

THE ANALYSIS OF THE THEME OF ANGER
IN JOHN OSBORNE'S PLAYS: *LOOK BACK IN ANGER*,
INADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE, *WATCH IT COME DOWN*

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis analyses the theme of anger in John Osborne's plays, namely *Look Back in Anger*, *Inadmissible Evidence* and *Watch it Come Down*, in terms of frustration-aggression hypothesis and psychoanalytic theory. It investigates the reasons for the protagonists' rage and the ways the characters reflect their anger onto other people.

Keywords: Anger, Aggression, John Osborne

ÖZ

JOHN OSBORNE’NUN OYUNLARINDAKİ ÖFKE TEMASININ ANALİZİ: *LOOK BACK IN ANGER*, *INADMISSIBLE EVIDENCE*, *WATCH IT COME DOWN*

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Bu çalışma, John Osborne’nun *Look Back in Anger*, *Inadmissible Evidence* ve *Watch it Come Down* adlı oyunlarındaki öfke temasını hayal kırıklığı-saldırganlık hipotezi ve psikanalitik yaklaşımı kullanarak incelemiştir. Ana karakterlerin öfkelerinin nedenleri ve kızgınlıklarını diğer insanlara yansıtma şekilleri araştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Öfke, Saldırganlık, John Osborne

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first performance of John Osborne's famous play *Look Back in Anger* at the Royal Court Theatre on 8 May 1956 is commonly regarded as the beginning of a new era in the British Drama. One of the famous critics of its time, John Russell Taylor, calls the play "the beginning of a revolution in the British theatre" (11). Kenneth Tynan from the Observer writes the day after he has seen the play: "I doubt if I could love anyone who did not wish to see *Look Back in Anger*" (qtd. in Taylor 51). Emil Roy affirms that "British drama renewed its claim on literary eminence with the premier of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*" (99). Arthur Miller calls the play "the only modern, English play" that he has seen (qtd. in Taylor 193). Another critic, George E. Wellwarth claims that "the 'new movement' in the British drama actually began officially on the night of May 8, 1956" (Taylor 157). Arnold Wesker describes the play as "having opened the doors of theatres for all the succeeding generations of writers" (qtd. in Taylor 195).

Look Back in Anger is called a significant play owing to the fact that it can be considered as a moment of change and also a reaction. Because, since the end of World War II British theatre was believed to have been in rapid decline. Audiences were falling off and theatres were closing all over the country. Some of the theatre companies were restaging Chekhov, Ibsen, Shaw plays and Restoration comedies. Most of the companies were trying to restore Elizabethan theatre by restaging Shakespeare plays over and over. Two of the most successful dramatists in Britain of the time were Noel Coward and Terence Rattigan but unfortunately their celebrated plays dated back to the 1930s, so they could hardly be regarded as rising new and young talents.

“The main cause for excitement in the post-war London theatre”, Taylor suggests, “had been the unexpected box-office success of a series of verse-plays by T.S Eliot and later his successor Christopher Fry ” (15). As a matter of fact, except for the surprising popularity of T.S. Eliot’s *The Cocktail Party* (1949) verse drama had small audience at this time. Furthermore, as it can be observed, the revival of verse drama did not challenge old theatrical values. According to Raymond Williams “the verse drama of Christopher Fry had never represented so real challenge since its weakness always was its tendency to use verse to decorate a romantic action, rather than to touch new dramatic experience” (30).

While British theatre was busy with restaging Restoration comedies and Elizabethan plays and verse drama in Europe the epic theatre of Bertold Brecht, the holy theatre of Antonin Artaud, and the absurd theatre of Eugène Ionesco were being praised in 40s and 50s. However, the influences of these writers were only fully absorbed in England around 60s and 70s. Meanwhile in The United States of America realist and naturalist plays of Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams and Eugene O’Neill, which did not get staged in London, were praised by the Americans.

One of the main reasons for Osborne’s having a different place in British scene might be because of the fact that he was among the pioneering playwrights of Britain to become aware of the changes in the theatre abroad England.

Many critics have regarded *Look Back in Anger* as a turning point in the history of twentieth-century British theatre owing to its choice of topics from social and political circumstances of its time, its lower-middle and working-class characters, its realistic setting and its everyday language.

1956, the year of *Look Back in Anger*, can be observed as rather rich in causes for disillusionment and despair for the British nation. In the Mediterranean, the Egyptian government announced that it was taking over the Suez Canal; up to then the canal was owned and run by British and French

governments. Therefore, Britain and France sent in troops to protect their interests in the Suez area. However, American interference let this canal to be nationalized by Egypt. Another political event of the year was the Russian invasion of Hungary on account of the fact that Hungarians rebelled against their so called Russian-imposed communist government. British government was against this invasion however it could do nothing. Meantime in Britain there was a protest carrying on against the use of nuclear weapons, called Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Gamini Salgado asserts that “these political events left many people in England, especially among the younger generation, embittered and disillusioned about the possibilities of individual political action within existing political institutions” (92). Furthermore, the gulf between two generations –those who fought in the war and regarded themselves as the inheritors of an imperial past, and those who were born during or just after the war and found many of the values of their society useless and outmoded- was widening.

A large number of critics of the time agreed that *Look Back in Anger* would appeal most strongly to those of its audience under the age of thirty. Salgado notes that “the younger generation’s frustrated political radicalism found a theatrical focus in the embittered and explosive eloquence of Jimmy Porter” (192). Another critic, Katherine J. Worth, explains the reason for *Look Back in Anger*’s impact on the audience:

Osborne astonished and fascinated by his feeling for the contemporary scene, and the mores of post-war youth, by his command of contemporary idiom. And his tart comments on subjects ranging from the posh Sunday newspapers and ‘white tile’ universities to the Bishops and the Bomb (Taylor 101).

It can be noted that Jimmy Porter has become a kind of representative of post-war generation puzzled by the Hungarian revolution, unhappy about Britain’s so called imperialist approach to Suez, and dedicated to protest the Bomb and the nuclear weapons. In this respect, Osborne has been compared with

Noel Coward, speaking in the theatre for disillusioned youth after the First World War. Consequently, it can be concluded that the success of *Look Back in Anger* indicates that the social and political expectations of theatre were changing according to the socio-political circumstances of the era.

According to Raymond Williams *Look Back in Anger* is “the beginning of a revolt against orthodox middle-class drama” because he believes that “what passes for realistic drama is in fact telling lies; it is not about real people in real situations, but about conventional characters (superficial and flattering) in conventional situations (theatrical and unreal)” (27). For the great number of the critics Jimmy Porter is regarded as the first non-middle class, provincial, anti-establishment anti-hero in modern British drama. Before Osborne there were successful examples of working class drama for instance in Germany Gerard Hauptmann’s *The Weavers* (1893) and in the United States of America Tennessee Williams’ *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947). However, what made Osborne different from them was the fact that he was exploring the British scene since, Jimmy Porter is a British man of working-class background with a university degree (not even redbrick but white tile) and working at a candy stall despite his graduate degree.

“Part of the immediate ‘shock’ of *Look Back in Anger* lay in the impact of its setting” (Lacey 29). It is:

a one-room flat in a large Midland Town... a fairly large attic room... most of the furniture is simple, and rather old. Up R. is a dole bed, ... a shelf of books. Down R. Below the bed is a heavy chest of drawers, covered with books, neckties and odds and ends... a small wardrobe.... two deep shabby leather armchairs.

(*Look Back in Anger* 9)

It can be suggested that Osborne made use of a full box-set which is a convention of naturalist fourth-wall drama. “The realism of a set like this asks to be judged not only in relation to an observable social reality beyond the stage but also

against the other kinds of theatre” (Lacey 29). Lacey also claims that this setting can be considered as a challenge to the iconography of the bourgeois living-room and the country-house drawing room. As for the old ‘chest of drawers’ according to Lacey “it would be likely to be antique and the profusion of books that covered it would be used to denote a ‘profession’ or at least a general level of ‘culture’”(29). It is clear that Osborne makes use of a realist- naturalist setting in *Look Back in Anger* in order to reinforce his point which is to present the living circumstances of post-war generation especially the younger generation of working and lower-middle class origins.

As for the language of the play it might be said that it is realistic. Jimmy shouts and swears most of the time he opens his mouth to talk. Cliff’s Welsh accent is clearly understood from his speech. The characters can say what they feel or think up to a limit determined by the censorship which was exerted on the play at that time. Osborne’s aim to use everyday language in the play also involves his wish to shock the audience with its bluntness.

It can be inferred that *Look Back in Anger* is regarded as a reaction to the affected drawing-room comedies of such writers as Noel Coward, Terence Rattigan and others, which dominated the West End stage in the early 50s. Because these playwrights wrote about affluent bourgeoisie at play in the drawing-rooms of their country homes, or sections of the upper-middle class comfortable in suburbs. However, Osborne looked at the working and lower-middle class people struggling with their existence in bedsits or terraces of their attic rooms in *Look Back in Anger* and in his later plays.

The critic John Russell Taylor believes that Osborne’s *Look Back in Anger* “started everything off... the play is the first ‘type-image of the new drama’” (75). After the success of the play theatre companies began to provide platforms for a succession of new playwrights such as Shelagh Delaney, John Arden, Arnold Wesker, Harold Pinter, and John Mortimer. Like Osborne these new and young playwrights were mostly of working class background. They

liked to be sensational to surprise and shock with their choice of topics from contemporary social and political circumstances. Most importantly these new dramatists were mostly involved in the theatre. For instance, both John Osborne and Harold Pinter were actors before they turned to playwriting.

When *Look Back in Anger* first appeared, most of the critics of the time regarded the play primarily as a play of political and social rebellion and labeled the movement, as ‘angry young men.’ Jimmy Porter was considered as the mouthpiece for an angry man’s disillusion about the society he lived in. Therefore, John Osborne was reckoned the first of the ‘angry young men.’ The term was made up by a Royal Court publicist in those times however “it had first been used of Noel Coward at the time of *The Vortex* in 1924” (Leon and Morley 219).

Alongside John Osborne, Arnold Wesker, Harold Pinter, and John Arden were given as the key figures of the ‘angry young men.’ Nonetheless, Osborne resisted allegiance to any group including the angry young men movement. But it can be observed that what all these dramatists have in common might be the fact that they have remained as a voice in opposition especially to the British establishment.

It can be asserted that, as Osborne himself claims, he might not be a member of the ‘angry young men’ whereas it is for sure that Jimmy is an angry young man and the theme of anger is evident in *Look Back in Anger*. Most of the central characters of Osborne’s later plays have something in common in the sense that they are, like Jimmy, angry about the conditions they are in. Osborne deals with the theme of anger in his later plays as an expression of the other themes such as frustration, lack of communication, alienation, search for compassion and love, disillusionment, suffering, despair and self-pity.

The dictionary definition of anger is “a violent, revengeful emotion that one feels about an action or situation which one considers unacceptable, unfair,

cruel, or insulting, and about the person responsible for it.” (“Anger”) Psychologists agree with the fact that anger is an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to rage and fury that might lead to aggressive behavior. Therefore, aggression can be considered as a way of expressing anger. Aggression is defined as “the behavior intended to harm (physical or nonphysical) another individual” (Abeles, Fischer, and Scherer 4).

It can be claimed that theories explaining the essence of anger and aggression begin with Sigmund Freud, namely psychoanalytic theory. Freud has several ideas about aggression. He initially believed that “aggression was a ‘primary response’ to the thwarting of pleasure-seeking or pain-avoiding behavior” (Albert Bandura 12). He thought that all human behaviors were motivated by the libido (sexual energy and instinctive drives) and the repression of libidinal urges was displayed as aggression. Then Freud claimed that there were ‘ego instincts’ that are nonlibidinal urges the general aim of which was self-preservation. “The major constituent of such instincts was aggression” (Arnold Buss 184). Freud claimed that aggressive urges could occur in the absence of sexual conflict:

The ego hates, abhors and pursues with intent to destroy all objects which are for it a source of painful feelings, without taking into account whether they mean to it frustration of sexual satisfaction or gratification of the needs of self-preservation. Indeed, it may be asserted that the true prototypes of hate relation are derived not from sexual life, but from the struggle of the ego for self-preservation and self-maintenance.

(qtd. in Buss 184)

Freud was affected by the mass destruction of World War I and he gave much attention to his theory of aggression. Lastly, he added the ‘death instinct’ or Thanatos opposing to Eros, that is life instincts. As he himself explains:

Erotic instincts always try to collect living substances together into even larger unities; the death instincts act against that

tendency and try to bring living matter back into an inorganic condition.

(qtd. in Antony Storr 6)

Contrary to Eros, Thanatos encourages aggression and destruction. Freud claims that these two instincts are in a continuous conflict and in this conflict the energy provided by the death instincts is redirected toward others not to destroy the organism. That is, people aggress to avoid self-destruction. Freud proposes that the displacement of the energy of the death instinct onto others is the basis of aggression. Buss notes that “the stronger the death instinct in a person, the more necessary is it for him to direct aggression outward against objects and people. Whatever aggression is not vented against external objects will be turned back on the self” (185). As a result, according to Freud aggression against the external world (both animate and inanimate) is the consequence of an innate biologically rooted drive called ‘the death instinct’ being blocked by the sexual, self-preservative instinct called ‘the life instinct.’

For a group of researchers at Yale led by John Dollard man is motivated to behave aggressively by a frustration-producing drive much like Freud’s Thanatos. Their theory is called ‘frustration-aggression hypothesis.’ They claim that “the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression” (qtd. in Buss 27). That is, frustration and aggression are linked in a cause and effect relationship. Later, this theory was reformed by Leonard Berkowitz who assumes that “the motivational energy that powers aggression is provided by an emotional state such as anger or rage which is a primary inborn reaction to frustration” (Abeles, Fischer, and Scherer 62). Berkowitz proposes that frustration creates an emotional state therefore the readiness to behave aggressively.

James Tedeschi claims that the frustration-aggression theory is a learning theory adaptation of Freud’s ideas on aggression. Because he argues that,

“according to this theory, aggressive behavior serves the function of reducing arousal built up through experience of frustration” (141). In Freud’s view, the destructive energy provided by the death instinct is directed towards external world by expressing aggressive behavior to prevent self-destruction. In frustration-aggression hypothesis the disturbing emotions of anger and rage aroused by frustration are displaced onto others by the expression of aggression in order to reduce the negative arousal. Berkowitz claims that the emotion of anger is a motivating force until it is discharged through aggressive behavior. It can be suggested that there are similarities between Freud’s aggression theory and the frustration-aggression hypothesis in the sense that both theories regard aggression as an instinctual drive and they assert that aggressive energy should be released by aggressive behavior.

There are different kinds of expression of anger. According to Buss the aggressive behavior may be classified in two ways. “The first is on the basis of organ systems involved: physical versus verbal aggression. The second is on the basis of the interpersonal relationship: active versus passive aggression.”(4). Physical aggression aims at assaulting an organism by using body parts (e.g. slapping, pushing, biting) or weapons (e.g. knife, gun). Verbal aggression includes threats, severe criticism, or verbal abuse. Rejection is another component of verbal aggression. However it “may be both nonverbal (shunning of an individual by avoiding his presence or escaping from it) and verbal; “Go away,” “I hate you.”” (Buss 6). It can be claimed that most aggressive behaviors are active, that is open and direct, in the sense that the instinctive way to express anger is to respond with aggressive actions whereas passive aggressive behavior includes avoidance of confrontation. It can also be referred to as silent aggression. Buss asserts that:

Passive aggression is a subordinate’s best weapon against his superior. Active attack invites retaliation, however when the attack is passive it is usually difficult for a victim to establish blame or to determine whether aggression has occurred (9).

Finally, it can be suggested that there are two ways of analysing anger. Firstly, anger can be considered as an emotional state as in the case of frustration-aggression hypothesis. Secondly, the expression of anger, that is aggression can be regarded as a defense mechanism as Freud claims that people express anger or aggressive behaviour in order to avoid self-destruction.

It can be observed that the characters of Osborne are angry and aggressive on account of several reasons. Jimmy rails at his wife Alison, especially her middle-class manners, which for him represent the Establishment, and he behaves aggressively. Bill Maitland, the protagonist of *Inadmissible Evidence* is a lawyer who is angry at the whole world since he wants to be taken into consideration; therefore, he frequently gets angry with the people around him. Two characters from Osborne's much later play, *Watch It Come Down*, Ben and Sally, are a married couple having problems like Jimmy and Alison and they rage each other most of the time. All these characters are somehow angry and they express their anger in different ways.

Consequently, this thesis is going to analyse the underlying theme of anger in terms of the psychoanalytic theory and the frustration-aggression hypothesis from *Look Back in Anger* (1956) to Osborne's later plays namely *Inadmissible Evidence* (1964) and *Watch It Come Down* (1975) by investigating the reasons for the protagonists' rage, considering anger as an emotional state aroused especially by frustration, and the ways of expressing anger regarding aggressive behavior as a defense mechanism to prevent self-destruction.

CHAPTER II

THE EMOTIONAL STATE OF ANGER

Berkowitz claims that anger is a feeling, experienced when a desired goal is blocked. According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis when a negative affect is stimulated it elicits an experience of anger. Therefore, anger is considered as the emotional state that intervenes between the thwarting and expression of angry and aggressive acts. Berkowitz states that when “a person displays violently hostile actions upon being frustrated (and) may do this because he is in an intense emotional state, i.e., his anger level is very high” (*Aggression* 35).

There can be many reasons for experiencing the emotional state of anger. According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis the main reason that produces anger is frustration. The emotions of isolation, alienation, anxiety, loneliness also trigger frustration therefore angry feelings. This chapter will look into the reasons of Osborne’s protagonists’ angry feelings particularly the causes that make them frustrated.

2.1. *Look Back in Anger*

Look Back in Anger (1956) is commonly credited with being the play in which Osborne expressed a sense of frustration and anger at the depressing circumstances of post-war Britain. Jimmy Porter is regarded as an embodiment of the frustrations of a particular age and class especially the generation of young men who have been expecting to leave behind their lower-class origins by using higher education. Jimmy is educated beyond his social roots; however, he cannot get what he expects from his education. Despite his university degree he has worked as an advertising salesman, a neophyte journalist, and a vacuum-cleaner

salesman. Then he starts to run a sweet stall for a living which is also not a proper job for a graduate man. According to Berkowitz “inability to fulfill the anticipations is a frustration” (*Roots* 16). Jimmy should have been working in a job suitable for his university education. It can be said that Jimmy is not working in a proper job due to his working-class origins. His university degree does not make him a member of a higher class. Carl Bode suggests that, “Jimmy knows that he is the displaced intellectual and that surely embitters him” (331). Because he is aware of the fact that he cannot change his social status only by a university degree however hard he tries. Therefore, as Bode claims Jimmy is “a man who has tried and failed to become middle-class” (331).

According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis Jimmy’s not having a suitable job despite his university degree can be considered a “frustration-produced instigation.” Jimmy is frustrated due to the fact that his educational background does not fulfill his anticipations. Therefore, it can be counted as one of the reasons for Jimmy’s rage. “His outbreaks of anger derive from this failure to find fulfillment” as Simon Trussler asserts. (54)

Throughout the play Jimmy rails about politics, religion and other social institutions. Jimmy feels betrayed by the previous generation because his generation is experiencing the disappointment of World War II. However, Jimmy is looking for some enthusiasm instead of exhaustion. Because he had a father who believed that there were still, even after the slaughter of the first World War, causes good enough to fight for and collective actions worthy of individual support. He claims:

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 the 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. About as pointless and inglorious as stepping in front of a bus.

(Look Back in Anger 84-85)

It can be asserted that Jimmy's anger arises from a sense of having missed out the opportunities for idealism, or heroism, or at least for an action which had been provided to the previous generation. Having missed out the chances to take an action can be considered a barrier for Jimmy to do something good for himself or for the welfare of the society which is another reason for him to feel frustration and therefore anger. Christopher Bigsby affirms:

It was not the injustice of his society which angered Jimmy Porter, but the vacuousness of his own life. Education had given him articulateness but nothing to be articulate about. The old England was dead but no convincing new one had taken its place. The country seemed like an endless succession of Sunday afternoons. It was its triviality, its pointlessness, which appalled Jimmy Porter, who was in effect an absurd hero rather than a social rebel. His anger was his attempt to simulate life; his violent language an effort to insist on his existence (21).

From the very beginning Jimmy expresses the 'vacuousness of his own life.' He utters:

God, how I hate Sundays! It's always so depressing, always the same. We never seem to get any further, do we? Always the same ritual. Reading the papers, drinking tea, ironing. A few more hours, and another week gone. Our youth is slipping away. Do you know that?...Oh heavens, how I long for a little ordinary enthusiasm. Just enthusiasm __ that's all. I want to hear a warm, thrilling voice cry Hallelujah! I'm alive! I have an idea.... Oh, brother, it's such a long time since I was with anyone who got enthusiastic about anything.

(Look Back in Anger 14-15)

At the beginning of his speech about 'not having any brave causes' Jimmy seems to find the one whom he can put the blame on for his frustration and anger:

Why, why, why, why do we let these woman bleed us to death?...
No, there's nothing left for it, me boy, but to let yourself be
butchered by the women.

(Look Back in Anger 84-85)

The whole speech, as Lacey suggests, “is symptomatic of the way that political and sexual impotency are interlinked in the play” (31). Jimmy’s constant quarrel is with the British middle class, the class out of which he has taken a wife. His resentment focuses on his wife, Alison. According to Michelene Wandor, Jimmy’s political rage “is displaced; firstly, his energies are expended totally on inter-personal relationships, and secondly, his sense of class hatred is sublimated into sexual hatred and... attacks on women in general and his wife Alison in particular” (74).

Many critics have called Jimmy a despot husband for bullying and attacking Alison all the time. Indeed, as Austin E. Quigley suggests, “Jimmy’s attacks on Alison repeatedly focus on what he perceives as her lethargy, her timidity, and her readiness to accept whatever comes her way” (42). Jimmy comments on Alison’s passivity from the very beginning of the play:

She’s a great one for getting used to things. If she were to die, and
wake up in paradise – after the first five minutes, she’d have got
used to it.

(Look Back in Anger 16)

Nothing I could do would provoke her. Not even if I were to drop
dead.

(Look Back in Anger 19)

It can be noted that one of the main reasons of Jimmy’s anger is Alison’s timidity. Jimmy expects Alison to react against him when he taunts her with such words as “sycophantic, phlegmatic and pusillanimous.” (LBA 21) However, the more Jimmy provokes, the more Alison withdraws. When Jimmy goes on calling her ‘pusillanimous’ and bullies her Alison ‘*leans against the board, and closes her eyes.*’ And says: “God help me, if he doesn’t stop, I’ll go out of my mind in a

minute” and Jimmy answers, “Why don’t you? That would be something, anyway” (LBA 22).

Jimmy wants Alison to give honest reaction to his humiliation of her. Even when Jimmy betrays Alison with her friend Helena she does not say anything. In her farewell note she writes:

My dear__ I must get away. I don’t suppose you will understand, but please try. I need peace so desperately, and, at the moment, I am willing to sacrifice everything just for that... I shall always have a deep loving need of you.

(Look Back in Anger 72)

Jimmy gets angry when he reads Alison’s farewell note and he says:

Oh, how could she be so bloody wet! Deep loving need! That makes me puke!.. She couldn’t say “You rotten bastard! I hate your guts, I’m clearing out, and I hope you rot!” No, she has to make a polite, emotional mess out of it!

(Look Back in Anger 72)

Jimmy complains about Alison’s hypocrisy in refusing to express her anger at betrayal which can also be considered a middle-class manner. Even while leaving Jimmy, she is trying to be polite. However, Jimmy might have much preferred her to have emphasized, rather than suppressed, what she really felt. It might be her lack of response and affection towards Jimmy which causes him to treat her badly. For Luc Gilleman, Jimmy is “a frustrated husband who is brought to despair by his wife’s passivity” (77). Jimmy is frustrated by Alison’s timidity and silence due to the fact that he expects her to have some enthusiasm and energy. However he complains that “that girl there can twist your arm off with her silence” (LBA 59). At one of the rare moments that Alison could openly react against him the stage direction says: “*The wild note in her voice has re-assured*

him. His anger cools and hardens. His voice is quite calm when he speaks” (LBA 51). Jimmy feels better when Alison expresses her anger openly.

Jimmy also wants Alison to take the responsibility of being alive. He thinks that Alison should have stayed at home to fight with himself in order to solve their problems. It might be suggested that, like Strindberg characters, Jimmy expects from women more than he could hope to get from them and when he is disappointed he turns on them with savage resentment. Susan Rusinko claims:

Jimmy’s anger indiscriminately hits those who cannot share his pain or his real feelings, especially those whom he loves. At one point Jimmy accuses everybody else of wanting “to escape from the pain of being alive.” His pain is deep-rooted, going back to a father who came back from the war in Spain when Jimmy was only ten and whom Jimmy watched die for twelve months (39).

It can be said that Jimmy was deeply affected by his father’s death since he was only a child when he passed away. He talks about his dying father as follows:

I was the only one who cared!... I had to fight back my tears... All he could feel was the despair and the bitterness, the sweet, sickly smell of a dying man... You see, I learnt at an early age what it was to be angry__angry and helpless. I knew more about__love... betrayal... and death, when I was ten years old than you will probably ever know all your life.

(Look Back in Anger 58)

Jimmy expects Alison to share his pain but he cannot say it directly. He is too proud to demand it. He says: “I’ve sat in this chair in the dark for hours. And, although she knows I’m feeling as I feel now, she’s turned over, and gone to sleep” (LBA 59). After he learns that Hugh’s mother, one of the people whom Jimmy really loves, died Jimmy asks Alison to come to the funeral with him. But Alison does not give an answer and prepares herself to leave the house. It makes Jimmy feel angry and disappointed because he thinks that Alison is supposed to be with him instead of leaving him alone when he needs her. Therefore, Jimmy is

demoralized both by the death of Hugh's mother and the pain of Alison's leaving him.

Alison's silence leads to a lack of communication between the couple which can be considered another cause for Jimmy's rage. "Every attempt at metacommunication fails" as Gilleman states (78). While Jimmy asks for openness Alison prefers to remain silent and do nothing. Indeed, she chooses to escape from the problems.

It can also be observed that Jimmy has inconsistencies and conflicts in himself which may also cause angry feelings; as Berkowitz claims "psychological discomfort can produce the aggression activating negative affect" (*Examination and Reformulation* 70). He both loves and despises Alison, attaches himself to her while rejecting her social origins. He does not like Alison's middle class manners and friends and he makes fun of them: "Oh dear, oh dear! My wife's friends! Pass Lady Bracknell the cucumber sandwiches, will you?" (LBA 51). However, as Trussler claims, "his ethical system is a sentimentalised working-class puritanism that he is almost Victorian in his insistence upon keeping a sexual relationship in its proper place__in bed" (52). He hates Alison's mother but he has sympathy with her father though he is obviously in many ways the representative of everything Jimmy is against. It might be due to the fact that people from previous generation such as Colonel Redfern and his own father had the enthusiasm and at least had the causes to die for. Jimmy tells Cliff:

I hate to admit it, but I think I can understand how her Daddy must have felt when he came back from India, after all those years away. The old Edwardian brigade do make their brief little world look pretty tempting. All home-made cakes and croquet, bright ideas, bright uniforms. Always the same picture: high summer, the long days in the sun, slim volumes of verse, crisp linen, the smell of starch... What a romantic picture. 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* 17)

It is certain that Jimmy is nostalgic about the good old days of England because he is a part of a generation who has to handle the disappointments and difficulties left from World War II. However, unlike his generation he is trying to stay alive. As Mary McCarthy asserts:

He is fighting to keep Alison awake, to keep himself and Cliff awake, as though all three were in the grip of a deathly coma or narcosis that had been spread over all of England by the gases emanating from the press, the clergy, the political parties, the B.B.C.(152).

It can be suggested that Jimmy is frustrated on account of the fact that he cannot awake the people he cares about. For instance, Alison's inertness can be considered as a barrier for Jimmy, keeping him from fulfilling his expectation to make her more active. As Berkowitz claims; "people become angry and aggressive on being kept from reaching a desired goal to the extent that they think that someone had intentionally and unfairly prevented them." It is called "aggression or anger-provoking situation" (*Examination and Reformulation* 63). Jimmy feels that Alison remains silent deliberately in order to make him angry. Her timidity can be regarded as a reaction to Jimmy's aggressive behavior.

According to Berkowitz's frustration-aggression hypothesis, "every frustration increases the *instigation* to aggression which is *anger*. Anger is the primary, inborn reaction to thwarting" (*Aggression* 47). As a result, Jimmy is angry because he is frustrated. He is frustrated because he is running a candy stall despite his university degree; he is frustrated owing to his middle class wife's passivity; he is frustrated on account of the fact that people whom he loves do not try to share his pain; he is frustrated since the older generation had made a thorough mess of things, and he thinks that there was nothing his generation could do except for talking nostalgically of the good old days.

2.2. *Inadmissible Evidence*

Inadmissible Evidence (1964) is commonly regarded as one of the most impressive achievements of Osborne. Michael Anderson asserts that the play “provides an acutely painful picture of a man, whose daily life is a frantic search for identity, moving toward a mental breakdown” (252). According to Salgado it is Osborne’s most interesting and original play to date and it is “a near-monologue in which the private and professional neuroses of a middle-aged lawyer are expressed in a series of eloquent speeches” (193). Simon Trussler claims that:

Of all Osborne’s lessons in feeling, *Inadmissible Evidence* has so far been the most impressive. The character, Bill Maitland, is probably more representative a product of the sixties than Jimmy Porter ever was of the fifties but for Bill Maitland his malaise goes to spiritual seed in every period, drifting into dissociation with his age, and ultimately, with reality itself (120).

Russell Taylor suggests that Bill Maitland can be considered Jimmy in his middle-ages. But this time as he claims,

he is allowed centre stage for his monologues simply because nobody bothers to listen to him anymore, and his deep sense of dissatisfaction is seen no longer as an objectively justified response to the ills of the world, but as the expression of a mind at the end of its tether (99).

Jimmy was also dissatisfied with the socio-political events of the time like Bill, however his difference from Bill is the fact that he was listened to when he expressed his ideas. He could talk to his best friend Cliff or Alison’s friend Helena. However, Bill has no one to share his inner feelings. He himself admits that he is in need of friends.

It can be claimed that Bill’s anger towards the outside world turns into an inner rage as the play develops. He begins to realize his own downfall however

he cannot do anything to change it. This helplessness leads Bill to frustration and anger. Therefore, Bill's self-realization of his incompetency can be considered the main reason for him to feel frustrated. Along with his weakness to control his own life, Bill becomes aware of his dependency on alcohol, pills and women. He searches for compassion, friendship and communication throughout the play, however he cannot find any of them. At the end, he makes his angry confession to his daughter with whom he cannot get along well either.

The play opens with Bill's nightmare which hints at his downfall. Bill sees himself in a dream-courtroom in which he is the prisoner being accused of "having unlawfully and wickedly published and made known, and caused to be procured and made known, a wicked, bawdy, and scandalous object." (IE 181)

According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory of dreams ego continues to try to solve conflicts in dreams. That is, "the mind takes the problem and weaves it into a dream. If ego cannot solve the problem the dream turns into a nightmare" (A.A.Brill 58). Bill's nightmare can be called an 'anxiety dream' since this type of dreams reflect one's inner fears. It can be inferred from his dream that Bill is anxious mainly because he is afraid of the fact that his inadequacy, dependency and isolation would be noticed by the people around him. He himself claims that he had always been afraid of 'being found out.'

Freud claims that "the things stored in the unconscious can emerge in dreams" (Murray 228). Therefore, it can be suggested that Bill unconsciously feels guilty for being an indecent and shameful object. For Freud anxiety dreams are generally manifested by libidinal energy. The dream hints at Bill's strong sexual appetite since he is charged with being 'a wicked, bawdy and scandalous object' and as the play develops it is seen that he is continuously having sexual intercourse with several women.

It can be asserted that Bill has difficulties in controlling his libidinal energy. His dependence on alcohol can be given as a futile attempt to control his

libidinal energy since he has become almost an alcoholic. He himself admits in his dream that he drinks too much:

I had too much to drink last night, that's just the simple truth of it... well, I do drink quite a lot. I'm what you'd called a serious drinker... I can drink a whole bottle of whisky... Still I'm pretty strong. I must be. Otherwise, I couldn't take it. That is, if I *can* take it.

(Inadmissible Evidence 185)

Bill's addiction to alcohol can also be considered as a way to escape from the bitter reality that he is too weak and impotent to take control of his own life because of his dependency on other people. He does not want to be sober enough to see and face the reality.

It can be inferred from the dream that Bill is aware of his capabilities and incapacities. He himself tells to the judge that he is "incapable of making decisions." (IE 183) He also claims that he is not a genius but he has a quick mind and a talent for cross examination. However, these virtues cannot prevent him from being an average man as he regards himself as "tolerably bright" but "finally irredeemably mediocre." (IE 187) According to Trussler "Bill's tragedy is one of complete self-awareness [and] it is this *consciousness* of impotence in the face of destruction" (124). In his nightmare Bill claims that he is aware of his dependency. He says:

I have to confess that ___ that I have depended almost entirely on other people's efforts. Anything else would have been impossible for me, and I always knew in my own heart that only that it was that kept me alive and functioning at all...

(Inadmissible Evidence 188)

In his dream-trial Bill also talks about the failures of his life. He admits that he could not get what he searched for so far. He comments on his disappointments:

I have never hoped or wished for anything more than to have the good fortune of friendship and the excitement and comfort of love and the love of women in particular. I made a set at both of them in my own way. With the first, with friendship, I hardly succeeded at all... Not at all. With the second, with love, I succeeded... in inflicting, ... more pain than pleasure... But I can't escape it, I can't forget it. And I can't begin again.

(Inadmissible Evidence 189)

This confession, according to Mark Hawkins-Dady, can be called “self perception of entrapment.” (129) Also in the stage directions Bill’s nightmare is depicted as “*the prison of embryonic helplessness.*” (IE 190) It can be inferred from Bill’s confession that he is aware of his enstrangement from the society. However, it is interesting that it is Bill himself who “made a set” between himself and people. According to Berkowitz frustration is defined as the inability to satisfy one’s wishes. It can be asserted that by making a set Bill puts his own barrier not to reach his desires and he prevents himself from fulfilling his wishes. Therefore, Bill causes his own frustration. Since he is the reason for his alienation, isolation and frustration Bill’s anger turns into an inner rage.

Bill’s dream also foreshadows his decline in his career as a lawyer as he says; “I don’t see how I can carry on my work... I must be getting less and less any good at it.” (IE 188) It can be suggested that Maitland has been trying to preserve his existence so far, however as it is indicated in his dream-trial he is beginning to dissolve both in his private and professional life.

Bill’s real decline begins with the first morning on which the real action starts. He tells his managing clerk, Hudson, that for the first time in his life he

could not get a taxi. And he adds that he did not get a good morning from the caretaker. He says:

Things seem a bit odd. I still can't understand why I couldn't get a taxi. They all had their lights on__ for hire. And the caretaker turned his back on me... I was going to ask him__ you know, quite politely__ why the lift wasn't working. And he turned his back on me.

(Inadmissible Evidence 196)

As Trussler claims these can be considered the early symptoms of alienation. On the same morning Bill's secretary Shirley (also one of his mistresses) quits the job claiming that she was sick of the sight of Bill and "couldn't even bear to be in the same room with him." (IE 192) People around Bill continue to ignore and abandon him during the same day. Anna, his wife, puts the phone down on him; Hudson states that he is considering a job offer from the rival law firm.

Bill cannot give any meaning to these bizarre events until one of his clients, Mrs. Garnsey, talks about her adulterous husband who has been deserted by the people around him including herself. Mrs. Garnsey explains the reason why she wants to divorce:

...he is being hurt so much by everyone... and I know that nothing really works for him. Not at the office, not his friends, not even his girls... everyone is drawing away from him... I can't bear to see him rejected and laughed at and scorned behind his back and ignored__ Now it's *me*. I have got to leave him.

(Inadmissible Evidence 217-18)

Bill's realization of the relevance of her words to his situation is described by the stage direction: "*Bill gets up to comfort her but is paralysed.*" (IE 218) Immediately after Mrs. Garnsey's last words Bill calls his telephonist, Joy, and tells her to get Mrs. Garnsey a drink and than a taxi. Instead of contemplating on Mrs. Garnsey's words Bill prefers to phone his mistress, Liz, but he cannot reach

her. Then he asks Joy to stay on a bit that night probably to make love to her. Bill is desperately trying to find a shelter to escape from his problems in women's arms.

Bill's self-recognition of his entrapment can be considered the main reason for his mental breakdown. And it can be seen very clearly in the second act that he is getting worse because he begins to lose his objective contact with the 'real world.' Even the stage directions refer to it by introducing the telephone conversation with Liz as follows:

NOTE: This telephone conversation and the ones that follow it, and some of the duologues should progressively resemble the feeling of dream and unreality of... the beginning of Act One... In the call that follows now... it should trail into a feeling of doubt as to whether there is anyone to speak to at all.

(Inadmissible Evidence 220)

In addition to losing the contact with the reality Bill also displays the signs of both mental and physical exhaustion due to his realization of his downfall and frustration such as his painful headaches, taking pills, his constant demand for something to drink, especially water, his dry coughs, and memory failures.

Lack of communication due to his isolation or vice versa can be counted as another reason for Bill's frustration and inner rage. It can be stated that Bill uses telephone as a means for communication, indeed it seems it is the only way for him to communicate. So far, most of the people around him have abandoned Bill except for Liz. Hence, whenever he feels isolated or frustrated Bill immediately tries to contact Liz by the telephone link as if he saw her as an evidence of his reality and an evidence that someone is still with him. He also talks about everything with Liz on the phone but it is doubtful whether there is someone on the other side of the link. In one of these conversations Bill says that he is aware of what people were doing to him. He says; "I just felt everyone was cutting me..." (IE 215).

It can be claimed that Maitland is aware of his troubles, however since he cannot do anything to solve them his anxieties intensify and lead him to total frustration. Therefore, he gets angry both with himself and with his colleagues at the office. And, he tries to escape from his problems by drinking alcohol, taking pills, and making love to the women around him.

As it has been foreshadowed in his dream-trial Bill has dependency on other people, especially on his wife, Anna. For the first time Bill confesses to Liz on the phone the fact that his existence is dependent on his wife. He says:

I'm frightened... It was as if I only existed because of her, because she allowed me to, but if she turned off the switch...who knows? But if she'd turned it off I'd have been dead...They would have passed me by like a blank hoarding or tombstone, or waste ground by the railway line...

(Inadmissible Evidence 223)

Bill feels worthless and he is aware of the reality that he is not taken into consideration by anyone. However, all he wanted was, as he indicated in his dream-trial, to have better relations with people especially with women in order to receive love and compassion. According to Leon and Morley "Bill's tragedy was that of a man whose fatal flaw was the inability to give, or sustain, or even receive the love that mattered so much to him" (108). Having sexual intercourse with his secretary Shirley and his telephonist Joy can be considered as an attempt to receive the compassion and love he searched for. Bill clings to women not to fall deep into his existential problems and to escape from them. And "sex is clearly a drug" for him (Hawkins-Dady 132). Hudson also tells Bill that, "some people seem to use things like sex [...] as a place of escape, instead of objects... in themselves." (IE 201).

Things continue to get worse for Bill Maitland on his second day at the office. Mrs. Garnsey withdraws her case from him, Joy threatens to leave,

Winters, one of Bill's friends, does not talk to him on the phone and the Legal Society begins to investigate him.

It can be claimed that Bill's clients also help him to become aware of his downfall on account of the fact that they in a way function as mirrors of his situation. With Mrs. Garnsey he realizes the fact that he has been ignored and deserted. With Mrs. Tonks, his second client who wanted to divorce because of her husband's excessive sexual appetite, Bill becomes aware of the fact that women in his life are abandoning him due to his extreme demand for sexual intercourse. With Mrs. Anderson Bill realizes his inability to communicate, therefore his alienation and loneliness. His last client, Maples, who is a young married man charged with homosexual behavior, makes Bill aware of his own situation as an outsider trapped in an unhappy marriage.

Bill's encounter with his daughter, Jane, can be regarded as the last straw in his realization of isolation due to her coldness and indifference. He knows that he is not loved by his daughter. And he tells her that he is neither loved by his own parents nor his wife's parents. He pours all his anger due to his frustrations on his daughter when he says:

They're all pretending to ignore me. No they're not pretending, they are! [...] There isn't any place for me, not like you. In the law, in the country, or, indeed, in any place in this city.

(Inadmissible Evidence 254)

The scene with his daughter displays Maitland's clash with the younger generation as Hawkins-Dady claims; "Bill's bitter envy of 1960s carelessness and carefreeness contrasts with his own experiences of growing up in post-war Britain... and his inheritance of existing social norms, particularly regarding marriage" (138). Bill blames his daughter for being a representative of the younger generation not having a sense of sin, therefore free of morality. For Bill,

her generation has not burdened itself with such obligations and responsibilities that society forces.

According to Bill, the younger generation has nothing to do with the social norms since they do not care about them. However, Bill is frustrated owing to the fact that he feels trapped between his wishes and society's rules because he thinks that he has to show concern for the obligations of the society. As Emile Roy suggests:

Maitland is trying to resolve a confusing dualism between his society's imperatives and his own desires, between his actions and society's judgements, but the attempt fails, leaving him with a mental suffering (104).

Consequently, Bill Maitland is frustrated and angry mainly because although he has become aware of his own alienation, isolation and dependency due to his weakness and inability to prove his existence by his own efforts, he cannot do anything to solve it. Another reason for his frustration is that he thinks that when he was young he was not given the opportunities that are provided for his daughter's generation now. Therefore, he claims that, like Jimmy Porter, he has never learned how it was to be young. Michael Billington summarizes Maitland's disease as "a helpless longing for all the things from which his own nature excludes him: love, charity, forgiveness, effortless style" (127).

2.3. *Watch It Come Down*

Watch It Come Down (1975) is one of the examples of John Osborne's later dramas in which the primary themes of love, fear and frustration are underlined. According to Steven Gale this play is the best written of Osborne's later plays. Gale also claims that Osborne expresses his frustrations and fears about the new world more seriously in his later period. Besides, it can be observed that such themes as death, the arts, homosexuality, nostalgia for the good old days and related topics become more central in his later writings. When compared to

the earlier ones, it can be claimed that Osborne's later plays are darker in the sense that they reflect his concern for the implications of the coming era. Also, the characters of his later plays are more cultured and sophisticated than those of his earlier plays and they can contemplate on their fears and frustrations.

The play centers on a married couple, a famous film director Ben Prosser and his novelist second wife Sally. The action takes place in an old railway station which was converted into a ranch house by Ben in which his wife and some other people live. The other people living with them are; Shirley (Sally's painter sister), Glen (an upper class homosexual historian and biographer who is about to die), Jo (Glen's lover and a loving woman interested in arts), and Raymond (a young working-class homosexual).

According to Herbert Goldstone starting the commune by converting a railway station is "an effort to shore up the marriage by creating an extended family through which Sally and Ben and the four others living with them could deal with their undeniable dependency needs" (199). It can be claimed that Ben and Sally are trying to save their marriage with the help of other people living in the country house with them.

Throughout the play Ben and Sally attack each other violently both verbally and physically while they are quarrelling. They are both angry at each other particularly because of the fact that they are sexually frustrated. Sally comments on their sexual life: "[...] *our* sex pitch has been washed out for years." (WICD 11) One of the main reasons for their mutual frustration can be lack of communication between the couple since they do not try to talk to each other about what they really feel. They are both aware of the fact that there is a problem with their marriage but they prefer to escape from discussing and solving it. Instead, they want to see what other people can do about their marriage. Therefore, Sally asks Ray to spread a rumor among the others that she and Ben are separating. Steven Gale comments on the creating the rumor of separation:

Although the couple does not intend to separate and is only pretending in order to evoke their friends' reactions, ironically they admit that a separation is possible, and Ray explains to Glen that it is almost as though they want their friends to make a decision for them (23).

Lack of communication between Ben and Sally leads to frustration because they cannot openly say that they love each other although both need to hear it. Since they cannot express their love in words, instead they quarrel. However, sometimes they try to express what they feel. For instance, Ben says to Sally: "You have great capacity for love. And nowhere to put it... You only accept love. You can't respond to it"(WICD13-14).

The other couple in the house, Glen and Jo, seems to be the foil to Ben and Sally because they are a loving couple that can say whatever they feel about each other. Throughout the play the tender moments of Jo and Glen come immediately after Ben and Sally's quarrels:

JO: My dear heart, I love you...You are what I care for [...] Even in my bed with others [...] And (keep) my heart in yours.

GLEN: It's there, my dearest. *It is* there. Always.

(Watch It Come Down 36)

Ben and Sally do feel sorry when they think that they have gone too far. After their bitter quarrels they can apologize for the things they have said since they realize that they might hurt each other. And they try to make it up:

BEN: I'm sorry

SALLY: No, I'm *sorry*. I shouldn't have said those things. It's my fault.

BEN: I__I, well, bad time... But I bought you a present...

SALLY: Thank you. That was sweet of you...

(Watch It Come Down 19)

According to Gale, Ben and Sally are emotional, irrational, and noisy and Glen and Jo are the intellectual center of the play. The real action of the play centers on Ben and Sally; however, Glen and Jo articulate the thematic meaning.

It can be asserted that the search for communication is one of the main themes of the play since all of the characters search for a contact with other people. Therefore, they use their arts as a means for communication. Ben makes movies, Sally tries to write a novel, Shirley paints and Glen writes a biographical book on the 20th century although he admits that “books are an outmoded form of communication.” (WICD 23)

Since Sally and Ben are sexually frustrated, as it was mentioned before, they search for a physical contact with other people. Immediately after one of their quarrels Ben phones his ex-wife Marion and he says that he wants to see her. After the phone call he asks Jo if he could kiss her and then kisses her *passionately*. Sometime later Sally comes to Jo and they talk:

SALLY: ...Do you love me?

JO: Yes. I always have... Do you want to make love to me?

SALLY: Yes. I want to kiss you. On the mouth. My tongue between your bright teeth. I want to hold you in my arms a whole night with our bodies like twin fortresses, lap in lap... May I kiss you?

(Watch It Come Down 45)

It can be claimed that both Ben and Sally, instead of looking at themselves, are looking for other people in order to receive love and passion. They both go to Jo since as she herself claims she is ‘a loving creature.’ Jo can love anyone because according to her love “is like religion without pain.” (WICD 39)

One night all the people in the house except for Sally and Ray come together and Jo tells them that only love can save them because of the fact that only by loving can they release themselves. So she offers: "We'll all have dinner and talk and think of love, even if there are lumps of hate within us. Please say yes. There isn't long." (WICD 39) She wants to do it as soon as possible because she thinks that time is running out.

Love is the central theme and is given much significance in the sense that lovelessness leads to frustration. For instance, another reason for Ben's frustration is he thinks, like Bill Maitland, that he is not loved by his daughter. He tells Jo that he cried in front of his daughter which is despicable for him. When Marion says that his daughter loves and admires him, he says as if he was questioning his self-worth: "For what? Being a renegade father's no great shakes." (WICD 51) Bill also tells Marion something that he could not tell Sally: "I am neither loved nor loving..." (WICD 52).

In addition to Ben and Sally the other people living in the ranch house are also frustrated as they are not pleased to live in the 20th century, especially in the contemporary England. They began to live in the country in order to escape from the fuzziness of the city life. However, local people including the Major do not like their life style and attacked them violently. They smash up the windows, kill Ben's dog, shoot at their house and shoot Ben at the end. All the people in the house are dissatisfied and frustrated because they could not find what they expected from the countryside.

According to Gale, the land stands for the changing England. Therefore, it can be indicated that England is not the old England anymore since people cannot live their lives the way they want. Sally says: "...there is not much life in the land. Fish and animals yes; and the pigs who *own* it and *run* it... Mindless millionaires wading in the jungle warfare of the new-style trout stream___" (WICD 17).

Almost everyone in the play is somehow pessimistic both about the present and the future. Sally and Ben talk:

BEN: ...The world is a battlefield. No, a sewage farm of books ...
SALLY: A bubble. Of literary luminaries. Books about people who wrote books, painted pictures, made films__ you said yourself we were choking ourselves to death with the effluent of celluloid.

(Watch It Come Down 33)

Glen says: "So; it *does* all fall apart... We've seen the future *and it doesn't work...*" (WICD 22). Jo sees the end approaching and says: "The time is short and all our heads are sore and our hearts sick oh, into the world, this century we've been born into and made and been made by." (WICD 39) And Ben asks: "Why has it got all so bad, so brutish, so devilish, so sneering?" (WICD 51) He tells what he sees about their future and he explains why he is not happy:

[...] Glen will write about the twentieth century and the people who lived it. Shirley will paint and barricade. Jo will take lovers. I will grow old in films... Oh God... This is a loveless place.

(Watch It Come Down 41)

According to the characters of the play nothing is promising at the present time and it seems nor will it be in the future. In other words, it can be claimed that Osborne's characters are not looking back in anger like Jimmy anymore, but they are looking forward to the future with fear because they think that nothing is going well as it was before. The title of the play is also related to this theme as it is revealed in Glen's words:

...I saw two signs on the road coming down. One was a little triangle of green with a hedge and the bench. And a sign read: 'This is a temporary open space'... And the other was a site of rubble near the Crystal Palace ... where the bank managers and cashiers fled at the beginning of our... century. It said

‘Blenkinshop___ Demolitionists. We *do* it. You *watch* it. *Come down.*’

(Watch It Come Down 50)

The two signs can be regarded as the symbols of the changing England. The first one stands for the old England, peaceful but temporary because it is falling, and the second one represents the new England, barbaric and violent just like the local people of the land.

Of all the people in the ranch house only Ben and Sally express their anger and aggression openly as a result of their frustrations. Glen dies; Jo kills herself; Shirley prefers to express her anger in her violent paintings; and Raymond remains silent. However, Ben and Sally’s grief and despair due to their impotence turn into aggressive behavior. According to the frustration-aggression theory their impotence can be considered a frustration-produced instigation in the sense that their inadequacy sets a barrier to their desired goals (i.e. taking control of their lives, solving their marital problems). Therefore, it turns into frustration and anger and consequently, they behave aggressively towards each other.

CHAPTER III

THE EXPRESSION OF ANGER

The expression of anger is commonly defined as aggression. According to Berkowitz's frustration-aggression hypothesis, people aggress instinctually in order to reduce the angry feelings mainly aroused by frustration. For Freud, expression of aggression is a defence mechanism in the sense that people aggress against the outer world in order not to destroy their inner selves. That is, the destructive energy provided by the death instinct is redirected towards external world for the protection of the self. It can be claimed that both Berkowitz and Freud consider aggression as an instinctual drive that should be released by a kind of aggressive behavior.

As it was mentioned before there are mainly four ways of expressing anger: active versus passive aggression and physical versus verbal aggression. This chapter is going to investigate the ways of aggression which the protagonists of Osborne use in order to express their angry feelings. And it will analyse the expression of anger considering aggression as a defense mechanism used in order to protect the inner self.

3.1. Look Back in Anger

Jimmy Porter is an aggressive young man. He is angry at almost every British institution such as the Church, the Monarchy, the government and he rants against 'posh' Sunday papers although he buys them every weekend. But most of all, he is against any form of upper-class manners. However, he married a girl from the class which he hates. As a result of his class hatred Jimmy attacks Alison both verbally and physically throughout the play since his wife reminds him of everything he despises in terms of class distinctions. John Mander suggests that

“in bullying her [Alison], Jimmy is certainly getting an easy revenge on the class he detests” (147).

By redirecting his class hatred towards Alison Jimmy makes use of one of the ego defense mechanisms, that is ‘displacement.’ Because he directs his anger and hatred for the middle-class towards Alison, the weaker object that is less able to react to any hostility. Alison becomes the main target of Jimmy and is made to suffer both psychologically and physically. Jimmy bullies, taunts, and humiliates Alison and her middle-class parents, friends, and manners as the play develops.

From the very beginning Jimmy verbally assails Alison. He wants her to answer a question about an article in the newspaper but Alison says that she has not read it yet. He goes on to ask the same question again and again until Cliff tells him to leave Alison alone. Jimmy immediately gets angry and asks:

Well, she can talk, can't she? You can talk, can't you? You can express an opinion. Or does the White Woman's Burden make it impossible to think?... (*shouting*). You know? Talking? Remember?

(Look Back in Anger 11)

He keeps on humiliating Alison and says; “she hasn't had a thought for years! Have you?” (LBA 12). Then Jimmy yells at Cliff for reading too slowly since he himself has finished his paper and has been waiting for him to exchange the papers. And he scolds Cliff and Alison for being ignorant of what he said about the Bishop. And he says: “Damn you, damn both of you, damn them all... I know you're going to drive me mad.” (LBA 15)

Jimmy continues to attack Alison and he includes her brother Nigel this time. He describes him as “the straight-backed, chinless wonder from Sandhurst” and says that Nigel's “knowledge of life is so hazy” that “the only thing he *can* do [is to] ___ seek sanctuary in his own stupidity” (LBA 20). Jimmy also humiliates

Alison and her brother's names and says: "Nigel and Alison. They're what they sound like: sychophantic, phlegmatic and pusillanimous" (LBA 21). And he begins to call Alison 'Lady Pusillanimous' then he gives the meaning of the word as follows:

Pusillanimous. Adjective. Wanting of firmness of mind, of small courage, having a little mind, mean spirited, cowardly, timid of mind... That's my wife! ... (*Shouting hoarsely.*) Hi, Pusey!

(Look Back in Anger 22)

Contrary to Jimmy, Alison does not give any direct reaction against Jimmy's aggressive behavior. She prefers to remain silent. It can be claimed that Alison reacts passively against Jimmy's verbal attacks and provocations. As the stage direction says:

Jimmy watches her to break. For no more than a flash, Alison's face seems to contort, and it looks as though she might throw her head back, and scream. But it passes in a moment. She is used to these carefully rehearsed attacks, and it doesn't look as though he will get his triumph tonight.

(Look Back in Anger 22)

Alison is aware of the fact that Jimmy is trying to make her angry. She knows that if she gives any reaction to his attacks he will be triumphant. According to Gilleman the play "consists of a series of withdrawals (on the part of Alison) and provocations (on the part of Jimmy)" (76). Alison's submissive and silent manner against Jimmy's assaults is also a way of expressing aggression because of the fact that she reacts passive aggressively. It can be claimed that passive aggressive behavior, or in other terms silent aggression, is much preferred by women in particular due to the fact that this type of aggressive behavior does not invite retaliation since the opponent cannot decide whether there is an aggression or not. Therefore, the submissive behavior of Alison functions as a disguised form of

aggressive behavior which she uses to protect herself against her husband's attacks.

Alison's silence and seeming ignorance can also be considered as a weapon in order to save herself from Jimmy's assaults. It seems as if she was not listening to Jimmy when he shouts at her to tell something. However, she admits the fact that sometimes she does it on purpose and she gives Cliff her reason for doing so:

I pretended not to be listening... And -of course- he got savage... But I knew just what he meant. I suppose it would have been so easy to say "Yes, darling, I know just what you mean"... It's those easy things that seem to be so impossible with us.

(Look Back in Anger 28)

Alison is aware of the fact that Jimmy wants her to understand what he means when he shouts at her and most of the time she comprehends what Jimmy tries to say but as she tells Cliff she knowingly chooses to remain silent. As a result, it can be said that both Jimmy and Alison provoke each other. Cliff who witnesses the aggressive interaction between the couple says to Alison: "I'm wondering how much longer I can go on watching you two tearing the insides out of each other. It looks pretty ugly sometimes."(LBA 28)

Jimmy not only assaults Alison but also other members of her family and her friends. He calls her parents "militant, arrogant and full of malice" (LBA 19). He labels her friends "sychophantic, phlegmatic, and, of course, top of the bill-pusillanimous." (LBA 49) The way he describes Alison's friends reveals his aggressive attitudes towards them: "They all sit around feeling very spiritual, with their mental hands on each other's knees, discussing sex as if it were the Art of Fugue." (LBA 49) Upon these words both Alison and Helena give no reaction against Jimmy but the stage direction says; "*the silent hostility of the two women has set Jimmy off the scent...*" (LBA 49).

As for Alison's mother Jimmy has so many things to say on account of the fact that she is the one whom Jimmy hates most since she totally represents everything he is against. She is dedicated to her middle class norms and she is so concerned about her daughter's marrying a man beneath her social status that she hires detectives to watch Jimmy because she does not trust him. And this gives Jimmy another opportunity to rage against middle-class values:

There is no limit what the middle-aged mummy will do in the holy crusade against ruffians like me... to protect her innocent young, she wouldn't hesitate to cheat, lie, bully and blackmail... She's rough as a night in a Bombay brothel, and as tough as a matelot's arm. She's probably in that bloody cistern, taking down every word we say.

(Look Back in Anger 52)

Jimmy goes on to talk about Alison's mother using extreme language in order to provoke Alison for a reaction. He calls her mother 'old bitch' and he says that she should be dead. However, he cannot get a reaction from Alison and he begins to make a fuss about it: "I said she is an old bitch, and should be dead! Why don't you leap to her defence!" (LBA 53). There is no doubt that Alison's inertness really makes Jimmy mad. He gets so angry that he pushes Cliff back savagely and keeps on shouting at Alison. But the more Jimmy provokes, the more Alison withdraws.

Jimmy also attacks Helena verbally since she is also a representative of the class he detests. When Helena and Alison are about to go out Jimmy accuses Alison of letting Helena influence her to go to church as he yells: "You Judas! You phlegm! She's taking you with her, and you're so bloody feeble, you'll let her do it!" (LBA 59). He describes Helena as a "saint in Dior's clothing" and claims that "her kind are everywhere, you can't move for them... They spend their time mostly looking forward to the past. The only place they can see the light is

the Dark Ages.” (LBA 56) And he calls Helena’s friends “posh girls with lots of money, and no brains” (LBA 84).

Throughout the play there is only one scene where Jimmy expresses physical aggression towards Alison. He pushes Cliff on the ironing board and Cliff falls against Alison and she burns her arm on the iron. At first, Jimmy tells Alison that he did not mean to hurt her but then he apologizes for doing it deliberately: “I’m sorry... I mean it... I did it on purpose” (LBA 33).

According to Freud’s theory of psychosexual stages of development, as Murray suggests “if a person becomes fixated at the biting stage of the oral period in his psychosexual growth then he may evidence such fixation as an adult through a pattern of ‘biting’ criticism of others or ‘chewing out’ people around him” (239). Jimmy’s bitter criticisms can be regarded as an evidence of his fixation at the biting stage. He also displays other signs of the fixation at the oral stage such as drinking, eating, smoking and puffing at his pipe continually; that is, he is fond of oral activities.

Wellworth claims that “Jimmy’s rantings are always the natural outgrowth of his psychotic stage: they are a defence mechanism he uses to hurt his wife... to avoid facing up the problem of his own helpless character” (119). For Terry Hodgson “Jimmy is vulnerable and he hates his own vulnerability and dependency.” (151) It can be claimed that Jimmy cannot cope with the reality that he is frail and vulnerable, therefore he prefers to deny it. He frequently accuses Alison of being weak and frail. That is to say, he projects the unacceptable aspects of his character onto Alison. He frequently attacks on Alison’s timidity and weakness. Hodgson also affirms that “Jimmy’s verbal assaults on Alison are the more extreme because he resents a strong and physical attachment to his wife.” (151) Jimmy adopts just the opposite behavior by verbally attacking Alison because the reality that he is dependent on her causes anxiety in him. He makes use of one of the ego defence mechanisms called ‘reaction formation’ that is he

expresses anger and aggressive behavior in order to hide his vulnerability and dependency.

Jimmy's dependency on Alison can be seen clearly when he tells Alison:

There's hardly a moment when I'm not –watching and wanting you. I've got to hit out somehow. Nearly four years of being in the same room with you, night and day, and I still can't stop my sweat breaking out when I see you doing -something as ordinary as leaning over an ironing board.

(Look Back in Anger 33)

Jimmy is frail because as he says he was exposed to death, loneliness and pain at a very early age. He watched his father's death when he was ten. He claims that he knows what it is like to lose someone. However, he thinks that Alison does not know anything about loss or the feeling of helplessness. Therefore, he tells her that she should have had a child and had lost it so that she could have experienced the feeling of loss. He curses Alison before she is about to leave him:

I want to stand up in your tears, and splash about in them, and sing.
I want to be there when you grovel... I want to watch it, I want the front seat... I want to see your face rubbed in the mud__ that's all I can hope for...

(Look Back in Anger 59-60)

Another reason why Jimmy is so frail can be the fact that he feels insecure due to being married to a woman above his social status. Because of his insecurity he suspects Alison's devotion, and he attacks her submissive behavior against his assaults. He displays his doubts about Alison's loyalty when he tells Cliff how he goes through her things in her absence:

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.

(Look Back in Anger 36)

Jimmy's class hatred turns into a kind of sexual hatred as the play develops. His insecurity is felt as he tells Cliff about his sexual life with Alison:

Do you know I have never known the great pleasure of lovemaking when I didn't desire it myself... She has the passion of python. She just devours me whole every time... She'll go on sleeping and devouring until there is nothing left of me.

(Look Back in Anger 37-38)

As İbrahim Yerebakan points out "the python imagery is a metaphor which encapsulates Jimmy's fear of female sexual and maternal domination and overwhelming power of a woman" (44).

Jimmy's aggression as a defense mechanism creates a vicious circle, the more he hurts Alison, the more he feels vulnerable and insecure. As Wellwarth argues, by hurting others Jimmy actually hurts himself:

Jimmy's biting sarcasms are in a sense really directed inwardly against himself in the manner of the guilt-ridden Dostoyevskian hero who tortures himself by torturing others.. It is not the love he had envisioned, it is self-laceration (120).

At the end of the play, when Alison returns having lost her baby, Jimmy does not seem to feel sorry for the baby. Instead, he tells her that he is hurt since Alison did not send any flowers to Hugh's mother's funeral. Yerebakan asserts that his behavior may "point to Jimmy's desire to gain Alison as a mother for himself by pressurising her to get rid of the baby" (43). Because, Jimmy needs both a mother and a lover at the same time.

Their bear and squirrel game can be considered as Jimmy's oedipal need for Alison in addition to an escape from the harsh reality as Jimmy tells Alison: "We'll be together in our bear's cave, and our squirrel's drey, and... we'll sing songs about ourselves –about warm trees and snug caves, and lying in the sun" (LBA 96). According to Yerebakan, the images of 'caves' and 'lying in the sun' are "clear indications of the return to the womb-world of mother once again" (43).

Consequently, it may be stated that Jimmy expresses anger and aggressive behavior due to several reasons and he directly expresses his angry feelings both verbally and physically by assaulting Alison, whereas Alison either suppresses her anger or aggresses passively by giving no reaction against her husband's aggressive attacks.

3.2. Inadmissible Evidence

Compared to Jimmy Porter Bill Maitland's reason for his anger is different in the sense that Jimmy is loved and cared by Alison, Helena and Cliff despite his aggressiveness; however, Bill's main reason for his anger is the fact that his existence is ignored by his parents, his wife, his daughter, his friends and his associates as the play develops.

Bill Maitland is introduced as a proud and snobbish man (if his dream-trial is not taken into consideration). He frequently assaults people working at his office. For instance, he taunts his secretary Shirley due to the fact that she is not fond of putting on make-up:

Of course, I forgot you girls don't really wear make-up nowadays, do you? All leaking eyeshadow and red noses. Go and put on some lipstick, dear. What's the matter? Isn't he giving to you?

(Inadmissible Evidence 191)

He also despises Shirley's boyfriend by calling him "droopy young book-keeper" (IE 192-93).

Although Hudson, his managing clerk, is the one whom Bill feels close at the office Bill does not seem to care about him. Whenever Hudson tries to say something important Bill interrupts and does not let Hudson finish his sentence. He also criticizes Hudson for being too "absorbed in his children" (IE 207). Bill's criticisms of Hudson might be because of the fact that Hudson is standing as a foil to Bill since he has everything that Bill longs for. He has a happy family with a loving wife and children and he is offered a better position from the rival law firm with a good salary since he is good at his job. Furthermore, he is loved by everyone both at Bill's office and at the other firms. And he gets on very well with Bill's wife, Anna, as Bill says: "Perhaps she should have married *you*. You have so many points of agreement. (IE 207)

Bill's snobbish attitude at the office can be considered as a defense mechanism that Bill uses in order to cover up his inferiority complex just as in the case of Jimmy's assaults on Alison. However, this time Bill displaces the anger he feels for his wife's upper-middle class manners and friends towards the people working at his office. Bill is not strong enough to express anger towards Anna since she is not the type of woman who would remain silent if she had been verbally attacked. Therefore, as Bill is socially superior to his workers he prefers to assault them.

Bill's inferiority complex stems from the fact that he thinks he is worthless in the eyes of both Anna and her friends because he is from the lower-middle class. And he feels that they put up with him just because of Anna's social status as he tells Liz:

They all seem to adore her... but more than ever..., it's only all right when I'm with her...

It was strange, as if I were there on tolerance... they're sorry for Anna and think I'm a boorish old ram...

(Inadmissible Evidence 215, 223)

He also tells Anna that he feels worthless and dependent on her as he says:

[...] the more they despise me the more admirable and courageous and decent spirited you become... Sometimes I think you're my only grip left, if you let me go, I'll disappear, I'll be made to disappear, nothing will work, I'll be something in a capsule in space, weightless, unable to touch anything or do anything, like a groping baby in a removed, putrefying womb...

(Inadmissible Evidence 224)

In addition to Shirley and Hudson, Bill also assaults his young clerk, Jones. According to Bill, Jones is "useless" (IE 225). It is for sure that he does not like him at all as he says: "He's a tent peg. Made in England. To be knocked into the ground... He irritates me. He doesn't like me any more than I like him" (IE 195). The stage directions also say that Bill's manner to Jones is "*slightly hostile*." (IE 192) In fact, it seems that there is no particular reason for Bill to hate Jones except for the fact that Jones is one of the representatives of the young generation who are as Bill calls 'sinless.'

Bill cannot get along well with his daughter either. He thinks that Jane does not care about him and would not mind his not attending her eighteenth birthday party as he tells Hudson; "it won't be the greatest disappointment of her life... I know, and she knows." (IE 208) He considers himself "a fairly rotten father but better than some" (IE 225) and he accuses Jane of being cold and indifferent towards him.

It can be claimed that Bill has both intra-individual and inter-personal conflicts. He feels worthless but he tries to look like an elegant person. He is aware of the fact that he is being alienated but he does not try to change the

situation. He cannot get along well with anyone around him due to his assaults. Therefore, people begin to abandon him one by one. However, all he wishes for is love, safety and friendship. But, he just wants things to happen without any effort. He tries to escape from his problems by the help of several women but as he tells Hudson it does not work:

I want to feel tender, I want to be comforting and encouraging and full of fun and future things and things like that. But all I feel is as if my head were bigger and bigger, spiked and falling off, like a mace, it gets in my way, or keeps getting too close.

(Inadmissible Evidence 201)

When Bill realizes that he cannot solve anything in his life he tries to repress his problems. However, the more he represses the more he becomes exhausted: “I keep wanting to sleep... I couldn’t get up (this morning). I couldn’t even move at first” (IE 199).

Nevertheless, Bill pours out all his frustrations and angry feelings at his daughter at the end. The critics claim that it is the most significant scene of the play because Bill expresses all his inner rage that he has been trying to repress so far. He bullies, insults, taunts and yells at his daughter who remains silent against his verbal attacks. According to Hawkins-Dady “Maitland’s assault reveals as much his weakness as his aggression, his daughter’s silence as much her quiet confidence as her passiveness” (138).

Bill’s aggressive behavior towards Jane is a defence mechanism in the sense that he expresses anger in order to cover his weakness and vulnerability. He tells Jane that he is not taken into consideration either by his own family or by his wife’s parents as he says:

[...] they never mention me by name, love to Bill, how’s Bill, nothing, not for ten years, and they only did it in the early years

after you were born because they thought they had to if they were going to be able to see you!

(Inadmissible Evidence 255)

Then he tells her that he is not coming to her party because he is going to be with Liz, his mistress, 'a subject that bores' her. And he gives his reason why he does not want to come to the party:

[...] I know that when I see you, I cause you little else but distaste or distress, or, at least, your own vintage, swingeing, indifference. But nothing, certainly not your swingeing distaste can match what I feel for you.

(Inadmissible Evidence 255)

Bill's dislike of his daughter turns into a youth envy as he goes on talking:

You've no shame of what you are... They're young, I said, and for the first time they're being allowed to roll about in it and have clothes and money and music and sex, and you can take or leave any of it.

(Inadmissible Evidence 255-56)

He tells her daughter that he was not given the chance of such independence when he was at her age. Therefore, like Jimmy, Maitland does not know what it is like to be young. Bill gets angry at his daughter because of the fact that she is not aware of the opportunities that are presented to her and her generation on the whole.

Consequently, when compared to Jimmy, Bill is not as aggressive as Jimmy because he does not express anger as much as Jimmy does although both have inner rage. Bill, like Jimmy, is angry at himself because although he is aware of his impotency, isolation and alienation he cannot do anything about it. And he is also aware of the fact that he himself creates his own isolation by treating people badly. Instead of solving his conflicts he redirects his inner anger towards

his associates and his daughter; represses his inner conflicts; tries to escape from his problems by having excessive sexual intercourses or by totally denying the fact that he is wrong. Instead, he says:

[...] I myself, am more packed with spite and twitching with revenge than anyone I know of. I actually often, frequently, daily want to see people die for their errors. I wish to kill them myself, to throw the switch with my own fist. Fortunately, I've had no more opportunities than most men. Still, I've made more than the best of them.

(Inadmissible Evidence 259)

At the end, none of these defense mechanisms work out and he regresses and loses his contact with the real world. He realizes that he has alienated every person in his life. His secretary, his managing clerk, his telephonist, his daughter and his mistress abandon Bill. At last, he cuts his contact with his wife by telling her on the phone: "...I think it must be better if you don't see me... don't see me... yes... don't... I'll have to put the receiver down...Goodbye." (IE 264)

John Russell Brown suggests that "Osborne is no longer angry and defiant; he is asking for compassion and understanding" (10). Bill's main concern is searching for love and friendship as he indicates at the very beginning of the play. However, as the play develops he realizes that he will not be able to get them and gradually he gives up because he does not have the enthusiasm or energy that Jimmy Porter has. Bill is not looking back in anger like Jimmy is; instead, "he is looking back in nostalgia__ just as he is seeking in the future a security he now knows it cannot contain" (Trussler 133). Bill does not feel safe about the future and he has doubts about his daughter's future too as he asks her:

[...]How much do you think your safety depends on the goodwill of others? Well? Tell me. Or your safety? How safe do you think you are? How? Safe?

(Inadmissible Evidence 255)

Inadmissible Evidence can be considered as an ‘evidence’ of Osborne’s changing attitude towards life. His emphasis on anger, enthusiasm and energy of *Look Back in Anger* begins to turn into looking for love, friendship and safety. Jimmy Porter had an hope and the enthusiasm to change things or to start over again. However, Bill Maitland has none of them and he begins to question his safety.

3.3. *Watch It Come Down*

There are certain changes between John Osborne’s earlier and later works. His earlier plays generally center on working-class people (as in the case of *Look Back in Anger*); however, the protagonists of his later dramas are chosen from upper-class people who are more sophisticated and cultured. In addition to this, the mood of his later plays is darker in the sense that they are full of pain, fear, frustration and death. Furthermore, Osborne is more direct in dealing with one of his basic themes, that is changing England as it is seen in *Watch It Come Down*. Arnold P. Hinchliffe claims that “those critics who disliked the High Tory Osborne could take comfort from the attack mounted in here (this play) on the Home Countries” (60). Because, in *Watch It Come Down* Osborne presents the country people as violent and barbaric particularly towards the outsiders such as Ben, Sally and their guests.

There are many characters in the play but the action mostly centers on Ben and Sally, the married couple who are quarrelling most of the time. When the two are compared, it can be said that Sally is more cruel than Ben as Gale suggests “she is ready to inflict pain” (23). As it was indicated before, the main reason for their aggressive behavior is sexual frustration. Their marriage is not going well due to several reasons including the fact that they are sexually frustrated. Moreover, they cannot be open and direct enough to tell what they expect from each other, as a result, their conversations end up in quarrels. Even at their first encounter when Ben comes back from London they argue because Sally expects

Ben to greet her but he does not do that. When Ben makes fun of Ray's homosexuality, Sally says to Ben: "Shut up, bitch-face... You're just boring *him*. And what's worse, me. The minute you get in." (WICD 14)

Both Sally and Ben are so angry with each other that any little thing can be a reason to start a row. Most of the time Sally provokes Ben for a fight. For instance, she taunts Ben's ex-wife Marion and his daughter. She calls his daughter "tall fruit of your tired old loins," and "five feet one face like bun" (WICD 19). And she asks Ben about Marion: "Did you fuck her?" When Ben answers that he did not, Sally goes on to deride him by saying: "Pity. It might have cheered you up." (WICD 19) Then she begins to criticize Ben for making bad films and being a bad father. She says: "[...] perhaps she doesn't *like* you... A lot of people don't, you know..." (WICD 19). At the end Sally manages to make Ben angry:

BEN: Will you... for a minute, just stop that fucking pile of shit spewing out of your fucking mouth!

SALLY: A hit, Raymond. I say: a *palpable*!

BEN: Or you'll get my fist right in the fucking middle of it. From my puny fist even it breaks my arm...

SALLY: You mustn't damage your arm...

(*Watch It Come Down* 19)

Immediately after this bitter quarrel they see that they have gone too far and feel sorry for the things they have said. Because, while they are rowing they both try to hurt each other as much as possible by their verbal assaults. But then they feel guilty and turn into a loving couple. It can be claimed that they aggress against each other in order to pour out their pain, helplessness and frustrations. That is, Ben and Sally express anger in order to get rid of their negative feelings.

Ben and Sally use different ways to cope with their inner weaknesses. Ben, like most of Osborne's male characters, looks for a shelter in women's arms. For example, after one of these rows Ben phones Marion or he goes to Jo in order to feel tender and safe. Sally, on the other hand, denies the fact that she is vulnerable

as she tells Ben: “You can’t hurt *me*.” (WICD 29) However, she “*slides into a low moan of tears*” (WICD 19) after one of the quarrels. For Gale, Sally’s cruelty is “a defensive reaction to situations that might expose her vulnerability” (23). She also thinks of running away from her troubles as she says to Jo: “[...] the time ... is running out, and we should be running away, running away together where we see fit or fine...” (WICD 45).

Most of the time Sally tries to hurt Ben by assailing him verbally. She also taunts his body: “It’s the *men-* o- pause... Male menopause. God, you must have had it along with your acne when you were lighter... *You* gave in years ago” (WICD 29). Sally can begin a fight when there is nothing to argue about. For instance, while they are talking about the dress that Ben bought her from London they begin to quarrel because Sally does not believe Ben when he says that she looks splendid in it:

SALLY: You’re just a hulk. All right, I *won’t* wear it. I’ll wear a kaftan and prayer beads and look like one of those virginal young nymphomaniacs. It’s pathetic!

BEN: Hear bloody hear! Listening to you is.

SALLY: All you scared, failing, middle-aged men [...] Why don’t you grow up?

BEN: Why don’t *you*? [...] You are the one who can’t face the future.

SALLY: At least I don’t mewl over the past...

(*Watch It Come Down* 28)

Ben is aware of the fact that Sally is trying to hurt him on purpose as he tells Marion: “the more pain I FEEL, the more resentment comes out of *her*.” (WICD 53). Sally strikes Ben to hurt him but sometimes it seems that she is hurting herself, too. For instance, when she wants to learn what Ben and Marion did when Ben went to London to see his daughter she asks: “Did you fuck her?” (WICD 19). It seems that she did not believe Ben when he said no because she asks the same question once again towards the end of the play (WICD 54). Sally can use other words instead of ‘fuck’ but she does not. According to Gale, “there

is simultaneously a masochistic, self-inflicted punishment aimed at herself” (27). Moreover, when Sally catches Ben and Marion talking on the phone, Sally interrupts and tells Marion: “...fuck him if you like. In my bed. I doubt if I shall be here to watch the spectacle” (WICD 34). Upon these words Ben takes out the dress that he bought for Sally and, as if he was retaliating, tears the dress and throws it outside. Sally pretends as if she does not care about what Ben is doing although she loved the dress.

The most aggressive scene of the play takes place when Sally comes back from her walk carrying the dead body of Ben’s dog that was shot by the country folk. Ben really gets crazy and accuses Sally of killing his dog. For the first time they physically attack each other as the stage directions describe:

He (Ben) goes to put an arm round her. She (Sally) hits him in the face. He staggers, recovers and they begin hitting each other. The rail breaks and she falls to the ground... they kick and tear at each other, clothes tearing and splitting. Blood and breakage.

(Watch It Come Down 42)

Ben shouts at Sally: “I’ll kill her! I’ll kill her! She’s killed *me*. She’s killed *everything*. Long ago.” Sally does not accept his accusation but she says: “I haven’t. But I would. And somebody will!” (WICD 42). Then they continue fighting and Ben smashes Sally in the face and they tear at each other. Gale comments on this scene:

In a frenzy of uncontrolled fury and frustration over their loss and their impotence, Ben and Sally fly at one another, smashing, kicking, and tearing [...] Striking out at each other in their grief is a reflection of the inner turmoil in Osborne’s world view (26).

Ben and Sally attack each other in this scene not only because they are angry at each other but also because they are aware of the fact that nothing can be done in order to save their marriage and future. Because of the attacks of local people they realize that they cannot be safe and happy at this place any longer because they

can do nothing to stop the hostility of those people. The violence of the local people was foreshadowed in Act I as Ben says: "If he (Major Bluenose) and his wife see any of our dogs on their land, etc., he's offered £5 to any of his men who shoots one" (WICD 16) It is also indicated that countrymen attacked them before, as Raymond says: "What about those yobbos smashing up the windows here last month?" (WICD 16).

The attacks of the local people continue as the play develops. Sally tells how savagely they killed Ben's dog: "They tied... her to a tree and set all the male dogs on her. And they shot her... In front of us." (WICD 41-42) At the end of the play they open fire on the ranch house and they are so barbaric that they shoot at Jo's dead body. Ben becomes so furious that he goes out to curse them for what they did but he is also shot by the countrymen.

The local residents attack them violently because of the fact that as Dr. Ashton claims they are not "popular" since they lead "odd sorts of lives." And because as Ben claims they refuse to "go to their (local residents') sherry parties!" (WICD 17).

Whatever Ben and Sally say or do to each other it is seen that they love and need one another. When Sally sees that Ben is about to die she begs him desperately: "Oh, Ben, don't go. Don't leave me. We all, *the few of us*, need one another." (WICD 57) The play both emphasizes love and violence at the same time. Ben and Sally and the other residents of the house could have lived there if there had not been the attacks of the local people. However, the destructive attitude of the countrymen made them realize the fact that the future of the countryside, and the new England on the whole, will not be as peaceful and safe as it was before. Hinchliffe states that "England is not 'green and rarely pleasant' and the barbarians who storm the gates are no longer vague black natives nor even Americans but English country folk" (60).

Watch It Come Down is one of the striking examples of Osborne's later drama in which he displays his anxieties and fears about the coming days of the changing England. The theme of fear is given more emphasis than the theme of anger in this play. Since the characters are from the upper class they do not care about the socio-political circumstances of the era like Jimmy Porter. But, even though they are rich they are also exposed to unjust treatment. They are mostly interested in searching for love, compassion and friendship like Bill Maitland. They look back in nostalgia at the old happy days of England. However, neither of them, like Bill, has the energy or enthusiasm of Jimmy in order to change things for the better.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

This study has aimed at analysing Osborne's underlying theme of anger in his selected plays namely *Look Back in Anger* (1956), *Inadmissible Evidence* (1964) and *Watch It Come Down* (1975). It has claimed that anger can be analysed in two ways considering the fact that there are two main aspects of anger which are the emotional state of anger and the expression of that emotion.

In order to explain anger as an emotional state it has made use of Leonard Berkowitz's reformulated version of the frustration-aggression hypothesis. Berkowitz defines anger as an emotional state experienced when a desired goal is blocked, that is, anger is an emotion that is felt when a person is frustrated. According to frustration-aggression theory people feel angry because of the fact that they are frustrated on account of several reasons. The first part of this thesis has looked into the reasons why Osborne's protagonists feel angry, in particular the factors that lead them to frustration.

Jimmy Porter, the protagonist of *Look Back in Anger*, is frustrated and angry mainly because of the passivity and insensibility of the people whom he loves. The protagonist of *Inadmissible Evidence* Bill Maitland is frustrated because he is angry at himself since he realizes the fact that he himself is the cause of his alienation. The main characters of the last play, Ben and Sally are both frustrated therefore angry particularly on account of the fact that there is a lack of communication between the couple.

The second aspect of anger that is, the expression of anger has been analysed in terms of Freud's psychoanalytic theory of defense mechanisms regarding the fact that people express anger or aggressive behavior for the purpose

of self-preservation. Furthermore, it has investigated the ways that the characters used in order to express their anger such as open aggression, passive aggression, verbal aggression or physical aggression. For instance, Jimmy and Bill aggress verbally when they feel frustrated and angry. Ben and Sally, on the other hand, attack each other both verbally and physically. Having analysed anger as an emotional state and the expression of anger, that is aggression, it can be claimed that the characters of Osborne become angry and aggressive when they feel frustrated, vulnerable and helpless. Therefore, they express their anger either verbally, physically or passively in order to get rid of their angry feelings so that they can prevent self-destruction.

Look Back in Anger (1956), *Inadmissible Evidence* (1964) and *Watch It Come Down* (1975) have been selected for this study due to the fact that each play represents a period in Osborne's career as a playwright. *Look Back in Anger* stands as an example for the early period of Osborne. *Inadmissible Evidence* displays the fact that Osborne's understanding of life is beginning to change. *Watch It Come Down* (1975) expresses his later period and it shows that his view of life has changed.

Look Back in Anger displays the energy, enthusiasm and anger of Jimmy Porter and it was regarded as a reaction against the insensibility of the generation which had grown up during World War II. Jimmy Porter was credited with being "the first young voice to cry out for a new generation that had forgotten the war, mistrusted the welfare state and mocked its established rulers with boredom, anger and disgust" (John Mortimer 183). Moreover, Jimmy Porter was also identified with Osborne when he wrote this play because of the fact that Osborne was also angry at the same things with Jimmy. As Kimball King suggests:

Much of Osborne's original anger was directed at England's compromised power and influence following the World War II. Bitter disappointment over the impending Suez crisis in 1956, the rapidly progressing loss of Empire, and the Americanization of the

West were palpable influences on the mood of the playwright.
(179)

Quigley claims that “Jimmy’s persistent anger is about the betrayal by the previous generation and about his own generation’s acquiescence, timidity, and general lack of aggression and enthusiasm” (54). According to William W. Demastes:

Alison offers us a sign that general awakening is possible, that the fact of personal disaster can be the signal for change rather than a prelude to surrender. Porter presents the impotent rage of looking back. The play itself offers signs... that looking forward is the only hope (67).

It can be said that Osborne was optimistic about the future when he wrote *Look Back in Anger*. Jimmy’s angry feelings were the source of his energy and enthusiasm to awake people around him and his generation as a whole.

With *Inadmissible Evidence* it is seen that Osborne’s view of life and future is beginning to change. Simon Trussler claims that:

The play assumes the existence of a recognisable “reality”, and sets one man at odds with it. And within the two days of time, and the two acts they fill out, it portrays the final stages of his struggle, the acceptance of total isolation. This is *Waiting for Godot* just before the waiting begins: or, more exactly, the beginning of the waiting coincides with the final curtain of *Inadmissible Evidence* (121).

This play suggests that Osborne has begun to question the safety of the future because of the fact that he is losing his hopes about the coming times. More than anger, Osborne stresses the significance of love and friendship in this play. Because, he displays the helpless situation of a person who is deprived of love and friendship.

Watch It Come Down is the play which is next to the last play of Osborne. In this play he clearly and directly emphasizes the fact that the number of people who are alienated like Bill is increasing. All of the characters of the play are not only alienated but also violently attacked by the society in which they live. Goldstone asserts that:

Watch It Come Down has a lot to say about how much people need each other for love, understanding, and reinforcement of self worth, particularly in a society where narrow self interest and lack of community are all too prevalent. It does so by revealing extremes of reaction that possibly no other Osborne work expresses, or at least does so in such an apparently outlandish and bizarre manner (199).

In this play Osborne indicates that things are going worse even in the countryside, the places that are supposed to be peaceful. He expresses that if people do not communicate with each other and love and help one another there will be no safety, peace or happiness in the future.

In all these plays Osborne's characters talk nostalgically about the old, happy days of England because they think that those days are gone and will not come back again. From the very beginning of his career Osborne tries to show that those happy days are left in the past. That is why Jimmy gets angry when he looks back. Osborne clearly defines what he means by 'anger' at the very end of his latest play *Dejavu* (1991), which he wrote thirty-five years later as a sequel to *Look Back in Anger*. As older Jimmy says:

[...] Anger is not hatred, which I see in all your faces. Anger is slow, gentle, not vindictive or full of spite. 'What's he angry about?' they used to ask. Anger is not *about*... It comes into the world in grief not grievance. It is mourning to the unknown, the loss of what went before without you, it's the love at another time but not this might have sprung on you, and greatest loss of all, the deprivation of what, even as a child, seemed to be irrevocably your

own, your country, your birthplace, that, at least, is as tangible as death.

(*Dejavu* 372)

It can be inferred from this passage that Jimmy is not optimistic about the coming days of England anymore. Osborne expresses that his anger turns into grievance due to the fact that he and his generation have lost the old happy days of England. Hence, in his later plays Osborne tells “his worst fears of where things might be headed, rather than the qualified hopes exemplified in the final pages of *Look Back in Anger*” (Quigley 54). Furthermore, Steven Gale comments on the change in Osborne as follows:

When he wrote *Look Back in Anger*, Osborne was indeed looking back in anger at an insensitive world and time. He was filled with rage. Now he is looking at another insensitive world and time, but he is looking forward and with fear. Where once he was aggressive and sought to goad his contemporaries into a life of feeling, he is now desperate in his fear of a world which is attacking him, and which will crush him and his way of life (28).

As a result, having analysed the reasons for the frustrations and angry feelings of the protagonists of Osborne’s earlier and later plays and the ways in which the characters reflect their rage onto other people, it is concluded that the rage and angry feelings which Osborne stresses in his earlier plays turn into fear and grievance in his later plays. The characters of his earlier plays express aggressive behavior due to their anger and rage; however, the protagonists of his later plays behave aggressively mainly on account of their fear and impotency to change things for the better.

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