

**54. A Cultural Materialist Approach to Gender through *Look Back in Anger*<sup>1</sup>****Ece NOYA<sup>2</sup>****APA:** Noya, E. (2024). A Cultural Materialist Approach to Gender through *Look Back in Anger*. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (39), 928-936. DOI: 10.29000/rumelide.1470155.**Abstract**

As John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* illustrates, the Angry Young Men Movement centred mostly on male disaffection, reflecting the societal upheavals that occurred in Britain after World War II. Nevertheless, it mainly disregarded the particular challenges and cultural constraints that women encountered during that time. In addition to experiencing comparable psychological traumas from the war, women were compelled to return to constrictive domestic duties, which overshadowed their efforts and aspirations during the war. The movement's narratives ignored the complex difficulties women faced, such as the struggle for autonomy and the conflict with pre-war feminine norms, in favor of focusing on men's experiences, such as Jimmy Porter's existential problems. This omission draws attention to a critical weakness in the movement's analysis of post-World War II society and emphasizes the need for a gender-inclusive investigation of the psychological and cultural dynamics of this period. This paper attempts to examine Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* in line with cultural materialist theory of Raymond Williams to analyze gendered power dynamics in the theater with a particular focus on the chosen play. The strategic portrayal of victimization within a gendered power system in the play is examined in this research. Using cultural artifacts and social conventions, it especially examines how the play's narrative and character interactions reflect and question the maintenance of gender hierarchies. The paper focuses on the interactions between male and female characters in order to dissect the intricate power struggles that are portrayed in the play.

**Keywords:** angry young men movement, cultural materialism, significance of gender, power and gender relations, *Look Back in Anger*, John Osborne

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## Look Back in Anger üzerinden Cinsiyet Kavramına Kültürel Materyalist Bir Yaklaşım<sup>3</sup>

### Öz

John Osborne'un Look Back in Anger oyununda gösterdiği gibi, Öfkeli Genç Adamlar hareketi İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra İngiltere'de meydana gelen toplumsal çalkantıları yansıtırken çoğunlukla erkeklerin hoşnutsuzluğuna odaklanıyordu. Dolayısıyla, kadınların da o dönemde karşılaştıkları belirli zorluklar ve kültürel kısıtlamalar genel olarak göz ardı edildi. Kadınlar, savaştan kaynaklanan benzer psikolojik travmalara sahip olmalarına ek olarak, savaş sırasındaki katkılarını ve isteklerini gölgede bırakan kısıtlayıcı ev içi görevlerine dönmek zorunda bırakıldılar. Sonuç olarak Öfkeli Genç Adamlar hareketine ait anlatılar, özerklik mücadelesi ve kadınlar için konulan savaş öncesi normlarla çatışma gibi kadınların karşılaştığı karmaşık zorlukları görmezden gelerek, Jimmy Porter'in varoluşsal sorunları gibi sadece erkeklerin deneyimlerine odaklandı. Bu ihmal, hareketin İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası topluma ilişkin analizindeki kritik bir eksikliğe dikkat çekiyor ve bu dönemin psikolojik ve kültürel dinamiklerinin toplumsal cinsiyeti de kapsayacak şekilde araştırılmasının gerekliliğini vurguluyor. Bu makale, Osborne'un Look Back in Anger adlı eserini Raymond Williams'ın kültürel materyalist teorisi doğrultusunda, tiyatrodaki cinsiyete dayalı güç dinamiklerini, seçilen oyuna özel olarak odaklanarak incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu arařtırmada oyundaki mağduriyetin cinsiyetlendirilmiş bir güç sistemi içerisinde stratejik tasviri incelenmektedir. Kültürel eserleri ve sosyal gelenekleri kullanarak, özellikle oyunun anlatı ve karakter etkileşimlerinin cinsiyet hiyerarşilerinin sürdürülmesini nasıl yansıttığını incelemekte ve sorgulamaktadır. Makale, oyunda tasvir edilen güç mücadelelerini incelemek için erkek ve kadın karakterler arasındaki etkileşimlere odaklanıyor.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Öfkeli genç adamlar hareketi, kültürel materyalizm, cinsiyetin önemi, güç ve cinsiyet ilişkileri, Look Back in Anger, John Osborn

### Introduction

The mid-twentieth century is known to have witnessed drastic political, social, and cultural changes. Following World War II, Britain experienced a swift shift in its political and social landscape, which effected all spheres of society. The psychological effects of wartime influenced twentieth-century playwrights such as John Osborne and his contemporaries. Witnessing the violence and persecution firsthand as well as the post-war social changes destroyed people's faith. Because of the consequences of dehumanizing regimes, individuals started to lose their morals and faith in religion, which led them to start questioning the meaning of life (Mızıkyan, 2010, 44, 45). Dramas that depicted the alienation of a generation trapped in a world full of meaningless traditions included John Osborne's *Look Back in*

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*Anger*. These playwrights have been dubbed "The Angry Young Men" because of the grim and unwaveringly pessimistic outlook of their works, which express their discontent through discussions of current events and taboo topics and realities that were not previously discussed. Due to their fragility, they experienced guilt, which led to outbursts of wrath stemming from the postwar mood and class struggles. Additionally, Fowler articulates the following as the fundamental cause of the pioneers of this theatrical movement's rage: "The young were adopting a socialist political outlook, directing their anger against the previous generation and power of the establishment: censorship, sexual repression, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and conscription" (Fowler, 2005, pp. 38-40). Tecimer discusses how this theatrical movement was first embraced in the following lines: "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' " (Tecimer, 2005, p. 6). Thus, the play was considered as a response and uprising against all that is considered sacred.

The turbulent atmosphere of the time also caused numerous changes to come to the fore in the lives of women. To illustrate, the Second World War brought about a shift for the work opportunities for women. Women's life were significantly impacted by job shortage caused by the Second World War. Women participated in and made contributions to the economy as a result. The difference between men's and women's societal roles was blurred. To cover the void in the industry, they had to resign from their conventional positions. However, following the war, attitudes regarding women persisted with the expectation that they should readjust to pre-war norms and resume their patriarchal gender roles within the household. This led to a sense of uncertainty, disagreements and confrontations inside the family and unease particularly among women regarding their social and sexual roles. The majority of women desired to remain in paid employment following the war. The mobilization throughout the war had caused them to have an awakening. It is difficult to feel content with simply performing household tasks once more after enjoying freedom for the first time. Therefore, women's status and their responsibilities in society were neither changed nor emancipated as a result of the Second World War. During the postwar era, families saw transformations that impacted the social roles of both genders. Gender struggle, domestic and sexual relationships, and family structure were unavoidable themes in the majority of plays at that time (Öztürk, 1993, pp. 2-24). These plays portray male dominance with male characters using violent rhetoric directed towards women. As such, Alan Sinfield in his *Literature, Politics and Culture in Post-war Britain* (2004) observed that there was a misogyny in much of the works that were a part of Angry Young Men Movement. He continued by claiming that: "In effect, the woman is taken as representing the hegemony of an effete upper class, and wooed and abuse accordingly" (p. 92). Accordingly, Osborne exhibits a misogynist mindset in *Look Back in Anger*. However, critic Micheline Wandor notes that "the imperative of gender" has been minimized despite its obvious and supreme relevance even though a great deal of attention has been placed on the realism offered by the plays of this movement. The goal of Wandor, in her article titled "Look Back in Gender" is to fill a void in theater criticism where the importance of gender is not given enough attention (Keyysar, 1988). Therefore, cultural movements like The Angry Young Men Movement examined the psychological effects of these changes on individuals in addition to reflecting the shift in the social and cultural context. But from the male perspective, this investigation is only presented as one-sided; that is to say, from the male perspective, merely. Despite the fact that women experienced the same psychological and social traumas as men did as a result of the war along with isolation and a general lack of hope for the future, their experiences were chosen to be disregarded in favor of men's. Furthermore, it could be argued that, due to their gender, women were twice as disadvantaged in this plagued-by-war world. In addition to being confused and trying to figure out who they were in a post-war world, they were also abused, abandoned, taken advantage of and even victimized by their spouses as is

described in *Look Back in Anger*. In this sense, the established power relations of the patriarchal society between two genders dominate the entire plot and cause the heroine to struggle and be oppressed.

The cultural materialist approach, a critical framework that arose in the late 1970s and early 1980s in reaction to the shortcomings of conventional literary analysis, serves as the theoretical basis for this study. Cultural materialism, which advocates for a comprehensive analysis of texts within their larger sociopolitical contexts, is a paradigm shift in literary theory that was developed by prominent critics including Raymond Williams, Jonathan Dollimore and Allan Sinfield (Taylor, 2013). The concept of cultural materialism, which gained prominence in the middle of the 20th century, was developed by Raymond Williams and represents a significant development in the relationship between literature, culture and material realities. Leading this intellectual movement, Williams developed a theoretical framework that demands cultural works to be analyzed in the context of the socioeconomic environments in which they were produced and received. This essentially multidisciplinary method promotes an integrated view of culture as a dynamic and material process as opposed to a static, separate asset by drawing on Marxist theory, literary criticism and cultural sociology. The idea of culture as a lived experience, in which cultural texts and practices are inextricably linked to the material circumstances of existence, is fundamental to Williams' theory. According to his theory, cultural forms actively shape and reshape social interactions rather than being passive reflections of the social structure. This viewpoint suggests a more flexible and dynamic relationship between material conditions and cultural production, challenging the classic Marxist distinction between base and superstructure. Williams' work illustrates how cultural creations are entwined with power, class, and ideological conflicts, especially in "Culture and Society" (1958) and "The Long Revolution" (1961). He contends that cultural texts ought to be interpreted in light of a larger body of "cultural material" that encompasses not just written works but also customs and establishments. In doing so, cultural materialism aims to reveal the ways in which texts reflect and challenge the dominant ideologies and power structures of their respective eras. Cultural materialism's central claim is that works of literature and other cultural artifacts are not produced in a vacuum, but rather are intricately entwined with the political, social and cultural currents of their day. According to Raymond Williams, cultural materialism investigates how ideology and power shape interactions within a culture. All cultural forms such as "history, philosophy, political and social theory, institutions, manners, and customs," are included in literature (1960, pp. 272, 273). Ideology is governed by the dominant culture in order to preserve its authority. It is defined as "those beliefs, practices, and institutions which work to legitimate the social order" (Dollimore et al., 2002, p. 213). This viewpoint stresses how literature and society interact dynamically, emphasizing how cultural texts both reflect and influence the ideologies and hierarchies of the historical periods in which they are set. Close readings of literary works are frequently combined with analyses of historical records, sociological data, and other types of cultural evidence in the practice of cultural materialist analysis. Scholars are encouraged by cultural materialism to examine texts from a variety of angles, taking into account not just its formal and aesthetic aspects but also their social and political relevance. Cultural materialists aim to reveal the underlying power dynamics, ideological tensions, and social contradictions that are contained in literary works by placing them within their historical and cultural contexts. By using an interdisciplinary approach, academics can explore the complex relationships that exist between literature, ideology and social change. This can provide valuable insights into the ways that cultural creations both reinforce and challenge dominant norms and values. The application of cultural materialist theory allows an examination of the power dynamics inherent in gender interactions within the setting of the chosen play, *Look Back in Anger*. The drama exposes the restrictive aspects of marriage and traditional gender norms through the character of Alison. Alison in the selected play suffers because of the institution of marriage, a social construct based on the prevailing ideology. Her suffering

highlights the ways in which women are devalued and oppressed in a culture controlled by males and provides a poignant depiction of the limitations imposed by patriarchal conventions. The chosen play shows how abuse is used by patriarchal systems to control women and maintain men's domination. In *Look Back in Anger*, verbal assault becomes as commonplace as psychological violence. The play uses violence as a means of communication. Jimmy's widespread aggression is a reflection of larger cultural power dynamics that frequently suppress and dehumanize women. Through an analysis of the cultural components incorporated into the play, cultural materialism offers a structure for comprehending the processes of gender ideology creation, maintenance, and challenge. Williams' approach encourages dissecting the cultural elements in the play and looking at the ways that language and symbols sustain societal norms. The goal of this study is to highlight the complex interactions between material circumstances, power dynamics and cultural representations by applying Raymond Williams' theory to the people and circumstances in *Look Back in Anger*. This research aims to shed light on the ways in which gendered power relations are negotiated and resisted by placing the play within its historical and cultural context. It also increases our knowledge of gendered power conflicts within the play.

### **Cultural Materialist Study of Gender in *Look Back in Anger***

*Look Back in Anger* exposes the patriarchal ideology of the twentieth century and highlights the victimization of Alison, an upper-class woman who is subjugated to male dominance through her marriage. Hayman notes that "*Look Back in Anger* is a one-man play per excellence" (1972, p. 25). In the post-war drama, *Look Back in Anger*, Jimmy's furious outbursts are shown as the product of a stagnant post-war mentality. However, in a post-war setting, women were not only affected by the warfare but also, as *Look Back in Anger* describes, assaulted by their spouses in addition to experiencing estrangement and identity crises. As it keeps her from expressing her distinctiveness, Alison fights against the patriarchal society. Osborne skillfully establishes a patriarchal household structure by the use of stage directions (Öztürk, 1993, pp. 30,31). Because of the established gender norms and patriarchal male attitudes, the household environment gives the impression of a traditional family. Accordingly, Alison is performing a stereotypical housewife's chore of ironing, while the men are reading newspapers in the opening scene. Only when she carries out her household chores, like "pouring water from the kettle into a large tea pot while standing over the gas stove" does she truly embody her femininity (Osborne, 1960, p. 39). Women found themselves unable to avoid becoming naturally preoccupied with household responsibilities. Consequently, gender identities have a role in upholding the patriarchal structure. Jimmy is the one who controls the topics of conversation. Due to his position as the prominent speaker, he is typically the most strong and dominant character. Mohammed also claims that: "Jimmy, the leading character, always speaks in long turns without being interrupted...This, again, proves that Jimmy is a powerful character; he speaks a lot without being interrupted. Other characters dare not interrupt him, otherwise they'll be targets of his offending criticism" (2022, pp. 63, 68). Even when Jimmy is able to remain silent, which is rare, he frequently blasts his trumpet to vent his fury; it "seemed like he wanted to kill someone with it" (Osborne, 1960, p. 41). He annoys those around him as a result by ignoring their reactions. He also emphasizes his domineering presence in the home with this repeating sound. "Dramatic conflict—the battle of the sexes, where one character psychologically devours another" is what *Look Back in Anger* showcases (Rusinko, 1989, p. 39). It revolves around a couple's troubled marriage. The institution of marriage, which is one of the key components of the patriarchal system that upholds and perpetuates male supremacy through gender-biased obligations, is the means by which Alison is abused. Furthermore, a person's socioeconomic environment has an impact on his/her life. Raymond Williams (2006) argues that a cultural materialist perspective emphasizes social structures more than the individual.

Cultural materialism places a strong emphasis on the ways in which material and economic conditions impact marriage and other facets of culture. When analyzing married relationships, factors such as social status and financial constraints that couples face must be taken into consideration. By considering the material and socioeconomic settings in which marriages and marital relationships exist, Williams' (1960, 1977) cultural materialism provides a framework for the analysis. For instance, Jimmy is unable to support his wife emotionally and financially. Men were historically seen as the primary provider because they were the father figures in society, which is why these kinds of expectations were placed on them. Upon their marriage, Jimmy lacked stable accommodation and steady employment. As a result, as a young married couple, they were forced to live with Jimmy's friend Hugh and his mother. Hugh's description by Alison as "He takes the first prize for ruthlessness" makes it clear that Jimmy led his wife to a place which is not to her preference. "A sort of hostage from those sections of society they had declared war on" is the perspectives of Jimmy and Hugh regarding her. Their impolite behavior made her feel very ashamed, saying, "I felt as though I'd been dropped in a jungle. I couldn't believe that two people, two educated people could be so savage" (Osborne, 1960, p. 43). Alison's remarks highlight their disparity in manners because she was raised in her parents' house, where she was raised to be kind and lead an easy life. Alison is from a different socioeconomic class than Jimmy and Cliff, who have similar backgrounds. She found it difficult to blend in with their working-class lifestyle. Her marriage to Jimmy has a significant impact on her social circle. Alison's life was devoid of responsibilities and worry until she got married. She then finds herself in a financially difficult marriage, which is very out of the ordinary for her. She is compelled to perform all household chores in her new life, is unable to communicate with her family and has a routine life. She was ignorant of Jimmy's extreme bigotry toward those from higher social classes (Haque, 2014). Williams' method places a focus on how socioeconomic class shapes cultural norms. Different responsibilities and expectations, based on social standing and cultural standards, are often present in married relationships. Cultural materialism can be used to examine how these roles are constructed and how they reflect and perpetuate class differences. Williams (1977) claims that the state of the economy is reflected in literature. Literature and economic reality are thus intertwined. This component of Williams' theory seems to be a good fit for illustrating the difficulties in the couple's marriage because Jimmy finds Alison's family to be more traditional upper class and he feels that there is a huge social divide between them. Consequently, it is possible to view their distinct classes as the root of their marital problems. Alison saw marriage as a challenge, drawing a comparison between it with medieval tournaments in which knights would toss their gauntlets to the ground, inviting opponents to engage in combat. She granted Jimmy his knightly appeal, but she steadfastly maintained the security of indifference in the face of his attacks. "into the battle with his axe swinging round his head-frail, and so full of fire" is how she characterizes her relationship with Jimmy (Osborne, 1960, p. 45). Therefore, it is possible to conceivable to observe his marriage to Alison as an attempt at retaliation for having stolen someone from the upper middle class and then trying to change her into someone else. Jimmy believed that he had prevailed in the battle of the classes by obtaining Alison as Brooke also suggested: "An abusive and aggressive masculinity becomes replacement for a lost class identity" (2012, p. 788) since he is well aware of her superior status in society. She finds out that he got married in order to get revenge on the upper class after they are married. It is in line with R. Williams' methodology, in that it highlights the impact of social class and economic circumstances on people's decisions to marry. It also emphasizes the maintenance of traditional gender roles, in which women are seen as means to a certain social or economic goal. This illustrates their relationship's power dynamics. He instantly makes reference to and criticizes Alison's father after reading a remark from the upper middle classes, only to coerce Alison into saying something: "You don't suppose your father could have written it, do you?" "Sounds rather like Daddy, don't you think?" (Osborne, 1960, p. 14). He views

her as an opponent within his domain and launches his conflict. According to critic Taylor, “The principal sufferer from all this is his wife Alison, whom he cannot forgive for her upper-middle-class background and whom he constantly torments in order to extract some reaction from her...” (1978, p. 41). As a working-class person, Jimmy has a predisposition towards people of higher social status. This causes him to be antagonistic towards Alison, who is the victim of his violence. Jimmy’s attacks on Alison are, therefore, really attacks on class differences. Consequently, their home creates an unhealthy atmosphere where Alison endures continuous distress. She might have tried to show some empathy for his class. However, she is unable to set aside her family and adopt his ideals, though, because of all of the mentioned reasons. She found it pitiful that he would intentionally degrade her social status in retaliation. She has a negative perception of the working class’s behavior because of Jimmy and Hugh, which makes it difficult for her to adapt to his lifestyle or class (Haque, 2014). He controls the discourse with Alison from the first act onwards, illustrating the dominance of men in the home. Jimmy’s misogynistic attitude is clear throughout the entire act. He calls Alison “The Lady Pusillanimous” in an unflattering way, as if she is weak and uncouth. He is, however, neglecting the reality that Alison is a strong individual with a unique personality of her own. She chooses to marry Jimmy against the wishes of her family and social standing. She defies the conventions of her class, which makes her rebellious. He calls Alison names such as “python” or “clumsy,” or he makes fun of her. Williams (1976) placed a strong focus on the role that language and communication play in constructing meanings in cultural materialism. A society’s discourse, representation, and communication surrounding marriage can reveal power structures and cultural attitudes towards gender roles and partnerships. Analyzing the terminology used to define marriage might provide insights into the standards and beliefs that society upholds. He attacks his wife to make himself feel better about himself. According to Innes (2002), Jimmy’s speech conveys his disillusionment, hopelessness, and selfishness. “Jimmy’s rebellion is purely verbal. The strong expression can be a cover, compensating for the inability to take effective action. He describes that he ‘learnt at an early age what it was to be angry-angry and helpless’” (pp. 88-89). With the next stage instructions, his fury finally subsides: Jimmy is rather shakily triumphant. He cannot allow himself to look at either of them to catch their response to his rhetoric. He’s been cheated out of his response, but he’s got to draw blood somehow (Osborne, 1960, p. 21). Jimmy’s declaration that he would “draw blood somehow” suggests that he is trying to use his words to gain control. He is attempting to control the situation in an attempt to regain control or get an answer from Alison. This is a sign of a power dynamic when individuals attempt to use speech to dominate others. Consequently, the passage highlights a power dynamic in the scenario that is marked by subdued and unsaid tensions. According to Taylor, this demonstrates his “neurotic determination to establish and keep his supremacy” (1963, p. 41) inside the family. To preserve his dominion, he continually degrades Alison. There is a lot of crude speech used in the dialogues in *Look Back in Anger*. In this sense, Alison is a victim of the institution of marriage, a social construct of the dominant ideology that upholds and perpetuates male dominance through gender-biased tasks. It is possible to see Jimmy’s domineering of his wife as a way to keep his position as the family’s head. The power struggles between the two genders in a post-war society are reflected in the drama through Jimmy and Alison. Jimmy portrays an image of the patriarchal worldview that sees women as the other by his treatment of Alison. “Nothing I could do would provoke her” he even admits that he did all of these on purpose to elicit a response from her (Osborne, 1960, p. 19). She never expresses her feelings. Rather, she would remain silent, and take comfort in ironing and solitude. She uses her quietness to demonstrate endurance and patience, which acts as a kind of barrier against Jimmy’s rage. However, there comes a moment when his attacks nearly turned physical. As it is evident from the stage directions, Alison may face physical violence during a fight between Jimmy and Cliff. At the start of the play, as he pushes Cliff onto the ironing board and subsequently onto Alison, Alison gets

burned on the arm. Alison's bodily suffering may serve as a metaphor for the mental and emotional suffering she endures as a result of Jimmy. According to Friedan, "there is no road to identity" (1962, p. 232) and "the identity of a woman is determined by her biology" (p. 38). People's social identities are greatly influenced by cultural conventions. Gender serves as a bridge across social and biological disparities, uniting the subordinate woman with the superior man. Likewise Alison is portrayed as a woman who lacks her own distinct personality and individuality as though she is Jimmy's property inside the home. She is not given the same freedom to exercise her autonomy as many other women who live under patriarchal systems, which calls into question preconceived notions about gender and power. In her essay, Wandor claimed that: "Alison is ironing one of Jimmy's shirts and wearing another. Immediately she is identified as 'his'; servicing his clothes, wearing 'his' uniform and working on his behalf- ironing his clothes while he is at leisure" (2014, p. 42). The aforementioned quotation demonstrates how domestic work reinforces conventional gender norms, where women are supposed to support and service males. The language and identity approach of R. Williams (1976) likewise looks at how language and symbols convey cultural meanings. The notion that Alison's actions and attire led to her being referred to as "his" emphasizes how language and symbols support gendered power relations. She has been feeling like "I've been on trial every day and night of my life for nearly four years" (Osborne, 1960, p. 67). She began to lose her patience with him. These dynamics, which highlight how cultural and societal factors affect the play's characters' interactions with one another and their conduct, can be examined via the perspective of cultural materialism.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, applying cultural materialism to John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* provides valuable insights on the complex interactions between power structures, gender roles and socioeconomic dynamics in post-World War II Britain. This research explains the widespread impact of patriarchal ideology and its effects on people by closely examining the characters and their interactions; Alison serves as a prime example of this. The way that Alison is portrayed as a victim of patriarchal tyranny highlights the structural injustices that are ingrained in society standards and marriages. Her submission to Jimmy's tyrannical actions and her shackling to gender norms serve as a perfect example of how male dominance permeates society and shapes women's identities and lives. Additionally, the discrimination she experiences as a woman of upper class traversing a working-class environment highlights the ways in which class and gender overlap, making her agency and autonomy within the story even more complicated. Through placing the characters' experiences in the larger socio-economic framework of post-World War II Britain, this analysis emphasizes the role that material circumstances play in forming cultural norms and power structures. The framework of cultural materialism proposed by Raymond Williams provides a sophisticated insight into the relationship between material reality, ideological frameworks and interpersonal relationships, which enhances the understanding of the socio-political importance of the text. Overall, a cultural materialist analysis of *Look Back in Anger* reveals the complex ways that gendered power relations and socioeconomic structures interact to maintain oppression and inequality. Through the play's examination of characters such as Alison and Jimmy, patriarchal hegemony and its persistent effects on personal agency, interpersonal relationships, and society standards are poignantly critiqued. As a result, this research advances our understanding of Osborne's pioneering work in relation to post-World War II British literature and sociocultural debate.



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