



DISCUSSIONS OF SOCIAL CLASS, DISCRIMINATION AND CLASS CONFLICT IN *THE CHERRY ORCHARD* AND *LOOK BACK IN ANGER*

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Abstract

Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* and Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* portray the problems of social class, social prejudice and class struggles in different societies and periods. While the former reflects the conflicts between the working class and the upper class before and after the rise of the middle class in the 19th century Russia, the latter depicts the clash between the working class and the upper middle class after WWII in England. One can identify some significant similarities and differences regarding the issue of social class in these two plays. Thus, in this study, the social struggles of characters from different classes and their conflicts with one another will be questioned by emphasizing the impact of changing social values and roles upon these individuals, so the aim of this article is to analyze two different settings in terms of class frictions by referring to the reasons and outcomes of these problems.

Key Words: *The Cherry Orchard, Look Back in Anger, Social Class, Discrimination, Class Conflict.*

THE CHERRY ORCHARD VE LOOK BACK IN ANGER ADLI ESERLERDE SOSYAL SINIF, AYRIMCILIK VE SINIF ÇATIŞMASI TARTIŞMALARI

Özet

Chekhov'un *The Cherry Orchard* ve Osborne'un *Look Back in Anger* adlı eserleri farklı toplumlar ve dönemlerdeki sosyal sınıf, sosyal önyargı ve sınıfsal çatışmaları sergilemektedir. İlk eser 19. yy. Rus toplumunda orta sınıfın ortaya çıkmasından önce ve sonra işçi sınıfı ve üst sınıf arasında yaşanan çatışmaları yansıtırken, ikinci eser II. Dünya Savaşı sonrası İngiliz toplumunda işçi sınıfı ve üst orta sınıf arasındaki uyuşmazlığı gözler önüne sermektedir. Bu iki oyunda sosyal sınıf konusu açısından öne çıkan bazı benzerlik ve farklılıklar tespit edilebilir. Böylece, bu çalışmada, değişen sosyal değer ve rollerin bu bireyler üzerindeki etkisi vurgulanarak, farklı sınıflardan karakterlerin sosyal mücadeleleri ve birbirleriyle olan ilişkileri sorgulanacaktır, bu sebeple bu makalenin amacı iki farklı mekân ve zamanı, sınıfsal anlaşmazlıklar açısından, bu sorunların sebep ve sonuçlarına değinerek incelemektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *The Cherry Orchard, Look Back in Anger, Sosyal Sınıf, Ayrımcılık, Sınıf Çatışması.*

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The emergence of class issue, social discrimination between classes, inequality among different groups in societies have been significant subjects of various literary works. Many writers, in their works, shed light on the impact of class mobility upon the social status of individuals by reflecting the destructiveness of class distinction. In this sense, Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* (1904) and John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956) also portray the conflicts between different classes and depict the corruption and social chaos in two different countries with different manners.

First of all, when Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* is examined in terms of the problematic points related to social class, class conflicts and social inequality, it is obvious that the social gap between the upper class and working class is one of the problems discussed in the play. Another problem regarding the social roles is the rise of the middle class, merchant class. Especially the conflicts of the merchant class with the aristocrats are depicted in the work with the purpose of showing the impact of the changing social roles upon the Russian society.

Considering the reasons leading to class struggles and the sufferings of characters due to class contradictions in the play, the rise of the merchant class and the decline of aristocracy should be analyzed so as to observe the disorder and social problems in Russian society in the 19th century. In *The Cherry Orchard*, while Mrs Ranevsky represents the fall of the Russian aristocrats, Lopakhin symbolizes the rise of the merchant class in Russia. Before this social change, in Russia there was a wide gap between the aristocrats and the working class in terms of social and economic conditions, as a consequence of which the peasants suffered from degradation and lack of respect. Since the aristocrats held the power in their own hands, they looked down on the working class and imposed their power upon them. In this sense, after the collapse of aristocracy in Russia, the social values and the conflicts between classes were replaced with new notions and new social classes. Particularly after the abolition of serfdom, the aristocrats lost their privileged positions and many land-owners turned out to be more dominant owing to their properties. In addition, those who proved themselves in trade and in industry also gained primary roles in society. Thus, the new powerful class, the merchant class emerged (Salter, 1907: 304-05, 308). By exposing this transformation in terms of classes, "Chekhov himself contended that the norms upheld by a society become palpable only when they are violated, and he adopted as a kind of goal the displaying of such infractions" (Popkin, 1993: 10). Thus, portraying the shifts between classes, Chekhov depicts the social contradictions in Russian society. In this perspective, in the play, the rise of the middle class in the nineteenth-century after the abolition of serfdom is effectively illustrated. Hence, what is in the foreground is "the transition occurring in [Chekhov's] contemporary Russia from the [...] pastoral world of the old nobility to a modern world of business and industry where the ability to change determines power and wealth" (Baehr, 1999: 99). Within this social structure, Lopakhin, whose family is degraded by the aristocratic family of Mrs Ranevsky before the rise of the merchant class, turns out to be a rich merchant who gains the power of the aristocrats as a result of the new social system in Russia (1998, I. 241). On the other hand, he is aware of the fact that while he is rich, he does not have the necessary knowledge and values to become an upper-class as he himself indicates in the work:

It's true my father was a peasant, but here am I in my white waistcoat and brown boots, barging in like a bull in a china shop. The only thing is, I am rich. I have plenty of money, but when you really get down to it. I'm just another country bumpkin. [...]. I was reading this book and couldn't make sense of it. (1998, I. 241)

It proves that even though he has gained wealth, he can not adopt the notions of upper-class and can not compete with the aristocrats in terms of their educational background, living style or social understandings, so despite his prosperity, he is unable to understand what he

reads. Even if he believes that the gap between the working class and the upper class will be eliminated when the working class climbs the social ladder and achieves a better economic condition, he becomes disillusioned when he recognizes that it is not enough to be transferred into the middle class and to attain wealth. Therefore, as Deer stresses,

[a]s a peasant by birth and upbringing, he feels that he is subservient to the Ranevskayas [...]. Yet, as a freed serf, he has the money and the desire to be an aristocrat. He scolds himself for desiring to rise above his class [...], and yet he wants to do just that. Thus, when he meditates upon the incongruity of the peasant in white waistcoat, he is struggling to reconcile the conflicting desires within himself. (1958: 32)

Lopakhin's inner conflict shows the situation of many Russian merchants who are not regarded as individuals by the aristocrats before the collapse of the aristocratic system and who suffer from class distinction in society. In this respect, Chekhov employs social realism in order to criticize the aristocrats who are obsessed with just their self-interest; by means of Lopakhin, he effectively portrays the misery and the anguish experienced by the working class before the aristocratic system shatters. The torment they are faced with is clearly highlighted by Lopakhin:

To be honest, the life we lead is preposterous.[...]. My father was a peasant, an idiot who understood nothing, taught me nothing and just beat me when he was drunk, with a stick too. As a matter of fact I'm just as big a numskull and idiot myself. I never learned anything and my handwriting's awful. A pig could write about as well as I do, I'm ashamed to let anyone see it. (1998, II. 263)

He emphasizes that his father was a peasant who knew nothing, understood nothing and who did not guide him to acquire necessary knowledge, skills, gentle manners, so this expression demonstrates that Lopakhin experiences the burden of coming from the lower, working class and being the servant of the aristocrats who consider the peasants to be insignificant, ignorant and inferior creatures. Thus, Lopakhin complains about his lack of education, writing skills, in a sense, he attacks the system in Russia, which does not provide educational and social opportunities with the working class. As they are peasants, they are not respected and their opinions are disregarded as Lopakhin says to Mrs Ravensky: "This brother of yours calls me a lout of a peasant" (1998, I. 248). This expression portrays the humiliation and the torments the peasants put up with before the aristocrats lose their power in Russia. As Werth emphasizes, "[t]hat is why Chekhov's philosophy is the philosophy of a true realist. The actual subject of Chekhov's stories is this world, where only a "half" or a "quarter" is known. [...]. For there is a sort of "moral lesson" to be found in his [...] philosophy" (1925: 623). Chekhov, in a very realistic way, reflects the social gap and the changing socio-economic situations in his society by emphasizing the didactic message and demonstrating the "historically, nationally determined social class[es], one [...] spectrum of concerns, feelings and ideas" (Senelick, 1997: 1). Since social classes have been constructed and accepted historically and nationally, it was hard to alter the social roles of people and each social role represented different perspectives, philosophies and problems, as a result it resulted in conflicts among different classes.

In Chekhov's play 'the cherry orchard and the cherry trees' are the representatives of the shattered aristocracy and the emergence of the new wealthy tradesmen, so the use of 'the cherry orchard' is symbolic in the play, because it is Lopakhin who buys the cherry orchard that belongs to the aristocratic family of Mrs Ravensky (1998, III. 281). Especially the "lonely and sad [...] noise of an axe striking a tree" (1998, IV. 294) at the end of the play and the cherry trees' being cut down, symbolize the shattering of the aristocratic system and the collapse

of the upper-class as well. As McVay highlights, “[...] Chekhov was never a totally neutral and impartial observer. He selected his material carefully, inviting the readers to act as jury [...]” (1998: 116); Chekhov, by depicting the selfish nature and materialistic understanding of the aristocrats and linking their loss of power with the cherry orchard’s being destroyed, makes the readers see the fall of aristocracy. It is clear that the dominant aristocrats lose their social positions and their financial superiority in society, whereas the manufacturers, merchants, tradesmen turn out to be the dominant wealthy class, whose members dominate the business world and the industry. Considering the position of Lopakhin, it is clear that although he does not completely represent the values of the middle class, bourgeoisie, in the play he comes into view as the representative of the rising bourgeois, who buys the estate, in other words, ‘the cherry orchard,’ owing to his new social and economic position, thus the cherry orchard stands for the new social structure in Russian society and the dominance of the merchant class as seen in Lopakhin’s words:

[...] the cherry orchard’s mine! Tell me I’m drunk or crazy, say it’s all a dream. [...] If my father and grandfather could only rise from their graves and see what happened, see how their Yermolay-Yermolay who was always being beaten, who could hardly write his name and ran round barefoot in winter-how this same Yermolay bought the estate where my father and grandfather were slaves, where they weren’t even allowed inside the kitchen. (1998, III. 282)

What draws attention is that Lopakhin, whose father and grandfather are despised by the family of Mrs Ravensky as if they were slaves, possesses the estate and the cherry orchard due to the changes of social classes that take place in Russia. The aristocrats’ loss of economic and social power in society leads the merchant class, those like Lopakhin, to become influential and wealthy. That is why Lopakhin feels as if he were in a dream. Hence, as Fitzpatrick underlines, “Chekhov’s play [depicts] [...] the way people react to a changing society” (1977: 267). On the other hand, what is very ironic is that in spite of all the financial difficulties the aristocrats are faced with, they are still concerned about their own advantages as observed in the play through Mrs Ravensky’s manners. When her behaviours are taken into consideration, what comes to the fore is her devotion to materialism despite her economic problems after the fall of aristocracy, so her daughter criticizes this situation in the play as follows:

She’d already sold her villa near Menton and had nothing left, nothing at all. I hadn’t any money either, there was hardly enough for the journey. And Mother simply won’t understand. If we have a meal in a station restaurant she asks for all the most expensive things and tips the waiters a rouble each. (1998, I. 245)

It is apparent that in spite of her financial problems, Mrs Ravensky does not hesitate to spend her money to have a more luxurious and comfortable life, so she asks for the high-priced things and wastes her money to show off by giving all the waiters tips in an extravagant manner. Although she says: “Yesterday I had lots of money, but I’ve hardly any left today” (1998, II. 261), she does not hesitate to waste it. Mrs Ravensky’s indifferent approach to the financial problems, her spending money carelessly and her irresponsible manners are criticized in the play; as Remaley stresses, “[her attitude] to their serious plight is essential to an understanding of much of the comedy in *The Cherry Orchard*” (1973: 16-17). In other words, the “naïve self-centeredness” (Evdokimova, 2000: 639) of the upper-class is condemned. Thus, “[i]n calling [...] *The Cherry Orchard* [as a comedy], [Chekhov] intended something radically different from our usual meanings [...]” (Gilman, 2002: x). What is ironic in the play is the attempt of the Russian noble class not to renounce their luxurious life despite their economic problems, so in the

play Mrs Ravensky symbolizes the destructiveness of materialism by representing the selfish aristocrats, who are cut-off from realism because of centring merely on their own affairs. In this sense, it is no doubt that “[t]he sale and subsequent destruction of the orchard, in turn, symbolize the broader effects of time, the passing of an old social order” (Foster, 1987: 164).

Accordingly, Lopakhin also portrays the materialists, who are obsessed with just their own benefits. His greed leads him to buy the estate without considering the emotions of the others, so he says: “this house-it’s no more use anyway, is it?-and cut down the old cherry orchard” (1998, I. 249). It is apparent that the greedy, insensitive capitalist is indifferent to the memories of the family members for whom the orchard has been very valuable; even if he has wealth, he has no mercy. Because of his hatred against the aristocrats who treat the working class in a despising manner before the rise of the merchant class, he cannot help treating them in the same way. Thus capitalism is also criticized by Chekhov in *The Cherry Orchard* so as to highlight its destructive impact upon individuals. In this setting, the character Trofimov becomes the spokesman of the play and emphasizes the social ills in Russian society by attacking the manners of the aristocrats and the inequality between classes as explicitly recognized in the quotation:

[...] we must work and we must do all we can for those who are trying to find the truth. Here in Russia very few people do work at present. The kind of Russian intellectuals I know [...] aren’t looking for anything. They don’t do anything. They still don’t know the meaning of hard work. (1998, II. 265-66)

Trofimov’s stress on the indifference of the Russian intelligent towards the improvement of their society and their reluctance to work to contribute to their community, reveals lack of concern in Russian society for the social and economic progress. It is obvious that the upper class are so preoccupied with their own positions that they do not feel the necessity to take a step for the sake of their country. As Serbinenko suggests, “it is a society that is in principle neither perfect nor ideal” (1993: 2794) and this is effectively highlighted by Chekhov in the play. Although it seems to be a perfect and ideal society according to the perspective of the wealthy, in fact the society is a symbol of materialism and corruption, as a result the problems of the poor are ignored and they are left behind with their miserable conditions.

Another important fact demonstrated by Chekhov is the class rigidity exercised by the aristocrats before the rise of the middle class, which brought about very dramatic outcomes. Since the aristocrats dwelt on their self-interest, they neglected the needs of the lower class. As the upper class put a distance between themselves and the lower class, there was a huge gap between the two classes. As Salter asserts, in that period while the noble class had lands, titles, honours, rights, the peasants had nothing but masters who determined everything related to their lives, so the clash between the upper and the lower-class took place (1907: 304-05). In the play, not only Lopakhin, but also Trofimov reflects the miserable condition of the peasants and their dehumanization owing to the cruelty of the aristocrats, who are also defined in the play as ‘intelligentsia’ due to their education and intellectual capacity:

They call themselves an intelligentsia, but they speak to their servants as inferiors and treat the peasants like animals. They don’t study properly, they never read anything serious, in fact they don’t do anything at all. [...] all the time everyone knows the workers are abominably fed and sleep without proper bedding, thirty or forty to a room [...], the moral degradation. [...]. What we have got is dirt, vulgarity and sexual. (1998, II. 266)

It is Trofimov, who stresses how the peasants are treated as if they were 'inferior' creatures or 'animals' by indicating that working class people suffer from insufficiency of living conditions and poverty. What is very ironic is that although the upper class pretend to be very knowledgeable, in fact they are not socially conscious about the vulnerable condition of the working class so that they do not try to reform the condition of these people who suffer from starvation and insufficient living conditions. This proves the ignorance of the intelligentsia on the sufferings of the working class and it leads to their isolation from one another, so Chekhov "use[s] analogous strategies for setting a panorama of isolation, blockage [...]" (Whitaker, 1991: 5), and this isolation is questioned in the play as well. The isolation depicted in the work stands for the destructive outcomes of the separation between the intelligentsia and the working class, the serfs in Russian society. The more they were isolated from each other, the more they had tension with one another, so it became hardly possible for them to come to terms with each other. But, especially after the economic and industrial developments in Russia, "the first questioning of serfdom and autocracy on moral grounds" came to the fore (Russians Abroad: 1996: 1). As a consequence, the 'cherry orchard' symbolizes the 19th century Russian society in which classes were in conflict with one another as Trofimov says to Anya:

All Russia is our orchard. [...]Your grandfather, your great grandfather and all your ancestors owned serfs, they owned human souls. Don't you see that from every cherry-tree in the orchard, from every leaf and every trunk, men and women are gazing at you? Owning living souls, that's what has changed you all so completely. (1998, II. 269)

The aristocrats' ignoring the needs of the working class, the sufferings of the working class as a consequence of this ignorance can be associated with the important function of the 'cherry orchard' in the play. The distressed position of many peasants and the cruelty of the noble class are symbolically related to the 'cherry trees,' which are cut down at the end of the play. So, as Foster claims, "[t]he orchard itself, symbolizing in the first instance a decaying social order, as it passes from blossom to destruction, comes also to signify the depredations of time and the transience of life" (2003: 129).

"The decaying social order" in the play represents the decline of aristocracy and the rise of the middle class. The destruction experienced by the working class before the fall of aristocracy is replaced with the destruction experienced by the aristocrats with the rise of the middle class as a result of the change in social class. This change gives rise to the change in social roles and results in conflicts between social classes as discussed in this article. Similar problematic issues about social positions and classes can also be observed in another play, John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, in a different context.

In *Look Back in Anger*, the sorrows, hopelessness and anger of the working class are depicted and the conflict between the upper class and the lower class is also demonstrated. In the post-war period, after World War II, in England, a great change in social values took place. The working class were provided with educational opportunities, nevertheless they were not respected, their opinions were disregarded (Gilleman, 2002: 51). Thus, this problem, which reached its peak after WWII in English society, is emphasized through Jimmy Porter in Osborne's play. Like this character, in England there appeared 'the lost generation' whose members were living in a vacuum in the post-war period and they were called as 'the angry young men,' who were angry with the degradation and the sufferings the educated working class people were subjected to (Wyllie, 2001: 1-2). Like Jimmy Porter, many working class people, despite their education, were regarded as insignificant, disrespected individuals even if they became members of middle class, so this degradation led to their psychological suffering. As Innes asserts, " 'The Angry Young Men' catchphrase gained rapid currency as the defining image of a 'lost generation' " (2002: 93) as it is also seen in Osborne's play.

While the working class in *The Cherry Orchard* is described as despised and oppressed due to lack of education and social rights, this group in *Look Back in Anger* is suffocated and repressed in spite of their education, because education cannot enable them to become respectable persons and to attain prestigious positions in society. In this respect, Jimmy, who is imprisoned by his working class background, is unable to adapt himself into the bourgeoisie values and becomes the epitome of such people who were degraded as a consequence of class discrimination in England. For this reason “[w]hen Jimmy looks back in anger, he is generationally situated as a voice of contemporary youth [...]. He is certainly prepared to denounce his own generation for getting too used too readily to a diminished role in the world [...].” (Quigley, 1997: 40-42). In other words, Jimmy Porter represents the anger and the psychological problems of the young working class people in the post-war England and becomes their voice to ask for their rights. The character not only questions the injustice against the working class but he also attacks the working class individuals, who do not question this injustice, consequently Jimmy can be regarded as the spokesperson in the play.

Jimmy’s suffering because of his regarding life as meaningless can be seen in the play in his own words: “It’s always depressing, always the same. We never seem to get ant 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” (1957, I. 8). It is doubtless that he can not feel comfortable as a working class man who finds a position for himself in the middle class, so he attacks the upper middle class due to their indifference towards the miserable condition of the lower class and his anger can also be observed in his looks as Alison’s friend Helena says: “I’ve never seen such hatred in someone’s eyes before. It’s slightly horrifying” (1957, II. i. 39). This angry young man is also against his wife and her mother, both of whom belong to the upper middle class. Therefore, his friend Cliff says to Alison:

I suppose he and I think the same about a lot of things, because we’re alike in some ways. We both come from working people [...]. Oh I know some of his mother’s relatives are pretty posh, but he hates them as much as he hates yours. Don’t quite know why. Anyway, he gets on with me because I’m common. (1957, I. 27)

What Cliff highlights is that Jimmy shows his hatred and anger towards the upper middle class, whereas he can get on well with the ordinary working class people. His harsh rejection of upper middle class values is based on his being a displaced person among the upper middle class; because in spite of his education, he can not adopt the notions, understandings and habits of the bourgeois. Moreover, due to his educational background, he cannot come to terms with the values of the working class and marries an upper middle class woman. Thus, Osborne illustrates “[t]he dramatization of the tormented life of an articulated, sensitive working class intellectual, both isolated from and yet concerned about his society” (Goldstone, 1982: 215-216). Jimmy’s “tormented life” due to his anger towards the inequality between classes is effectively reflected in the play. Since he is so angry with the upper class, he isolates himself from society, but he cannot put up with the injustice against the working class, so he is still concerned about the social problems experienced by his own class.

Because of his concern about the condition of his own class and the gap between the upper middle class and working class, he shows his anger towards his upper middle class wife and her mother. His calling Alison’s mother “an old bitch and [as a person who] should be dead” (1957, II. i. 53) effectively proves his hatred towards her class. Thus, “[t]he play’s logic of anger and despair [...] reflects a systematic functionalistic convention of reality” (Gilleman, 1997: 71). On the other hand, he feels sympathy towards Hugh’s mother who is poor and uneducated as Alison indicates: “Jimmy seems to adore her [Hugh’s mother] principally because she’s been poor almost all her life, and she’s frankly ignorant” (1957, II. i. 45). Therefore, he is very sensitive

to the distressed and miserable people like himself. In this sense, Jimmy can be regarded “not just the messenger but rather as the message of the play” (Demastes, 1997: 62). By means of this character, Osborne underlines the desolation of the working class in England, especially after WWII. He reveals the desperate condition of these people who are torn between their original and new identities. In the work, as Helena indicates, “[Jimmy] doesn’t know where he is, or where he’s going” (1957, III. iii. 96), because he loses his personal identity like many educated working class people.

Moreover, his painful memories of childhood, his father’s depressed situation after the war also cause his hopelessness and anger as he utters: “For twelve months, I watched my father dying-when I was ten years old. He’d come back from the war in Spain [...]. I learnt at an early age what it was to be angry-angry and helpless” (1957, II. i. 58). Not only the class distinction in English society, but also his witnessing his father’s suffering after the war, his psychological trauma after recognizing the destructive nature of war, also plays a considerable role in his sorrow, loneliness and anger. The depression he experiences in his childhood due to his father’s sorrowful position reaches its peak when he is exposed to class distinction in his youth.

His protest against class discrimination and his anger as a working class man towards the upper class can also be recognized after his marriage to Alison from the upper middle class. His discomfort, isolation and loneliness among the members of the upper middle class, his negative attitude towards them lead him to feel that he is despised and disregarded by this class as he utters: “[...] She gets letters. [...]. Letters from her mother, letters in which I’m not mentioned at all because my name is a dirty word [...]. She writes long letters back to Mummy, and never mentions me at all, because I’m just a dirty word to her too” (1957, I. 35). It is clear that he portrays his aggressive approach also to his wife and feels as if he were inferior due to his background, so he complains about Alison’s and her mother’s letters in which he is not mentioned. Thus, it would not be wrong to say that “[i]n Jimmy Porter, Osborne created what came to be seen as a model of the ‘angry young man’ ” (Bond, 1999: 3). He is so angry and feels so lost that even Alison’s pregnancy is not important for him, because he thinks that she has a negative attitude towards Hugh’s mother, who is an ignorant and a poor woman:

I don’t care if she’s going to have a baby [...]. For eleven hours, I have been watching someone I love very much going through the sordid process of dying. She [Alison] made the greatest mistake of all her kind. She thought that because Hugh’s mother was a deprived and ignorant old woman, who said all the wrong things in all the wrong places, so she couldn’t be taken seriously. And you think I should be overcome with awe because that cruel, stupid girl is going to have a baby! (1957, II. ii. 76)

He feels himself so isolated from the upper middle class that he leads his life dealing just with the problems or affairs of the lower class, so he ignores the pregnancy of his wife and treats her in a very cruel way by blaming her for her indifference to the condition of Hugh’s mother. In addition, he pays no attention to the feelings of his wife even after the loss of their baby by saying: “it isn’t my first loss” (1957, III. ii. 98). His suffering as a consequence of being disrespected and finding no proper place for himself in society, shows that he has experienced pain before. In this respect, there emerged many English in the post-war period, like Jimmy, “[...] [who were] displaced persons in English society, belonging to no one, yet wanting to have an acceptable identity compatible with their self-realization” (Kroll, 1959: 556). His feeling alienated to his own society due to his identity crisis makes him suffer and at the end of the play Alison also learns suffering after the loss of her baby as she utters: “All I wanted was to die [...]. I was in pain [...] if only he could see me now [...]. This is what he’s been longing for me to feel. [...] I’m burning, and all I want is to die! It’s cost him his child” (1957, III. ii. 95). In

this outlook, Alison and Jimmy, who can not reconcile with one another because of Jimmy's discomfort and his anger towards Alison's class, overcome their problem when Alison suffers as well. Thus, the conflict between them efficiently represents the effects of the changing values in the post-war English society.

Comparing and contrasting these two works in terms of class and the exercise of social discrimination, it can be asserted that the common point in these two works is that in Chekhov's play, the social change after the collapse of aristocracy in Russia and the new social roles are questioned, similarly in Osborne's work, the changing social structure in the post-war England and the inner conflict experienced by individuals due to this change can also be observed. Nevertheless, even if the discussions about class and social distinction in *Look Back in Anger* and *The Cherry Orchard* appear similar, the most significant difference between the two plays is the portrayal of the condition of the working class. While in Osborne's play, the social position of the educated working class in the post-war England is depicted, in Chekhov's play, what is reflected is the social and economic change experienced by the uneducated Russian peasants, who did not have the right even to receive education and who were treated as if they were slaves before the emancipation of the serfs in Russia. On the one hand, Osborne's work sheds light on the disillusioned English working class people with the decline of the British Empire after WWII by demonstrating the agony of the lost generation, who were torn between their original and new identities, which was re-shaped after they received education. On the other hand, in Chekhov's play, one can observe the depiction of a harsh discrimination in Russian society, the peasants' agonies due to lack of social and educational rights before the rise of the merchant class together with their uncomfortable position because of their social and educational background even after the decline of aristocracy.

Finally, both of the works reflect the transformation that took place with the new social structures in different societies despite the differences in terms of setting and the reflection of the historical background. It can be concluded that in *Look Back in Anger*, the portrayal of the main character includes a multidimensional and psychological sense whereas in *The Cherry Orchard* one can not recognize such a kind of mental picture reflecting the psychological condition of the major character, but the common point in these two plays is that the playwrights show the impact of socio-economic conditions upon the conflicts between the upper class and the working class. Thus, it is obvious that the problems related to class, social status and social discrimination are questioned in these two works by means of different characters from different environments and periods, with different social and historical backgrounds, but with common concerns.

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