of women who did not marry, "[m]arriage and dependency within it were the norm."¹³ Penny Summerfield reports from the Pilgrim Trust (1938) that "[t]he girl of 14 tends to drift into the most remunerative employment immediately available, keeping the alternative of marriage always in view and hoping that she will sooner or later be freed from the fulfilment of a function in industry."¹⁴ The ideology of the male breadwinner and female dependent was most concretely expressed by putting a marriage bar in many occupations.¹⁵ The marriage bar was essentially "the unwritten practice to dismiss a woman on marriage in many industries, and [it] reinforced the emphasis on youth in the age profile of women workers."¹⁶ As a result, the employers were prejudiced against older women whether married or single, since younger women, especially 14 to 18 year-olds, were cheaper to employ. Younger women also, from the male workers' point of view, did not stay long enough to be rivals for promotion. Thus, it became increasingly difficult for women to find a job the older they got, and employment benefit was often denied them until they proved that they were "genuinely seeking work", but women running homes and families were considered as not doing so and "women dismissed on marriage were trapped in the bind of being denied benefit until they had 're-established' themselves in

industry."¹⁷

Married women also suffered many social and official prejudices. After marriage the chances were that they worked as charwomen or did some outwork "which was done for a pittance"¹⁸ in or near their own homes, and where marriage bars did not operate. However, because of the low payment in these jobs many women preferred to conceal their marriages and keep their original jobs in factories and offices. Secondly, there was a growing population of married women with a "legitimate status" in the working women population.¹⁹ The reason for such a tolerance is that these women were in the "women's" industries and that sexual division, already discussed, existed within these industries. This "differentiation of types of work and rates of pay received by men and women served to protect men from 'intrusion' by women."²⁰

Undoubtedly, married women experienced difficulties even in "women's" industries. They were often treated by their employers as "dispensable workers, who could be used to plug holes in the production process ... but did not have to be continuously employed"²¹ Such conditions together with the "counter-pull of housework and family demands upon married women ... inevitably interrupted their availability for work."²² However, in areas where it was normal for women to work in industries, there were pressures on married women not to work outside the home if their husbands' wages were enough. Such patriarchal attitudes which expected that "women would renounce paid work on marriage"²³ were

widespread.

To sum up, the position of women immediately before the war was not an advantageous one. Although there was a growing demand for women's labour, women were concentrated in a few industries and occupations which were considered unskilled and low-paid. Women experienced irregular employment and usually were denied their rights since they were considered to be dependents. Women workers in both industrial and white-collar occupations, mainly young and single, were expected to contribute to the family budget until they were married. The proportion of working married women was increasing but it was generally expected that married women should not do paid work. The pressure on them was twofold: husbands and families demanded that they should work exclusively at home, and the marriage bar was imposed particularly in better-paid industries and occupations.

The Impact of the War on Women: their mobilisation

With the Second World War women experienced a social transformation, as far as their job opportunities were concerned, since the war created a demand for women's labour in the munitions industries and essential services and this development reduced the difference between men's and women's social roles. As a result, they participated on a great scale in the war economy and the war effort generally "sharing ... a common struggle"²⁴ with men.

During the war women were needed particularly in engineering, metals, chemicals, vehicle building, transport, the energy industries and shipbuilding. Between 1939 and 1943 there was an increase of over 1.5 million women in these industries and by 1943 women represented 33 per cent of the total number of employees in them, compared with 14 per cent in 1939. In 1941 women were conscripted for war-work or for service in the women's branches of the armed forces, and by September 1943 there were 470,000 women in the armed forces.²⁵ Other major changes were in the marital status and the age of the female labour force. For example, the proportion of married working women was 43 per cent, and a very high proportion of women employed was over 35. Married women were mostly directed into part-time work since they had household responsibilities preventing full-time work.²⁶ In 1944 the number of part-time women workers was 900,000, and these women had the chance to expand their job opportunities outside home and often stressed the new freedom they found in the part-time work. Therefore, the war contributed to the expansion of opportunities for older and married women to engage in paid work, particularly through the establishment of part-time work. This was a major change for many women since part-time work in factories, offices, schools and hospitals offered these women a change from housework, childcaring, cooking and shopping.

On the other hand, it was not only women who experienced a temporary change in their gender roles but men also experienced a major change as a result of the necessities of wartime

conditions. In 1939 all men aged 18 to 41 were called up for service in the armed forces and in December 1941 the upper age for men's call up was raised to 51.²⁷ Certainly this affected the majority of the male population and those men in the army had to learn how to look after themselves since they were away from home during the war years. Michelene Wandor describes "the way in which men developed their own self image, [through] learning by necessity how to darn socks, cook, wash clothes and perform the kinds of jobs that under peacetime conditions would be done by women." Although she points out that "this is not a common image of heroic depictions of war," men did perform these tasks along with trying to justify the image of a "military hero"²⁸ in the war. Therefore, men and women were united in their national efforts by occupying themselves with tasks contrary to the social patriarchal expectations, and thus breaking down their traditional sexual and social roles.

However, it is important to keep in mind that this was only a temporary change valid during the war years. It is true that the war disturbed the conventional gender divisions at home and at work, but the war situation did not lead to a profound breakdown of sexual divisions within these spheres. This fact became more obvious when the war came to an end and family members experienced a return--at least they were expected to return--to their "real" roles.

The Post-war Period: transitions in families

Women's lives changed greatly during the Second World War as they left their conventional roles because of the need for women in the war industry. After the war, however, a continuity with pre-war attitudes and practices towards women was observed both in the job arena and domestic life. As a result, family members, mainly women, confronted conflicting attitudes concerning their sexual and social roles, which rendered them uneasy.

Firstly, women experienced tension as regards their job opportunities. As far as their employment patterns are concerned there was a considerable job loss among women since war production changed direction. In some industries like steel-making and shipbuilding (where product demand was high in the post-war period) women stayed on, but in industries that depended on war women were the first to be dismissed. They were mostly employed in the areas where they had been employed during pre-war period and even though there was a fall from the high wartime proportions of women in fields like engineering, vehicles, metals and electricity, larger proportions of women were employed in 1950 than in 1939. The picture illustrates that on the one hand women were willing to enter employment areas and earn their own money, but on the other traditional pre-war patterns and attitudes continued to obstruct their improvement in these areas.

Women were also subject to dilemmas within their domestic spheres. The reality was that the majority of women did want to stay in paid work after the war.²⁹ The reason for this was that

wartime mobilisation had changed their awareness, and also their own earnings had given them a feeling of independence. Even some women who did not intend to continue in paid work after the war felt that the experience of war work meant that they would not return to being quite the same sort of housewives as they had been before.

On the other side of the picture the ideology of "the feminine mystique"³⁰--which suggests that the highest value and the only commitment for a woman is the fulfilment of her own femininity which is achieved by performing her duties to her home, husband and children was strongly supported by the magazines, psychologists and sociologists. As Alan Sinfield maintains, "[this] insistence on domesticity was a confusing pressure upon a situation that was already disturbed and complex."³¹ Therefore, many women who were in paid work or higher education in Britain were uneasy about their roles. Women in college, for example, said "they regarded career achievement as masculine, unfeminine, and hence unattractive, and their role was to establish a home for husband and children. They performed below their abilities for fear of disconcerting the fragile male ego."³² What is more, there were questions in the press about whether higher education for women was a waste of time and money.

This was in fact a general picture of women within the British society which Summerfield defines from a feminist point of view. She claims that the reason for women's lack of freedom is the division of society according to sex. She attacks those

who see women's role at home as "primarily one of servicing a male breadwinner," and bearing and rearing children. In the workplace sexual divisions mean that single women are seen as temporary workers, therefore, not worth training and "by nature unskilled." Married women are considered secondary members of the workforce, "working to supplement incomes primarily earned by their husbands, and therefore appropriate candidates for the lowest paying, least skilled work, with the lowest potential for promotion."³³ Thus, we can sum up that the Second World War did not change the status of women as far as these roles are concerned, and in this sense did not have an "emancipating"³⁴ effect, although "the 1940s brought about a degree of 'equalization' of experience and condition that was greater than any before."³⁵

Similar to women who returned--or rather were made to return--home to take up their conventional role as wives and mothers, men returned from the war "to build a new peacetime life."³⁶ After such a long period of time at war the transition to a peacetime domesticity had its effect on the "head" of the family: he had to conform to the new image created for him in the society. What is very interesting about the period is that men were attributed qualities which brought a fundamental change in the way they saw themselves. To the image of the military hero so prevalent during the war (and afterwards; in Britain two years of military National Service continued to be compulsory for men until the late 1950s) others were added: they resumed the role of

the pre-war breadwinner and the head of the family with fulfilled sexuality. In short a "virile"³⁷ male. There was a broad public agreement for woman that marriage is the norm instead of earning her living, that man should be the chief breadwinner and that married woman should go out to work only if she could carry out her duties to her family. Harold Smith is therefore right to point out the absence of a profound transformation of the division of labour within marriage during the war.³⁸

In conclusion, the decade after the Second World War was a period of transition for both men and women because of the contrast between wartime and peacetime domesticity. As a consequence, both men and women experienced a tension and gender conflict in their efforts to re-adjust to the social conditions of postwar decade and conform to the new images created in the media for them.

B. Cultural Transformations After the War

The New Drama

The new drama was mainly characterized by its working-class origin, its attack on middle-class practices and the use of a new language to portray an authentic picture of contemporary society. Therefore, "[w]hat John Osborne and the Angries did ... was to break through into conventional theatre by their sheer vitality, by using language that seemed contemporary ... by encouraging

young dramatists into believing that the theatre was a place where contemporary problems could be discussed."³⁹

The date that started the stage revolution in the post-war British drama is 8 May 1956, when John Osborne's Look Back in Anger was staged by the English Stage Company at the Royal Court Theatre. All at once the Royal Court became "the leading edge of experimentation, beginning a heady decade in which proliferating new dramatists were provided opportunities to have their plays produced."⁴⁰ Thus, as the cutting edge of the new drama, the Royal Court encouraged individual writers--John Osborne, Arnold Wesker and John Arden among early leaders--and set the pattern for many experimental movements and theatres, labelled "the fringe."

One distinguishing feature of these socially and politically committed dramatists was their predominantly working-class origin. They were a new generation of intelligent and articulate young people who wanted to change the lot of the workers. For many years the stage had been a middle-class preserve: middle-class writers wrote for mainly middle-class audiences. The reversal of pattern with the advent of experimental drama, therefore, suggests a new distinctive quality in the theatre. The plays of the working-class dramatists pictured a different world--"the kitchen sink" setting portraying the daily working-class life in a realistic manner instead of the traditional sitting-room plays. Their central characters were like the people they had known in their childhood neighbours, "an

underclass struggling against material and emotional deprivations, whose lives had not been regarded before as fit subject for the English stage."⁴¹ Like Osborne, most of the playwrights attacked the British class system, established authorities, middle-class life styles, and confirmed assumptions about many things including politics. They all freely borrowed or invented theatre styles and expected publicly subsidized theatres to produce their anti-Establishment plays.

The inclusion of new characters, new settings and fresh themes called for new language and new patterns of stage dialogue. What distinguishes the new plays from the older drama, therefore, is the language in which the characters express themselves. This is remarkable in Look Back in Anger as well as The Entertainer (1957), Epitaph for George Dillon (1958), and Luther (1961), where the speeches uttered by the central characters have rhetorical force. In Look Back in Anger, "the dynamism of the raw emotions of an educated young man legitimized the stage language of a new anti-hero and moved audiences."⁴² What is so new about Jimmy's anger is the raw and highly articulate language, for which his own stifling present and the Edwardian past of Alison's family (and Alison herself) are the main objects. Thus, Look Back in Anger went beyond existing boundaries for strong emotion and language on the stage, and Osborne became the catalyst for change on the British stage through his use of powerful rhetoric.

Factors Affecting the Renaissance of Drama

As John Russell Taylor states "[i]n the launching of any new movement, timing is all-important;"⁴³ thus the emergence of the new drama was not effected by the production of Look Back in Anger only, but it was rather a culmination of a whole string of events and conditions which have determined the characteristic forms of the contemporary theatre. Those conditions include the launching of the new theatres which gave younger dramatists a spirit of freedom, the popularization of television and its impact, and the political conditions which set an appropriate atmosphere for the advent of the new movement.

A brief look at the theatrical conditions in the post-war decade reveals that it was a period of stagnation for drama, which certainly made the advent of the new drama more striking. The reason for this sluggish characteristic of theatre was that there had been very few fundamental changes in the style of the plays written since the 1930s with the exception of verse drama. The chief practitioners were Ronald Duncan, T.S. Eliot and Christopher Fry, who tried to revitalise drama by reintroducing it to poetry, but the genre had limited appeal. With the exception of this movement in verse drama the theatre, especially the commercial Shaftesbury Avenue theatre which was dominant in the immediate postwar period, was content to revive the classics, and to produce musicals, revues and drawing-room comedies.

As a result of the absence of theatrical excitement, the focus of attention switched abroad. The best plays of the

American playwrights, such as Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams were staged, but their works were not as influential as they might have been since foreign plays were expressing a social and cultural reality which did not have an appeal to the English condition and did not serve as an effective model.

In the mid-fifties the British theatre recovered from its sluggish characteristic, and a series of theatrical events significantly changed its course. The two outstanding indicators of change were the production of Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot at the Arts Theatre (1955), and the visit of Brecht's East German Company, the Berliner Ensemble in 1956.⁴⁴ These events stimulated new dramatic forms, styles, subjects, themes and types of expression. As a result individuals and groups were encouraged to set up companies whose perspectives clashed with those of the narrow-minded and commercial attitudes of the Shaftesbury Avenue managements. Two major companies appeared: the Theatre Workshop of Joan Littlewood,⁴⁵ which was established at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, and which aimed at bringing the theatre to the people and helping young playwrights to learn their craft in a workshop atmosphere; and the English Stage Company which George Divine established in the Royal Court Theatre, whose aim was to encourage the development of new contemporary works. These two theatres were attended mostly by the educated lower middle-class "anxious for a drama that reflected their more permissive outlook and anti-Establishment attitudes."⁴⁶ The opening of another company, the New Watergate Theatre club at the

West End's Comedy Theatre (1956) which staged plays related to gay themes, also meant the successful challenge to convention and official censorship. The growth of these new companies gave a chance, for the first time, to the writers to have their works considered by managements which were prepared to take a risk on new plays, and, in the case of Joan Littlewood, to work with writers in the process of learning the craft of playwriting. Above all, the new plays which appeared showed that there was an audience which the commercial managements could not satisfy.

Apart from the new theatrical conditions which prepared the grounds for the advent of the new drama, television drama, for which most of the new playwrights wrote, was also functional in this new movement.

Television was a new medium and stimulus for the new playwrights for many reasons. Firstly, "[t]he journalistic nature of television ... tended to result in plays based on current social problems,"⁴⁷ and because most of the new writers were from the working-class, the outcome was a reflection of working-class life styles. Also television offered more opportunities since it had a greater appeal than the theatre, and offered more financial support to the writers.

Television could also be said to be partially responsible for closer relations between the theatre and its audience since it reflected the changing social attitudes of these people. This audience of young people had grown up in the age of television and they thought that good theatre had to offer an insight into

their lives and had to be as effective as the best television drama. For them television was at least capable of producing an immediate involvement and a direct response to their lives, and it was with such an audience with such expectations that the new companies were learning to communicate. Therefore, in drama the television had the potential to show the social problems and issues of the time, and the television play contributed to the truthful presentation of social conditions, by "providing a reservoir of new playwrights."⁴⁸ The extent of the influence of technological advancements in society could be observed best in Epitaph where the characters are preoccupied with the "wireless, T.V. and telephone," and very much excited about the T.V. in the bar in The Entertainer.

Lastly, the time was ripe as far as the political conditions in Britain were concerned. At the beginning of the 1950s, there was a sense of disappointment because of the failure of the Labour governments of the postwar period to make any significant change in the social and political life. At the beginning of the 1950s Britain's economic problems and the fact that it was no longer an imperial power caused disenchantment, and the nation was yearning for the prosperous days and its past confidence.

The feeling of disillusionment with the ideologies of the political left was further strengthened by the suppression of the Hungarian anti-Communist revolt by Russia and the attempt of France and Britain to invade the Suez Canal Zone, both of which indicated the aggressive imperialism and violence of some power

blocks in the world. This breakdown in the confidence of the young in established political parties and values was reflected by their revolt against the whole social structure. Beneath this spirit of protest, was a feeling that only a moral protest was possible and, therefore, for many of the new graduates of the universities the hopes of changing society through democratic methods seemed useless. Since these people were "[e]ducated to be more politically aware than their parents, their disenchantment took the form of cynicism and protest."⁴⁹ Thus, a new generation of intelligent and articulate young people who expressed their feelings of disillusionment and sense of protest in their "angry works" emerged, and they were known as the "Angry Young Men" generation.

**Crisis of Manhood and the "Feminine" in Angry Writing:
a misogynist attitude**

As has been discussed, the post-war decade experienced a transition within the families, which imposed burdens on both men and women as regards their gender roles in society. The post-war society was so confused in its sexual values and objectives that both sexes faced physical, social and spiritual dilemmas. An inevitable consequence of this was that many plays written in that period were concerned with the questions of the nature of the family, sexual and familial relationships and the gender conflict within these relations.

These plays are interesting in the way they represent male-

female relations. Plays like Chicken Soup with Barley (1958), Roots (1959) and I'm Talking About Jerusalem (1960) by Arnold Wesker present a domestic setting where the gender roles are reversed--the nature of manhood and the male role is under stress and open to question, and the female is a questing and questioning figure who is given a social significance. Plays like Serjeant Musgrave's Dance (1959) by John Arden and Look Back in Anger present sexually dangerous women and dominant male characters as the main focus asserting a "masculine persuasive force"⁵⁰ and directing their angry language at women. These plays struggle to reflect the tension experienced about the sexual roles but at the same time are not able to rid themselves of being the "prisoner[s] of the virility cult,"⁵¹ which considered women mere dependents and men perfect machoes. What is common ground in both types of plays, however, is that family is a potent and real force whereas conventional masculine and feminine roles are under pressure.

Moreover, Alan Sinfield in his book Literature, Politics and Culture in Post-war Britain, asserts a presence of a "repellent misogyny [in much of] Movement and Angry writing," and he describes "this male hostility towards women" in male authors and characters as follows: "Feeling insecure, and marrying or seeking to marry upper-class women as a sign of their success, the upwardly mobile feel driven to emphasise their manliness." He continues: "In effect, the woman is taken as representing the hegemony of an effete upper class, and wooed and abused

accordingly."⁵² Likewise, in Look Back in Anger, Osborne manifests a sense of insecurity by creating an image of an "Angry Young Man" who has to be dominant, and his wife has to compromise or else the image of the "Angry Young Man" would no longer be sustained. On that ground, Jimmy Porter is clearly in certain respects "a hero in the Movement mould in that he is resentful of class privilege at the same time being drawn to women of a higher class than his own."⁵³

Consequently, the main concern of Chapter II will be the representation of the "virile" and the "feminine" images in Look Back in Anger in relation to the misogynist attitude of Osborne. Certainly, a contradictory attitude: a male figure with an aspiration to be "virile", but having a feeling of insecurity at the same time; a female figure with "feminine" characteristics but posing a threat to her husband's sense of manhood, on the other hand. As a result, gender becomes the battleground for both where they can manifest their sense of uneasiness about their roles.

Chapter II

Gender Roles in Look Back in Anger

A. Staging of the Conventional, Patriarchal Family Structure

One of the most important features of Look Back in Anger is the message conveyed through the stage directions. They portray a picture of a conventional family in the sense that the domestic setting involves patriarchal male attitudes along with the feminine virtues. The 'virility' image applies to Jimmy's character, who through stage presentation sounds very heroic and dominant. The impression of Alison created by the stage directions as fully feminine and submissive also contributes to the image of the conventional wife.

Jimmy Porter is an exaggerated macho figure who, like Percy Eliot in Epitaph for Gerge Dillon, satisfies his self-esteem by torturing his wife. This characteristic of his is best revealed through some stage directions inserted between his monologues of resentment: "He turns and looks at her. The tired appeal in her voice has pulled him up suddenly. But he soon gathers himself for a new assault."⁵⁴ Now and then, he shouts and "throws [the papers] down" (I.i.12) during his speeches and he is "resentful of being dragged away from his pursuit of Alison" (I.i.15) when Cliff interferes. At one point the culmination of his invective is completed with the stage directions:

There is no sound, only the plod of Alison's iron. Her eyes are fixed on what she is doing.... Jimmy is rather

shakily triumphant. He cannot allow himself to look at either of them to catch their response to his rhetoric.... He's been cheated out of his response, but he's got to draw blood somehow (I.i.21).

These are indications of his "neurotic determination to establish and keep his supremacy"⁵⁵ in the household. To do so he invents trouble, attacks Alison and is rather childishly petulant. In some ways he resembles Percy Eliot who insistently humiliates his wife or Archie Rice who patronizes his wife in The Entertainer.

As for Alison, she is the main target of Jimmy's abuse within this "domestic" setting and she bears his verbal abuse with stoicism. At one point, Jimmy despises her for being mean and cowardly and then "watches her, waiting for her to break." Contrary to his expectations, she "carries on with her ironing" since she "is used to these carefully rehearsed attacks" (I.i.22). She may even be exposed to physical abuse. As the stage directions indicate, during the mock struggle between Jimmy and Cliff:

They collapse to the floor C ... struggling. Alison carries on with her ironing. This is routine, but she is getting close to breaking point, all the same.... Jimmy makes a frantic, deliberate effort, and manages to push Cliff on to the ironing board, and into Alison. The board collapses. Cliff falls against her, and they end up in a heap on the floor. Alison cries out in pain (I.i.26).

Alison's physical pain could be taken as an emblem of the psychological and emotional pain which Jimmy inflicts on her, "in which Cliff symbolically colludes."⁵⁶

Moreover, the dramatic presentation of Alison is as a stereotyped housewife perfectly conforming to the principles of femininity. The opening act of the play begins by telling us that "[Alison] is leaning over an ironing board. Beside her is a pile of clothes" (I.i.10). Right from the beginning she is engaged in the domestic and repetitious task of ironing and so conforms to the rules of the "feminine mystique"⁵⁷ referred to by Betty Friedan. Friedan criticises the "myth of the feminine mystique" which suggests that the highest value and the only commitment for women is the fulfilment of their own femininity. The theorists of the feminine mystique claim that "the identity of a woman is determined by her biology,"⁵⁸ so she has to "fit the ... image of feminine fulfilment by centering all [her] energy on housewifery"⁵⁹--washing dishes, cooking, looking after children, ironing, and by having a strong faith in male domination. Significantly, at the beginning of Act II, Alison is again fulfilling her "femininity" by "standing over the gas stove, pouring water from the kettle into a large tea pot" (II.i.39).

"For the woman who lives according to the feminine mystique, there is no road to identity,"⁶⁰ and, likewise, Alison is presented as a woman who is deprived of her individuality. Osborne's stage directions tell us that "Alison is wearing ... a

cherry red shirt of Jimmy's" (I.i.10). Thus apart from contributing to the domestic scene, she is at the same time "demonstrating to the audience in a visual way that she is Jimmy's property."⁶¹ It is as if she has no individuality of her own within this household; she is "often drowned in the robust orchestration of the other two [Jimmy and Cliff]" (I.i.10). Jimmy even allows her no privacy since he goes through her cases and handbag whenever he finds a chance. The end of Act I is one of such instances when he "picks up Alison's handbag ... starts looking through it ... [and] brings out a letter from the handbag" (I.i.36).

The patriarchal structure of the family is so forceful that even Helena--a self-sufficient woman--also has to conform to this pattern. This suggestion is confirmed through the stage presentation which is very similar to that of Alison:

Helena is standing down L. leaning over the ironing board, a small pile of clothes beside her.... She wears an old shirt of Jimmy's (III.i.75).

This time the new element in Jimmy's verbal attack is the criticism of Helena's religious beliefs. The stage directions inform us:

She is shaken by the sudden coldness in his eyes, but before she has time to fully realise how hurt she is, he is smiling at her, and shouting cheerfully at Cliff (III.i.78).

Like Alison, Helena is also in danger of physical abuse at

any time. When Jimmy and Cliff argue about Jimmy's new song, Jimmy "hurls a cushion at [Helena], which hits the ironing board" (III.i.81). This is certainly an indication of Jimmy's misogyny. He may need women, as he says later on, but he simultaneously treats them as if they were objects existing purely for his own enjoyment. When Helena decides to leave, refusing to endure any more suffering, Jimmy "takes out a dress on a hanger [and] puts the dress in her arms" (III.i.94). So long as the women are wearing Jimmy's shirts, they are creatures to be controlled and dominated by him in his territory; but now that Helena is leaving, Jimmy symbolically attempts to restore her individuality to her by handing her a dress.

Obviously, the stage directions are of great help in our understanding the patriarchal nature of the family: Alison is a housewife conforming to the rules of the "feminine mystique" without any claim on her rights, and Jimmy, totally a macho figure with his eagerness to dominate his women within the domestic circle through his physical and psychological abuses.

B. The Playwright's Ambivalent Attitude

Osborne attempts to establish a patriarchal family pattern through an efficient use of stage directions. However, careful reflection reveals an ambivalent attitude towards the family members on the part of the playwright. This could be taken as a

result of the major developments during the post-war decade, which involved and affected both men and women. These changes help "to explain the ... presence ... of conflicting currents of thought which inevitably left their mark on dramatists of the day."⁶² Therefore, being caught up in these contrary forces, Osborne is deeply ambivalent in his treatment of both Jimmy and Alison: Jimmy, the virile male of the house, gradually gives himself away through long tirades indicative of his impotence; and Alison, the feminine wife, paradoxically turns out to be a threat to her mate.

The Virile and The Unheroic

What is remarkable about Look Back in Anger is its handling of a "dramatic conflict--the battle of the sexes, where one character psychologically devours another."⁶³ Therefore, the model of the conventional family which is in crisis is made use of by the playwright. His approach, however, towards such a theme is one of questioning of how the male "hero" fits (or does not fit) into the social/sexual roles expected by society.⁶⁴ This process of questioning reveals itself in the male character's monologues where he sublimates his class hatred into sexual hatred while trying to establish his manly power in the household.

In the house Jimmy is a macho figure who tries to assert his manliness through bragging, giving orders, despising everyone and

attacking his wife whenever he finds a chance. Once he threatens Cliff with "pulling his ears off" (I.i.11), later on threatens Helena with slapping her face (II.i.57), talks about writing a book about them all "[w]ritten in flames a mile high ... and ... recollected in fire, and blood. My blood" (II.i.54), from time to time expects everybody around him to serve him tea (I.i.12), or even asserts his supremacy by claiming that he is "the only one who knows how to treat a paper, or anything else, in this household" (I.i.12). Furthermore, much of the stage action unfolds in the form of abusive monologues by Jimmy, which are directed at Alison and her family. These serve to reveal his will to declare his dominance within the household as well as his personal antagonism towards women in the person of Alison. In the manifestation of the superiority of his gender, the gender conflict becomes a battleground:

Have you ever noticed how noisy women are?... The way they kick the floor about simply walking over it? Or have you watched them sitting at their dressing tables, dropping their weapons and banging down their bits of boxes and brushes and lipsticks?... Thank God they don't have many women surgeons! Those primitive hands would have your guts out in no time (I.i.24).

Jimmy is like Archie Rice who reflects his feelings of loss by directing his attacks at his wife. He continues his speech by pouring out his anger for his ex-neighbours:

I had a flat underneath a couple of girls once. You

heard every damned thing those bastards did, all day and night. The most simple, everyday actions were a sort of assault course on your sensibilities.... With those two, even a simple visit to the lavatory sounded like a medieval siege.... Slamming their doors, stamping their high heels, banging their irons and saucepans--the eternal flaming racket of the female (I.i.24-25).

Beneath his insulting references to the "inferior" sex, there lies his fear of women since their boxes, brushes, lipsticks, saucepans (and everything related to being female) are "weapons" to him and women are threatening enemies.

The fact that Jimmy is scared of women because he sees them as threatening enemies suggests that he has a fundamental inferiority complex and lack of self confidence, which can only be covered up by verbal aggression especially on Alison. Thus, he never misses any opportunity to despise "the little woman" (I.i.21) and play verbal games at her expense: he has been "married to this woman, this monument of non-attachment," and he finds a word that "sums her up.... Pusillanimous! It sounds like some fleshy Roman matron" (I.i.21). He identifies himself with Pusillanimous' husband Sextus:

Poor old Sextus! If he were put into a Hollywood film, he's so unimpressive, they'd make some poor British actor play the part.... The Lady Pusillanimous has been promised a brighter easier world than old Sextus can

ever offer her" (I.i.22).

Certainly Jimmy does not sound very heroic here but emerges as a self-pitying figure; in fact, he is a "mass of contradictions,"⁶⁵ resembling Archie Rice and George Dillon. As Alison describes him, he "has got his own private morality. It is pretty free ... but it's harsh too" (I.i.30). With Osborne's presentation Jimmy is "a disconcerting mixture of sincerity and cheerful malice, of tenderness and freebooting cruelty; restless, importunate, full of pride.... Blistering honesty, or apparent honesty.... sensitive to the point of vulgarity ... simply a loudmouth" (I.i.9-10).

On that ground, Jimmy displays his sense of uneasiness about his sexual identity by spending all his energy on conforming to the image of the virile male, but being unable to suppress his horror of the opposite sex at the same time. Thus, the gender conflict becomes the battleground for him in his determined effort to establish his supremacy. Consequently, he becomes a man of contradictions: both forceful and ineffectual.

The Feminine and the Venomous

Osborne's handling of the female of the house is also one of ambivalence. The stage directions tend to be detailed establishing a domestic setting in keeping with the idea of a fully feminine wife. However, through Jimmy's long tirades against women and Alison in particular, she turns out to be an

image of the woman who is venomous. In considering Alison's role in the play, it might be useful to apply Margaret Hallisy's work on venomous women in literature. For Alison is one of those figures who emerges as "an image of female power and male fear of that power."⁶⁶ Thus, all the "mysogynistic notions related to [this] image are manifestations of male fear of domination by a woman" since he is scared of not being able to maintain control in the household.⁶⁷

Alison in the play is the representative of the female sexual power which poses a threat to Jimmy's manliness. Her virginity before their marriage is one of many challenges to Jimmy's so-called heroism. Alison tells Cliff that they had not slept together before marriage:

And, afterwards, he actually taunted me with my virginity. He was quite angry about it, as if I had deceived him in some strange way. He seemed to think an untouched woman would defile him (I.i.30).

The fact that his animosity for her is a result of her maintaining her virginity is indicative of his sense of sexual insecurity. Jimmy cannot tolerate a woman's being superior to him in one way or another--especially if (as in Alison's case) she comes from a higher class. In this case virginity, in Jimmy's mind, is something desirable but when his wife is in question he does not like the idea of her having been a virgin since it makes her morally superior to him.

Motherhood and sexuality are "part of the same nexus of

associations with femaleness"⁶⁸ for Jimmy. In order to attack Alison, " he has to attack her not just as a female sexual being but as a potential mother."⁶⁹ Therefore, Act I comes to an end with Jimmy's speech about Alison's reproductive potential, which carries a brutal irony (since we know that she is pregnant). He wishes that Alison might be exposed to suffering so that she could learn how to become a "recognisable human being." At the heart of this ironical speech is his desire that Alison might conceive and lose a child so that she would be exposed to an experience she could not dismiss or put aside:

Oh, my dear wife, you've got so much to learn.... If only something--something would happen to you, and wake you out of your beauty sleep! If you could have a child, and it would die. Let it grow, let a recognisable human face emerge from that little mass of indiarubber and wrinkles. (She retreats away from him.) Please--if only I could watch you face that. I wonder if you might even become a recognisable human being yourself (I.i.37).

The suffering which Jimmy wants Alison to experience is directly related to her reproductive potential. The possibility of motherhood in Alison, therefore, is something that Jimmy is afraid of because "[r]ecognized as the source of life and thus the embodiment of fertility" the figure of the mother represents the feminine power.⁷⁰ Thus this power becomes the root of female oppression in the play. Alison is right ,therefore, in being

reluctant to disclose her pregnancy to Jimmy:

He'll suspect my motives at once.... [H]e'd feel hoaxed, as if I were trying to kill him in the worst way of all. He'd watch me growing bigger every day, and I wouldn't dare to look at him (I.i.29).

Just as the potential in a woman to give birth renders Jimmy uneasy, female sexuality is another issue which he is terrified of. When he is talking about Alison's sexuality, it is as if he is accusing Alison of not allowing him to give birth to his own self:

She has the passion of a python. She just devours me whole every time, as if I were some over-large rabbit. That's me. That bulge around her navel--if you're wondering what it is--it's me. Me, buried alive down there, and going mad, smothered in that peaceful looking coil. Not a sound, not a flicker from her--she doesn't even rumble a little. You'd think that this indigestible mess would stir up some kind of tremor in those distended, overfed tripes--but not her?... She'll go on sleeping and devouring until there's nothing left of me (I.i.37-38).

His verbal attacks appear to compensate for his sexual insecurity resulting from his view of Alison's sexual potency, which "smothers" and "devours" him, as a threat to his manliness. This feeling of insecurity about the nature of his masculine identity, which is further revealed through the 'python' metaphor,

demonstrates his fear of female sexual and maternal power. Here, the "serpentine woman ... becomes a strong metaphor for the woman who is too [powerful] for the man to handle."⁷¹ Thus, the male protagonist tries to "subdue her--in other words, by showing his power to control her, to become a hero."⁷²

When the "idea of the venomous animal is linked to women, the significance is usually sexual, and the metaphor becomes a misogynistic commonplace."⁷³ This misogyny, which manifests itself in fear of intercourse and the fear of women, "is an acknowledgement of [the male character's] own weakness."⁷⁴ Therefore, a man like Jimmy could only come to terms with his wife only if he no longer sees her as serpentine. Jimmy has had to destroy the possibility of motherhood in Alison, in order to overcome his feelings of insecurity, and to come to terms with her. His victory over her has been achieved through violence. Now that he has defeated her, Jimmy can speak his true mind:

The heaviest, strongest creatures in this world seem to be the loneliest. Like the old bear following his own breath in the dark forest. There is no warm pack, no herd to comfort him.... Do you remember that first night I saw you.... You seemed to have a wonderful relaxation of spirit.... It was only after we married that I discovered that it wasn't relaxation at all. In order to relax, you've first got to sweat your guts out. And, as far as you were concerned, you'd never had a hair out of place, or a bead of sweat anywhere

(III.ii.94-95).

The despair he feels is now in the open and his final appeal to Alison is straightforward and direct: "I may be a lost cause, but I thought if you loved me, it needn't matter" (III.ii.95). Thus, Alison finally surrenders to Jimmy on his terms, by losing her child and coming back to him in humility. She says:

I don't want to be a saint. I want to be a lost cause.
 I want to be corrupt and futile.... Don't you
 understand? It's gone! It's gone! That--helpless human
 being inside my body.... All I wanted was to die.... I
 was in pain, and all I could think of was you, and what
 I'd lost ... I thought: if only--if only he could see
 me now, so stupid, and ugly and ridiculous. This is
 what he's been longing for me to feel.... Don't you
 see! I'm in the mud at last! I'm grovelling! I'm
 crawling! (III.ii.95)

After Alison's speech, they retreat to the safety of the fantasy world of bears and squirrels "to live on honey ... and lots of nuts ... [and] sing songs" (III.ii.96) in order to escape from the conflicts of their relationship. Her decision to rejoin him in the pit though on equal terms now, can provide them with a temporary refuge.

To sum up, Osborne's questioning of the conformity of each family member to the sexual/social roles expected by society, assumes an interesting form in the end. The supposedly virile male ultimately proves to be a person of inadequacy. To cover

up this inadequacy, he rages at his wife as if to make her the image against which his despair is to be expressed. Archie Rice somehow overcomes this feeling of inadequacy by having sexual intercourse with other women, and George Dillon by courting both Ruth and Josie at the same time, not to forget the fact that he is married to another woman. The contradiction in Look Back in Anger is the presentation of a wife fully feminine and obedient but an object of threat for her husband at the same time. Significantly, her weapon is the female power which includes both the feminine sexual power and the potential for motherhood. Her sexual power frightens her husband because sex is something that "debilitates men and is metaphorically poisonous."⁷⁵ Her potential for motherhood also means that she has the feminine power to create and, therefore, should be feared and symbolically destroyed.

C. A Male-Centered Approach

It has been claimed that what has been innovative about Look Back in Anger is the nature of the language, which is highly articulate--though little attempt is made by Osborne to characterize through this language anyone but Jimmy Porter. Therefore, it may be argued that in the construction of Look Back in Anger Osborne has a clear bias in favour of the male character because Jimmy is the only character in the play who is fully

developed. Osborne achieves this, "partly at the expense of his other characters.... To build up Jimmy he has had to a certain extent to scale down the rest"⁷⁶ so that they serve to the full development and complexity of the protagonist around whom "action and actors gravitate."⁷⁷ The other characters, therefore, have a functional language and supporting roles in the play. Additionally, Osborne makes Jimmy develop fully by making the central character dominate the stage through his language and, therefore, become the central focus of the play.

Functional Role of the Minor Characters

As G.L. Evans acknowledges, the language of a "well-made"⁷⁸ play is "sacrificial", where characters (apart from the central character) have "little chance of initiating any kind of action", and they become "victim[s] for the other person on stage who holds all the verbal weapons."⁷⁹ Exactly the same process is discernible in Look Back in Anger in the language and roles of Alison, Cliff, Helena and Alison's father, Colonel Redfern, which lacks individuality but serves the purpose of developing Jimmy's character fully.

Indeed, in many Osborne plays "certain characteristic Osborne supporting roles recur," the most important of which are the "silent or downtrodden sufferers"⁸⁰ at whom the hero's attacks are directed. Alison, like Phoebe Rice in The Entertainer, and Mrs Eliot in Epitaph, is a perfect example of

the "browbeaten wife."⁸¹ Alison could be considered the only person in the play who has some depth of understanding towards Jimmy, and she thus contributes to a fuller characterisation of Jimmy. Undoubtedly this contribution takes place in her speeches, almost all of which are about Jimmy. Therefore, when Alison answers Helena's question on Jimmy's attitude towards the kind of relationship she has with Cliff, the focus of her speech is Jimmy:

It's what he would call a question of allegiances, and he expects you to be pretty literal about them. Not only about himself and all the things he believes in, his present and his future, but his past as well. All the people he admires and loves, and has loved. The friends he used to know, people I have never even known.... His father.... Even the other women he's loved. (II.i.42)

Through her words a particular aspect of Jimmy is presented: that of an overdemanding husband (since he wants her to accept his terms.) He is similar to Jean's fiance in The Entertainer who cannot accept any kind of achievement on the part of Jean. Likewise, when she explains to Helena why she married Jimmy, we get a deeper perception of Jimmy than of Alison herself:

I met him at a party.... The men there all looked as though they distrusted him, and as for the women, they were all intent on showing their contempt for this rather odd creature.... He'd come to the party on a

bicycle ... and there was oil all over his dinner jacket. It had been such a lovely day, and he'd been in the sun. Everything about him seemed to burn, his face, the edges of his hair glistened and seemed to spring off his head, and his eyes were so blue and full of the sun.... I knew I was taking on more than I was ever likely to be capable of bearing, but there never seemed to be any choice. Well, the howl of outrage and astonishment went up from the family.... He made up his mind to marry me (II.i.45).

Alison's speech illustrates her confused response to the situation she finds herself in, but again what is portrayed is a romanticised picture of Jimmy, not Alison. Another of such contributory instances is Alison's description of Jimmy to Helena in his battle with her parents, where she helps us to get more insight into the character of Jimmy:

Jimmy went into battle with his axe swinging round his head--frail, and so full of fire. I had never seen anything like it. The old story of the knight in shining armour--except that his armour didn't really shine very much (II.i.45).

Alison's speech serves to reveal the complexity of Jimmy's character: it demonstrates the basic insecurity beneath his surface aggressiveness and hostility.

It is again through Alison that once more we get to know more of Jimmy and his demands on women:

He wants something quite different from us. What it is exactly I don't know--a kind of cross between a mother and a Greek courtesan, a henchwoman, a mixture of Cleopatra and Boswell (III.ii.91).

Alison shows that she is aware that no woman can ever really satisfy Jimmy since he needs some impossible amalgam of mother, lover and intellectual companion--a mother to offer comfort and security, a lover to offer sexual attraction and potency, and an intellectual companion to offer intellectual satisfaction. He resembles some other Osborne heroes--George Dillon, Archie Rice--who are not sure about their attitudes towards women.

Similarly, Cliff is a character who by his very presence on the stage--not to mention his language--contributes to the development of Jimmy's character by revealing many aspects of him. Cliff is very affectionate towards Alison and in that he resembles Archie's brother who is very loving towards Phoebe, and therefore emphasises Jimmy's cruelty more. He is also a kind of person who can be on good terms with Jimmy because he is from the same class; and he poses no sexual threat to Jimmy. On the contrary, he makes Jimmy feel good as he is pliant--he makes no decisions of his own. Therefore, when Cliff announces his decision to leave, Jimmy defines this lack of will-power in positive terms:

You've been loyal, generous and a good friend.... And all because of something I want from that girl downstairs, something I know in my heart she's

incapable of giving. You're worth half a dozen Helenas to me or to anyone (III.i.84).

Jimmy's response links his sense of loss at Cliff's leaving to his sense of there being no "good causes left." The alternative to Cliff, in Jimmy's view, is to be "butchered by the women"--i.e., the representatives of the sex that, through their very natures, pose a threat to Jimmy's conception of masculinity. This notion of threat becomes very obvious in A Patriot for Me where the main character discards marriage and even women from his life and becomes a homosexual. At this point, Jimmy identifies his social conflict with his gender conflict:

Why, why, why, why do we let these women bleed us to death?... I suppose people of our generation aren't able to die for good causes any longer. We had all that done for us, in the thirties and forties, when we were still kids.... If the big-bang does come and we all get killed off, it won't be in aid of the old-fashioned grand design.... No, there's nothing left for it, me boy, but to let yourself be butchered by the women (III.i.84-85).

Jimmy's nostalgia for a bygone nationalistic heroism and the threat of the nuclear bomb, leave only one alternative for him--to be physically killed by women, as if women were as dangerous as the enemy in war and the 'big-bang.' Through Cliff, therefore, we become more aware of the extent of Jimmy's underlying social and sexual insecurity besides a probable covert homosexuality

(because he prefers the intimacy of a male friend to that of a woman and he has an obvious mysogyny).

Cliff could also be taken as "an easy-going sympathizer of Jimmy who manage[s] to co-exist harmoniously [with him] ... turning aside the stream of insults that comes [his] way with a good-natured shrug."⁸² One of such instances in the play is when Cliff draws our attention to the most overt clue to Jimmy's character. He acknowledges Jimmy's self-indulgence in his mocking attack on his need for food:

JIMMY: (Picks up a weekly.) I'm getting hungry.

ALISON: Oh no, not already!

CLIFF: He's a bloody pig.

JIMMY: I'm not a pig. I just like food--that's all.

CLIFF: Like it! You're like a sexual maniac--only with you it's food. You'll end up in the News of the World, boyo.... James Porter, aged twenty-five, was bound over last week after pleading guilty to interfering with a small cabbage and two tins of beans on his way home....

(I.i.12)

Jimmy's response to Cliff indicates his appreciation of what Cliff has said. Behind this exchange between the two there is Cliff's perception that Jimmy is like a child for whom eating is a cry for comfort in a world where he feels desolate and helpless.

Although Jimmy is the centre of attention in the play, his relationship with those around him forms a vital part of his

characterisation. Helena is one of those characters who, like Cliff, by her very presence in the household prompts Jimmy to speak and show his true mind. Significantly, her relationship with Jimmy is seemingly parallel to that of Alison. Osborne's stage directions in Act III stating that "Helena is standing down L. leaning over the ironing board, a small pile of clothes beside her.... [S]he wears an old shirt of Jimmy's" (III.i.75) are indicative of a parallel patriarchal type of relation. However, what happens in Act III is only a shadow of what is unfolded in Act I. Cliff senses this and remarks to Jimmy, comparing Helena to Alison: "You didn't seem very keen yourself once.... It's not the same, is it?" (III.i.83), and Jimmy is aware of it:

(irritably). No, of course it's not the same, you idiot! It never is! Today's meal is always different from yesterday's and the last woman isn't the same as the one before. If you can't accept that, you're going to be pretty unhappy, my boy (III.i.83).

Since the Helena-Jimmy relationship is rather a superficial one, the patriarchal nature of the relationship is also fake. It is of great importance to keep in mind that Helena is an actress and it seems that she is playing the role of a submissive wife while she is living with Jimmy. Therefore, she occupies the role of Alison only temporarily. As a result of this superficial quality of their relationship, there is no real tenderness between Helena and Jimmy, not even the possible escape of bears and squirrels. It seems that Jimmy is "bound to [Helena] by

nothing more complicated than lust,"⁸³ and their passion is only an aspect of their enmity. He is similar to George Dillon who is drawn to women by lust although he sees them as inferior. Jimmy openly acknowledges this:

You made a good enemy, didn't you? What they call a worthy opponent. But then, when people put down their weapons, it doesn't mean they've necessarily stopped fighting (III.i.86).

The superficial nature of Helena's devotion to Jimmy is brought home during the conversation between Helena and Alison, following Alison's return. Helena is actually relieved by Alison's return and she declares her intention of leaving, and her inability to continue a relationship which requires pain and suffering. She tells Alison:

When I saw you standing there tonight, I knew that it was all utterly wrong. That I didn't believe in any of this, and not Jimmy or anyone could make me believe otherwise. (Rising.) How could I have ever thought I could get away with it! He wants one world and I want another, and lying in that bed won't ever change it!
(III.ii.90)

With Helena the process is only partial, which does not touch her deeply. Pamela in Time Present is like Helena since she has a temporary relationship with her best friend's lover and then decides to leave. As Helena puts it, she and Jimmy belong to very different worlds, and unlike Alison she is not the kind of

person to change her values for the sake of Jimmy. Therefore, she asserts the continuity of a traditional moral belief in her, which her sexual passion for Jimmy has not altered:

At least, I still believe in right and wrong! Not even the months in this madhouse have stopped me doing that. Even though everything I have done is wrong, at least I have known it was wrong (III.ii.89).

The fact that minor characters in the play contribute to the complexity of Jimmy's character is also true for Colonel Redfern. As for his language it seems to lack the basic requirement of dramatic language--it lacks individuality:

Well, I'd better put this in the car then. We may as well get along. Your mother will be worried, I know. I promised her I'd ring her when I got here. She is not very well (II.ii.69).

Because of the simplicity of his language, he hardly emerges as a character in the play. However, his function is again to give an insight into Jimmy's "emotional make-up."⁸⁴ Although we never see him with Jimmy and he is never subjected to Jimmy's abuse directly, he is the only character in the play who shares the same feelings with Jimmy: nostalgia for and obsession with the past. Like Jimmy, Redfern idealises the past, and when feelings of desolation and emptiness with the present become too much to bear, he consoles himself with the memories of the past. Alison puts this similarity into words:

You're hurt because everything is changed. Jimmy is

hurt because everything is the same. And neither of you can face it. Something's gone wrong somewhere, hasn't it? (II.ii.68)

Jimmy, like Archie Rice and Martin Luther in Luther, is angry when he looks back at a past in which he longs to be included, but which he cannot quite accept. Deep down in his heart there seems to be an anger because he feels excluded. It is not surprising, therefore, that along with his feelings of resentment for Alison's father, he also respects him since he, as in the case of Billy Rice, lived at a time when there were "good brave causes."

I think I can understand how her Daddy must have felt when he came back from India.... The old Edwardian brigade do make their brief little world look pretty tempting. All homemade cakes and croquet, bright ideas, bright uniforms. Always the same picture: high summer, the long days in the sun, slim volumes of verse, crisp linen, the smell of starch. What a romantic picture. Phoney too, of course.... Still, even I regret it somehow, phoney or not. If you have no world of your own, it's rather pleasant to regret the passing of someone else's (I.i.17).

Obviously Jimmy has a certain nostalgia for the old certainties of Britain's imperial power. Rather similarly, the relationship between Archie Rice and Billy Rice (who is ill at ease in contemporary society), and the portrayals of both past and present

English verse in A Sense of Detachment, point to the same clash of past and present.

Jimmy's criticisms of Alison's father indicate how tactful he is because he uses them as a pretext to launch a further attack on Alison. This could be seen as another manifestation of his fundamental misogyny, which is further confirmed by the speech between Alison and Colonel Redfern, the main focus of which is again Jimmy. Colonel Redfern:

I always believed that people married each other because they were in love. That always seemed a good enough reason to me. But apparently , that's too simple for young people nowadays. They have to talk challenges and revenge. I just can't believe that love between men and women is really like that (II.ii.67).

Later on in the play Jimmy demonstrates how a man can be so revengeful nowadays by shrugging off the illness of his wife and even the loss of his baby: "It was my first child, too. But it ... isn't my first loss" (III.ii.92). In the previous act he explains to Helena the reason for his enmity:

I don't care if she is going to have a baby. I don't care if it has two heads.... For eleven hours, I have been watching someone [Mrs Tanner] I love very much going through the sordid process of dying. She was alone, and I was the only one with her. And when I have to walk behind that coffin on Thursday, I'll be on my own again. Because that bitch won't even send her a

bunch of flowers.... She made the great mistake of all her kind.... And you think I should be overcome with awe because that cruel, stupid girl is going to have a baby! (II.ii.73)

Osborne tends to sympathise with his hero to such an extent that the other characters are "made to capitulate to him almost without a struggle,"⁸⁵ and inevitably they are not allowed enough space to develop as characters but only enough to pass on information about the main character.

Language--as the Tool of the Main Character

"The hallmark of success" in Look Back in Anger is Osborne's "unfolding portraiture" of the main character in all its "immediacy and particularity"⁸⁶ and the medium of this portrayal is language rather than incident. Jimmy Porter, like Archie Rice, George Dillon and Luther, is therefore invested with a powerful weapon: the language which includes both his monologues and music. Inevitably, the rest of the characters are "hardly more than sounding-boards for Jimmy's diatribes against his surroundings."⁸⁷

Since Jimmy is a character "derived from the personality of the language,"⁸⁸ his voice dominates the play through his series of monologues. These monologues play a significant part in revealing Jimmy's feelings about the characters, including Alison's family through whom he manifests his enmity, and the

people from his own past through whom he reflects his nostalgia.

Alison's family is one of the targets at which Jimmy can direct his attacks. He violently attacks them because they are first, Alison's family and, secondly, they increase his sense of inconformity:

Yes, that's the little woman's family. You know Mummy and Daddy, of course. And don't let the Marquess of Queensberry manner fool you. They'll kick you in the groin while you're handing your hat to the maid. As for Nigel and Alison.... They're what they sound like: sycophantic, phlegmatic and pusillanimous (I.i.21).

Under Jimmy's abusive language lies his lack of self-confidence since Alison's family bring to the surface his inferiority complex. For they belong to a higher class and they opposed his marriage to Alison at the beginning:

I really did have to ride up on a white charger--off white.... Mummy locked her up in their eight bedroomed castle.... There is no limit to what the middle-aged mummy will do in the holy crusade against ruffians like me.... I knew that, to protect her innocent young, she wouldn't hesitate to cheat, lie, bully and blackmail. Threatened with me, a young man without money, background or even looks, she'd bellow like a rhinoceros in labour--enough to make every male rhino for miles turn white, and pledge himself to celibacy (II.i.51-52).

The fact that Jimmy does not hesitate to attack Alison's family with aggressive wit, simply indicates his own feelings of inadequacy. What is seemingly a class and social conflict is actually a conflict of personal identity because he is afraid of losing Alison to her "armour plated" (II.i.52) mummy.

In the play the clash of past and present is also presented in linguistic terms. What Jimmy says about the people from the past reveals his tendency to idealise the past and reject the present. Jimmy's account of Madeline, his ex-lover, for instance, is in a way a rejection of the present in favour of the past:

CLIFF: I get mixed up with all your women. Was she the one all those years older than you?

JIMMY: Ten years.

CLIFF: Proper little Marchbanks,⁸⁹ you are! (I.i.18)

Cliff is obviously being ironic about the relationship between Jimmy and his older lover, Madeline. By the literary reference to Shaw in his response he emphasises the dreamlike quality of Jimmy's idealisation. However, Jimmy is wholly preoccupied with his past:

She had more animation in her little finger than you two put together. Her curiosity about things, and about people was staggering. It wasn't just a naive nosiness. With her, it was simply the delight of being awake, and watching.... Just to be with her was an adventure. Even to sit on the top of a bus with her was like setting out with Ulysses (II.i.18-19).

Here Jimmy is unable to separate his idealised figures in the past from the present (in the hope of investing his present life with meaning), and it seems that he feels free to despise his wife by making a comparison with those figures in the past. He is like Archie Rice who idealises his ex-wife because "she was a person of principle."

Exactly the same process of idealising can be traced to each of the figures Jimmy refers to, especially his own father, Hugh, Hugh's mother Mrs Tanner, and, typically, enough he uses these people as tools in order to attack Alison even at their most affectionate moments.

As for his father, Jimmy is full of sentimental idealism, which recalls a similar relationship between Pamela and her dying father in Time Present, and this becomes obvious particularly when he gives the account of his father's death to Helena:

Every time I sat on the edge of his bed, to listen to him talking or reading to me, I had to fight back my tears. At the end of twelve months I was a veteran... All that that feverish failure of a man had to listen to him was a small, frightened boy. I spent hour upon hour in that tiny bedroom. He would talk to me for hours, pouring out all that was left of his life to one, lonely, bewildered little, boy who could barely understand half of what he said. All he could feel was the despair and the bitterness, the sweet, sickly smell of a dying man (II.i.58).

Through these comments we become aware of the extent of how the image of the worshipped father dissolves into a figure of horror, bitterness and failure, which fascinates him and which he tries to understand and idealise in vain.

However, the object of this sentimental speech turns away from the dying father to Jimmy himself. This time he is the victim reflected through his "self-indulgent eloquence."⁹⁰ He emerges as a self-pitying figure like George Dillon.

Doesn't it matter to you--what people do to me? What are you trying to do to me? I have given you just everything. Doesn't it mean **anything** to you?
(II.i.58)

Briefly, Jimmy is equipped by a rhetorical force through which he reflects his animosity for his wife's higher class family and his nostalgia and love for the people like Mrs. Tanner and Madeline because they no longer exist in reality, and they pose no threat to him. He can idealise them because unlike Alison's family, they serve to fulfil his dream of perfection; and because his view of the past was something complete as opposed to the present which seems meaningless for him.

Moreover, it seems that to compensate for what Jimmy feels lacking in himself he takes refuge in a language which is "polished" and "eloquent" out of a "desire to chalk up a victory in the intellectual stakes."⁹¹ We notice how careful he is in directing his attacks with enough intellectual references and word games to prove his ability to be critical, and show that he

is right: "the English Novel", "the White Woman's Burden"⁹² and in an ironic allusion to T.S. Eliot's Mrs Porter: "And Mrs. Porter gets'em all going with the first yawn."⁹³ He shows off his knowledge by punning on the title of a section of The Waste Land: "The Cess Pool." Later on he offends Alison's family by employing references such as "the mass meeting of a certain evangelist at Earl's Court,"⁹⁴ "the Edwardian twilight,"⁹⁵ "the Marquess of Queensberry manner."⁹⁶ He attacks Alison's friend Webster as "a sort of female Emily Bronte."⁹⁷ He speaks derogatorily of Alison's brother Nigel: he is the "Platitude from Outer Space" who should be decorated by a medal inscribed "For Vaguerly in the Field." He despises the upper-class practices by making a reference to Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest: "Pass Lady Bracknell the cucumber sandwiches, will you?" In his allusions his aspirations come to the surface: once he mentions "Ulysses"⁹⁸--an image most probably Jimmy would like to have of himself (a Herculean figure). His mention of "the Greek Chorus Boys,"⁹⁹ "Old Gide"¹⁰⁰ and "the Michelangelo Brigade"¹⁰¹ points to the fundamental mistrust and rejection of women in his sub-conscious. These forced allusions emphasise his underlying insecurity and to overcome this feeling of unsafety he develops a defence mechanism through intellectual references.

Jimmy's monologues are his rhetorical weapons out of which he emerges as a complex and well developed character. However, he is capable of dominating the action even if he is not delivering his sermons: often through music. In the first scene

of Act I he is listening to a concert on the radio and he gets angry at Alison because her ironing is "interfering with the radio" (I.i.23). Later on in Act II "Jimmy is playing on his jazz trumpet, in intermittent bursts" (II.i.39), a similar scene to scene ii, Act III, where Alison returns home, and she and Helena are struggling to converse against "the sound of Jimmy's jazz trumpet" (III.ii.87). It is as if the women's voices are not allowed to be heard on stage, but Jimmy's voice--in this case through his trumpet instead of his monologues--is there to remind us of him.

His lyrics are also part of this domination in the play and they represent a great deal of Jimmy at the same time. He dominates the stage through his loud voice, but the words he pours out reflect the insecurity of a macho figure: "Don't be afraid to sleep with your sweetheart,/ Just because she's better than you" (III.i.81). In another song he reveals his sense of insecurity by referring to sexual intercourse:

This perpetual whoring
 Gets quite dull and boring
 So avoid that old python coil
 And pass me the celibate oil. (II.i.50)

To sum up, Jimmy emerges as a whole character out of his fully ornamented language. This verbal power helps him to dominate the stage action and, therefore, be the central focus of the play. Except for a few moments the other characters' language lacks personality when compared to Jimmy's articulate speeches.

Thus they are not effectively drawn and they serve only to fill the gaps in Jimmy's series of monologues (especially in the first act) and serve to develop Jimmy's character. Their function is to emphasise the extent to which Jimmy's attacks are obsessional, returning time and time again to the same two or three main concerns: class, the inertia of Alison and Cliff, and his obsession with figures from the past whom he idealises.

Conclusion

Gender plays a prominent part in the creation of the play. Osborne creates a world where the action revolves around the destiny of the male character and establishes the social setting, the crisis and the medium--the language--through which this crisis is conveyed and resolved in terms of the sex of the motivating character.

In the new social realist plays of Osborne and his contemporaries, known as the "kitchen-sink" school of theatre, stage directions tend to be lengthy since they are crucial in the establishment of the social setting (which is usually working class). Thus, in Look Back in Anger Osborne's stage directions picture a domestic setting, with the kitchen visible on the stage. This type of setting is the premise of a conventional family, and through stage directions the model of the conventional family wholly emerges with its patriarchal attitudes. The message conveyed is that the male of the house makes his authority felt in the household through his overbearing nature, and the female of the house displays her feminine characteristics by submitting herself to her husband and occupying herself with domestic chores.

Osborne's approach towards the members of this conventional family placed in a domestic setting is one of questioning how the individual fits into the social/sexual roles expected by society, but in the achievement of this purpose he adopts an ambivalent

attitude towards the characters. Thus the supposedly "virile" male sublimates his class hatred into sexual hatred to the point where the gender conflict affects "the aesthetic dynamics"¹⁰² of the play itself. This in turn could be taken as a manifestation of his uneasiness about his identity. The supposedly "feminine" wife who represents the potential for motherhood and female sexuality, emerges as an image of female power and an object of threat to the male character. The only compromise between them may be achieved by her feminine power being destroyed and in this case Jimmy must destroy her reproductive potential in order to come to terms with her.

The play expresses some radical questioning of the family and of sexual relationships, where there is a power tension between male and female characters. However, in the handling of such a battleground there is a clear bias in favour of the male character since the action is not "equally motivated"¹⁰³ but centers on the dilemma of the male protagonist. Throughout the play, the other characters adopt supporting roles and sacrificial language so that they could provide us with a deeper perception of Jimmy's character. They are not allowed much space to develop and their function is just to pass information about Jimmy. There is no equivalent focus given to Alison, either. She is not given any education or occupation. Jimmy is, however, the boss in his own home--"a pyrrhic victory, since it is predicated on mysogyny, a profound insecurity about male identity."¹⁰⁴ Moreover, Jimmy is given the most significant tool in the play to

develop and grow: the rhetorical force which includes both his monologues and music. Therefore, he emerges as a cultural snob--he uses an intellectual language, listens to classical music only and plays traditional jazz--conveying the social and sexual message of the time.

As a consequence, it could be claimed that the gendered approach of the playwright is reflected through the way his imagination works. In the first place, the nature of the stage space--the domestic setting--turns out to be a place where patriarchal, masculine power could be asserted. Therefore, the "kitchen-sink" theatre becomes an ironic name as far as the female character's function in the play is considered since the kitchen--by tradition female territory--becomes the place of abode for the male character, where he can dominate his wife. The resolution of the conflict which is "the male psyche in crisis"¹⁰⁵ is also achieved at the expense of the female character--she has had to compromise herself. This could be taken as the solution of a male dramatist working within the "well-made" play form where the "theatrical dynamic (the action) is ... determined by the story needs"¹⁰⁶ of the male character, and following the misogynist attitude of the "Angry Young Men." The biased approach of Osborne becomes more striking as far as Jimmy's central function in the play is considered. He is armed with the most effective weapon--language--and through this weapon he carries out the mission of conveying the most vital comments on important issues faced in the British society.

Notes

¹ Penny Summerfield, Women Workers in the Second World War: Production and Patriarchy in Conflict (London: Routledge, 1984) 8.

² Summerfield verifies this from the 1931 Census which reported that 34.2 per cent of women were in paid employment out of a total of 6,265,000.

³ The payment was only 5s to 10s a week for school leavers and 15s to £1 for women over 18.
Elaine Burton, What of the Women? (London: Frederick Muller, 1941) 194-95.

⁴ Gail Braybon, Women Workers in the First World War (London: Croom Helm, 1981) 186-90.

⁵ Summerfield (1984) 9.

⁶ Summerfield (1984) 9.

⁷ Summerfield (1984) 9.

⁸ Summerfield (1984) 9-10.

⁹ Summerfield (1984) 10.

¹⁰ Summerfield (1984) 11.

¹¹ In 1925 only three women were accepted into the administrative grades of the civil service and only nine more were considered to be qualified between 1926 and 1935.

Summerfield (1984) 12.

¹² Summerfield (1984) 12.

¹³ Summerfield reports from the 1931 Census that in 1931, in textiles 68 per cent of women workers were under 35, whereas

in the industries of metals, electrical apparatus and scientific instruments approximately 90 per cent were under 35. Moreover, of all occupied women 77 per cent were single, 16 per cent married and 7 per cent widowed or divorced.

Summerfield (1984) 14.

¹⁴ Summerfield (1984) 14.

¹⁵ The marriage bar was formally applied within the civil service, in banking, retailing and against women teachers by many local education authorities.

C. Hamilton, The English Woman (London: Longmans Green, 1940) 24-25.

¹⁶ Hamilton 25.

¹⁷ B.B. Gilbert, British Social Policy, 1914-39 (London: Batsford, 1970) 95.

¹⁸ Summerfield (1984) 15.

¹⁹ The figures were 13 per cent in 1921 and 16 per cent in 1931, with higher proportions in a small number of industries such as textiles, hosiery-making, boots and shoes, and the pottery industry. e.g. 36 per cent of women in textiles were married in 1931.

Summerfield (1984) 15.

²⁰ Summerfield (1984) 15.

²¹ E. Roberts, Population and Society in Britain 1850-1980, "Working Wives and Their Families", eds. T. Barker and M. Drake (London: Batsford, 1982) 143.

²² Roberts 143.

- ²³ Summerfield (1984) 16.
- ²⁴ Krishan Kumar, The New Pelican Guide to English Literature: The Present, ed. Boris Ford (London: Penguin Books, 1983) 23.
- ²⁵ Penny Summerfield, "Women, War and Social Change: Women in Britain in World War II", Total War and Social Change, ed. Arthur Marwick (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988) 97-104.
- ²⁶ All information on the proportion of working women comes from Summerfield (1988) 95-100.
- ²⁷ Summerfield (1984) 31.
- ²⁸ Michelene Wandor, Look Back in Gender: Sexuality and the Family in Post-war British Drama (London: Methuen, 1987) 4-6.
- ²⁹ Sixty-six per cent of women in an Amalgamated Engineering Union survey of 1944-5, three-quarter of whom had entered the industry during the war, said they wanted to stay in engineering. Summerfield (1988) 107.
- ³⁰ Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (London: Penguin Books, 1962) 38.
- ³¹ Alan Sinfield, Literature, Politics and Culture in Post-war Britain (Worcester: Brillings and Sons Ltd., 1989) 207.
- ³² Sinfield 207.
- ³³ Summerfield (1988) 96-7.
- ³⁴ Summerfield (1988) 97.
- ³⁵ Krishan Kumar 23.
- ³⁶ Look Back in Gender 3.
- ³⁷ Look Back in Gender 4.

³⁸ Harold Smith, War and Social Change, British Society in the Second World War (Manchester UP, 1986) 211.

³⁹ Susan Rusinko, British Drama, 1950 to the Present (Boston: G.K. Hall and Co., 1989) 2.

⁴⁰ Rusinko 1.

⁴¹ Roger Cornish and Violet Ketels eds., Introduction, Landmarks of Modern British Drama: The Plays of the Sixties (London: Methuen, 1985) xi.

⁴² Rusinko 11.

⁴³ John Russell Taylor, Anger and After (London: Penguin Books, 1963) 33.

⁴⁴ Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), German playwright and theatre director whose Marxist beliefs led him to a rejection of the existing naturalist theatre. To Brecht theatre was a tool to help people to see more clearly the social forces which were shaping their lives, and he founded the Berliner Ensemble to put his ideals into practice.

⁴⁵ Joan Littlewood has worked with various street-theatre groups since the early 1930s, presenting plays in public places in an effort to take theatre out to people. During the Second World War she was banned for her political views, which were considered too radically left. The Theatre Workshop was a left-wing theatre where acting (based on improvisation) stressed class roles theatrically in a music-hall style.

⁴⁶ Richard Courtney, Outline History of British Drama (Totowa: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1982) 255.

⁴⁷ Hugh Hunt, The Revels History of Drama in English, gen.ed., T.W.Craik. (London: Methuen, 1978) 53.

⁴⁸ Hugh Hunt 51.

Look Back in Anger owes much of its financial success to television where an act of the first production was shown. As John Russell Taylor acknowledges, "Look Back in Anger is the earliest example of a process which has frequently been crucial in the progress of the new drama: the mediation of television between the playwrights and his public" (Taylor 33).

⁴⁹ Hugh Hunt 54.

⁵⁰ Sinfield 79.

⁵¹ Blake Morrison, The Movement (London: Methuen, 1980) 176.

⁵² Sinfield 81.

⁵³ The Movement 162.

⁵⁴ John Osborne, Look Back in Anger (London: Faber and Faber, 1986) I.i.19.

All subsequent reference to the main work will be indicated parenthetically in the text.

⁵⁵ John Russell Taylor 41.

⁵⁶ Look Back in Gender 9.

⁵⁷ Friedan 38.

⁵⁸ Friedan 67.

⁵⁹ Friedan 206.

⁶⁰ Friedan 232.

⁶¹ Look Back in Gender 8.

⁶² Gail Finney, Women in Modern

- European Theater at the Turn of the Century (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989) 13.
- 63 Susan Rusinko 39.
- 64 Look Back in Gender 68.
- 65 John Russell Taylor 43.
- 66 Margaret Hallissy, Preface, Venomous Woman: Fear of the Female in Literature (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987) xiv.
- 67 Venomous Woman xiv.
- 68 Look Back in Gender 10.
- 69 Look Back in Gender 10.
- 70 Women in Modern Drama 145.
- 71 Venomous Woman xiv.
- 72 Venomous Woman xv.
- 73 Venomous Woman 90.
- 74 Venomous Woman 12.
- 75 Venomous Woman 11.
- 76 John Russell Taylor 43.
- 77 Michael Anderson, Anger and Detachment (London: Pitman Publishing, 1976) 24.
- 78 As John Russell Taylor puts forth, Look Back in Anger is a "well-made play, with all its climaxes, its tightenings and slackenings of tension in the right places," i.e. a very conventional pattern--statement, development, crisis and resolution, 38.
- 79 Gareth Lloyd Evans, The Language of Modern Drama (London: Dent, 1977) 102.

80 Anger and Detachment 24.

81 Anger and Detachment 24.

82 Anger and Detachment 24.

83 John Russell Taylor 40.

84 Anger and Detachment 24.

85 John Russell Taylor 43.

86 Anger and Detachment 25.

87 Hugh Hunt 237.

88 G.L. Evans 110.

89 **Proper Little Marchbanks** refers to the ineffective poet in Candida, whom she uses to blackmail and threaten her husband.

90 G. L. Evans 113.

91 G. L. Evans 103.

92 **The White Woman's Burden**: this remark ironically compares Alison's resigned and yet superior position as she irons throughout Jimmy's tirades to the attitudes of the British to the natives during the colonial period. The reference is to Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden" (1896).

93 **And Mrs Porter gets'em all with the first yawn**: again an ironic comparison of Alison's attitude to that of T.S. Eliot's Mrs Porter. In this case the allusion includes Alison's mother and implies the training her daughter has received from her, since the reference is to The Wasteland: "O the moon shone bright on Mrs Porter / And on her daughter / They wash their feet in soda water." The final image stresses the waste and extravagance of the middle-classes, and their indulgence of themselves.

⁹⁴ **The mass meeting of a certain American evangelist at Earl's Court:** Earl's Court is a large stadium in London, and the reference is to the fashion in Britain in the 1950s for the holding of prayer meetings conducted by visiting American evangelists, in which people were "converted" in an atmosphere of mass-hysteria.

⁹⁵ **The Edwardian twilight:** the Edwardian period can be viewed as the transitional period between the assured attitude of Victorian England and the excesses of the First World War, which swept away the last traces of nineteenth-century confidence. Hence it was a twilight period between the high day of Victorian confidence and the coming night of twentieth-century doubt and scepticism.

⁹⁶ **The Marquess of Queensberry manner:** Douglas Williams, fourth Marquess of Queensberry (1724-1810), was famous sporting peer who drew up the first rules to regulate the sport of boxing. The implied point is that Alison's mother appears to play by the rules of her polite manner but that beneath this she remains a vicious and unscrupulous opponent.

⁹⁷ **A sort of female Emily Bronte:** Emily Bronte was a famous nineteenth-century woman novelist. Jimmy reverses the sex because he wants to imply that Webster is a homosexual.

⁹⁸ **Ulysses:** Odysseus, the Greek hero, whose voyages, described in Homer's Odyssey, culminated in his sailing out of the known world through the Pillars of Hercules in search of a new world. The image is clearly one Jimmy would like to have of

himself. There is perhaps an irony in the fact that Penelope, wife of Ulysses, is the mythic image of long-suffering, patience and faithfulness.

⁹⁹ **The Greek Chorus boys:** this refers to the fact that the Greeks practised homosexuality as a 'higher' form of love than heterosexual love.

¹⁰⁰ **Old Gide:** this refers to the French novelist Andre Gide (1869-1951), who was homosexual.

¹⁰¹ **Michalengelo** never married and it has often been supposed that he was homosexually inclined.

¹⁰² Look Back in Gender 70.

¹⁰³ Look Back in Gender 68.

¹⁰⁴ Look Back in Gender 14.

¹⁰⁵ Look Back in Gender 8.

¹⁰⁶ Look Back in Gender 68.

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