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**The Historical and Socio-Political Context of
“Look Back in Anger”
By John Osborne**

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Dedication:

To my family, for their continual love, support, happy times
and inspiration.

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Abstract:

George Orwell at the end of the Second World War said that the next 10 years would show whether Britain remains a great power. This thesis argues how two world wars weakened Britain's empire and how within twenty years, Britain's imperial night passes into history. The first chapter offers a depiction of the British society before and after the Second World War which was quite difficult to be systematic about its history; one could digest consummately satisfactory data albeit gathered in different ways and in every aspect hard to harmonize. The first chapter identifies the changes brought during the war time which in fact destabilized the normal chronology of exposing events. The second chapter demonstrates how *Look Back in Anger* emerged as a landmark in the history of the British theatre; it analyzes the theme of anger and the reasons behind the protagonist's rage, how was it difficult for him to withdraw the romantic golden age, covered by the glitter of a long hot summer with big hats, and how John Osborne felt angry to swallow the page of the past where the right to rule. The third chapter concludes that *Look Back in Anger* can be understood through an approach which relates the loss of power to the loss of British manliness and soldierly authority which once gave Britain a great image.

Key Words: Decline of the British Empire, John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, the Angry Young Men, Masculinity.

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General Introduction

“Historical and Socio-Political Context of Look Back in Anger” by John Osborne

General Introduction:

The topic of my thesis is “The Historical and Socio-Political Context of Look Back in Anger” by John Osborne, A topic that worth examination from the wide to the narrow spectrum, I chose Look Back in Anger as I felt delighted to inspect a different side of Global Power Britain, Osborne did succeed to change the landscape of the British Theatre throughout painting strong pictures of characters giving them a realistic basis inspired by 20th century gloomy atmosphere. His play came to throw the cold water on a generation that refused to believe that the sun will not set on the British Empire anymore. Moreover, the play encouraged me to investigate the time period of the 1950s which was considered as the most insane period of human history as it announced a cultural shift in the British history. The thesis will be divided into three major chapters, each chapter discusses a different perspective within the same topic of John Osborne’s Look Back in Anger, and it aims to examine the general changes brought to Britain as a consequence of the Second World War, including the damage time and the catastrophe; furthermore, the ways in which Britain in particular got itself in and out of this distress, then the reconstruction and rebuilding. Adding to that, few general reflections on the post war period, and the continuity of the main political parties, the impact of labor party which was known as “The Left Wing” headed by Clement Atlee and his cabinet, how they went ahead to lead one of the great reforming government of the twentieth century within five years. They would introduce the “Welfare State” and manufacture that perhaps would be the most prominent legacy, taking into account how things came together in order to rewrite the story of reconstructing post war Britain, a very affluent, different, tolerant and literally a modern place. The first chapter, then, will cover certain social issues of the era, the keys to be unlocked are those found in different relating books and writings dedicated both to the history and culture. With the help of my supervisor who encouraged me to enlarge my thesis with studying the various priceless books related to the British psyche in the twentieth century, especially, Arthur Marwick’s book “*British Society Since 1945*” which was identical to my research and is basically the guide to the first chapter. Questions that needed investigations, concern the heritage of the World War II, austerity and ridding from it, class system in Britain, the welfare state, and the people's resentment at the British Government policy, end of censorship, how it disposed of the high culture, and gave birth to the mass

General Introduction

culture permissive consumer society, status of men and women, how all this chronology of events motivated the emergence of numerous movements, each movement came to revolt against the other one, the movement discussed in this thesis is the Angry Young Movement, The second chapter will address a major relative movement that had appeared with the course of the same period was known by the Kitchen Sink Realism, adding to that the Social Realism. The chapter will examine the play and the author, “The Many Lives of Angry Young Men” by John Heilpern was very helpful in terms of inserting authentic facts about John Osborne, and his psychology during the 1950s. It will study as well, how the aforementioned Contemporary Social issues were reflected in the writings of John Osborne’s “*look back in Anger.*” How has the stage of the British theatre shifted from the bourgeois drawing rooms to the Kitchen Sink? Why John Osborne was known for the man who turned anger into art and why was he angry? How was Osborne’s play considered as the voice of an entirely working class generation? Every research needs a land and the third chapter is land of this research, it would not be plausible to study history and literature without studying the theoretical framework, this chapter will explain the topic of masculinity and its configurations which are, hence related to British identity and the deconstruction of class system. Thus, how the 1950s Britain encouraged the New Woman to invade men’s space? How did the dethronement of the British Empire emasculate the British Man? A well known example of life-history research on masculinity is Raewyn Connel’s studies on the interplay agency structure and the historical process of the lives of different groups of men. Her book (*Masculinities*) will be the guideline to my theoretical chapter. Finally, the chapter will analyze the relationship between the masculinities of Englishness and the Working Class within the play of Look Back in Anger. Consequently, the success of Look Back in Anger signifies that the social and political anticipation of theatre were altering in relation with the socio-political conditions of that period.

Chapter I: History

1.1 Introduction:

In order to put the main topic which is Osborne's master piece "Look Back in Anger" in context, it would be a necessary to look back in calendar first and provide a depiction of the historical and cultural contexts of Great Britain since the Second World War. This chapter is basically divided into two major parts. Starting from 1945 onwards, the three themes have stood out in British history since 1945 were: (1) the foundation of a welfare state based on a remarkable political consensus; (2) the vacillating performance of the British economy; (3) the decline of Britain from the status of a great world and imperial power to that of a middle rank European nation. I found it quite interesting initially, in first section of the first chapter to discuss the Second World War itself, the cause and the effects, Inevitably the abolishment of censorship on art, particularly on theatre in 1965 gave the blue pen for writer to express publicly, on stage their outrage towards the loss of values and loss of masculinity I thought it would be helpful to address in the second section particularly, the issues that appeared in the Nineteen-Fifties the decline of the British Empire after the loss of its imperial power, as I do want us to remember though, the war did not simply affect the United Kingdome, it rather crushed every nation involved. Britain's ability to resist national demands diminished, which helped accelerating the prospect of relinquishing all imperial possessions allowing Britain's legacy to open its arms for multicultural ethnic minorities to enter its white property. Within the second section, the slogan "*set the people free*" signaled a shift and spurred drastic transformation in culture. The British youth felt more affluent, unrestricted, and impatient to withdraw the inflexibility of the past. They disputed and mocked the cultural conventions; it is yet the time for alternative lifestyle and values to come to the light. The era also encouraged rebellions to spring, the rise of angry young men generation during the course of the 50s and 60s was firmly common, as men felt victimized by this new culture that stole their masculinity, they believed men have transformed from a vehicle of production to womanish repository of consumption..

Key Words: British Empire, Second World War, Post-War Britain, Labor Party, Working Class Angry Young Men.

1.2. Historical Background:

At a length persisted for a long time (1603 - 1949), England remained in charge of the world, as it controlled an expansive abroad domain, from Canada to India from Australia to Nigeria from the Carrabin toward the south Africa, Britain once ruled over the third of population on earth, it was at the pinnacle of royal pride. In 1922, it was said that the sun never sets on the British Empire, amid this period; England reached the zenith of the force to be reckoned with, and it truly enjoyed a robust advance and constant reforms. The end of the Main World War, however, denoted an atmosphere of instability coupled with a desire to restore "the glorious days". British people doubted everything, they did not perceive the possibility of the fall of the empire, they never minded defending it, in any case, it took a noteworthy worldwide crisis to at long last acknowledge what they truly have lost The country was plunged into depression as a result of mass unemployment and poling lodging, industrial and social agitation which would last for two decades, there were no welfare state which implied that if you were poor you endured terribly. The grand optimism of the empire is fading. England the motherland is partitioned by class and wealth; her old ventures, transport fabricate, textile and coal are in decrease, the ascent of trade unions threatened the old order.

In the Second world war, which lasted for six years (1939-1945), the absence of food led spurring imperial ambitions, As Hitler threatened to build his own European empire, he wanted a free hand in Europe, his plan was to conquer the countries of the east in order to win room to live for the German people, but Churchill would have none of it, Churchill's defense was immensely popular:

"We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender. (Winston Churchill, 4 June 1940)

Since Nazi German invasion in Britain seemed inevitable, Britain will fight on, patriotic enthusiasm reached its zenith, Britannia, the old conqueror island is not going down easily.

Constant threat of bombs badly damaged beautiful eighteenth century cities, in a battle known as “the Blitz” (Blitzkrieg meaning lightening war in German). Civilians were the main target of bombing. Hitler threatened to burn the city of London till the ground “*I want fires everywhere. Thousand of them!*” Families were split up; most children were evacuated to countryside. There was panic, hysteria, chaos, The German air fleets (Luftwoofer) were ordered to attack London, thereby drawing up the last remnants of the Royal Air Force (RAF) Fighter Command into a battle of annihilation. Britain did not have the guts to all alone attack Germany, at this time; Britain still had all the resources of its past empire, In short, its dependence upon other parts of the world ultimately made it stronger than Germany’s attempts at self-sufficiency. Life was horrible during the Second World War era; it impacted both soldiers and civilians.

Arthur Marwick puts it in his *British Society Since 1945*, that Britons have taken an important lesson from the First World War and therefore are well set up for the second. Fear of running out of nourishment, particularly nourishment for the troops led government officials to make rationing a reality for many in British colonies, "*Many of the conditions of war were indeed to continue until early 1950, with rationing and controls enduring still longer*" (Marwick 18). In British Africa, for example, colonial policy forcing production for war rather than for domestic food consumption meant shortages that were only made worse by wartime inflation. Crop failure in Rhodesia in 1942 implied widespread hunger and starvation. England began investigating policies to save and create sustenance in return for triumph and great welfare state. In 08 January 1940, rationing was acquaint “*rationing will give everyone, rich and poor alike an equal share of all that’s going*” Ministry of Agriculture headed by Master Frederick set up to control rationing, guaranteeing their troopers were all around sustained. The "dig for victory” campaign encouraged ordinary people to plant gardens, so they ate more vegetables, then none would experience the ill effects of mal sustenance. Rationing kept going for the next few years. Full business and higher wages meant that workers additionally had more access to food. Children and pregnant women were given extra- treatment.

Troops from everywhere in the British empire, were mobilized for the Second World War, nearly a million men from Australia and new Zeeland, more than 700.000 from Canada 600.000 from Africa and 2.500.000 from India, the territories in colonies remained loyal, however there is less of the patriotic further of the First World War, there was a feeling that

this is not our war, that the British government who bungled into it, ought to surface out, we want independence. Hopes for superior Britain vanished as England gravely needed help; She had practically run out of options. Eventually, One of the most important encryption technologies used first by the German military was known as the Enigma, a code breaking machine designed initially by the Poles and later enhanced by the English endeavors, formed the strategy of war, it was traded to America as a scientific gift with a hook, since Churchill urgently needed to draw America into the war, America as a reaction entered the war Roosevelt declared an arrangement under which the United States would supply England with shipping arms, material and sustenance. The machine was a deadly hit to their combat strategy as the Allies could anticipate the German's next move. Within weeks the situation was reversed Britain was no longer alone in battling Germany as She had gained a monstrous aircraft, new styles of battles, strategies of destruction combined with rapid movement of troops and tanks. The Allies together triumphed against the AXES under, a systematic British intelligence, American hardware and Soviet soldiers. All of the three indispensable to allied victory. The Second World War remains the most geographically wide spread military conflict in humanity, The violence of the Second World War gives us a window into the way the war affected everyone who lived at that time, it also allows us to see war from a global perspective in a way that focusing on strategies or tactics or pivotal that battles does not.

Britons had figured out how important the intelligence of insight could be. August 1945, two atomic bombs forced Japanese to surrender. Over 110.000 people died immediately and many thousands died later from the after war –effects. War is over, 150.000 colonial troops died in defense of the empire. It was a terrible end of war. Britain blew everything it had to win against the Nazi's, everything could be done to win was done. Europe later on became divided into two, the eastern part under communist soviet control; the western part under capital system protected by the United States power.

As the war came to an end, victory is celebrated over the globe; the British people emerged at knees but triumphed. They contemplated the future of their empire, passion for colonial rule and a desire to improve the lives, this was of their main subjects, and Britain was concerned with finding a new part to play in fast-changing the current situation, beside changing relation with its friends particularly the United States, the European countries and with members of the commonwealth. Nonetheless, the country was virtually bankrupt, as the balance of power completely shifted towards the United States and Soviet Union,

notwithstanding the fact that, two centuries of expanse and conquest gradually diminished the power of Britain which found its self struggling to survive.

1.3. Post war Britain:

After the war is over and troops furthermore began returning from the previous war, the primary priority now was the reconstruction and to get the country back on its feet, starting from government. There was a huge desire to clean the country of slums which for so long blunted the landscape, people wanted to see more equal Britain, the gap between the rich and the poor was not as visible as before the 1930s, blame and disgrace carried to promise for future actions, this promise for a better world had been played in propaganda films, radios saying: “*We are realizing we are all in the same boat*”. It was a time of recovery from war and a time of war consequences: “*Life in these dozen years [i.e. 1945 1957] was dominated by the consequences of the war, both negative and positive*” (Marwick18).

For the past years, Britain had been run by a coalition government dominated by the Tories (conservatives), Churchill as a prime minister had promised to call for a general election once Germany might have been defeated, it was a campaign of personality over policy, against the labor party headed by Clement Attlee.

After the war, Churchill crowned his wars achievement by reviewing Berlin itself, Antony Eden and Clement Attlee were invited to pop stand as observers in the British delegation, what Churchill haven’t foreseen, was the reaction of service men, when he raised his hat and two fingers with the acquainted victory, the troops were not calling his name but that of Attlee. Churchill, War-time hero, the man who has led his country through its darkest days in the fight against Nazi Germany, the brilliant leader whose speeches did much to inspire the country when Britain faced possible invasion by Nazi Germany; just weeks after leading his country to victory in Europe, would become a central figure in a bitterly contested election. The British did not reject the man, they rejected the Conservative party. Many service men and the civilians as a whole idolized Churchill-but not the party he now represented.

The Labor party was the right choice for reform; Atlee believed that country was looking for something more substance. his attitude towards government was to introduce to what we now call the Welfare state, Labor felt that when Germany was defeated, the threat on Britain was over and the party led by Attlee should be given the opportunity to govern, In 1942 the liberal lord Beveiredge had produced a report which proposed that everybody regardless of

race should be cared for by the state “From The Cradle To The Grave”, a welfare state is opened for everyone, The parties accepted the report’s basic objectives, labor with most eager as this was the basis of labor manifesto and the blueprint for the welfare state, claiming that if you could have full employment to kill people why can’t you have full employment to build houses, to recruit teachers, recruit nurses, build schools for free secondary education and provide more further higher education, which means that if you could plan for war you could plan for peace and that what was said by the labor manifesto party,” we want practical work to obtain people problems”; Churchill didn’t see the report as socialist claiming that the conservatives were already going on that line, but they were not. They were not as eager as the labor.

The conservatives had been in power for most of the time before the war, and they were blamed for the high unemployment and widespread poverty. 1945 was the year of Churchill’s greatest victory and that of his most devastating defeat as he was rejected by British electorates, the labor party was swept a power, a story of election with a result that would shock the world and radically reshape Britain. Labor scored a huge national victory in 1945 48% vote. *"The general election of 1945 [...] for the first time ever, gave Labour a decisive victory"* (Marwick 7), labor party won its first seat in history, liberal was the third party. The government was headed by clement Attlee, his government is often claimed as a success story of post war Britain, he remained leader for 20 years, he said that fight in the east turned him to a socialist, he did not think the people he met there are inferior, he is a socialist of the left, he fought in wars, he said that the aim of the labor party was to ensure that slums and poverty would be abolished , he said : *“I took part in the great war in the hope of securing lasting peace and better life for all, we were promised that war would end that the men who fought in that war be cared for unemployment slums and poverty would be abolished”* (The Socialist Register 1983, p.55). These words expressed his wide ideas and sentiments to build exciting future for young people of that moment, Atlee and his cabinet went on to lead one of the tremendous reforming government of the twentieth century, within 5 years they would introduce the welfare state and the reconstruction of a post war Britain, and build what perhaps would be their greatest legacy. What the labor were promising to do, to eliminate what Beveridge called the Five Giants:

- 1- Squalor
- 2- Idleness
- 3- Ignorance

4- Want

5- Disease

After winning the election labors immediately started operating reforms, they introduced:

- Family Allowance Act which provided a universal flat rate(massive forward for working class family)
- National Insurance Act 1946: established benefits for those who were victims of accidents / illness financed from N I funds.
- National Health Service 1946: free access to health, free prescription and free dental care, this act in particular was opposed by the conservatives, they claimed that the HNS would cause a huge amount of total GDP in the UK
- New Towns Act 1946: laid plans for huge house building programs, quite cheap and at low cost built around Britain
- National Assistance Board 1948: provided extra benefits for the poor.

In this context, the thought that the state ought to manage the economy and make centralized interventions in areas for instance: housing, healthcare and education were no longer purely the province of the socialist left. As a result of this consensus, such services would become the primary industry of welfare.

The main confrontation between parties was that on the level of Nationalization needed for British economy to best operate itself, the idea of we can take care of ourselves without the need of help from the outside country. To illustrate, labor party is a socialist party and proud of it, its ultimate purpose was to establish a socialist commonwealth for Great Britain. At that time, socialism was thought to be the wave of future, people gave it a great push after the war. What Atlee really meant by socialism, is a new form of society based on the principle of nationalization which he called the common ownership of the means of production distribution and exchange, which was in clause four in labor party institution. It was the perfect time, that meant to a change the nature of society to create a good society, a society not based on acquisition and greed but on the principle of fellowship. Atlee said that the labor party had to be led from Left Center, from the political spectrum, his great weakness, was rather his ignorance of economics, during the first economic crisis in labor government 1947, a crisis caused by trying to make the pound convertible which led to the outflow of cash from

the country, rapid end convertibility, he was unable to give a lead. There was an attempt to remove him.

The labor party began the process of decontrolling in the 1940s, which was accelerated by conservatives once they swiped the power again and came to office in 1951. In practice, the labor government came to be much more concerned with the stabilization of the economy rather than problems of planning the industrial structure. Harold Wilson said: "*the great gap in the labor party policy at that time was it had no real policy for private industry*". (Professor Vernon Bogdanor, *Britain in The 20 the Century: The Attempt to Construct a Socialist Common Wealth, 1945 – 1951*) Government was blamed for evading all sorts of difficult questions about Britain's industrial efficiency which would become important later on.

For the next quarter century, both the Conservative and Labor parties were agreed on the need to keep up the "welfare state", in particular avoiding unemployment. Britain progressed towards becoming in fact a social democracy, in which both main parties agreed on most of the basic values, and disagreed mainly about method. The main area of disagreement was the level of nationalization desirable for the British economy to operate at its best. As a result of the changes which gave significance to people's happiness and wellbeing, the government became plainly known as "the welfare state".

1.4. Making of Modern Britain: (1950 – 1960):

. "*Modernity is a historical period following the middle ages. It is a post-traditional order marked by change, innovation and dynamism. The constitutions of modernity can be seen at least in the account of Gidden (1990) to consist of: industrialism, surveillance, capitalism and military power. Modernists have typically displayed an optimistic faith, in the power of science, rationality and industry to transform the world for the better*". (Chris Barker *Cultural Studies*) Modernity is thus a term that refers to historical and sociological configuration.

For many reasons the war and its impact were quite longer lived and that certainly effected the recreation and the reconstruction of Britain, The 1950's and 1960's would appear as utopia for people who lived during 1930s. "*The war itself had had an enormous direct influence in stimulating all kinds of expanded or new industrial development often in areas remote from the attentions of German bombers*" (Marwick 20) When peace was settled, the main casualty of post war ideological progress has been the idea of planning which was strongly supported, applied and that is now seen brightly. Britons questioned how to cope in the immediate aftermath of war, "*How should we rebuild London*" it's the cover of book published in 1945,

the idea that the city has been destroyed, there was a desire to rewrite history to destroy the past in order to reshape the present, there was a mood of optimism, but the threat of communism advances, In the words of Harold Farrar, " *an era of affluence was predicted, and meritocracy that would supersede the reign of old school ties.*" The new "red-brick" universities were built and greatly expanded educational opportunities. Winston Churchill was again voted into office by 1951.

The Royal Festival Hall celebration in 1951, one year after the Great Exhibition, marked the end of hardships caused by war. It was a popular celebration of national recovery. February 1952 Elisabeth II succeeds her father, George VI. The conquest of Everest was perfectly timed for coronation celebration, Britain had higher expectation in the summer of 1953 and the coronation marked the beginning of a period of optimism and achievement, this fact shows the extent to which the nation took the young queen to their hearts instantly. Hopes are higher for Britain during this period of time.

By the mid 50s people started enjoying themselves, bringing new ideas on to market that promised to give everyone a taste of modern living Britain had become one of the world's most affluent countries, the economic boom finally underway in Britain. Difficulties were beginning to ease , cars and other luxury goods were becoming twice affordable than in 1930s , in the air too, Britain was looking to the future , the record breaking command the world first jet air liner helped to create a sense that Britain was finally on the move.

The volume cars in the British roads prompted concerns about safety and congestion. A new edition of the high way code was set by the minister of transport in response to the rapidly escalating number of road accidents. Britain by the mid 1950's, traveled by bus and trains to enjoy their summer holidays. This new kind of development relied on Britain's growing motor industry, which was based in the Midlands. the Government set various attentions on industry which is also related to science and technology. "*It is a commonplace, though also an accurate and significant truth, that economic developments and social conditions in all industrialized countries since 1945 have been mightily affected by scientific and technological change*". (Marwick 11) The high level of industry in fact increased the number of job opportunities for people to earn more money "*Overall, despite the frustration and austerity of the immediate post-war years, there was modest prosperity and the bulk of wage and salary earners did reasonably well*" (Marwick 20). The unemployment was a striking problem to be solved by the welfare state policy. "[...] both Labour and Conservative

Governments were fully committed to a philosophy of the avoidance of mass unemployment" (Marwick57).

The nineteenth century towns had been changed by the building of new homes near the railway. The Distribution of Industry Act (1945) led to the development of man areas, now the country around the towns changed as many new houses were built along with main roads suitable for motoring. Middleclass people moved much further to quieter new suburbs.

Since the war Britain had been in the front of development in health and medicines, British scientists were not far from cure from one of the world biggest killers. In the mid 1950s the dialogical struggle between America and Russia eventually led to a nuclear stand off, Britain by now was committed to have a nuclear territory of its own, In 1957, Antony Eden the, conservative leader retired as a prime minister , on 01 July 1957, Harold Macmillan became the new prime minister , he went on to give the late 1950s the summary of the economic situation of the country saying: *"Let us be frank about it, most of our people have never had it so good"*. With the decline on the empire Britain would seem to lose its role in the world attempting to work alone between the United States and USSR, to conduct a policy as weak as its military power, government now is attempting to enter Europe wisely. At that time Britain could not make up its mind, it was searching for a role, a role in Europe. Harold McMillan made first implication to join European community that was in august 1961; De Gaulle was against Britain's being a part of it, not because of his hatred of "Les Anglo-Saxons". He believed that Britain could not decide whether its first loyalty, the decline of the empire was to Europe or the United States, later on it tried again in 1963. *"Great Britain has lost an empire and not yet found a role"* (qtd-in Davis, 2001, p.1)

Economic was the reason for decline and that in way is odd, the cost of post war years have seen the growing spread of consumer affluence, their decline was in terms of comparison with other countries on the continent particularly Germany Japan, these countries are growing faster, after De Gaulle's retirement, Britain became a member in the European Community in 1973.

The 1960s encountered the civil rights movements, students, feminists, the women's suffrage movements. Million of Britons had grown up in an era of unparallel affluence, era of sexual freedom, ushered by the contraceptive pills, which became available in Clinics The NHS (Family Planning) Act permits health authorities to give contraceptive advice regardless

of marital status and the Family Planning Association (FPA). Abortion was extremely illegal; however woman was in danger of dying. In 1967, Labor MP David Steel sponsored an Abortion Law Reform bill, which became the Abortion Act. The act helped decriminalizing abortion in Britain on certain grounds. The status of women had undergone slight changes, "*it had been changing since the beginning of the century, and the changes had been greatly accelerated by the Second World War*" (Marwick 63). As the welfare state was doing better, it was producing more goods that had to be consumed by people. The important unit in the consumer society was the family unit. "*More and more, especially in the freer economy of the 1950s, it was becoming important as a centre of consumption. "Advertisements would be directed at wives and at children [...]"* (63). Marwick states: "*traditional male attitudes persisted; [however], there were examples in working-class. Homes of husbands sharing in duties [...]. Women were having fewer children, earlier and then often going out to work [...]"* (64). The consumer productions which were obtainable were "*the benefits brought by technology: disinfectants and detergents [for hygiene]; food was [...] purer and fresher than before the war [...]"* (111). Furthermore, there were fridges, washing and dishwashing machines, television sets and other technical developments marking the standard of better living.

To conclude the topic of the welfare state we may say that "*[w]hat was done and it was a lot was the result of truly noble vision [...]"* (Marwick59). The welfare state was the solving of problems; however, affluence which went hand in glove with so-called consumer society was coming towards an end in the Nineteen-Fifties.

1.4.1 The end of Censorship:

Limitation or what is accredited within family life, the codes of restraint, the symbolism are themselves represented in ways indirectly produced by censorship which in nature became a piece of the more repressive forms of the state. The National Endowment for the Arts was set up in 1965, the law was modified as The single finest point of confinement on the flexibility of expression in English theater was canceled, and new universes of conceivable outcomes therefore opened up to authors and that was when Lord Chamberlain's authority to censor drama was abolished in September 1968. The time was for renewal of its franchise, a quarter of century later, art would no longer be perceived as an inadequate spiritual good. Breaking points, however, were as yet put by the legislature on specific sorts of works. An

entire era of dramatists has grown without the alterations of the blue pencil, keeping in mind that to face religious extremist name, a case of current endeavors at restriction. The fatwa made against Salman Rushdie, the pickets outside Jerry Springer the Melodic drama, the rough dissents against Behzti at the Birmingham Repertory Theater. In all these cases, religious fundamentalists have attempted to deny freedom of expression which gives no respect to the taboos imposed by the society, and to audiences the opportunity to make up their own minds.

1.4.2 The Decline of the British Colonies:

According to Simon Adams, in his book, Post-War Britain: for decades, Britain has exercised power across the world, the British have been in India for over 200 years, the first crisis was in 1947, when India had to be let gone, and gained liberation. British rule in India had been challenged by decades of nationalist protest and terrorist violence, thus, they were unable to act and made tremendous concession towards Indian self-government; India's fate was two nations will be created by partition, a secular India, and new home land for Indian Muslims in Pakistan. In this chaos millions of refugee witnessed the bloodshed; they were struggling to get to India and Pakistan, as thousands of others were doing their best to prevent. Britain's loss of the first colony would be the beginning of the end for that great imperial Britannia. Ten years after the war, came Suez fiasco or Suez crisis of 1956, America refused to support Britain's position, which showed that Britain could not act independently when opposed by the United States. Britain policy for the empire in Africa after the Second World War had planned for a gradual move to independence, 12 colonies of British empire in Africa will become independent, the first country to be set free was Ghana 1957, followed by Nigeria 1960 Other decolonization of other territories: Uganda, Kenya, etc. In the West Indies Jamaica and Trinidad gained independence in 1962. Most of the smaller Caribbean, Indian, and Pacific Ocean islands became independent by the mid 1980. Facing history was the starting point. The words are well-recognized but deserve to be reread:

“Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the diseases. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers. We practiced discrimination and exclusion. It was our ignorance and our prejudice. And our failure to imagine these things being done to us. With some noble exceptions, we failed to

make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask - how would I feel if this were done to me? As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us." Keating's Redfern (1992).

This speech confesses the terrible consequences of European Colonizing policies which were exercised upon other helpless parts of the world. The government made a call for workers from Caribbean to help build post war economy, by 1962 over 250,000 from West Indies have arrived to Britain, tempted by the promise to work and better life, they were given English education, told that England is the greatest country in the world, however when they came they were traumatized by being unwelcomed by Britons.

The central theme of postwar period is the decline of national self competence, competence in British institution and British parliamentary system which seemed in 1954 took triumph and immediately, after the war most Britons would thought that whatever the hardships Britain will better govern than another country in the world but that gradually began to disappear and with the decline on the empire. Today, the white, the black and the Asian, all search for new national identity within Britain which seems to them most tolerant society in the world.

I.2- Culture:

I.2.1. Post- War Upheaval of Societal Conventions in Britain:

Older people were frightened by the development, and called the new youth culture "permissive society" "[t]he word 'affluence' began to be bandied around freely. Release came, not just from post-war austerity, but from social controls going back to Victorian times [...]" (Marwick 13). All the traditions whether they were religion, dress manner, marriage and family, all of them have collapsed and old values disappeared, some are never replaced. Perhaps the newest face of the permissive age was the miniskirt, a far shorter skirt than the one had never been worn before. Youngsters began to express themselves differently in unexpected ways; they doubted the culture in which they had been raised, specifically they opposed the sexual standards of Christian society, they have reached the moment in history where their traditional thought and traditional inferences to customs and authority had brought them to the brink of global disaster, the world even wouldn't thought about, public dissatisfaction could nonetheless be unexpectedly strong.

The message was hard to resist. The permissive of culture attracted and tempted them, they had to create new forms so that people could experience new ways of living, if they like it they might defend it. A generation was coming to age to see reality differently, it was known as "the baby boom generation" "*the post-war 'baby boom' which culminated in 1947 with a birth-rate of 20.7 per thousand*" (Marwick 31). They rebelled and lost their innocence. British people of the 1950's and 1960's era lived free, they had no concerns of religions, governments or laws, and basically had learned from the music the admiration of the arts (Jazz and Rock and Roll). They dressed, danced and played music as they liked, not worrying about how society or officials may or may not approve. Coming up with contraceptive rid the fear of pregnancy, perhaps the most powerful sexual restrained was no longer an obstacle.

Yet if we are thinking the real social revolution of twentieth century, that is to say, not so much the rise and fall of standards of living, but the most significant changes in behavior-clothing, sex relations, hobbies, sports and holidays-then we have to admit that the youth movements have been the most successful revolutionaries of the all time.

I.2.2. The Working Class in Modern Britain:

The industrial Revolution marked the emergence of the working class which later on became an important objective that prompted segregation in modern society, British class legacy after the war was actually: "*'working class' [...]; we find a rather more varied and less precise use of 'middle class' and 'middle classes' as well as 'lower-middle class' and 'upper-middle class' "*" (Marwick 34). The "*[h]igh taxation during and after the war hit the upper-middle class hardest, lowering the barriers between it and the lower-middle class*". Concerning the working class there "*was little ambiguity about [its] composition [...]. Of the total employed population, well over 60 per cent did manual work of one sort or another [...]. Manual workers and their families formed the working class [...]*" (37). The Education Act in 1945, set to grant free secondary education for all students above 15 years old, thus, it helped to increase more educated students, and therefore education became more accessible. The working-class students, in particular became more aware of their position in the British society. Not the entire working-class student finished their secondary school, nor had university degree, this however, is an isolated concept and become a menace not only to

society but to gender role in this society. What is meant to be a working class of the 1950s according to Marwick is:

"[...] to be working-class meant performing manual work... or just plain boring circumstances. ...When it came to 'life chances' members of the working class were still at a disadvantage compared with all of the rest of the society. Individual members might move upwards, but conditions within the working class, not excluding working-class attitudes themselves, discouraged educational aspiration. (Marwick 43-44)

Marwick adds: *"Class is a difficult and messy subject, but indisputably neither the upheavals of the Second World War nor the programmed of the Labor Government abolished it"* (44). He continues: *"If we are to compare the significance of class with that of other sources of distinction and inequality,[...], class stands out as a key factor in such matters as wealth, political power, educational opportunity, and style of life"* (44).

It is appropriate to mention that this chapter certainly does not encompass the social situation in its entirety. It highlights and discusses the most important issues of the society after the war and in the Nineteen-Fifties. These issues of the social background actually initiated a very strong subjective element: The class inequality. The working class students became demoralized by the lack of opportunities; the responses, to these factors are quite relevant to my research and deserve investigation. They chose to express their anger with audience. The new sound of the 1950s was stamped as the Angry Young Men movement.

I.2.3. The Emergence of Angry Young Men:

Just as the 1920s had its “Lost generation”, the 1950s and 1960s have their “Angry Young Men” created by a similar post-war atmosphere of change and upheaval. An angry young man is: “[...] a young person who strongly criticizes political and social institutions. The phrase was originally used by British newspapers in the late 1950s, after the success of the play *Look Back in Anger* by John Osborne, to describe young British writers like Osborne, Kingsley Amis, and Kenneth Tynan [...].” (Crowther 19) The Angry Young Men were a group of working class British authors who represented the generation of the 1950s.

Angry Young Men and the Movement are quite interrelated to each other; “*In the early Fifties "already a number of younger poets had determined to make a clear and explicit stand against modernism, internationalism, neo-Romanticism and the exclusiveness of upper-class bohemia"* (Marwick 26). We may say that the Movement was a gathering of authors and poets. The fact that the Movement did not have any proclamation or program meant its logical end. The decline of the Movement prepared ground for the emergence of the Angry Young Men. Marwick says that “*developments in the novel and on the stage actually made it [...] into popular daily newspapers.*” (27) “*When speaking about the change wrought by the Angry Young Men, some references debated the vitality that they brought into literature: New vitality, although it was unrestrained and undirected, was brought back into English literature by dramatists and novelists who obtained an attractive [...] name "Angry Young Men" [...].The whole of this rugged movement had been grouping its strength for many years, and it only boomed in May 1956 with Osborne's play Look Back in Anger [...].*” (Stříbrný 667; my translation)

2.3.1. The British New Wave:

The Angry Young Men: “*all those 1950s new writers who marched down from the provinces to storm the barricades of literary London*” (Ritchie). Works to be examined most “*were the first novel by Movement writer Kingsley Amis, *Lucky Jim* [...], *Look Back in Anger*, by the playwright John Osborne [...], and *The Outsider* [...] by twenty-four-year-old Colin Wilson [...].*” (Marwick 27) as indicated by Marwick, this word in relation to the young writers of the Nineteen-Fifties was applied after the premiere night of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. “*Then, almost by accident, the Royal Court press officer produced the notion*

that Osborne was 'a very angry young man'. 'Angry young men', particularly Wilson and Osborne [...], but also the 'new' novelists and many associated with the Movement, became the centre of media attention." (Marwick 29) Tadeusz Żuczkowski in his article confirms what Marwick expressed. He claims: "The 'Angry Young Men' label was utilized by the press." (Żuczkowski) Further on, he goes more into the point in clarifying the source of the expression "Angry Young Men". The title is taken from Leslie Allen Paul's *Angry Young Man* (1951) an autobiography of a contemporary religious philosopher converted from Marxism to Christianity, managing with angry youth in politics, left-wingism and unemployment during the 1930s. (Żuczkowski) "In 1956, the term began to be more regularly utilized in connection to a group of young writers and the heroes of their novels." (Żuczkowski, my translation)

2.3.2. Why were the Angry Young Men Angry?

Harry Ritchie states in his essay: "*No one was quite sure what they were angry about the class system, perhaps, Suez, or the H-bomb but they were clearly angry about something*" (Ritchie). The post war British male found his characteristic embodiment in the figure of angry young men, rebellious with critical attitude; they rebelled against the traditional forms of social organization and the phoniness of postwar life. Angry young men writers were Leftists with socialist soul, taking to considering their battles against class division, pursuing homogeneous mass culture. Nevertheless, "*The Angries assaulted British foreign policy (Suez) and the post-war English Establishment in press articles. Osborne reported one of the furious pieces of criticism in this experience. He viewed the English undertaking with the Hbomb in the Pacific the meanest criminal deception in the British history*". (Żuczkowski). Basic issue was class and its borders which were much of the time unable to ignore. Tadeusz Żuczkowski advocates that the class issues were a baffling variable for some individuals of the time. "*Still another frustrating factor may have caused the 'anger' was the fact that the Angries were of working-class origin and welfare-state opportunity.*" (Żuczkowski) What is captivating is (as stated by Żuczkowski) that "*Men too, in popular consciousness, were being domesticated. They had returned from battlefield to bungalow with new expectation of comfort and pleasure of home*" (Segal 1990, 3) the New Women which out of her silence through a series of feminist movement, in order to rid herself from domestic obligations, this freedom was considered as a threat for men, hence, the angry young men reacted and revolted against it too.

“The Angry Young Men were also angry with women. They definitely assaulted the status of women, in other words, the change of the status of women with the occurrence of permissive affluent society. The “housewife” with her new washing machine, vacuum cleaner and New Look fashion wear was the one to whom affluence was aimed and who its prime beneficiary was”. (Żuczkowski)

The Angries felt emasculated: they assaulted effeminacy, the résumé of those qualities which were supposed traditionally to exude from the worst in women: insignificance, snobbery, impertinence, voluptuousness, superficiality, materialism. (Żuczkowski) The politics, class, women and other issues that these young writers were angry about will be discussed and reflected in Angry Young Men's selected writings in the following chapters.

Marwick's quote concludes this subchapter with briefly sums up of both terms already discussed: *“The Movement was dead, but it had expressed a coherent point of view [...]; the Angry Young Man had always been something of a media invention, but beneath the fantasy there were genuine stirrings in British culture [...]”* (Marwick 32).

I.3.2. Conclusion:

In 1929 The Empire was composed of 37 different colonies which meant that over the quarter of world population were under the British rule. Five years later, the empire had collapsed and the struggle to keep the title of the British Empire, cost dramatic weakness in industrial power. Furthermore, serious social and political instability arouse, the government found itself in a sort of *economic paralysis*, the result was disappointment and Great Depression, This unhappy ending was argued for being a consequence of the following : failure to invest to reinforce its industry as much as other industrial nations, the loss of self confidence; mismanagement, the trade unions were too competent, Indeed British forces being equipped for the development and research expenditures kept up, The centre interest investment was for the development of weapons of mass destruction, but not for new hospitals, the reason for the re-equipment was that the new modernized and large forces were kept in being to deal mainly with the Soviet Union in Europe, not for imperial policing purposes, or minor British operations overseas. The British Empire was to sake help from the common wealth to bridge the gap between the old empire and the new post war world. As a

result of the changes which gave importance to people's happiness and wellbeing, the government introduced "the welfare state."

The legacy of the empire is most evident in Britain itself, in 50 years the face of Britain has been transformed, Britain became a multicultural society embraces, people religion culture from all over the former empire, but sometimes this diversity ignites Racial tension, The Post war society is marked with the growth of new movements to react against the conventional modality, mainly the Angry Young Men, who expressed their anger in front of the audience, one of the leading figure of this movement was John Osborne whom I based my thesis on. The rationale at the core of this research is that the lineage of British social realism has portrayed a gradual departure from an ostentatious and judgmental approach which circumscribed the British New Wave.

Chapter II: Look Back in Anger:

II.1. Introduction to Chapter Two:

The second chapter is divided into three sections: The purpose of the first is to give a broad application of the term Kitchen Sink Realism and social realism through the aspects of practice and politics, style, form and content, as an artistic movement, expressed in the visual and other realist arts, which depicts working class activities, it is considered as brief introduction to the second chapter as it will discuss the Realism, definition, characteristics and its accordance with The Kitchen Sink Drama. The second section is devoted to discuss in general *Look back in Anger* and the biography of its author John Osborne, the reason behind his fury, the relationship between the British theatre and society, adding to that, the relationship between the Kitchen Sink Drama and the play, then the relationship between Jimmy Porter and the Angry Young Man. The second section tends to analyze in more specific spectrum: the summary and analysis of acts of the play, the title, plot and characters, themes, language and structure. Finally, the third section is only devoted to examine the key issues that bothered the protagonist Jimmy Porter as an Angry Young Man.

II.2. Literature: Kitchen Sink Realism.

2.1. Background :

In contrast to Classical, Victorian and even Edwardian (1859 to 1900) constrained in melodramas; spectacle plays and comic operas. Realism at the end of the 19th-century sought to make theater more pragmatic to society. Realism was, in fact, influenced by the development of major theories amongst them: a theory known as *Positivism* by August Comte (1798-1857), *The Origins of Species* by Charles Darwin (1809-1882) and the political theory against urbanization and in favor of communism by Karl Max (1818-1883). Political events, hence, including pursuit to transform some political structures prompted new ways of thinking. Wars in Europe since 1848 demonstrated that there was a thirst for political, social, and economic amelioration. Governments were anxious into promising better standards of living, but most did not execute those changes when assaults ended. Technological advances were escalating due to industry and trade, giving a vehement confidence that science could decode human issues. Nevertheless, the working classes still needed to battle and resist; charters and strikes became the central device workers would use from the 1860s onwards, yet

achievements were accomplished only after excessive work, suppression and savagery. At the end, there was chronic dismissal of Romantic idealism; aftermaths of the Industrial Revolution became apparent; urban centers and slums grew rapidly on a new scale contrasting with the display of wealth of the upper classes. Within a new sense of social consciousness, the Social Realists urged to “fight the beautiful art”, any style which appealed to the eye or emotions. “*A recurrent narrative motive of escape.*” (ibid, 2011,p.63). They recorded what they saw (“as it existed”) in a dispassionate manner. Audiences were outraged by Social Realism, in certain part; they did not know how to perceive it or how to react to it, pragmatism ruled instead. The ordinary man, though needed to feel recognized, and people declared themselves through progressive activities.

2.2. Definition of Kitchen Sink Realism:

Historically, conditions of 1950s/1960s English society are in fact a necessary. As aforementioned, England's economy and society had fallen into a stagnant state. London theatre in 1955 was commercial, only interested in banal little plays which would provide a vehicle for a star to achieve a long and tedious run. Terence Rattigan was known with his plays *The Deep Blue Sea* and *Separate Tables*. The most successful play on every level was Enid Bagnold's glittering and artificial high comedy-mystery *The Chalk Garden*,. Most plays were bright comic, farces, and mysterious including Agatha Christie's *The Mouse Trap*, which kept enjoying successful productive career. Adding to that the contemporary musicals *Salad Days* and *The Boyfriend*, bubbly pieces set in what seemed to be a heavenly Edwardian England. There were fourteen one of kind of American shows, and six imports from Paris playing in the West End. London theatre remained a middle-class, middle-aged theatre. The charge was dictated by the public and that public them-selves preferred what was given to them. They wanted something "safe."Realism was a style of theatre settled before the spring of the 20th Century that attempted to place the theory of naturalism into practice. It aimed to lay 'a slice of life' onstage and also creating plausibility, that is, an inclusive harmony within all elements of the production.

“Modernism accepts the meaningfulness of reality that lies beneath or beyond appearance. Consequently it dispenses with the ideas of realism as a form that unproblematically represents the real. For modernist, the problem with Realism is that it supports to show things as they really are rather than acknowledging its own status

as an artifice. Further, the narrative structures of realism are organized by “metalanguage” of truth that privileges and disguises the editorial position rather than letting different discourse speak for themselves and compete for allegiance” (Moctab, 1981)

Realism concentrates upon method of acting, which makes the actors, become the characters creating a piece of theatre that rings true of real life as it is." The 1950's to the 1970's gained notoriety to of one of the most significant movement in modern British Theatre which emerged as a reaction against the absurdist and the Avant Guard Theatre. "The Kitchen Sink Drama" is generally a term used for plays that speak of a new wave of British realism, and intentionally captures a realistic depiction of working class throughout the years of affluence. Osborne's Look Back in Anger script declares real experiences and aims to insert 'real' situations on stage. No wonder the play has an 'epic' magnitude, Kitchen Sink theatre was certainly labeled 'epic' because his plays consisted of broad historical and social backgrounds in their narratives.

following part of the thesis is focused on the features of 'kitchen sink drama' that was introduced in the late 1950's by a group of young playwrights, who were following the trend initiated by John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger*. The features that are to be mentioned should characterize the genre, despite the fact that Kerensky describes the movement as "*easy to recognize, but hard to define.*" (1977, xv)

2.3. The characteristics of Kitchen Sink realism:

The most unusual characteristic of the Kitchen Sink drama was the context of conveying the social message, the breakthrough in society and on stage. What they experienced and lived as mobility and readjustment of society, may be in fact the factual and credible direction of our society towards our future. They focused on the ugly realities of contemporary life through depictions that emphasis the relationship between location and identity and sympathized with working-class people, particularly the poor. Raymond William gives us a helpful set features and impulses in realist works, portrayed the "new" British identity vis-à-vis the "new" British house which both were subject to them, they see social realism in different ways because it evolves and changes as well. The Kitchen was central to signify the realm of the conventional woman, which was rarely present in Victorian drama, the antagonism between male and female frequently thought to defend the masculine in many of

these plays, women are regularly expected to care of the men of their husbands even when they conflict; usually the man is the one depicted as the victim protagonist. Women's torment is always a consequence of the distress of the male. Realists changes take place in a kind of investigating with what has gone previously and underwriting their own appeal to discover reality by exposing the artificiality and conventionality of what has been said for reality before which is stated by John Hill, against their modern counterparts.

Features of social realist extracts particularly in British realist traditions, is the way character and location are linked in order to explore parts of contemporary life in a similar way to naturalism. Kitchen sink realism gave birth to social realism in which life was presented to the audience. This genre of plays and films showed authentic picture of life situation and realistic characters in post war English society.

2.4.Social Realism:

Social Realism is in some aspects difficult to define because it is both historically and politically coincidental; it has been summed as a reaction against idealism and the extreme ego inspired by Romanticism. Artists who subscribed to Social Realism were painters with socialist (not fundamentally Marxist) political visions. The movement therefore has some commonalities with the Socialist Realism used in the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, but the two are not identical - Social Realism is not an official art, and allows space for subjectivity. In certain contexts, Socialist Realism has been considered as a specific branch of Social Realism. “‘*Social Realism*’ should be taken to mean ‘*drama that engages with the contemporary world...*’ where ‘*the contemporary...is...the focus of active investigation*” (ibid, 2011, p.58).

Many post modern artists turned away from abstract art to adopt realistic styles of performing which would become known as social realism. Social realism is a movement of authors who paid more attention to everyday situations of the working class and the poor who are critical of social structure that maintain these conditions. Author's infectious enthusiasm for life was committed through their writings which were for them the expression of life itself. They are best categorized for using urban scenes and the ability to capture the essence of neighborhood life in England. They were against development of modern life; social realism highlights the injustice of social, economic and political systems and their effects on the less

well-off members of society. During the recreation of modern Britain, social realism was one of the two movements of the Left Wing character.

Arnold Wesker, John Osborne Shelagh Delaney and John Arden are the Kitchen Sink Dramatists who threw cold water on people to shake their idleness and give them a wakeup call, through plays that idolized the themes are acquainted with the British Culture of that period of time. John Osborne's quote sums up the purpose of the Kitchen Sink Realism:

“Drama rests on the dynamic that is created between characters on the stage. It must be concrete and it must be expressed, even if it is only in silence or a gesture of despair. The theatre is not a schoolroom, nor is it, as many people seem to think, a place where "discussion" takes place, where ideas are apparently finally examined in the manner of a solitary show-off in an intellectual magazine. It is a place where people spend much of their time responding nakedly - or failing - to the burden of trying to live, and preparing to die”. (John Osborne.)

II.3. General Introduction to Look Back in Anger:

Look Back in Anger is categorized as a standout amongst the most modern plays in British theater. It was the primary well-known model of "Kitchen Sink drama," a style of theater that investigated the feeling and drama underneath the surface of normal domestic life. Jimmy Porter, the play's fundamental character, became the prototype for the "Angry Young Man," a name given to a whole generation of artists and working class young men in post-World War Britain. In May 1955, Osborne began writing *Look Back in Anger* and finished writing the script within seventeen days. It was fairly autobiographical piece of writing dedicated to his beloved father in memorial of his bit early death. The essence of the play is adapted from Osborne's unhappy marriage to Pamela Lane, while he was passionate by his career and theatre Lane was more practical and materialistic, not taking Osborne ambitions seriously and betrayed him with a local dentist. At first, the play was rejected by many operators and theater companies. George Divine, the innovative producer for the Royal Court Theater, determined to gamble on the play and arranged its first production. Mixed reviews from critics were to undermine this new image of English theater, yet it won a rave review from the Times. The play was a success, it was a premiere at on the London court theatre on May 1956 by the English stage company under the direction of Tony Richardson, the press called the author an angry young man, a phrase that came to represent a new movement in 1950's British theater,

the following year, it has been filmed and emerged as an exciting and challenging motion; the term angry young man to describe Osborne and those of his generation who implied harshness of realism on the theatre in contrast with the most utopian theatre that characterized the previous generation.

3.1. John Osborne:

Born on December 12, 1929, Fulham, South West London, John James Osborne, the man who turned anger into art, was an English playwright, screenwriter, actor and critic, known for his excoriating prose and intense critical stance towards “established” social and political norms. His father, Thomas Godfrey Osborne was commercial copywriter, died in 1941, leaving for Osborne an insurance settlement which he used to fund his school education at Belmont College in Devon. His father’s death devastated Osborne; and made him wails his death for the rest of his life. As a matter of fact, Osborne felt lost and could not finish his studies; he left school after striking the headmaster. He went back to London and lived with his mother for a short period of time. Furthermore, He became interested in theatre when he worked as mentor in a touring company of young actors. Osborne went on to assist as actor-director in 1956; He wrote around twenty-six plays, he determined to submit one of his plays, *Look Back in Anger* which is considered by many critics the watershed in postwar British theatre. Osborne's protagonist, Jimmy Porter came to represent an entire generation of "angry young men."

In his next play, *The Entertainers* (1957), Osborne kept on criticizing the state of the country, this time using three generations of a family of entertainers to symbolize the decline of England after the war. That it was an appropriate continuity to the great success of *Look Back in Anger*. After this, however, the quality of Osborne's output became unpredictable. Although he produced a number of hits including *Luther* (1961), a play represents the leader of the Reformation, and *Inadmissible Evidence* (1965), the study of a depressed solicitor at a law firm. In 1963, Osborne won an Academy Award for his screenplay for *Tom Jones*. He also produced a string of unimportant works. Critics began to accuse him of not fulfilling his early potential, and audiences no longer seemed effected by Osborne's rage. Recognizing this, Osborne described himself in his last play as "*a churling, grating note, a spokesman for no one but myself, with deadening effect, cruelly abusive, unable to be coherent about my despair.*"

Osborne died as a result of complications from Diabetes on December 24, 1994, at the age of 62 years old in Shropshire, England. He left behind a large quantity of works for the stage as well as several autobiographical works. Some of his plays were also adapted for film such as *Look Back in Anger* and *The Entertainer*. His last word was on cigarette packet in hospital, it was: "I have sinned."

3.2. The reason Behind Osborne's Anger, Reflected in the Play:

As John Heilpern stated in his book "The Many Lives of Angry Young Men" None have talked about the underclass of England before, and the fury of the ruling allies for keeping them down, and then comes Osborne by himself a man with a very colorful life, he was absolutely very crucial to the playwriting in modern drama as we know it today, his life has been compellingly chronicled.

It was not the fury at his five marriages, the fury came when the marriages failed, he hated things to go wrong, he blamed everyone except himself, his fury at the "*damn you England*" was actually England's support of the nuclear bomb, hysterical letter that he wrote and was published, saying: "*damn to all politicians who were sending us to our graves*" (John Heilpern) Osborne himself was a political emotional man, he hated his mother, his father death is a story told in *Look Back in Anger*, as an autobiographical.

Contextually, the English economy was not at its greatest point, which resulted in high levels of unemployment within the country. Jimmy, for instance, the protagonist of his "*Look Back in Anger*" is constantly searching for a 'cause' worth living for, however the societal restrictions of class and finance that are placed upon him, means that there is truly no good cause left. Because of this, Osborne expressed the rebellious attitude of the "Angry Young Men" in "*Look Back in Anger*" as a revolt against the drawing-room comedies and middle-class drama.

3.3. British Theatre and society in the 1950s and 1960s:

G. Gurvitch has perceived an « *affinité frappante entre la société et le théâtre* » this affinity reflected in the metaphor describing the world as a stage, a view that is not confined to literature alone, but which is widespread in folk and popular culture, this may be explained as if society contribute to drama more than anything by taking sides whether objectively or via preconceived biases that they have of one or even both the components involved. The 1950s and 1960s period of time, is characterized by a rebirth of dramatic interest due to renewal of the British Theatre; the permissive society and the emergence of several movements, particularly those related to clash of sexes, for instance: The Feminist Movement and Angry Young Men Movement, both reacted against the lack of opportunities, their influence was strongly felt in the problem plays of George Bernard Shaw and in the realism of John Galsworthy Somerset Maugham and. T.S. Eliot. John.

The theorist Burns (1972) in her book “*The Theory and Analysis of Drama*” incorporated theatre history and sociological theory to make connections between what is viewed on the stage and what occurs in social reality. “*As a matter of fact, drama is a paradigmatic genre to perform social and individual antagonism: It can openly show reality in society living under unrest, at the same time, it grants more than one emotional acknowledgment to these logically untaught stories. It is naturally ironic. “Drama is thus, appealingly, the commonplace for producing individual negative potentiality, it can withstand irritable ending [Sic.] after fact and theory; and thus maintain ahead extravagant dialogues of self-interpretation.”* (Goethals 24). One of the quite fascinating things to the subject, the shift from the theatre of writers like John Whiting, Arnold Wesker and all the beautiful drawing rooms middle class plays, no lower class people actually appeared on the English stage. The 1950s was an interesting period for British theatre. The Kitchen Sink Realism plays propelled by the movement revealed political and social problems taking into consideration the working class and lower class. Osborne through Jimmy Porter brought emotions to English psyche and the English stage, the fundamental theory of the play according to John Heilpern is about: the class war, marital war, and sex war.

3.4.Look Back in Anger and The Kitchen Sink Drama:

The idea of the Kitchen Sink drama was likewise a disclosure for British theater. The styling of most British theater before *Look Back in Anger* favored Victorian dramas and comedies or staging of classical plays. Generally speaking, the Victorian plays managed for the most parts with customary themes from the late 19th and early 20th century upper ruling class. Conversely, Osborne's play delineated the raw feelings and living conditions of the working class. This style of theater was named "Kitchen Sink" because of its emphasis on the interior domestic and emotional existence of ordinary people. In the case of *Look Back in Anger*, the kitchen is literally a part of the set. The cultural background to the play is the ascent and fall of the British Empire. Jimmy Porter's came to represent an entire generation of "angry young men" infuriated by the contemporary social conditions surrounding. A postwar generation was audibly unsatisfied with post war aftermaths and remained nostalgic for this past glory. He idealizes the worthy causes of the past even while he mocks those who cannot understand why the circumstances have changed, it can be considered as a moment of change and also a reaction. The play turned out to be the drama that threw cold water in the face of a sleepy popular culture. A drama characterized by its domestic realism.

II.4. Look Back in Anger Study Guide:

4.1. Look Back in Anger Summary:

"Look Back in Anger" is a heavily autobiographical play, through which John Osborne concerns a love triangle involving Jimmy Porter, an intelligent and educated young man, he is twenty five years old, married to Alison from completely different social class, an upper middle class wife Whom he had to fight hard against her family objection to win her, he says: "*Alison's mummy and I took one look at each other, and from then on the age of chivalry was dead*", (Look Back in Anger 50) They live in a small attic flat apartment with Jimmy's best friend, Cliff. Cliff is like Jimmy, a young working class man whom he runs with a small sweat-stall; however, he is less educated than Jimmy, he attempts to keep peace between Jimmy and Alison. The setting takes place on a Sunday afternoon in April, mid 1950' England, where Jimmy and Cliff read Sunday papers, beside them, Alison ironing in the corner of the room and barely half listening to Jimmy's dialogue, a picture of the new statesman of that period.

Jimmy is a very complicated character to get a grasp on at first, however, as the acts progress, Jimmy becomes more and more vituperative transferring his antipathy for Alison's family onto her character describing her "pusillanimous". His desire to live is evidenced when Helena (Alison's best friend) replaces Alison. Jimmy and Helena seem fundamentally meant for each other as Helena is able to stand up to Jimmy and the passion she displays drives Jimmy into finding her attractive. It's certainly an unexpected moment when they kiss; however, it is understandable on Jimmy's part as he has found a partner that shares his passion for life. He calms down a little after Helena's coming, but he still remains without a cause. Furthermore, in this play, audience would want to know why Cliff, who lives with the Porters, is powerless to leave them.

The play portrays a juxtaposition of events, which will develop to physical horseplay, so much to shock the audience: Jimmy's black hatred, hurt and anger with everything, It ultimately pictures the fighting shock of the dialogue, the real ire of Jimmy that he holds towards upper class women and the whole situation of post war England, and the natural humor which reveals Jimmy Porter as an arresting and provocative person from his anger. Alison, the girl he never forgives for being born into society beyond his reach. All of this will be discussed in the summary and analysis of each act and scene.

4.2. Title:

Heilpern concluded that Osborne had contemplated six different titles for the play: *Angry Man*, *Farewell to Anger*, *Man in a Rage*, *Bargain from Strength*, *Close the Cage behind You and My Blood is a Mile High*. Subsequently, Osborne settled upon: *Look Back in Anger*, The title of *Look Back in Anger* embodies its basic theme. The play is "motivated by outrage at the discovery that the idealized Britain, for which so many had sacrificed themselves during the war years, was inauthentic." (Innes, *Modern British Drama: 1890-1990: 1890-1990* 102) (Heilpern163-164) His choice made ultimate sense since dissatisfaction in society is a noteworthy characteristic of the play.

4.3. Plot:

The plot of *Look Back in Anger* was inspired by a play of the American playwright Tennessee Williams *A Streetcar Named Desire* 1947:

In both dramas, a refined upper-class woman was married into the lower class.) Stanley Kowalski [the hero of A Streetcar Named Desire] / Jimmy Porter has blowtorched his way into "society". Each wife is brutalized by a furious outsider who wants to bring her down to his animal level".(Heilpern 116) Goethals21.

The lower class Jimmy Porter and The upper-class Alison are the main characters of *Look Back in Anger*. Jimmy longs to displace Alison in order to match his animalistic level: she has to experience the death of a loved one so that to understand what is it like to be real human being. When Jimmy and Alison broke up, Helena, Alison's best friend seduced Jimmy and replaced her. At the end of the play, Helena quits because she feels guilty about having betraying and destroying their marriage. When Jimmy realizes that Alison has changed her attitude after she had lost her child, they reunited again. Jimmy's best friend Cliff is a third important character. He is "a personification of the working classes" (Skovmand 87). Alison's father, Colonel Redfern, is the fifth character in the play. He was a dedicated strict soldier for forty years. He worked in India and loved being there. When he came back to Britain he discovered by then, that he did not conform to the New England he left before. The play acts as a replica of the story of Britain in which the poor conditions of the country is reflected in the conflict between the characters. Michael Billington, a journalist of *The Guardian*, expressed this idea acutely: "*Its premiere [of Look Back in Anger] at the Royal Court in May 1956 not only put the English Stage Company on the map, but proved to a generation of contemporary writers that it was possible to put contemporary Britain on stage.*" (qtd. in Heilpern 186) Osborne's innovations were not only in form, but rather in character, language, and passion which, for the most part mask and cover up the clumsy mechanics when the play is being acted.

4.4. Characters Analysis:

Jimmy Porter:

Osborne at the beginning of the play, paints Jimmy as a “*disconcerting mixture of sincerity and cheerful malice, of tenderness and freebooting cruelty; restless importunate full of pride a combination which alienates the sensitive and insensitive alike.*” (*Look Back in Anger*) Jimmy Porter is the hero or rather the anti-hero of *Look back in anger*, Osborne's characterization of Jimmy was very much an outlet for his own personal dissatisfactions with society, however too feeble to response to the poor situation at the time. He is an outsider in rebellion against the whole “establishment” which personifies his wife and her family (those “born” to power and privilege). He also has hated Helena for the same reason, namely her social class and the church as a part of the “Establishment” as well. Jimmy dominates the play through the power of his anger, humbug and language. The roots of his psychological complexity, attitude and anger shows the consequences of his childhood trauma in the past, particularly, in his father’s death and his mother’s inadequate, although, Jimmy has graduated from university he works with cliff as owner of sweat stall, the character of Jimmy Porter is perhaps a hyperbolic, a personified piece of Osborne's conscience, he is masochist and ruthless; he conceive love as a conquest and marriage as a revenge; creating a love-hate relationship with his wife.

Alison:

Jimmy’s upper-middle class wife, who loves her husband but can no longer bare his maltreatment, she is a representative of oppressive society: Church, money education. She has been married to Jimmy for three years. Alison lacks a total emotional commitment that provokes Jimmy’s attacks. Alison is warm and open with Cliff without displaying a sexual attraction to him. Jimmy insults Alison brutally and he seems by all accounts trying to force her to have a genuine response, she has married him, but does not give all herself to her husband. She says she is not real because she has not endured real pain and degradation. When Helena takes charge and arranges for Alison to leave, Alison does not protest and sure returns to her parents where the values and the security. Alison returns back to Jimmy at the end after she has suffered the pain and loss brought by the miscarriage of her child however, she is the strongest of the two: she has the courage to leave her family, support Jimmy’s rudeness etc...

Helena:

Alison's middle-class friend or rather counterpart, she is an actress who comes to stay with the Porters while she performs in a play at the local theatre. Jimmy has long despised her, as he considers a member of the establishment. When she calls Alison's father and asks him to take Alison home, Helena seems really concerned about Alison. However, she seduces Jimmy and replaces. When Alison returns, Helena realizes that her affair with Jimmy is wrong and chooses to leave. Helena believes in the traditional distinction between right and wrong, she recognizes Alison as Jimmy's rightful wife, even though she has taken him as a lover.

Cliff:

Jimmy's working class friend and partner, whom he shares with the sweet stall and the flat as well. Less educated, a man of Welsh heritage. He is a pleasant person, warm, loving and humorous. He is sympathetic to Alison but adjusts once she leaves. Cliff's first allegiance is to Jimmy however, shows none of the neurotic behavior display by Jimmy. Nevertheless, at the end, he decides to make his own way alone.

Colonel Redfern:

Alison's father is the representative of decline and nostalgia for the British Empire. He has been stationed for many years in India, as a symbol of Britain's imperial reach into the world. The world has shifted to an American age, he argues and the people of the nation cannot understand why they are no longer the world's greatest power. Colonel Redfern is caught out of his time. The England he left as a young army officer no longer exists. Jimmy gives a fair description of him as he says *"just one of those sturdy old plants left over from the Edwardian Wilderness that can't understand why the sun isn't shining anymore"*

4.5. Summary and Analysis of Acts:

Summary of Act I:

As the curtain rises, Act one takes place on a Sunday morning in April. Jimmy Porter and Cliff Lewis seated in two shabby armchairs, reading newspapers which cover the top half of their bodies. The setting is at Porter's cramped suburban attic; Jimmy begins to reflect on the condition of the English nation. He recalls an old saying about England, he says sarcastically that he can't help but idealize Alison's father's time spent in the British army in India. He

concludes: “*it’s pretty dreary living in the American Age -- unless you’re an American of course.*” Jimmy continues to disparage Alison and her family. He calls them “*sycophantic, phlegmatic and pusillanimous.*” He tells her that the word “pusillanimous” describes her perfectly. Cliff and Jimmy wrestle then, Jimmy pushes Cliff on Alison and her ironing board. They fall to the floor while Cliff continues to bandage her arm; she confides that she is pregnant and that she has not told Jimmy.

Summary of Act II - Scene I:

Act II opens two weeks later, on a Sunday afternoon. Alison tells Helena the story of their first few months of marriage. Helena, later on, gets in with two prayer books and informs Jimmy that he has a call. Jimmy enters solemnly. He tells Cliff that Hugh’s mom is dying and that he must leave to go see her. Jimmy tells Alison that he needs her to come with him. Church bells ring and Alison picks up her prayer book and exits. Jimmy, stunned, leans his head on drawers and throws the teddy bear across the room and then falls burying himself on the bed.

Summary of Act II - Scene II:

The second scene of Act Two opens on the following evening. Colonel Redfern, sits in a chair. He is a handsome man in his late sixties. Alison tells the Colonel that Jimmy called her mother an “*over privileged old bitch*” and called the Colonel “*a plant left over “from the Edwardian Wilderness that can’t understand why the sun isn’t shining anymore.*” Cliff asks Alison if she wants to stay and tell Jimmy about her departure. She hands Cliff a letter, at the end of the scene, when everyone is left, Jimmy asks Helena to get out and she slaps his face. He lets out a “*muffled cry of despair*” and then Helena grabs him and they passionately kiss.

Summary of Act III - Scene I:

The scene opens once more with a domestic portrayal of Jimmy and Cliff sitting in their same places, reading the Sunday papers. Helena now occupies ironing in a corner just as Alison did in Act I. Cliff then tells Jimmy that he is thinking of leaving. Helena and Jimmy share a tender moment, embracing. There is a knock at the door. Jimmy opens it and finds Alison, standing in a raincoat and looking ill. Jimmy tells Helena that she has a visitor and walks out of the room, leaving the two women together.

Summary of Act III - Scene II:

When the curtain rises, Jimmy is seen in Cliff's room playing his trumpet. Helena is pouring Alison a cup of tea. Helena confesses that what she is doing is wrong, but that at least she believes in right and wrong. Jimmy leans against the window and cries, "Oh, those bells!" Alison begins to leave but Jimmy stops her!" Alison cries out, she tells him when she lost the child she wished he could have seen her, "*so stupid, and ugly and ridiculous. This is what he's been longing for me to feel...*" He tries to comfort her and then, with a "mocking, tender irony" begins to tell her that they'll be together as a bear and a squirrel. "She laughs a bit and then softly adds, "Oh, poor, poor, bears!" They embrace as the curtain closes.

Analysis of Act I:

The act opens with Osborne's very unusual scene for British theatre. He attempts to portray each character through an analysis of their physical attributes and their emotional makeup. He tends to introduce Jimmy as a very masculine character; Alison Porter as a woman that has been thumped down by life using the word "malaise". Cliff, as a gentleman man, seen as the inverse of Jimmy's kind, he claims Jimmy's abuse with good nature. The opening scene uses stereotypical gender references to introduce the characters, which shows how both of the characters have attempted to fit into societal roles and expectations that have both made them miserable and angry. The play opens in April, a reference to T.S. Eliot's line from *The Waste Land*: "April is the cruelest (*sic*) month." Eliot is mentioned several times in the play and as a cultural English reference for Jimmy. This love/hate relationship with British culture is characteristic of Jimmy's attempts to retain a dynamic patriotism even while being depressed by the state of English affairs. Their apartment flat symbolizes domesticity the 1950's, it is important to recognize the mood of domestic disturbance as "*A broadcast of the characters lifestyle*" like a piece of junk or old furniture. Jimmy emotions and ambitions vehemently out of sight from the upper class culture and this cause a great amount of anxiety for him. Jimmy's political and social persuasions become visible in the first act as well when he mocks a fabricated column in the paper written by the "Bishop of Bromley." He is unconventional and untied to traditional British politics; he even declares that no political party would want him. He a bit of an anarchist, opposed to any genre of "establishment" whether it be politics or religion. The comical teasing between Cliff and Jimmy contradicts the heavy tension and anger of the relationships between the three characters. Jimmy is anxious, above all, with "enthusiasm" and "living." He depicts others as slothful and lazy.

Jimmy's anger is a result of his inability to awaken identical feelings in the people around him. Jimmy's comment on "American age" revives his nostalgia towards the British Empire. He is at once antagonistic for those who refuse to believe in the fall of the Empire such as Alison's father, and yet he is also fiercely patriotic; Jimmy's anger is a result of not being able to live in such humanity, an emotion he equates with living a real life. The British Empire represented for him a history in which the Englishman was allowed to truly exist. When Jimmy plays the trumpet, it represents his affinity for a Black American jazz culture which Osborne here believes is truly alive in the allusion to the twentieth century British and embodiment of a "natural" humanity.

Alison's own fear is revealed in her private discussion with Cliff that she does not want to "trap him." Jimmy is already trapped in a sleepy, domestic life; on the one hand, she is dedicated to the conservative familial structure of her upbringing. On the other hand she is in love with Jimmy and wants more than all to put his needs above her own. Alison and Cliff's affectionate physical relationship is strange they often touch and hug, however, this does not seem to inspire any jealousy or emotion in Jimmy. Alison is able to get the affection that she desires from Cliff while Cliff also provides the masculine friendship and confidence that Jimmy desire.

Analysis Act II - Scene I:

Helena Charles is introduced as an actress. She is the opposite of Alison, though both share the same upbringing. Alison lacks Helena's elegance that she once had before marrying to Jimmy. Helena occupies domestic role while with the Porters, however, she is not a domesticated female figure. She has a profession that requires some bohemian kind of lifestyle. Alison's line: "*things seem to be very different*" when talking to Helena foreshadows a conversation that will have consequences later on. She actually proves why she is married to Jimmy and how he is partly right in his assessment that both of them have not found a way to truly live; the audience is left to wonder if Cliff feels the same way about Alison as she feels towards him. This scene of Act II allows Osborne to explore the idea of masculine chivalry in the twentieth century. Alison uses her stories of meeting Jimmy and the party crashing which makes Jimmy look like a knight in shining armor, though admits his armor never shone very brightly. Jimmy is thus linked to a British past even though he continually alludes to the fact that the past is gone. It is ironic that Alison explains the symbolism of the bear and squirrel game as an "*unholy priest hole of being animals to one another,*" since their normal

relationship Jimmy often expresses his emotion in wild animalistic ways. She explains that by taking on the persona of these stuffed animals they both are able to have “*dumb, uncomplicated affection for each other.*” This shows how the only way to love each other is to completely detach from the world. The game displays an image of a lost childhood that both share. Alison’s affirmation that she is attending church with Helena is one of the only times in the play that Jimmy expresses genuine surprise. By going to church to him, is a justification for his further vicious humiliation of her. In fact, relates church going with Alison’s past that he rescued her from, like a knight in shining armor. She tells Helena, Jimmy, is a brutally loyal man. He asks those around him also be loyal, whether it is the political viewpoints he takes or his lovers. This part of Act II also allows Osborne to express Jimmy’s misogyny; Jimmy is particularly cruel to old upper class women. Alison’s mother is the best example of this in the play. When Jimmy ends his rant in a terrible depiction of her death, his extreme hatred of all women turns towards Helena and begins to attack her and her worldview. He affirms that classic virtues have no sense in the modern world. Jimmy thinks the church to be simply a toy of political and social power; then he confronts Helena and dares her to slap his face. however does not give her a chance to choose since he moves to a deeper conversation of his own personal suffering, of how he watched his father die at a young age. In this way, Jimmy is attempting to make Helena similar like Alison; a stupid girl that has never experienced distress and so cannot understand how to truly live. Which is ironic since Alison suffers the most under Jimmy’s cruel moods. The end of the scene makes suffering a central breaking point between Alison and Jimmy, when Alison chooses to go with Helena. It is a choice for a world that Jimmy feels is unreal and he felt devastated.

Analysis of Act II - Scene II:

The second scene of Act II is written to provide a break from the hysterical intensity of previous scenes. Colonel Redfern is, perhaps, the play’s most sympathetic character. He is introduced as a former military man. The audience realizes, when the Colonel’s character appears, which contains rigidity and lack of emotions is a fictionalized caricature created in Jimmy’s mind. The Colonel’s physical characteristics are painted as relaxed and softened. Jimmy is partly correct in his assessment that the Colonel represents the past. Alison tells him that Jimmy considers him as a leftover from the “*Edwardian Wilderness.*” The Edwardian period in British culture represents both the high water mark of British culture but also the beginning of the end for the dominance of Great Britain. The Colonel symbolizes the

emasculatation of the British character, Osborne is suggesting that British culture and character is resigned and withdrawn in this new American age. The Colonel's generation, he says, was the last generation to believe unquestionably in an absolute right. Now, the Colonel does not understand the new British generations. Osborne argues that this attitude mirrors the collective British conscience which cannot understand the angry young men populating its working classes.

Critics have noted that the kiss that Jimmy and Helena shared at the end of the scene is conclusively unneeded. The purpose of the scene is to give a complex understanding of Jimmy's view of the past. The scene can be summed up in Alison's observation that Jimmy and the Colonel are similar in many points. The Colonel's concern is the present changed. Jimmy is vexed because he views that the past creates stagnation and anger, he sees no future for himself or anyone else. Osborne's point here is that the past has definite consequences for the present. In the Colonel's case, the past creates resignation and bewilderment in the present.

Analysis of Act III - Scene I:

The concept of blood plays an important role in this scene. This idea of blood symbolizes the sacrifice that he believes he is making by living a domestic life first with Alison and now with Helena, Jimmy still believes that it is Alison's past -- her parents -- that are responsible for his sacrifice. We soon learn that Jimmy is mostly unchanged from his relationship with Helena. Helena only brings a new antagonism into their relationship: religion. Religion has no place in modern society, or if it does it must take a vastly different form, such as African American religion which relies on strong expressions of emotion and personal feeling. According to Jimmy, the world is a subjective place now, thus, is a character trapped between his nostalgia for the past and his assessment of his present prospects.

Analysis of Act III - Scene II:

Alison confesses to Helena that she knows she's done wrong by coming to their apartment and doesn't want to be a slash between her and Jimmy. Helena tells her that she trusts her and that it is Alison that should berate her behavior. Nostalgia for the past is also the reason behind Jimmy's acceptance of Cliff's desire to leave. Cliff sees the present as completely changed; Helena's decision at the end of the play sets her up as the moral compass of all the

characters. This morality is concluded by the church bells which ring in several scenes at the end. Osborne's ultimate statement with the play: modernity means to understand and cope with the world around. As a playwright, Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* fiction, no matter how realistic, is a diversion from the rest of the world.

4.6.Style:

4.6.1. Language:

Osborne's use of language reflects the characters' speech and rhythms reflect their class and education. The language is unconstrained and vital, no longer affected by middle-class etiquette, crude and violent. Cliff is humble; Colonel Redfern is calm and respectful. Jimmy's vulgar dialogues are applied by everybody in their daily life, they hold colloquialism, comic variation in spelling or pronunciation, and even performance, in fact, Jimmy is extremely articulate and self-confident. His passion is immense and he has the language to overmaster others with that passion. His language is not polite Jimmy can also be very humorous which is evident in the play, for example:

CLIFF: *(To Alison.)* Someone on the phone for you.

ALISON: On the phone? Who on earth is it?

CLIFF: Helena something.

Jimmy and Alison look at each other quickly.

JIMMY: *(to Cliff)*. Helena Charles?

CLIFF: That's it.

ALISON: Thank you, Cliff. *(Moves upstage.)* I won't be a minute.

Jimmy makes no reply

CLIFF: What's the matter, boyo?

JIMMY: *(slowly)*. That b**ch.

CLIFF: Who?

JIMMY: *(to himself)*. Helena Charles.

CLIFF: Who is this Helena?

JIMMY: One of her old friends. And one of my natural enemies. You're sitting on my chair.

(Jimmy Picks up Alison's handbag thoughtfully and starts looking through it.) When she goes out, I go through everything— trunks, cases, drawers, bookcase, everything.

Why? To see if there is something of me somewhere, a reference to me. I want to know if I'm being betrayed.

CLIFF: You look for trouble, don't you?

JIMMY: Only because I'm pretty certain of finding it. (*Brings out a letter from the handbag.*) Look at that! Oh, I'm such a fool. This is happening every five minutes of the day. She gets letters. (*He holds it up.*) Letters from her mother, letters in which I'm not mentioned at all because my name is a dirty word. And what does she do? *Enter Alison. He turns to look at her.* She writes long letters back to Mummy, and never mentions me at all, because I'm just a dirty word to her too. *He throws the letter down at her feet.* Well, what did your friend want?

ALISON: She's at the station. She's—coming over.

JIMMY: I see. She said "Can I come over?" And you said "My husband, Jimmy—if you'll forgive me using such a dirty word, will be delighted to see you. He'll kick your face in!" *He stands up, unable to sustain his anger, poised on the table. (Look Back in Anger 15 – 16)*

Jimmy is even poetic, as when he describes Colonel Redfern as a "*sturdy old plant left over from the Edwardian Wilderness*, one that covers various other faults. Alison is proper and non-judgmental in her speech and so is Helena, throughout the course of act two, Helena and Alison plan to go to church:

JIMMY: Going out?

ALISON: That's right.

JIMMY: on a Sunday evening in this town? Where on earth are you going?

ALISON: (*rising*): I'm going out with Helena.

JIMMY: That's not a direction, that's an affliction. *He leans forward and addresses her again.* I didn't ask what the matter with you, I asked where you were going?

HELENA: (*steadily*) she is going to church.

He has been prepared for some plot but he is genuinely surprised by this as Cliff was a few minutes earlier.

JIMMY: You're doing what? Have you gone out of your mind or something (*to Helena*) (Look Back in Anger 58)

Furthermore, and after a long dispute with the characters, Helena asks Jimmy:

HELENA: Haven't you finished?

JIMMY: (*to Alison*) are you going to let yourself be taken by this Saint in Dior's clothing?

I will tell you the truth about her (*Articulating*) she is a cow. I wouldn't mind that so much but she seems to have become a sacred cow as well. (*Look Back in Anger 66*)

Helena is less proper and conventional as to Alison, when act two progresses, she says to Jimmy:

HELENA: (*like ice*). If you come any nearer, I will slap your face.

He looks down at her, a grin smouldering round his mouth.

JIMMY: I hope you wouldn't make the mistake of thinking for one moment that I am a gentleman.

HELENA: I'm not very likely to do that.

JIMMY: (*brining his face close to hers*). I've no public school scruples about hitting girls. (*Gently*.) If you slap my face_ by God, I'll lay you out!

HELENA: You probably would. You're the type. (*Look Back in Anger 68*)

Indeed, the powerful use of language seems almost to be a second form of structure for the whole play

4.6.2. Structure:

Structure of *Look Back in Anger* was certainly not new. All events take place in one location over several months. Osborne referred to the play as "*a formal, rather old-fashioned play*" (*Taylor, Anger and After 28*).

"The play consists of three acts, five scenes and two intervals. This was the conventional form that he had known all along as an actor: the structure preferred by the old West End managements of the era." (Heilpern 184).

Suggestion at a personal level nothing has changed for jimmy. In contrast with the thematic revolution, Osborne might not search for a new structural form because he agrees George Devine's: "*I am very much more interested in content than in form. I do not think any play is really worth producing if it's not a play of ideas. Literally, the play's the thing*". (qtd. in Osborne, *Almost a Gentleman 15*) The circularity of the play is identical to the structure of

Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1955) (Innes, *Modern British Drama: 1890-1990: 1890-1990* 102). The third act opens as a replay of the first act, but this time not Alison but Helena is standing at the ironing-board wearing Jimmy's shirt.

4.6.3. Major Themes:

Osborne's play is enriched by themes that shaken the personality of the English young man. "*The major theme of Look Back in Anger is social protest. Osborne probed into personal relationships and bared their social determinants*" (Weiss 286). John Osborne opened the doors to speak of the concerns of the young in Post-war Britain. Heilpern indicated what made *Look Back in Anger* so thrillingly new in the 1950s: "*It was the first British play that openly dramatized bruising emotion, and it was the first to give the alienated lower classes and youth of England a weapon.*" Jimmy's alienation from Alison comes precisely because he cannot break through her "cool," her unwillingness to feel deeply even during sexual intercourse with her husband. He berates her in a coarse attempt to get her to strike out at him; the Establishment was the "stiff upper lip," that reticence to show... "*Osborne saw his play as a weapon with which ordinary people could break down the class barriers.*" (Taylor, *Ten Years of the English Stage Company* 123) which means that the social and individual issues were not Osborne's only new theme: he gave a sweeping nature to the angry attacks of his protagonist and he also infringed a lot of social and sexual taboos: sexism, The British real life and sloth in British culture, apathy and passivity. Nature of love, Institution of marriage Harsh social and economic realities of social order Moral confusion-loss of direction and faith.

II.5. The Issues that Bothered Jimmy Porter as an Angry Young Man:

Class system:

It is the class system that makes Jimmy's existence seems so meaningless, although some of his mother's relatives are "pretty posh," Jimmy hates them as much as he hates her family. He has a university degree, however works at sweet-stall; as Colonel Redfern points out: "*operating a sweet-stall seems an odd occupation for an educated young man*". whereas Nigel (Alison's brother), the "*straight-backed, chinless wonder*" who is insensitive to others, who went to Sandhurst, who has no beliefs of his own, who is a Member of Parliament and who will "*make it to the top.*" Alison's mother is portrayed as a class-conscious monster that

used every tactic she could to prevent Alison from marrying Jimmy. Jimmy likes Cliff because, as Cliff himself says, "I'm common." i.e. they share the same upbringing.

The New Women:

Jimmy Porter seems for many to be a misogynist and Alison a mere a victim struggling to observe the world. Through Jimmy's eyes, John Brannigan makes a remark on Jimmy's behavior towards women. It says: "*Jimmy Porter's violent outbursts tend to be directed against women, rather than the social or political order [...]*" (Brannigan, *The English Novel in the 1950s*, 137). A contemporary reading of *Look Back in Anger* contains inherent assumptions of sexism. Osborne has been criticized of misogynistic views in his plays. Many point to play *as* the best example. These critics accuse Osborne of glorifying young male anger and cruelty towards women and homosexuals. This is seen in the play in specific examples in which Jimmy Porter emotionally distresses Alison, his wife, and delivers a grisly monologue in which he wishes for Alison's mother's death.

Masculinity Crisis:

Osborne asserts that he is attempting to restore a vision of true masculinity into a twentieth century culture that he sees as becoming increasingly feminized. This feminization is seen in the way that British culture shows an indifference to anything but immediate, personal suffering. This causes deadness within which Jimmy's visceral anger and masculine emotion is retaliation against.

Identity Crisis:

Jimmy does not seem to fit in anywhere, while he harangues everyone around him to have honest feeling, he is trapped in his own problems of social identity. He Sees suffering in life as the one way to find one's true identity. Alison does at the end suffer the loss of her unborn child and runs back to Jimmy, who embraces her return with open arms. Helena discovers that she can be happy only if she lives according to her conventional principles of right and wrong. Colonel Redfern is caught out of his time. The England he left as a young army officer no longer exists. Cliff does seem to finally found his identity, accepts it and moves on with his life.

Rise and fall of British Empire:

The character of Alison's father represents the decline of and nostalgia for the British Empire. The Colonel had been working for many years in India, a symbol of Britain's imperial position in the world. The Edwardian age which corresponded to Britain's height of power, had been the happiest of his life. His nostalgia is representative of the denial that Osborne sees in the psyche of the British people. The world has moved on into an American age, he argues, and the people of the nation cannot understand why they are no longer the world's greatest power.

4.1. Jimmy Porter and the Angry Young Man:

The phenomenon of the Angry Young Men was a huge theatre/culture driven movement in the 1950s, begun at London Royal Court Theatre and spearheaded by Osborne and Kingsley Amis [of Lucky Jim fame]. In fact, it may be argued that there are many parallels between that social movement and the one gripping Britain today. Osborne and Amis, however, were writing for their own sake and from a position of education and observation. They carefully thought out loud of their points and when they put them across, they made perfect sense. Jimmy and Look Back in Anger are considered pivotal works of the movement of the Angry Young Men. They set the mood of the 1950s and express the attitude of a great amount of writers. Both of these works, just as other works of the Angry Young Men, reflect the changes after World War II and convey the disappointment and criticism of the post-war period to mirror the true situation of British cultural, social and political situation, critique raises some previously undiscussed arguments around Jimmy's representation of masculinity and the ways in which women came to be the focus of his anger when he says: "*why, why, why do we let these women bleed us to death.*" (Osborne) Jimmy's anger and the movement also is their antagonism with the recent history. "*How can one feel like a man when men only a decade older fought and died in a just war?*" (Osborne) This indicates that the war was essentially won by those who embodied the typical, traditional masculinity.

The whole point of the character of Jimmy Porter and of Osborne's work was, an entire generation of people was educated, however, out of their social class. The whole ethos of The Angry Young Man was that he was too educated to fit in with his class of origin but deemed too socially "deficient" in the eyes of the uppers.

5.2. Look Back in Anger Glossary:

- **Purgative:** something that cleanses, a term that Jimmy uses to express to Helena how he feels when she comes.
- **Macabre:** deadly, a term that Alison uses to express to Helena how she feels when Jimmy comes.
- **Chivalry:** a term linked to knighthood and bravery, Alison used to think of Jimmy as a shining knight.
- **Virility:** it refers to masculinity, a term that Jimmy usually uses to refer to his state of mind as masculine and violence.
- **Lethargy:** to be in a coma, Jimmy calls Alison lethargy.

5.3. Conclusion:

Finally, after addressing the key issues of the play and its context, I now believe that Jimmy married Alison to directly challenge the class based society that he is so opposed to. Jimmy comes from a working-class background, whilst Alison is upper class, and thus class separates them on a fundamental level. Jimmy took on Alison as what one could describe as a project to attempt to shape her to his own societal views. In other words, if Jimmy was to succeed in conforming Alison to fit his own agenda and outlook on society, he would succeed at effectively breaking the class system. Also, Jimmy misinterpreted Alison's pusillanimity as a care free nature in which she is not bound by any societal conventions or expectations. Instead, Jimmy was given exactly what he wished not for - and thus antagonism is inevitable between two completely different people. On the other hand, Alison marries Jimmy believing that he was a unique individual, and also somewhat of a project. She is aware that he is flawed, stating that he is, 'a knight in shining armor,' yet that his, 'armor did not shine that much.' Therefore, I'm not convinced that their marriage was formed on the basis of love as much as it was on misunderstanding from both parties. However, this is open to individual interpretation.

Chapter III: Theory:

III.1. Introduction:

The previous chapter examined the play, and could identify the main issues of society and how they reflected the play. This chapter is divided into two sections; both will trace additionally a corresponding sequel, yet in theoretical context. It adjusts some of the electrical theoretical developments with particular attribution to the research questions, it analyses in the first section that gender studies developed as a result the feminist movements. The second section will review and discuss theories of masculinity relevant to the study. I will begin with a general discussion of masculinities which will focus on the theories of Raewyn Connell and other modern theorists. In addition, as Class and nationality are significant practice in masculinity and thought of as major themes of *Look Back in Anger*, the two concepts will be discussed separately in the second section. Finally, and in the second section, I will conclude the theoretical chapter with a brief consideration of literary studies dealing with masculinities. I will discuss the relevant configurations of masculinities: companionate themes of Englishness and the working-class as the key debates around men and masculinities within the play of *Look Back in Anger*.

III.2. National Identity in Postwar Britain:

Introduction:

The 1950s and 1960s marked a critical stage in the history of British theatre, as it saw the rise of major theatrical movements such of “Avant Garde Theater”, the absurdist theatre introduced by authors like Samuel Becket, and the theatre of anger by John Osborne. The most notable characteristics of these postwar theatrical movements reflected a strong message of discontent with the dysfunctional status-quo. This research investigates In particular, the loss of national ideals throughout the framework of Osborne’s *Look Back in Anger*. The characters in the theatre of anger confront the end of their own Empire. Consequently, the feeling of disillusionment was often mixed with a painful lament for the dying empire. The end of British power in the international context as Britain receded from its former prominence; its national identity and authority were called into question. Naturally then, postwar generations’ feelings toward nationhood were mixed. On the one hand, they suffered

the consequences of waning imperial power. On the other hand, they painfully saluted the downfall of the Empire and lingered on past glory.

2.1. The Battle of Sexes:

A story of struggling for racial equality became a central debate to the field of academic writing and popular culture since the 1950s. During the war, in early twentieth century, there was a serious shortage of able-bodied men, and women were required to take on many of the traditional male roles, this prompted a new view of what a woman was capable of doing. The wars exhaustively threatened the gendered division of work and welcomed women to the workplace. It was a period characterized, by civil rights movements, more significantly, fights for women's right. Within the 1950s, Women's movements were escalating to increase awareness about how social, political and economic problems are interwoven with gender. Women movements concentrated on achieving equal rights. While the war empowered women with the labeled mannish descriptions such as liberated, self-sufficient and autonomous, it moreover affected men's masculinity, The New Woman's dismissal of domestic duty and her association within society expanded into the larger context that jeopardized the nation, *"femininity became less firmly tied to motherhood, while work gradually became accepted as a province of both men and women and masculinity was seen as reformed. This destabilized established understandings of working class masculinity and femininity"* (Brooke 774). When medical professionals and the media encouraged female production, The depreciators of the New Woman, and English imperialists stressed that the nation's inability to repopulate would eventually threaten the nation's durability, they considered the New Woman as the beginning of national concern: *"female demands for the vote, expanded education, greater economic, occupational, and professional opportunities, as well as control over property, children, and less explicitly, sexuality, called into question the stability of the family, the nature of authority, the fundamental religious, moral, and scientific basis of gender, and the very future of the race"* (Soloway 110). In *"Plain Words on the Woman Question"* (1889), social theorist Grant Allen feared the *"danger that many of the most cultivated and able families of the English-speaking race will have become extinct" because educated women rejected the duties of maternity. He further emphasized that "in spite of everything, the race and the nation must go on reproducing 27 themselves."*

It was commonly defined as being the time era of postwar Britain and a post war industrial society. Postwar Britain went through a series of international affairs that seriously downgraded the nation's global power. Hence, it had encouraged women's participation in the public sphere, and tensions about race, class, and gender had been kept in line. British men encountered an identity crisis at their home, they were deprived of their substance and felt nothing but a soft feminized and a castor diversion of traditional working class bread winner archetype. Several social transformations altered the idea of conventional femininity and advocated women's subversion of domestic femininity, which endangered men's pervaded entourage. Male territory was not necessarily confined in a physical space. More significantly, an increasingly prominent female sexuality also threatened male security, As Zweiniger-Bargielowska pointed out, "*the widespread use of birth control caused a decline in fertility, which further resulted in women's increasing employment (11). After all, as women were no longer bound to unwanted maternity, they could devote more time and energy to work (Zweiniger-Bargielowska 11).*" The female invasion into men's territory thus directly resulted from the subversion of women's patriarchal, domestic role to reproduce.

Consequently, a developing motivation to draw back women involved in the male sphere, once more to the domestic sphere, further enhanced the conventional view that women's authentic place was home. Working women were often stigmatized for the consequences of domestic issues. Notwithstanding the fact that society demanded women's continuous work after the war, however, postwar popular culture in the 1950s and 1960s promoted a reactionary ideology by portraying women who functioned securely within the traditional heterosexual patriarchal home.

With the conclusion of the World War Two, the rigid gender patterns of Victorian British woman were breached. The sense of loss toward masculinity further coupled with concerns over national identity. Contemporary popular culture promoted traditional femininity and heterosexual masculinity, thereby reinforcing masculine national identity. Theorists against Feminist Movement believed that women now have it all and it is men's turn for having same understanding, sympathy and special programs, "*feminism articulated only the shadow side of men and only the light side of women.*" (Farrell 1993:4). He adds, that feminism argued that God might be a she but never argued that the devil might be one as well! Webster argues that while postwar British society struggled with undermined masculinity, popular culture of the 1950s also asserted hyper-masculine heterosexuality. According to her, the prevalent

homophobia or the pervasive misogyny in the contemporary working-class realism reflected the fear of the “contraction of Englishness” and ultimately of national decline after the Suez crisis. The concrete structure of traditional masculine identity was being shaken. Segal argues, men’s power is the primary determinant of masculinities then the Feminist Movement in asserting their demand for the equality of power relations posed a large threat to its legitimacy

2.2. Configuring Masculinities in Theory and Literary Practice:

Humans have always been considered as social animals, they survived throughout a series of struggling in history, the job of men was to hunt, to fight and protect the perimeter which gave them the privilege to be in the first place, vast majority of men believe that a man should be strong, competent, courageous and honorable, they do not want to be challenged, “specially” by women in terms of power. Britain amid the previous decades was a country sharply divided along gender lines. Women usually occupied positions in domestic service, most of them were expected to marry and the husbands retained all privileges to property and children. Nevertheless, the construction of Traditional masculinity was viewed as problematic social construction which needed to be deconstructed, rethought and critically evaluated

“In the last two decades, the concept of masculinity and attempts at its definition has come under much scrutiny and re-evaluation.” (Masculinities, Connell 1995).

A genre of criticism of the male role was created in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. Most of the critics believed that masculinity was in crisis and that the crisis itself would drive forward change. Two of the main instigators of this criticism were the Women’s Movement and Gay Rights activists. *“The concept of sex role identity prevents individuals who violate the traditional role for their sex from challenging it; instead they feel personally inadequate and insecure”*. (Pleck, 1981).

“In light of the alleged centrality of employment and occupational status in the lives of men, unemployment on the other hand may be seen as paradigmatic example of masculinity under challenge. Unemployment at least potentially provides a challenge to traditional masculine identities” (Morgan, 1992).

According to Connell, what constructs a powerful meaning of masculinity is a set of individual behavior; social practices organized by groups, and interactions too, with social norms set for masculine behaviors, to deviate from such norms would have meant a sense of inadequacy. Normative *sex role theory* thus helped to dampen social change. If any change were to be enacted, it would hardly have come from the dominant gender. Being typecast in a stifling stereotypical role did not mean conformity yet it also yielded what Connell refers to as the ‘patriarchal dividend’. Chris Haywood and Mairtin Maccan Ghaill have discussed *sex role theory*. They argue that it encompasses femininity and masculinity as historical polar opposites that can be measured. As they claim, “*effeminate boys and gays[] are seen as not having enough masculinity [...] [while] black boys and white working-class boys are seen as having too much masculinity*” (7-8; original emphasis). Men’s dominant position in the gender order has had a material pay-off. Though Connell suggest that in general men gain from this patriarchal dividend, specific groups of men gain very little. He cites working class youths economically dispossessed by structural unemployment, as gaining no economic advantage at all over women in their communities. Moreover, for Connell the concept of *male role* has severe weaknesses, both scientific and practical. It misses the complexities within masculinity and the multiple forms of masculinity offers very limited strategies of change.

It would not be, plausible to discuss the Masculinity and its configurations without giving definition to ‘gender’. Gender can be defined as “*the socially learned behaviour and expectations that are associated with the two sexes*” (Anderson, 1993:310). Connell regards gender as an interactive system, a complex terrain, and its changes are the turbulent process where “*the everyday conduct of life is organized in relation to a reproductive arena, defined by the bodily structures and processes of human reproduction*” (*Masculinities* 71). For her, gender is about reproductive bodies that enter into social groups and enter into history itself; as a result, there are constructions of masculinity and femininity through history “*a historical process involving the body, not a fixed set of biological determinants*” (*Masculinities* 71).

“*Gender is an achieved status, which is a function of socialisation and has social, cultural and psychological components. As a result of direct and indirect experiences, formal and informal learning we develop images conceptions, perceptions and the like of masculinity and femininity. Furthermore, people generally behave, hold attitudes and feel the way society says that a male does so, he is called masculine and when a female does so, she is called feminine.*” (Walum 1984:5 quoted in Franklin 1984)

Because it is learned and historically constructed, it is always opened to change, and always possible that masculinity could change, however not always for the better, there are some historical moments when violence is a dominating form of masculinity, furthermore, it becomes dominant in the society, which can be very dangerous and damaging for other people.

“‘Masculinity’, to the extent the term can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture.” (Masculinities 71)

Furthermore, social identities are related to cultural identities which are comprised of *“identifications of class, gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, nationality”* (Barker 229). According to the cultural theorist Stuart Hall, *social and cultural identities are about togetherness and belonging, but at the same time, “it is only through the relation to the Other [...] that the ‘positive’ meaning of any term [...] can be constructed”* (Hall 4-5). Selfidentity appears to be formed by a collection of cultural identities. While masculinity is connected to social and cultural identities, it may also be part of a person’s self-identity as Connell asserts, masculinities form complex relations, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.1 Configuration of Masculinities in Theory:

The anthropologists have gone through the course of their trawling of different cultures around the globe and they have provided us in fact with of the most dramatic evident of the different forms of masculinity, and in different ways of being a man that a society can produce and honor. The term “masculinity” may emphasize its social-constructedness and consequently, that it is opened to reconstruction. The plural “masculinities” is taken to reflect multiplicity, including those related race and nation. This section will consider two kinds of configurations of masculinities: nationality, and class theories. As *Look Back in Anger* is mainly concerned with Englishness and working class, this will be given an emphasis in the discussion.

2.2.2. Nationality and Nation:

Nationality and Nation have numerous definitions, both of the terms derived from Latin, they express the same etymological meaning “birth” or “descent”; they are used with obscurity in popular language. Chris Barker inserts In *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*, that “[n]ations are not simply political formations but systems of cultural representation by which national identity is continually reproduced through discursive action” (252). Also, *nation on a symbolic level is affected by temporal changes.*” (Barker 252). A sense of unity and communion is significant in the formation of culture; According to Barker, the fact of being all together in a specific geographical arena is the most essential requirement of a nation. The people may differ in races and breeds, but they progress sympathy for each other from their long association as inhabitants of the same arena. Their reciprocal sympathy may develop as a consequence of a common history of battling, happiness or grief; a reciprocal tradition of religion or language and reciprocal culture. This must be complete with reciprocal wish to live together freely and independently and the power to practice the right of political self-determination.

2.2.3. National identity and Englishness:

“[n]ational identity is a form of identification with representations of shared experiences and history. These are told through stories, literature, popular culture and the media” (Barker 253), which denotes that identity can be shaped by shared experiences throughout history. Jopi Nyman discusses in his dissertation *Imagining Englishness: Essays on the Representation of National Identity in Modern British Culture*. Nyman states that there are three main findings in his study: firstly, “the identity of Englishness is based on the notions of national and racial Others”; secondly, “the national identity produced is based on memory in two ways: it relies on memories of Empire and on memories of an imagined national past”; thirdly, “such a construction has become highly problematic and is now under erasure” (57).

2.2.4. Nationality Nationalism and Englishness:

Nationalism is connected with nationality. Nationalism is thus performed through active reconstruction and repetition. Nationalism and patriotism can be thought of as consequences of national identity that represents positive evaluations of one's own group but imply different social goals. The form of nationality and national identity that is significant in this study is Englishness. The roots of Englishness as a cultural ideal are in the late nineteenth century "when idealized ways of being English were needed to counter the threats of urban degeneration, economic crises, and various external and internal [O]thers in Britain, Europe and the Empire" (Nyman 39). These others included "suffragettes, homosexuals, Germans and colonial peoples" (Nyman 39). Englishness is defined against others as well as through symbolism. Thus, education and rules appear foreign and feminine, while practical hard work and using common sense are related to masculinity and Englishness. Furthermore, Nyman states that "twentieth-century representations of national identity in Britain reconstruct stereotypes of national others, reproduce ideas of Englishness based on national symbols" (52). One of the powerful symbols of Englishness is the imagery of picturesque countryside of the southern parts of England (Nyman 42).²⁷ M. Spiering discusses Englishness using an imagologist approach in *Englishness: Foreigners and Images of National Identity in Postwar Literature*.

2.2.5. Class and Masculinity:

In academic discourse, class has been given various definitions. In *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*, Chris Barker discusses some definitions of class. Barker quotes Edward Thompson's famous study *The Making of the English Working Class* where class is defined as a reality constituted by people who "as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against" people with dissimilar or opposing interests" (Barker 44). Later, Barker discusses Marxist theory that sees class "as an essential unified identity between a signifier and a specific group of people who share socio-economic conditions" (Barker 95). Critics of Marxism view class as "not simply an objective economic fact but a discursively formed, collective subject position affected by gender, 'race' and age" (Barker 95). Due to intersectionality, subjects are fragmented and they "take up plural subject positions" (Barker 95).

Men in throughout the course of the twentieth century witnessed enormous social and cultural changes which impacted, both directly and indirectly (and differentially, depending on the social and geographical location of individuals), on how masculinity was experienced. Class consciousness since the 1950s has proven to be a fruitful source of inspiration for authors, the depiction and style of writing is innovative within this genre. It is important to get an idea of the class system in Britain since the 1950s. After the Second World War, the general belief was that the traditional class system had been broken down. “*The hardships felt by members of every class during the war created a false sense of solidarity and fraternization*” (Cannadine 146). Reality of human life shows enormous variety of forms of masculinity, different ways of being a man. David Morgan provides two interesting points onto class and masculinity: Firstly, Morgan states that working-class masculinities may, at least on the surface, be described as “*collective, physical and embodied, and oppositional*” (170). However, he mentions that “*there are working class individualities represented in popular social types such as ‘Jack the lad,’ ‘the cheeky chappie,’ and ‘the hard man’*” (171; 28 my emphasis). Secondly, Morgan discusses models of class and states that class classifications do not always coincide with class experience; as he asserts, Furthermore, “[c]lass as experience needs to be filtered through particular agencies, such as housing, residential area, educational experience”

The relevance of masculinity in working-class fiction is discussed by Susan Brook in her article “*Engendering Rebellion: The Angry Young Man, Class and Masculinity*.”

“*The ‘angry’ texts have been celebrated by some critics “as documents of ‘instinctive leftishness,’” as works of genuine social and political commentary and meaningful leftist experience; however, the ‘angry’ writers produced texts that portrayed rebellion and authenticity exclusively as masculine*” (Brook 22-23). Brook argues that “[t]he ruggedly heterosexual and rebellious masculinity found in these texts was read as the authentic experience of the working class or lower-middle class, and as a form of class resistance” (23).

Brook uses John Osborne’s drama *Look Back in Anger* as an example of the ways in which the reading of ‘angry’ texts as authentic working-class experience was heavily influenced by masculinity (23-29).

Englishness and working class are constructed through repetitive performances. In addition, Englishness and working class are defined in contrast with other nationalities/ethnicities and middle class/education. These binary oppositions often regard Englishness/working class as superior and masculine, while their opposites are described as inferior and effeminate. In conclusion, Brook shows that gender is relevant in the discussion of class and the state (Brook 33).

This section has been a brief contemplation of recent studies regarding masculinities, nationality, and class. Further, reviewed how these studies have discussed changes in Englishness, working class, and masculinities in contemporary British fiction. Similarly, these changes will be considered in the analysis of this study. Next, we will proceed to the analysis which will focus on masculinities and their relation to, Englishness and working class.

2.3.1. Configuration of Masculinity in Literature:

2.3.2. Masculinities in Look Back in Anger: Englishness, Working Class and:

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, the primary source of this research, written by the leader of the angry young men movement, through which Osborne uses excessively stylistic features that became an influential work of period of the 1950s. Its title and the characteristics of the hero gave the name to the movement of the Angry Young Men. This section will begin by a discussion of Englishness and masculinities giving examples from the play itself.

2.3.3. Englishness in Look Back in Anger:

Contextually, Englishness was occupied by unsatisfied males uniting to face the unchanging situation of class-based norms. Englishness in this section reflects political, social and cultural situation of Britain after the Suez Crisis and the end of empire, it aims to compare the contemporary situation to the past which was depicted through the eyes of the protagonist Jimmy Porter. The conservative newspaper *The Star* described Porter as “*a caricature of the sort of frustrated left-wing intellectual who, I thought, died out in the war*” (Heilpern 169). When examining the masculine Englishness entity of Jimmy Porter, one must not ignore his sincerity, tenderness, and sensitivity, although, Jimmy enjoys imposing his malice,

antagonism, and ego. He was described as “almost noncommittal”, Alison describes him a “spiritual barbarian” and she adds:

"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 (sic) -- except that his armour didn't really shine very much." (Look Back in Anger 69),

Jimmy wants to see these emotions of enthusiasm in Alison and Cliff, which was quite nonviable to have them as citizens of the 1950s, he stands at the beginning of the play and shout:

"Why don't we have a little game? Let's pretend we're human beings, and that we're actually alive.... it's such a long time since I was with anyone who got enthusiastic about anything" (Look Back in Anger 9).

To Jimmy, if we cannot live the way we used be in era of dominance, let us at least pretend like we are having a real one. His secret regret is England will never have back its Edwardian Glory days, his secret hero is his father in law Colonel Redfreen whom he thinks is identical to the British Empire, Redfreen says to Alison:

"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?" (Look Back in Anger 70).

What hurts Jimmy the most is the loss of the British Empire as he relates it to the emasculation of the British Identity, Jimmy idolizes the characteristics of the old Edwardian man, he is even compared to Colonel Redfern in his attitude to the present situation of Britain, he considers:

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. There aren't any good, brave causes left. If the big bang does come, and we all get killed off, it won't be in aid of the old-fashioned, grand design. It'll just be for the Brave-New-nothing-very-much-thank you." (Look Back in Anger 87).

The longing for innocence, security, and ideological construction which conflates imperial nostalgia, innocence that seems to have been present in Britain before war, in the sense that, Britain at present, should have no money and no strength and they lie between the two great powers of the US and The USSR.

"If you've no world of your own, it's rather pleasant to regret the passing of someone else's. I must be getting sentimental. But I must say it's pretty dreary living in the American Age -- unless you're an American of course." (Look Back in Anger 15)

This signifies the petty he feels when the power shifted to the US and USSR, which later develops to anger, he says:

"People like me don't get fat. I've tried to tell you before. We just burn everything up."(Look Back in Anger 12).

Here, Jimmy is speaking on the name of the Angry Young Men Movement; the term “burn” signifies Jimmy’s wild eagerness to have a real life, even if at the expense of destroying the life of those around him. Jimmy is often very cruel to the ones he loves, but he might defend that as an example of the passion that is missing in other men.

In Jimmy's dialogue there are many articulations of the sort of “typical” masculinity that he tries to rebel against. At the end of the play, Jimmy can do nothing but fall back in love with Alison and become an animal again. There may be cruel steel traps waiting for their bears and squirrels, but it is preferable to the agony and confusion of being a human – of being a man – in his time and place.

2.3.4. Working Class:

Look Back in Anger has been recognized as a atomic bomb that exploded the old British theatre, Further, ‘angry’ masculinity and maleness may be viewed as pop stands for class-transcending independence and originality, while anything related to “establishment” which has relation to religion, femaleness and femininity is associated with the upper classes and the class system, is ultimately, the binary opposition of the masculine. Jimmy was perfect for the educated man to have so many expectations out of life that would ultimately be dashed by

social convention that had failed to evolve also this way of life in itself is a reason for Jimmy's resentment, he says to his wife:

“Well, you are ignorant. You're just a peasant. (to Alison) What about you? You're not a peasant are you?” (Look Back in Anger 3).

Although he comes from a working-class background, Jimmy considers himself intelligent and superior, his education gives him more superiority over Allison and Cliff, however, despite his education, he is poor and cannot find a suitable job, he adopts anger as an alternative to express his hatred towards the “establishment”, starting with Alison's family:

“And don't let the Marquess of Queensbury manner fool you. They'll kick you in the groin while you're handing your hat to the maid. As for Nigel and Alison – Nigel and Alison. They're what they sound like: sycophantic, phlegmatic and pusillanimous” (Look Back in Anger 15-16).

What he means when describing Alison and her brother Nigel as “Sycophantic” is that they use flattery to win someone over, “Phlegmatic” they are cool temperament, “Pusillanimous” is that they lack courage.

Brook confirms that the ‘angry’ masculinity is an alternative to the class system: *“it is clear that the scorn which the Angry Young Men hurled at ‘the Establishment’ was class resentment, but one devoid of any collective class-consciousness”* (Segal qtd. in Brook 28).

The gap between the upper-class and working-class parties made Alison condemned to suffer for belonging to the upper-class, however, surprisingly, the end of the play portrayed a picture of sympathy and love, when Jimmy and Alison reunite again, this signifies that both can turn away from the destruction hinting that obscure society after the decline, and would reconstitute a sense of social utility as redemptive quality that Neither masculinity nor femininity but of humanity.

2.3.5. Conclusion:

The configuration of masculinities study within contemporary English society is a recent and main focus of postmodernist theory, the study of men and masculinities has been one of the most dynamic in contemporary postmodernist research as writers have started to discover the variety of men's experience, conceptions of masculinities and their authority relations. Masculinity witnessed a challenging construct and needed to be deconstructed and re-examined. With the transferring of gender roles, especially the emergence of The New women and her increased contribution in the workforce, conventional social roles were changed. My objective focuses on examining how these changes affected men's sensitivity of themselves in society. Masculinity, made male performance centre on work. Taking into account, of unemployment which opened the doors for a situation where masculinity is under challenge and threat. As work sphere has been invaded by women; there comes the feeling of a sense of place. It was difficult to find a location through the context of employment and often feeling invaded by women. This thesis has investigated an alternative sense of place available to unemployed working class men of the 1950s and examined this problematic in the light of Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*.

Conclusion:

Finally, I would mention that the study of Look back in Anger was fruitful in terms of addressing the main issues through which answers were automatically decoded, in each chapter the reader will be acquainted with a different vision; the first chapter for instance, will inspect how in a short period of time, Britain, was shaken from top to toe, the general historical foundation of British country after the Second World War, and shows how rapidly can a global power caught off guard regardless of the possibility that it contains extent military power, it disregard its budgetary decay, how unintended outcomes can prompt the mince of one nation and the ascent of another nation.

The second chapter was the breathing break among the three chapters, as literature is always the most entertaining, in this chapter, the reader will understand that the British theatre has changed as society changed, thereby, the emergence of the Angry Young Men movement, and the Kitchen Sink drama, helped to show life as it is, Furthermore, the reader will see the talented John Osborne, his style of writing which denotes that he is an educated young man with purpose and his plays contain very artistic language unlike the absurdist's.

Finally the theoretical chapter, which was the most difficult and most time consuming, since it is the conclusion for both of the two chapters. It is important to mention that discussing the theoretical part, requires making the relationship between the historical background and the literary work , for instance, the loss of the British Empire has been related to the emasculation of manhood, because since Britain has lost its colonies, it has lost its power and thus it became feminized, The New Woman withdrew its Victorian values which caused a group of angry young men to react against this permissive society in order to protect their manliness and their British traditional identity.

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