



**REPRESENTATIONS OF THE INTELLECTUAL
IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH THEATRE**

Yavuz PALA

PhD Dissertation

English Language and Literature

Assoc. Prof. Yeliz BİBER VANGÖLÜ

2024

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T.C.
ATATURK UNIVERSITY
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SUPERVISOR
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ERZURUM -2024



TEZ BEYAN FORMU

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜNE

BİLDİRİM

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ABSTRACT**PhD THESIS****REPRESENTATIONS OF THE INTELLECTUAL IN CONTEMPORARY
BRITISH THEATRE****Yavuz PALA****Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Yeliz BİBER VANGÖLÜ****2024, 216 Pages****Jury: Assoc. Prof. Yeliz BİBER VANGÖLÜ****Prof. Arda ARIKAN****Prof. Mehmet TAKKAÇ****Assoc. Prof. Kubilay GEÇİKLİ****Assoc. Prof. Yavuz ÇELİK**

This thesis provides a comprehensive examination of intellectuals in contemporary British theatre, tracing their evolution from ancient times to the present day. Through a multidisciplinary approach, this study explores representations of intellectual characters on the stage. The study comprises six main chapters along with an introduction and a conclusion. Chapter One provides a historical overview of intellectuals, examining their social roles and perceptions from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. Chapter Two delves into contemporary perspectives on intellectuals, exploring their responsibilities and dilemmas through the works of influential thinkers. Chapter Three analyses the portrayal of intellectuals in Western and British theatre, tracing their evolution and impact throughout history. Chapter Four investigates the ethical complexities of intellectual pursuits through a textual analysis of Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* and Tom Stoppard's *The Hard Problem*. Chapter Five examines the Marxist perspective on intellectuals in Trevor Griffiths' *Occupations* and *The Party*, highlighting their engagement with social transformation. Chapter Six explores critiques of social norms and the role of the artist in challenging authority through a textual analysis of *Look Back in Anger* and *Scenes from an Execution* by John Osborne and Howard Barker respectively. Through these chapters, the thesis offers an exploration of intellectual identity, engagement and representation in contemporary British theatre, shedding light on their enduring significance in shaping social discourse and values.

Keywords: Intellectual, Contemporary British Theatre, Ethics, Responsibility, Authority.

ÖZET

DOKTORA TEZİ

ÇAĞDAŞ BRİTANYA TİYATROSUNDA ENTELEKTÜEL TEMSİLLERİ

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Yeliz BİBER VANGÖLÜ

2024, 216 Sayfa

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Bu tez, çağdaş Britanya tiyatrosunda entelektüellerin kapsamlı bir incelemesini sunmakta ve antik çağlardan günümüze kadar geçirdikleri evrimin izini sürmektedir. Bu çalışma disiplinler arası bir yaklaşımla, entelektüel karakterlerin sahnedeki temsillerini incelemektedir. Çalışma, giriş ve sonuç bölümlerinin yanı sıra altı ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci Bölüm, Orta Çağ'dan yirminci yüzyıla kadar entelektüellerin toplumsal rollerini ve algılarını inceleyerek entelektüellere tarihsel bir bakış sunuyor. İkinci Bölüm, entelektüellere ilişkin çağdaş perspektifleri ele almakta, sorumluluklarını ve ikilemelerini etkili düşünürlerin eserleri üzerinden incelemektedir. Üçüncü Bölüm, entelektüellerin Batı ve Britanya tiyatrosundaki tasvirlerini analiz ederek, tarih boyunca geçirdikleri evrimin ve etkilerinin izini sürmektedir. Dördüncü Bölüm, Robert Bolt'un *A Man for All Seasons* ve Tom Stoppard'ın *The Hard Problem* oyunlarının metin analizleri aracılığıyla entelektüel uğraşların etik karmaşıklıklarını araştırmaktadır. Beşinci Bölüm, Trevor Griffiths'in *Occupations* ve *The Party* adlı eserlerinde entelektüellere yönelik Marksist bakış açısını incelemekte ve entelektüellerin toplumsal dönüşümle olan ilişkilerini vurgulamaktadır. Altıncı bölüm, John Osborne ve Howard Barker'ın sırasıyla *Look Back in Anger* ve *Scenes from an Execution* adlı eserlerinin metin analizleriyle toplumsal normların eleştirisini ve sanatçının otoriteye meydan okumadaki rolünü incelemektedir. Bu bölümler aracılığıyla tez, çağdaş Britanya tiyatrosunda entelektüel kimlik, sorumluluk ve temsile dair bir keşif sunmakta ve bunların toplumsal söylem ve değerleri şekillendirmedeki süregelen önemine ışık tutmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Entelektüel, Çağdaş Britanya Tiyatrosu, Etik, Sorumluluk, Otorite.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Assoc. Prof. Yeliz Biber Vangölü for her exceptional support, infinite patience and steadfast guidance during my doctoral studies. Her expertise, dedication and genuine interest in my research have been pivotal in shaping my academic growth and achievements. Her profound insights, constructive criticism and encouragement have continuously pushed me to exceed my own expectations and reach new heights in my research endeavours. Her dedication to success, coupled with her expertise in the field, has been instrumental in shaping my scholarly journey. I am profoundly grateful for her mentorship and the invaluable lessons I have learned under her guidance. Assoc. Prof. Yeliz Biber Vangölü's impact on my academic and professional trajectory is immeasurable, and I am privileged to have her as my supervisor.

I am thankful for the valuable contributions of Prof. Mehmet Takkaç and Assoc. Prof. Kubilay Geçikli during the writing process of my PhD. Their insightful feedback and guidance have played a pivotal role in shaping the quality and direction of my research. I also extend my sincere thanks to Asst. Prof. İsmail Avcu for his support throughout my PhD journey. I am truly grateful for his assistance during this challenging pursuit.

I am grateful to my teacher, Ayten Şirin, for her invaluable role in inspiring my academic pursuits and for her support during the critical years leading up to university. Her belief in my abilities and support during the challenging process of preparing for university exams was invaluable. I am grateful for her commitment to her students' success and for being a guiding light in their academic journey.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my parents, Mustafa and Medine and my sisters, Nilgün and Büşra, for their support during my PhD. Their belief in me has been a source of motivation, propelling me forward even in the face of adversity. I am fortunate to have such a loving and supportive family, whose presence has enriched every step of this journey.

SCHOLARSHIP STATEMENT

I am immensely grateful for the support extended to me by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) through the 2214/A International Research Fellowship Programme for PhD Students. The scholarship provided invaluable funding for my study abroad, facilitating the completion of my thesis. I am deeply appreciative of the opportunities afforded to me as a TÜBİTAK fellow, which have significantly enriched my academic journey and allowed me to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in my field.

Undertaking this PhD journey has been deeply transformative for me, influencing my academic career in many ways. I owe immense gratitude to TÜBİTAK for their invaluable financial support, which played a crucial role in enhancing my studies at the University of Lincoln. I extend my sincere appreciation to Dr Jacqueline Bolton for her support and guidance throughout my twelve-month as a Visiting Scholar at the University of Lincoln.

INTRODUCTION

I will tell you what I will do and what I will not do. I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it calls itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use – silence, exile and cunning.

—James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

Stephen Dedalus, one of the most remarkably intellectual characters of British literature, discloses his intellectual awakening by manifesting the supremacy of his own intellect and freedom over what he considers as the oppressive Irish identity and the Catholic Church. The repetition of ‘I’ in the quotation is significant mainly due to his intended emphasis on individualism and one’s own intellect, which runs parallel to the lexical meaning of the term, ‘intellectual’: “a person who places a high value on or pursues things of interest to the intellect or the more complex forms and fields of knowledge, as aesthetic or philosophical matters, especially on an abstract and general level” (“Intellectual”). Accordingly, while Dedalus’ declaration that he will determine his path by freely following his own desires emphasises individualism, it also appears as an intellectual attitude in Joyce’s work insofar as Dedalus believes that an individual is the starting point of all knowledge (as well as actions based on this knowledge) and that the individual reason cannot depend on a higher authority. As these conflicts intensify within Dedalus, he becomes increasingly alienated from both the Church and his homeland. He feels alienated from the religious and cultural institutions that seek to confine him, leading him to pursue intellectual and artistic freedom elsewhere. This sense of alienation makes him a self-exiled individual in search of an aesthetic and his own truth through which he can freely express his own being without reference to any authority. He thus sets out to maintain his individuality and freedom through his artistic ideals. Dedalus, in the words of Edward W. Said, is an intellectual who “will not adjust to domesticity or humdrum of routine” (17). That is, through his unorthodox ideas and aesthetic search of beauty, he confronts “orthodoxy and dogma” (11). In contrast to the society surrounding him that accepts dogmas without questioning, Dedalus can find no peace in these constructs, his

uneasiness making him a non-conformist and an aloof figure who is regarded as a rebel before the established system.

Dedalus indeed represents the sense of individualism, rebelliousness, reason, freedom and the artistic propensity of the twentieth century's intellectual figure. His character illustrates a model in understanding the nature of the intellectuals and their relationship with societies, authorities, politics and other institutions of their ages. While Dedalus serves as a foundational example of certain intellectual traits within the context of this thesis, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of his portrayal in capturing the whole scope of intellectualism. The epigraph above serves just as a backdrop to an exploration into the rich tapestry of intellectualism – its origins, motivations and impact on society. Through the lens of Dedalus' declaration, it prompts a deeper delve into the complex dynamics and history of intellectual engagement and its enduring significance in shaping human thought and progress through human history.

Intellectualism encompasses a vast array of disciplines and viewpoints, ranging from philosophy and literature to science and activism. Acknowledging this broad spectrum of intellectual discourse allows for the development of a richer understanding of the complexities and diversity inherent in intellectual thought throughout history. Commencing this study with an exploration of its etymology, definition and historical context will help to lay a basis for the further discussions in this thesis which examines representations of intellectuals in contemporary British theatre. Utilising an interdisciplinary approach, this study synthesises theoretical frameworks from literary studies, cultural theory, sociology and philosophy to understand intellectual representations and their significance in both literature and society.

The term, intellectual, derives from the Latin word 'intellectus' and the Old French word 'intellectuel' meaning the knowing and reasoning faculties of mind, or a person who is intelligent, highly gifted with understanding (Onions 479). This term refers to a person or group of people engaged in activities such as research and critical thinking, which require mental activity and knowledge. The term is commonly used as opposed to the term 'manual' for people and jobs where the use of 'intelligence' and 'reason' is intense or dominant. In this context, 'intellectual' typically refers to individuals or small groups engaged in the creation, transmission and critique of cultural products and ideas such as

writers, artists, scientists and technologists, philosophers, religious thinkers, social theorists (Bottomore 53). Since its early beginnings, the emergence of intellectual engagement has been deeply intertwined with the evolution of human societies. As communities began to form and expand, individuals found themselves facing increasingly complex challenges that required innovative solutions and deeper understanding. The transition from nomadic to sedentary agricultural societies marked a major turning point in intellectual life as individuals started to cope with the intricacies of cultivation, resource management and social organisation.

In this context, the emergence of intellectual figures became imperative as societies sought to overcome the complexities around them and establish order amidst uncertainty. According to Paul Radin, there were two groups of people, that of ‘priest-thinkers’ and ‘laymen’ in ancient societies. The first group was engaged with religious phenomena and way of thinking while the latter was preoccupied with the daily issues of survival and action (15-16). At the time, the vast majority of people were uneducated and their knowledge of the world was very limited. There was a limited group of people who could access information and receive education. These people were conscious of the phenomena of the world. Since the ignorance and incompetence of the majority caused fear, they needed more competent people to help dispel their fears regarding the phenomena the world. That is, the smaller group of priest-thinkers, who became actively engaged in thinking, emerged due to the inadequacy of the larger group of people, so the small group became complementary to the larger group. In his work, *Legislators and Interpreters* (1987) Zygmunt Bauman explains the relationship between these two groups in terms of ‘uncertainties of life’ as follows:

Uncertainty has always been the paramount source of fear. The random behaviour of factors crucial for the success or failure of one’s life struggle, the stubborn unpredictability of outcome, lack of control over so many unknowns within the life equation, these have always generated acute spiritual discomfort and made the sufferers crave for the security which only the practical control, or intellectual awareness, of probabilities may bring. This urge has been the prime yarn of which the roles of magicians, priests, scientific experts, political prophets, or professionals are spun. (*Legislators* 10)

The passage emphasises the human tendency to seek certainty and control in the face of life’s uncertainties. It also suggests that throughout history, individuals or groups claiming to possess knowledge or the ability to interpret the uncertainties of life have played important roles in society. These individuals (magicians, priests, scientific experts,

political prophets, or professionals) were believed to have insights or connections to forces beyond ordinary human understanding and consequently played an important role in explaining natural phenomena and guiding social consciousness. The basic idea here is that people's desire for security and control in the face of life's uncertainties leads to the emergence of specific roles within society. Whether through religious figures such as priests and shamans or through individuals with scientific expertise and political insight, common people have sought out those who can offer explanations and insights and thus help to alleviate the discomfort caused by the unpredictability of life.

The existence of individuals with intellectual roles engaged in critical thinking and interpretation has been a consistent feature across different societies and historical periods. Regardless of a particular cultural, religious or social context, there have always been individuals who have played important roles in the creation, transmission and criticism of cultural products and ideas. In Ancient Greece, for example, philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle as well as the Sophists travelled to different cities to deliver lectures to students. Their main purpose was to prepare young people for practical and social life and to discuss the nature of truth with them. In doing this, they made intensive use of the art of oratory. They spread a discourse about life, science, politics and information in a form that everyone could understand (Meriç 25-26). Thus, they were usually characterised by the authorities, as well as the societies in which they existed, as divergent, immoral and evil because they fought against the established thoughts and morals. Yet, it was their rebellious, independent and revolutionist characteristics that posited them as the early representatives of free thought.

In Ancient Greece, the prime example of this commitment to the pursuit of truth was undisputedly Socrates. He sought to subject established belief systems to scrutiny by applying the dialectical method (Penner 171-173). As a result, he found himself accused by the Athenian politicians of his time who suggested that his philosophical activities were violating the morality of the younger generation. In response to all the efforts to discourage and silence him, Socrates resolutely continued to express and defend his philosophical beliefs. He chose to maintain the integrity of his ideas, preferring to face death rather than renouncing his beliefs. His story effectively connects historical threads by showing how intellectual figures have consistently played fundamental roles in the

creation, transmission and criticism of cultural products and ideas, as well as contributing to the evolution of the term, intellectual.

Following the intellectual legacy of Ancient Greece, Western civilisation continued to produce notable thinkers and scholars who shaped intellectual discourse and laid the foundations for future inquiry. In the Hellenistic period, which succeeded the classical era, figures such as Euclid, Archimedes and Ptolemy made significant contributions to mathematics, physics and astronomy, advancing knowledge in these fields and setting the stage for further intellectual exploration (Morris and Powell 522-525). The Roman Empire inherited and expanded upon the intellectual achievements of the Greeks, with figures like Cicero contributing to rhetoric and philosophy and Seneca exploring themes of ethics and stoicism. However, they both faced the fate of Socrates in the midst of the prevailing of anti-intellectualism as Emily Wilson points out:

Both were voluminous authors, deeply influenced by rhetorical training, who composed both poetry and prose, including philosophical works and both were also key figures on the political stage in their times. Both were controversial figures who were accused of various forms of duplicity (indecision and flipflopping in Cicero's case, or a failure to practice what he preached in the case of Seneca) and who aroused deep enmity as well as deep friendship. Both were exiled but succeeded in making a comeback. Both died by force when the political tide turned against them. Seneca was forced to kill himself by Nero, while Cicero was assassinated in 43 BCE thanks to the enmity of Mark Antony. Cicero's death could be seen as marking the beginning of the end for the Republic, while Seneca's marked the end of the dream that an intellectual could guide Roman politics. (9)

Wilson's reflection on the fates of Cicero and Seneca offers a broader perspective on the challenges faced by intellectuals throughout history. The persistent themes of accusation, exile and tragic endings highlight the precarious position in which intellectuals have often found themselves, no matter which era or civilisation they lived in. Cicero and Seneca, thus, serve as symbolic figures representing the struggles and aspirations of intellectuals in different historical contexts. Their experiences underline the complexities and fragilities inherent in the pursuit of intellectual and political engagement throughout history.

Following the intellectual traditions established by Ancient Greece and continued throughout the Hellenistic period and the Roman Empire, Western civilisation faced a significant transition with the final collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century. Despite this decline, intellectual pursuits continued, albeit in a transformed way.

Christian theology emerged as a dominant force, reshaping intellectual discourse and influencing the trajectory of Western thought for centuries to come (Ward-Perkins 175-180). This shift marked a significant departure from the philosophical and political engagements of earlier periods, reflecting the evolving cultural and religious landscape of the post-Roman period. Thus, the transition from classical antiquity to the Middle Ages represented not only a shift in political power but also a transformation in intellectual paradigms, with Christian theology emerging as a central pillar of Western intellectual discourse.

Drawing on the etymology and historical evolution of the term, intellectual, this thesis aims to explore the multifaceted nature of intellectuality in contemporary society, with a particular focus on its representation in contemporary British theatre. It analyses how intellectual characters are portrayed in relation to social structures, authority, politics and cultural institutions. Using an interdisciplinary approach, the research offers a comprehensive examination of intellectual representations. Through a rigorous examination of intellectuals in contemporary British theatre, this study intends to shed light on the complexities of intellectual identity and its enduring relevance in an ever-changing world.

The first chapter of the thesis explores the historical evolution of intellectuals, tracing their journey from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. It examines the social perceptions of intellectuals, ranging from figures revered for their pursuit of knowledge to complex agents navigating shifting power dynamics and ideological transformations. The chapter discusses the negative connotations associated with intellectuals, particularly during the nineteenth century and explores significant events such as the Dreyfus affair, which divided intellectuals into opposing factions. It also analyses the impact of capitalism and nationalism on the role of intellectuals, highlighting their struggles and dilemmas in aligning with ruling classes or advocating for social justice. The chapter concludes by emphasising the importance of understanding the multifaceted nature of intellectuals' roles in society and their responses to historical and ideological changes.

Chapter Two examines various contemporary perspectives on the role of intellectuals in society. Drawing on the works of Antonin Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Julien Benda, Michel Foucault, Zygmunt Bauman, Edward Shils, Jürgen Habermas,

Noam Chomsky, Immanuel Kant and Edward Said, it delves into the responsibilities and dilemmas faced by intellectuals, including their relationship with state power, the pursuit of truth and the tension between professionalism and amateurism. Through these varied viewpoints, it seeks to elucidate the evolving nature of intellectual engagement and its significance in shaping public discourse and social change.

Chapter Three offers a detailed examination of the representation and role of intellectual characters in Western and British theatre, spanning from Ancient Greek theatre to the mid-twentieth century British theatre. It tracks the evolution of these portrayals, analysing how they were influenced by social, political, scientific and philosophical developments over time. Additionally, it explores various trends in the portrayal of intellectuals, including those who have been identified as social reformers, outsiders and disillusioned individuals, reflecting the dynamic socio-political context of each era. Through careful analysis, the chapter illuminates the complex and evolving nature of intellectual characters in theatre, highlighting their significance in shaping audience perceptions and engaging with contemporary issues throughout history.

Chapter Four investigates the moral and ethical complexities of intellectual pursuits by examining *A Man for All Seasons* by Robert Bolt alongside the philosophical inquiry into consciousness and ethics in *The Hard Problem* by Tom Stoppard. Both works provoke reflection on the nature of truth, the role of intellectuals in society and the ethical responsibilities inherent in the pursuit of knowledge. This chapter explores the complex nature of intellectual pursuits through the lens of the theatre, revealing the ethical responsibilities and moral dilemmas that characters face as they navigate their way through deep inquiries into truth and consciousness. By examining theatrical performances as mirrors of social values and human complexities, it seeks to enrich our understanding of the role of the intellectual in theatre. Shedding light on the dynamic interplay between philosophy, ethics and dramatic representation, this chapter also offers a refined understanding of how theatre serves as a platform for exploring the depths of intellectual thought and behaviour.

Chapter Five analyses Trevor Griffiths' plays *Occupations* and *The Party*, focusing on the recurring theme of the divergence between intellectual theory and practical action from a Marxist perspective. The chapter examines the active engagement of intellectuals

with the working class in *Occupations*, highlighting their inability to achieve transformative change. It further extends the discussion to explore the frustration and the impotence surrounding intellectuals trapped in critical discourse in *The Party*. These plays collectively paint a vivid picture of the intellectual landscape of the late 1960s and 1970s, marked by disillusionment and shifting dynamics. This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the intellectual challenges in the midst of social transformation and underlines the importance of theatre as a medium that provokes a critical approach to socio-political issues.

Chapter Six focuses on John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* and Howard Barker's *Scenes from an Execution*, aiming to explore their critiques of social norms and the role of the artist in challenging authority. Employing textual analysis and historical context, it investigates the thematic richness of these works, examining Osborne's portrayal of post-war British society and Barker's depiction of the artist confronting political repression. Through this analysis, the chapter highlights the enduring relevance of these plays in contemporary discourse on power, resistance and intellectual integrity.

In conclusion, this thesis on intellectuals aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of intellectuals across different disciplines and ages to reveal their profound impact on human societies and thought. Through the lens of theatre, which offers a unique perspective, the thesis aims to illuminate intellectuals' struggles, dilemmas and contributions to socio-political discourse. Theatre serves as a powerful tool to examine the representation of intellectuals and allows for a refined exploration of their roles, conflicts and interactions within society. Studying theatre texts, thus, provides valuable insights into how the changing nature of intellectual engagement struggles with ethical dilemmas, ideological tensions and social expectations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTELLECTUALS: HISTORY AND THEORY

1.1. THE EVOLUTION OF INTELLECTUALS: FROM THE MEDIEVAL FOUNDATIONS TO THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY

In examining the historical role of individuals of intellectual prominence within societies, an examination of antiquity serves as a foundational context. However, there is a noticeable shift in the conceptualisation and structuring of intellectuals during the Middle Ages. The roles attributed to intellectuals in this period differed markedly from those of magicians, priests and philosophers in antiquity. The group having an intellectual role in the Middle Ages was more professional and organised compared to the previous ones. Jacques Le Goff and Tom Bottomore contend that the genesis of modern intellectuals can be traced to the establishment of universities in medieval Europe. In *Elites and Society* (2001), Bottomore discusses the major change in medieval Europe leading the birth of modern intellectuals as follows:

The growth of the universities, associated with the spread of humanistic learning, made possible the formation of an intellectual stratum which was not priestly caste, whose members were recruited from diverse social milieu and which was in some measure detached from the ruling doctrines of feudal society. This intellectual stratum produced thinkers of the Enlightenment and in France particularly, the intellectuals established themselves as critics of society by their opposition to the ruling class and the Church of the *ancien régime*. It is in this role, as critics of society, that the modern intellectuals have frequently been considered. (54)

Foundation of universities as well as the invention and development of the printing press provided the basis for the circulation of knowledge that facilitated the emergence of a professional group of professors and scholars. Specialised in various fields of science, this group of professionals made many scientific discoveries about the earth, the universe and human biology, which had been unknown until then and developed new ideas in parallel to these discoveries. Thanks to medieval discoveries and inventions, these professionals shook the roots of the established belief and moral systems and developed ideas on the nature of power and society, spreading their ideas to distant parts of the world.

Despite the rather complex social and political structure of the Middle Ages, this professional group seemed to be an advocate of free thought. Yet, this group still had an important role in the sustenance of the existing values and structures since medieval intellectuals belonged to the clergy and teaching was a function of the church. Therefore, a role was assigned to this group by the Church. In *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages* (1957), Le Goff clarifies the nature of professionals' dependence on the Church as follows:

St. Bernard, in a famous text, denounced the professors' earnings as an income to shame. The Papacy also ordered a series of measures in this regard. In 1179 Latran council, Pope III. Alexandre had proclaimed the principle of free education and his successors issued numerous edicts recalling this decision. In addition, a school would be opened near each cathedral and the teacher would earn a living with a salary attached to him. But the papacy in this way binds intellectuals who are destined to demand salaries with self-interest and stops or at least significantly curbs the movement that leads these intellectuals to secularism. The result of this is that only those who accept this financial dependence on the church could be professors at the university. (133)

This economic dependence imposed by the Church sparked controversy over the intellectual activities of this professional group in the Middle Ages as it undermined the positive values attributed to the intellectuals. Şerif Mardin examines the group or individual who has such a role in society under the term 'literati'¹ to criticise their 'so-called' intellectual role. According to Mardin, literati, who were thought to have the task of preserving knowledge and transmitting it to society, used their knowledge in a very different way compared to true intellectuals because the teaching activities of this group were determined by the Church (256-57). They served as a kind of mediator, ensuring the transmission of the worldview of the Church to the people. This role was thus conceived as the defender and guardian of the interests of the ruling class since literati was a social class depending strictly on the existing values. That is, they were servants who were transmitting values of the ruling class. Consequently, critical thinking, questioning and opposition, which are the general defining characteristics of the intellectuals, either rarely or never exist in this group (Mardin 257). However, they were still identified with intellectual activity regarding their role in the creation, transmission and critique of cultural products and ideas.

¹ Literati, plural form of 'literatus', is used to define an educated group of people interested in literature or the arts.

This professional group gradually severed its ties with the ruling class in response to the socio-political dynamics that coincided with the rise of the bourgeoisie. The knowledge accumulated within this group of intellectuals was instrumental in shaping transformative historical periods such as the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. In this period, intellectuals assumed the role of social critics and to some extent freed themselves from the patronage and surveillance of the ruling class. The advent of the printing press facilitated the dissemination of their ideas to the masses and contributed to the development of intellectuals' financial independence. Moreover, the patronage of the bourgeoisie played a crucial role in providing intellectuals with a degree of autonomy unrivalled in previous centuries.

The sixteenth century, especially with the rise of the bourgeoisie, was an important turning point in the autonomy of intellectuals. Aligning themselves with the bourgeoisie, intellectuals underwent a transformative process by adopting a more secular and independent stance. This alignment led to the formulation of new theories and systems of social and political criticism, depending on their expertise in various fields. Jean-Paul Sartre explains the importance of the rise of the bourgeoisie and field expertise in the reconstruction of the role of the intellectuals as follows:

A new stratum of 'experts in means' thus arose from within the ranks of the bourgeoisie: they constituted neither a class nor an elite but were wholly integrated in the vast enterprise that was mercantile capitalism and provided it with the means to self-reproduction and expansion. (233)

Despite being a part of the bourgeoisie, this new stratum was neither in search of providing an ideology for the bourgeoisie nor supervising any ideology. Yet, discoveries and inventions of the intellectuals of this new stratum beginning especially from the sixteenth century enabled the bourgeoisie to take advantage of the developing trade networks and to carry out individual commercial activities. The bourgeoisie gained economic prosperity in parallel to commercial developments and gained economic independence in which they had the opportunity to raise their own intellectuals by secularising education that had previously been in the monopoly of the Church. In fact, the works of the intellectuals of this stratum became a weapon for the bourgeoisie to fight against feudalism and the Church. The bourgeoisie was not actually seeking a specific ideology at first, its aim was the desacralisation of all social and political formations

through the knowledge of the intellectuals. Sartre explains how desacralisation takes place for the bourgeoisie as follows:

As it happened, no adaptation of sacred ideology could ultimately satisfy the bourgeoisie, whose interests now demanded a desacralization of every sphere of practical activity. It was this secularization—beyond all inter-clerical conflicts—that the technicians of practical knowledge had unwittingly prepared by rendering bourgeois praxis aware of its own nature and defining the time and space of the circulation of commodities. (234)

This process of desacralisation had two consequences: Firstly, it reduced the influence of the church and the ideologies of the feudal order and secondly, it made it easier for the bourgeoisie to extend its economic activities to all areas of society. As a result, the bourgeoisie accumulated wealth and thus reshaped social dynamics through its capital. Capital emerged as the primary channel for the dissemination of scientific and technical knowledge and at the same time shattered the traditional hierarchical worldview centred around a God-centred universe propagated by the Church.

In this context, the changing role of intellectuals becomes evident. Their knowledge of science, technology, law, politics and religion increasingly came into conflict with the doctrines defended by the church and feudal lords. However, this knowledge found support and approval from the bourgeoisie and signalled a significant departure from the traditional allegiance to religious institutions. This shift in allegiance was an important factor in the transformation of intellectuals from clergymen to independent and secular scientists. Over time, the bourgeoisie became a self-conscious class, encompassing a wider section of society:

As one sacred field after another was laicized, God was obliged to retire back to Heaven: from the end of the 17th century, he became a Hidden God. At this time, the bourgeoisie felt a compelling need to affirm itself as a class with a global conception of the world, that is to say, an ideology: such was the content of what has been called ‘the intellectual crisis of Western Europe’. This ideology was not created by clerics but by specialists of practical knowledge: men of the law (Montesquieu), men of letters (Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau), mathematicians (d’Alembert), a tax-farmer (Helvetius), doctors, etc. They took the place of clerics and called themselves philosophers, that is to say ‘the lovers of Wisdom’. Wisdom was equated with Reason. (Sartre 234)

The creators of the new order in Europe were the philosophers, the intellectuals of the period, educated in the bourgeoisie's secular education system. They discarded the idea of a God-centred universe and formulated a new world view based on law, science, medicine, philosophy, literature and criticism. As advocates of bourgeois humanism, their aim was to overthrow established social and political structures. They also sought to express the objective mentality of the bourgeoisie by developing a system of thought centred on the principles of free trade, the rise of individualism, the rejection of authority and the abolition of feudal privileges. In essence, as Sartre suggests, philosophers emerged as the architects of a new intellectual and social framework that reflected the values and aspirations of the emerging bourgeoisie:

This class was becoming aware that it needed such an ideology to achieve full consciousness of itself through a system of signs and symbols – and to dissolve and destroy the ideologies of the other classes in society. The philosophers can thus be seen as organic intellectuals, in the sense that Gramsci gave to the word. (236)

Consistent with their desire to develop a universal bourgeois humanism, Enlightenment philosophers sought to overthrow established class-based ideologies and to promote a sense of equality among all individuals by capitalising on the consciousness they fostered. The philosophers' defence of the thinking system of the class to which they belonged, that is, the bourgeoisie, against the ruling class that oppose it, especially the aristocracy, made them organic intellectuals to some extent in parallel to the Antonio Gramsci's definition of the organic intellectuals². As Sartre argues, these philosophers can be seen as organic intellectuals because they defended the bourgeoisie's thinking system against the established systems and reflected the ideology of a particular group. However, this organic link between the intellectuals and the bourgeoisie dissolved in time. The philosophers of the seventeenth and the eighteenth century were born into the bourgeoisie and nurtured by the space of freedom it created, but in the process leading up to the nineteenth century, a conflict arose between the bourgeoisie and intellectuals. Intellectuals strived for the production of knowledge that was universal, holistic and valid for all humanity. However, the bourgeoisie started to become a part of the ruling class especially

² [T]here are the "organic" intellectuals, the thinking and organising element of a particular fundamental social class. These organic intellectuals are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong (Gramsci 131).

in the nineteenth century and hence tended to develop a privileged system for itself. The transformation of the bourgeoisie into a privileged class maintaining its privileges by moving away from its birth principle of humanism radically changed the definitions of the intellectuals' role that had previously been accepted.

The term, intellectual, can be attributed to many historical figures such as priests, professors and philosophers according to its lexical meaning from ancient times to the nineteenth century; yet, the first modern use of the term, intellectual, was in the nineteenth century. While the use of the terms, intellect and intelligence, can be traced back to the fourteenth century, the term intellectual, which has a relatively recent origin, was used for the first time in the nineteenth century referring to a particular person or a group of people. In his *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (2015), Raymond Williams defines the term as follows: "Intellectual as a noun to indicate a particular kind of person or a person doing a particular kind of work dates effectively from the early nineteenth century, though there were some isolated earlier uses" (121). From the early nineteenth century, besides its generally accepted use that refers to the faculties of mind, intellectual is also used with a negative connotation such as frigidness, aloofness and incapability since intellectualism was usually associated with rationalism. Williams clarifies the reason for the negative connotation of the term:

The reasons are complicated but almost certainly include opposition to social and political arguments based on theory or on rational principle. This often connects, curiously, with the distinguishing use of the more or the most intelligent as a governing class, and with opposition, as in Romanticism, to a 'separation' of 'head' and 'heart', or 'reason' and 'emotion'. Nor can we overlook a crucial kind of opposition to groups engaged in intellectual work, who in the course of social development had acquired some independence from established institutions, in the church and in politics, and who were certainly seeking and asserting such independence through 1C18[the last period of the eighteenth century] C19[the nineteenth century] and C20 [the twentieth century]. Eventually, under the influence of these developments, intellectual and intelligent could be offered as terms of contrast, and by 1C19 [the last period of the nineteenth century] there was the characteristic formation 'so-called intellectuals'. (122)

The intellectuals' creation of free space outside the boundaries of the church and feudalism during the three-hundred-year period including the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Enlightenment Period, led the rulers to develop an anti-intellectual attitude towards them. This anti-intellectual attitude caused intellectuals to be associated with negative connotations in society such as being traitors or enemies of the state and

the church. The new social formation, 'so-called' intellectuals, on the other hand, also caused the term, intellectual, to be associated with negative connotations in the society since they lost their organic connections with the society and served the ruling class.

In her *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1976), Hannah Arendt associates this anti-intellectual tendency and the intellectuals' loss of prestige with the Dreyfus affair. Alfred Dreyfus was an artillery captain in the French army. He was arrested for allegedly spying on France for the German government. Although there was no evidence against Dreyfus, he was found guilty because of his Jewish identity and anti-Semitic nationalism of the French Third Republic. In the face of this incident, the intellectuals were divided into two groups. There was a group led by Emile Zola on one side and nationalists against Dreyfus on the other (Arendt 89-95). While Emile Zola, Octave Mirbeau, Anatole France and other intellectuals opposed this anti-democratic and repressive attitude of the authorities and wrote articles criticising it, other writers, politicians and journalists such as Maurice Barrès and Ferdinand Brunetière sided with the power. The term, intellectual, was first used after this division. By partly quoting from Zeldin, Mardin states that "Clemenceau introduced pro-Dreyfus writers to the public as 'les intellectuels' to describe the respectable qualities of these writers. The right-wing and anti-Dreyfus press described the same authors, as 'arrogant residents of libraries and laboratories'" (256). The intense smear policies of the right-wing against the intellectuals who stood up against this anti-democratic affair brought about the result of the intellectuals being mentioned with negative qualities in the society.

From the early Renaissance to the nineteenth century, intellectuals, in their traditional meaning, who have been in pursuit of knowledge, have a high power of evaluation and criticism and committed to leading the society, were highly respected. However, towards the end of the nineteenth century, notably after the Dreyfus affair, intellectuals started to lose their reputation and prestige in public due to the intense pressure and smearing strategies of the power and right-wing policies. Yet, there was another social formation, intelligentsia, that brought positive connotations to the term, intellectual. Williams expresses the contribution of this social formation to the term, intellectual, as follows: "From eC20 [the first period of the twentieth century] the new group term intelligentsia was borrowed from Russian. This source is significant, for the sense of a distinct and self-conscious group had, for good social reasons, been important

in Russia from mC19 [the mid-nineteenth century]” (122). Although the group of intellectuals in this social formation contributed to the addition of positive connotations to the term thanks to their positive efforts for societies such as opposing social inequalities and injustice, unfavourable uses of the term, intellectual, remained influential for a long time. As a result, both the negative connotations of intellectuals in society and the oppressive attitudes of the rulers against them greatly limited the effectiveness of intellectuals in social issues and politics. Thus, the intellectuals, who started to lose their power and effectiveness in social discourse due to all this pressure and defamation, either became completely isolated and marginalised or dependent on the economic power of the authorities and governments.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the bourgeoisie became the ruler and defender of the capitalist order, starting to suppress the larger mass of the working class. This new role and attitude of the bourgeoisie showed that it had lost its birth principles. The loss of the bourgeoisie’s principles of existence caused division among the intellectuals who championed it. While some continued to support the bourgeoisie, others adhered to its first principles and continued to be the spokespersons of freedom of thought and justice. Meriç explains this division as follows:

The philosopher bore the flag of the third class, that is, of the rising bourgeoisie. He was a part of it: a part that thinks. He was dedicated to the worldview of which he was the architect. The appearance of a new social class divided the intellectuals into two. Some of them joined the poorest and most populous class: they wanted to be its spokespersons and consciousness-raisers. Some linked their fate to the ruling class; they tried to repair its ideology that was decaying and dissolving in places. (48)

Transformation of the bourgeoisie into an elite ruling class caused the intellectuals to question the values and principles of the class they represented. Ultimately, the bourgeoisie, losing its responsibility to be the conscience of society, dragged the intellectuals into a dilemma that would be discussed widely in the twentieth century. The dilemma of the intellectuals was that they would either continue to act as the spokespersons and advocates of the bourgeoisie, the class into which they were born, or they would move away from this class which have become elitist in view of their first principles. The second option meant they would be representatives of the oppressed serving justice and social equality.

This dramatic change was the direct result of the dominant ideologies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, notably capitalism and nationalism. Within this paradigm, the ruling class recruited some intellectuals into its ranks. Intellectuals who refused to embrace false heroism by succumbing to nationalism or ignoring the exploitation inherent in capitalism found themselves branded as traitors by the ruling elite. Central to the ethos of intellectuals was their unwavering commitment to universality, which positioned them as defenders of truth and guardians of the wider social conscience. As Said articulates “Universality means taking a risk in order to go beyond the easy certainties provided us by our background, language, nationality, which so often shield us from the reality of others” (xiv). However, some intellectuals, who undertook the task of defending the oppressed, justice and truth through their commitment to universality, betrayed their duty by attaching themselves to the ruling class. Thus, these intellectuals, who were conceived as the heralds of universality because they grasped the universal truth, found themselves fragmented due to the developing economic and social structures. No longer exclusively loyal to the ruling class, intellectuals were divided; some remained loyal to the upper classes, while others allied themselves with the emerging working class and maintained dissident traditions.

The intellectuals did not, then, create a uniform picture by merely being the spokespersons of the truth; they divided into different groups. Some of them undertook a variety of missions, ranging from theorising and legitimising fascistic ideologies to stating that liberal capitalism is the most advanced and universal stage of historical development. As Meriç writes: “The service expected from the intellectuals is to protect the interests of the ruling class based on technical knowledge, to strengthen and sustain its ideology against hostile ideologies. Their task is not to unite humanity but to perpetuate their privilege” (37). Some intellectuals, on the other hand, continued to be the spokespersons of the truth by maintaining their amateur attitude without being bound to an authority. For the bourgeoisie, these intellectuals with whom they had been in a complete alliance, now lost their importance in their regard and even became threatening to their class interests.

As a result of these developments, the universal intellectual, in Foucault’s terms, was gradually replaced by the left-wing intellectuals. They now joined the ranks of the

proletariat. Foucault elucidates the rationale behind intellectuals' engagement with the proletariat as follows:

[I] am of the opinion that intellectuals actually approach the proletariat and the masses for two reasons. The first is that this is a problem related to real, material and everyday struggles; the second reason, is that the proletariat and the intellectual in general face the same enemy (multinational corporations, judiciary and police organisations, real estate speculators, etc.) in different ways. (46)

The intellectuals who aligned themselves with the proletariat were firmly convinced that the proletariat, in the grip of the dominant power structures, was incapable of grasping reality. This conviction stemmed from the realisation that the consciousness of the proletariat was being systematically manipulated and alienated by those in positions of authority. Therefore, they saw themselves as the spokespersons of the proletariat.

Parallel to ideological developments such as Marxism, the social guiding role attributed to the intellectuals underwent a significant transformation in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, both members of the bourgeoisie, observe a social difference between the intellectuals and the proletariat. They attribute this divergence to epistemological disparities arising from the contrasting educational backgrounds of the two groups, leading to distinct perceptions. Since the proletariat cannot create a full consciousness of itself due to lack of education, their attempts for revolution are more aggressive and rapid but far from being organised and successful; hence, these attempts are only instantaneous actions and cannot be successful without correct guidance. In fact, there is a strong emphasis in Marxism on the self-consciousness of the proletariat itself, but without guidance, the proletariat seems unlikely to have full self-consciousness. However, the situation in which Marx emphasises the necessity of intellectuals' guidance is quite different from interpretations of the role of the intellectual expressed until then. As he puts it in his famous saying: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it" (Marx). With Marxist thought, what is expected of modern intellectuals is not only the skill of thinking, but also the ability to act and create change. In Marxist thought, the role of intellectuals extends beyond mere interpretation to encompass the crucial task of mobilising and guiding the working class towards revolutionary transformation. They are seen as agents of change, tasked with galvanising the working class and articulating the need for revolutionary action.

Intellectuals originating from the bourgeoisie, a more organised and self-aware social group, can be regarded as particularly well-positioned to cultivate the emerging class consciousness of proletariat. While it may initially appear contradictory to Marxist principles that stress the consciousness of the working class, the bourgeois background of intellectuals does not preclude their potential role in shaping social awareness. Despite their bourgeois origins, intellectuals possess education and awareness that endow them with the capacity to select which values to champion. This ability to exercise choice stems from the historical context in which the bourgeoisie emerged. Fundamentally opposed to the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie forged its social identity on the principles of liberty and freedom. Consequently, intellectuals aligned with this social stratum may find themselves empowered to diverge from bourgeois interests should they perceive a need to do so. Sholomo Avineri explains the autonomy of intellectuals within this framework:

The content of his consciousness, qua intellectual, gives him the possibility of choice; he may choose to be an “ideologue” of the bourgeoisie (if we adopt for the moment Marx’s terminology in *The German Ideology*) or he may join the revolutionary proletariat. The intellectuals are a social group determined as such by society to possess the individual power of choice; hence they are not a class, because by definition they get divided. Otherwise, how can one explain why a particular individual can choose the bourgeoisie, while another adopts the tenets of revolutionary socialism? There is no a priori determination, as in the case of the capitalist or the worker. Choice is the very embodiment of the intellectual’s determined “social being.” (277)

The autonomy of intellectuals sets them apart from individuals tied to specific social classes, thereby releasing them from the inherent obligation to exclusively represent their birth class. Nevertheless, this does not preclude intellectuals from advocating for the interests of their own class. The contentious issue arises when certain intellectuals persist in supporting the bourgeoisie without acknowledging its corruption, fuelling intense debates about the social role of intellectuals. Influenced by Marxist thought, this divergence among intellectuals has widened over time, leading to the emergence of left-wing and right-wing factions in response to evolving social dynamics. Left-wing intellectuals aligned themselves with the proletariat by embracing Marxist ideology, seeing it as a means of defending social justice and challenging existing power structures. Conversely, right-wing intellectuals sought to maintain the status quo and protect their own interests by aligning themselves with the ruling class. However, this division of intellectuals into different groups cannot be attributed solely to awareness of Marxist thought. The increasing influence of capitalism has also played an important role in

shaping intellectual loyalties. The pressures of capitalism have encroached on the space for free thought, especially in the field of education, which is vital for the development and dissemination of intellectual ideas. By shaping education to align with the interests of the ruling class, capitalists effectively forced intellectuals to either conform to their agenda or create a new class of intellectuals who supported the existing system. This manipulation of intellectual discourse serves to maintain the hegemony of the ruling class and suppress dissenting voices, further entrenching the divide between left and right-wing.

Consequently, the intellectuals underwent a huge transformation in parallel with mass university education in the mid-nineteenth century. Intellectuals, who were previously limited in number and more independent, now began to lose their characteristics of being an elite (not necessarily privileged) and influential group. Through university education, they now evolved into a larger group of professionals. These professionals had a struggle to exist in various public and private organisations. They moved away from their previous universal ideals and attempted to create more specific fields of critical thinking in accordance with their specialisations. While intellectuals who aligned themselves with the existing system asserted that their work retained a universal significance despite operating within a framework of authority, it was undeniable that their scope was constrained by their allegiance to such authority. Sartre clarifies this tension, highlighting the dual nature of their position:

They insist there is no such thing as ‘bourgeois science’ and yet their science is bourgeois by virtue of the limits imposed on it, and they know it. All the same, it is true that in the phase of research proper they work in an atmosphere of freedom, which makes the return to their real-condition all the more bitter.
(243)

While intellectuals try to create their own freedom spheres and pursue the principle of universality, the society and system they grow up in may lead them to an internal conflict. Although they are thought to be the representatives of free thought, there are some social and political factors that they are exposed to during their development. Sartre lists three issues to be considered in defining the role of modern intellectuals and the roots of the division among the intellectuals. The first one is that “The technician of practical knowledge is recruited from above. In general, he is no longer a member of the ruling class, but it is this class that defines his being by its allocation of jobs” (Sartre 237). The

ruling class needs people with technical knowledge for the continuity of the system, so the intellectuals, who are technicians of practical knowledge, are assigned roles suitable to their field of expertise. Intellectuals come under the control of the ruling class by playing the role assigned to them since they must have an income in order to survive. This necessity, in a way, makes them the spokespeople for the ruling class because they put their expertise at its service. Second reason that puts intellectuals at the service of the ruling class is that “The ideological and technical formation of the specialist in practical knowledge is also defined by a system that is instituted from above (primary, secondary and higher education) and hence is necessarily selective” (Sartre 238). With a gradual education system, the ruling class aims, on the one hand, to make people who receive education adopt its own ideology, on the other, to train experts who ensure the continuity of the system. The last point Sartre emphasise is that “Class relations automatically regulate the selection of the technicians of practical knowledge” (239). Thus, it is almost impossible for the lower-class to receive higher education due to economic concerns, so the people who receive specialist training are either middle or upper class. Thus, the ruling class, on the one hand, trains the technicians of knowledge, on the other, keeps the lower class that constitutes the workforce under control for its self-interest by leaving them uneducated.

Despite the fact that capitalism and authoritarian state structures play an active role in determining the role of the intellectual in society in terms of professionalism, it would not be right to state that every person with an intellectual role in society serves the authority entirely. Intellectuals still have a choice thanks to their autonomy. As Meriç puts it: “There are two options for the intellectual: to publicise the lies of the established order, that is, to be a truth distorter, more precisely to be a shepherd dog or to stand with the oppressed, to oppose every injustice, to silence every lie and to reveal every insincerity” (38). Sartre describes those who continued to act as the spokespersons and advocates of the ruling class as ‘false intellectuals’ and ‘watch dogs’ (252). He defines these false intellectuals as miserable figures created by the upper class to justify its interests and defend its particular ideology and he adds:

It would be simplistic to imagine that the false intellectual is merely an individual who has ‘sold out’ - unless we understand the bargain that makes a technician of knowledge into a false intellectual as a little less crude than is normally implied. Let us say that certain subaltern functionaries of the

superstructure feel that their interests are tied to those of the dominant class: which is true – and refuse to feel anything else – which is to suppress the opposite sentiment, that is also true. In other words, they ignore their alienation as men (actual or potential men) and think only of their power as functionaries. They wear the appearance of intellectuals and also start by contesting the ideology of the dominant class... In other words, the false intellectual, unlike the true, does not say no, but rather cultivates the ‘no, but ...’ or the ‘I know, but still ...’ attitude. (252)

Sartre’s analysis highlights the complex interplay between power, ideology and individual agency in the intellectual sphere. Pseudo-intellectuals represent a compromise between honesty and autonomy, embodying a form of intellectual betrayal that perpetuates the interests of the ruling class at the expense of genuine critical inquiry and social justice.

In conclusion, the evolution of intellectuals from ancient times to the twentieth century reflects a journey marked by shifting power dynamics, ideological transformations and individual agency. From their origins as clergymen aligned with religious institutions to their emergence as independent thinkers challenging established norms, intellectuals have navigated complex social landscapes shaped by changing economic, political and cultural forces. The tensions between serving the ruling class and advocating for the oppressed, between perpetuating falsehoods and championing truth, underscore the multifaceted nature of the intellectual’s role in society. Moving onto the next chapter, it is crucial to contextualise the ongoing transformations within the broader scope of history. Human and civil rights, the rise of democracy and nationalism, the advent of industrialisation and free market systems and the impact of the World Wars have all played significant roles in shaping intellectual discourse. The profound changes witnessed in science, education, production methods and political structures throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have fundamentally altered our understanding and interpretation of the world. This period has seen the emergence of ground-breaking theories in both sociology and the natural sciences, challenging established norms and revolutionising intellectual exploration. Moreover, in the midst of these scientific and philosophical advances, theories about the social role of intellectuals have proliferated. Scholars such as Antonio Gramsci, Julien Benda, Jürgen Habermas, Louis Althusser, Zygmunt Bauman, Edward Shils, Immanuel Kant, Edward W. Said and Michel Foucault have offered different perspectives on the responsibilities, duties and ethical dilemmas facing intellectuals in contemporary society. The following chapter explores these

theories in more depth and considers the complex interplay between intellectuals, power dynamics and social transformation in the modern era.



CHAPTER TWO

CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES ON INTELLECTUALS: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION

2.1. THE ROLE OF INTELLECTUALS IN CULTURAL HEGEMONY: GRAMSCI'S MARXIST APPROACH

Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci developed his ideas about intellectuals while imprisoned in Italy under Mussolini's fascist rule. In his best-known work, *Prison Notebooks*³, Gramsci builds discussions about ideology, power and hegemony and examines the role of the intellectuals in relation to these concepts. Analysing the Marxist theoretical concepts of 'base and superstructure'⁴, Gramsci focuses on how dominant ideologies are formed and produced in society. Developing Marx's idea of superstructure further, Gramsci points to two spheres that make up this structure. The first is the civil society which consists of trade unions, political parties, schools, universities, media, non-governmental organisations and the second is the political society which is the state itself and its functional bodies. The social hegemony of the ruling class, for Gramsci, is based on the proper management of these spheres, i.e., consensus-based civil society and coercion-based political society (*Selections* 145). In essence, Gramsci's analysis suggests that hegemony operates through a complex interplay of coercion and consent, with the bourgeoisie maintaining its dominance not only through direct control of economic and political institutions but also through the construction of a cultural and ideological hegemony that permeates society. The consent of the subaltern classes, facilitated by their economic dependency and ideological indoctrination, thus becomes a crucial element in the perpetuation of bourgeois hegemony in twentieth-century Europe.

This economic dependence materialised in Marxism as a determinist economic interpretation of history. That is, the fact that political power is determined by the nature of the economic system gave rise in Marxism to pessimism and the idea of the

³ *The Prison Notebooks* were a series of essays written by Antonio Gramsci between 1929 and 1935.

⁴ According to Marxist theory, society consists of two parts: basic structure and superstructure. The basic structure includes the means of production and relations that people undertake to produce their life needs. Superstructure, on the other hand, includes the culture, institutions, political structures, social roles and state instruments created by the means of production and relations in the basic structure.

immutability of political power relations. Gramsci, however, criticises Marxism's determinist economic interpretation of history and he believes that social hegemonic forces that seem immutable can be defeated through the correct policies. For Gramsci, hegemony is a situation in which a fundamental group exercises a political, intellectual role within a hegemonic system created by shared values and a common worldview. Thus, he believes the implementation of this role in the political and social spheres, as well as in the economic sphere, can make the transformation of the previous ideological ground and the redefinition of hegemonic structures possible. Valeriano Ramos clarifies this process: "This transformation and redefinition are achieved through a re-articulation of ideological elements into a new worldview which then serves as the unifying principle for a new 'collective will'" (Ramos) For this to happen, the group that desires to usurp hegemony must assimilate and redefine the discourses of other social classes and create a new collective will out of it. Gramsci, as a member of the Communist Party, particularly examines the proletariat within the struggle for hegemony. He claims that the task of the proletariat is to make itself hegemonic by developing an alternative ideology to the bourgeoisie. To achieve this, he stresses, the working class must strengthen its claim to leadership in the political, social and cultural spheres before it can administer state power. Yet, the biggest obstacle to these ideas of Gramsci is the question of how the working class would dominate the economy in an order where the means of production are controlled by the bourgeoisie. In the face of this question, Gramsci suggests that in order to establish social hegemony, the working class must unite social forces by forming alliances with other subclasses and social organisations fighting for their interests. Gramsci suggests that the proletariat faces the imperative of constructing a new 'historical bloc'⁵ as part of its struggle against capitalist domination. This entails not only overthrowing the existing socio-economic order established by the capitalist system but also dismantling the foundational structures of bourgeois hegemony. Gramsci posits that the working class must cultivate its own class consciousness before forging alliances to attain hegemonic status. He also believes that the working class needs guidance to achieve this. He expresses that the fulfilment of this need is possible only through intellectuals whose main task is to organise, manage and educate society. In this framework,

⁵ Gramsci calls the union of social forces that arise from the alliances and relations established by the proletariat with other sub-classes a historical bloc.

intellectuals play a pivotal role as organisers and regulators of the new collective will of the proletariat.

Building upon his assertion of the indispensable role of intellectuals in guiding the working class, Gramsci delves into a comprehensive examination of intellectuals as pioneers of social change and transformation within the context of class relations. He claims that “all men are potentially intellectuals in the sense of having an intellect and using it, but not all are intellectuals by social functions” (*Selections* 3). Each person has a certain understanding of the world and a system of thought which they develop from their own experiences. That is, every human activity requires a minimum of creative intellectual ability. Gramsci’s assertion that all individuals possess the potential to be intellectuals aims to underscore the intellectual capabilities inherent within the working class, challenging the conventional perception that views them solely as a potential labour force. It is important to clarify that Gramsci does not claim that every individual with mental capacity automatically assumes an intellectual role in society. Rather, he emphasises the necessity of both physical and mental involvement in order to fulfil the intellectual function within society. According to Gramsci, intellectuals are characterised by their ability not only to conceive ideas, but also to actively implement them and thereby influence social change and organisation. Gramsci contends that the dichotomy between mental and physical labour leads to a hierarchical division between those deemed intellectuals and those classified as non-intellectuals. Such a classification tends to create an elitist class structure, confining the label of ‘intellectual’ solely to individuals engaged in mental labour. However, according to him, just as there can be no human activity without intellectual involvement, intellect without action is meaningless (*Selections* 9). Thus, having an intellectual role in society requires both intellect and action. What distinguishes intellectuals from non-intellectuals is not only their intelligence but the nature and quality of their actions under certain social conditions.

Considering the functions of intellectuals in society, Gramsci classifies intellectuals as traditional and organic intellectuals. The concept of traditional intellectual characterises the intellectual communities that emerge in the historical process and constitute a historical continuum that cannot be interrupted even by the most complex and radical changes in terms of political and social forms (Gramsci, *Selections* 3-4). Traditional intellectuals are those who are not directly connected to the economic

structure of their particular society and who do not adhere to a particular class or political discourse. Nevertheless, intellectuals in this group mediate between the central government and the public and they have a major political and social role because of these functions. It is difficult to separate their professional duties from their political functions. Traditional intellectuals include people who might be called intellectuals such as artists, writers, teachers and religious leaders. These intellectuals carved out a place for themselves in the historical process and preserved their existence against political and social changes. Despite their dependence on the ruling class, traditional intellectuals consider themselves independent of the ruling class since the roles and tasks of these intellectuals do not change even if the current power changes. They claim that their work has a universal value, free from any class bias, however, Gramsci argues that this belief is misleading. Whether consciously or unconsciously, they ultimately serve the interests of the ruling class:

Since these various categories of traditional intellectuals experience through an “esprit de corps” their uninterrupted historical continuity and their special qualification, they thus put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group. This self-assessment is not without consequences in the ideological and political field, consequences of wide-ranging import. The whole of idealist philosophy can easily be connected with this position assumed by the social complex of intellectuals and can be defined as the expression of that social utopia by which the intellectuals think of themselves as “independent”, autonomous, endowed with a character of their own, etc. (Gramsci, *Selections* 138-139)

The basic idea is that traditional intellectuals lack the ability to create change; instead, they maintain the existing system and remain disconnected from society and social problems. They maintain some privileges by serving their skills to the ruling class. They do not generate ideas but carry out orders. The real power of the system lies not only in the violence of the ruling class or the power of the state apparatus but also in the acceptance by the intellectuals of the worldview of the ruling class (Bodenheimer 22). Thus, the dominant class has been able to gain the consent of many subordinate classes through traditional intellectuals throughout history.

Since traditional intellectuals tend to consent to authority because of the way they exist, it is quite clear to Gramsci that social change will not come about through such intellectuals. In order to change this system, a new group of intellectuals is needed, as opposed to the traditional intellectuals who serve to maintain the system. Thus,

emphasising the passivity of the traditional intellectuals, Gramsci introduces a new type of intellectual, the organic intellectual who can create change in the light of Marxist thought, as follows:

Secondly, there are the “organic” intellectuals, the thinking and organising element of a particular fundamental social class. These organic intellectuals are distinguished less by their profession, which may be any job characteristic of their class, than by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong. (*Selections* 3)

Unlike traditional intellectuals, organic intellectuals have a direct and intrinsic connection with the economic framework of their social class. This connection goes beyond a superficial relationship; it involves a deep understanding of the economic dynamics and interests of the class. Moreover, organic intellectuals are deeply invested in the function and representation of their class in society. They actively endeavour to articulate and advance the collective will of their class, an important aspect Gramsci emphasised in the context of hegemony building.

The social role of the organic intellectuals, as set out by Gramsci, is quite different from that of traditional intellectuals. He formulates the new role of the organic intellectuals, whom he identifies as pioneers of social transformation, as follows:

The mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence, which is an exterior and momentary mover of feelings and passions, but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organiser, “permanent persuader” and not just a simple orator (but superior at the same time to the abstract mathematical spirit); from technique-as-work one proceeds to technique-as-science and to the humanistic conception of history, without which one remains “specialised” and does not become “directive” (specialised and political). (*Selections* 141-142)

Gramsci sees these new intellectuals as dynamic actors capable of bringing about concrete change in society. Their task involves active intervention in social structures to initiate a revolution that alters hegemonic power dynamics. Central to this endeavour is the transformation and influence of culture, morality and political goals. By using their intellectual power and social influence, organic intellectuals play a crucial role in mobilising social changes towards a more egalitarian and just order. Although Gramsci views the organic intellectual as an essential component in raising the class consciousness of the working class, the concept of organic intellectual is not class-specific. All social classes can have their own organic intellectuals. Organic intellectuals are members of any social group that create ideas to rationalise and legitimise the interests of their social

groups and to claim supremacy of their social groups, regardless of their profession or economic role. This may include engineers, managers, bureaucrats within the ruling class, or trade union leaders and workers of the proletariat.

Since Gramsci regards cultural hegemony as the first principle of attaining power, he maintains that the working class with the help of the organic intellectuals must develop its own culture and seek to recruit traditional intellectuals into their stratum in order to oppose the cultural hegemony of the bourgeoisie. In this case, the function of the organic intellectuals in establishing counter-hegemony is to organise and strengthen the authority of the group they represent and this practical task, according to Gramsci, must be accomplished in two spheres: civil society and political society (*Selections* 524-533). On the one hand, intellectuals, who must secure the hegemony of their group in civil society, are responsible for creating literature, art, philosophy and ideology that will appeal to all members of the social group and enable them to consent to that hegemony. Intellectuals operating in political society, on the other hand, create mechanisms to enforce obedience from members of any social group who do not voluntarily consent to the social sovereignty of their group. Margaret L. King notes that the organic intellectuals legitimise and validate their group hegemony through the dominance of these two areas:

[T]he intellectuals persuade the public in the civil arena to acquiesce to a certain social order; they coerce the public to the same end in the political arena. These two main types of intellectual activity - persuasion and coercion constitute the two main divisions of the superstructure pertaining to the structure of the dominant social group. (27)

To secure the hegemony of their own group in these two areas, organic intellectuals must intervene in ideology, education, media and economic relations at every point in the historical bloc. They must also come to the fore with the functions they perform within the bureaucracy and the state in the superstructure. Depending on these activities, Gramsci defines not only those who engage in intellectual activity, but also intellectuals who are organised and who participate in all strata of social life.

Gramsci claims that the existing hegemonic structures must be restructured in order to be able to witness the transformation of the previous ideological ground in both civil and political society. This transformation and the establishment of a new ideological ground occurs through the introduction of a new worldview that reveals the collective will and gains the consent of the other sub-groups. However, it is not possible to introduce

a new worldview and dominate all areas within the historical bloc with intellectuals only engaged in mental activities. The economic activity of each social class involves different mental and physical capacities. While some of the tasks that must be done within the group require muscular strength rather than mental activity, some require the opposite. Thus, true intellectuals, according to Gramsci, must be intellectually and physically active in every field of life and critically examine the common sense inherent in their group and develop a coherent philosophy from it. King further elucidates that Gramsci's notion of common sense encompasses the unified core of society:

Common sense comprises a jumble of incoherent ideas, some derived from prejudice, some stemming from economic interest, some imposed by an alien but dominating social group, some inappropriate to the worker-thinker's real historical position but surviving somehow from a dead past. Insofar as these multiplicitous ideas are chaotic and contradictory, they are accepted on faith and are rarely subjected to critical analysis. Thus, those members of a social group whose work is primarily muscular-nervous will be unlikely to examine critically the common-sense notions they share with their fellows. Even if they attempt to do so, they will be unable to create a coherent world-conception appropriate to their social group. (29)

Since this is a very difficult task, only a relatively small number of people can critically analyse common sense, regulate it and create a philosophy that represents their group. In other words, only a small number of organic intellectuals from each stratum can create a philosophy that meets their needs. Moreover, the organic intellectuals who can develop a system of thought, i.e., an ideology that regulates all the ideas of the group, must ensure that everyone in their group participates in the ideology in order to establish hegemony. To achieve this, organic intellectuals must organise and trigger the political process, according to Gramsci.

Organic intellectuals must convey the philosophy they create in order to express the needs and interests of their group through political action to all members of the group. In this way, they can become a dominant group by creating a common understanding of the world. As Gramsci notes, the creation of a common mindset, i.e., successfully applying cultural hegemony in both civil and political society means to attract the sub-groups and traditional intellectuals to the cause of the group:

One of the most important characteristics of any group that is developing towards dominance is its struggle to assimilate and to conquer "ideologically" the traditional intellectuals, but this assimilation and conquest is made quicker and more efficacious the more the group in question succeeds in simultaneously elaborating its own organic intellectuals. (*Selections* 142)

As traditional intellectuals hold permanent positions within civil and political society, garnering their support and leveraging their energy is crucial in the quest to establish cultural hegemony. Organic intellectuals thus endeavour to shift the power balance by challenging the monopoly of the bourgeoisie over traditional intellectuals. Valeriano Ramos underscores the significance of the new organic ideology in dismantling this monopoly:

The creation of the new organic ideology is effectuated dialectically through “ideological struggle”: the aspiring hegemonic class adopts an articulating principle which makes it possible to absorb, rearticulate and assimilate ideological elements in the discourse of other social classes and to unify these elements into a new collective will. (Ramos)

Gramsci, however, does not consider the high culture of the organic intellectuals and the critical philosophy they formed in parallel with the needs and interests of their groups sufficient to create a new collective will and a historical transformation. Influenced by Marx’s philosophy of praxis⁶, Gramsci stresses that the organic intellectuals must act, i.e., engaged in the political sphere, in order to create change. In this point, Gramsci echoes Marx’s famous sentiment as given before “The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it” (Marx). Gramsci concurs with Marx’s assertion that philosophy primarily serves to interpret and understand the world, emphasising its limited role in effecting tangible change. For Gramsci, the imperative for change lies not solely in philosophical interpretation but in the realm of politics. Politics, according to Gramsci, holds the power to enact transformative action and alter the fabric of society. As King points out the organic intellectuals become the political organisers of their groups: “Intellectuals must find within themselves the will to enact their philosophy, which, if not concretized in practice, will become ephemeral, non-historical, inconsequential. As actors of their own philosophy, intellectuals become the political organizers of their social group” (33). Once the proletariat has reached a conscious class position with the philosophy of the organic intellectuals, it can further develop a comprehensive worldview that includes other sub-groups. As a result, they can develop a political programme that enables the manifestation of a political party that plays a role in

⁶ “Praxis refers in general to action, activity; and in Marx’s sense to the free, universal, creative and self-creative activity through which man creates (makes, produces) and changes (shapes) his historical, human world and himself; an activity specific to man, through which he is basically differentiated from all other beings.” (Bottomore 435)

the name of seizing hegemony, otherwise, philosophical ideas that are not put into practice make intellectuals no more than experts.

Gramsci sees the political party as the organising force of the socialist revolution and a space where the public and intellectuals come together. He claims that people from different intellectual backgrounds fulfil their social functions by working together thanks to the party. He also believes that the party has great importance in the process of hegemony building, as the participation of more people has the potential to reach a wider audience and include subgroups. Moreover, the participation of many people removes the intellectual's monopoly on the decision-making process, eliminating the classic elitist position of the intellectual. This cooperation between intellectuals and society leads to a possibility to create a new historical bloc.

In this new historical bloc, Gramsci's intellectual is not simply a transmitter of information. His intellectuals seek not only to pursue their own cultural enrichment but also to create a cultural base and a common ideology in which the masses can be involved. This can be achieved through a political party. In describing the characteristics of the political party, Gramsci is inspired by Machiavelli's famous work *The Prince* (1532). To describe the characteristics and function of contemporary political parties, he writes *The Modern Prince*:

The modern prince, the myth-prince, cannot be a real person, a concrete individual. It can only be an organism, a complex element of society in which a collective will, which has already been recognised and has to some extent asserted itself in action, begins to take concrete form. History has already provided this organism and it is the political party—the first cell in which there come together germs of a collective will tending to become universal and total. In the modern world, only those historic-political actions which are immediate and imminent, characterised by the necessity for lightning speed, can be incarnated mythically by a concrete individual. (129)

The ruler of the modern world, according to Gramsci's definition, is a political party in which the collective consciousness is represented and the most important cells of this organism are the intellectuals who create the universal collective consciousness. A. Santucci notes that Gramsci stands against the hegemony of the authoritarian regimes dominated by the bourgeoisie through his definition of the modern prince. Furthermore, he attempts to develop an alternative theory of hegemony that would allow the exploited classes to independently manage an entire social apparatus and economic system of production (156-158). In achieving hegemony, organic intellectuals, for Gramsci, must

be the ones to ensure and organise the functioning of mechanisms such as political parties that reach and mobilise broader masses.

In conclusion, Gramsci discusses the role of the intellectuals by discussing the nature of the capitalist system and the proletariat through concepts such as ideology, civil society, political society, political party and hegemony. Gramsci examines the functions of the intellectual in the historical bloc. The functions of the intellectuals in this historical bloc are primarily related to the class or group they represent. They function in terms of both leading ideological and revolutionary roles positioned against hegemony of other classes. The class that seeks social hegemony can achieve so by forming a group of organic intellectuals who represent their own class and use hegemony and coercion. Achieving this hegemony also requires the assimilation of traditional intellectuals by organic intellectuals. Gramsci, thus, places great emphasis on organic intellectuals, whom he sees as practitioners of his theory to succeed.

2.2. IDEOLOGY, STATE AND INTELLECTUALS: ALTHUSSERIAN PERSPECTIVES ON POWER AND CONTROL

French Marxist philosopher Louis Pierre Althusser, like Gramsci, discusses the role of intellectuals within the Marxist tradition regarding the state and bourgeois ideology, particularly in his work *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1970). In fact, Althusser's works have no direct systematic questioning of intellectuals or intellectual roles. However, the theories he advances about ideology and the ideological state apparatus are closely tied to the intellectual professions addressed by various sociologists and philosophers.

Having a broad grasp of Althusser's views on intellectuals requires comprehension of what he means by the terms, 'state', 'ideology' and 'ideological state apparatus'. These terms outline his discussions of Marxist philosophy and his ideas on intellectuals. Althusser defines the state, which he regards as the source and guarantor of class exploitation, as follows:

The state is a repressive 'machine' that enables the dominant classes (in the nineteenth century, the bourgeois class and the 'class' of big landowners) to ensure their domination over the working class in order to subject it to the process of extorting surplus-value (that is, to capitalist exploitation). The state

is thus, above all, what the Marxist classics have called the state apparatus.
(70)

His Marxist theory defines the main reason for the existence of a state and state apparatuses as a mechanism that ensures the continuity of the sovereign power. However, the continuity of power is not absolute and infinite; it is secured through procedures Althusser refers to as state apparatuses. Althusser categorises these state apparatuses into Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological State Apparatuses (74-75). Repressive state apparatuses include the government, administration, army, police, court and prisons, which operate primarily through mental and physical coercion and violence. Ideological state apparatuses, on the other hand, include religion, education, family, law, politics, union, culture and communication, which serve to transmit values of the state and preserve social order, primarily via reproducing capitalist production relations.

Considering the necessity of state apparatuses for the continuity of power, particularly within the scope of intellectuals, this discussion will focus on ideological state apparatuses. Althusser contends that the ruling class needs various professionals to make its ideology dominant on the public primarily through ideological state apparatuses. In order to achieve this, the ruling class establishes various institutions such as schools, churches and universities, which provide the training of these professionals and the continuity of ideology. According to Althusser, these institutions not only foster the development of an exploiting class ideology but also exert indirect repression on the masses through assimilation:

Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic. (There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus.) Thus, schools and churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection, etc., to 'discipline' not only their shepherds, but also their flocks. The same is true of the family. . . The same is true of the cultural ISA (censorship, among other things), etc. (244)

In this disciplinary process, intellectuals act as active participants in both the production and reproduction of ideological state apparatuses and act as ideological professionals in Althusser's terms. Essentially, intellectuals serve as legitimising actors within the framework of hegemony, operating under the authority of the ruling powers and reinforcing their control. Althusser's concept of the 'relative autonomy' of ideology suggests that intellectuals, while influenced by dominant ideologies, also possess a degree

of agency in interpreting and disseminating these ideologies. However, this agency operates within the confines of the ideological apparatuses in which intellectuals are situated, constraining the boundaries of acceptable discourse and dissent. Jerome Karabel's observation reinforces this perspective, suggesting that assuming intellectuals will consistently oppose the existing order is misleading, given that many of them occupy relatively privileged positions within society (209).

Althusser develops two theses on ideology: "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" and "ideology has a material existence" (256-258). In the first thesis, unlike other Marxist theories, Althusser sees ideology as a permanent illusion that must exist to bring people together. He argues that even in classless societies, ideology is necessary to achieve social cohesion. In the second thesis, as Margaret Majumdar clarifies, Althusser argues that ideology does not arise in the form of ideas or conceptions in individual's mind, but from actions and behaviours determined by their inclinations within their material bodies (30). In other words, individual's ideas are material actions defined by material ideological apparatuses. Although Althusser emphasises the necessity of ideology in terms of creating social unity, he does not ignore the manipulative aspect of ideological apparatuses.

In such an ideology-oriented worldview, as theorised by Althusser, there is an absolute subject (e.g. God or the state) as well as the other subjects formed around this subject. The existence of the absolute subject and the other subjects that surround it clarifies how ideology functions in societies. The function of intellectuals in this ideological sphere is the ideological production and activation of the will of the absolute subject and the subjectivation of other people to this subject. Although this structure usually turns out to be a community of professionals in the service of power, alternative ideologies can develop alongside the dominant ideology. However, since the current bourgeois system holds the basic ideological apparatuses of the state, changing the dominant ideology can only be possible by taking over state power and rebuilding the ideological apparatuses.

Althusser, essentially, claims that existing ideologies can only be understood in the context of class struggles. Intellectuals are also defined by their positions and functions in these class struggles. Thus, intellectuals, for Althusser, are classified either

as ideological professionals working for the ruling authority or as revolutionary intellectuals taking responsibility for the ideological struggle of the proletariat under the Marxist ideology. Although Althusser suggests that there can be revolutionary intellectuals in different classes, it should be noted that the definition of the revolutionary intellectual is not firmly established in his writings.

Althusser does not provide an in-depth analysis of intellectuals in his works but it is clear that the group he calls ideology professionals has an intellectual function in the social sphere. In his theory, however, these professionals are not autonomous, as in the works of Gramsci. Nor do they cooperate with the changing historical forces for social change. Rather, Althusser emphasises the passivity of intellectuals in their relationship with the dominant powers. To sum up, Althusser claims that the dominant class creates an ideology in order to maintain its domination over the inferior classes and this ideology is reproduced through ideological apparatus of state. The intellectuals (ideology professionals) as producers of knowledge, culture and symbols of societies have important position in the ruling power as producers and performers of the dominant ideology.

2.3. JULIEN BENDA'S CRITIQUE: THE INTELLECTUAL BETRAYAL

Quite different from Gramsci's definition of the intellectual that encompasses the larger part of society, Julien Benda's definition of the intellectual refers to a very distinguished and small group of people. In his famous work, *The Treason of the Intellectuals* (2007), Benda notes that intellectuals have some basic missions such as telling the truth, condemning corruption, defending the weak and resisting authority. He, thus, claims there are very few people who are capable of carrying out these missions. True intellectuals, for Benda, do not pursue practical aims and interests in their activities but rather seek joy in art, science or metaphysical thinking. Moreover, he claims that throughout history, for more than two millennia up to modern times, many philosophers, clergymen, men of letters, artists and scientists were in direct opposition to the reality of the masses and the rulers with their way of thinking. They had been the elitist representatives of universal truth and morality for a long time. In his words, they had not been poisoned by political passions:

They were either entirely indifferent to these passions and, like Leonardo da Vinci, Malebranche, Goethe, set an example of attachment to the purely disinterested activity of the mind and created a belief in the supreme value of this form of existence; or, gazing as moralists upon the conflict of human egotisms, like Erasmus, Kant, Renan, they preached, in the name of humanity or justice, the adoption of an abstract principle superior to and directly opposed to these passions. (Benda Ch. 3)

The intellectuals Benda refers to here were part of a tradition that glorified abstract human values, universal truth and intellectual activity. They were representatives of a system of thought that transcended human ego-centrism. True intellectuals, for Benda, form a kind of clergy and they uphold the eternal standards of truth and justice that are not of this world. Thus, they are the most important force against evil in the world.

However, this attitude and adherence to universal principles changed towards the end of the nineteenth century. In Benda's words, intellectuals "began to play the game of political passions" (Ch.3) since then; they began to lose and abandon their allegiance to the philosophical and scientific ideals they had previously cherished. One of the most important indicators of this change, according to Benda, was the abandonment of universality and the praise of particularity. Intellectuals, who for centuries had tried to eliminate human differences by invoking the divine essence to bring people together, now began to praise those same differences at the end of the nineteenth century. Robert J. Niess explains the transformation of intellectuals as follows:

The new 'clerk'⁷, a moralist where his ancestors had been pure thinkers, scorns the universal for the particular, teaches man to regard himself as distinct from his fellows instead of as a part of their whole, exalts the practical over the spiritual, preaches the abandonment of disinterested, "useless" activity in favor of a more realistic philosophy. (384)

The fact that intellectuals turned away from idealism towards pragmatism, on the one hand, deteriorated the principle of universality, on the other, led to the emergence of a populist attitude that protects the interests of a certain group of people. Benda notes that the reason for this change, which began in his time, was the increasing racial, class and national passions. Benda, writing at a time of increasing ethnic and nationalist hatred, blames the intellectuals as the organisers of this hatred. They embraced and glorified the

⁷ Benda uses the term "clerks" to distinguish intellectuals from common people, emphasising their different status and behaviour. Unlike the majority, who prioritise the pursuit of material benefits and establishing connections with worldly authorities, intellectuals as Benda depicts them occupy a different sphere. They are more inclined towards abstract pursuits, intellectual endeavours and the pursuit of universal truths, which distinguishes them from the material concerns of ordinary individuals.

discriminatory discourses of politicians without questioning them and they espoused a local form of philosophy of ethics.

In fact, Benda does not expect intellectuals to be completely indifferent to politics, on the contrary, he believes that they should undertake a mission to raise the awareness of their citizens about the mistakes in political matters. Yet, the reason Benda calls the intellectuals ‘traitors’ as the title of his work states, lies in their advocacy of political affairs and their growing devotion to politics, i.e., the main problem of modern intellectuals was their willingness to embrace political passions:

They permit, they desire them to be mingled with their work as artists, as men of learning, as philosophers, to color the essence of their work and to mark all its productions. And indeed never were there so many political works among those which ought to be the mirror of the disinterested intelligence. (Ch. 3)

The intellectuals who expressed their political fervour in all their works did not consider it shameful to align themselves with societies that supported certain political ideologies or repressive state regimes. Unlike their predecessors who analysed society through a spiritual and objective lens, modern intellectuals adopted a utilitarian stance. They moved away from traditional intellectual traditions and assimilated into society and the state system. They devoted themselves to politics which they regarded as a necessity for success. Instead of defending the principles of justice and truth, they sought to appease those in positions of authority. Distancing themselves from the traditions of their intellectual forebears, they were driven solely by material concerns. Benda recognises that the turbulent political environment of twentieth-century Europe and the effects of the emerging capitalist economic system were important factors that triggered this profound transformation among modern intellectuals. Benda’s critique, however, does not focus on accusing intellectuals of betrayal for capitulating to the demands of the new world order and capitalist pressures. Instead, he condemns them for their willingness to serve this oppressive and exploitative social framework. Robert Merton extends this critique by emphasising the shift in intellectuals’ approach to influencing socio-political change. Merton observes that while intellectuals had previously aligned themselves with political movements that sought to restructure economic and political systems, there has recently been a noticeable tendency to effect change through established channels of government (408). This shift implies a shift away from radical or revolutionary approaches towards more institutionalised paths of reform. Rather than challenging the basic structures of

power and capitalism, intellectuals are increasingly involved in activities aimed at reforming these systems within existing institutional frameworks.

Benda discusses the cause of this corruption of intellectuals in terms of the relationship between morality and politics. He argues that people had only two kinds of doctrine as far as the relationship between politics and morality was concerned. One was that of Plato, according to which morality was the determinant of politics because only within the framework of certain moral rules, an ideal society could have been created. The other doctrine was that of Machiavelli for whom morality could have no relationship with politics since any action that would make the power of the state dominant was considered to be legitimate. Yet, modern intellectuals introduced a new (third) doctrine that emphasised the importance of pragmatism. For the modern intellectuals, any political action that would be beneficial to their ideology and politics would also be a determining factor in the moral understanding of the period. Benda illustrates attitudes of the modern intellectuals as follows:

We have to admit that the “clerks” now exercise political passions with all the characteristics of passion — the tendency to action, the thirst for immediate results, the exclusive preoccupation with the desired end, the scorn for argument, the excess, the hatred, the fixed ideas. The modern “clerk” has entirely ceased to let the layman alone descend to the market-place. The modern “clerk” is determined to have the soul of a citizen and to make vigorous use of it; he is proud of that soul; his literature is filled with his contempt for the man who shuts himself up with art or science and takes no interest in the passions of the State. (Ch. 3)

The intellectuals of whom Benda speaks strive to show themselves as agents by participating in fixed systems of thought. This aspiration to be an agent serves nothing other than self-interest because of extremism, hatred and fixed ideas. Their aim was not to develop the target group’s system of thought as Gramsci suggests but to manipulate them and draw them into political arguments for self-interest. Thus, modern intellectuals took on the task of reinforcing certain ideologies in the minds of the uneducated.

Benda makes a comparison between the intellectuals of the past and the modern intellectuals in order to illustrate the betrayal of modern intellectuals. He suggests that people like Socrates, Jesus, Dante, Galilei Voltaire and Zola, whom he considers as true intellectuals, performed their duties fully and with dignity as they were officials of abstract justice and acted without passion for worldly objects. They were the ones who could speak the truth even when those truths were against the majority of society. Modern

intellectuals, on the other hand, strive to please the masses without appealing to any universal truth. They prefer to be praised by ordinary and uneducated people who represent a particular nationality and/or ideology. Moreover, they pursue false heroism rather than the truth, which means these intellectuals betray their true mission. Benda posits that true intellectuals derive fulfilment from pursuits beyond practical aims, finding solace in the realms of art, science, or metaphysical contemplation. Their allegiance lies not in worldly pursuits but in the pursuit of non-material virtues, echoing the sentiment, “My kingdom is not of this world” (Ch. 3). Benda’s idea of the true intellectual closely resonates with Ali Shariati’s portrayal of intellectuals as “enlightened souls” (4). Like Benda, Shariati underlines the idea that real intellectuals go beyond mere academic pursuits or professional achievements. Instead, they show a deeper commitment to spiritual enlightenment and ethical principles, prioritising these values over worldly concerns.

In contrast to this attitude, modern intellectuals focus on worldly questions and tried to analyse the world through a materialistic approach. Furthermore, modern intellectuals embark on new missions such as patriotism, xenophobia, hatred, fanaticism, national thinking and devotion to authority. In essence, modern intellectuals abandon the traditional philosophical and scholarly ideals of the ancient intellectuals and opt instead for particularism and moral relativism. Benda identifies nationalism as the most glaring error of modern intellectuals, aligning with the prevailing mindset of nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe. Modern intellectuals, cloaked in the rhetoric of nationalism and preoccupied with local concerns, betray thousands of years of intellectual tradition and universality. Benda also condemns this blind form of nationalism, arguing that its purpose is to rationalise injustice:

It was reserved for our own time to see men of thought, or men giving themselves out as such, professing openly that they would not submit their patriotism to any check on the part of their judgment, proclaiming (like Barrès) that “even if the country is wrong, we must think it in the right,” denouncing as “traitors to the nation” those of their compatriots who retain their liberty of mind, or at least of speech, in regard to their country. (Ch. 3)

Benda’s analysis reveals the insidious nature of blind nationalism, which not only stifles intellectual freedom but also perpetuates a culture of conformity and censorship. By prioritising nationalistic fervour over critical inquiry and moral discernment, modern intellectuals betray the foundational principles of intellectual integrity and universal

human values. This quote serves as a poignant critique of the erosion of intellectual independence and ethical responsibility in the face of nationalist ideologies, highlighting the dangers of uncritical allegiance to the nation at the expense of truth and justice.

Modern intellectuals not only fervently embraced nationalism but also propagated xenophobia, systematically elevating their own country while denigrating others. This mindset not only laid the groundwork for fascist ideologies but also perpetuated notions of superiority and exclusion based on national identity. This sentiment was particularly evident during the Second World War, notably in Nazi Germany. As Benda puts it, “[T]hese new ‘clerks’ declare that they do not know what is meant by justice, truth and other ‘metaphysical fogs’, that for them the true is determined by the useful, the just by circumstances” (Ch. 3). They believe that loyalty to one’s own country is the only path to virtuous thoughts, leading them to view dissenters or those lacking in nationalist fervour as enemies or outsiders.

Benda’s criticism of modern intellectuals goes beyond their embrace of nationalism and condemns their lack of discomfort within its narrow confines. Instead of questioning or challenging nationalism, these intellectuals readily embraced it, seeing it as a form of realism. They believed that their nationalist fervour glorified them, enhanced their importance in society and served what they perceived as the greater good of civilisation. This uncritical endorsement of nationalism under the guise of realism forms the crux of Benda’s critique of modern intellectuals. (Ch.3). Benda underpins this moral corruption in Europe with an example from Tolstoy’s story: “Modern Europe is like the brigand in one of Tolstoi’s stories, who made his confession to a hermit and the hermit said in amazement: Others were at least ashamed of being brigands; but what is to be done with this man, who is proud of it?” (Ch.4). Benda uses this analogy to highlight the troubling attitude of modern intellectuals, who not only embrace immoral ideologies like nationalism but also take pride in them. Unlike their predecessors such as Socrates, Voltaire and Spinoza, who remained independent of nationalist sentiments and worldly powers in their intellectual pursuits, modern intellectuals have abandoned such principles. Modern intellectuals, as Benda puts it, “have labored in a direction contrary to that expected of them; they have flattered the vanity of nations, they have fed full the arrogance with which each nation flings its superiority in the face of its neighbors” (Ch. 3). Particularism became the main source of their rhetoric. They began to immerse

themselves in a world of material political ambitions. For this reason, they lost their ability to be the conscience of society.

Contrary to modern intellectuals, Benda's ideal intellectual model, supported by historical examples, is an angry and courageous individual who speaks truth to power, who sees no worldly power as great and powerful enough to be subjected to without questioning. In Said's words: "Real intellectuals, according to Benda's definition, are supposed to risk being burned at the stake, ostracized, or crucified. They are symbolic personages marked by their unyielding distance from practical concerns" (7). The image of the real intellectual that Benda creates through his discussion is very striking and impressive. Indeed, as Benda notes, it is quite difficult in modern societies to encounter such intellectual figures who are not embroiled in the political passions of the modern world. Benda was disgusted by the European intellectuals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because they had lost their ability to discuss political and military matters dispassionately. Hence, he ends his famous work by expressing his disappointment in the following words: "And History will smile to think that this is the species for which Socrates and Jesus Christ died" (Ch. 4). By recalling the names of these notable historical figures, Benda highlights the sharp contrast between their ideals and the actions of modern intellectuals, whom he considers to have abandoned the pursuit of truth and righteousness in favour of political expediency and moral compromise. The phrase 'this species' refers to the collective body of modern intellectuals and implies that they fall short of the lofty standards set by their predecessors. In essence, Benda's final words are a poignant indictment of the moral decadence and intellectual bankruptcy he observes in the contemporary intellectual milieu.

2.4. THE END OF UNIVERSAL TRUTH: FOUCAULT'S REINTERPRETATION OF INTELLECTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

The ideas of Michel Foucault on intellectuals demonstrate a radical rethinking of the concepts of truth and power as well as a political redefinition of the intellectual in relation to these concepts. Examining the relationship between truth and power, Foucault asserts that there is no absolute truth independent of power as traditional intellectuals once claimed. On the contrary, Foucault argues that truth is not something to be discovered outside of us, but a phenomenon created through certain power relations. In particular,

the emphasis on subjectivity in modernity and the incredulity towards realism in postmodernity undermined the concept of universal truth that traditional intellectuals had once espoused. Consequently, the phenomenon of absolute truth, once thought to exist independently of all human relations, has lost its validity in modern societies and the universal intellectual associated with the concept of absolute truth has lost its power and effect due to this change.

In modern societies, where the perception of truth is subjective, diverse and multi-layered, intellectuals have no longer been called upon to act as defenders of universal truth for some time. In his interview, Foucault expresses his thoughts on the nature of truth in modern societies as follows:

‘Truth’ is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. ‘Truth’ is linked in a circular relation with system of power which produce and sustain it and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A ‘régime’ of truth. This regime is not merely ideological or superstructural; it was a condition of the formation and development of capitalism. (*Power/Knowledge* 133)

For Foucault, truth in modern society is not a phenomenon that lies outside power, waiting to be discovered, as the universal intellectuals once claimed. On the contrary, it is a set of rules that coexist with power, separating right from wrong. In other words, truth is produced by power and becomes validated in societies through the apparatuses of power. Thus, Foucault asserts that the role of the intellectual is neither to tell others what they are supposed to do, nor is it to establish laws and propose solutions since speaking truths as if they were universal tends to support the continued domination of power. Intellectuals adopting such an attitude contribute to a system in which contingent concepts are treated as if they were indispensable and immutable.

In the discourse of the universal intellectual, ideology is in the service of power and is posited against the truth. This discourse assumes a sharp contrast between power and truth. Yet, as Foucault states in his analysis, power and truth are in a circular relationship and together they form a regime of truth. Thus, ideology has lost its function of analysing the position of power in modern society turning, instead, into a concept that cannot practically be used in political struggle. For Foucault, intellectuals in modern society cannot simply be mediators of knowledge, because modern individuals are no longer in need of intellectuals to acquire knowledge (*Intellectuals and Power* 207). These

intellectuals also realise that the masses no longer rely on themselves for knowledge. The masses are fully aware of their conditions and have the capacity to express themselves. However, there is a system of power that discredit, obstruct and prohibit this consciousness and understanding. Consequently, Foucault portrays the revised role of modern intellectuals as follows:

Intellectuals are themselves agents of this system of power—the idea of their responsibility for consciousness and discourse forms part of the system. The intellectual's role is no longer to place himself "somewhat ahead and to the side" in order to express the stifled truth of the collectivity; rather, it is to struggle against the forms of power that transform him into its object and instrument in the sphere of "knowledge", "truth", "consciousness" and "discourse." (*Intellectuals and Power* 207-208)

This redefined concept of the intellectual echoes Gramsci's notion of the organic intellectual and underscores the shift in the intellectual's role from the global to the local context, transitioning from the universal to the specific intellectual. Foucault argues that power relations constitute a field of knowledge which enables the functioning of power. Truth is mundane and is only generated through multiple forms of constraints of power. Each society creates its own regime of truth and power as well as mechanisms and authorities that distinguish between false and true statements (*Power/Knowledge* 131). The source of sovereignty is multiple; thus, political struggle cannot be limited to a single mode of production, government, or social class. The modes of production, class structures or forms of government are the ultimate form of power, hence, targeting and changing the ultimate forms cannot bring about large-scale social transformation. There are many possible recodifications of power relations. Therefore, political struggle must also be plural and local, corresponding to the decentralised and plural nature of power. Ferda Keskin illustrates the features that the modern intellectuals: The intellectual is no longer positioned as the master of universal truth, the possessor of a comprehensive theory of the state, or the sole arbiter of values that valid for all (24). The modern intellectual for Foucault is one who works in a specific discipline such as physics or biology, or at institutions such as schools, universities and laboratories. The knowledge of the new intellectuals is not comprised of an integrative knowledge or a unifying theory of society, but rather their expertise and skills in a specific, local area.

According to Foucault, the figure of the specific intellectual has emerged with the Second World War. He argues that the transition from the universal intellectual to the

specific intellectual was possible thanks to the studies of nuclear physicists, especially Robert Oppenheimer (*The Political Function* 12). Local scientific knowledge in the hands of nuclear physicists has shown that there is a power that can benefit life or destroy it. This has rendered the specific intellectual both as a political threat and a target of political forces. Foucault, thus, thinks that the specific intellectual was for the first time hounded by political powers no longer on account of the general discourse he conducted, but because of the knowledge s/he held under her/his control. The specificity of this new intellectual, for Foucault, is directly related to the functioning of the regime of truth in society:

In other words, the intellectual has a three-fold specificity: that of his class position (whether as petty-bourgeois in the service of capitalism or 'organic' intellectual of the proletariat); that of his conditions of life and work, linked to his condition as an intellectual (his field of research, his place in a laboratory, the political and economic demands to which he submits or against which he rebels, in the university, the hospital, etc.); lastly, the specificity of the politics of truth in our societies. (*Power/ Knowledge* 132)

The three-fold specificity of this new intellectual becomes important depending on how the politics of truth is carried out in society. Even though the intellectual with his specific expertise is in danger of serving the current truth regime, he can struggle for a change in the regime of truth by fighting the power relations and techniques established in his field with the same knowledge. While the local struggle of the specific intellectual is only a small part of the regime of truth, the struggle against the existing regime of truth, in general, can produce some positive effects and results that are not bound only by professional or sectoral boundaries.

The role of the intellectual in this new struggle is not to lead the masses in global action, but to be the supervisor of a particular group in the struggle. Even though the field of action of the specific intellectuals is limited in this new role, there is still a fundamental problem they may face. The specific intellectuals are at risk of serving the interests of the state or capital or being manipulated by the powers in his political engagement due to their expertise. However, this still does not diminish the importance of the specific intellectuals because of the increasing role of information and technology in politics. Foucault further elaborates the role of this new intellectual as follows:

The essential political problem for the intellectual is not to criticise the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by a correct ideology, but that of

ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth. The problem is not changing people's consciousnesses—or what's in their heads—but the political, economic, institutional régime of the production of truth. (*Power/Knowledge* 133)

The specificity of the intellectual's knowledge and skills, as well as their relationship to the production of truth, fundamentally reshape the intellectual's connection to the masses. This relationship no longer revolves around mere representation. A specific intellectual does not serve as the consciousness or representative of those who are alienated or distorted by ideology. As quoted by Foucault before "Truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements" (*Power/Knowledge* 133). Therefore, a new link between theory and practice of intellectuals has been established in modern societies due to this change in perceiving the truth:

Intellectuals have become accustomed to working not in the character of the 'universal', the 'exemplary', the 'just-and-true for all', but in specific sectors, at precise points where they are situated either by their professional conditions of work or their conditions of life (housing, the hospital, the asylum, the laboratory, the university, familial and sexual relations). Through this they have undoubtedly gained a much more concrete awareness of struggles. They have also thereby encountered problems which are specific, 'non-universal', often different from those of the proletariat and the masses. (Foucault, *The Political Function* 12)

A specific intellectual no longer tries to represent universal values and truths. Instead, they endeavour to exert influence in specific areas by engaging in struggles within the contexts in which they live and work. In this scenario, theory is not separate from practice; rather, theory embodies practice itself. However, this practice is not comprehensive and universal, but rather local and regional. Consequently, this new link between theory and practice is no longer a struggle of intellectuals to enlighten society from a safe distance, but rather an activity carried out directly with those who struggle for power.

In Conclusion, in his analysis of Western culture, Foucault argues that universal intellectuals, seeing themselves as the spokespersons of universal truth and taking on the duty of being the consciousness, conscience and pioneer of the masses, have lost their power. For him, it is high time to give up the role those universal intellectuals have set for themselves because the social, political and economic promises of universal intellectuals, which they put forward based on scientific discourse, have not been realised. The radical change in the perception of concepts such as truth, power and science in the

modern world cannot be managed and explained through the particularistic point of view of the traditional intellectual. They now have to theorise and practice within the specific areas since the forms of knowledge, explicit and tacit, formal and informal vary.

Thanks to these changes, Foucault draws attention to the transition from the age of delusional universal intellectuals to a more realistic age of specific intellectuals. This also means that intellectuality is anchored in its material circumstances as well as in its various forms of reflexivity. Universalism has been replaced by a system in which all specific examples are included and in which specific challenges, opportunities and options for learning and acting are built. Although the intellectual's place as well as their influence seems more limited in this system, the basic idea is that the activity of each individual is the basis of politicisation. Every form of knowledge or action remains open to another, capable of forging connections between different points of politicisation. Local and specific activities serve as links in the establishment of a new regime of truth. While the struggle may be confined to local or specific areas, the outcome can also precipitate broader social transformations. In his analysis, Foucault underlines the importance of non-holistic, local discourses whose function in political struggle is to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of power networks and to leave tactics, strategy and objectives directly to those involved in the struggle. He also draws attention not to an absolute model of social transformation, but to multiple alternative models in which local groups can express themselves and act for their own benefit. Although Foucault gives a new definition of the intellectual in his interviews, he does not address the role of this new intellectual and the limits of his activity clearly. Yet, his discussion of the specific intellectual, which he treats within the concepts of truth and power, seems more reasonable and appropriate for the nature of modern society.

2.5. LEGISLATORS AND INTERPRETERS: BAUMAN'S REFLECTIONS ON THE CHANGING ROLE OF INTELLECTUALS

In his famous work, *Legislators and Interpreters* (1987), Zygmunt Bauman questions the concept of intellectual as well as intellectual role in terms of modernity and postmodernity. Modern view of the world is that it is essentially an ordered unity. Even if the existence of a pattern of uneven probabilities may appear, there is always an explanation for the uneven probabilities. If intellectuals provide a logical or valid

explanation for the uneven probabilities of the world, then they can use them as a tool for prediction and control. In other words, objective information, which is thought to provide order, becomes a means of control in the hands of intellectuals. Postmodern view of the world, on the other hand, assumes that there is an unlimited number of models of order, each of which is produced by a series of relatively autonomous practices. An order does not precede autonomous practices and therefore there cannot be an external measure of its validity (*Legislators* 3-4). Postmodernism's positing of the concept of reality on such slippery ground shakes the foundations of the idea of absolute truth. Especially since the Renaissance, the fact that objective knowledge, seen as a means of attaining absolute truth, has led to a chaotic rather than an orderly model of the world, has given rise to widespread distrust both of knowledge and of those who possess it. This justified incredulity towards reality has also rendered the values that have prevailed in modernity meaningless. Incredulity towards reality has also meant that the traditional intellectuals, who seek to generate universal values, have also been discredited.

In the light of this context, Bauman discusses the changing role of intellectuals who dominate knowledge in today's world by highlighting the changes that have taken place from the modern to the postmodern era. He theorises the last three centuries of Western European history concerning intellectual praxis, making use of the clash between modernity and postmodernity. Although relativity of knowledge is also emphasised in modernity, it still contains the idea of universality. Yet, in postmodernity, the idea of relativity is continuous and fluid which means there is no place for universality. Bauman outlines the difference between the two periods in terms of the understanding of knowledge as follows:

If, from the modern point of view, relativism of knowledge was a problem to be struggled against and eventually overcome in theory and in practice, from the post-modern point of view relativity of knowledge (that is, its 'embeddedness' in its own communally supported tradition) is a lasting feature of the world. (*Legislators* 4)

These two different perspectives toward the perception of reality are the main reason for the dramatic change in the intellectual role. The loss of the intellectuals' monopoly on knowledge as well as their inability to control it and put it into a form applicable to all have dramatically changed their traditional role in society.

For Bauman, the typical modernist strategy of intellectual work is best illustrated through the metaphor of the 'legislator' role (*Legislators* 4). This position entails utilising authoritative statements to resolve conflicts and choose opinions that, once chosen, become true and binding. In this case, jurisdiction is justified by superior objective knowledge, which intellectuals have easier access to than the non-intellectual segment of society. This role points to the intellectuals' authority and control over objective knowledge. Just like Foucault, Bauman also notes that knowledge is a tool for exercising power. Thus, the intellectuals dominating knowledge, on the one hand, gain power, on the other, they serve the power and the capital. In a sense, this is an act of mutual legitimisation. While the intellectuals legitimise power with their intellectual knowledge, power confirms the intellectuals' expertise with its authority. Bauman describes the legislator role of the intellectuals as follows:

Access to such knowledge is better thanks to procedural rules which assure the attainment of truth, the arrival at valid moral judgement and the selection of proper artistic taste. Such procedural rules have a universal validity, as do the products of their application. The employment of such procedural rules makes the intellectual professions (scientists, moral philosophers, aesthetes) collective owners of knowledge of direct and crucial relevance to the maintenance and perfection of the social order. (*Legislators* 5)

This quote suggests that intellectuals, by virtue of their expertise and access to objective knowledge, often assume a role similar to that of legislators, exercising the authority to make judgements and shape values within society. In doing so, they tend to promote a perfectionist worldview (the belief in achieving ideal standards) underpinned by principles they perceive as universally valid. This value system is conceptualised as being developed on behalf of all humanity and means that intellectuals see themselves as arbiters of moral and ethical standards that apply universally to human society. Thus, intellectuals are viewed as 'extraterritorial', operating beyond specific boundaries, which grants them the responsibility to assess and potentially challenge beliefs from various social sectors. In this context, Bauman's conceptualisation of the role of the intellectual in modernity converges with Foucault's idea of the universal intellectual, highlighting the common emphasis on the relationship of intellectuals to universal values and their potential to shape social discourse and progress.

In line with the notion of multiple models of order in postmodernity, Bauman asserts that each of these models is interpreted within the confines of the practices that

endorse it, as there is no overarching truth applicable to all. Consequently, information systems are evaluated solely within the parameters of their respective traditions. Bauman suggests that in this context, the role of the intellectual in the postmodern era is best understood through the metaphor of the interpreter. He elaborates on this metaphor by stating:

It consists of translating statements, made within one communally based tradition, so that they can be understood within the system of knowledge based on another tradition. Instead of being orientated towards selecting the best social order, this strategy is aimed at facilitating communication between autonomous (sovereign) participants. (*Legislators* 5)

Bauman underscores that this role is primarily concerned with preserving the integrity of meaning in the communication process. The objective is to permeate the new information system for interpretation while maintaining a delicate equilibrium between two divergent traditions. This equilibrium is crucial for ensuring the message remains undistorted and comprehensible to all parties involved. In polycentrism, there may be many truths, but the intellectual is able to represent only one of them as a consequence of the polyphony that postmodernity brings. As the monopoly of universalism and rational centralisation has been weakened, knowledge has begun to evolve according to the local contexts and practises of different cultural communities. The new role attributed to intellectuals in this process is to translate different contexts into each other and produce meaning and practise in relation to their own context. Integrating the concept of ‘liquid modernity’ or liquidity of modern life by Bauman, we can further understand the fluidity and flux inherent in contemporary society (Bauman, *Liquid* 2). Just as liquid modernity implies a state of constant change and uncertainty, so too does the interpretation and negotiation of meaning in postmodern communication. In the fluid dynamics of contemporary life, fixed categories and stable identities give way to a more malleable, adaptable understanding of reality. In this context, the role of the intellectual as interpreter takes on added complexity. Not only must they navigate between different traditions and systems of knowledge, but they must also contend with the ever-shifting currents of social, cultural and technological change. Just as liquid adapts to the shape of its container, so too must intellectuals adapt their methods of interpretation to suit the fluid contexts in which they operate.

Bauman questions the origins of modern intellectual to further clarify the distinction between the modern and the postmodern intellectual. The group that Bauman

calls 'les philosophes'⁸, had a significant role in the formation of the modern intellectual. This group, the forefathers of modern intellectuals, regarded the Enlightenment heritage as a way of life, a living philosophy, rather than the creation of ideas and the dissemination of thinking. The main reason for the appearance of this class, les philosophes, in the Enlightenment was the emergence of a new understanding of the state order. The feudal structure, which established a link between land ownership rights and administrative duties, gradually lost its influence from the eighteenth century onwards. The landowners, i.e. the aristocracy, lost their political power. This political class, losing its power, was replaced by the absolute monarch. This replacement also brought about the transition from feudal subjection to the citizenship of the modern state. The basis of this new understanding of the modern state lies in the idea that the modern world is chaotic and disorderly, therefore society needs to be regulated. In this new order, there are two primary actors who strive to organise society: the state and intellectuals. Both the state and the intellectuals, with the passion of being legislators, have set themselves various tasks, such as guiding nations by formulating their moral principles and saving them from primitiveness, chaos and insecurity.

The period of absolute monarchy in Europe was an age marked by organisation and administration. A hierarchical state structure was developed in this period and all activities in social and commercial areas were strictly regulated by laws and regulations. Thus, the boundaries between the private and the public were radically redrawn and the public sphere increased to an unprecedented extent. This new state system was about creating a new culture that would permeate and control society, a culture of surveillance. This culture of surveillance required expertise, skill and systematic knowledge to accomplish tasks that had previously been done by natural and practical means. Authority, thus, needed scholars to organise and regulate the structure of the state (Bauman, *Legislators* 26). Bauman, for this reason, believes that this period was most favourable for the emergence of an intellectual class. Since it was a period of re-creation, *les philosophes*, the forerunners and archetype of modern intellectuals, did not take over the leadership of current public opinion. They built a new public, they created public opinion

⁸ Bauman's concept of 'les philosophes' refers to the philosophers and writers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire who appeared in France in the second half of the 18th century and were the most important agents of modernity.

and they acquired authority for this creation which enabled them to negotiate or compete with the power of those who controlled the reins of government (Bauman, *Legislators* 34). Bauman elucidates the reasons behind the significant influence of this intellectual cohort in the realms of social and political discourse:

Fifthly, though untied to any institutions and unbound by any divisive loyalties, the philosophes were more than a collection of individuals. They constituted a closely-knit group bound together by a dense network of communication: la republique des lettres, les societes de pensee, clubs, voluminous correspondence, mutual reviewing, mutual visitings, their own papal court at Voltaire's home at Ferney, their own judicial and punitive system with opinion sitting on the jury bench. They were a group, an autonomous group and a group which introduced opinion, writing, speech and language in general as a social bond to do away with all social bonds. (*Legislators* 26)

The primary reason intellectuals exercised such power in the social and political spheres was their autonomy. This intellectual autonomy served as an “active utopia”⁹ (Bauman, *Legislators* 24) in which passions, achievements and values were measured, criticised, corrected and standardised through discussion. Since the emergence and development of absolute monarchy coincided with the Ages of Enlightenment and Reason respectively, human opinion was the only social basis of the new certainty and argument was the only path to truth. That is why, as Bauman claims, the philosophers occupied the role of legislators in society since they were a community in which free discussion took place.

Monarch and intellectuals were indeed two autonomous powers in the early days of absolute monarchy but all powers were eventually merged under the absolute monarch as a result of the monarch's absolutist and monopolistic attitude in decision-making processes. After this, intellectuals were no longer a power equal to the monarch. Nevertheless, the system required intellectuals to function as practitioners of power on behalf of the monarch since the absolute monarchy was confronted with administrative tasks of an unprecedented magnitude that could not be handled by traditional means. Bauman argues the shift in power dynamics under absolute monarchy and the new role given to intellectuals:

⁹ In this context, ‘active utopia’ refers to a concept where intellectual autonomy serves as a driving force for social change and progress. It suggests that intellectuals, unbound by institutional constraints or divisive loyalties, embody a vision of an ideal society where passions, achievements and values are critically examined, corrected and standardised through open discussion and debate. Bauman uses this concept in relation to the intellectuals’ pursuit of an ideal society and the new state system.

The seemingly unlimited power was now concentrated in the hands of the absolute monarch tempted to embark on experiments to reshape the social body, as the latter now seemed tractable and malleable by comparison with the enormity of the tools of power. But this called for a grand design for a better society; experts, specialists, advisers - those who 'know better' – were needed. (*Legislators* 37)

Intellectuals, i.e. experts, specialists, advisers and those who know better, were now under the control of the monarch. The main task of experts was to impose a uniform bodily rhythm instead of the varying tendencies of individuals. The most effective way to achieve this was to transform a group of subjects acting for different purposes into a uniform object through education. Following the establishment of the monarchy, education became an essential component of power. The purpose of employing education as a component of power was to teach obedience and to keep people under surveillance. Intellectuals also became part of this culture of surveillance because the essence of the Enlightenment was not to spread knowledge but to legislate, organise and regulate knowledge. Moreover, intellectuals of the Enlightenment such as Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke designed, from the very beginning, a social order based on the power of the monarch or legislator over the individual.

The social-intellectual movement known in history as the Age of Enlightenment was not a massive propaganda favouring truth, reason and science; nor was it a result of the lofty goal of bringing the light of wisdom to the confused and oppressed. To Bauman, the Enlightenment was an exercise in two distinct parts instead:

First, in extending the powers and the ambitions of the state, in transferring to the state the pastoral function exercised previously (in a way incipient and modest by comparison) by the Church, in reorganising the state around the function of planning, designing and managing the reproduction of social order. Secondly, in the creation of an entirely new and consciously designed, social mechanism of disciplining action, aimed at regulating and regularising the socially relevant life of the subjects of the teaching and managing state. (*Legislators* 80)

The actors of these designs and activities were intellectuals. However, the concern for an ideal society and the desire to design a new social mechanism with laws and rules and presenting these as universal truths was not innocent. This was, somehow, an enactment of the concept of binary opposition that constitutes the cultural infrastructure of the West. Although philosophers tried to create an ideal society by universalising all social values with laws and rules, the result was far from establishing such a society. What emerged as a result of the intellectuals' endeavours was communities that struggled for supremacy

trying to make their own truths prevail. Thus, the role of intellectuals expressed in the metaphor of the legislator led to various formations and movements ranging from Marxism to fascism and liberalism and to nationalist and religious movements.

In the postmodern period, with the collapse of the monopoly of universalism and rationalism, knowledge has also been shaped according to local contexts and practices of different cultural communities. The role of intellectuals in this process is to translate different contexts and produce meaning and practice related to their own contexts. This new intellectual figure that Bauman expresses with the metaphor of the interpreter is the expression of a postmodern intellectual position and role. For Bauman, the social context of the postmodern intellectual figure portrayed in the metaphor of the interpreter is community:

‘Community’ is indeed the central concept of the self-consciously post-modern philosophy and social science. It has come to replace reason and universal truth and the one method leading to both. It is in community, rather than in the universal progress of mankind, that the intellectuals of the West tend to seek the secure foundation of their professional role. (*Legislators* 145)

In the postmodern era, which is marked by multiplicity of truth and locality of knowledge, there is no longer an agent who can present a common set of values for all. Intellectuals, thus, are instead called upon to act as interpreters between communities. Nevertheless, they also continue to play the role of the legislator only within their own community. Their current role involves making decisions or acting as a judge in controversial situations in their communities.

To sum up, Bauman examines how intellectuals originated in a historical context, as well as their place in the social and political structure and the duties they perform, using the metaphors of the legislator and the interpreter. For Bauman, modernity was a quest for certainty, order and uniformity realised through the combination of knowledge and power. This quest was made possible by the legislative role of intellectuals who provided the knowledge needed to regulate society. Intellectuals, with this role, were one of the most important instruments of the modern state so that the system could function reasonably. Since the modern state represented a new form of state power that possessed and exercised the means to organise society according to an established model, intellectuals sought to provide a basis for such an ideal model of society and state and to legitimately and morally justify state activity. However, this relationship between

knowledge and power has dissolved in time due to incredulity towards authority and a new collaboration has emerged with the postmodern age. In this new collaboration, the new actor, i.e., the owner of power, is no longer the state but the capital. The power with which capital collaborates is not the intellectuals, but the experts who work as labourers for the market. Truth, which in the process of modernity was under the rule of intellectuals and modern state power, has passed into the hands of capital with postmodernity. Although Bauman defines the postmodern condition of intellectuals with the metaphor of the interpreter, he also believes that intellectuals are still actively responsible for social order. Thus, one of the essential duties of intellectuals is to create a public space where the critical mind is dominant and public issues are discussed. Bauman acknowledges that intellectuals have largely lost their influence in the postmodern age. However, he still believes that intellectuals, with their knowledge and experience, can initiate a dialogue in society for a just and free world.

2.6. NAVIGATING THE INTELLECTUAL TERRAIN: EDWARD SHILS' VIEWS ON INTELLECTUALS AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Intellectualism is a matter that has preoccupied the mind of the American sociologist Edward Shils at every step of his career. His views on intellectuals are primarily based on the intellectuals' interactions with the cultures they inhabit. Shils pondered the concept of intellectual at an early age and provided a comprehensive explanation on intellectuals in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968) in which he classifies intellectuals as rare individuals drawn to the sacred. Shils claims that religious symbols were the original and sustaining impulse for intellectual work: before the rise of secular intellectual traditions in the modern West, most intellectuals engaged with what lies beyond the immediate concrete experience through religious symbols. For Shils, intellectuals are those who, in their communication and expression, use general and abstract symbols of reference concerning human beings, society, nature and the cosmos relatively more frequently than the other members of their community (*The Power* 5). The employment of symbols for intellectual activity is motivated by two factors: the first is the requirement of their own subjective intellectual tendencies and the second is professional duties that necessitate intellectual action. These requirements may

coexist in the same person or activity or they may exist separately. Shils argues that the need for intellectual interests is deeply rooted in human beings:

Intellectual interests arise from the need to perceive, experience and express—in words, colors, shapes, or sounds—a general significance in particular, concrete events. They arise from the need to be in cognitive, moral and appreciative contact with the most general or “essential” features of man, society, nature and the cosmos. This need is deeply, indeed constitutively, rooted in human beings, albeit unequally distributed among individuals. (*Intellectuals* 399-400)

The inherent need within human beings serves as the foundation for both the creation and appreciation of intellectual works across diverse fields including science, philosophy, theology, literature and art. This perspective encourages a deeper insight into the interplay between individual expression and the broader social and cultural milieu. Furthermore, it highlights how intellectual pursuits are not solely the result of individual inclinations but are also deeply influenced, nurtured and amplified by the traditions, cultures and institutional frameworks within which these activities are cultivated (Shils, *Intellectuals* 400).

Shils elucidates further on the institutionalisation of intellectual activities, highlighting its role in maintaining intellectual dispositions. This institutionalisation encompasses the establishment of norms and expectations regarding the production, reproduction and consumption of intellectual work:

Intellectual activities are institutionalised because many individuals who do not have strong or intense intellectual interests of their own need the results of such interests, either to satisfy the necessities of their own mental and physical constitution or because they believe intellectual products to be necessary for the effective functioning of institutions and of society as a whole. (Shils, *Intellectuals* 400)

Individuals who may not possess the inherent abilities or capabilities to directly engage with the broader and more abstract aspects of existence still have a need, albeit sporadic, for interaction with and involvement in the symbolic representations crafted or unveiled by those who are more creatively inclined. Additionally, they require the development of faculties that run parallel to the growth of capacities involved in productive or reproductive intellectual pursuits. This need for participation in intellectual activities is fulfilled through institutionalisation. Individuals are drawn towards intellectual professions not solely due to internal motivations and inclinations, but also because of the

allure of prestige and financial rewards provided by familial, educational, institutional and cultural systems. Specifically, those in positions of power recognise that they can leverage these incentives to attract individuals to undertake the intellectual activities essential for the functioning of modern states. In doing so, they create new intellectual and social roles that serve to perpetuate their authority, while also incentivising participation in these roles through economic, political and cultural rewards. The fundamental rationale behind institutionalising intellectual action lies in harnessing existing intellectual potential for specific purposes and incorporating individuals who possess intellectual capabilities but may not typically identify as intellectuals.

Shils claims that all communities throughout history have had their own intellectuals. However, prior to modern societies, the empirical character of technology, the primitiveness of educational institutions and the restricted function of government kept the intellectual strata small and internally undifferentiated (*Intellectuals* 401). The intellectual class acquired important position with the formation of modern states and institutions in Western societies. The structure of modern society, concerned with the exercise of authority, has thus produced sophisticated, differentiated and professionalised intellectual roles. The modern idea of the tasks of the state produces a civil service that requires people who have studied different disciplines such as law, economics, administration, or whose intellectual abilities have been cultivated through the pursuit of intellectual activities such as mathematics, classics or literature which are not directly related to administration. The significant increase in the scale of organisation of economic units, the industrial revolution, the industrialisation of wars, scientific discoveries have enhanced the demand for scientists, technologists, statisticians, economists, managers and research workers. As modern society has become more complex, professional occupations that require different intellectual dispositions to function in different disciplines have continued to emerge. This has meant both the increase of the intellectual class and the expansion of the field of intellectual activity.

Shils argues that the structure of the intellectual system of any society is defined by four main factors: sources of financial support, administration of intellectual actions, patterns of demand and tradition and creativity. He expounds upon the forms of financial support for both productive and reproductive intellectual endeavours as follows:

(a) income gained from inherited wealth; (b) income gained from the practice of nonintellectual occupations; (c) patronage; (d) income from the sale of the products of the individual's own intellectual actions; (e) income received as salary (or from other types of payment) for services performed, usually within corporate intellectual bodies; and (f) income for services performed in intellectual-practical (executive) occupations. (*Intellectuals* 402)

These forms of financial support gained by intellectuals have evolved according to the characteristics of historical periods and the social structure. Before modern states and societies, especially before the eighteenth century, intellectuals' primary source of income derived from inherited wealth, patronage, or intellectual services (teaching, writing). Intellectuals, on the other hand, are supported in advanced modern societies primarily through employment in institutions such as universities and research institutions and to a lesser extent through employment in intellectual-practical occupations, e.g. civil service, military organisations, newspapers and research departments of industrial companies. Thanks to the establishment of new institutions such as universities and the growth of new fields of study and disciplines, there are more freelance intellectuals in modern cultures than in the past. However, when the overall number of intellectuals is taken into consideration, the percentage of freelance intellectuals in modern times is relatively lower than in the past. The fact that the percentage of freelance intellectuals in modern society is relatively low compared to pre-modern times shows that intellectuals have become dependent on institutions and states and have lost much of their autonomy over time. Moreover, the proportional increase or decrease in the number of autonomous intellectuals is closely linked to the level of development of the society in which they live (Shils, *Intellectuals* 403). In underdeveloped countries, where most of the population is still illiterate, the number of autonomous intellectuals, who maintain their lives thanks to the sale of their intellectual products, is relatively small while the rate of autonomous intellectuals in developed countries is much higher.

Shils examines the administration of intellectual actions in relation to the changing nature of science. He claims that the tendency towards an increasing envelopment of intellectual life by intellectual institutions is a consequence of the ever-changing habits of the intellectual classes and the tremendous change in the nature of scientific studies. Another reason for this phenomenon is that disciplines such as literature, philosophy and theology, in which intellectuals are primarily interested, are replaced by scientific and scholarly interests (Shils, *Intellectuals* 403). In disciplines such as literature, philosophy

and theology, which do not require great material needs, intellectuals could once support their work with their own income. Modern intellectuals, however, are no longer able to conduct scientific research at their own expense as modern scientific work requires large libraries, laboratories, research centres and expensive equipment. This material dependence in the scientific field has begun to threaten the autonomy of intellectuals. As a result, the structure and administration of the intellectual class have undergone a great change in the modern age. Consequently, these radical changes in intellectual activity have brought about some sociological and political changes. Shils expresses the impact of these changes and the relationship between scientific developments, education and institutionalisation of intellectual activity as follows:

The greater numbers of persons seeking scientific education, as well as the newly created association of research and education, required larger laboratories with larger masses of equipment. There was no alternative to a denser, more encompassing organisation of scientific activity. These changes in the techniques of scholarship and science coincided with the growth of national wealth and a new development in the attitudes of governments toward university education and toward the scholarly and scientific studies pursued within them. (*Intellectuals* 403)

Governments, as well as affluent individuals and the foundations they formed, reacted generously to these developments. Governments and private organisations that financially support and employ those who wish to engage in intellectual and scientific pursuits, mainly through the universities, have begun to train intellectuals for their needs thereby controlling the intellectual classes.

The demand for intellectuals who serve the state's welfare is great since intellectual competence is associated with the state's power, internal order and the physical and mental well-being of the general people. This great increase in demand of intellectuals requires an organised model of education and certification of intellectuals. Intellectual competence in recruitment and reproduction has to be standardised so that users in the practical sphere - in commerce, industry, education, the civil service and the judiciary - could be sure that their recruits are trustworthy (Shils, *Intellectuals* 404). While the above-mentioned fields, which are assumed to contribute to the power and order of the state and the physical well-being of society are standardised by universities, the branches of art and literature, which are assumed not to contribute directly to the state are evaluated and standardised by their consumers. This has freed literati and artists from the necessity of

being subject to the authority to which engineers, architects and scientists, as performers of intellectual-practical activities, have to submit.

Shils argues that all intellectual actions, no matter how brilliant their performers, are shaped within the context of a tradition. In the pattern of scientific work, the most recent expression of the tradition serves as the starting point for every individual research. Furthermore, tradition defines the interaction between authority and intellectuals. Shils explains some of the traditions that have shaped contemporary intellectuals' relationships with authority. These are the tradition of scientism, the romantic tradition, the apocalyptic tradition, the populist tradition and the tradition of anti-intellectual order (Shils, *Intellectuals* 407-9). The tradition of scientism insists on testing any knowledge and rejecting it if it does not match its facts. It is the tradition that demands the avoidance of any extraneous obstacles to the precise perception of reality. It criticises the arbitrary and irrational. With its emphasis on the indispensability of direct experience, it opposes everything that stands between the mind of the individual and reality. At first glance, the Romantic tradition seems to stand in irreconcilable opposition to the tradition of scientism. Yet, Romanticism also rebels against rules and conventions that are seen as external and imposed because they kill spontaneity, enthusiasm and creativity. Romanticism begins with an appreciation of the spontaneous manifestations of the essence of individuality. It therefore values the originality produced by the genius of the individual, as opposed to his stereotypical and tradition-bound actions. Since reasoning and detachment obstruct spontaneous expression, they are seen as destructive to life. Institutions that have rules and determine the behaviour of individual members through contracts and orders are also seen as harmful. The Romantic tradition is one of the most explosively anti-authoritarian forces of modern intellectual life with these. The apocalyptic tradition or revolutionary tradition is based on the millenarian tradition. In the millenarian tradition, the world we live in is seen as highly degraded, deteriorated and detached from sacred values, so that it cannot be corrected with partial reforms; there is an urgent need for radical transformation. Another tradition that influenced intellectuals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is populism. Influenced by the Romantic tradition, populism is the belief in the creativity and superior moral value of ordinary people, the uneducated and unintellectual. Moreover, populism leads intellectuals to praise the public as more authentic and wiser than members of the elite in their own

society. Shils discusses the tradition of the anti-intellectual order, which is a negation of the traditions put forward previously regarding the intellectual's relationship to authority:

Here, order is understood as a perfect integration of society under a powerful authority, in accordance with which each individual has a prefixed status and role. Best known in the West in the form of French positivism (as in the work of Saint- Simon and Comte), the anti-intellectual tradition has its roots in antiquity and in the belief that excessive intellectual analysis and discussion can disrupt the foundations of social order. Evidence of an ambivalence in the traditional antiauthoritarianism of intellectuals is afforded by Plato's attitude toward poets, the burning of the books by the repentant Confucian Li Ssu at the origin of the Ch'in dynasty, Hobbes's analysis of the role of intellectuals in bringing about the English civil war, Taine's interpretation of the significance of the *philosophes* in bringing on the French Revolution of 1789 and the ideas of Joseph de Maistre and of the French "right" since his time. (*Intellectuals* 409)

This anti-intellectual order is a system in which authority allows only a certain intellectual freedom and in which civil authority is typically regarded as an enemy. While intellectuals who promote authority are welcomed in this system, there is a hostile attitude towards intellectuals who criticise authority and are believed to undermine the order.

Since intellectual labour and competence are important factors for maintaining the power, operation and internal order of states as well as the physical and mental well-being of the public, there is a high demand for intellectuals who can serve the welfare of the states. This high demand for intellectuals brings about the necessity for an organised education model and certification of intellectuals. That is, intellectuals required by public or private organisations in specific fields such as commerce, industry, education and the judiciary have to go through a series of structured training and certification processes to acquire the required skills to meet the needs of these organisations. In this way, both public and private sector employers can have confidence in the intellectual abilities of their employees (Shils, *Intellectuals* 404). The nature of demand is the key aspect affecting and determining the fields of intellectual activity and the qualifications required for these fields. The intellectual actions, for instance, required by the state for the functioning of the state have been met and standardised through public institutions and universities in fields such as commerce, industry, education, public services, judiciary, engineering, which are assumed to contribute directly to the power, order and physical well-being of the society. On the other hand, other fields such as art and literature, which are assumed to make no direct contribution to the state's power and have thus become

marginal, are evaluated and standardised only by their consumers. Thus, this has freed literati and artists to some extent from the necessity of being subject to the authority to which engineers, architects and scientists, as performers of intellectual-practical activities, have to submit.

In the pattern of scientific or literary work, the most recent expression of the tradition serves as the starting point for every individual research that follows. Furthermore, tradition defines the interaction between authority and intellectuals. Shils explains some of the traditions that have shaped contemporary intellectuals' relationships with authority. These are the tradition of scientism, the romantic tradition, the apocalyptic tradition, the populist tradition and the tradition of anti-intellectual order (Shils, *Intellectuals* 407-9). The tradition of scientism insists on testing any knowledge and rejecting it if it is inconsistent with scientific facts. This tradition demands the avoidance of any extraneous obstacles to the precise perception of reality. It criticises the arbitrary and irrational. Its emphasis on the indispensability of direct experience opposes everything that stands between the individual's mind and reality. The Romantic tradition, on the other hand, may seem to stand in irreconcilable opposition to the tradition of scientism. Nevertheless, Romanticism also rebels against rules and conventions seen as external and imposed because they kill spontaneity, enthusiasm and creativity. Romanticism begins with an appreciation of the spontaneous manifestations of the essence of individuality. It, therefore, values the originality produced by the genius of the individual, as opposed to stereotypical and tradition-bound actions. Since reasoning and detachment obstruct spontaneous expression, they are seen as destructive to life. Institutions that have rules and determine the behaviour of individual members through contracts and orders are also seen as harmful. The Romantic tradition is one of the most explosively anti-authoritarian forces of modern intellectual life. The apocalyptic tradition or revolutionary tradition is based on the millenarian tradition. In the millenarian tradition, the world we live in is seen as highly degraded, deteriorated and detached from sacred values, so that it cannot be corrected with partial reforms; there is an urgent need for radical transformation. Another tradition that influenced intellectuals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is populism. Influenced by the Romantic tradition, populism is the belief in the creativity and superior moral value of ordinary people, the uneducated

and unintellectual. Moreover, populism leads intellectuals to praise the public as more authentic and wiser than elite members of their own society.

These traditions, however diverse in age and origin, are various expressions of the tension between the intellectuals and the authorities. Alienation between intellectuals and religious authorities has led to these secondary traditions. The tension between intellectuals and authorities also arises from the intellectuals' need to find and validate an authority that symbolises the highest good while rejecting the actual authority as a traitor to the highest values. In the words of Shils, "this tension comes from the vital tradition of the intellectual stratum which propels it toward the discovery and expression of what is 'ultimately' true and thus 'sacred'" (*Intellectuals* 407). As these traditions are hostile to authority, no institutional system exists to meet their needs.

The survival of these traditions, thus, depends on their appeal to people with strong intellectual inclinations as well as on the presence of opposing organisations. There is a need for non-expropriated private ventures such as schools, universities, publishing houses and bookshops. Shils also highlights the importance of literature created by prominent figures in order to ensure the survival of these traditions:

However, the life of these secondary traditions depends, above all, on the literature which the great figures of these traditions have created. Much of this literature forms part of the intellectual tradition which the more highly organized intellectual institutions cultivate as part of their task of training recruits for intellectual and intellectual-practical actions. However, since the secondary traditions themselves are not cultivated by the organized intellectual institutions, the transmission of these traditions and their institutions of assessment tends to be fragmentary and discontinuous. (*Intellectuals* 409)

The functioning of the intellectual system of secondary traditions is maintained by responding to non-institutionalised demand. The continuity of these traditions is ensured by those who create literary and artistic works. That is, musical, artistic, literary or spiritual endeavours are the heart of the acceptance and cultivation of secondary traditions. The survival of these secondary traditions, however, is severely threatened in modern societies because the intellectuals of modern society are largely middle class and it is no longer as easy for middle-class intellectuals to reproduce and finance themselves in modern cultures as it used to be. Nevertheless, intellectuals have a multitude of duties and responsibilities in society, regardless of their class or autonomy. Shils lists the

essential duties and responsibilities of intellectuals in society as creating and diffusing high culture, providing national and cross-national models, developing common cultures, influencing social change and playing political roles.

Shils sees the most prominent function of intellectuals as creating works of high culture for their society. It is also the responsibility of intellectuals to maintain, elaborate or change existing traditions while at the same time passing on inexpressible tendencies, tastes and methods of experiencing and interpreting reality to future generations (*Intellectuals* 410). Intellectuals, representatives of high culture, are also expected to contribute with their intellectual activities not only to their own society and its intellectuals, but also to the intellectuals of other societies. It seems that the interaction of intellectuals of different societies with each other as well as the realisation of similar genres of intellectual action in different societies contribute to the universalisation of the standards of intellectual action and the formation of common values. Another task of intellectuals is to contribute to the formation of a common culture of a nation or community. Common culture is created by intellectuals and intellectual organisations such as schools, universities, religious institutions and journals in nations with large territories and large populations (*Intellectuals* 411). Thanks to these intellectual organisations, members of society create common values and thus the sense of belonging to their society is reinforced.

Moreover, the continuity of the beliefs that nations try to impose on societies is ensured by the central institutional systems. Intellectuals, with the social models they create, the norms they set and the symbols they produce, shape the basic tendencies that determine aesthetic taste, artistic creation and the ethical judgements of societies. This notion, thus, leads us to believe that intellectuals can theoretically lead to social change. However, modern societies' intellectual practices and beliefs are very diverse and inconsistent. Although intellectuals are considered figures determining the basic principles of life in society, the claim that intellectuals dominate social life seems to be inaccurate since most intellectuals have grown up in an institutionalised intellectual tradition and are subject to certain limitations in modern societies.

Finally, Shils draws attention to politics, which he sees as one of the most important social functions of intellectuals. According to Shils, intellectuals are in pursuit of what is

fundamental, ultimately true and sacred in politics. They contribute to social order and welfare with this pursuit. The political powers, on the other hand, emphasise their own sanctity and supremacy in order to maintain their credibility and legitimacy. This is the main conflict between the intellectuals and the political authority. The political role of intellectuals is essentially to rebel against the authority, to denounce the errors of the authorities and to restore social balance. This perspective leads us to the assumption that the intellectual who strives for the absolute truth and the sacred must constantly be in opposition to political authority. Nevertheless, as Shils points out, “despite the long-standing and recurrent mutual distrust between intellectuals and politicians, numerous intellectuals, including some who have been among the greatest of primary producers, have affirmed, accepted and served the ruling authorities” (*Intellectuals* 413). This dilemma is primarily due to modernisation and institutionalisation. In any case, Julien Benda, as mentioned previously, sees such participation of intellectuals in power or the service of power as a betrayal of intellectual tradition. In contrast, Shils asserts that this situation is primarily due to the strengthening of democratic regimes.

In conclusion, the intellectuals Shils defines stand at two extremes: they either oppose the prevailing norms or exist mainly to maintain public order and continuity by adopting a conciliatory attitude (Said 39). The choices intellectuals make between these two options are directly related to many socio-political issues such as the regime, demographic structure, cultural infrastructure and wealth of their country. The relationship and conflict between intellectuals and power affect the attitude of intellectuals in different ways. Throughout history, there have been various kinds of compromises and disagreements in the ongoing relationship between intellectuals and the ruling forces of society. Yet, Shils believes that the goal of the responsible intellectual is to seek and achieve an optimal balance between society and authority regardless of the extent and nature of the relationship between these two poles.

2.7. THE EVOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE: HABERMAS' PERSPECTIVE ON INTELLECTUALS AND SOCIETY

German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, one of the most important representatives of the Frankfurt school, makes an important contribution to the discussion on intellectuals

with the concept of 'public sphere', which appears in his famous work *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). The emergence of the 'public sphere' theorised by Habermas in parallel with the concept of modernity forms the basis of his thinking about intellectuals. Habermas claims that the emergence of modern intellectuals and the formation of the public sphere coincide historically. In his work, Habermas analyses how the 'public sphere' is formed in Western societies, especially in France, Germany and England. He also traces the historical change in the social and political concept of the public sphere, especially from the Renaissance to the present. Furthermore, his theory defines the public sphere as a mediator between private individuals and the state.

Habermas asserts that free people in ancient Greece had a public space where they could meet, have free discussions and express themselves. He notes, however, that this situation disappeared for a long time in Europe, especially in the Middle Ages (3-5). This lost period shows, above all, a picture in which feudalism prevailed and only nobles had access to public sphere. It is not possible to speak of a public space open to all in that period. This is why, Habermas refers to the medieval period with the words 'representative publicness' (7). Representative publicness was not a social sphere but rather an attribute of status. The ruler and the nobles were not the authorised representatives of the people, i.e. they did not represent the people in the modern democratic sense of representation; instead, the ruler and the nobles were the living embodiment of the country. They occupied the public space through titles such as excellence, highness, majesty and possessions and these titles signified public display or representation of the public. They were, however, far from creating a space where the public could come together and discuss social or political issues. This representative publicness weakened during the Renaissance. Reform movements, in particular, pushed the representative publicness of the church and feudalism into more private spheres. As the idea of the modern state began to emerge, the state began to take over many of the functions of the royal and palatial authority and the nobility, representing the representative public, was replaced by the parliament.

According to Habermas, this conflict between the public and the private began in the Renaissance and was one of the first stages of the transition from feudalism to capitalism. The rise of individual trade-based economies meant that the power of kings

and the aristocrats was, in a sense, handed over to the people. The fact that people began to trade directly with each other and with different continents created a new public sphere. But this public sphere was neither the labour of the working classes nor the aristocracy of the noble classes. It was a public space associated with the business of the rising middle class; hence Habermas calls this space the 'bourgeois public sphere'. Thanks to the rise of the bourgeoisie and the industrial revolution, urbanisation increased and new institutions such as coffee houses, saloons and publishing houses emerged in the cities, that is, in the bourgeois public sphere (Habermas 32). These new institutions served as centres of criticism, especially in both France and England—first literary, then political—where certain educational equality began to emerge between members of aristocratic society and bourgeois intellectuals.

The emergence of public spaces provided a platform for critical discussions between the bourgeoisie, who enjoyed greater economic autonomy and the aristocracy, facilitated by their substantial education. Within these public spheres, intellectuals - predominantly literati, artists and journalists, as noted by Habermas, engaged in discourse:

Just as Dryden, surrounded by the new generation of writers, joined the battle of the "ancient and moderns" at Will's, Addison and Steele a little later convened their "little senate" at Button's; so too in the Rotary Club, presided over by Milton's secretary, Marvell and Pepys met with Harrington who here probably presented the republican ideas of his *Oceana*. (32-33)

These discussions, initially centred around literature and art, progressively expanded to encompass economic and political matters. Through debates in coffee houses, salons and publishing houses, intellectuals fostered a culture of criticism. This culture facilitated public engagement in literature, art and various other domains, marking the advent of social enlightenment.

This intellectual tradition, which began in the seventeenth century as a literary tradition and transformed into a political public sphere, continued actively into the nineteenth century. In this process, intellectuals who resisted censorship contributed to the politicisation of social life and the rise of journalism and advocated freedom of thought, made their presence felt in the public sphere. The discussions conducted by intellectuals had qualities other than being merely academic. Since the social and political discussions took place before the common people, they educated and encouraged them to

use their own minds (Habermas 105). In a sense, these discussions describe the social role of bourgeois intellectuals. In this period, bourgeois intellectuals had the attempt and the task of problematising the existence of power, enlightening the masses and creating universal values. This tradition of political thought, born with the bourgeois intellectuals, spread to all cities by the end of the eighteenth century.

However, bourgeois intellectual idealism, which had for more than two centuries questioned the power and endeavoured to create an ideal state that included the public sphere, began to erode in the mid-nineteenth century, mainly because of economic depressions. In addition to the economic depression, the bourgeoisie also played a considerable part in this collapse because after the intellectual success and the seizure of power by the bourgeoisie, the conflicts of conscience became less important. The bourgeoisie turned away from the critique of power. It was the nation-states that emerged stronger from the economic crises. States interfered more in the economy and controlled international trade to protect their domestic markets (Habermas 141-143). These interventionist attempts by states, which extended to almost all commercial spheres, meant that the private sphere of traders was no longer separate from the state and that the public sphere of private individuals began to fade. This phase also saw ruptures between the bourgeois class and the intellectuals. While some intellectuals took over positions of power, others became spokespeople for the proletariat. However, the intellectuals have detached themselves from the proletariat in time, depending on social conditions and developments and have become increasingly isolated and independent from the classes in the new public community of cultural consumers:

This phenomenon once more sums up the disintegration of the public sphere in the world of letters. The sounding board of an educated stratum tutored in the public use of reason has been shattered; the public is split apart into minorities of specialists who put their reason to use non-publicly and the great mass of consumers whose receptiveness is public but uncritical. Consequently, it completely lacks the form of communication specific to a public. (Habermas 175)

The deterioration of the public sphere was exacerbated in the twentieth century by the rise of mass media, which politicians exploited to control public opinion rather than incorporate them into critical discussions. Due to mass media, people today consume the illusion of publicity on radio and television, but they do not engage in serious critical debates about how government should be administered.

Habermas points out that the journals and publishing houses where critical discussions once took place have become commercialised by creating the illusion of publicity. People believe they participate in the public sphere by reading the articles selected for them in newspapers and magazines, but this is, in fact, not participation, only consumption. States also address their citizens as consumers and not as participants. Through political parties, people are prevented from being involved in a genuine sphere of discussion and are made to adopt an ideology ready for consumption. In other words, the public space has become a product of hidden interest groups operating in the background. Habermas calls this state of politics ‘manufactured publicity’ (211). This is a matter of presenting the candidates or ideologies of the parties through the mass media in such a way that they are accepted and approved and not open to debate. In other words, it is a system of thought that prioritises the participation of the individuals hypnotised by the mass media rather than discussing what is presented to them.

In manufactured publicity, the struggle for sovereignty, liquefied by the mass media, is embodied by manipulation of public discourse on issues important to most of society. The discourses produced by manipulation may not be sufficient by themselves to achieve sovereignty but reveal a communicative power. Communicative power mediates an agreement reached through the process of citizens’ political will formation through discourse on the morality of broader norms of behaviour. Rather than eliminating power (strategic social power) acquired through political rivalry, communicative power creates the moral and constitutional context in which this strategic power can be exercised. In this sense, the function of intellectuals can be better understood through their influence on constructing these manipulative public discourses. Intellectuals are now either the agents who legitimise an illegitimate power with their discourses and ensure its continuity or they are the agents who deprive legitimacy of existing power and guide the creation of new legitimate administrative power.

In conclusion, Habermas, who provides a brief history of the public sphere, informs us in detail that the public sphere had a golden age with the emergence of bourgeois intellectuals but fell over time. Nevertheless, he remains optimistic about the future. He concludes his work with the argument that finding principles of universal interests and values can create a new critical public sphere. Habermas believes that the creation of the public sphere can also be achieved today thanks to intellectuals, as it was

in the period of the bourgeois public sphere. For him, the public sphere was the social basis of the European Enlightenment tradition and because of this, he deems intellectuals as an important value for society in terms of ensuring the continuity of the Enlightenment project.

2.8. CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO: CHOMSKY'S VISION FOR INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Noam Chomsky, an American linguist and philosopher, originally expressed his views on intellectuals in his work, *The Responsibility of Intellectuals* (1967) in which he investigates the role of intellectuals via key sociological and political events of his time, such as the Vietnam War, the Korean War and McCarthyism. Chomsky explains at the beginning of his work that he was motivated by the writings of Dwight Macdonald published after the Second World War, which questioned the responsibility of peoples for the crimes of their governments (Ch. 1). Chomsky discusses the involvement of Western intellectuals in the repressive and destructive practises of the colonial powers by focusing on Macdonald's question of the responsibility of peoples referring to the responsibility of the German and Japanese people for the atrocities committed by their governments during the Second World War. Referring to Macdonald's question, Chomsky addresses the responsibility of the intellectuals and peoples of United States of America and Britain. Chomsky emphasises the responsibility of intellectuals for their country's misdeeds, believing that Western democracy offers intellectuals political independence, access to knowledge and freedom of expression. Thanks to these opportunities, Chomsky says, intellectuals have the responsibility to proclaim the truth and expose the lies of the government:

For a privileged minority, Western democracy provides the leisure, the facilities and the training to seek the truth lying hidden behind the veil of distortion and misrepresentation, ideology and class interest, through which the events of current history are presented to us. The responsibilities of intellectuals, then, are much deeper than what Macdonald calls the "responsibility of people," given the unique privileges that intellectuals enjoy. (Ch. 1)

Chomsky further argues that many Western intellectuals, despite their privileged status, do not bear this responsibility. He attacks intellectual culture in the USA, claiming it is mainly subservient to power and particularly criticises the American social scientists and

technocrats who, in his opinion, provide a pseudo-scientific justification for the State's crimes related to the Vietnam War.

Chomsky also adds that indifference to the truth spread among intellectuals. He attributes the reason for such a tendency among intellectuals to adopt Martin Heidegger's definition of truth as "the revelation of that which makes a people certain, clear and strong" (Ch. 1). He contends that Heidegger's definition of truth justifies lying on consequentialist¹⁰ grounds. Chomsky is deeply disturbed by any scenario in which activities are judged only by their outcomes and the satisfaction of the majority. He is concerned that redefining truth in the way Heidegger suggests will separate truth from facts. Thus, he asserts that "the facts are known to all who care to know." (Ch. 1). However, knowing the truth requires responsibility and very few people want to take that responsibility. Instead, they are prone to accept predetermined facts because governments' propaganda apparatuses are so effective that those, who do not thoroughly research the issues presented, are trapped in an illusion of truth.

The danger of falling into this trap seems great for the common citizen but Chomsky is more concerned that intellectuals are also becoming accomplices to government lies. He claims that much of the press coverage of the USA's involvement in the Vietnam War is intended to distort the truth about the USA's reasons for sending troops to Vietnam. Similarly, many intellectuals seek to legitimise the USA's unjust occupation in their articles. One such example he mentions is Arthur Schlesinger, an American historian and an intellectual whose work presents immoral violence as "perfectly rational argument" (Ch. 1). Chomsky also notes his concern about the American propaganda apparatuses that increasingly recruit academics to distort the USA's misdeeds in an attempt to justify them.

Another point Chomsky draws attention to is labelling in the mass media. He notes that those who reject the unrestricted right of the USA to expand its power and influence are labelled 'hysterical', while those who accept this right as a fundamental political principle are called 'responsible' in the media. Furthermore, critics who are labelled emotional and hysterical struggle to be heard and gain media attention, whereas so-called responsible critics dominate prime time. Chomsky also asserts that most of the

¹⁰ Consequentialism is an ethical theory that judges whether or not something is right by what its consequences are.

intellectuals only stood by in silence while the government killed the civilians in Vietnam. Chomsky points to experts and elite bureaucrats as the reason for this silence. Experts and elite bureaucrats at all levels of the government mask the truth for the sake of so-called responsibility and national interests. Protestors, especially university protestors, are accused by these so-called policy experts of making unfounded claims about what the Vietnamese people truly desire. They claim that the protestors' beliefs about Vietnamese people are based on emotion and are thus false. Thus, Chomsky asks, "Should decisions be left to 'experts' with Washington contacts—even if we assume that they command the necessary knowledge and principles to make the 'best' decision, will they invariably do so?" (Ch. 1). He believes it should not be so because every expert is also a government agent and actor. Moreover, it is never sure that they will make the right decision; thus, people with intellectual potential should act and strive to learn the facts for themselves. Chomsky also notes that these pro-government experts can undermine revolutionary movements aimed at creating genuine democratic structures because they constantly try to downplay and neutralise all revolutionary action.

Although Chomsky states that "The will to power is not so much cloaked in idealism as it is drowned in fatuity. And academic intellectuals have made their unique contribution to this sorry picture" (Ch. 1), he still believes that there are intellectuals who can reverse this deterioration. He encourages them to refuse to engage in political debate and harmful norms promoted by government misinformation campaigns. If, as Chomsky says, it is the responsibility of intellectuals to tell the truth and expose the lies, failure to fulfil this responsibility means silent consent to atrocities committed by governments. Thus, intellectuals must examine events from a historical perspective and analyse how the ideology of elites justifies oppression by resorting to various forms such as moral superiority, expertise and modernisation in order to distinguish facts from deceptions.

2.9. SAPERE AUDE: KANT'S CALL FOR INTELLECTUAL COURAGE AND AUTONOMY

Immanuel Kant, one of the most significant thinkers of the Western Enlightenment, puts forward a challenging thesis about the cognitive structure of human beings in his book, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) with his 'Transcendental Idealism', which he develops about the functioning of the human mind. Kant's transcendental idealism, which

combines empiricism and rationalism, indicates that our cognitive structure is made up of two distinct faculties: the intuitive perceptive faculty and the discursive intellectual faculty. While our intuitive perceptive faculty gives us the content of experience, our intellectual faculty synthesises this content to bring it all together and generate experience. In this sense, experience, for Kant, is more than just the acquisition of raw materials; it is a whole that includes the forms that define the receipt of this raw material as well as the intellectual processes that dictate its processing as knowledge (*Critique* 130-34) The peculiar nature, essential construction, formulation and characterisation of reason and reflexivity sets Kant radically apart from his predecessors. According to Kant, the methods of acquiring knowledge have undergone a secularisation since the Enlightenment and have been transformed into a worldview centred on the belief in the power and projection of reason in an absolute sense. Kant's focus on reason as it comes from the scientific revolution, as well as his emphasis on universal natural laws and progress, are crucial strategies for understanding intellectuals in this text. Kant also employs the Latin phrase 'sapere aude', which means 'dare to know' as a motto of the Enlightenment. Although he does not define specifically the concept of intellectual, in his writings, it is reasonable to conclude that his study of the Enlightenment and observations of reasoning identify the intellectual primarily as a person who employs and prioritises his or her own thinking.

To understand Kant's views on intellectuals, one must also consider his views on the concept of enlightenment, which prioritises reason, as well as the cognitive structures of the human being, which he formulates as a part of his Transcendental Idealism. In his article, "What is Enlightenment?" (1784), Kant notes that enlightenment is "man's leaving his self-caused immaturity" (30). In Kant's philosophy, immaturity is defined as the inability to know without the guidance of another, while maturity is associated with the ability to be guided by one's own reason. He also contends that immaturity is caused by a lack of determination and/or courage, not by a lack of intelligence. Thus, people are very likely to be immature as Kant emphasises:

If I have a book which provides meaning for me, a pastor who has conscience for me, a doctor who will judge my diet for me and so on, then I do not need to exert myself. I do not have any need to think; if I can pay, others will take over the tedious job for me. (*Enlightenment* 30)

He, thus, believes that it is quite simple for human beings to hide under a veil of ignorance and fall into laziness and cowardice. It is hard to face the burden of responsibility of knowing things beyond what we have been told or taught from an early age. That is why he claims individuals would rather rely on statutes and formulas than undertake the job of figuring things out for themselves. Fear and laziness leave us vulnerable to exploitation by those in power. It is challenging to have the courage to go alone after the dominant forces have persuaded one of the risks of doing so. Thus, societies need individuals with intelligence, courage and willpower to inspire people to utilise their minds against the power that attempts to intimidate and pacify them.

Although Kant thinks that all humans have the instrument, reason, to think their way out of ignorance, he acknowledges that most people find it challenging to do so. Even if individuals are endowed with reason to overcome ignorance, it is challenging for them to accomplish this by personal cultivation of the mind. Thus, the best way, for Kant, is for the public as a group to enlighten itself (*Enlightenment* 31). However, it appears that certain individuals must be already enlightened for society as a whole to become enlightened, which makes Kant's proposal more complicated to understand. In his writings, Kant does not attempt to provide a solution to this issue; instead, he asserts that relatively few members of every community are self-enlightened. Thus, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that Kant refers to these self-enlightened individuals as intellectuals. Kant believes that self-enlightened people, intellectuals, can inspire others to become enlightened. However, the process of inspiring should not be understood as imposing ideas on individuals but rather as creating a spark that will support the individual's process of self-development.

According to Kant, this public enlightenment can only be achieved through freedom as he notes, "nothing is required for the enlightenment, however, except *freedom*; and the freedom in question is the least harmful of all, namely, the freedom to use reason publicly in all matters" (*Enlightenment* 31). Although Kant advocates the free use of reason, he distinguishes between the public and private uses of reason. He states that people should always have freedom regarding the public use of reason. For example, people should always be able to debate whether laws are just or not. That is, the public use of reason must be free and unrestricted for enlightenment to take place (Kant, *Enlightenment* 31). Yet, Kant adds that there is also private use of reason, namely the way we use our reason

in civic posts or authority, basically in our profession. He states that this kind of reason must be restricted in many cases. For example, one might disagree with the current tax law, but as a citizen, she/he still has to pay taxes (Kant, *Enlightenment* 31). It seems that, for Kant, people have to obey the state's laws, even if they criticise them. The private use of reason is determined by following certain rules and achieving certain goals, so that there is no free use of reason at this level. Kant claims that knowing the limitations of the private use of reason is crucial for avoiding chaos.

Although Kant seems to impose a limitation on the private use of reason, he thinks this is inevitable for social order. The importance of the intellectual, on the other hand, is directly related to the public use of reason. Kant's principle of reliance on reason and distrust of any other authorities helps us to define the intellectual figure of the Enlightenment. Kant's intellectual is, therefore, someone who dares to know and regards her/his own reasoning as the highest source of knowledge, as emphasised by the Latin term, 'sapere aude'. Thus, intellectuals as self-enlightened individuals are responsible for encouraging people to use public reason to move from immaturity to maturity.

2.10. EMBRACING AMATEURISM: EDWARD W. SAID'S RESPONSE TO PROFESSIONAL PRESSURES IN INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS

Edward W. Said, a prominent literary and cultural critic and one of the leading public intellectuals, presented his ideas on intellectuals in Reith Lectures on BBC Radio in 1993. His ideas, a compilation of six lectures on intellectuals, were later published as a book under the title of *Representation of the Intellectuals* (1994). In his work, Said examines in detail the ideas and meanings attributed to the concept of intellectual from a historical perspective. A reinterpretation of the ideas on intellectuals of Antonin Gramsci and Julien Benda, which have been discussed in detail in previous chapters, serves as the starting point for Said in *Representation of the Intellectual*. He distinguishes between Gramsci's organic intellectual and Benda's super-gifted and morally endowed intellectual at the outset of his work. On the one hand, he recognises the presence of organic intellectuals as a historical and sociological fact that evolves based on the style of dominance in a particular social formation; on the other hand, he longs for the intellectuals Benda characterises as exceptional geniuses. Even though the image of intellectuals as generally conceived by Benda remains attractive and fascinating, Said asserts that

Gramsci's sociological view of the intellectual as a person who performs a particular set of duties in society is far more accurate than anything Benda offers, especially in the late twentieth century, when so many new professions have validated Gramsci's vision.

Revealing such a historical reality is required to understand the intellectuals' position in the modern world. Said, however, believes that being satisfied with this idea may result in certain complications. He sees a risk that such an idea may degrade intellectuals into inert professionals. Thus, he argues that an intellectual, besides being a professional, has a certain public role: "I think, that the intellectual is an individual endowed with a faculty for representing, embodying, articulating a message, a view, an attitude, philosophy or opinion to, as well as for, a public" (11). Intellectuals have a passion for the art of representing through a profession, whether by speaking, writing or teaching. These professions are significant to the extent that they are well known to the public and entails both dedication and risk, audacity and vulnerability.

Even if the definition of an intellectual varies by country, language and region, Said believes there are certain universal ideas about what an intellectual accomplishes. The most important of these is that intellectuals, who exist as a minority in many societies, question the society in which they live. Intellectuals are at risk of being co-opted mouthpieces for the state, nation and nationalism since they share the same culture and language as the society in which they reside. Thus, intellectual discourses should transcend national boundaries even while they are nourished by the language and culture of a particular community. Intellectuals, therefore, are responsible for transcending their national identities and serving as the ambassadors of the universal truth, despite the fact that they come from various groups. Said also notes that the task of intellectual is "explicitly to universalize the crisis, to give greater human scope to what a particular race or nation, to associate that experience with the sufferings of others" (44). In doing so, an intellectual always faces a problem of loyalty since she/he has to defend the truth against the masses who are manipulated by national feelings. Thus, the only way to end this oppression, according to Said, is not simply to call out social injustices or to support a particular cause but also to develop a new idea that may serve as a social compass.

Said divides intellectuals, who have lived their entire life as members of a society, into two groups: insiders and outsiders. On the one hand, there are the insiders who have

adapted to the existing conditions of society and live in peace with it and on the other, there are outsiders and exiles who are in conflict with their society and do not pursue privilege, power or fame. While Said discusses exile as an actual condition, he also uses it as a metaphor to offer his definition of real intellectual. According to him, even if an intellectual is not a real exile, he should be able to act and think as if she/he were:

Even if one is not an actual immigrant or expatriate, it is still possible to think as one, to imagine and investigate in spite of barriers and always to move away from the centralizing authorities towards the margins, where you see things that are usually lost on minds that have never traveled beyond the conventional and the comfortable. A condition of marginality, which might seem irresponsible or flippant, frees you from having always to proceed with caution, afraid to overturn the applecart, anxious about upsetting fellow members of the same corporation. (63)

Exile can, therefore, serve as a paradigm for thinking for the intellectual, a person who lives on the edges and is homeless. In such a position, the intellectual is free to conduct her/his activities without regarding the caution or restriction of those in the corporate body. That is to say, an intellectual does not follow conventional reasoning; instead, she/he dares to advocate change and fight the status quo.

Another issue Said addresses concerning intellectuals is institutionalisation and professionalism. According to Said, the problem of intellectuals is not their cooperation with institutions. Indeed, it is absurd to envision intellectuals living in ivory towers, free of all practical worries, or developing an idea without financial assistance (Said 68). Said proclaims that being a member of any institution does not preclude one from being an intellectual. Professionalism, not institutional factors, for Said, poses the greatest threat to intellectualism today. Some fundamental pressures of professionalism raise the question of the autonomy of intellectuals. The most important of these is specialisation. According to Said specialisation means “losing sight of the raw effort of constructing either art or knowledge; as a result, you cannot view knowledge and art as choices and decisions, commitments and alignments, but only in terms of impersonal theories or methodologies” (77). To be a specialist in a specific discipline usually means shutting out all other disciplines and producing knowledge only within the limits of canons in one’s speciality. Said also notes that specialisation undermines the sense of excitement and discovery and this is a significant obstacle to being an intellectual. To surrender to specialisation causes laziness, which limits a person to delivering only what is expected of her/him in her/his speciality. Expertise is the second source of pressure in

professionalism because one has to be certified by the authorities in order to be an expert. Being certified by an authority means acting within limits set by that authority. Therefore, expertise is a limiting title for an intellectual. The third pressure of professionalism is, as Said notes, “the inevitable drift towards power and authority in its adherents, towards the requirements and prerogatives of power and towards being directly employed by it” (80). The desire of the authorities is the key component that influences the mindset and priorities of academic and scientific study in such a setting.

These pressures, for Said, are facts of the modern world. The problem of the intellectual is, therefore, to try to cope with the onslaught of modern professionalisation not by ignoring them or denying their influence, but by representing a different set of values and priorities. Said calls this act of representation as amateurism, “the desire to be moved not by profit or reward but by love for and unquenchable interest in the larger picture, in making connections across lines and barriers, in refusing to be tied down to a specialty, in caring for ideas and values despite the restrictions of a profession” (76). Said contends that the association of intellectuals with power cannot be disregarded. In contemporary society, intellectuals are always a part of authority. What is important here is how the intellectual addresses authority: “as a professional supplicant or as its unrewarded, amateurish conscience?” (Said 83). An intellectual, for Said, must be one who transcends professionalism and expertise and reflects an emancipatory, radical and unaffiliated amateur attitude at a higher level.

The intellectuals, for Said, should not be constrained by their professions. They should engage in areas outside of their expertise in the public sphere and consider how to convey the truth. The intellectuals must engage in the nature of truth. Said asserts that the intellectuals are neither government officers, corporate employees nor professionals who are totally obedient to the objectives of a government or big companies. The intellectuals, thus, must ask the question: how does one speak the truth? The truth revealed by intellectuals should be above all identities, it should be universal and challenge any authority: “Speaking the truth to power is no Panglossian idealism: it is carefully weighing the alternatives, picking the right one and then intelligently representing it where it can do the most good and cause the right change” (Said 102). Speaking the truth to power, then, requires both strategy and commitment. Furthermore, it is always meant to achieve the desired transformation in society.

The intellectual is ultimately a ‘representative’ in the public sphere, says Said who concentrates on the public function of the intellectual as someone challenging the status quo. The intellectual also advances the idea she/he stands for on behalf of the public and on the basis of universal principles. According to Said, an intellectual should only seek out the truths that he or she really believes in. At this point, the intellectual must confront all the challenges that will come up and continue to seek the truth. The intellectual has to be genuinely amateur and inquisitive. The intellectual must speak the truth to power and either create or assist power in finding its way. This truth must be objective and beneficial to humanity. While expressing this, it should be concerned with expressing the universal without becoming entangled in regional and local issues. The pursuit of truth, avoiding the sterility of specialisation and making every effort to speak the truth are necessary characteristics of an intellectual. They ought to shape public opinion in accordance with these ideas while speaking their own truths.

CHAPTER THREE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTELLECTUALS IN THEATRE

3.1. REPRESENTATION OF THE INTELLECTUAL IN WESTERN AND BRITISH THEATRE

Theatre is a form of knowledge; it should and can also be a means of transforming society. Theatre can help us build our future, rather than just waiting for it

—Augusto Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*

In the preface of his work, *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (1992), Augusto Boal regards theatre as one of the most humanistic art forms because it allows us to actively enact the world we want to live in; a more just, equitable and inclusive world in which artists and the arts are truly valued for their contributions to truth and transformation. As a form of knowledge, theatre creates a public sphere in which actors and the public interact through the knowledge it provides. This interaction in the public sphere also serves as the foundation for social transformation. Thus, theatre both as a form of knowledge and an authentic public sphere where the voice of the public echoes, has always been one of the most vital branches of art for intellectual activities. In his work, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962), Jürgen Habermas argues that the emergence of intellectuals and intellectual discourses is directly related to the existence of a public sphere. Theatre, thus, offers a venue for intellectual activity with the public space it creates. Theatre, both as a public space and as a form of art, is one of the most significant sources of intellectual life (Bayly 19-20). Therefore, the first section of this study provides a brief historical background of intellectual life and the representation of intellectuals in theatre from ancient Greece to the contemporary ages. The study then delves deeply into the representation of the intellectual in contemporary British theatre.

Theatre, especially in ancient Greece, reached the highest possible level of publicness at that time. theatre and public space were almost inseparable (Balme 24). In fact, it would not be wrong to note that the theatre provided a more democratic public

sphere than the Athenian democracy in ancient Greece because Greek plays included groups of people such as women and slaves who had no representation in the political system. The dramas were also intended to teach the public virtues of life, to evaluate political systems and to criticise their enemies and notorious public figures. In this regard, ancient Greek theatre left a lasting impression as an intellectual establishment that elevated mental activities and enlightened the public in accordance with the moral codes of the time. It should also be noted that the most important representatives of this establishment such as Aristophanes, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were leading intellectual figures of the period. The philosophers were among the most significant intellectual figures in ancient Greece, along with playwrights. However, it is exceedingly challenging to claim that there is an agreement between these intellectual groups because each accuses the other of disrupting and corrupting social values, norms and virtues. Plato's *The Republic* (c. 375 BC) exemplifies this conflict, as it critiques poets for their perceived dissemination of misinformation and corruption of youth. Plato argues that poets, as imitators of reality, are prone to distortion and deception, thus posing a threat to the moral fabric of society (*The Republic* 277-285). Despite the tensions between philosophers and playwrights, both groups left indelible marks on ancient Greek culture and thought.

Three significant intellectuals may be identified in classical Greek theatre: chorus, oracles and philosophers. These figures stand out as intellectuals both in terms of the cognitive processes they engage in and the social roles they perform. Ancient Greek chorus is made up of everyday citizens, thus, it represents the collective views, aspirations, anxieties, hopes and sufferings of the Greek society at the time. In a sense, the chorus serves as a public forum for judging and commenting on the actions of the play. It functions as a single organism, presenting historical perspectives as well as judgement of actions. In this regard, the chorus represents an intellectual attitude as a collective character observing the events of the play objectively and historically, criticising mistakes or glorifying virtuous behaviour. It also attempts to influence or alter audience's view through its criticism and commentary. The chorus, which emphasises the destruction caused by the hero's vices, especially in tragedies, reinforces the effect of catharsis in the audience. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that one of the purposes of the chorus in the play is to give moral lessons or to shape society within the framework of a

set of moral values. Consequently, the chorus, as a collective identity, makes its presence felt as an intellectual character in the plays due to the different perspectives it offers (Weiner 212), its didactic and leading features and its role as being the voice of the society. Despite having these characteristics that give it the appearance of being autonomous and independent but, it conforms to the prevalent traditions and norms of the time through its knowledge. It more closely resembles Gramsci's traditional intellectual paradigm in this regard.

Another intellectual group in the ancient Greek theatre is that of oracles and prophets, whose role is not just to predict the future but to unearth the truth and provide advice. These figures do not have any supernatural abilities; instead, their capacity to prophesise is due to their various interactions with the gods. Although the spiritual characteristics of such figures are highlighted in this definition rather than their mental functions, they, nonetheless, play the intellectual role of their time owing to their guiding qualities and capacity to transmit knowledge, even if it is divine. Divine knowledge may appear to be a sort of knowledge independent of one's own mental abilities but this does not exclude one from playing an intellectual role in society. Indeed, prophets are characterised as intellectuals by several sociologists and thinkers such as Julien Benda and Ali Shariati. Furthermore, their deep spirituality may also be seen as their capacity for a more objective interpretation and assessment of worldly events. In this sense, these figures are well suited to Benda's definition of intellectual who "seek their joy in the practice of an art or a science or metaphysical speculation" (Ch. 3). In ancient Greece, the people dealing with this metaphysical speculation were oracles. One of the most famous of these oracles is Tiresias who appears both in Greek myths and in Sophocles' plays such as *King Oedipus* (c. 429 BC) and *Antigone*. The fact that Tiresias is a blind character is also crucial concerning the quoted definition because Tiresias' insight stems from his blindness, which allows him to see the truth without being influenced by the worldly pleasures or material advantages. He also appears to be the only one capable of speaking truth to power, notably the king. In *Antigone*, Tiresias tells Creon to correct his error and bury Polynices' body to protect Thebes from the gods' wrath. Creon, on the other hand, swears to Tiresias that the body will not be buried and accuses Tiresias of false prophesies and taking bribes:

Tiresias: Creon, Creon, you do not understand . . .

Creon: More sooth, for heaven's sake? Well, go ahead.

Tiresias: Wisdom is a greater treasure than treasure.

Creon: And foolishness is worse than any disease.

Tiresias: That's what you have and a very serious case. (Sophocles 45)

Tiresias' prophetic truth, like those of *Oedipus the King* and *Oedipus at Colonus*, is met with hostility and rejection. Creon, like Oedipus, rejects Tiresias' warning because it violates his own sense of duty and authority. Creon, like Oedipus, accuses Tiresias of lying and abusing his prophetic abilities for self-benefit. However, Tiresias never backs down when confronted with insults, humiliation and even threats by kings. He does not yield to the wrath of kings because he is faithful to his sight. Tiresias' speech may be harsh and his message frightening but he is always dedicated to the truth. Thus, Tiresias stands out as a strong, admirable and intellectual figure because of his suffering, piety and dedication to prophetic truth.

Among the ancient Greek theatre intellectuals, philosophers are the final group under scrutiny. Despite their historical significance as paramount figures in producing and disseminating knowledge during their era, ancient Greek philosophers are not depicted with equal fervour in ancient Greek theatre. Philosophers are depicted in the ancient Greek theatre as individuals engaged in a mental activity but their mental pursuits are typically viewed as a basis for social exploitation. Thus, it would not be wrong to suggest that there is an anti-intellectual tendency in the ancient Greek theatre, where hostility to and mistrust of intellect, intellectuals and intellectualism, is widely expressed. One of the best illustrations of this anti-intellectual tendency is presented in Aristophanes' *The Clouds* which is a satire of the teachings of Socrates and the education provided by Sophists. In *The Clouds*, Aristophanes accuses Socrates of charging young people money while corrupting them through dishonest teaching. He also critiques the sophist assertion that rules and moral imperatives are merely constructs of human creation and therefore subject to revision. Aristophanes argues that the Sophist doctrine is dangerous because it distorts the truth and does not respect the gods and traditions. Socrates tells Strepsiades in the play: "The first thing you'll have to learn is that with us the gods are no longer current" (Aristophanes, 122). Aristophanes also clearly makes the audience feel this danger when Strepsiades defraud their creditors and Pheidippides beats his father. The audience in Athens would find these occurrences disturbing since traditional societies

place a high value on upholding agreements and showing respect for authoritative figures. Strepsiades' speech at the end of the play also reinforces the idea that sophist teachings deceive him:

Strepsiades: How mad I was! I let Socrates persuade me to deny the gods!
[Addressing the statue of Hermes on a pillar outside his house] Hermes, don't be cross with me. Don't destroy me. Forgive me- I was demented, I listened to too much blether. Give me some advice. Should I prosecute them, or what do you think? [Pretending to see the statue indicating dissent] You're right. I shouldn't have thought of trying to trip them in the courts. I'll go right off and burn the blighters' school. (Aristophanes 172)

Although Strepsiades' confession delivers the message Aristophanes intends to give, the refutation of Socrates' teachings is entirely conventional and populist. Indeed, Strepsiades seems to be immature according to Kant's definition expressed in *What is Enlightenment?* because he has no ability to know without the guidance of others. Socrates, on the other hand, has the ability to be guided by his own reason and bears responsibility for his actions.

Despite all the arguments that Aristophanes raises, some features of the character of Socrates in *The Clouds* clearly contradict reality. Socrates did not actually have a school and did not accept payment for his teaching, as in *The Clouds*. However, it appears that the charges brought against Socrates in *The Clouds* persisted in that period because Socrates was prosecuted and executed for charges akin to those implied by Aristophanes in the play. The philosopher was accused of being involved in defiling the minds of young Athenians. In his work, *Apology*, Plato also asserts that the work of Aristophanes had a role in Socrates' trial and execution because Aristophanes' portrayal of the philosopher turned many Athenians against him, which finally resulted in his execution (*Apology* 25-27) and hence the extermination of an extremely important intellectual both for his era and for the ages to follow.

These figures from ancient Greek theatre perform intellectual roles in terms of having knowledge as well as instructing and shaping society. However, it is difficult to argue that they were equally significant in Greek theatre. It appears that the oracles and chorus in ancient Greek plays serve as the playwrights' intellectual ideas and acts. Through these characters, playwrights attempt to portray the truth while criticising the flaws in society, evil ideologies and politics. However, there is a propensity to denigrate intellectualism when it comes to philosophers. The primary cause of this is because the

Greek myths, traditions and norms that are the foundation of theatre inspire playwrights. In this sense, their voices overlap with the chorus and the oracles in the play. Philosophers, however, reject the tradition. They ignore tradition in their pursuit of truth, that is why, plays about philosophers would have a cynical attitude toward them.

Theatre was still one of the most prominent public spaces for intellectual pursuits in ancient Rome, even if it had gradually lost its influence over society after reaching its zenith in ancient Greece. Although the principal objective of Roman theatres was entertainment, they also served as gathering places for the Romans to debate social and political issues. Ancient Roman theatre preserved the intellectual legacy of the Greeks, albeit with somewhat diminished influence. Greek drama had a significant impact on ancient Roman theatre since the Romans effectively adopted the theatrical styles and techniques of the Greeks. In various respects, theatre was a Greek activity for the Romans because the Greeks influenced the Romans in terms of both theatrical production and architecture. The early Roman plays written in Latin, for instance, were translations rather than original works. The amphitheatres of the Romans utilised for performances were semi-circular, open-air and had raised seating areas, just like the Greek ones. Furthermore, ancient Roman theatre drew heavily on Greek tragedy, comedy and mythology as key sources of inspiration.

Even though they were very closely intertwined, the social functions of Greek and Roman theatre were quite distinct. Theatre, for the Greeks, was the cornerstone of their culture. It was a part of their daily life. Greek plays had a philosophical, aesthetic and religious symbolism. Particularly, tragedies were used to disseminate significant social messages and teach moral lessons based on social values. The functions of Greek theatre were to educate the society and enhance the sense of aesthetics. The Romans, on the other hand, prioritised comedies over tragedies and placed less attention on philosophical issues. The majority of Roman tragedies lacked a vigorous moral or educational goal. They were largely used for entertainment and spectacle, with exaggerated amounts of bloodshed and violence.

Due to the lack of vigorous philosophical motivation and moral or educational objectives in ancient Roman theatre, it is quite difficult to identify figures equivalent to those we have evaluated as prominent intellectual figures of Greek theatre. The use of a

chorus in Roman theatre, for instance, was quite rare in early plays and it was completely abandoned later on. It is not possible, likewise, to address a prophet or an oracle in Roman theatre who has a direct link to truth, wisdom or power. Depending on the lexical meaning of intellectual —the knowing and reasoning abilities of the mind, or as a person who is brilliant, highly gifted with knowledge (Onion 479)— the most noteworthy character deserving of the label ‘intellectual’ in ancient Roman theatre is found in the dramatic character of the *servus callidus*, namely the cunning slave. This character, who appears frequently in Plautus’ comedies, achieves his goals through his wit and intelligence. He is one of the most self-conscious characters of the ancient Roman theatre because he is fully aware of his own skills and ability in trickery as well as his wit. He is usually portrayed as being more intelligent than the upper-class people surrounding him. In one of the plays of Plautus, *Bacchides* (c.194-184 BC), the cunning slave, Chrysalus, even delivers a lecture on being an intelligent slave:

There’s nothing more worthless than a servant without brains: he’s got to have a precious powerful intellect: whenever a scheme is needed, let him produce it from his own intellect. Not a soul can be worth anything, unless he knows how to be good and bad both. (Plautus, 650-60)

It needs to be noted that a slave who exploits his intelligence for self-interest cannot be regarded an intellectual in the way we have addressed the figure of the intellectual in this work. His intellectual pursuits are, nonetheless, strong and his plots successful because he is always engaged in mental activities throughout the play. He also constantly critiques and evaluates other characters, particularly the masters, pointing out their stupidity or immoral behaviour. Despite the irony of hearing the cunning slave criticise moral and social defects, he is the only one who speaks truths that other characters dare not speak. He is also allowed to talk in a style that does not fit his social status throughout the play. In this regard, the cunning slave, according to Francesca Schironi, embodies the spirit of carnival:

From the energetic, inventive free citizen of democratic polis, the comic hero of Roman comedy (and in particular Plautine comedy) became a slave in the political center of the new Mediterranean power: the *servus callidus*. The change in the comic trickster’s social class is important because it adds to carnivalesque nature of comedy as a genre: comedy began depicting a topsy-turvy world in which slaves were in charge and tricked their masters. (447)

Even if the slave cannot be regarded as a true intellectual with his inconsistent and deceptive rhetoric, his disruption of established order might be deemed an intellectual act

since it offers multiple perspectives on truth and alternative worlds. The power of strict rules of piety and respect for official concepts of the sacred, as Mikhail Bakhtin notes, is ripped away in carnival (123-124). The cunning slave, thus, adopts an intellectual function that increases public awareness, challenges established authority and speaks the truth thanks to this carnivalesque mode his presence creates in the ancient Roman comedies. To summarise, slaves in ancient Roman comedies may be considered intellectual characters owing to the carnivalesque atmosphere they generate and the fact that they serve as the voice of the marginalised, even if their mental activities are not typically regarded as conscious intellectual acts.

For several centuries following the collapse of ancient Rome and the demise of the Roman theatre, theatre did not officially exist. There were a few small touring companies that made a living by performing shows of entertainment. Nonetheless, there was no significant theatrical development during this time. Theatre, thus, lost its function as a public sphere for a long time. Medieval theatrical performances, which later began only as a part of religious rituals, eventually moved out of the Church and found massive public popularity. Although theatres began once again to serve as public spaces, they were not utilised as forums for the discussion of various social and political issues as in ancient Greece but rather as spaces where religious doctrines were dictated. It is vital to note, however, that the Medieval theatre provided a platform for intellectual engagement through Christian doctrines for individuals who were illiterate and who frequently engaged in manual labour. Although the Church intended to use theatre to maintain its authority, preserve tradition, control the public and spread its ideology, this activity encouraged an intellectual consciousness for the Reformation and Renaissance movements that would eventually come about to revolt against the Church.

Despite the authoritarian, oppressive and restrictive nature of religious theatre, it is still feasible to have a debate on intellectuals within theatrical performances. The saints and biblical figures might be evaluated as intellectuals in the mystery and miracle plays. They, in a sense, provide divine knowledge and sacrifice themselves for the redemption of their people. True intellectuals, as Benda notes, occupy a position at the very edge of common society, opposing the status quo and prepared to be burnt at the stake, exiled, or even crucified for their ideas (Ch. 3). The saints and biblical characters are, similarly,

presented in mystery and miracle plays as characters who struggle with power and corruption and are exiled or crucified due to their convictions.

Transitioning from the exploration of intellectual themes within church-based theatre, particularly through the portrayal of saints and biblical figures in mystery and miracle plays, we observe a shift towards the more secular and universal themes of morality plays. Though still deeply religious, morality plays feature more secular and universal themes than mystery and miracle play. Morality plays typically feature a protagonist representing mankind who encounters personifications of abstract concepts that are aligned with good or evil, virtue or vice. In these plays, there are also allegorical characters that can be associated with the concept of intellectual such as Wisdom and Knowledge. Despite having limited roles in discovering the absolute truth in a religious sense, these characters encourage and guide the protagonist to live a better life or try to warn her/him of the peril s/he is in because of her/his ignorance. It is worth noting that, in contrast to mystery and miracle plays, the protagonist's emancipation from ignorance in morality plays is accompanied by Knowledge. Even though Knowledge or Wisdom in morality plays embodies Christian doctrines and is, therefore, strictly limited to a single system, it is still significant since it highlights one's relationship to knowledge on the journey to the truth. This journey to truth is a process of self-awareness and enlightenment as Knowledge clarifies in *Everyman*: "Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide, in thy most need to go by thy side (Lester 85). This resonates with Kant's notion of enlightenment, wherein individuals transcend self-imposed limitations through the acquisition of knowledge. The main character of Medieval theatre evolved into an individual who was accountable for and conscious of his own deeds, especially with the emergence of morality plays. Though initially marked by enthusiasm for religion, morality plays experienced considerable evolution and the portrayal of God and priests in plays as well as other aspects of religion became less prominent. Mankind, now, was at the centre of the plays. Thus, it would not be inaccurate to suggest that this transformation in the Medieval theatre ultimately inspired by intellectual movements of the age, notably Renaissance humanism. The intellectual characters of the succeeding centuries were, likewise, nourished by human-centred thought systems, which were originally represented by these allegorical figures, Knowledge and Wisdom.

The secularisation of Medieval theatre, which began with morality plays, continued towards the end of the fifteenth century with the introduction of plays known as interludes. Interludes were shorter plays performed between the acts of longer plays, or as stand-alone entertainment. Like morality plays, interludes were often didactic in nature and sought to impart moral lessons to their audiences. In contrast to morality plays, however, interludes were often more light-hearted in tone and focused on entertaining their audiences rather than solely on teaching moral lessons. During the Renaissance, there was a shift from the didactic, moralising nature of medieval drama towards a greater emphasis on entertainment and the portrayal of realistic and complex characters, which can be observed in the development of the Tudor interlude. A form of Renaissance drama that evolved out of the medieval interlude, Tudor interludes introduced new elements to English theatre, such as realistic dialogue, character development and a greater emphasis on individualism. They paved the way for the development of more sophisticated plays in the Renaissance and helped to establish English drama as a respected art form.

Renaissance drama grew out of this medieval theatre tradition and was nourished by the artistic, social, political and scientific developments of the new century. The Renaissance was a time of great intellectual awakening and a flowering of arts and sciences. It was characterised by discoveries, inventions and achievements such as a renewed interest in classical learning and values, questioning of traditional authority, belief in the power of reason, appreciation of the arts, the development of new scientific ideas and a focus on exploration, discovery, individualism and humanism. All of these had a major impact on the development of theatre leading to the creation of new forms and the introduction of more complex and realistic characters as well as plot structures. Renaissance humanism was a cultural movement that embraced the study of classical literature and philosophy and the idea that human beings have the potential to be creative and virtuous. The emphasis on the potential of the individual had a significant impact on the arts, particularly on theatre. During the Renaissance, theatre, thus, emerged as a popular form of entertainment and a means of expressing ideas and intellectual thought. Many of the plays of the Renaissance were based on classical models and themes and they often incorporated elements of mythology to explore ideas about human nature, morality and the nature of the universe. In this way, Renaissance theatre served as a vehicle for an exploration and discussion of intellectual ideas and themes.

The university wits of the Renaissance theatre included playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe, Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe who were renowned for their depth of knowledge and propensity for delving into difficult subjects and concepts in their works. These writers were well-educated and had a deep understanding of classical literature, history and philosophy. They were also innovative in their use of blank verse and their exploration of controversial themes and they helped to pave the way for the development of Renaissance drama. Despite not being a member of the university wits William Shakespeare, on the other hand, was able to compete with this group of playwrights and establish himself as a leading playwright and intellectual of his time thanks to his exceptional talent and education at grammar school, where he studied Latin and classical literature. These playwrights were influenced by the intellectual and cultural trends of the time and their works often reflect the intellectual climate of the Renaissance. Many plays in this period featured characters who were highly educated and well-versed in the arts and sciences. These characters often served as mouthpieces for the playwrights' own ideas and beliefs.

One of the most notable intellectual characters in Renaissance theatre is Doctor Faustus in Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (1592). As a Renaissance man, Faustus is highly educated and well-informed in a variety of subjects, including philosophy, theology, medicine and magic. He is depicted as a man of great intellect and learning but also as someone who is vain and driven by an intense desire for power and knowledge. His desire for greatness and his thirst for knowledge cannot be satisfied by traditional forms of learning. He becomes disillusioned with traditional forms of knowledge and instead turns to the study of new ways to acquire knowledge. To satisfy his desire for knowledge and power, he makes a deal with Lucifer and sells his soul in exchange for access to forbidden knowledge. This might be considered as a manifestation of the intellectual and scientific breakthrough of the Renaissance, during which people were beginning to question long-held beliefs and to seek out new ways of understanding the world. Kevin LaGrandeur, however, evaluates Doctor Faustus not as a bold intellectual challenge but as a satire on lazy thinking and dangerous shortcuts to knowledge and power:

The problem is not that Faustus dares too much; it is that he does not fully commit to his daring nor dare wisely enough. Marlowe depicts an intellectual figure who, despite some gifts and grand ambitions, resorts to facile thinking

and trite, selfish actions. Because he only makes hasty and partial use of his intellectual potential, rather than taking the long, hard road of full and careful development of it, he is like a man who decides to become a lion trainer but does not take the precautions of studying the lion's habits, nor trying some simple tricks first before putting his head in the lion's mouth. (129)

The point LaGrandeur emphasises here makes sense because Faustus' quest for knowledge through magic and the occult contradicts the empirical and rational approach to learning that characterised the Renaissance period. Faustus seems to be prone to making impulsive or reckless decisions and his lack of discernment ultimately leads to his tragic downfall. His inability to use his intellect and judgement wisely ultimately undermines his potential for intellectual excellence despite all his qualities.

Despite LaGrandeur's analysis, Faustus may still be evaluated as an intellectual Promethean rebel because he seeks to acquire knowledge and power that are beyond the limits of what is considered natural or acceptable for a human being. Both Faustus and Prometheus are willing to take great risks to acquire knowledge and power. Faustus makes a deal with the devil and sells his soul in exchange for access to forbidden knowledge, while Prometheus steals fire from the gods and gives it to humans, despite the fact that this action is strictly forbidden: "I hunted down fire's stolen spring and hid it in a fennel stalk, revealing it to mortals as teacher of all arts, a great resource" (Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 110- 115). Both characters are willing to defy traditional authority to pursue their goals and both ultimately suffer the consequences of their actions. That is, Faustus' desire to exceed the bounds of human potential and experience echoes the myth of Prometheus. His rejection of tradition, thus, might be interpreted as a manifestation of his intellectual curiosity and willingness to explore new ideas. By turning to the study of necromancy, he rejects the authority of traditional sources of knowledge and seeks answers from alternative sources. This demonstrates his intellectual independence and readiness to challenge and question traditional ways of thinking.

As a man of intellect and reason, Faustus represents the ideals of the Renaissance, which emphasised the importance of knowledge, individualism and the potential of human reason. He undoubtedly represents the intellectual figure of the Renaissance period as he embodies many of the ideals and aspirations of the time. However, it is important to note that Faustus' rejection of tradition is not solely motivated by a desire

for knowledge and understanding but also his ambition and desire for admiration and glory:

Faustus: Sweet Mephostophilis, thou pleasest me:
 Whilst I am here on earth let me be cloy'd
 With all things that delight the heart of man.
 My four-and-twenty years of liberty
 I'll spend in pleasure and in dalliance,
 That Faustus' name, whilst this bright frame doth stand,
 May be admired through the furthest land. (Marlowe 76).

The desire for admiration and glory is a common human motivation. Thomas Hobbes defines glory in *Leviathan* (1651) as the “joy arising from imagination of a man’s own power and ability” (36). Faustus’ desire for unlimited knowledge and worldly pleasures could be seen as a kind of desire for glory as he seeks recognition and admiration from others for his intellectual and worldly achievements. Yet, glory is not usually a private passion. It is closely tied to the recognition and admiration of others and is safe only when it is based on the experience of one’s own capacity. Faustus’ pursuit of glory, however, is ultimately self-destructive as he is willing to sacrifice his soul in order to go beyond his capacity.

As in *Doctor Faustus*, Renaissance plays often feature intellectual characters who are meant to be representative of the ideal Renaissance man. These characters are often highly educated and well-spoken, with a strong sense of morality and a deep understanding of the arts and sciences. They are also depicted as being highly rational and often explore philosophical and intellectual ideas through their speeches and actions. These characters would often be on a journey of self-discovery, trying to understand their own thoughts and feelings as well as the world around them. One of the most prominent characters of Renaissance theatre, Hamlet, like Faustus, is also portrayed as a highly educated character with a strong background in literature, philosophy and the humanities. Both are portrayed as characters educated at University of Wittenberg, one of the most important intellectual centres of the time. Both Hamlet and Faustus are fictional characters so their association with the University of Wittenberg is purely fictional. However, the University of Wittenberg is a real place and was an important centre for learning and intellectual activity in the sixteenth century. It was also the centre for the

Protestant Reformation, with the publication of Martin Luther's 'Ninety-Five Theses' in 1517. So, it is likely that Marlowe and Shakespeare drew on this historical context in creating their intellectual characters.

In the great pantheon of intellectual figures throughout history, fools and clever servants occupy a unique but often underestimated position that parallels that of the respectable Renaissance man. These characters are often portrayed as possessing extraordinary resourcefulness and sharp wit, using their intelligence to outwit their superiors and achieve success in the complex game of life. Indeed, as Robert Wilcher suggests "the fool's folly is the beginning of wisdom" (119), summarising the paradoxical nature of their existence. This implies that within their seemingly absurd actions lies a core of insight, a spark that ignites the journey towards enlightenment. This concept underlines the complexity of the mind, emphasising that wisdom often emerges from the most unexpected sources and experiences. In this way, they serve as an important source of humour and levity in the plays but also serve a deeper purpose by offering insight and commentary on the actions of the more privileged characters. Renaissance fools and servants, thus, fulfil the same intellectual function as the slave character of ancient Roman theatre. That is to say, the fools serve as carnivalesque figures, offering a temporary inversion of social hierarchy and norms through their jokes and antics. They also frequently have an intellectual role of speaking the truth to authority, satirising authoritarian figures and providing alternative perspectives. In Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1605), for instance, the Fool is a character who serves as a commentator on the actions of the other characters, particularly King Lear. Despite being treated as a fool by others, the character is depicted as being wise and insightful, using his wit and humour to speak truth to power and offer counsel to Lear. In *The Taming of the Shrew* (1593), on the other hand, Tranio, a clever servant, plays a key role in the plot. Tranio is a resourceful and quick-witted character who is able to outmanoeuvre his superiors and get ahead in life through his intelligence and cunning:

Tranio: I am in all affected as yourself,
Glad that you thus continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline, 30

Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray,
 Or so devote to Aristotle's checks
 As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured.
 Balk logic with acquaintance that you have
 And practise rhetoric in your common talk;
 Music and poesy use to quicken you;
 The mathematics and the metaphysics-
 Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you.
 No profit grows where is no pleasure tane:
 In brief, sir, study what you most affect. (Shakespeare 68-69)

The quotation illustrates the cunning of Tranio, who advises his master Lucentio on his quest for knowledge and personal fulfilment. Tranio recognises Lucentio's commitment to philosophy, but warns him not to be overly rigid or dogmatic in his approach. Instead, he advocates a well-rounded education covering a variety of disciplines, from rhetoric and poetry to mathematics and metaphysics. However, it is important to note that these characters were not necessarily intellectuals in the real sense. While some fools and servants in Shakespeare's plays may be clever or witty, their primary function is usually to entertain and amuse or to serve as agents in complicating the storylines, rather than to engage in deep intellectual or philosophical discussions. In conclusion, the main intellectual figures of Renaissance theatre are the characters who embody the spirit of the Renaissance. This might include those who are seeking new ways of understanding the world, challenging traditional ways of thinking and pushing the boundaries of what is thought to be possible. These intellectuals may also be characterised by their curiosity, their desire for knowledge and learning and their willingness to take risks in order to pursue their goals. That is why, the intellectual characters of Renaissance theatre stand out for their individual qualities and abilities rather than their social roles.

The transition from English Renaissance theatre to Restoration theatre was marked by a period of significant cultural and social change in England. English theatre was flourishing during the Renaissance, with a wide range of new theatre genres and techniques. However, with the rise of Puritanism and the overthrow of the monarchy in 1649, the Puritan leaders who came to power sought to suppress many forms of entertainment, including theatre, which they saw as sinful. Professional theatres were closed, acting and playwriting were suppressed. Therefore, the English theatre was in

great decline. After the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II in 1660, the theatre began to flourish again but it was not the same as the highly regarded theatre of the Renaissance. The focus shifted from the highbrow drama of the Renaissance to more commercial, popular forms of entertainment. The restoration of the monarchy was accompanied by a desire to return to more formal, aristocratic tastes and this shift was reflected in the types of plays that were popular at the time. Restoration and eighteenth-century drama tended to focus on the lives and experiences of the aristocracy and was often characterised by elaborate sets and costumes as well as by a focus on wit and sophistication. The plays of the time often featured complex plots and themes and were known for their use of irony and satire.

While both Renaissance and Restoration theatre shared a common interest in exploring intellectual and artistic themes, they diverged in their specific emphases and the philosophical and cultural movements that shaped them. The Enlightenment stands out as the most influential movement during this period, sweeping across Europe from the late seventeenth century through the eighteenth century. Characterised by an emphasis on reason, science and individualism, the Enlightenment profoundly influenced the intellectual and cultural landscape, leaving a lasting impact on theatre and other spheres of society. The Enlightenment had a significant influence on the development of the neoclassical style of drama, which sought to emulate the principles of classical Greek and Roman theatre. All of these developments and changes had a direct impact on character description in Restoration and eighteenth-century theatre. Intellectual characters, in particular, were often portrayed as witty, sophisticated and clever, using their intelligence and rhetorical skills to outmanoeuvre and outwit their opponents. These characters were typically members of the upper class and their intelligence was often used as a tool to assert their social status and superiority and as a means of commenting on the events of the play or providing social commentary.

The Restoration period, in particular, was known for its witty and sophisticated comedies, many of which were written by playwrights such as William Congreve and George Farquhar. These plays often featured clever repartee and sparkling dialogue and were notable for their exploration of themes such as love, honour and morality. John Dryden was also a leading playwright of the Restoration period, often featuring complex and intellectually engaging characters who were motivated by a desire for knowledge and

understanding. Dryden's plays also often explored themes of political and social power and his intellectual characters often had to navigate complex moral and ethical dilemmas. In his tragic play *All for Love* (1677) for example, the characters of Antony and Cleopatra are depicted as complex, intellectual and multifaceted, with both good and bad qualities. The play explores the idea that all human beings are capable of both good and evil and that the choices they make can have far-reaching consequences. Another important theme in Dryden's plays is the role of power and authority in society. In *The Conquest of Granada* (1672), for instance, the characters of Almanzor and Boabdil are depicted as vying for power and control and the play explores how power can corrupt and influence people's actions. The comedy of manners and other subgenres of comedy that satirised the manners and customs of the upper class also relied heavily on wit in eighteenth-century theatre. The plays of Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, for example, were known for their clever and witty dialogue and their use of satire to comment on the foibles of society. With the restoration of the monarchy, theatre regained its status as a public sphere where people congregated to share experiences and participate in discourse. Notably, theatre assumed a pivotal role in facilitating discussions on social criticism. Playwrights seized the stage as a platform to offer commentary and critique on pressing contemporary issues, including but not limited to gender roles, class disparities and political corruption. The plays often used humour and satire to convey their message through intellectual characters. These intellectual characters were often used to represent the values and ideas of the Age of Enlightenment. They were typically depicted as rational, educated and enlightened individuals who championed reason and progress.

The representation of intellectual characters in nineteenth-century literature was influenced by various literary and philosophical movements and ideas of the time such as romanticism, naturalism, existentialism, utilitarianism and social Darwinism. Each movement or idea had its own perspective on the role and function of the intellectual in society and each movement had its own way of depicting intellectual characters. It is difficult to argue, however, that these movements were as influential in nineteenth-century British theatre as they were in other genres of literature or European theatre. Melodrama, light-comedies and burlesque were popular genres in nineteenth-century British theatre and the influence of literary and philosophical movements on these genres was often subtle rather than direct. This subtle influence can be seen in the way these

genres address themes such as morality, social justice and the nature of reality. Melodramas, for instance, dealt with themes of good and evil and the struggle for justice and morality, which were also central concerns of romanticism. Burlesques, on the other hand, used humour and satire to comment on social issues, which were also central concerns of realism and naturalism.

These dominant genres often portrayed intellectual characters in a simplified and stereotypical way with less emphasis on complexity and nuance. Intellectual characters were portrayed as either heroes or villains with a clear distinction between good and evil. They were also depicted as individuals who used their intellect and knowledge for either heroic or nefarious purposes. In *The Bells* (1871) by Leopold Lewis, Matthias is portrayed as an intellectual but villainous character, motivated by greed, ambition and a desire for power. He is presented as a scheming and manipulative villain with no redeeming qualities. Conversely, George Peyton in *The Octoroon* (1859) by Dion Boucicault is portrayed as an intellectual and heroic character, motivated by love, compassion and a desire for justice. He is introduced as a brave, selfless and morally upright character who fights against the forces of evil. The one-dimensional depiction of these characters especially in melodramas, however, do not accurately represent the complexity of real-life intellectuals. They are only simplified versions of stereotypical intellectual characters that are employed to enhance the melodramatic plot.

Oscar Wilde, one of the most prominent playwrights and intellectuals of nineteenth-century British theatre, on the other hand, managed to provide a more complex and multi-dimensional representation of intellectual characters in comparison to other playwrights of the time by using wit and satire to comment on social issues and by satirising the manners and customs of the upper classes. In his famous play, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895), Wilde portrays intellectual characters such as Algernon Moncrieff, Lady Bracknell and Gwendolen Fairfax as complex and multifaceted figures who are both well-educated and witty but also flawed and self-absorbed. They are not limited to traditional archetypes of good and evil in melodramas. These characters are not solely defined by their positive or negative traits but rather they possess a range of qualities that reflect the complexity of human nature. Through the representation of the complex intellectual characters in the play, Wilde exposes the absurdity of the social norms and values of the time and the way the upper-class intellectual society of the time is more concerned with

appearances and social status than with wisdom and moral integrity. Overall, the portrayal of intellectual characters in the nineteenth-century British theatre was often limited and stereotypical. With a few exceptions, these characters were depicted as one-dimensional figures rather than complex individuals. Their presence had a specific purpose within the play such as providing comic relief or serving as a foil for other characters. The social norms of the time placed a high value on appearances and social status and intellectualism was associated with the upper class, which led to the portrayal of intellectual characters as superficial, pretentious and narrow-minded figures who value social status and wealth above all.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Henrik Ibsen, the Norwegian playwright, exerted a profound influence on the evolution of theatre across Europe. His plays marked a departure from the conventional theatrical forms prevalent at the time, introducing novel themes, characters and styles that significantly shaped the trajectory of modern theatre on the continent. Ibsen's works were renowned for their exploration of symbolism and psychological depth, as well as their keen engagement with contemporary social issues. The impact of Ibsen's plays extended beyond the borders of Norway, particularly in England, where they found eager audiences and garnered critical acclaim. Notably, George Bernard Shaw, a prominent figure in British theatre, played a pivotal role in popularising Ibsen's works in England. Shaw not only staged Ibsen's plays but also translated several of them into English, thereby making them accessible to a wider British audience. Moreover, Shaw's own theatrical productions bore the unmistakable imprint of Ibsen's style and thematic concerns. Like Ibsen, Shaw's plays grappled with social issues of the time, delving into themes of class dynamics, morality and human psychology. Shaw's works mirrored Ibsen's penchant for psychological complexity and symbolic representation, cementing the Norwegian playwright's enduring influence on the development of British theatre. Through their collaborative efforts and shared artistic sensibilities, Ibsen and Shaw contributed significantly to the transformation and revitalisation of theatre in Europe during this period. According to John Smart, Shaw introduced a new purpose in British theatre under the influence of Ibsen:

Shaw was a man of ideas and his view of the theatre was that it had serious purpose: to make people think. If that sounds commonplace today, it was much less so in Edwardian Britain [...] Shaw's wit is not decorative, but essential to his purpose. (12-13)

He was a strong advocate of using the stage as a platform to raise awareness about social and political issues and to challenge the status quo. His plays dealt with controversial subjects, such as class inequality, poverty and the role of women in society and were not meant to be purely entertaining but also to provoke thought and spark debate. He used his wit and intelligence not for decorative purposes but as a tool to encourage thought and discussion among the audience. Shaw's plays, thus, feature intellectual characters who are deeply engaged with the world around them, using their intellect to question social norms and advocate for social change. Many of Shaw's characters are highly educated and articulate; they engage in hot debates and discussions about a wide range of topics, from politics and religion to art and science.

In his famous work, *Man and Superman* (1903) for instance, the major characters Jack Tanner and Don Juan Tenorio are used to represent modern intellectuals. They are free thinkers who are unafraid to challenge social norms and question traditional beliefs. They are also highly educated and engage in intellectual discussions and debates. Throughout the play, Shaw uses these characters to explore various intellectual and philosophical themes such as the nature of art and the role of the individual in society. Shaw also uses these characters to critique the rigid social hierarchy and class distinctions of his time. Their strong sense of individuality and self-actualisation also reinforce the idea that one should work to fulfil one's potential and not be constrained by social norms. This idea is also aligned with Friedrich Nietzsche's concept 'Übermensch', which suggests that the individual is able to transcend the limitations of society and achieve true self-actualisation. In his statements, Don Juan also makes indications regarding the spirit of a superman.: "I tell you that as long as I can conceive something better than myself I cannot be easy unless I am striving to bring it into existence or clearing the way for it. That is the law of my life" (Shaw 98). Like Nietzsche's 'Übermensch', superman in Shaw's play is presented as an individual who has the potential to transcend the limitations of society and achieve a higher level of existence. Both concepts suggest that individuals have the ability to overcome the constraints and expectations of their surroundings and to create their own values and purpose.

Shaw had a significant role in changing the representation of intellectuals in the twentieth-century British theatre. His plays defied conventional intellectual definitions and paved the way for the development of more complex characters. It contributed to the

public discussion of political and social issues by depicting multifaced intellectual characters who engage in socio-political events. Beside Shaw's contributions, the socio-political events such as the rapid industrialisation, scientific and technological advancements, the rise of socialist and communist ideologies and the devastation of World War I had a profound effect on British theatre. Thus, the representation of intellectual characters in British theatre became diversified and more complex in parallel to these events.

First trend was the portrayal of intellectuals as social reformers who sought to expose and challenge the injustices of society. This was particularly evident in the works of playwrights such as George Bernard Shaw, who wrote plays such as *Pygmalion* (1913) and *Saint Joan* (1923) depicting intellectuals as idealistic and moralistic figures. The image of intellectuals as outsiders or outcasts was another trend. This was evident in the works of playwrights such as James Joyce, whose play *Exiles* (1918) depicts an intellectual character who feel disconnected from society and struggle to find a sense of belonging. The last one was the portrayal of intellectuals as disillusioned and disaffected individuals. Samuel Beckett's absurdist plays such as *Waiting for Godot* (1953) features intellectual characters who are consumed by feelings of despair and hopelessness. Especially after the Second World War, the representation of intellectuals in British theatre changed dramatically. They were no longer depicted as idealistic figures working to bring about change but rather as complex and flawed characters, who struggled with personal and moral dilemmas. They were portrayed as individuals who were unable to act or change the situation they were in, or who were conflicted by their own desires and sense of responsibility.

To conclude, the representation of intellectual characters in the nineteenth-century British theatre was often limited and stereotypical. However, the emergence of new theatre in Europe, particularly the influence of Henrik Ibsen, had a significant impact on the development of modern theatre in Britain. The plays of George Bernard Shaw, heavily influenced by Ibsen, introduced a new purpose to British theatre: to make people think. Shaw's plays featured intellectual characters who questioned social norms and advocated for social change, using their wit and intelligence to provoke thought and discussion among the audience. Overall, the representation of intellectual characters in theatre has evolved over time and contemporary theatre continues to explore and challenge the

complexity of these characters. This part of the thesis has provided a brief history of the representations and functions of intellectual characters in theatre, tracing their development from Ancient Greek to the 1950s British theatre in parallel with the socio-political, scientific and philosophical developments of their times. The following chapter aims to provide a deep analysis of the representations of the intellectual in contemporary British theatre in the context of the theories presented in the first part of the thesis.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE CROSSROADS OF ETHICS AND INTELLECTUAL IDENTITY

4.1. ETHICAL STRUGGLES AND INTELLECTUAL RESILIENCE IN *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS*

Robert Bolt (1924-1995) occupies a prominent position in British theatre, renowned for his profound insights into the human condition and the intricate tapestry of moral and political landscapes. As an English playwright and screenwriter, Bolt's contributions transcend mere entertainment, delving into the depths of conscience, integrity and social responsibility. His works stand as poignant reflections on the timeless struggles faced by individuals grappling with the forces of history and their own moral compass. He is best known for his play, *A Man for All Seasons*, which was first performed in London in 1960 and it won the Tony Award for Best Play and the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play in 1962. The play is a historical drama that depicts the life of Sir Thomas More. Bolt's other notable plays include *The Tiger and the Horse* (1960), *Vivat! Vivat Regina!* (1970) and *State of Revolution* (1977). Bolt's professional journey as a playwright was characterised by a consistent exploration of complex political and moral themes within his theatrical productions. His plays delved deeply into issues surrounding conscience, integrity and the individual's role and obligations within the broader context of society. His works delved deeply into the multifaceted layers of political and moral dilemmas and he intricately examined the complexity of these themes, often presenting them in a thought-provoking and sophisticated manner that prompted audiences to contemplate deeper philosophical questions.

In *A Man for All Seasons*, Bolt explores the story of Sir Thomas More, a sixteenth-century English statesman, scholar and intellectual, who finds himself stuck between his loyalty to the state and his commitment to his beliefs. Set in the early sixteenth century, during the reign of King Henry VIII of England, who is seeking to divorce his wife, Catherine of Aragon, in order to marry Anne Boleyn, the play follows the story of Sir Thomas More, who is appointed as the Lord Chancellor of England by King Henry VIII. Despite being one of the king's most trusted advisors, More finds himself at odds with

the king over the issue of divorce. More believes that the king's actions are morally wrong and that he cannot support them. Throughout the play, he is faced with a series of challenges and moral dilemmas as he tries to balance his personal beliefs with his political obligations. Despite the pressure from the king and his court, More remains steadfast in his commitment to his principles, even when it means facing imprisonment and death. In the end, he is arrested and charged with treason and is ultimately executed for his refusal to support the king's divorce and his supremacy over Church.

Despite his execution, More is remembered as a hero and a model of moral and ethical integrity. His story continues to be widely celebrated as a testament to the power of personal conviction and the courage of standing up for what one believes in. In the preface of the play, Bolt explains why he chose the sixteenth-century intellectual figure, More, as the hero of the play by referring to our present position:

We no longer have, as past societies have had, any picture of individual Man (Stoic Philosopher, Christian Religious, Rational Gentleman) by which to recognise ourselves and against which to measure ourselves; we are anything. But if anything, then nothing and it is not everyone who can live with that, though it is our true present position. Hence our willingness to locate ourselves from something that is certainly larger than ourselves, the society that contains us. (x)

Bolt discusses the idea that modern society does not have a clear and defined concept of individual identity as past societies did. This leads to a sense of ambiguity and a feeling of being anything and nothing at the same time, which is difficult for people to accept as the reality of the present situation. Thus, people try to define themselves in relation to something larger, such as society, but society itself does not have a clear understanding of what it is. The society offers individuals freedom and opportunity but does not provide any guidance on what to do with these. As a result, individuals are left with a sense of confusion and are thrown back upon themselves at their lowest. This leads to a cycle of seeking validation from society, which ultimately leads back to the same feelings of confusion and frustration. Thus, Bolt aims to provide a picture of individual man for us against which to measure ourselves. In the words of Leonard Smith "Against this 'centre which is empty', both socially and individually, Bolt sets what he calls More's adamant sense of his own self" (48). Smith argues that Bolt sees the core of society as empty, lacking a solid foundation of values and beliefs. Thus, Bolt places More, who has

a strong sense of self, against this core, highlighting the contrast between the values of modern society and the unwavering commitment of More.

Focusing on sixteenth-century events, Bolt also explores the actions and motivations of statesmen faced with dire consequences or grand temptations, as they are forced to make difficult decisions. However, the years which seem to have informed the central arguments in *A Man for All Seasons* are the 1950s as it was a time of important socio-political events such as the Cold War, the British invasion of Egypt, the Soviet invasion of Hungary, the development of nuclear weapons and the rise of Communism. In his analysis of *A Man for All Seasons*, Smith describes the 1950s as a time “when everyone, particularly artists, the ‘unacknowledged legislators of the world’, had to declare their allegiance. In the ‘West’, they had to be for their own country and against Communism and vice versa: there was no third alternative” (58). In this context, artists and intellectuals were often pressured to embrace a certain ideology or action without question. This is exactly the formula applied to More by the king and his court in the play:

Cromwell: (patiently) Bear with me, Your Grace. Now if he [More] opposes Spain, he supports us. Well, surely that follows? (Sarcastically.) Or do you see some third alternative?

Norfolk: No no, that’s the line-up all right. And I may say Thomas More——

Cromwell: Thomas More will line up on the right side. (Bolt 61)

More seems to be stuck between his loyalty as a statesman to the king and his conscience as a devout Catholic when he is asked to support King Henry’s divorce. In response to this dilemma, More tries to find a third alternative that would allow him to maintain his integrity while avoiding direct confrontation with the king. He decides to remain silent on the issue and not publicly support the divorce, but he also refuses to publicly oppose it or speak out against the king since he is aware of the necessity of obeying the law as a well-respected lawyer. This approach allows him to avoid committing a treasonous act for a while, but it also leaves him without any authority to influence the situation. However, the alternative approach More tries to create does not make any sense for the power because it expects him to declare his full allegiance.

The 1950s was a time of great social and political upheaval, particularly in the Western world and many artists and intellectuals felt a sense of responsibility to engage with the issues of the day and take a stand on the important moral and ethical questions

facing society. In this context, More's struggle to balance his loyalty to the king with his conscience as a Catholic can be seen as a microcosm of the larger social struggle to reconcile conflicting loyalties and values. The play invites us to reflect on the nature of conscience, morality and the relationship between the individual and the state, all of which were pressing issues in the context of the Cold War and the broader political and cultural changes of the time.

While More's religious beliefs and his loyalty to the king certainly play a significant role in the play, the conflict he faces is not solely a matter of theology or ideology. Instead, it is a more fundamental dilemma of conscience and morality as Bolt explains in the preface of the play as follows:

But I am not a Catholic nor even in the meaningful sense of the word a Christian. So by what right do I appropriate a Christian Saint to my purposes? Or to put it the other way, why do I take as my hero a man who brings about his own death because he can't put his hand on an old black book and tell an ordinary lie? For this reason: A man takes an oath only when he wants to commit himself quite exceptionally to the statement, when he wants to make an identity between the truth of it and his own virtue; he offers himself as a guarantee. (xii)

The quote suggests that taking an oath is a significant act that demonstrates a person's commitment to the truth of their statement and their belief in their own virtue. By taking an oath, a person offers themselves as a guarantee of the truth of their words, implying that their reputation and personal integrity serve as a symbol of the truth of their statement. In the context of the play, the protagonist faces a dilemma where he must either compromise his principles and take an oath recognising the king's supremacy or refuse and face the consequences. More's refusal to take the oath is not just a matter of personal integrity but also a stance that demonstrates the principles he believes in. Thus, Bolt regards More as "a man with an adamant sense of his own self" (xi) because his refusal to take the oath exemplifies his commitment to his beliefs and his conscience. This makes More an appropriate hero for Bolt's play. As for the appropriation of a Christian saint for non-Christian purposes, it is not uncommon for people to draw inspiration from individuals or figures outside of their own cultural or religious traditions. Moreover, the values and ideals represented by More in the play are not exclusively Christian but are universal, such as the importance of personal integrity and standing up for one's beliefs. Therefore, it is possible to admire and appreciate More as a hero or a role model without necessarily subscribing to his religious beliefs.

Noting that the essence of More's self is Christian, Randy Lee also underlines that Bolt cares little about the Christian nature of this essence (309). The Christian nature of More's self is not the focus of the play for Bolt; his focus is rather on More's strong and demanding conscience which dictates his behaviour. The exchange between More and Norfolk, a nobleman and statesman in the court of King Henry, particularly More's poignant inquiry, encapsulates this central theme: "And when we stand before God and you are sent to Paradise for doing according to your conscience and I am damned for not doing according to mine, will you come with me, for fellowship?" (Bolt 82). More articulates a fundamental dilemma rooted in his commitment to his conscience, even in the face of potential damnation. His question to Norfolk underscores the depth of More's conviction and the moral clarity with which he navigates the complexities of Tudor politics and religious upheaval. By invoking the imagery of standing before God and facing judgment based on the dictates of their respective consciences, More highlights the existential weight of personal integrity and the ultimate accountability to one's own moral compass.

More's position is indeed difficult to defend, as the play acknowledges that the Pope, the King and other figures of authority are not necessarily morally upright individuals. Therefore, neither the Pope, to whom More's religious belief is committed, nor the King, of whom he is a loyal subject, offer a viable alternative for him. However, his conviction that he must follow his conscience above all else is unwavering. As he delivers in his conversation with Norfolk: "But what matters to me is not whether it's true or not but that I believe it to be true, or rather not that I *believe* it, but that I *believe* it ..." (Bolt 56- 57). This is a powerful expression of More's commitment to his conscience. It suggests that he is concerned less with whether his beliefs are objectively true or not and more with the fact that they are true for him. In any case, Bolt's aim is not to debate the correctness of More's decision about the King's marriage to another woman, but rather to illustrate his dedication to his principles and conscience, even in the face of adversity. This highlights the importance of individual conscience in the play as well as the idea that one's sense of identity is closely tied to one's beliefs and values. While the primary focus of *A Man for All Seasons* is on More's moral and ethical principles, his character can also be seen as an intellectual role model. He is portrayed in the play as a highly educated and intelligent man, with a profound knowledge of philosophy, theology and law. He is

respected by his colleagues for his intellect and his ability to reason logically and persuasively. More's intellectual curiosity and his commitment to learning are also evident in his interactions with his family and friends, as he engages them in lively debates and encourages them to think critically about their beliefs.

As discussed earlier in this study, Julien Benda refers to real intellectuals as 'clerks', who do not pursue practical aims and interests in their activities but rather seek joy in art, science or metaphysical thinking. He also notes that the role of these clerks is to uphold universal values such as truth, justice, integrity and morality while remaining independent from political and personal interests (Ch. 3). Benda believes that intellectuals have a duty to be the conscience of society regardless of the consequences. Benda's vision of the intellectual as a moral compass for society is exemplified in the character of More in *A Man for All Seasons*. He is depicted as a man of strong moral and ethical principles who is willing to stand up for his beliefs, even in the face of opposition and personal danger. His resolute commitment to his beliefs, despite the formidable pressures exerted by the king and other influential figures to abandon them, serves as a vivid illustration of Benda's notions concerning the responsibility of intellectuals within society.

The portrayal of More as a man of learning, reason and commitment to his conscience and justice contrasts with the compromise and corruption that often characterises modern politics and the society of Bolt's age. By presenting More as an intellectual who is detached from political and economic interests and who serves as a voice of conscience for society, Bolt highlights the scarcity of individuals who embody these ideals in modern times. This can be seen as a commentary on the absence of real intellectuals in modern societies, who are willing to put truth and justice above personal gain and who are committed to serving as the voice of reason and conscience. In this sense, the play can be considered as a call to action, urging modern intellectuals to reclaim their role as truth-seekers and defenders of universal values. It also serves as a reminder of the importance of the ideals of intellectual detachment and commitment to truth and justice and of the need for such individuals to play a central role in shaping public discourse and shaping the future of society. As Bolt notes earlier, we need '[...] any picture of individual Man by which to recognise ourselves and against which to measure ourselves.'

The character referred to as the Common Man in Bolt's play serves as a symbol of the audience's engagement with the ethical imperative and their accountability as contemporary individuals. Through his multifaceted roles, including that of More's steward, the boatman, the innkeeper, the jailer, the jury foreman and the executioner, the Common Man offers insights into the motivations and actions of the main characters. Acting as a commentator on the unfolding events, he encourages the audience to contemplate the relevance of the narrative to modern society and to ponder their own roles in the broader social fabric. In the alternative ending of the play, the Common Man steps forward after More's execution, shedding his mask as the executioner and delivers a poignant speech:

The Common Man came to the centre stage, having taken off his mask as the executioner and said:

Common Man: I'm breathing ... Are you breathing too? ... It's nice isn't it? It isn't difficult to keep alive friends ... just don't make trouble – or if you must make trouble, make the sort of trouble that's expected. Well, I don't need to tell you that. Good night. If we should bump into one another, recognise me. (Bolt 104)

This speech, in which he speaks of the simple pleasure of breathing and the desire to avoid trouble, underscores his relatability to the audience. By doing so, he prompts the audience to recognise their own potential complicity in the marginalisation and persecution of intellectuals. Moreover, he invites them to reflect on how they can act as agents of change in their own lives and in society at large. The Common Man, thus, serves as a conduit through which the audience can engage with the ethical dilemmas presented in the play. By considering his actions and reflections, the audience gains insight into their own responsibility in shaping the social and political landscape. Ultimately, they are challenged to confront the implications of their choices and to strive towards a more just and equitable world, thereby preventing the recurrence of such tragedies in the future.

Playing so many roles, the Common Man also serves as the ironic reversal of More's consistent self-hood (Smith 70). The Common Man adopts different personas throughout the play, while More remains consistent in his adherence to his principles and beliefs. This contrast between the Common Man's adaptability and More's steadfastness creates a sense of irony and highlights the complexity and corruption of human nature as Smith notes:

The counter-theme to the sense of self is embodied in the play by the Common Man. The Common Man starts by being More's Steward and ends by being his executioner, being willing to play any part that came his way. This is Bolt's way of saying that 'our true present position', that of the common man, is to be 'anything. But if anything, then nothing'. (62)

This kind of flexibility and adaptability can be dangerous, especially when it leads people to act without a strong moral compass. The Common Man is seen as an everyman, representing people who do not have the luxury of taking a strong stand on issues of morality or ethics. The final line of the quote, 'But if anything, then nothing', which references Bolt, underscores this idea. If we are willing to play any role given to us, then we are not standing for anything at all. We are simply cogs in a larger machine without any real agency or individuality. The primary issue with the Common Man, like other characters in the play, is his willingness to embrace political passions, which Benda condemns in contemporary intellectuals. In stark contrast, More emerges as a heroic intellectual figure within the narrative precisely due to his unwavering commitment to his principles, even in the face of formidable opposition from the state's powerful forces.

While the other characters in the play also demonstrate varying levels of commitment and dedication to their respective causes, none of them attain the status of hero or intellectual that More embodies. More is universally perceived as possessing the highest degree of integrity among the characters portrayed. For example, Cardinal Wolsey, Lord Chancellor of England, appears motivated by the preservation of the public good, as evidenced by his efforts to prevent his country from descending into civil war as he says More:

Wolsey: Let him [Henry] die without an heir and we'll have them back again. Let him die without an heir and this 'peace' you think so much of will go out like that! (Extinguishes candle.) Very well, then England needs an heir; certain measures, perhaps regrettable, perhaps not – (pompous) there is much in the Church that needs reformation, Thomas — (More smiles.) All right, regrettable! But necessary, to get us an heir! Now explain how you as Councillor of England can obstruct those measures for the sake of your own, private, conscience. (Bolt 13)

Wolsey believes that the king's divorce from Catherine of Aragon is necessary for the good of the country, as it may allow the king to have a male heir. Wolsey sees the divorce as a matter of state and he is willing to go to great lengths to secure it. On the other hand, More argues that the king's desire for a divorce is not a matter of state, but rather a matter of personal desire. He questions the logic of seeking a dispensation from the Pope to annul

a marriage that was originally allowed by the same authority for reasons of state: “A dispensation was given so that the King might marry Queen Catherine, for state reasons. Now we are to ask the Pope to – dispense with his dispensation, also for state reasons?” (Bolt 12). Indeed, while Wolsey’s actions in attempting to keep England out of civil war by seeking the Pope’s consent for King Henry’s divorce may initially appear altruistic, his motivations are depicted as far from entirely logical and benevolent. Rather than solely driven by concerns for the welfare of the country, Wolsey is portrayed as a character primarily motivated by his own ambition and desire for power and prestige. Throughout the play, Wolsey’s methods are often viewed as manipulative and self-serving. His attempts to pressure More into supporting King Henry’s divorce serve as a testament to his Machiavellian nature, as he prioritises political expediency over moral principles. Wolsey’s actions reflect a willingness to manipulate and coerce others to achieve his own ends, regardless of the consequences for those around him.

Signor Chapuys, imperial ambassador, is another character who has strong integrity in his cause. He is devoted to his nation, Spain and determined to prevent the divorce between King Henry and Catherine, which would dishonour Catherine and Spain. Chapuys’ fundamental tenet, however, is predicated on the notion that what is good for his country is necessarily good. He is unable to properly analyse the occurrences due to the overriding influence of this principle. Lee notes that Chapuys would declare war if war benefited his nation’s interest (312), demonstrating a single-minded focus on national allegiance above all else. Benda’s criticism of modern intellectuals resonates strongly in Chapuys. By glorifying the nation-state and prioritising national interests over universal ethics, intellectuals risk abandoning their commitment to universal moral principles. This blind allegiance to nationalism, as Benda argues, can lead to the erosion of ethical standards and the perpetuation of injustice on a global scale. In the case of Chapuys, his willingness to declare war for his country’s benefit could lead to the suffering and death of countless innocent people. While Chapuys is a skilled diplomat and a loyal servant to his own nation, his actions in the play are not consistent with Benda’s definition of a universal intellectual since his actions are primarily driven by political considerations, rather than moral convictions.

Another central figure in the play, Thomas Cromwell, a crafty lawyer, emerges as a skilled and highly educated politician dedicated to serving the interests of his king,

Henry VIII and spearheading significant reforms in England. Cromwell is portrayed as a man of considerable intellect and strategic acumen, employing his talents to advance the agenda of the monarchy. However, despite his intellectual prowess, Cromwell's actions often deviate from ethical or moral principles. He is depicted as willing to employ underhanded tactics, including bribery and intimidation, to achieve his objectives and maintain his influence over the king. Cromwell's allegiance to Henry VIII's wishes takes precedence over considerations of justice or morality, leading him to engage in Machiavellian manoeuvres to consolidate power and implement the king's desires.

These characters, like More, are all committed to their own purposes and beliefs, but they are not always considered to be as heroic as More. Therefore, Lee comes up with the following question: "Why do so many find More the 'hero' of the play when his conscience is guided by a God, a church and a body of teachings with which neither the play's author nor many in its audience feel akin?" (315). This question can perhaps best be answered through another: Is it their flaws that distinguish the other characters with certain intellectual leanings from More? Having flaws is not necessarily an obstacle to being an intellectual hero. Intellectuals, like all people, are fallible and have their own personal flaws and imperfections. However, what distinguishes true intellectuals from others is their ability to think critically, engage in ideas and prioritise universal moral values above narrow personal or national interests. In fact, one may also argue that acknowledging one's own flaws and limitations is a crucial part of the intellectual process. By recognising their own biases and limitations, intellectuals can approach ideas with greater humility and open-mindedness and be more receptive to alternative perspectives and critical feedback. In the preface of the play, Bolt clearly emphasises that More as an intellectual figure is fully aware of his limitations:

At any rate, Thomas More, as I wrote about him, became for me a man with an adamant sense of his own self. He knew where he began and left off, what area of himself he could yield to the encroachments of his enemies and what to the encroachments of those he loved. It was a substantial area in both cases for he had a proper sense of fear and was a busy lover. Since he was a clever man and a great lawyer, he was able to retire from those areas in wonderfully good order, but at length he was asked to retreat from that final area where he located his self. And there this supple, humorous, unassuming and sophisticated person set like metal, was overtaken by an absolutely primitive rigour and could no more be budged than a cliff. (xi)

This quotation illuminates More's ability to discern different types of encroachments, whether from adversaries or loved ones. He exercised caution and compassion in his actions, yet remained steadfast in certain principles. While he could retreat from certain aspects of his life 'in wonderfully good order,' there came a point where he could not compromise—his conscience. In this final area, More was resolute, 'set like metal' and unwavering in his commitment to his moral and ethical beliefs, valuing them above any political or personal gain. This analysis highlights the distinction between Thomas More and other characters particularly regarding their intellectual leanings and moral integrity. While More's commitment to his conscience and principles sets him apart as the hero of the play, the flaws and moral compromises of other characters raise questions about their intellectual and ethical standing.

The exploration of More's moral integrity and the complexities of heroism leads us to delve deeper into the symbolic significance of oath-taking within the play's moral and ethical landscape. In More's perspective, the act of taking an oath signifies a profound commitment to a chosen course of action, with a breach of that oath resulting in a loss of personal integrity. Oath-taking serves as a symbolic gesture reflecting the characters' moral and ethical convictions, particularly for More, where it represents a solemn pledge to uphold truth and conscience, guiding his actions in alignment with his deeply held principles:

More: When a man takes an oath, Meg, he's holding his own self in his own hands. Like water (cups hands) and if he opens his fingers then – he needn't hope to find himself again. Some men aren't capable of this, but I'd be loathe to think your father one of them. (Bolt 87)

He sees taking an oath as a binding promise that cannot be broken without serious consequences, both for himself and for society at large. For other characters, on the other hand, taking an oath may be a more ritualistic or even manipulative act as Lee notes "[...] some people of power take great pleasure in abusing their power and not because they rationalise their actions as necessary for public service. Rather, they relish the opportunities to abuse power because they are intoxicated by power" (320-21). That is why they can easily take an oath recognising the King as the head of the Church. Rich, initially depicted as a poor academic and friend of Thomas More, quickly rises through the ranks of British society, driven by ambition and a willingness to compromise his principles for personal gain. This sets the stage for his famous declaration at the beginning

of the play: “But every man has his price [...] But yes! In money too [...] Or pleasure. Titles, women, bricks-and-mortar, there’s always something” (Bolt 2) seems to hold true for many of the characters in the play. The characters’ actions are motivated by personal gain, whether it be for financial, political, or social reasons. Rich himself is a good illustration of this, as he ultimately betrays More and provides false testimony against him in exchange for a position in Cromwell’s administration.

Unlike Rich or the others in the play, More seems to be a person who has no price. As he says, “A man should go where he won’t be tempted” (Bolt 4). Thus, he locates his self in his conscience and the law where he will not be tempted. His commitment to his principles and his refusal to compromise them, even at the cost of his own life, is a testament to his integrity. He firmly believes that the law must be upheld and that he cannot, in good conscience, take an oath that would go against his principles. More’s conversation with Roper, enthusiastic young man firmly adherent to Lutheranism, later converts to Catholicism, shows his trust in law:

Roper: I’d cut down every law in England to do that!

More: (roused and excited) Oh? (Advances on Roper.) And when the last law was down and the Devil turned round on you where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? (Leaves him.) This country’s planted thick with laws from coast to coast – Man’s laws, not God’s — and if you cut them down – and you’re just the man to do it – d’you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then? (Quietly.) Yes, I’d give the Devil benefit of law, for my own safety’s sake. (Bolt 41-42)

The conversation between More and Roper underscores More’s commitment to the rule of law and his belief that the law serves as a foundation for justice and fairness in society. More recognises that the law is not perfect, but he also understands that it provides a necessary structure for individuals to live together in peace and harmony. However, as Bolt notes in the preface of the play, More is also removed from the protection of the law, which is one of his last two shelters:

More’s trust in the law was his trust in his society; his desperate sheltering beneath the forms of the law was his determination to remain within the shelter of society. Cromwell’s contemptuous shattering of the forms of law by an unconcealed act of perjury showed how fragile for any individual is that shelter. Legal or illegal had no further meaning, the social references had been removed. (xiv)

More’s belief in the law is a belief in the stability and protection of his society, but when the forms of the law are shattered by perjury and abuse of power, all he is left with is his

own intellectual conscience as a shelter. More's integrity is also demonstrated through his honesty and transparency in his dealings with others. He refuses to engage in the political manoeuvrings and backstabbing that other characters indulge in and instead speaks his mind openly and honestly, even when it means going against those in power. Finally, More's integrity is demonstrated through his deep sense of personal responsibility. He recognises that his actions have consequences and is willing to accept the consequences of his actions, no matter how dire they may be. Although More is guided by his conscience, which is informed by his faith and the teachings of the Catholic Church, he manages to create a space where he reflects universal values of integrity, morality and the struggle to do what is right in the face of adversity.

The portrayal of More as a man of integrity and self-hood in contrast to other characters who embrace political passions reinforces his intellectual characteristics in the play. This contrast is primarily based on the tension between the principles of personal conscience and the pragmatic demands of political power in the Machiavellian sense, as exemplified by the opposing intellectual characters, More and Cromwell. Cromwell represents the Machiavellian approach to politics. Rich reveals Cromwell's Machiavellianism at the beginning of the play when he tells More that it was Cromwell who had recommended him to read Machiavelli. Cromwell is portrayed as a ruthless pragmatist who is willing to do whatever it takes to achieve his goals, even if it means betraying his friends or breaking the law. He sees politics as a game in which the strongest and most cunning survive and that is why he uses his position of power to manipulate those around him. More, on the other hand, represents a commitment to personal conscience and moral principles. More sees politics as a realm in which moral values and individual conscience should be upheld, even if it means sacrificing personal gain or prestige. The major tension in this conflict arises between Cromwell and More during the trial scene:

More: (Earnestly addressing him.) In matters of conscience

Cromwell: (bitterly smiling) The conscience, the conscience ...

More: (turning) The word is not familiar to you?

Cromwell: By God, too familiar! I am very used to hear it in the mouths of criminals!

More: I am used to hear bad men misuse the name of God, yet God exists. (Turning back.) In matters of conscience, the loyal subject is more bounden to be loyal to his conscience than to any other thing.

Cromwell: (breathing hard: straight at More) And so provide a noble motive for his frivolous self-conceit!

More: (earnestly) It is not so, Master Cromwell – very and pure necessity for respect of my own soul.

Cromwell: Your own self you mean!

More: Yes, a man's soul is his self! (Bolt 97)

This discussion highlights the fundamental conflict between the idealistic and individualistic approach of More and the Machiavellian approach of Cromwell. While More is willing to sacrifice his own life to preserve his conscience, Cromwell is willing to sacrifice individual morality for the sake of the state and maintain power. Cromwell's bitter response, in which he accuses More of frivolous self-conceit, highlights the clash between their worldviews. While More sees individual conscience as a fundamental aspect of personal identity and a necessary component of a just society, Cromwell sees it as a hindrance to effective governance and a potential threat to the stability of the state.

This discussion brings us to the role of the intellectual as a public servant or statesman. Almost all the characters in the play are well-educated and knowledgeable individuals who have certain duties in the state administration. Although there are certain personal interests as discussed here, their motivation is basically to fulfil the task given to them as is the case with More. What distinguishes the other intellectual characters in the play from More, then? This issue is best understood in the context of professionalism and specialisation. The propensity for professionals to be lured to power and authority and to directly work for it, according to Edward Said, is one of the primary pressures on professionalism. This is a serious strain since it might compel professionals to compromise their morals and principles to keep their standing and prestige within the system of power (see Said 77-80). This is evident in the play, where many of More's colleagues and fellow professionals choose to sign the oath in order to maintain their positions and avoid punishment. They act out of purely material considerations. More's refusal to take the oath, however, is a rejection of this pressure towards power and authority. More believes deeply in the importance of private conscience in his public role as a statesman:

Wolsey: Then, good night! Oh, your conscience is your own affair; but you're a statesman! Do you remember the Yorkist Wars?

More: Well ... I believe, when statesmen forsake their own private conscience for the sake of their public duties ... they lead their country by a short route to chaos. (Bolt 13)

More's commitment to his conscience is based on his belief that the individual is accountable to a higher authority than the state or the king. The statement indeed raises a fundamental theological and philosophical question regarding the relationship between earthly authority and divine will, particularly in the context of monarchy and religious belief. In historical and theological perspectives, especially during the time depicted in *A Man for All Seasons*, the concept of the divine right of kings was prevalent, wherein the monarch was often seen as divinely appointed and their authority derived directly from God. From this viewpoint, refusing the king's commands could be interpreted as a defiance of God's will, as the king was considered the earthly representative of God's authority. However, More's perspective, as depicted in the text, challenges this traditional understanding. More's stance reflects a belief in the supremacy of conscience and individual accountability to a higher moral authority, which he perceives as transcending even the authority of the king. While More acknowledges the king's position and authority, he also maintains that one's conscience is ultimately answerable to God and obeying the king at the expense of one's conscience would constitute a betrayal of that divine accountability.

By refusing to compromise his conscience, More maintains his independence from the political establishment. Said calls this act 'amateurism' which is a form of resistance to professional pressures because it allows individuals to maintain their independence and objectivity by refusing to be co-opted by the political establishment (76). In this context, amateurism is not a lack of expertise or competence, but rather a conscious decision to resist professional pressures and to maintain one's integrity and independence. One may argue that More's silence is passive resistance, unproductive in effecting change or challenging authority because there is no direct rejection. However, More is reluctant to speak out against the King's wishes because he is a highly respected lawyer and statesman and he believes in the importance of obeying the law and maintaining social order. He also fears that his direct challenge to the authority could create further conflict and division since the king represents the God's will at the time in

public. More is conscious that his resistance to the King's authority may be viewed as a danger to national stability and exploited by other power groups. As a devoted subject of the Crown, More does not want to undermine the government, yet he is also unable to compromise his convictions.

As a result, he attempts to create the best alternative for society as an intellectual figure. As Said notes, the truth revealed by intellectuals should transcend all identities, be universal and defy any authority as quoted before: "Speaking the truth to power is no Panglossian idealism: it is carefully weighing the alternatives, picking the right one and then intelligently representing it where it can do the most good and cause the right change" (102). Speaking the truth to power, then, necessitates both strategy and commitment. This is what More attempts to do throughout the play. It is More's amateur approach, as defined by Said, that makes him different from other intellectual characters in the play. It is possible to argue that Bolt attempted to establish an amateur spirit, as Said puts it, through the character of More, particularly for the masses of intellectuals who were trapped in the grasp of professionalism during the 1950s when the play was written. As a result, it seems that like Said, Bolt believes that the statesman as an intellectual should not simply accept the prevailing ideas and ideologies of the ruling power. Instead, they should use their knowledge and expertise to challenge and question the assumptions that underpin these ideas and ideologies.

Bolt's portrayal of More highlights the importance of having a moral compass that transcends the demands of political expediency but it does not necessarily present a clear answer to the question of how individuals should navigate the conflicting demands of their moral principles and their duty to the state. Thus, More's execution at the end of the play may give the impression that acting virtuously is not a practical choice. For the playwright, however, this execution scene serves two main purposes.

The first purpose of execution scene is to serve as a powerful testament to the importance of personal integrity and the dire consequences of compromising one's principles. More's commitment to his conscience, even in the face of imminent death, serves as a beacon of moral courage. His refusal to succumb to external pressures or betray his beliefs underscores the idea that individual integrity should not be sacrificed for the sake of political expediency or social expectations. Bolt uses More's sacrifice to

provoke contemplation on the nature of ethical decision-making and the necessity of remaining steadfast in one's moral convictions, even in the most challenging circumstances. By depicting More as a martyr to his principles, Bolt highlights the enduring significance of personal integrity as a guiding force in navigating moral dilemmas.

Turning to the second purpose, Bolt employs More's execution as a cautionary tale, warning the audience of the dangers of complacency and complicity in the face of injustice. Through the character of the Common Man, who represents the ordinary citizens witnessing and leading More's downfall, Bolt highlights the pervasive influence of apathy and acquiescence in perpetuating social injustices. The Common Man's passive acceptance of More's fate serves as a stark reminder of the collective responsibility of individuals to challenge oppressive systems and defend moral principles. By implicating the audience in the tragedy unfolding on stage, Bolt prompts introspection regarding the role each person plays in either upholding or undermining social ethics. Thus, More's execution not only serves as a rallying cry for resistance against tyranny but also underscores the imperative for individuals to actively engage in the pursuit of justice and moral righteousness in their own lives and communities. The audience is compelled to acknowledge that, while they may not have direct blame for More's fate, they bear the responsibility for their own apathy and involvement in allowing such tragedies to occur.

More's unyielding refusal to compromise his principles and conscience in the face of enormous pressure and personal risk also highlights the necessity of Nietzsche's concept of the 'intellectual conscience'. The intellectual conscience, according to Nietzsche, is the internal voice that demands that we remain true to our deepest beliefs and values in the face of external pressures and social norms (29-30). It is a guiding force that enables individuals to act in accordance with what they believe to be right, even when faced with opposition or adversity regardless of the consequences. More's refusal to support the King's divorce is also motivated by his intellectual conscience. Despite the urging of his family, friends and colleagues, More refuses to compromise his principles and betray his own conscience. More's commitment to his intellectual conscience emphasises the value of individual autonomy as well as the dangers of conformity. Many of More's colleagues and friends in the play are willing to compromise their own beliefs and values in order to keep their jobs and avoid the King's wrath. To avoid conflict and

ensure their own survival, they are willing to bend the rules and ignore the truth. More, on the other hand, refuses to compromise his principles, even if it is the easier or safer option. Although More's commitment to his intellectual conscience also leads to his tragic downfall and his execution for treason when he refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of the King's supremacy over the Church of England, his commitment to his beliefs ultimately results in his martyrdom and his story serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of a strong intellectual conscience.

In conclusion, Bolt uses the historical context of the play to highlight the timeless and universal nature of the themes he explores, such as the conflict between individual conscience and state authority, the nature of power and the role of the law in society. By setting the play in the sixteenth century, Bolt is able to draw parallels between the political and social context of the play and the political climate of the 1950s and 1960s. Both periods were characterised by a sense of political and social upheaval, as well as a heightened concern with issues of loyalty, authority and conscience. More's intellectual rigour and commitment to justice and truth are qualities that Bolt sees as possessing great importance, particularly in the context of these epochs.

The premiere of the play in 1960 coincided with a tumultuous period marked by profound social introspection. Amidst the backdrop of the 1960s, a decade characterised by sweeping social and political change including the civil rights movement, anti-war protests and the rise of the counterculture, individuals began to question established norms and challenge traditional authority structures. This era of upheaval was further fuelled by advancements in technology and communication following the aftermath of World War II, which facilitated increased scrutiny of governmental actions and social conventions. In this climate of questioning and re-evaluation, Bolt's selection of Thomas More as the central figure in his play takes on added significance. More, portrayed as an embodiment of intellectualism and moral fortitude, symbolises Bolt's conviction in the power of critical thinking and ethical reflection within society. More's commitment to truth and justice, coupled with his insatiable intellectual curiosity, emerges as qualities that Bolt views as indispensable for fostering a healthy and equitable social framework.

4.2. INTELLECTUALS IN DEBATE: ETHICS, CONSCIOUSNESS AND KNOWLEDGE IN *THE HARD PROBLEM*

The distinguished British playwright Tom Stoppard has carved a unique place for himself in the theatre world with his sharp wit, linguistic genius and thought-provoking narratives. His plays are commonly characterised by clever wordplay, complex language structures and a deep engagement with philosophical and scientific concepts. The intellectual depth of his works makes them both challenging and rewarding for the audience. The challenge lies in grasping complex ideas and navigating unfamiliar narrative structures, while the reward comes from the intellectual fulfilment and stimulation that results from successfully interacting with the material. Stoppard seamlessly integrates diverse disciplines into his plays. From science to philosophy, his works delve into complex ideas, challenging traditional boundaries and offering audiences a unique blend of entertainment and intellectual stimulation. *The Hard Problem*, written in 2015 and premiered in The National Theatre, stands as a testament to Stoppard's continued exploration of deep interdisciplinary themes. The play enters the realm of intellectual enquiry, grappling with ethical dilemmas, evolutionary perspectives and the elusive nature of consciousness. Stoppard's background, marked by his intense interest in science and philosophy, is woven into the fabric of the play, influencing its central themes and shaping the characters' journeys as they navigate the complex territory of intellectual engagement and morality.

At the heart of *The Hard Problem* lies a philosophical mystery, which rests upon an exploration of consciousness and subjective experience, often referred to as the 'Hard Problem of Consciousness'¹¹. Stoppard weaves this intricate question into the fabric of this play, challenging audiences to contemplate the intersection of scientific inquiry, ethical considerations and the intricacies of human consciousness. In this exploration, we delve into the key issues presented in the play, including the 'prisoner's dilemma', 'the selfish gene' and 'altruism'. These concepts will be elaborated and discussed in the following pages in relation to the concept of 'intellectual'.

¹¹ The Hard Problem refers to the challenge of explaining why and how physical processes in the brain give rise to subjective experience or consciousness (Chalmers 201).

The Hard Problem follows the main character, Hilary, a young neuroscientist and psychology researcher, as she grapples with the challenging questions surrounding consciousness, morality and the nature of existence, questioning whether the complexities of human experiences can be fully explained through scientific and materialistic approaches. Hilary, driven by her personal and professional pursuits, encounters various characters and scenarios that challenge her understanding of the mind. The narrative weaves through the realms of psychology, philosophy and personal relationships, creating a rich tapestry of ideas. As Hilary navigates her academic and personal journey which includes her teenage pregnancy and the subsequent decision to give her daughter, Catherine, up for adoption, the play invites the audience to reflect on the intricate interplay between scientific inquiry and the mysteries of human consciousness. *The Hard Problem* serves as a compelling exploration of the complexities inherent in understanding the intellectual and moral implications that arise from our evolving understanding of consciousness.

The play begins with a discussion between Hilary and her lover Spike, a scientist, on the prisoner's dilemma which is a concept in game theory. The prisoner's dilemma is a hypothetical scenario used to illustrate the difficulties of co-operation and decision-making in situations where individuals have to weigh their self-interest against mutual benefit (Peterson 1-3). Spike presents a scenario in which Hilary becomes one of the prisoners in order to make her understand the motivation of human beings while making decisions. The dynamic between Hilary and Spike, each with contrasting perspectives on human nature, provides a rich thematic layer that can be explored within the context of intellectualism. Hilary's belief in the possibility of unconditional goodness brings a more optimistic and perhaps idealistic view on human behaviour, while Spike's evolutionist viewpoint brings a possibly more pragmatic and possibly cynical perspective. Although Hilary is also a scientist, her scepticism about explaining human nature in purely physical, biological or evolutionary terms is quite discernible throughout the play. This scepticism reflects a refined exploration of the relationship between science and philosophy, especially with regard to the understanding of human behaviour.

The prisoner's dilemma is highly pertinent in intellectual discourse surrounding human behaviour. Thus, the dynamics demonstrated by this dilemma resonate with the philosophical dialogues between Hilary and Spike, suggesting a correlation between the

theoretical concepts and real-life debates depicted in the play. Before analysing the fragmented scenario in the play, it would be useful to review Martin Peterson's detailed hypothetical scenario on the concept to grasp this notion better:

Two gangsters, Row and Col, have been arrested for a serious crime. The district attorney gives them one hour to either confess or deny the charges. The district attorney, who took a course in game theory at university, explains that if both prisoners confess, each will be sentenced to ten years in prison. However, if one confesses and the other denies the charges, then the prisoner who confesses will be rewarded and get away with serving just one year. The other prisoner will get twenty years. Finally, if both prisoners deny the charges, each will be sentenced to two years. The prisoners are kept in separate rooms and are not allowed to communicate with each other. (1)

The power of the prisoner's dilemma theory lies in its ability to encapsulate and illuminate the complexity of decision-making, co-operation and strategic interactions between individuals. This hypothetical scenario, which originates from game theory, has far-reaching applications in various disciplines, offering insights in psychology, economics, political science and philosophy. The theory serves as a tool for studying decision-making processes when individuals are faced with choices involving a balance between self-interest and mutual benefit. It reveals the complex interplay of rationality, self-interest and the potential consequences of co-operation or betrayal. In the context of intellectuals and ethical dilemmas, the prisoner's dilemma provides an engaging framework for analysing characters and their moral choices. By encouraging a sophisticated exploration of the ethical dimensions inherent in decision-making, it sheds light on the tension between individual gain and broader ethical considerations.

Returning to the conversation between Hilary and Spike on the prisoner's dilemma, Spike approaches the scenario as a rational game, underscoring self-interest as a fundamental driving force. His assertion that rational prisoners would betray each other accentuates the competitive essence ingrained in human behaviour. Conversely, Hilary reacts strongly to the mere mention of the prisoner's dilemma, indicating her unease with its ethical implications. She introduces an emotional dimension to the hypothetical situation, challenging the notion of pure rationality by emphasising her emotional bond with Bob, the fictitious fellow prisoner. She asserts, "You've left out everything about Bob and me except we're each out for ourselves and we've got two buttons to push. Actually, Bob loves me" (Stoppard 4). This injects the scenario with a sense of trust and

emotion as factors influencing decision-making. Spike, however, dismisses Hilary's emotional stance, steering the discussion toward an evolutionary perspective:

The game is not about you and Bob, it's about a statistical tendency. It's about survival strategies hard-wired into our brains millions of years ago. Who eats, who gets eaten, who gets to advance their genes into the next generation. Competition is the natural order. Self-interest is bedrock. Co-operation is a strategy. Altruism is an outlier unless you're an ant or a bee. You're not an ant or a bee, you're competing to do a doctorate at the Krohl Institute where they're basically seeing first-class honours degrees and you're in line for a two-one, so don't be a smart arse and above all don't use the word good as though it meant something in evolutionary science. (Stoppard 4-5)

In response to Hilary's emotional considerations, Spike promptly dismisses the personal dynamics, steering the conversation toward an evolutionary perspective rooted in the principles outlined in *The Selfish Gene* (1976) by Richard Dawkins. According to Spike, the scenario transcends the individual relationship between Hilary and Bob. Instead, he frames it as a manifestation of 'survival strategies hard-wired into human brains over millions of years.' Spike's evolutionary lens posits the dilemma as a strategic game where self-interest stands as the paramount driving force. This resonates with the broader themes explored in *The Selfish Gene*, where Dawkins contends that the fundamental nature of genes and evolution inherently promotes behaviours that prioritise individual survival and reproduction. In this context, competition becomes the natural order, with self-interest forming the 'bedrock' of human motivations. Cooperation, as Spike describes, emerges as a calculated 'strategy' and altruism is depicted as an 'outlier' unless one aligns with the communal nature observed in ants or bees. This evolutionary perspective deepens the understanding of the interplay between self-interest, cooperation and altruism within the intricate fabric of human behaviour, drawing parallels with the insights provided by Dawkins in *The Selfish Gene*.

Although the idea of competition as the natural order and self-interest echoes Dawkins' portrayal of genes being primarily concerned with their own perpetuation, it is crucial to recognise Dawkins' cautionary stance on deriving morality from evolution:

I am not advocating a morality based on evolution. I am saying how things have evolved. I am not saying how we humans morally ought to behave. I stress this, because I know I am in danger of being misunderstood by those people, all too numerous, who cannot distinguish a statement of belief in what is the case from an advocacy of what ought to be the case. My own feeling is that a human society based simply on the gene's law of universal ruthless selfishness would be a very nasty society in which to live. But unfortunately,

however much we may deplore something, it does not stop it being true. This book is mainly intended to be interesting, but if you would extract a moral from it, read it as a warning. Be warned that if you wish, as I do, to build a society in which individuals cooperate generously and unselfishly towards a common good, you can expect little help from biological nature. Let us try to teach generosity and altruism, because we are born selfish. Let us understand what our own selfish genes are up to, because we may then at least have the chance to upset their designs, something that no other species has ever aspired to. (2-3)

Dawkins' passage reveals a sophisticated understanding of the complexities surrounding evolutionary biology, morality and human society. It encourages critical thinking about the interplay between biological predispositions and moral aspirations, ultimately advocating for a conscious effort to teach and practice generosity and altruism in the face of inherent selfish tendencies. Like Hilary, Dawkins expresses a cautionary perspective about deriving morality directly from evolution. Dawkins is explicit in stating that he is not advocating a morality based on evolution and Hilary, with her emotional considerations, seems to question the morality embedded in the prisoner's dilemma. Hilary's inclination to trust Bob finds resonance in Dawkins' desire for building a society where individuals cooperate generously and unselfishly towards a common good. Dawkins provides a unique perspective by explicitly stating that 'This book is mainly intended to be interesting, but if you would extract a moral from it, read it as a warning'. This is distinct from views of Spike and Hilary, as Dawkins emphasises the importance of understanding our own selfish genes and consciously working against their designs. Dawkins, similar to Hilary, expresses a personal feeling that a human society solely based on the gene's law of universal selfishness would be undesirable. This illustrates a critical analysis of the potential consequences of rigidly upholding evolutionary principles.

The dialogue between Spike and Hilary clearly shows the complexities surrounding altruism, expanding the discourse from biological underpinnings of the prisoner's dilemma to a moral argument. The concept of 'altruism' takes centre stage, prompting the characters to grapple with contrasting perspectives on what constitutes 'good' behaviour. This discussion underscores the complex interplay between inherent selfish tendencies and the conscious effort required to foster altruistic behaviour, echoing Dawkins' call for critical thinking and cooperation in the face of evolutionary principles:

Hilary: Don't you believe in good, Spike?

Spike: I believe in it, it's just not what you think it is.

Hilary: What do you think it is?

Spike: Behaviour. It takes millions of years to evolve, but it's evolved behaviour, whether you're a person or a vampire bat. Every night, vampire bats leave the cave in search of warm blood. When they get back to the cave, the ones who were lucky cough up for the ones who weren't. Literally. They regurgitate some of the blood to feed the bats who came home hungry. Do you think these are good vampire bats?

Hilary: No. I don't. But I don't think they're little people with wings and sonar, either.

Spike: I didn't want to be the one to break it to you. How many times do you think a bat will refuse to share its dinner before it finds out next time it comes home hungry the other bats won't cough up?

Hilary: I don't know.

Spike: I don't know either, but off the top of my head ... four. Four times, say. That'll teach the selfish little bastard how to behave. I don't see that we have much to feel superior about, as a species. Altruism is always self-interest, it just needs a little working out.

Hilary: Like you going miles out of your way to give me a lift home?

Spike: Exactly. It's a cost-benefit thing. I go miles out of my way because you might invite me in for coffee and I throw in a tutorial to get into your –

Hilary: Pants.

Spike: Good graces, I was going to say. But you're basically right on the biology.

Hilary: I'd rather not complicate ...

Spike: Hey, I'm your tutor, it would be an abuse of trust without precedent in higher education.

Hilary: It's a cost-benefit thing. I'm sorry about the coffee, too. But giving something to get something isn't altruism, anyway. (Stoppard 5-6)

Spike introduces the evolutionary lens once more, portraying altruism as evolved behaviour shaped by millions of years of adaptation. His example of vampire bats engaging in reciprocal feeding highlights the pragmatic aspect of altruism, suggesting that it is a learned behaviour driven by self-interest. This aligns with the earlier analysis of Spike's dismissal of emotional considerations in the prisoner's dilemma scenario, reinforcing the idea that altruism is intricately connected to self-serving motives. Hilary challenges this perspective, expressing her disagreement with the characterisation of vampire bats as 'good.' The dialogue weaves in moral dimensions, questioning whether actions driven by self-interest can be inherently 'good.' Hilary's refusal to equate bats with human beings introduces a moral stance that goes beyond the biological lens presented by Spike. The discussion continues with Spike's proposition that altruism is

always self-interest but may require some ‘working out.’ This echoes the earlier analysis of Spike framing altruism as a cost-benefit calculation in the evolutionary context. The transition between the analyses and the dialogue is seamless, as both explore the intricate relationship between self-interest and altruistic behaviours. The reference to Spike going out of his way to give Hilary a lift home brings a personal touch to the conversation, illustrating the interplay between altruistic acts and personal motives. The mention of a tutorial and Spike’s humorous remark about ‘I’m your tutor, it would be an abuse of trust without precedent in higher education’ adds a layer of irony, inviting reflection on the complexity of motives even in seemingly altruistic actions. Hilary’s closing statement, ‘giving something to get something isn’t altruism, anyway,’ encapsulates her perspective on altruism, emphasising the purity of selfless actions. This sets the stage for a continued exploration of the moral dimensions of altruism and the complex interplay between self-interest and genuine generosity in the unfolding narrative.

The discussion between Spike and Hilary, particularly on the concept of altruism, touches upon fundamental philosophical and ethical aspects that resonate with the notion of being a true intellectual. Intellectualism involves not only the pursuit of knowledge but also a deep engagement with complex ideas, ethical considerations and the ability to navigate the intricacies of human behaviour. Spike, embodying a more pragmatic and evolutionarily rooted perspective, showcases a form of intellectualism that is grounded in scientific understanding. His references to evolutionary biology and the pragmatic aspects of altruism align with a rational and analytical form of intellectual inquiry. The acknowledgment of self-interest, even in seemingly altruistic acts, demonstrates a keen awareness of the complex motivations behind human behaviour. On the other hand, Hilary introduces a moral dimension to the conversation, challenging the purely biological interpretation of altruism. Her inclination to question whether actions driven by self-interest can be labelled as ‘good’ adds a layer of ethical contemplation. This moral stance reflects an intellectual engagement with broader philosophical questions surrounding ethics, morality and the nature of ‘good.’ The play, therefore, serves as a platform to explore and question the nature of altruism. It prompts the audience to consider whether acts of apparent selflessness can be truly altruistic or if, as Spike argues, they are ultimately rooted in evolutionary strategies. The dialogue between the characters

adds depth to the exploration of altruism, illustrating the tension between biological determinism and the complexities of human emotions and relationships.

This dynamic conversation not only probes the intricacies of altruism but also challenges traditional expectations of intellectualism. Delving deeper into their exchange confronts us with fundamental questions about the intersection of self-interest and intellectual pursuits, inviting a philosophical re-evaluation of the very essence of being an intellectual. Traditionally, intellectuals are often expected to embody qualities such as altruism, selflessness and a commitment to the greater good. However, Spike introduces the idea that even seemingly altruistic actions may have an underlying self-interest. This challenges the notion of pure altruism, suggesting that, at a fundamental level, self-interest is always inherent. When we apply this perspective to the traditional notion of intellectuals, it introduces a layer of complexity. Can an intellectual, in the pursuit of knowledge or the betterment of society, truly act without any self-interest? Spike's argument implies that even the noblest pursuits have an element of self-interest, whether it is the satisfaction of contributing to knowledge, social recognition or other intrinsic rewards. On the other hand, Hilary's emotional considerations and her emphasis on trust and cooperation suggest a more traditional view of intellectuals as individuals committed to ideals beyond personal gain. Therefore, the question of whether a true intellectual can be entirely free from self-interest and act solely for the greater good becomes a philosophical one.

Examining Spike's perspective not only challenges traditional notions of sacrifice but also initiates a profound reconsideration of intellectual identity. Navigating the complexities of self-interest in intellectual pursuits necessitates a re-evaluation of the essence of being an intellectual. Spike's proposal disrupts the ideal of pure altruism and suggests an inherent intertwining of self-interest and noble endeavours. In light of this, it becomes important to explore the resonance between Spike's insights and the philosophical thoughts of thinkers such as Althusser and Gramsci about innate selfishness and the unattainability of complete selflessness. Hilary's perspective can also be examined in relation to the philosophies of Benda and Said, with a focus on the idea of being selfless and embodying the characteristics of a true intellectual. Spike's alignment with Althusser's concept of 'Ideological State Apparatuses', which suggests that institutions propagate ideologies that benefit particular classes, underlines his emphasis

on the natural order of competition and self-interest. Like Althusser, Spike seems to recognise the existence of an inherent selfishness in social structures. This parallel is further emphasised by Gramsci's concept of organic intellectuals striving for the hegemony of their class and reflects a similar recognition of the inherent self-interest in social dynamics. In relation to Hilary's perspective, which emphasises trust, altruism, cooperation and questioning simplistic explanations of human behaviour, parallels can be drawn with the ideals promoted by Benda and Said. Hilary's inclination towards selflessness and her commitment to understanding human complexity align with Benda's call for intellectuals to prioritise universal values and selflessness over personal interests. Additionally, her scepticism towards reductionist explanations mirrors Said's emphasis on critical engagement and the interrogation of prevailing narratives.

I would also like to draw an analogy between Dawkins' ideas on altruism and Gramsci's organic intellectual in relation to the discussion above. Dawkins argues that natural selection operates at the level of genes rather than individuals. Genes that enhance their own replication and transmission to subsequent generations are more likely to persist. Altruistic behaviours, which may seem selfless at the individual level, can be advantageous if they promote the survival and reproduction of genes. One form of altruism Dawkins discusses is kin selection. Individuals may exhibit self-sacrificing behaviours for the benefit of close relatives who share a significant portion of their genes. In this way, genes promoting altruism toward kin increase their chances of being passed on, even if the altruistic individual does not directly reproduce (Dawkins 94). Dawkins also explores reciprocal altruism, where individuals engage in mutually beneficial exchanges (183-185). By helping others with the expectation of receiving help in return, individuals can enhance their own fitness. This reciprocal cooperation can be seen as a strategy that benefits the genes involved. In examining the concepts of kin selection and reciprocal altruism in the context of Dawkins' ideas on gene-centred evolution and Gramsci's notion of organic intellectuals, parallels emerge in the dynamics of contributing to a group's well-being. Much like kin selection and reciprocal altruism, which involve mutually beneficial exchanges, Gramsci's concept of organic intellectual plays a role embedded in and contributing to the intellectual and cultural advancement of their community in mutually beneficial exchange. These concepts share a common thread of actions that, while not entirely selfless, lead to long-term advantages and are deeply

connected to the well-being of the group, whether in terms of genetic fitness, individual well-being or intellectual and cultural progress. The analogy underscores the interplay between seemingly altruistic acts and the dynamics of group survival or advancement in both biological and intellectual contexts. It is crucial to acknowledge that this analogy has its limitations. Genetic evolution and cultural evolution operate on different principles and the motivations and consequences of behaviours are complex. While not a perfect analogy, the comparison between kin selection, reciprocal altruism and intellectual contributions offers a perspective on the potential benefits that even self-interested actions, whether in biology or intellectual endeavours, can bring to a group or community. It underscores the diverse nature of altruism and contribution within the context of evolution and social dynamics.

Drawing on the sophisticated understanding of altruism and group dynamics, the ongoing dialectic between Hilary and Spike in *The Hard Problem* takes on a deeper significance. Their opposing perspectives not only drive the narrative forward but also prompt intellectual debates and ethical dilemmas that permeate the storyline. As the play unfolds, their contrasting views continue to clash, fuelling intellectual debates and ethical dilemmas that permeate the storyline. This ongoing struggle between their opposing ideologies not only drives the plot but also invites the audience to grapple with complex questions about morality, ethics and the nature of humanity. Scene 3 unfolds at the Krohl Institute for Brain Science, where Hilary's job interview takes place, providing a physical representation of the intellectual and ethical clashes between her and Spike, as introduced in the play's opening scene. Here, the characters' perspectives and interactions echo Spike's view on human competition and self-interest. The stage with a rich opulent environment symbolises scientific achievement, prestige and intellectual rigor. The exclusive nature of the institute, emphasised by the security passes worn by everyone, immediately establishes an environment steeped in competition and selectivity. Hilary, poised for her interview, occupies a chair, surrounded by the trappings of scientific prestige. As she flips through Krohl-branded file-holders containing specialist periodicals and print-outs, the competitive ambiance becomes palpable. The lavish setting mirrors Spike's emphasis on the natural order of competition in social structures. The introduction of Amal, another candidate, further enriches the exploration of competition. Amal's pragmatic advice aligns with Spike's perspective, as he suggests, "Psychology is a

sideshow at the Krohl. You need a hard-science crossover to improve your chances” (Stoppard 18). This resonates with Spike’s belief in the evolutionary basis of self-interest and the advantage of strategic positioning and underscores the vital role such tactics play in improving one’s chances in competitive environments such as Krohl’s.

At the beginning of this scene, Hilary is presented as the embodiment of altruism and emotional consideration. Dressed for the interview and engrossed in her materials, she displays a genuine interest in her field. Hilary’s altruistic inclination is evident in her interaction with Amal, where she expresses curiosity about his background. However, Amal’s pragmatic approach begins to influence the dynamics. For instance, when he suggests that Hilary needs a “hard-science crossover to improve [her] chances” (Stoppard 18), she is prompted to reflect on her own position. Hilary, though seemingly maintaining her altruistic and empathetic demeanour, is not immune to the competitive undertones. Amal’s disclosure about his strategies to enhance his chances prompts Hilary to reconsider her own approach. Amal mentions, “I’ve submitted to do an experiment tracking unconscious readiness potential move by move in two subjects playing a repeated prisoner’s dilemma” (Stoppard 18) and Hilary responds with irony, “They’re going to love you” (Stoppard 18). This exchange signifies Hilary’s exposure to a different, more competitive perspective within the intellectual domain.

While Hilary may not overtly abandon her ideals, the competitive environment challenges her traditional view of human beings. Her willingness to engage in the discussion about the nature of the brain and consciousness with Amal reflects an unconscious adaptation to the competitive milieu. The shift is subtle but signifies Hilary’s recognition of the pragmatic aspects of intellectual endeavours. Leo Reinhart, an administrator at the Krohl Institute, makes a decisive choice to prioritise Amal for the interview, further complicating Hilary’s position. While she may not explicitly compromise her ideals, the competitive dynamics force her to navigate a space where the emphasis on a ‘hard-science crossover’ becomes a factor in evaluating intellectual worth. The interplay between her ideals and the pragmatic reality of the competitive intellectual landscape adds depth to her character, highlighting the numerous responses individuals may exhibit when confronted with the complexities of social structures and competitive environments.

It is suggested in the play that a background in the rigorous methodologies of hard science, particularly in brain science, is highly valued. This institutional focus shapes the dynamics of competitions and aspirations among the characters, revealing the inherent challenges and biases ingrained in scientific pursuits. A critical discourse unfolds as Amal and Leo engage in a debate on whether a machine can truly think:

Amal: ... Sure, but the brain is a machine, a biological machine and it thinks. It happens to be made of living cells but it would make no difference if the machine was made of electronic gates and circuits, or paperclips and rubber bands for that matter. It just has to be able to compute.

Leo: Computers compute. Brains think. Is the machine thinking?

Amal: If it's playing chess and you can't tell from the moves if the computer is playing white or black, it's thinking.

Leo: What it's doing is a lot of binary operations following the rules of its programming.

Amal: So is a brain.

Leo: But can a computer do what a brain can do?

Amal: Are you kidding? – A brain doesn't come close!

Leo: (to Hilary) Do you want to jump in?

Hilary: Not much.

Leo: Really? Why?

Hilary: It's not deep. If that's thinking. An adding machine on speed. A two-way switch with a memory. Why wouldn't it play chess? But when it's me to move, is the computer thoughtful or is it sitting there like a toaster? It's sitting there like a toaster.

Leo: So, what would be your idea of deep?

Hilary: A computer that minds losing. (Stoppard 22-23)

Amal staunchly argues for the brain as a biological machine, capable of thinking. His emphasis on the physicality of the brain aligns with the prevailing scientific paradigm at the Krohl Institute. In contrast, Hilary introduces a different perspective, contemplating the idea of depth in thinking. Considering the discussion above, where Hilary engages in a discussion about the capabilities of computers and their comparison to human cognition, her statement 'A computer that minds losing' (Stoppard 23) hints at a more intricate understanding of consciousness, suggesting that true thinking involves emotional nuances beyond mere computation. This divergence in viewpoints adds layers to the exploration of machine thinking and the complexities of consciousness. At the heart of *The Hard Problem* lies the overarching theme of the enigma of consciousness. Hilary's candid

admission, “I have no idea and nor does anyone else. I thought that’s why we’re here. To crack the Hard Problem” (Stoppard 24) encapsulates the collective pursuit of knowledge and understanding that motivates the characters at the Krohl Institute. The play grapples with the fundamental questions surrounding consciousness, challenging characters and audiences alike to confront the limitations of current scientific understanding. This quest for unravelling the mysteries of the mind becomes a driving force, uniting and dividing characters within the intricate web of scientific ambition and intellectual pursuit.

The portrayal of intellectuals in Scene 3 and the underlying competition among them raises intriguing questions about the nature of being intellectual, ethical considerations and the moral implications within the context of the unresolved hard problem of consciousness. The emphasis on a ‘hard-science crossover’ and strategic positioning underscores the idea that intellectual pursuits are not devoid of competitive dynamics. This raises questions about the ethical implications of competition within the intellectual landscape and how it influences the character and behaviour of intellectuals. The scene prompts a reflection on whether intellectual pursuits can truly be selfless or if, as Spike suggests, there is an inherent element of self-interest.

The institutional emphasis on hard science at the Krohl Institute prompts an examination of how institutional priorities, as articulated by Edward Shils, contribute to shaping ethical considerations within the intellectual community. Shils posits that intellectual activities are not merely spontaneous expressions of individual tendencies but are also influenced and institutionalised by traditions and culture (400). In this context, the play raises pertinent questions: Does the Krohl Institute’s pursuit of specific methodologies align with ethical standards, or does it introduce biases that may compromise the broader ethical goals of intellectual endeavours? The emphasis on hard science at the Krohl Institute suggests a predetermined set of methodologies and areas of study deemed valuable by the institution. Shils, in evaluating the alignment with ethical standards, emphasises the importance of institutions prioritising objectivity, transparency and the pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of society. However, it is important to recognise potential biases or limitations in the institutional framework. Emphasis on particular methodologies and fields of study may inadvertently exclude alternative perspectives or interdisciplinary approaches, potentially hindering a comprehensive understanding of complex issues. Furthermore, institutional priorities, such as securing

funding or maintaining prestige, can influence research agendas as revealed when Hilary writes an article with the institution name on it:

Spike: Yeah ... Let me make three points about your pre-print. The pre-print is twenty pages, self-published. Don't circulate it. If you circulate it, don't put your name on it. If you put your name on it, don't put the Krohl's name on it.

Four points. If you circulate it with your name and the Krohl's name on it, don't call it 'Is God the Last Man Standing?'

Hilary: Why?

Spike: Because it will make you unemployable. You'd have to do philosophy.

Hilary: I haven't written anything which isn't in plain sight. What is to be done with the sublime if you're proud to be a materialist? To save the appearance of value, no theory is too unlikely, no idea too far-out to float so long as it sounds like science – elementary particles with teeny-weeny consciousness; or a cosmos with attitude; or the life of the mind as the software of a biological computer. These are desperate measures, Spike! (Stoppard 47)

This exchange touches on the delicate balance between intellectual freedom and institutional constraints, hinting at the influence institutions like the Krohl Institute may have on the content and dissemination of intellectual work. The dialogue underscores the tension between intellectual independence and institutional expectations at the Krohl Institute. Spike's warning to Hilary suggests that the institute's reputation and values may clash with the provocative nature of Hilary's article. This dynamic reflects a broader theme of how institutions, in this case, the Krohl Institute, can exert control over the intellectual discourse of their members, potentially stifling unconventional or controversial ideas. Louis Althusser's insights on ideological state apparatuses further enrich the analysis. Spike's warning to Hilary about potential employability issues underscores how institutions act as ideological state apparatuses, reinforcing the dominant ideology of the ruling class and shaping the intellectual landscape in accordance with their interests and priorities. Althusser's assertion that institutions create professionals to make their ideology dominant is evident in Spike's caution against circulating the article with the Krohl's name, highlighting the institution's influence on intellectual discourse.

Even though the limitations and effects of institutionalisation of knowledge are discussed in the play, other variables and limitations of personal tendencies and beliefs shaping the intellectuals also find expression. Hilary's perspective, profoundly influenced by her teenage pregnancy and the subsequent decision to give her daughter up for

adoption, stands out as a pivotal event that impacted her objectivity, as highlighted earlier. This experience has instilled in her a religious inclination, evident in the prayer scenes throughout the play, where she focuses on Catherine's safety and happiness. These rituals serve as a manifestation of Hilary's belief that leading a morally upright life can mitigate past mistakes and ensure her daughter's well-being. Her reliance on metaphysical assistance beyond biological confines, coupled with her veering into the realm of the uncertain, draws criticism from those in her circle for deviating from objectivity and scientific rigor. This attitude is often manifested in attempts to demonstrate the existence of realities beyond the biological realm, often through instances of coincidence and miracles. A notable example is the founder of the company, Jerry Krohl, who coincidentally has an adopted daughter named Catherine, prompting speculation about her identity. This speculation implies a belief in connections beyond mere coincidence, perhaps suggesting a belief in fate or destiny. Hilary is convinced that altruism, compassion and goodness cannot be explained solely by biological reasons and these coincidences further convince her of the validity of this idea. These developments are also the reason why she shows a tendency to go beyond the boundaries of her institution's work and research for the article mentioned above, 'Is God the Last Man Standing?'. Whether altruism is disguised self-interest deployed instinctively as an evolutionary strategy, or whether it can exist as unalloyed self-sacrifice, becomes a major part of the 'hard problem'.

Hilary and her assistant Bo, Chinese math genius, design an experiment to test this. Catherine, daughter of Jerry and 95 other children at her school are tested for how much compassion or altruism each child displays toward a woman they witness supposedly being subjected to electric shocks. Bo's analysis of the data, which reveals that younger children exhibit more innate compassion and altruism compared to older children who have been taught to be comfortable with cruelty, challenges Spike's claim regarding inherent selfishness. Bo's hard work seems to show an unselfish desire to please Hilary. Although, Hilary is sceptical about Bo's hard work and her efforts to please her, she cannot take a scientific approach because the results validate her beliefs. With the comfort of proving her point, Hilary goes on a business trip to Venice to present her research and encounters with Spike, whom she has not seen for eight years. As she struggles with the implications of her findings, her chance encounter with Spike in Venice reignites their

ongoing debate, prompting further reflection on the nature of consciousness and spirituality. Again, this raises the question of whether their lives are being guided by pure chance or some kind of providence. Spike and Hilary argue again, this time over whether a divine intervention can create consciousness, but they cannot reach any consensus. In bed, Hilary asks Spike to join her in praying for her daughter. However, in spite of the temptation to please her, Spike remains true to his principles and refuses. Regardless of her confidence in her work, Spike points out potential flaws in Hilary's article, particularly about the empirical basis of her equations. He suggests that her equations are not tied to hard data, indicating the limitations of personal biases and beliefs in shaping intellectual endeavours:

Spike: But it's pathetic to rely on a supreme being to underwrite what you call your values. Why are you afraid of making your own?

Hilary: You don't claim to make your own. What's the difference between a supreme being and being programmed by your biology?

Spike: Freedom. I can override the programming.

Hilary: Who can? Who's the 'you' outside your brain? Where?

Spike: I wish I'd pulled that primatologist with the thigh boots who was hitting on me at registration. Why don't you leave me alone? At least change the title, will you?

Hilary: All right.

Spike: At least. But you didn't write these equations, I know that much.

Hilary: I might have done.

Spike: No, not these. You shagged a mathematician.

Hilary: No, I didn't. But there's a Chinese girl in the department who's phenomenal. She was a quant at KCM before.

Spike: Krohl's hedge-fund? That's a comedown.

Hilary: She doesn't think so. I'm mad about her, actually. She's designed an experiment like nothing in the literature – ninety-six kids in four age groups –

Spike: (*quite impressed*) Ninety-six?

Hilary: Close to, probably. We've got pretty much an entire school participating, thanks to Jerry – it's his daughter's school. So you liked her equations?

Spike: I liked them, but they're not tied into hard data. (Stoppard 48-49)

Hilary and Spike engage in a debate about the nature of values, freedom and the source of human agency. Hilary expresses frustration with the limitations of materialism, lamenting the tendency to reduce profound human experiences to mere biological processes. She critiques the desperation to cloak speculative ideas in scientific language

to maintain credibility. Spike, on the other hand, challenges Hilary's reliance on a supreme being to validate her values, advocating for personal autonomy and the ability to override biological programming. He emphasises the importance of freedom in shaping one's values and actions. This exchange also highlights the importance of critical evaluation and empirical rigor in intellectual pursuits, cautioning against the uncritical acceptance of ideas driven solely by personal convictions. Despite Spike's warnings about empirical shortcomings of her study, she still continues to trust Bo's feedback on raw data and calculations. However, the tension arises in Scene 8 when Leo confronts Hilary about the nature of her research, expressing frustration and disdain for what he perceives as a departure from scientific rigor. Leo's reaction underscores the institutional pressure to uphold traditional scientific paradigms and avoid controversial or speculative topics, such as the relationship between consciousness and divine intervention:

Leo: (cold) Fuck the beautiful day. What do you call this and why has it got our name on it?

An awkward pause. Bo leaves.

Hilary: You mean my Venice thing?

Leo: Yes, I mean your Venice thing, which is the subject of several emails from the comedians among my friends and colleagues. We do science here, Hilary!

Hilary: This is about science, the psychology of the scientific mind-set.

Leo: Psychology of bullshit. It's about God.

Hilary: It's about the Hard Problem. It says every theory proposed for the problem of consciousness has the same degree of demonstrability as divine intervention. So – psychologically – they're equivalent.

Leo: What it says is that if you're an atheist, you're in denial.

Hilary: (patiently) No, it says we may be in denial about mind–body dualism.

Leo: Oh, well, that takes care of the Hard Problem! The reason it's hard, you pig's arse, is that mind–body is the problem! (Stoppard 54-55)

Leo confronts Hilary about the perceived lack of scientific rigor in her research, expressing frustration with what he sees as a departure from established scientific norms. He dismisses her work as irrelevant to their scientific pursuits, emphasising the need for a more focused approach to empirical inquiry. Hilary, however, defends her research by framing it within the context of the 'hard problem' of consciousness and the psychology of scientific inquiry. She asserts that her study addresses fundamental philosophical

questions rather than promoting religious beliefs, highlighting the equivalence of different theoretical approaches in terms of their demonstrability.

Even though Hilary attempts to defend her research, Leo's dismissive response highlights the challenge of confronting institutional expectations and maintaining academic integrity which becomes very apparent in the following scene when Hilary hosts a party to celebrate the printing of the paper she and Bo co-wrote. The party becomes chaotic as Spike's behaviour turns rude, Hilary accidentally burns the food and Amal, now Bo's boyfriend, openly criticises their paper. Worse, Bo reveals to Hilary that she manipulated the data to make it come out the way she knew Hilary wanted—because she (Bo) seems to be in love with Hilary. Hilary's joy at having science prove that humans are inherently good is shattered after finding out about Bo's intervention. The problem of whether 'goodness' is what it seems, or whether it can always be analysed as a self-serving tactic, remains 'hard', especially when the data is manipulated:

Bo: I think I may have done something bad.

Hilary: (pause) Like what?

Bo: There were ninety-six children to start with.

Hilary: Well ... okay. But you went with eighty-eight. Right? Eighty-eight participated.

Bo: No, they all did.

Hilary: But ... wait ... they all ninety-six participated? And – what? – eight kids didn't stay the course, so you crunched the data for the rest – is that right?

Bo: No, I did the math across all ninety-six.

Hilary: And then what?

Bo: Then I eliminated eight kids and did the math again.

Hilary: Then what?

Bo: Then I showed you. When you got back from Italy.

Pause.

Hilary: How did you choose the ones you eliminated? Was it random?

Pause.

(Quietly.) Shit. You took out two from each group who were spoiling your result.

Bo: They were freak results!

Hilary: They were outliers, Bo! That's what random does, that's why experiments tend not to come out with every hair in place! Why did you do it? How can you be so stupid?

Bo: How can you?

Belatedly, Hilary catches up.

Hilary: Bo ...?

Bo: I wanted to give you what would please you!

Hilary: (unmoved) Yes. But ultimately, you wanted what you wanted, Bo.

It's my fault. I missed it.

Bo: (in tears) I'm sorry... (Stoppard 66-67)

Bo's confession of manipulating the data represents a significant setback for Hilary's research, as it undermines the integrity of her scientific inquiry. This betrayal of trust not only jeopardises Hilary's professional reputation but also calls into question the validity of her findings regarding altruism and ultimate goods. Hilary's initial shock and disbelief reflect the magnitude of the situation and the revelation challenges her beliefs about Bo's character and motivations, as she had previously perceived Bo's dedication to the research as altruistic rather than driven by ulterior motives. The juxtaposition of Hilary's intellectual pursuits with the personal dynamics between her and Bo underscores the complex interplay between professional ambition, interpersonal relationships and ethical considerations in the realm of scientific inquiry. It forces Hilary to confront the limitations of trust and the inherent vulnerability of relying on others in the pursuit of knowledge.

In the following scene, tension rises as Leo confronts Hilary about the manipulation of data in their research experiment. Initially, Hilary denies any involvement in the wrongdoing, but as Leo presses further, she says that she is going to retract the paper with the Krohl name on it from a major journal. She also implies that she is going to leave her position to study philosophy. By taking full responsibility, Hilary vehemently defends Bo, highlighting her talent and potential contributions to their research endeavours. She pleads for leniency on Bo's behalf, emphasising the importance of giving her a second chance. Ultimately, Leo agrees to give Bo a formal warning instead of terminating her employment, indicating a degree of leniency influenced by Hilary's plea. This scene also reveals that Hilary's adopted daughter and Cathy, the daughter of her employer, Jerry, are the same person, adding a significant layer of complexity to the narrative of *The Hard Problem*. In the final scene of the play, we witness a significant shift in the dynamics and direction of the narrative. Hilary is seen packing up her office, leaving her position at the institution. The scene begins with Hilary and Jerry, the head of the institution, engaging in a conversation that touches on various themes explored

throughout the play. Jerry's discussion about Catherine, his daughter, serves as a metaphorical reflection of the broader themes of nature versus nurture, altruism and personal responsibility since she is mentioned as 'outlier'. The term, outlier, suggests that Catherine's behaviour or responses on the test were significantly different from those of the other participants, which may have influenced the overall findings of the study. However, the ambiguity surrounding the reasons for Catherine's classification as an outlier complicates the interpretation of the results, reflecting the moral and ethical complexities encountered by the characters in the play. The exchange between Hilary and Jerry about her departure to New York University to study philosophy reveals a personal and intellectual evolution for Hilary. Her decision to pursue philosophy, despite its indemonstrable nature, reflects a shift towards embracing uncertainty and exploring the deeper questions of existence.

The characters' struggle to comprehend the hard problem of consciousness not only highlights the intellectual challenges they face but also introduces a moral dimension to their quest. As they grapple with the unknown, ethical considerations inevitably arise regarding the potential consequences of their relentless pursuit of understanding. This ethical responsibility extends to acknowledging the inherent limitations of current knowledge and recognising the intellectual boundaries. Recognising the boundaries of current understanding encourages intellectuals to approach their research with a sense of openness and honesty. It prompts them to recognise uncertainties and gaps in knowledge, fostering a more nuanced and truthful exploration of complex subjects such as consciousness. In this way, the ethical imperative to acknowledge limitations serves as a safeguard against intellectual hubris and the manipulation of data or facts to serve personal or ideological interests. Moreover, embracing intellectual limitations can fuel a more collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to inquiry. By acknowledging the boundaries of their expertise, intellectuals are encouraged to seek input from diverse perspectives and disciplines, enriching their understanding and mitigating the risks of bias or oversimplification. This collaborative ethos promotes a more robust and ethical pursuit of knowledge, grounded in a genuine commitment to truth and understanding.

During a conversation with Nicholas Hytner about *The Hard Problem*, hosted by the National Theatre and available on YouTube, Tom Stoppard draws a parallel between himself and the protagonist, Hilary. He expresses this connection by stating:

This is certainly me, I mean it just seemed to me that I don't really want the things which are emotionally important to be devalued by being relative to as it were the textbook of human life as opposed to the poem of human life. (Tom Stoppard and Nicholas Hytner 00:07:51-00:08:16)

Stoppard's remark about not wanting 'emotionally important things to be devalued' suggests a sophisticated understanding of the complexities inherent in human experience. He seems to be advocating for a recognition of the profound emotional and existential aspects of life that transcend mere factual or scientific explanations. While Stoppard acknowledges the value and validity of scientific explanations and methodologies, particularly in understanding the natural world, he also recognises their limitations when applied to the complexities of human experience. By constraining the understanding of human beings solely within the framework of current scientific knowledge and treating them as mere mechanical objects, he argues that essential aspects of human existence are overlooked or misunderstood. This limitation, according to Stoppard, fails to capture the intricacies of human consciousness, emotions and subjective experiences, which cannot be fully explained or understood through scientific reductionism alone. Thus, he advocates for a broader, more holistic approach that integrates scientific inquiry with other modes of understanding, such as philosophy, literature and art, to grasp the full richness and complexity of human life. Exploring the workings of human consciousness with more holistic approach can provide valuable insights into the nature, motivations and responsibilities of intellectuals in society. By understanding the cognitive, emotional and ethical dimensions of consciousness, we can better appreciate the complexities of intellectual inquiry and the diverse ways in which intellectuals contribute to the advancement of knowledge and understanding.

In conclusion, *The Hard Problem* by Tom Stoppard delves deep into the complexities of consciousness, ethics and intellectual pursuits, prompting a profound exploration of human nature and the pursuit of knowledge. Stoppard's purpose in crafting this play appears to be multifaceted: to provoke thought, challenge preconceptions and prompt introspection about the nature of consciousness and the ethical considerations inherent in intellectual endeavours. The dialogues between Spike and Hilary, along with the interactions among other characters, prompt audiences to ponder profound questions about the nature of consciousness, the role of institutions in shaping intellectual discourse and the ethical implications of scientific research. The play challenges audiences to

confront their own beliefs and biases, fostering a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in the pursuit of knowledge. In doing so, Stoppard also encourages audiences to critically evaluate the role of intellectuals in society. He seems to question whether the traditional idealisation of intellectuals as altruistic seekers of truth accurately reflects the realities of intellectual life. Instead, he prompts audiences to consider the fallibility and ethical responsibilities of intellectuals, emphasising the need for humility, integrity and critical self-reflection in the pursuit of knowledge. In this sense, Bauman's description of intellectuals as interpreters offers a complementary perspective to Stoppard's approach. Bauman emphasises the role of intellectuals as mediators between complex ideas and the broader public, translating abstract concepts into accessible language and facilitating understanding. In the context of *The Hard Problem*, Bauman's notion of intellectuals as interpreters aligns with Hilary's role as a neuroscientist striving to bridge the gap between scientific research and social understanding. However, Bauman's description also underscores the ethical responsibilities of intellectuals in interpreting and communicating knowledge. Like interpreters, intellectuals must navigate the complexities of language, context and interpretation, recognising their power to shape perceptions and influence discourse. Stoppard's impact on the audience is profound, as *The Hard Problem* sparks contemplation and discussion long after the final curtain falls. Audiences are left pondering the nature of consciousness, the ethical responsibilities of intellectuals and the inherent challenges of seeking truth in a complex and ever-changing world. Stoppard's play serves as a catalyst for introspection and dialogue, inviting audiences to engage with profound philosophical questions that lie at the heart of the human experience.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSE AND REVOLUTIONARY IMPOTENCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GRIFFITHS' *OCCUPATIONS AND THE PARTY*

5.1. INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP: NAVIGATING THEORY AND PRACTICE

As a second-wave left-wing playwright, Trevor Griffiths, was engaged in the political events of his period; he was a member of the New Left movement in the early 1960s and gained notoriety throughout the 1970s along with playwrights such as David Hare, Howard Brenton and David Edgar. He was born in Manchester to a working-class family in 1935. His upbringing within a working-class community in Manchester, which experienced the profound consequences of industrialisation and its aftermath, greatly influenced his vision and abilities as a playwright. Growing up in a family of modest means and receiving an education during the post-war era marked by economic instability and political ambiguity, Griffiths acquired a profound comprehension of the economic inequalities and hardships endured by the working class. Stanton B. Garner touches on the importance of Griffiths' working-class background in his development as a playwright:

Griffiths has characterized his life as one of 'borders' and his career reflects the tension and creativity generated by the multiple positions he has inhabited and continues to inhabit. There are, of course, the related issues of geography and class. Like Lawrence, Griffiths is a product of the northern working class. He was born and raised in Manchester and continues to live in the north of England and his politics have always drawn upon a northern radicalism with roots in a regional tradition of labor activism. (3)

The term 'borders' is used metaphorically to describe the complex and multifaceted nature of Griffiths' life and career. It implies that Griffiths operates in the spaces between various fields and locations, rather than simply fitting into specific categories. His playwriting career has involved traversing and exploring various boundaries and contradictions. Amidst all these boundaries and contradictions, the most defining feature of his playwriting career is geography and class. They play an important role in shaping Griffiths' identity and work. A product of the northern working class, his politics draws

on a northern radicalism rooted in a regional tradition of labour activism. By embracing these borders, Griffiths has likely brought a unique and diverse perspective to his work allowing him to tackle a range of themes and engage with different audiences. Michael Billington further points out Griffiths' working-class roots and political engagement enabled him to interact with people from all socioeconomic backgrounds, including intellectuals of the period:

He had, in fact, worked as a teacher and a further education officer for the BBC and also spent a lot of time in the New Left movement of the Fifties and Sixties, which brought him into contact with left-wing intellectuals such as Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson, Stuart Hall and Christopher Hill. (210)

Griffiths' involvement with the New Left as well as his contact with important intellectuals of the time has a considerable influence on his writing. It has encouraged him to investigate social and political subjects in his plays, reflecting the widespread dissatisfaction of the period. His works frequently address topics of class conflict, socialism, political ideology and working-class challenges. Griffiths, as a member of the New Left, has proved a strong commitment to socialism and the left-wing movements in Britain. However, his attachment to socialism and the left movement has not been a blind commitment, it has been rather a critical engagement that has sought to challenge and improve the movement. Griffiths' writings frequently prove his willingness to confront and question leftist practices and ideals. He does not hesitate to call attention to the flaws, inconsistencies and failures of the leftist movement. His dedication to intellectual integrity and desire to encourage reflection and development within the left-wing itself are both evident in this critical position.

Following the significant political and social movements such as anti-war protest, counterculture and civil rights movement of late 1960s, British theatre of the early 1970s reflected a period of intense political engagement and a sense of disillusionment and despair. It became apparent that the political upheaval, dreams and aspirations of the late 1960s had not been fulfilled. The revolutionary spirit of 1968, which was characterised by numerous protests, social discontent and calls for drastic change, was viewed as a pivotal moment in the history of activism. People throughout the world, including in Britain, were motivated and filled with optimism that these movements could overthrow established power structures and bring about profound social improvements. However, as the 1970s unfolded, it became apparent that the anticipated revolution did not

materialise in the way many had envisioned. There was a sense of disappointment and despair among activists and intellectuals as entrenched power institutions seemed to strengthen their positions rather than undergo significant social changes (Billington 210). British political playwrights of the 1970s including Griffiths responded to this disappointment and disillusionment in their works. They aimed to address the unfulfilled promises of the previous decade and critiqued political systems, including the leftist movement, as well as examining their failures.

Griffiths' plays often present a critical examination of socialist and leftist ideologies, examining their boundaries and exploring the internal conflicts and divisions within these movements. He reflects on the dilemmas faced by socialist intellectuals, particularly in reconciling their ideals with the facts and compromises of real-world politics. He examines the fundamental struggles and divides within intellectual groups, delving into the complexity of ideological disagreements. In doing so, he encourages critical thinking on intellectuals' roles in forming political beliefs and their potential effect on social change. In line with these ideas, we examine Griffiths' plays *Occupations* (1970) and *The Party* (1973), analysing them as critiques of the left-wing intellectuals and socio-political problems in 1970s Britain. Drawing on different theories, particularly those of Antonio Gramsci, regarding the role of intellectuals, the chapter of thesis explores and discusses the representation of Marxist intellectuals in these plays.

Both *Occupations* and *The Party* present intellectuals as central characters who play pivotal roles in advocating for social and political transformation. These intellectuals are depicted as individuals with deep ideological commitments and a strong desire to effect change within their respective contexts. They embody the concept of organic intellectuals of Gramsci, arising from the working class and actively participating in the struggles of their communities. However, in these plays, Griffiths explores the internal conflicts and divisions within the left-wing movement as intellectuals grapple with the challenges of organising and mobilising collective action. The plays delve into the complexities of ideological debates and highlight the crucial role played by intellectuals in shaping and influencing these discussions. They also expose the limitations and compromises faced by intellectuals as they strive to reconcile their ideals with the practicalities of political engagement.

Griffiths uses real historical events as a backdrop to explore the role of intellectuals and political activism in both plays. In *Occupations*, he uses the workers' occupations of the Fiat factories in Turin in 1920 to delve into the themes of labour rights, activism and the role of intellectuals. The play portrays the experiences, motivations and challenges faced by the workers involved in the occupation, as well as the responses of intellectuals to their cause. By setting the play within this historical context, Griffiths aims to provide a deeper understanding of the complex interactions and dynamics between workers, intellectuals and the ruling class. He also explores the power struggles, ideological conflicts and solidarity that arise during such labour movements. The play may shed light on the perspectives and dilemmas of both the workers and the intellectuals who engage with the occupation, addressing themes of class struggle, solidarity and the role of intellectual activism. In *The Party*, on the other hand, Griffiths depicts a socialist meeting in London that coincides with the early Paris student riots of 1968. The play explores the dynamics and discussions that unfold among the attendees at the socialist gathering while the events of the student uprising in Paris are taking place.

Occupations explores the historical boundaries of a specific revolutionary period while also delving into different styles of leadership. It specifically examines the leadership approaches of Antonio Gramsci, a prominent figure in the Turin workers' movement and a significant Marxist thinker of the twentieth century, as well as Kabak, the representative from the Soviet Union (Bulgaria) to the Communist International. Kabak comes to Turin with a proposal for a contract with Fiat, just when the workers' occupations come to a head. He meets with Gramsci, observing the unfolding events and once it becomes evident that the anticipated revolution will not occur, goes ahead with the offer to Fiat. In the meanwhile, his lover, formerly a countess, is dying of cancer in a hotel bed on stage. Her suffering and death form the backdrop for most of the play.

The characters, Kabak and Gramsci, can be seen as representing different forms of intellectual engagement within the left-wing movement. Kabak, the Soviet representative to the Comintern, likely embodies the concept of an 'organic intellectual' which refers to intellectuals who arise from and are connected to specific social groups or movements. Kabak's role as a representative from the Soviet Union suggests his affiliation with the institutionalised Marxist ideology and the established power structures within the Comintern. As an organic intellectual, Kabak may prioritise strategic

considerations and negotiations with foreign capitalists, reflecting the policies of the Soviet Union at the time. Although his collaboration with the capitalists can be seen as an anti-communist act, Kabak was commissioned by the Soviet rulers and the main purpose of this collaboration is to keep the Soviet revolution alive even if the Italian revolution may not take place. Therefore, Kabak plays the role of a pragmatist intellectual rather than an idealist throughout the play. On the other hand, Gramsci, the leader of the Turin workers and a prominent Marxist thinker, can be viewed as an organic intellectual in a different sense. His intellectual contributions are deeply rooted in his connection to the working-class movement. Gramsci's leadership style and ideas reflect a more grassroots¹² and class-conscious approach. As an organic intellectual, Gramsci seems to emphasise the importance of workers' agency, autonomy and the need to challenge capitalist structures. In this sense, the character of Gramsci portrayed in the play is closer to Benda's idealist intellectual.

Through the characters of Kabak and Gramsci, Griffiths seems to explore the tension between these two forms of intellectual engagement within the left-wing movement. The play examines the clashes and negotiations between institutionalised Marxism and more grassroots, worker-led approaches. These dynamics reflect broader debates on the role of intellectuals and their relationship to social movements and revolutionary change. By depicting Kabak and Gramsci as organic intellectuals with different perspectives and strategies, *Occupations* delves into the complexities of intellectual activism, ideological conflicts and the challenges faced by the left-wing movement in navigating these tensions as Janelle Reinelt notes:

Kabak, rather than Gramsci, is the central character. Together they portray the contradictions of revolutionary leadership. Kabak is disciplined, ruthless, completely committed, but also callous as a human being and in some ways deformed by his discipline. Gramsci is also totally committed, but to a flesh-and-blood humanity rather than an abstraction. As a result, he refuses to risk the lives and welfare of the Turin working class in leading an all-out bid for revolution without guarantees of the support of the Italian workers throughout the rest of Italy. (148)

¹² This term describes organisations or initiatives that operate within local communities very close to stakeholders or with population groups that are difficult to reach. Thus, this term is used here to emphasise Gramsci's definition of the organic intellectual and the relationship and role of character in relation to the working class.

Reinelt's words shed light on how Kabak and Gramsci portray different traits of and approaches to revolutionary leadership. Kabak's callousness as a human being indicates the potential negative consequences of unwavering dedication to discipline and ideology. Gramsci's approach, on the other hand, is grounded in empathy and consideration for the well-being of workers. These two approaches highlight the possible conflict between unwavering commitment to ideology and the need for compassion and concern for human welfare, underscoring the complexities and contradictions inherent in such leadership roles.

The conflict between Kabak's callousness and Gramsci's empathy becomes most apparent during a crucial moment at the end of first act, when the Directors of the General Confederation of Labour ask Turin workers' community led by Gramsci, to lead a general uprising in Italy. For Kabak, the opportunity for revolution has opened up and must be seized. He believes that this demand is a risk for the future of the workers but it is also an opportunity with positive consequences for the revolution. However, Gramsci is sceptical about this demand because of the failure of previous attempts and the lack of support:

Gramsci: You know what happened last April. We led the Italian proletariat, the Party and the unions in a general strike. Unfortunately, though not by accident, they did not follow. So we were isolated, our supply lines cut, our carefully nurtured alliance with the Piedmont peasants smashed. We crawled back to work on our hands and knees. The compact between capital and labour couldn't have been more complete. Bosses, union and Party leaders conspired to fill our mouths with soil. Now, the same people are inviting us to put ourselves at total risk, in all-out confrontation, without any commitment on their own part to support us. (Griffiths, *Occupations* 44)

Despite the previous failures and lack of support from the federation, unions and party leaders, workers are being asked to put themselves at risk with no guarantee of support once more. This urges Gramsci to consider whether it is worth risking further hardship and vulnerability without a stronger commitment from their supposed allies. As Gramsci points out with the phrase 'crawled back to work on our hands and knees,' the relationship between capital and labour became even more imbalanced after the failed strike. Gramsci sees workers as individuals, not as cogs in the mechanics of revolution. He, therefore, does not want to jeopardise their lives for the sake of a revolutionary adventure with an uncertain end. This approach aggravates the tension between him and Kabak:

Kabak: It is a risk you must take. It's September now.

Gramsci: We have risked too much already. I will not allow that class to be wiped out. I could not survive it.

Kabak: No sentimentalisms, please. You must not confuse revolutionary duty with bourgeois conscience.

Gramsci: Nor shall I, comrade.

Kabak: You cannot say you love your working class too much to put them at risk and then imagine you're saying something profoundly revolutionary.

Gramsci: That isn't what I'm saying. I am saying that they are too important to the world revolutionary movement to squander on a dubious adventure that could well have been concocted precisely to produce their annihilation.

Kabak: And you . . . could not survive it? Do you mean . . . you love them?

Gramsci: Yes, I do. That's exactly what I mean.

Kabak: I see.

Gramsci: What?

Kabak: You cannot love an army, comrade. An army is a machine. This one makes revolutions. If it breaks down, you get another one. Love has nothing to do with it. (Griffiths, *Occupations* 45-46)

This dialogue illustrates a moral and intellectual dilemma that is frequently present in revolutionary movements. While Kabak seems to have a more detached and strategic approach, focusing on the overarching objective of revolution, Gramsci's perspective emphasises the social aspect of the struggle, with a concern for the individuals participating. The narrative evokes an intense empathy for Gramsci, whose humane approach becomes a prominent focus. Yet, these two contradictory approaches do not dominate each other throughout the play. It seems that Gramsci and Kabak embody two facets of a potential dialectic, serving as the fundamental core in Griffiths' plays.

It should be noted that Griffiths presents neither Gramsci's nor Kabak's perspective as a final solution with no negative consequences. The consequences of Gramsci's approach include the failure of a general uprising and the passing of the revolutionary moment. This highlights the potential drawbacks and limitations of prioritising individual concerns and social relationships in a revolutionary context. On the other hand, Kabak's pragmatist and objective approach is not portrayed as completely negative or impractical. His ability to manage negotiations and make deals, even if it involves concessions, demonstrates a certain effectiveness in achieving his goals. But Kabak's disciplined pragmatism comes with significant costs, as it sacrifices personal relationships and emotional attachments. His unwillingness to stay with the Countess when she is dying and his prioritisation of work over empathy and compassion can be

seen as a price he pays for his approach. It highlights the potential alienation and detachment that can result from a purely pragmatist perspective. Kabak's approach to workers also lacks empathy. His focus on negotiating with the Italian bosses and cutting deals may benefit the larger revolutionary objectives, but it may come at the expense of the workers' well-being and rights. This lack of empathy can create a divide between intellectuals and the working class they seek to represent, potentially leading to mistrust and resistance within the movement. Moreover, the contribution of Kabak's agreement with the bourgeoisie as a strategic manoeuvre to the socialist revolution is unclear since the play is open-ended. Kabak's approach, as Gramsci implies, challenges the fundamental objective of the revolutionary cause:

You would be wrong to see this. . . love. . . as the product of petit-bourgeois idealism. It is the correct, the only true dialectical relationship between leaders and led, vanguard and masses, that can ensure the political health of the new order the revolution seeks to create. Treat masses as expendable, as fodder, during the revolution, you will always treat them thus (Pause). I tell you this, Comrade Kabak, if you see masses that way, there can be no revolution worth the blood it spills. (Griffiths, *Occupations* 46)

The quotation effectively conveys a powerful message about the importance of love and genuine relations between leaders and the masses in the context of a revolutionary movement. It emphasises the possible consequences of neglecting the welfare of the people and carries a persuasive tone urging the audience to consider the ethical implications of revolutionary actions. Social transformation and redefinition of society, as Gramsci puts it in his theories, is accomplished through the re-articulation of ideological elements into a new worldview. This new worldview then becomes the unifying principle for a new collective will, guiding the revolutionary process. In this context, Kabak's approach, which seemingly ignores the importance of collective will, is considered to be lacking as a meaningful revolutionary act from the perspective of Gramsci.

According to Reinelt, leaving the conflicts between the two modes of leadership unsolved provides for a more sophisticated and realistic portrayal of revolutionary conflicts and leadership dilemmas:

It would be bourgeois humanism, with its emphasis on individuals and their suffering, to leap too easily to Gramsci's position, yet it would be doctrinaire ultra-leftism (individualism is a bourgeois flaw, a failure of nerve) to dismiss

Gramsci's critique of Leninist vanguard leadership. In view of Soviet history beyond this point this argument is strongly compelling. (150)

The problem of bourgeois humanism highlights the danger of oversimplification of revolutionary movements by focusing solely on individual pain and emotions. The play recognises, without instantly accepting Gramsci's perspective, that revolutionary forces involve complex political and intellectual contradictions that are difficult to resolve. Reinelt's allusion to doctrinal ultra-leftism also highlights the peril of dismissing Gramsci's critique of Leninist vanguard leadership without actually addressing it. The play depicts both viewpoints providing for a more comprehensive analysis of the difficulties and dilemmas faced by revolutionary leaders. The discussion of Soviet history beyond the plot strengthens the case by demonstrating how the challenges of revolutionary leadership have real-world implications and consequences. Consequently, the play does not provide a final answer to the issue, instead leaving the audience to grapple with the complexities and repercussions of each point of view. In doing so, Griffiths invites the audience to consider the nature of the revolution, the role of intellectual leaders and the impact on the masses critically. Open-ended nature of the play also enables the audience to contemplate the probable outcomes of the characters' various routes. The quandaries confronting revolutionary leaders are prompting discussion on the delicate balance between strategic decisions and ethical concerns, as well as the potential sacrifices involved in attempting social transformation.

It should be noted that Griffiths does not present either Gramsci's or Kabak's perspective as a final solution without negative consequences. In Gramsci's approach, one finds the failure of a general uprising and the passing of the revolutionary moment. This failure points out the potential drawbacks and limitations of prioritising individual concerns and social relationships in a revolutionary context. However, Kabak's pragmatist and objective approach is not portrayed as completely negative or impractical either. His ability to manage negotiations and make deals, even if it involves concessions, demonstrates a certain effectiveness in achieving his goals. But Kabak's disciplined pragmatism comes with significant costs, as it sacrifices personal relationships and emotional attachments. This strong pragmatism is quite evident in the fact that he refuses to stay with his lover, the countess, when she is in deathbed. This attitude reinforces the potential alienation and detachment that can result from a purely pragmatist perspective.

Kabak's approach to workers is also devoid of empathy. His focus on negotiating with the Italian bosses and cutting deals may benefit the larger revolutionary objectives, but it may come at the expense of the workers' well-being and rights. This lack of empathy may create a divide between intellectuals and the working class they seek to represent, potentially leading to mistrust and resistance within the movement. Moreover, the contribution of Kabak's agreement with the bourgeoisie as a strategic manoeuvre towards the socialist revolution is unclear since the play is open-ended. Kabak's approach, as Gramsci implies, challenges the fundamental objective of the revolutionary cause:

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Reinelt contends that staging and presentation of a play have a considerable influence on both how the audience experiences its narrative and how they react to it. In the context of *Occupations*, the staging takes on an epic (Brechtian) quality, effectively underscoring the tension between personal narratives and historical contexts:

The staging of *Occupations* is epic in spite of the fact that, except for two speeches that Gramsci makes to the workers inside a Turin factory, with the audience becoming the workers, the play takes place inside Kabak's hotel room. The scenes in the factory come midway in each of the two acts, bringing the historical immediacy of the occupations to the foreground, displacing the personal narratives of the two men, especially Kabak's. These scenes are definitely a Brechtian alienating and historicizing device. Griffiths describes

them as “insisting that the audience distance themselves from the lives of the first act and resituate themselves in relation to the historical event.” (151)

The Brechtian device of alienation and historicisation used in these scenes is in line with Brecht’s philosophy of dramatic distancing, where the audience is directed to engage critically with events rather than being emotionally immersed. By disrupting the narrative and emphasising the historical context, the play encourages a more reflective and analytical viewing experience. Griffiths’ description of the scenes as “insisting that the audience distance themselves from the lives of the first act and resituate themselves in relation to the historical event” outlines the deliberate intention behind this staging choice. The play challenges the audience to shift their perspective, move beyond the stories of individual characters and connect with the wider social and historical forces shaping the narrative. The incorporation of Brechtian techniques within the play reflects Brecht’s fundamental philosophy that history is not a static, predetermined entity, but rather a dynamic process open to change and improvement. Brecht posited that history is shaped by human agency and intervention, rather than being dictated by fate or inevitability. The staging choices in the play echo this notion by encouraging the audience to critically engage with historical events and recognise their own capacity to influence the course of history. In Brecht’s own words, “Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it¹³”. This quote encapsulates Brecht’s belief in the transformative power of art and its ability to challenge prevailing narratives and provoke critical reflection. Applied to the context of the play, it underscores the intent behind the use of Brechtian techniques to disrupt conventional theatrical conventions and foster an active dialogue between the audience and the material being presented.

The thematic exploration in *Occupations*, particularly the examination of intellectual leadership and its impact on individuals and society, reflects Brecht’s tendency to politicise personal dilemmas as in his own plays such as *Mother Courage and Her Children*. Griffiths follows in the Brechtian tradition of using individual narratives to reflect wider social issues by exploring the inner conflicts of the protagonists in the context of wider socio-political currents. This approach aims to engage the audience on an analytical and critical level. Thus, the purpose of Griffiths employing impotence of

¹³ While the original source of this statement cannot be located, it is most commonly attributed to Bertolt Brecht and less so to Karl Marx or Vladimir Mayakovsky (see Malzacher 11).

intellectuals and avoiding a final solution regarding the role of intellectuals in his play encompasses several artistic and particular intentions: provoking critical thought, reflecting historical realities, promoting active participation and highlighting ethical dilemmas.

5.2. REASSESSING REVOLUTIONARY DISCOURSE: INTELLECTUALS IN A CHANGING WORLD

In *The Party*, Griffiths continues his examination of intellectual leadership and its multifaceted implications, expanding on the basis that he establishes in *Occupations* which demonstrates his commitment to delving deeper into the complexities of this subject matter within the context of the 1968 uprisings and the broader landscape of socialist movements. Reinelt notes that “Like *Occupations*, it [*The Party*] examines the moment of historical possibility when suddenly real change seems possible. Like *Occupations*, it is unrelenting in its analysis of the human cost of some forms of commitment” (152). The play revolves around a political meeting of socialist intellectuals during the student uprisings in Paris in 1968. The story is set in a meeting where characters, each representing different ideological perspectives, come together to discuss their strategies, beliefs and future course of action. The play explores in depth the ideological conflicts, personal struggles and power dynamics that unfold during the meeting. The characters include traditional Marxists, pragmatic politicians, idealists and moderates, all with their own perspectives and agendas. As they engage in passionate debates, their relationships are tested and tensions rise due to their different stances on issues such as revolution, compromise and the best methods to achieve their goals. Throughout the play, the characters’ debates reveal the challenges faced by a political movement trying to reconcile different viewpoints and chart a unified path forward. The story highlights the challenges of balancing ideology with practicality, maintaining solidarity within a diverse group and navigating the complexities of both personal and political relationships.

The play opens with a peculiar and unique prologue that combines elements of comedy and serious discourse. Groucho Marx, a comedian, interacts with projected portraits of historical revolutionaries like Marx, Lenin and Trotsky. This juxtaposition of humour and historical figures creates an intriguing theatrical atmosphere. The blend of

these contrasting features may be designed to attract the attention of the audience and stimulate their curiosity, leading them to wonder how these seemingly conflicting aspects will interact and unfold as the play progresses. Groucho Marx also engages with the audience by projecting and commenting on notable quotations from the thoughts of historical revolutionaries. The use of projected portraits of historical figures functions as an alienation technique which enables the audience to remain aware that they are watching a performance. Griffiths' constant use of alienation techniques in his plays serves as a powerful tool to emphasise his insistence on fostering audience's critical awareness. He prompts the audience to remain intellectually engaged with the performance rather than passively absorbing the plot.

Groucho characterises the bourgeois epoch using a quote from Marx: "constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones" (*The Party* 98). This quotation encapsulates the dynamic nature of the capitalist period by underlining the ongoing modifications to manufacturing procedures, the upheaval of accepted social standards and the pervasive discontent and uncertainty. Groucho then attacks Lenin's revolutionary phrase making: "the repetition of revolutionary slogans irrespective of objective circumstances at a given turn of events, in the given state of affairs obtaining at the time" (*The Party* 98-99). This quote is likely to reflect that merely repeating slogans without considering the actual context and conditions can lead to a disconnect between the rhetoric and the reality of events. Groucho concludes his commentary with Marx's definition of money: "alienated power of humanity" (*The Party* 100). This quote refers to Marx's notion that money while serving as a representation of human labour and value, has become separated from its original essence and purpose. Groucho's performance creates a light-hearted and satirical representation of revolutionary language and doctrines. The humour and the contrast between the seriousness of the message and its light-hearted delivery help to criticise the efficacy and relevance of revolutionary rhetoric. This strategy offers entertainment through humour while also provoking the audience to reflect on the complicated link between ideology, language and human motivations.

Following Groucho's act, the scene shifts into a succession of projected scenes portraying the Paris student uprising. These visual representations merge with the dimly

lit bedroom of Joe Shawcross, an accomplished TV director. The audience witnesses Joe's unfulfilling sexual experience with his wife. Then, they observe Joe masturbating as his wife is leaving. This shift should be intended to compare personal struggles with broader socio-political events. By intertwining the scenes of the student uprising with Joe's personal experiences, Griffiths draws parallels between collective movements and individual struggles, suggesting a connection between social upheaval and personal turmoil. The blending of the projected images with Joe's unsatisfactory sexual experience and subsequent masturbation indicates a deeper sense of disillusionment. Joe's unfulfilling sexual experience and the act of masturbation can be interpreted metaphorically as a reflection of the impotence of intellectuals (Bull 123). Just as Joe's personal experience illustrates his failure to establish a genuine connection, it also represents a greater issue: that intellectuals may face the difficulty of achieving practical change or influencing their environment despite their intellectual prowess. The theme of impotence transcends the personal realm and it may serve as a foreshadowing. As the plot unfolds, this metaphorical impotence may be a symbolic portrayal of the failures and incapacity of the socialist intellectuals.

The rest of the play takes place in Joe Shawcross' house where he organises a meeting of left-wing British intellectuals. This meeting accommodates diverse individuals, including John Tagg, a significant figure as the National Organiser of the Revolutionary Socialist Party and executive member of the reconstituted Fourth International. Andrew Ford, a sociologist and lecturer at the London School of Economics is accompanied by socialist students Jeremy Hayes, Susie, Kate and Richard Maine. There is also Kara, a journalist who happens to be Shawcross' former wife, as well as Grease Ball, an ardent anarchist, Louis Preece, a black activist and Malcolm Sloman, a playwright. The purpose of presenting a diverse array of characters in a meeting of left-wing British intellectuals serves multiple functions within the play. Initially, this diversity mirrors the complexity of contemporary society, highlighting the various viewpoints, backgrounds and ideologies that exist within the realm of intellectual discourse. The presence of characters with varying political ideologies, academic backgrounds and social identities enriches the intellectual landscape. Furthermore, different origins of characters provide a platform for exploring distinct intellectual functions within society. The characters represent different facets of culture, politics and intellectual interaction

with society, ranging from journalists to activists, sociologists to playwrights. Therefore, the purpose of this diversity is to create a microcosm of the larger intellectual environment, providing a comprehensive portrayal of the issues, perspectives and positions that intellectual navigate in a complicated and changing world.

As the characters gradually assemble for the meeting, a constant stream of information regarding the events unfolding in Paris is transmitted through the television, serving as a backdrop. Reinelt's examination of the role of television offers a compelling perspective on the contradictory relation between technology and representation unfolding onstage:

Throughout the play television news of the activity is sometimes broadcast on wall screens as well as on a prop TV. This treatment of media is another central alienating device. The real revolutionary struggle is juxtaposed to the ersatz one that will unfold onstage, yet it is mediated in just the way it was received by the characters as historical subjects—as TV news. The distance from the 'real' events is thus both underlined and interrogated. The commodification of information through technology is also established by this device and supported by many different uses of contemporary communications technology in the play (telephones, earphones for stereo equipment, special lighting for "conversation areas"). (153)

The use of media generates a distancing effect, isolating both the characters and the audience from the 'real revolutionary struggle'. The juxtaposition of genuine events and their mediated portrayal on television raises concerns about authenticity and perception. Furthermore, Reinelt's perspective on the 'commodification of knowledge through technology' emphasises how technology converts information into a consumable product. The idea is reinforced by the incorporation of several modern communication devices, which highlight their importance in altering interactions and perceptions. The issue is further emphasised using new communication methods, which expands on the concept of information packaging and consumption. As a result, the play delves into a complex interaction between technology, representation and human interaction, giving a thought-provoking analysis of the evolving dynamics of the modern world.

This recalls Bauman's views, which resonate with the representation of intellectuals' evolving roles and duties in engaging with media, evaluating information and navigating complicated social changes. The practical implications of Bauman's observations are obvious in the scene where characters gather around the television to watch events developing in Paris:

Joe: I'm expecting others . . . so. . . p'raps we should watch this for a bit anyway.

Mostly he's ignored. Louis gives him a bland wink but no smile and returns to the screen. Close but not vital attention at this stage, as Robert McKenzie gives a studio background to the present discontent. Suddenly they move by satellite to Paris itself and the scene of the student demonstration. Louis turns up the volume, the atmosphere becomes immediately more charged and sparky. Fade lights; bring up the bulletin they're watching on the wall screen behind them. The grand march to the Sorbonne has begun. Torches flare, there is much banter, humour and resolution. Caped police and CRS line routes and hold strategic points along it. A rather breathless English commentary tries to account for what we see.

Fade everything to black.

Fade up again.

TV, wall screen pic, followed by room lights. People still stand or sit, rather stunned and excited. On the screen, Harry Carpenter is sunnily welcoming us back to the ringside at the Albert Hall, where England are matched with Poland.

Louis: Right on! Doesn't that blow your mind though? Jesus Christ, I need a j. (*He fiddles in his pocket for grass and papers.*)

Susie: (*crossing to switch set off*) What're we doing here, for Christ's sake! It's started, man. (Griffiths, *The Party* 30)

The characters, as intellectuals, are depicted as observers and mediators, charged with engaging with media and deciphering its meaning within their postmodern context. The characters then attempt to interpret and analyse the social reflections of the Paris protests after this scene, which serves as an introduction to a conversation on the issues facing the leftist movements. The two long monologues by Andrew Ford and John Tagg in the first act give an overview of the events in Paris and contemporary circumstances from a socialist perspective. Although both monologues strive to interpret a historical occurrence, they further obscure the matter. According to Bauman's views, intellectuals face difficulties in transforming media input into meaningful knowledge, especially during times of complex social upheaval. On the one hand, Louis' cry, "Right on! Doesn't that blow your head though?" captures the characters' simultaneous excitement and bewilderment. This response reflects the sophistication of the characters' roles as interpreters of media content, navigating the influx of information and attempting to make sense of its implications. On the other hand, Susie's response, "What're we doing here, for Christ's sake! It's started, man" can be regarded as a criticism of the characters' present inaction. It might be expressing frustration as they quietly watch events. This could also be interpreted as a rhetorical question which implies that they

should be doing something more active or purposeful as the gathering seems to be unfruitful.

It seems that Griffiths problematises the role of intellectuals as interpreters. The constant flow of information from various sources emphasises the overwhelming amount of data and perspectives that intellectuals must navigate, echoing Bauman's notion of intellectuals as interpreters in a pluralistic environment. The characters struggle to understand, translate and make sense of this information. Regarding the failure of the intellectual characters to create a meaningful change in the play and the emphasis on their impotence, the play raises questions about the effectiveness of this role in an information-saturated world. In doing so, the play further stimulates reflection on whether traditional notions of intellectuals as agents of change still hold relevance in the modern world by exposing their difficulties and failures. As a matter of fact, each of the characters attending the party makes different speeches, the speeches are disconnected from each other and lack any purpose and plan as Reinelt notes:

There is a great deal of humor in this play for anyone who has ever identified with the Left or been a party to any of the difficulties of trying to get cooperation and consensus from intellectuals of any persuasion. The 'party' can't quite get off the ground because everyone has her or his own carefully guarded point of view (what we now call identity politics) and because nobody knows how to begin and move forward. (153)

As Reinelt points out, the characters' diverse and disengaged speeches and comments during the party embody the inherent difficulty in attaining cooperation and unity among intellectuals. This depiction of internal conflict and a lack of direction illustrates the challenges of navigating a postmodern world defined by identity politics and information.

The disconnection, inconsistency, inability to act and internal conflict among intellectuals is quite evident in both Ford and Tagg's speeches. Ford provides a brief overview of his perspective on the condition of the European proletariat and their relationship with capitalism in the context of 1968:

In 1968, European proletariats can no longer be said to be a subversive force inside capitalism, because European proletariats no longer feel themselves faced by a European bourgeoisie that concentrates in itself, to return to Marx: 'All the evils of society, embodying and representing a general obstacle and limitation'. (Griffiths, *The Party* 38)

Ford believes that the European proletariat no longer sees bourgeoisie as the embodiment of social problems and limitations as Marx once posited. This shows a changing

perception of class dynamics and requires a more complex analysis and understanding of the role of bourgeoisie and proletariats in the social framework of the time. Ford's perspective implies that the lack of revolutions in Europe rooted in the approach of proletariats, which dismiss the responsibilities of intellectual. Thus, Ford's analysis requires intellectual to reassess their roles and strategies in advocating for social change, suggesting that "The capitalist heartland is no longer London, or Paris, or Turin: It is Saigon, it is Angola, it is Mozambique" (Griffiths, *The Party* 39). Thus, intellectual need to seek alternatives for addressing social issues beyond the traditional models. Tagg further confirms the analysis of Ford as follows:

revolutionary potential, shall we call it? growing among sections of the population whose relation to the working class is either nonexistent, or extremely tenuous, or positively antagonistic. I'm thinking of such categories as students, blacks, intellectuals, social deviants of one sort or another, women and so on. (Griffiths, *The Party* 47)

Tagg deepens Ford's analysis by emphasising the diverse and evolving nature of the revolutionary potential of the late 1960s. He emphasises the need for a broader understanding of class dynamics, the role of intellectuals and the global scope of social change efforts. This expanded perspective challenges traditional models of revolution and calls for new strategies and approaches to address social problems.

Although Tagg develops Ford's theory, he does not see this diversity as the only reason why revolutionary movements did not materialise. As Reinelt argues, he sees intellectuals as the main figures for the failure of revolutionary processes:

He then zeros in on intellectuals and castigates them for being stuck with words, which are not rooted in the productive forces of the society, or, to put it another way, not part of the economic base, but only of the ideological superstructure (although he does not use those terms). Intellectuals are frustrated, according to Tagg, by their lack of real action, so they scapegoat the working class for not having revolutionary zeal and turn their attention to the Other. (154- 155)

Reinelt's comment on Tagg's approach highlights the tension between intellectual discourse and practical action in revolutionary movements, which seems to be main concern of Griffiths throughout the play. As noted, intellectuals seem to be frustrated by the lack of real action or progress towards their goals. This frustration is likely to stem from the difficulty of translating complex ideas into practical strategies and the slowness of social change compared to the pace of intellectual discourse. Tagg, then summarise the

tension between practical action and intellectual discourse as follows: “The intellectual’s problem is not vision, it’s commitment. You enjoy biting the hand that feeds you, but you’ll never bite it off” (Griffiths, *The Party* 53). The first part of the metaphor ‘enjoy biting the hand’ suggests that intellectuals tend to criticise and challenge the systems and institutions in a comfortable position. Yet, the second part of the metaphor reveals that intellectual may be critical of the status quo, but still cannot turn this critique into a revolutionary action, as they are embedded within the status quo through academic positions, publications, or other forms of recognition of the institution.

The metaphor which emphasises tension between practical action and intellectual discourse is quite evident in the case of Joe as he is a bourgeois TV director with a working-class background. Joe’s commitment to socialism and left-wing ideals is at odds with his bourgeois lifestyle. Furthermore, Joe’s attitude towards his brother Eddie, who seeks a loan to start a small business, reveals the tension within him. Joe interprets Eddie’s ambition as an attempt to engage in capitalist investment that contradicts to Joe’s left-wing intellectual discourse. Joe consciously takes an anti-capitalist attitude concluding: “There’ll be people working for him and he’ll be making a profit on their labour, just as in any other capitalist enterprise” (Griffiths, *The Party* 25). This attitude is completely opposed to his existing bourgeois lifestyle. Thus, this contradiction makes the gap between intellectual discourse and practice more apparent.

The disconnection of intellectual theory and practice highlighted by Tagg in the play and conveyed through the case of Joe seems to be related to Foucault’s definition of the modern intellectual. As noted before the modern intellectual for Foucault is one who works in a specific discipline such as physics or biology, or at institutions such as schools, universities and laboratories. The knowledge of the new intellectuals is not comprised of an integrative knowledge or a unifying theory of society, but rather their expertise and skills in a specific, local area. The characters in the play are also stuck in their own areas of specialisation and are far from displaying a unifying approach that would transform the idea of revolution into action. Returning to Tagg’s metaphor, a new question arises, expertise. As Said explains, a person must be approved by the authorities in order to be an expert. Being approved by an authority involves acting within the boundaries established by that authority. Going beyond this means biting the hand off. In the context of the play, the characters, despite their critical discourse, never take such radical steps.

In the second act of the play, the lack of revolutionary action becomes more apparent. It is witnessed that no common idea is formed as the characters leave a meeting one by one. Tagg implies the failure of the party and confesses that “I’ll be dead by the end of the year. (Pause) I have this tumour. (He holds his stomach)” (Griffiths 61). Tagg’s confession about his expected death may be evaluated as a symbol which emphasises the loss of intellectual leadership within the party and the broader left-wing intellectual community. His role as a significant figure in the organisation of the represents the diminishing influence of intellectuals in revolutionary change. This failure becomes more apparent when Joe agrees to give Eddie money to start his own business, even though Joe considered this as a contribution to the capitalism in the first act.

In his both plays, Griffiths highlights recurring theme of the disconnection between intellectual theory and practice. However, the frustration and inability to act become more apparent in *The Party*. In *Occupations*, While Griffiths features the impotence of intellectuals and their struggle to bring theory and practice together, there is still a sense of proactive engagement. This engagement is embodied through Gramsci who is actively in contact with working-class and tries to create a collective will among them. Gramsci illustrates the potential for intellectuals to initiate revolutionary movements and overcome the gap between theory and practice, although his efforts eventually fail. In *The Party*, on the other hand, the frustration and inability to transform intellectual discourse into practical action become more pronounced. Despite their intellectual capacities and critical discourse, the characters seem to be stuck in a state of inertia and unable to create meaningful change or form coherent ideas. In short, *Occupations* introduces the theme of intellectuals struggling to overcome the gap between theory and practice. *The Party* intensifies this frustration, making it the central focus of the play. This intensification may be evaluated as Griffiths’ disillusionment and criticism of intellectuals as a socialist playwright.

Through his plays, Griffiths, in some way, creates an intellectual profile of the late 1960s and 1970s by disillusionment, fragmentation and shifting roles of intellectuals during this transformative period. He uses his characters as a lens through which to examine the socio-political events and conditions of the time. His depiction of intellectual engagement and activism is rich and diverse. Griffiths also seeks to encourage intellectual engagement among the audience. He encourages the audience to think critically about the

problems and participate in debates about them by presenting social and ethical dilemmas and socio-political issues.



CHAPTER SIX

INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL DISCONTENT AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

6.1. EXISTENTIAL REFLECTIONS AND CULTURAL CRITIQUE: INTELLECTUAL REPRESENTATION IN *LOOK BACK IN ANGER*

Britain was confronted with the difficult challenge of rebuilding the country from the ravages of the Second World War. The war led to a significant reassessment of both economic and social norms as the country was seeking to repair its infrastructure and reinvigorate its economy. At the same time, Britain was undergoing some geopolitical changes. It was losing many of its colonies, most notably India and Sri Lanka. In addition to these losses, the Suez Crisis was a crucial moment in British history, signifying the decline of traditional colonial powers, the creation of new global alliances and the reshaping of the geopolitical landscape, ultimately quickening the decolonisation process and changing the dynamics of power in the post-colonial age (Louis 746-47). For Britain, this chain of events clearly exposed an unpleasant reality: once a superpower, it was now losing its control over the world.

The Education Act of 1944 intensified the transformation in addition to the social changes brought on by the war. The act spread the education and provided the working class with greater opportunities including free education, access to secondary education, technical and vocational education options and support for students with special needs (Simon 73-77). These improvements were designed to diminish class-based obstacles in accessing education and create a fair educational ecology. These opportunities resulted in immense social mobility and transformation as they also produced a new challenge. Although education was more accessible to disenfranchised people mostly from the working-class community, the rigid British class system was maintained in other spheres of social life. Youths from the working class who attended college faced a more challenging situation. Despite all their academic qualifications, these young people found themselves grappling with a social system that struggled to develop strategies which could truly utilise their education.

This period witnessed the emergence of the 'Angry Young Men' movement, a cultural phenomenon that portrayed the frustrations and disappointments of a new generation in a fast-changing world. These young intellectuals, often from working-class backgrounds, fought the established norms and class structures of British society by making their ideas recognised via literature and art. This movement transformed into a mechanism through which intellectuals evaluated the disintegration of existing systems and the formation of a new reality. Born into a lower-middle class family in London in 1929, John Osborne represented the spirit of this age, emerging as an outstanding dramatist in the 1950s, the so-called Angry Decade. Osborne's early life was dominated by financial problems and a challenging environment, which significantly shaped his perspective and later found expression in his works.

Osborne's best-known play, *Look Back in Anger* (1956), serves as a powerful testament to the instability of his life in post-World War II Britain, reflecting the disillusionment of a generation with the prevailing system. The play encapsulates the essence of the Angry Young Men movement and the social turbulence of the 1950s Britain. Osborne adopted an autobiographical perspective to craft the narrative, delving into the depths of human enthusiasm and social instability. During an era of social upheaval in post-war Britain, *Look Back in Anger* came out as a crucial cultural phenomenon. Its premiere coincided with the Angry Young Men movement, a wave of discontent expressed by writers and intellectuals like Kingsley Amis, Alan Sillitoe and Philip Larkin. These voices, among which Osborne's was remarkable, aggressively challenged the existing standards in theatrical representation by demanding a more genuine portrayal of the working class and denouncing the indifference of the higher ranks of society.

In this climate of social unrest, Osborne, as a leading playwright of his period, fearlessly ventured into uncharted emotional and social realms in his plays. Delving deep into the post-war British psyche, he also shattered the established theatrical traditions through *Look Back in Anger*. From its first stage production onwards, the play was noted for its pioneering emotional intensity as well as its expression of real and uncensored feelings such as anger, frustration and disappointment. This departure from the restrained narratives favoured by the mid-twentieth-century British theatre reflected the prevailing

attitude of a generation moving away from traditional values and desperately searching for purpose in an ever-changing environment.

In an exploration deeply rooted in the contextual fabric of post-war Britain, *Look Back in Anger* emerges as a poignant microcosm of the era. Set against the backdrop of a Midlands market town, the narrative intricately unveils the life of its protagonist—a young, educated individual ensnared in the monotonous routine of managing a modest sweet stall. Within this seemingly mundane existence, Jimmy's sharp intellect is overshadowed by an overwhelming sense of discontent. This discontent, as discerned, transcends personal affliction to become a potent reflection of the broader social unrest stemming from the aftermath of the war. At the heart of the narrative resides Jimmy Porter, an unusually irate character who encapsulates the pervasive sense of alienation experienced by the educated working-class and lower-middle class during the period. In stark contrast to the genteel, upper-class protagonists typically depicted on mainstream stages, Jimmy emerges as a working-class anti-hero endowed with a formidable intellect and education. His portrayal transcends mere intellectual discontent; he embodies the visceral, unbridled anger that serves as the crux of the play. His anger, far from being a mere character trait, emerges as a formidable force that positions him as the quintessential archetype of the Angry Young Man.

The play introduces the audience to a complex web of relationships, the most important of which is the relationship between Jimmy and his wife Alison, who comes from an affluent background. This relationship exemplifies the emotional breakdown, class conflict and miscommunication that were emblematic of the period. Cliff, as an observer and confidant, becomes a witness to these problems within the household. His character, less overtly expressive, represents a contrasting perspective, serving as a foil to Jimmy's intense anger and Alison's emotional detachment. As the narrative unfolds, the arrival of Alison's friend Helena further complicates this complex relationship dynamic, increasing tensions and forcing the characters to confront their individual shortcomings and the harsh realities of their existence. The thematic core of disillusionment and discontent is fully intertwined with Jimmy as Peter Billingham observes: "Jimmy's anger embodied the bitter disappointment, frustration and alienation felt by a new, emerging hybrid of left-wing working class and liberal-bourgeois men and women in their twenties and early thirties" (6). The play does not offer easy solutions,

leaving the audience feeling uneasy much like the unsettled generation it portrays. The play stands as an enduring testament to the intellectual and emotional turmoil experienced by the Angry Young Men of its time. A period of transition from traditional beliefs to a search for meaning in a changing world is effectively captured in the play's narrative of struggle, conflict and constant questioning.

The play's portrayal of a lower-middle class character's reaction to the world surrounding him was a huge break from the established standards of representation, contributing enormously to its revolutionary impact. In essence, *Look Back in Anger* became a symbol of its time, a cultural touchstone that not only mirrored the despair of the youth but also actively transformed the landscape of British theatre. As Aleks Sierz notes: "The revolution in post-war British theatre - where the vapid, genteel country-house comedies were replaced by gritty, brash and politically relevant social realist drama - started with Osborne" (46). Sierz's recognition of Osborne's role as a forerunner not only underscores the playwright's historical significance but also emphasises the transformative power of theatre to question the social conventions and evoke profound reflection.

This chapter engages in a comprehensive exploration of Jimmy's intellectual discontent in *Look Back in Anger*, primarily through an in-depth analysis of his multiple roles as a critic, cultural transformer, political activist and bearer of ethical dilemmas. The complexities inherent in Jimmy's character are examined here by employing Bauman's theoretical framework as a guiding lens. Jimmy Porter stands out as an aggressive critic of post-war British society. His harsh criticism, often directed at the middle-class values, serve as disturbing reflections of his intellectual discontent. Through his passionate exclamations such as: "Hallelujah! I'm alive! I've got an idea. Why don't we play a little game? Let's pretend we're human and we're really alive. Just for a little while. What do you say? Let's pretend we're human" (Osborne 18), the play captures the essence of his rebellion against the numbing conformism of the world he inhabits. This outburst summarises his longing for true human experiences and his frustration with a society that seems to have forgotten what it means to truly live. In this way, Jimmy's critique goes beyond mere words; it becomes an impassioned call for authenticity and vitality in a world seemingly stuck in lifelessness. His call for authenticity and vitality implies his

intellectual role as he urges individuals to engage with life in its fullest and most genuine form.

Jimmy is portrayed as a social rebel who challenges various aspects of life by criticising inactivity, laziness, corruption and regression both in family and community and country at large. He is an educated man disillusioned with the daily routine he has to endure, with his wife Alison and with his friend Cliff, whom he considers lacking in enthusiasm. He condemns Sundays because they epitomise a boring pattern of tasks like reading papers, drinking tea and ironing clothes, which he finds suffocatingly monotonous:

Jimmy: Why do I do this every Sunday? Even the book reviews seem to be the same as last week's. Different books—same reviews. Have you finished that one yet?

Cliff: Not yet.

Jimmy: I've just read three whole columns on the English Novel.

Half of it's in French. Do the Sunday papers make you feel ignorant?

Cliff: Not 'arf.

Jimmy: Well, you are ignorant. You're just a peasant. (To Alison.) What about you? You're not a peasant, are you? (Osborne 8)

Jimmy's anger at the monotony of life is multifaceted. His anger stems from various factors, which reflects a complex interplay of emotions and circumstances. Jimmy's criticism of Sunday papers, which lack intellectual depth and focus on frivolous topics, reflects his frustration with the position of the media. He sees them as propagating shallow intellectualism and fostering class distinctions that further contribute to social stagnation. When he says, 'half of it's in French', he draws attention to the elitist nature of the intellectual discourse. French, as a language associated with high culture and education, serves as a symbol of intellectual elitism, making content less accessible to those not proficient in the language and thereby widening the class divisions. Jimmy's subsequent insult, labelling Cliff as a 'peasant', reflects his critique of established class distinctions and the cultural elitism associated with the upper class. Jimmy uses the term 'peasant' figuratively to refer to Cliff who lacks refinement or intellectual sophistication but even if this word targets Cliff, his frustration with intellectual limitedness is directed more towards the prevailing system which is pillared on social injustice.

Jimmy's complaint about the repetitiveness of the reviews points to a deeper frustration with the state of intellectual thought and cultural production. This frustration goes beyond the momentary boredom of reading the same content week after week; it is emblematic of a society caught in a cycle of inauthenticity and cultural stagnation. The same ideas, traditions and norms seem to persist without evolution or innovation. This pervasive intellectual stagnation reflects a society unwilling or unable to break free from established traditions and explore new horizons. Jimmy's criticism is a call for intellectual and cultural renewal. He yearns for a world that values originality, critical thinking and creative expression. This discontent serves as a rallying cry for change, challenging society to throw off the chains of conformity and embrace a more vibrant, intellectually stimulating and culturally diverse future.

His criticism towards Alison and Cliff reflects his perception that society, represented by these individuals, is trapped in repetitive patterns, devoid of innovation and genuine intellectual exploration. Alison represents the stagnation of the upper class, constrained by norms and lacking intellectual curiosity, while Cliff, though more attentive, lacks the delicacy that Jimmy seeks in intellectual discourse. His critique of them reflects both his scorn for social apathy and his need for intellectual peers who can challenge his intellect. Osborne's portrayal of Jimmy's disillusionment finds a striking expression in his irritated disclosure about Alison, encapsulated in the lines where he uses the word 'pusillanimous' to describe her:

Jimmy: I told you—pusillanimous Do you know what it means?

Cliff shakes his head.

Neither did I really. All this time, I have been married to this woman, this monument to nonattachment and suddenly I discover that there is actually a word that sums her up. Not just an adjective in the English language to describe her with—it's her name! Pusillanimous! (Osborne 29) [...] Pusillanimous. Adjective. Wanting of firmness of mind, of small courage, having a little mind, mean spirited, cowardly, timid of mind. From the Latin pusillus, very little and animus, the mind. (Slams the book shut) That's my wife! That's her isn't it? (30)

Jimmy's use of the Latin word 'pusillanimous' serves a dual purpose. In its lexical meaning, the word accurately summarises Alison's passive, unassertive and intellectually

unadventurous nature and emphasises her inability to challenge the social norms or engage in meaningful intellectual discourse. At the same time, it indirectly criticises the wider society, suggesting that Alison, as a representative of the upper class, embodies the conformist and conservative attitudes prevalent in this social stratum. This choice of language also underlines the cultural and intellectual gap between Jimmy and the class he originally belongs to.

Jimmy's discontent also extends to social issues and political institutions including religious authorities and economic inequality in society. He, for instance, condemns bishops for supporting the H-Bomb project and the rich for their exploitation of the poor:

Jimmy: Give her her finger back and don't be so sickening. What's the Bishop of Bromley say?

Cliff: (letting go of Alison) Oh, it says here that he makes a very moving appeal to all Christians to do all they can to assist in the manufacture of the H-Bomb

Jimmy: Yes, well, that's quite moving, I suppose. (to Alison.) Are you moved, my darling?

Alison: Well, naturally.

Jimmy: There you are: even my wife is moved. I ought to send the Bishop a subscription. Let's see. What else does he say. Dumdidumdumdidum. Ah yes, He's upset because someone has suggested that he supports the rich against the poor. He says he denies the difference of class distinctions. "This idea has been persistently and wickedly fostered by—the working classes!" Well!

He looks up at both of them for reaction, but Cliff is reading and Alison is intent on her ironing. (Osborne 12-13)

Jimmy's condemnation of the Bishop of Bromley for backing the H-Bomb project is a harsh critique of religious authorities that associate themselves with military and potentially destructive agendas. This criticism highlights Jimmy's mistrust of religious figures who support actions that can bring harm and suffering rather than advocating peace and compassion. Denouncing the rich for their exploitation of the poor, Jimmy emphasises his concern about economic injustice and the exploitation of the vulnerable. His critique exposes the inequalities inherent in the socio-economic system, pointing to the moral and ethical shortcomings of those who benefit from the suffering of others. The tone of the Jimmy's speech above, dominated by sarcasm and irony, is also notable as it highlights his overall sense of disillusionment. Osborne, through Jimmy,

crafts remark laden with biting wit, such as his suggestion to send the Bishop a subscription and his mimicry of the Bishop's words through the sounds 'Dumdidumdumdidum.' These elements of dialogue demonstrate Jimmy's cynicism towards the insincere and hypocritical nature of the statements made by those in power, echoing Osborne's critique of social norms.

As a character, Jimmy represents the role of an intellectual in the context of Osborne's narrative. Jimmy acts as a vehicle for Osborne to criticise dominant narratives and challenge established norms, encouraging critical thinking in society. Jimmy's relentless questioning and cynicism serve as subversive tools that force others and therefore the audience, to confront the stagnation inherent in their beliefs and actions. Through Jimmy, Osborne reveals the limits and shortcomings of powerful institutions and individuals, reflecting the spirit of intellectual activism that permeates the playwright's work. The famous phrase 'speaking truth to power', attributed to Edward Said, finds a powerful resonance in Osborne's work. Through the character of Jimmy, Osborne fearlessly exposes the limits and shortcomings of powerful institutions and individuals. Jimmy becomes the embodiment of Osborne's voice, challenging dominant norms and social indifference with his sharp criticism and sharp wit. Osborne manifests the spirit of intellectual activism by daring to question established beliefs and initiating a dialogue that forces the audience to think. In doing so, Osborne articulates a truth that many may shy away from, calls society to confront its own flaws and prompts a reconsideration of rooted values. Osborne also acts as a catalyst for change, provoking thought and inspiring action. His willingness to address uncomfortable truths through Jimmy demonstrates the power of artistic expression to challenge the status quo and advocate for a more authentic, just and enlightened society. At the centre of Jimmy's personality is his sophisticated use of language, a tool cautiously used to define his character and convey his intellectual ability. In the context of this play, Jimmy's dialogues become a powerful tool through which his intellectual mastery is clearly established. His speeches, full of literary and political references, sharp critiques and eloquent expressions serve as a lens through which we can explore his complex intellectual identity. Jimmy's linguistic expressions do not only reveal his internal struggles but also position him as a formidable intellectual presence in post-war British society, from questioning established ideologies to reshaping power dynamics and serving as a form of resistance.

A careful examination of the impact of Jimmy's language reveals its layers to understand how his rhetoric became a defining feature of his intellectual character and profoundly influenced the narrative of *Look Back in Anger*. Jimmy's dialogues function as a potent prism, illuminating the depths of his intellectual prowess. His ability to use language with sharp wit and piercing irony is evident as he praises Edwardian times and laments the coming American Age:

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. Phoney too, of course. It must have rained sometimes. Still, even I regret it somehow, phoney or not. 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. Perhaps all our children will be Americans. That's a thought isn't it? (Osborne 22)

Jimmy's use of language is remarkably sophisticated here with the vivid and evocative imagery he uses to describe the 'old Edwardian brigade' and their world. Phrases such as homemade cakes, croquettes, bright ideas, bright uniforms and slim volumes of verse show his ability to paint a detailed picture by means of language. His language is not only descriptive but also ironic and satirical when he refers to this image as 'phoney'. This use of irony and wit is an essential component of his style of communication. Jimmy's speech reveals his intellectual depth in reflecting on the past and changing times. He criticises his own nostalgia for the 'Edwardian brigade' and their world, pointing out that it is based on a romanticised and idealised image that is not entirely real. The fact that he is able to critically evaluate this image by saying 'it must have rained sometimes' reveals his intellectual capacity since he is questioning the authenticity of that image by acknowledging the inevitability of imperfection and adversity, symbolised by rain, even in seemingly idyllic times. Jimmy's observation about regretting someone else's world while lacking a world of his own highlights a deep sense of dissatisfaction within him. Jimmy implies that he feels adrift in a society that he does not fully belong to or identify with. He may long for a sense of belonging and purpose that he feels is absent from his current existence. This sentiment underscores his existential angst and his struggle to find meaning and fulfilment in a world that he perceives as hollow and artificial. This dissatisfaction is not just personal but is reflective of a broader social tendency. However, Jimmy's use of the word 'sentimental' is probably ironic because he rarely shows

sentimentality. He is probably emphasising the absurdity of feeling emotional in the context of his cynical worldview. His disdain for the 'American Age', on the other hand, reflects his resistance to cultural assimilation and serves as a critique of the changing social landscape. His language is not merely a commentary on his personal discontent; it reflects a wider social unrest. Expressing his apprehension about the potential loss of his personal and national identity to American cultural influence, Jimmy actively opposes the undermining of traditional British values. Through his language, which transcends mere linguistic skill, he engages in profound social critique. Jimmy employs his biting humour and sharp criticism not indiscriminately, but rather as targeted tools against perceived conformists or individuals he deems intellectually lacking. In doing so, he assumes the role of a vocal critic of social transformations, advocating for the preservation of established norms amidst shifting social paradigms.

As previously noted, modern intellectuals, according to Foucault, are not merely knowledge mediators because modern people can acquire knowledge on their own. The masses are aware of their circumstances, such as the social, political or economic issues that affect their lives. They understand the challenges, struggles and limitations they face within the existing social framework. However, there is a hidden or covert system of power, often controlled by influential institutions or individuals, which works to suppress or obscure this awareness among the masses (207-208). In other words, structures such as government, media, corporations and other powerful organisations manipulate information, control narratives and shape public discourse in ways that prevent the wider population from fully grasping the depth of their situation. According to Foucault, intellectuals, traditionally seen as mediators of knowledge, are also influenced and controlled by these power structures, limiting their ability to challenge or change the dominant narratives. Thus, their task is not merely to communicate hidden truths; it is, perhaps even more importantly, to resist the power that transforms them into tools of knowledge, truth, consciousness and speech.

Jimmy, as a modern intellectual, is potentially aware of the power dynamics at the play in post-war British society. He recognises the social and political structures that suppress the awareness of the masses and maintain the status quo. By challenging Alison, he confronts the ignorance and apathy characteristic of the privileged class and draws the audience's attention to this power dynamic:

Oh, my dear wife, you've got so much to learn I only hope you learn it one day. If only something—something would happen to you and wake you out of your beauty sleep! (Coming in close to her.) If you could have a child and it would die. Let it grow, let a recognisable human face emerge from that little mass of indiarubber and wrinkles (She retreats away from him.) Please—if only I could watch you face that. I wonder if you might even become a recognisable human being yourself. But I doubt it. (Osborne 52)

Jimmy challenges Alison's ignorance with a powerful hypothetical scenario—the tragedy of losing her child. By confronting Alison's apathy and superficiality, he calls her to face the harsh realities of life, challenging not only her ignorance but also the indifference of the privileged class as a whole. This confrontation underlines that the lack of awareness is not accidental but the product of the systematic suppression of certain truths and experiences. Alison serves as a representation of larger social problems, compelling the audience to confront the power dynamics and the social inequalities that persist. Jimmy's use of harsh and confrontational language deviates from the polite and restrained dialogue typical of English theatre of the time. Osborne's intentional deviation from the tradition can be viewed as a form of resistance, challenging not just the traditional boundaries of theatre but also questioning power dynamics and social norms. Through Jimmy, Osborne uses language as a powerful tool of resistance, challenging theatrical norms and reflecting his rebellion against dominant power structures. By developing a critical language for Jimmy, Osborne asserts intellectual autonomy and demonstrates Jimmy's refusal to passively accept the dominant discourse. This deliberate choice allows Jimmy to resist the control of powerful entities and social norms, preventing him from being co-opted by the system. Osborne also challenges the oppression of authorities through the realistic depiction of working-class life embodied by its angry young man, Jimmy. The play's exploration of social issues such as class struggle and political apathy serves as a collective rejection of oppressive systems. The psychological depth of the characters emphasises their individuality, resisting reduction to stereotypes. The play's impact on the theatre marks a move away from traditional narratives by empowering marginalised voices. All elements of the play reject the passivity and obedience usually expected in the face of authority, emphasising instead autonomy, resistance and authenticity.

Delving into the complexity of Jimmy's character and his harsh criticisms reveals a deep reflection of the broader concerns that characterise a period marked by rapid social and cultural changes. Jimmy emerges as the voice of a generation struggling with the

disintegration of traditional values and the erosion of enduring causes. This post-war era, as sociologist Zygmunt Bauman describes, embodies the essence of liquid modernity – a concept that encapsulates the fluid, ever-changing nature of contemporary existence (*Liquid 2*). In this fluidity, the certainties of the past dissolve, leaving individuals adrift in a sea of uncertainty. It is in the context of this social flux that Jimmy's poignant discontent resonates deeply:

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. (In his familiar, semi-serious mood.) 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. (Osborne 132)

In this quotation, Jimmy's frustration with the absence of brave causes reflects the ephemeral nature of modern life as described by Bauman. The fading of grand designs and the emergence of what Jimmy calls the 'Brave New-nothing-very-much-thank-you' captures the essence of Bauman's concept of liquid modernity. The evaporation of enduring ideologies leaves individuals like Jimmy floating in a constantly changing and unstable world, struggling to find meaning. Jimmy's critique of established social norms and institutions stems from his longing for stability and purpose in a world where traditional values are in a constant state of flux. However, his endeavour to stabilise his own beliefs in this ever-changing environment paradoxically underlines the dilemmas faced by intellectuals within the framework of liquid modernity. This inherent conflict between questioning dominant social structures and the individual yearning for stability forms a deep aspect of Jimmy's character, making him a compelling example of the intellectual challenges faced in contemporary society.

This sense of drifting in uncertainty vividly portrayed in Jimmy's visceral critique, provides a backdrop for a better understanding of his intellectual alienation. His dissatisfaction and disillusionment reflect the broader social shifts that mark the age of liquid modernity, where certainties from the past dissolve and leave individuals adrift in an uncertain sea of change. This ambiguity vividly captures Jimmy's intellectual alienation, emphasising his struggle within the changing landscape of modern life. Applying Edward Said's perspective of intellectual alienation to Jimmy, we can indeed

see him as the intellectual exile par excellence. Jimmy's alienation and exile can be understood in the context of Said's distinction between insiders and outsiders in a society:

Even intellectuals who are lifelong members of a society can, in a manner of speaking, be divided into insiders and outsiders: those on the one hand who belong fully to the society as it is, who flourish in it without an overwhelming sense of dissonance or dissent, those who can be called yea-sayers; and on the other hand, the nay-sayers, the individuals at odds with their society and therefore outsiders and exiles so far as privileges, power and honors are concerned. (52-53)

Jimmy clearly belongs to the category of 'nay-sayers' described by Said. He is in deep disagreement with the society in which he lives, constantly expressing disapproval and opposition. His alienation stems from his deep dissatisfaction with the existing social and cultural norms, making him a true outsider. Unlike insiders seeking privilege, power or fame within existing social structures, Jimmy does not aspire to fit within these parameters or to be recognised through them. His intellectual pursuits are not motivated by a desire for social acceptance or material gain. Instead, he embodies the essence of an intellectual exile, passionately engaging with ideas and concepts that challenge the status quo. Jimmy's position as an intellectual exile, thus places him on the margins of society. He views the world from a perspective that is often rejected or ignored by those comfortably settled within traditional boundaries. This marginality gives him the freedom to think, question and challenge without fear of social repercussions.

Jimmy's disillusionment with the society in which he lives is palpable. He feels disconnected from the cultural mainstream and underestimates what he sees as a lack of intellectual depth in the people around him. His alienation is evident in his harsh criticism of popular culture, politics and social norms and his intellect sometimes leads to a sense of superiority that emotionally distances him from others. His verbal attacks, full of intellectual rhetoric and biting sarcasm, create an emotional barrier, further isolating him from the people around him.

In conclusion, Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* stands as a pivotal work that encapsulates the intellectual discontent of post-war Britain as well as serving as a groundbreaking contribution to the theatrical landscape. Through Jimmy, Osborne skilfully navigates intellectual turmoil. He offers a sharp critique of social norms and a profound reflection on the wider intellectual milieu of the time. Osborne's remarkable vision enabled him to capture the essence of post-war Britain and create a figure whose

frustration resonated deeply with the audience. Osborne also brought a fresh perspective to crafting characters by endowing Jimmy with a powerful mix of simmering anger and profound intellect. This turned him into a symbol of intellectual rebellion – a restless soul challenging social norms and the status quo. Furthermore, Osborne defied theatrical conventions with his inventive use of language. Jimmy’s rhetoric elevated the performance into a higher intellectual realm through literary allusions, political criticism and bitter sarcasm. This innovative approach not only connected profoundly with the audiences but also sparked a transformative change in the realm of British theatre. It left a lasting impact on playwrights and played a role in shaping the evolution of dramatic expression.

In delving into the intellectual landscape of the time, Osborne boldly explores the challenges faced by intellectuals. Through Jimmy’s fiery confrontations, the clash between intellectual depth and social apathy unfolds. This turns the play into a microcosm of the broader challenges intellectuals faced: the battle against conformity, the yearning for authenticity and the pursuit of genuine human experience in a rapidly changing world. *Look Back in Anger* stands as one of the most important plays in British theatre history, marking a paradigm shift in character representation, dialogue construction and social criticism. Osborne’s innovation lies not only in his narrative but also in his ability to reflect the intellectual spirit of his time.

6.2. ARTISTIC REBELLION AND INTELLECTUAL RESISTANCE: UNMASKING POWER THROUGH ARTISTIC CREATION IN *SCENES FROM AN EXECUTION*

In the intricate terrain of British theatrical expression, Howard Barker stands out as a prominent dramatist whose literary output serves as a resolute counterforce to prevailing currents of conformity. Barker’s notable affiliation with the Theatre of Catastrophe¹⁴ underscores his artistic endeavours, which, in turn, bear witness to a purposeful

¹⁴ The Theatre of Catastrophe is a term coined by British playwright Howard Barker to describe his distinctive approach to drama and theatrical production. Barker’s Theatre of Catastrophe represents a departure from conventional theatrical norms and challenges established ideas about storytelling, character development and the role of the audience. It represents a bold and challenging approach to drama that prioritizes intellectual engagement, aesthetic innovation and a willingness to confront and unsettle audiences.

divergence from popular cultural norms and a conscious resistance to conventional mainstream traditions. An examination of Barker's creative responses to the tumultuous political atmosphere of the 1980s, characterised by ideological flux and cultural discord, proves indispensable for a deliberate understanding of his dramatic objectives.

The temporal backdrop of the 1980s in Britain was characterised by a transformative political landscape, significantly influenced by the leadership of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (Leach 197-98). The policies of Thatcher's conservative government encapsulated under Thatcherism, encompassed a series of economic reforms advocating free-market principles, deregulation and a diminution of trade union influence. Alongside this change, this period witnessed a broader ideological shift towards individualism, privatisation and a prevailing scepticism towards state intervention. The effects of this political milieu were far-reaching, extending into the realms of artistic and intellectual pursuits.

Conservative government funding restrictions for cultural institutions and its focus on market-oriented values in public life sparked disputes and opposition within the intellectual and artistic communities. Many writers, playwrights and artists found themselves having to contend with issues of autonomy as well as the government's role in promoting the arts and the wider social effects of conservative policies. The portrayal of intellectuals assumes a central role in this political climate as a deep examination of social dynamics, political conflicts and the core of the creative resistance. Amidst this political milieu, Barker's *Scenes from an Execution* (1990) emerges as an important theatrical piece, providing a canvas on which intellectual characters navigate the complexity of their roles against a historical and political backdrop.

A leading critic of Barker's works, Dan Rebellato sheds light on Barker's turbulent relationship with the major theatre institutions and politics of his time through his review of *Scenes from an Execution* on his blog. Rebellato captures the essence of Barker's unwavering commitment to his artistic vision, vividly quoting Barker's famous line, "I send my plays to the National Theatre to be rejected, so I know I can still see clearly" (Rebellato). This quotation serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it symbolises his resistance to conforming to artistic norms and preferences dictated by established institutions such as the National Theatre. Secondly, it reflects Barker's belief that the rejection of his work

by these institutions confirms the continuing clarity of his artistic vision. In essence, by deliberately avoiding institutional approval, Barker demonstrates his artistic independence and an unwavering commitment to his unique creative perspective, uninfluenced by the prevailing preferences of mainstream theatre institutions. In the context of political and cultural upheaval, Rebellato not only amplifies Barker's sentiments, but also interprets them as a compelling call for artistic autonomy. Rebellato's acute observations provide an indispensable perspective for deciphering Barker's claim and its strategic importance in overcoming the obstacles imposed by established theatre institutions.

Set in sixteenth-century Venice, *Scenes from an Execution* unfolds as a narrative that transcends its temporal confines to resonate with contemporary audiences. The play centres around Galactia, a provocative Venetian artist commissioned by the Doge to paint a canvas commemorating the Battle of Lepanto. As Galactia grapples with her artistic vision, social expectations and political pressures, Barker weaves a narrative that transcends its historical setting and offers a profound exploration of intellectual struggle and social critique. In exploring the essence of *Scenes from an Execution*, our analysis aims to reveal the complex layers of intellectual representation. Barker's characters serve as conduits that embody the theoretical insights of influential thinkers such as Antonio Gramsci, Louis Pierre Althusser and Edward Said. Under Barker's direction, the stage becomes a crucible where intellectual ideals and social expectations intersect and create a dynamic and thought-provoking environment.

Barker's intellectual approach outlined in the Theatre of Catastrophe serves as a radical departure from traditional norms, forcing audiences to interact with the complexities of his indigestible play. Rejecting the constraints of common morality, Barker's theatre becomes a sanctuary for intellectual exploration, shielded from the bombardment of compelling comments prevalent in contemporary discourse. The word 'shielded' is used to convey the idea that Barker's theatre provides a protective space or refuge where intellectual exploration can occur without being overwhelmed or influenced by the dominant narratives or conventional moralities present in contemporary discourse. Barker's *Arguments for a Theatre* (1989) lays the theoretical foundation for this avant-garde movement, positioning it against mainstream theatre. In *Scenes from an Execution*, the chief intellectual character is Galactia, a provocative artist, who navigates the

intricacies of social expectations and political pressures. Barker's metadramatic nature adds layers of complexity to this representation and invites the audience to grapple with alternative narratives, challenging established historical accounts. In essence, Barker's Theatre of Catastrophe serves as an intellectual battleground, disrupting, provoking and beckoning the audience to venture beyond the familiar terrain of conventional theatre.

This analysis, therefore, endeavours to examine the intellectual battleground of Barker's ideas as well as the representation of the intellectual characters in his play. It explores not only the historical and political dimensions of *Scenes from an Execution* but also delves into the motivation behind Barker's writing. Through this exploration, we confront the complexities of artistic rebellion and the ever-shifting boundaries between autonomy and institutional embrace. As we explore the play, *Scenes from an Execution* turns into a theatrical manifesto, which invites the audience to question, resist and engage with the catastrophic beauty of the stage.

Barker introduces Galactia as an intellectual by portraying her as a bold and controversial sixteenth-century Venetian artist. Galactia's intellectualism is evident in her artistic vision, specifically her determination to paint a canvas that conveys the brutality of the Battle of Lepanto. Her commitment to portraying the grim reality of war reflects a deep intellectual engagement with the ethical responsibilities of an artist. Throughout the play, Barker explores the complexities of intellectualism, social resistance and the transformative power of art. Galactia emerges as a multifaceted intellectual, challenging established norms and engaging in a profound dialogue about the role of artists and truth-tellers in society. Her speeches encapsulate the intellectual's struggle to navigate social expectations, showcase uncomfortable truths and contribute to the ongoing dialogue about the complexities of the human experience:

Galactia: I am painting the battle, Prodo. Me. The battle which changed you from a man into a monkey. One thousand square feet of canvas. Great empty ground to fill. With noise. Your noise. The noise of men minced. Got to find a new red for all that blood. A red that smells. Don't go, Prodo, holding your bowel in –

Prodo: What sort of woman are you?

Galactia: A midwife for your labour. Help you bring the truth to birth. Up there, twice life-size, your half-murder, your half-death. Come on, don't be manly, there's no truth where men are being manly–

Prodo: Don't trust you, got a mad eye–

Galactia: Shuffling away there, stop, will you?

Prodo: Afraid of you.

Galactia: Afraid of me? Me? Why?

Prodo: Hurt me –

Galactia: Never –

Prodo: Ruin it –

Galactia: What?

(Pause.)

What?

Prodo: MY PEACE WITH LIFE. (Barker, *Scenes Scene One*)

The dialogue between Galactia and Prodo, a veteran, in *Scenes from an Execution* encapsulates the complex interplay of intellectualism, artistic vision and social resistance that defines Galactia's character. Galactia's declaration, 'I am painting the battle' underscores her role as an intellectual artist committed to capturing the profound impact of historical events on human existence. Through the vivid imagery of 'the noise of men minced' and the search for 'a new red for all that blood', Galactia transcends traditional artistic boundaries, seeking to represent the visceral reality of war in a provocative and innovative way. The inclusion of 'a red that smells' adds a sensory dimension, emphasising the immersive nature of his art. This intellectual challenge to traditional norms is in line with Barker's Theatre of Disaster and encourages a deeper exploration of uncomfortable truths. The canvas becomes a metaphor for her intellectual labour, a space to explore the brutal reality of war and challenge conventional perceptions. Galactia's characterisation aligns with Edward Said's notion of the intellectual as a truth-teller. Her determination to depict the Battle of Lepanto reflects a commitment to unveiling uncomfortable truths about the human condition. The canvas, as described by Galactia, becomes a transformative medium through which she engages with the ethical responsibilities of the intellectual. Prodo's response, questioning the type of woman Galactia is and expressing fear, represents the social resistance faced by intellectuals challenging the status quo. Galactia, as a midwife for truth, positions herself as a disruptor, echoing Antonio Gramsci's idea of intellectuals as social disruptors. Prodo's fear symbolises the apprehension society often harbours toward intellectuals who seek to bring uncomfortable truths to light.

The gendered dynamics of intellectualism, as reflected in Prodo's questioning of Galactia's trustworthiness, resonate with broader social biases that have historically marginalised and stereotyped women in intellectual pursuits. Historically, women intellectuals have faced systemic challenges, including limited access to education, exclusion from intellectual institutions and social expectations that confined them to predefined roles. The suspicion and fear expressed by Prodo mirror the ingrained prejudices that have portrayed women as disruptive or destabilising forces when engaged in intellectual activities. This perception stems from deeply rooted gender norms that have historically sought to confine women to domestic spheres and limit their influence in public and intellectual realms. While Prodo adheres to the conventional portrayal of Galactia as a destructive and destabilising woman, it is essential to understand that these traits associated with Galactia are not inherently linked to gender. Instead, they represent intellectual characteristics that exist independently of gender distinctions. The culmination of Prodo's statement, 'MY PEACE WITH LIFE' introduces a poignant moment of introspection. Galactia's intellectual pursuit, depicted on the canvas, becomes a potential threat to Prodo's peace with life. This conflict embodies the inherent tension between the intellectual's quest for truth and the society seeking stability and comfort in their miserable lives.

As Rebellato notes "It [the play] begins as one might expect as a play about a dangerous artist wanting to tell the truth about war". Galactia emerges as a quintessential rebellious intellectual, embodying the archetype—an individual with a dangerous edge, driven by the imperative to reveal the truth. This initial premise sets the stage for a narrative that explores the challenges and complexities of being an intellectual, particularly one whose artistic vision clashes with social expectations and norms. Barker uses the character of Galactia to examine the conflict between the intellectual search for truth and the social norms and institutions that either oppose or accept such a rebellious narrative. Galactia represents the figure of the rebellious intellectual who challenges established norms and seeks to uncover the truth about war, illustrating the friction between intellectual freedom and social constraints. This inherent tension is palpable between Galactia, a truth-seeking artist and Prodo, a war veteran, in their perspectives on war. The facts of the war, as expressed by Galactia in the above quotation, stand in stark contrast to Prodo's traditional and idealised views, expressed as follows: "God gave me

life. God led me to the battle. God steered the bolt and in his mercy turned my maiming to my benefit” (Barker, *Scenes* Scene One). Prodo’s speech reflects a traditional worldview deeply rooted in religious belief and a sense of divine order. He attributes his experiences, including his war injury, to the will and mercy of God. This is consistent with a more conservative understanding of human life and suggests a passive acceptance of circumstances shaped by higher forces. In contrast, Galactia’s speeches reveal a rebellious intellectualism. She positions herself as a transformative force that challenges Prodo’s perception of the divine order. Galactia’s focus on depicting the war as it was, free from romanticism and idealisation, reflects her commitment to revealing the harsh realities of war.

Galactia’s role as a ‘midwife of truth’, seeking to uncover the stark reality of the conflict, positions her as a disrupter of conventional narratives. The tension arises not only from the clash of perspectives, but also from an implicit challenge to authority, whether it is divine authority, as seen in Prodo’s beliefs, or social authority that shapes the war narrative. This tension becomes a focal point for a broader exploration of intellectualism, the role of artists and the power dynamics, which are all related to the representation of truth in the play:

Galactia: Oh, my poor ridiculous man, I shall paint the why of all your terrors, shall I?

Prodo: Give me back my little peace...

Galactia: Why was the battle fought, Prodo?

Prodo: My little ease, you –

Galactia: Why?

(Pause.)

Prodo: Freedom, of course...

Galactia: Freedom...

Prodo: Glory, of course.

Galactia: Glory...

Prodo: The Honour of the Great Republic and the Humiliation of the Pagan Turk!

Galactia: Oh, look, the arrow’s twitching! Round and round it goes.

Prodo: DOESN’T!

Galactia: Twirling, feathered thing, oh, look!

Prodo: DOESN’T!

Galactia: Wonderful man, grappling with dim truths!

Prodo: WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO TO ME, SIGNORA!

(Pause.)

Galactia: Truth, that's all, just truth. See yourself out, will you?

Prodo: You are an unkind woman, you...

Galactia: Thank you for coming.

Prodo: Digging out my –

Galactia: Sketchbook! Sketchbook! Where have I –

Prodo: Horror of my –

Galactia: Laid it down and –

Prodo: STUPID LIFE. (Barker, *Scenes* Scene One)

In this dialogue, the tension rises as Galactia persistently questions the underlying motives behind the battle, challenging Prodo's simplistic notions of freedom and glory. Galactia's insistence on uncovering the truth disrupts Prodo's attempt to reclaim his 'little ease'. The interchange highlights the clash between Galactia's commitment to revealing the complexities of war and Prodo's resistance to confronting the uncomfortable realities. Galactia's mockery of the arrow's twirling and her description of Prodo grappling with dim truths underscore her role as a provocateur of intellectual discourse. Prodo's emotional outburst and accusation of Galactia being unkind reveal the discomfort provoked by her relentless pursuit of truth. This scene encapsulates the broader tension between the rebel intellectual, embodied by Galactia and the resistance to any challenge to established narratives, symbolised by Prodo.

While this analysis focuses on the intellectual and moral confrontations between characters like Galactia and Prodo, Barker's Theatre of Catastrophe must also be taken into consideration as it invites multiple interpretations of truth and challenges conventional expectations. The purpose of having confrontational characters in Barker's Theatre of Catastrophe, such as Galactia and Prodo in *Scenes from an Execution*, is in line with Barker's overall philosophy. The confrontations between characters in Barker's Theatre of Catastrophe are deliberately crafted to provoke intellectual and moral turmoil. These confrontations are intended to embrace the chaos and complexity Barker aims to convey in his plays. The conflict between Galactia, the rebellious intellectual artist and Prodo, who represents traditional beliefs and social norms, exemplifies Barker's commitment to challenging established orders. Within the Theatre of Catastrophe, Barker

intentionally disrupts the expected moral and ideological foundations, creating a space for intellectual disquiet. The characters become vessels for conflicting ideas, engaging in a dialectical struggle that transcends conventional notions of right and wrong. Thus, the purpose is not to provide clear resolutions or moral lessons; it is rather to immerse the audience in a tumultuous intellectual experience. By placing confronting characters at the centre of his narrative, Barker encourages the audience to grapple with uncertainty and embrace the ambiguity inherent in intellectual enquiry. The Theatre of Catastrophe becomes a space where the clash of ideas is celebrated and the audience is confronted with the challenge of navigating complexity without taking refuge in the comfort of pre-defined moral frameworks. These characters serve as a deliberate invitation to engage with the indigestible nature of Barker's theatre, pushing the boundaries of conventional understanding and creating a profound intellectual and emotional impact on the audience.

The conversations between Galactia and Prodo reveal the tension between the intellectual and the public, while the conversations between Galactia and Urgentino, Doge of Venice and Suffici, an admiral, reveal the direct tension between the intellectual and authority. In this dynamic, Barker explores the tension between the visionary artist on the one hand and the political and military powers that seek to control and manipulate the narrative, on the other. Galactia's intellectualism is felt in her relentless pursuit of truth in art, challenging the expectations and desires of authority for a sanitised depiction of the Battle of Lepanto. The interactions of the Doge and the admiral, who represent political and military authority respectively, with Galactia illuminate the inherent conflict between artistic freedom and state control:

Urgentino: Signora, obviously you have a sense of humour, only an artist with a sense of humour would place the Admiral of the Fleet in such an obscure position! For all his size, he does not dominate the drawing. Now, that is very witty of you, but you see, I am witty, too, so let's be serious, shall we?

Galactia: Are you faulting me for composition?

Urgentino: Signora Galactia! Would I do such a thing? You are the artist! I only remind you of certain priorities. A great artist must first of all be responsible, or all his brush strokes and all his colouring, however brilliant, will not lift him out of the second rank.

Galactia: I am painting the Battle of Lepanto. I am painting it in such a way that anyone who looks at it will feel he is there and wince in case an arrow should fly out of the canvas and catch him in the eye –

Urgentino: Excellent!

Galactia: So that children will tremble at the noise and cling to their parents as the ships collide –

Urgentino: Excellent!

Galactia: Such a noisy painting that people will stare at it holding their ears and when they have dragged themselves away, look at their clothes to see if they have been spattered with blood or brain –

Urgentino: Marvellous! You see, you are passionate, you are magnificent!

Galactia: Make them breathless, make them pale!

Urgentino: Yes! Yes! But also make them PROUD.

Galactia: Proud?

Urgentino: Great art will always celebrate! Celebrate! Celebrate! Do you love Venice, Signora Galactia?

Galactia: I am a Venetian.

Urgentino: So you are, but –

Galactia: I have said, I am a Venetian.

Urgentino: Then praise Venice. I think I need say no more than that. Bring me another drawing soon. (Barker, *Scenes Scene Two*)

Urgentino, representing political authority, urges Galactia to prioritise certain themes in her art that align with the state's agenda. His emphasis on the admiral's position and the need for celebration reflects the desire for a sanitised, glorifying depiction of the Battle of Lepanto to serve political interests. Galactia resists such directives, citing her commitment to capturing the raw and brutal realities of war. Her insistence on creating a painting that immerses viewers in the chaos of war, evoking fear and intensity, contrasts with Urgentino's call for a proud celebration. In the theoretical framework we have presented, drawing especially on thinkers such as Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault, this tension can be seen as a manifestation of the power struggles between the intellectual and institutionalised authority. Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony comes into play where the ruling class attempts to maintain its dominance by controlling cultural narratives. As an intellectual, Galactia challenges this hegemony by refusing to conform to the expectations of the state and seeking to uncover the truth, echoing Gramsci's concept of counter-hegemony. The conflict between artistic freedom and state control in *Scenes from an Execution* can be related to Barker's approach to the National Theatre, as discussed by Dan Rebellato. The tension between the intellectual artist and the political and military authorities embodied in Galactia in the play reflects Barker's broader stance

on the relationship between the artist and institutionalised theatre, including large venues such as the National Theatre.

Galactia's act of creating counter-hegemony aligns with Gramsci's ideas about the role of intellectuals in challenging the prevailing hegemony. According to Gramsci, intellectuals play an important role in two spheres: civil society and political society. In civil society, intellectuals aim to secure the hegemony of their group by creating literature, art, philosophy and ideology that appeal to and gain the consent of members of their social group (524-533). In this context, Galactia's artistic expression appeals to a wider audience within civil society by serving as a means to disrupt the traditional narrative and to challenge the established order. Her art becomes a form of persuasion that seeks to make viewers reconsider their perspectives on war and victory:

Galactia: At first I thought, paint him dead. With arms flung out and backwards, falling headlong from the Muslim deck and then I thought, what a waste of a head, because who will look at a head which is upside down? DO STOP WHATEVER IT IS YOU ARE DOING, YOU WILL MAKE MY DAUGHTER ANGRY. So instead I did a suppliance. I did a figure begging for his life and I put him at the feet of the great Admiral, with his palms extended and I thought I would put into his expression the certain knowledge he would be murdered on the deck. So with one figure I transformed the enemy from beast to victim and made victory unclean. And I suspect, even as I draw it, they will hate this...! (Barker, *Scenes Scene Five*)

Galactia grapples with the artistic choices involved in portraying the enemy. She initially considers depicting the enemy with his arms outstretched and falling upside down from the Muslim deck, symbolising death. However, questioning the effectiveness of depicting an upside-down head, he rejects the idea as a waste. Instead of choosing this more traditional representation, he opts for a different artistic approach. She describes her artistic decision: a suppliant, a figure pleading for his life. Placed at the feet of the Admiral, she seeks to convey the inevitable murder awaiting him on the deck. This decision transforms the enemy from a mere beast to a victim, deliberately staining the concept of victory with moral complexity. This poignant moment captures the tension between artistic expression and social expectations, revealing Galactia's commitment to challenging conventional narratives and introducing a counter-hegemonic perspective in her art. Her suspicion that 'they will hate this' acknowledges the potential resistance of viewers who prefer a sanitised depiction of war. However, Galactia's determination to make victory unclean exemplifies her role as an intellectual who challenges established

norms, encourages critical thinking and contributes to the formation of a counter-hegemonic space in art and public discourse. Although Galactia's resistance is primarily artistic, her preference upsets the expectations of the political and military figures in the play. Her refusal to conform to state-sanctioned narratives and her commitment to depicting the grim and brutal aspects of war, typically overlooked or romanticised, constitute an ideological intervention. In this sense, her art becomes a tool of social and political commentary that encourages a re-evaluation of established norms and perceptions. The aim is to disrupt complacency and encourage critical thinking in order to foster a deeper understanding of the complexity and consequences of war.

The act of creating counter-hegemony explored through Galactia's artistic expression becomes more complicated as we delve into the dialogue between Galactia and her daughter, Supporta. The conflict between them further deepens the complex dynamics of the role of an intellectual in society:

Supporta: Give the people what they want and they will love you. They will exclaim over you. And after that, no woman painter here will have to struggle against prejudice, because you will have proved us. You see, I think you have a responsibility – not to the State, but to Venetian women. Paint your feelings, by all means, that is your power, but let the public in, share with them. The drawing of the Turk insults them.

Galactia: You want me to paint like a man.

Supporta: No –

Galactia: Yes, you want me to paint a man's painting.

Supporta: I do not. What man can paint like you in any case? The vigour, the effort, the agony? No man.

Galactia: And no man honestly hates murder, either. You ask me to be responsible, when what you really mean is, 'celebrate the battle!'

Supporta: I am thinking of you.

Galactia: Oh?

Supporta: I am thinking how mean life is, how it gives you one bite only. Think how they'll attack you, they'll say this woman scorns us, mocks our sacrifice. You scour your own mind, you hunt down your own truth, but perhaps you're vain, too, not to compromise. Maybe you're arrogant, have you thought of that?

Galactia: Arrogant, me?

Supporta: You joke, but –

Galactia: Supporta, listen to me. The act of painting is an act of arrogance. It is arrogant to describe the world and then to shove the thing into the world's face. It is arrogant to compete with nature in painting a flower, or to challenge

God by improving views. To paint is to boast and if you don't like boasting you ought not to paint. Now, let me concentrate. I will negotiate with power because I have to. I will lick the Doge's crevices if need be, because he has power. I am not wholly an idiot and I like to eat and drink as well as you.
(Barker, *Scenes Scene Five*)

In this dialogue between Supporta and Galactia, the conflict revolves around the role of the intellectual artist in society, specifically resisting populism and maintaining artistic integrity. Supporta advocates appealing to approved sentiments in order to gain public consent and frames this as a means for women painters to overcome prejudices. Galactia, on the other hand, resists this populist demand and opposes Supporta's suggestion that she should paint to please the public or at least, she should not upset them. Supporta's expectation that Galactia should 'paint like a man' highlights patriarchal norms influencing artistic expression by referring to gendered expectations of intellectuals. Arguing that no man hates murder, Galactia not only expresses her personal views or feelings, but also provides a deeper analysis of the issues raised by Supporta. She questions traditional gendered perspectives on war and challenges the expectation that one must conform to established norms, such as painting to please the public or conforming to gendered expectations of how intellectuals, especially women, should express themselves artistically.

Supporta's accusing her mother for arrogance also adds a different dimension to the role of the intellectual. In the context of intellectual traits, arrogance can be seen not as a negative quality but as a manifestation of the intellectual's confidence in her or his beliefs. Intellectuals often challenge established norms and question the status quo; these traits may be perceived as arrogance by those who do not welcome change. Galactia's response to the accusation of arrogance shows a keen awareness of her intellectual position, marked by her determination to challenge prevailing norms, resist social pressure and remain true to her beliefs. This awareness is quite evident in Galactia's metaphorical statement about being willing to 'lick the Doge's crevices if need be.' The metaphor underscores her readiness to engage in unpleasant or submissive actions to navigate power dynamics and ensure the success of her artistic and intellectual pursuits. The use of such a metaphor may also convey a degree of sarcasm, emphasising the absurd expectations placed on her by those in power and suggesting that she will only resort to extreme measures when absolutely necessary.

The dynamics between authorities and intellectuals explored in the dialogue between Supporta and Galactia intensify in Scene Eight with Rivera who is a critic. The encounter of Galactia and Rivera reveals how artists act in a precarious balance in a society that demands conformity to political and social norms. This encounter not only explores the complexities of artistic integrity but also foreshadows the growing conflict between authority and intellectuals, a conflict that will later result in Galactia's imprisonment. Rivera highlights the Doge's feelings of vulnerability and unease in response to Galactia's artistic expression. By underscoring the political implications of Galactia's art, Rivera reveals that the Doge is not only concerned with the aesthetic aspects of the artwork but is also deeply apprehensive about the potential impact on the political landscape. This vulnerability contributes to the escalating tension. This risk goes beyond artistic expression and has political implications, emphasising the potential consequences for artists who challenge the established order. The disagreement over the representation of "the greatest triumph of Venetian history" (Barker, *Scenes Scene Eight*) illustrates the clash of perspectives between the intellectual artist and the authorities. By questioning the concept of victory, Galactia signals her resistance to conforming to the prescribed narrative. Her resistance to Rivera's attempts to influence her artistic choices is a subtle but firm stand of intellectual independence. Galactia's effort to emphasise the artistic elements of the canvas, such as "the muscle hanging off the bone" contrasts with Rivera's emphasis on the "dirty mess of truths" (Barker, *Scenes Scene Eight*). This dichotomy reflects the ongoing tension between artistic expression and the unsettling truths that pose a challenge to authority. This ongoing struggle precipitates the consequences Galactia will face, particularly her impending imprisonment, stemming from her unwavering stance not to compromise her artistic vision.

The intensifying conflict between authorities and intellectuals, exemplified in the dialogues with Supporta, Galactia and, later, the critic Rivera, anticipates an important moment in Galactia's artistic journey. This high tension culminates when the state, dissatisfied with Galactia's painting, commissions an alternative work of art. The choice of Galactia's lover, Carpeta, for this alternative painting marks a profound shift in intellectuality and artistic expression. This change is emphasised by the fact that Carpeta, who is more inclined to compromise with authority than Galactia, shows no commitment to artistic and intellectual principles:

Urgentino: [...] And I ask you very frankly, is she a moral woman?

Carpeta: Moral? No, I don't think you could – not moral, no.

(Pause.)

Ostensibile: How quickly can you paint a canvas of three thousand square feet, Signor Carpeta?

(Pause.)

Carpeta: A month.

Urgentino: Now, that's silly –

Carpeta: No, I'm saying –

Urgentino: I have heard of ambition, but that's –

Ostensibile: Let him finish.

Carpeta: I'm saying I could, I could paint a canvas of that size in a month, only it wouldn't be –

Urgentino: It damned well wouldn't, would it?

Carpeta: Be very – very good –

Urgentino: Quite. You are not a rash man, Signor Carpeta. I am glad to see.

Carpeta: For a decent composition and – with the right assistants, I think – seven weeks.

Ostensibile: You see, Signora Galactia has not been altogether fair with us.

Carpeta: No, no, she hasn't been – (Barker, *Scenes* Scene 10)

The dynamics between Carpeta and the two officials, Urgentino and Ostensibile who is a Cardinal, reveal the intersection of political and artistic forces. The dialogue in which Urgentino questions Galactia's morality adds an important layer to the conflict. Carpeta's claim that Galactia lacks morality emphasises the potential conflict between social expectations and Galactia's artistic endeavours. Carpeta's willingness to compromise artistic principles for material gain raises ethical concerns about the integrity of artistic expression. The authorities' evaluations, which praise Carpeta for conforming to the expectations of authority and criticise Galactia for her immorality, underline that adherence to authority and social norms determines the moral perspective in their evaluations. This dialogue reveals the complex interplay between morality, social expectations and artistic integrity, deepening the moral dilemmas faced by the characters in the narrative.

In light of the moral complexities highlighted in the interactions between Galactia, Carpeta and the authorities, the decision to imprison Galactia is seen as a response to her defiance of established norms, emphasising the consequences intellectuals may face when

challenging authority. The decision to imprison Galactia is seen as a response to her defiance of established norms, emphasising the consequences intellectuals may face when challenging authority. In essence, the contrasting responses of Galactia and Carpeta to the state's demands provide a rich exploration of the different facets of intellectualism, highlighting the complexities and dilemmas faced by artists when confronted with social expectations and political pressures. The narrative prompts reflection on the potential consequences of intellectual independence and the nuanced choices intellectuals must make in navigating a society that often demands conformity. As we delve into the dialogue between Ostensibile and Carpeta, the tension between Galactia's artistic autonomy and social expectations comes to the fore, raising thought-provoking questions about the boundaries between public and private reason within the philosophical perspectives of Immanuel Kant:

Ostensibile: You see, Signora Galactia has not been altogether fair with us.

Carpeta: No, no, she hasn't been –

Ostensibile: She has –

Carpeta: Gone her own way –

Ostensibile: Gone her own way, yes! Which is all very well in certain circumstances, but in a public matter such as this –

Carpeta: You have to think of –

(Pause.)

Ostensibile: What?

(Pause.)

What do you have to think of?

Carpeta: What – the circumstances – require. (Barker, *Scenes Scene Ten*)

As already mentioned, in his work *What is Enlightenment?* Immanuel Kant distinguishes between the public and private use of reason. In the public use of reason, he advocates unlimited freedom through which individuals can openly express their thoughts and participate in debates on matters of public concern. However, he recognises that there are limitations in the private use of reason, especially in civil or professional roles, where individuals may need to follow certain rules and restrictions for the social order. In the dialogue, Galactia's artistic expression is portrayed as a manifestation of her private use of her intellect. She is willing to defy the expectations of the state and the authorities by asserting her independence and autonomy in the pursuit of her artistic vision. By 'going

her own way', Galactia emphasises the primacy of her individual judgement rather than conforming to the established norms of a public affair.

The apparent contradiction lies in Galactia's willingness to use her reason privately in a situation that, according to Kant, involves a public matter. While Kant emphasises the limitations placed on private reason in civil matters, Galactia's challenge suggests that individual artistic expression takes precedence over conformity to social expectations. This contradiction raises questions about the boundaries between public and private reason in Kant's framework.

One way to interpret this contradiction is to consider Galactia's role as an intellectual figure who challenges established norms and contributes to social discourse. From this perspective, Galactia's actions may be compatible with Kant's broader emphasis on individuals who dare to know and rely on their reasoning as a source of knowledge. In essence, Galactia's actions seem to contradict Kant's distinction, but they also emphasise the complexity of applying rigid categories to the interaction between public and private reason. The tension between Galactia's artistic autonomy and social expectations adds depth to the exploration of intellectual independence in a social context.

After Carpeta was commissioned to paint the Battle of Lepanto, the authorities congratulate him on his role and promote him to the pantheon of Venetian masters. The conversation shifts towards Galactia, with Urgentino sharing illustrative drawings and suggesting an intimate connection with Carpeta. Nevertheless, by shifting the focus to the controversial work of art, Ostensibile emphasises the need for an appropriate response to what he perceives as a calculated and obscene insult to history:

Ostensibile: We cannot overlook the provocation. We cannot, can we, on delivery of this calculated and obscene affront to History, lie down, can we? Say many thanks and put it in the basement? It is all meat and chopped up genitalia, it is not a battle and she knows it. We cannot simply overlook.

Urgentino: No.

Ostensibile: And she wouldn't want us to.

Urgentino: She would hate it.

Ostensibile: We have to make an appropriate response.

(Pause.)

Urgentino: Prison.

Ostensibile: You think prison?

Urgentino: I think prison is – a little prison, not too much – is what this desperate woman wants...

Ostensibile: Yes.

Urgentino: Confirmation. Of our baseness. Is what she wants. (Barker, *Scenes* Scene Ten)

Ostensibile emphasises the offensive nature of Galactia's artwork by framing it as a calculated and obscene provocation. By characterising the painting in this way, the authorities aim to legitimise a strong reaction from the state. The use of words such as 'affront' and 'all meat and chopped up genitalia' creates a narrative that positions Galactia's work not just as a work of art, but as a deliberate challenge to social norms and history. Urgentino's suggestion of imprisonment as a response underlines their belief in the necessity of a punitive act to confirm the perceived baseness of Galactia's intentions. For him, imprisonment functions as both a consequence and a confirmation of social norms. By proposing prison as 'a little prison, not too much', Urgentino attempts to strike a balance between punishment and acceptance of what Galactia sees as her desperate desire for validation. The authorities' discussion thus functions as a rationalisation or legitimisation of possible state action against Galactia.

The dialogue between Urgentino and Carpeta emerges as a battleground of artistic vision and political repression. Urgentino's dissatisfaction with Carpeta's painting becomes a metaphor for the tension between artistic expression and political expectations. During the ongoing dialogue between Urgentino and Carpeta, Rivera abruptly enters the scene and witnesses their conversation and at some point, also offers a moment of clarity as a critic. Her claim that Carpeta is a solid painter but not an epic painter offers a critical insight into artistic talent, which leads to a broader inquiry into the role of artists and the potential for directing their creative strengths toward different ends, especially in the context of political and ideological considerations:

Rivera: Now, listen to me and I will tell you what I know, as a critic and a loyal supporter of your party and your cause. In art nothing is what it seems to be, but everything can be claimed. The painting is not independent, even if the artist is. The picture is retrievable, even when the painter is lost... (Barker, *Scenes* Scene Sixteen)

Here Rivera emphasises the appropriability of art; that it can be claimed or appropriated for various purposes. Her statement discloses the fact that interpretations in the field of art can be diverse, subjective and eternally changing. The idea that 'the picture is

retrievable, even when the painter is lost' implies that the impact of a work of art can continue beyond the presence or intentions of the artist. This implication unfolds profound layers of irony, scepticism and freedom in Scene Sixteen, where irony arises from the contrast between the superficial appearance of art and its deeper, multifaceted nature. Scepticism is directed towards the intertwining of art with politics and freedom is found in the flexibility and adaptability of art to be appropriated and reinterpreted in different contexts and times. In this case, while the committee finds Carpeta's artistic skill inadequate, it tries to use Galactia's controversial talent for its own ends, as Rivera puts it, setting the stage for a series of ironic turns. The committee strategically releases Galactia in the Scene Seventeen as a political move to assert the Republic's authority in handling dissent, aiming to utilise her controversial talent for its own political agenda. The public display of her contentious painting in Scene Eighteen in a tense atmosphere reflects the Republic's confidence and control over the narrative. In other words, it can assimilate and potentially suppress dissenting or controversial voices to maintain its authority.

The culmination of these strategic moves by the committee sets the stage for the unfolding events in Scene Eighteen. As the public space echoes with the gentle murmurs of a passing crowd by Galactia's canvas, a unique atmosphere emerges, blending artistic debate, political manoeuvring and public acceptance and creating space for a subtle exploration of the relationship between art and society. The Committee's decision to publicly display Galactia's controversial painting is a political move to demonstrate the Republic's ability to intimidate dissenting voices, which finds expression when Urgentino says,

To have lost such a canvas would have been an offence against the artistic primacy of Venice. To have said this work could not be absorbed by the spirit of the Republic would be to belittle the Republic and our barbarian neighbours would have jeered at us. So we absorb all and in absorbing it we show our greater majesty. It offends today, but we look harder and we know, it will not offend tomorrow. We force the canvas and the stretcher down the gagging throat and coughing a little and spluttering a little, we find, on digestion, it nourishes us! There will be no art outside. Only art inside. (Barker, *Scenes* Scene Eighteen)

The quotation underscores the importance of aligning art with the spirit of the Republic, employing vivid metaphors to convey the process of compellingly absorbing and diverse perspectives. The first metaphor 'forcing the canvas and stretcher down the gagging

throat' represents the Republic's capacity to assimilate and embrace a range of artistic expressions, even those initially perceived as challenging or offensive. This reflects a deliberate effort to integrate diverse perspectives into the cultural and political identity of Venice. The second metaphor 'coughing a little and spluttering a little, we find, on digestion, it nourishes us' suggests that the assimilation process may encounter resistance or discomfort, but ultimately, the Republic derives nourishment from the assimilated art. These metaphors intricately depict the complex relationship between artistic freedom, political authority and the dynamic nature of cultural assimilation within the context of the Republic of Venice, emphasising the ongoing dialogue between diverse artistic expressions and the collective identity of the Republic. Urgentino's statement, 'There will be no art outside. Only art inside' also aligns with Althusser's view that the dominant class, in this case the Committee, creates and reproduces ideology through various institutions. The Committee members clearly function as professionals of ideology as they actively engage in the production and dissemination of the dominant ideology, using art as a tool for political demonstration and social assimilation. The Committee's decision to showcase Galactia's painting can be considered as an embodiment of Althusser's argument that intellectuals, as ideology professionals, are legitimising actors subordinate to ruling powers. They contribute to the reproduction of ideology, maintaining the existing power structures. The public labelling of the painting as 'Revenge of the Slag' adds a layer of irony to the scene. The use of the term 'slag', a derogatory slang word implying promiscuity, acquires an irony as it is associated with Galactia herself. The strangeness of the label stands in stark contrast to the seriousness of the subject matter and emphasises the disparity between public perception and the intention of the artist.

The next scene unfolds in Galactia's studio, which portrays a tense encounter between Galactia and Rivera in her studio. The dialogue delves into themes of betrayal, artistic integrity and the consequences of compromise. The atmosphere is charged with resentment and betrayal as Galactia accuses Rivera of flattery, lying and being a shameless peacemaker, expressing a deep disdain for the term 'conciliator'. Rivera, attempting to justify her actions, mentions that she saved Galactia's art and ensured that people saw it. However, Galactia remains unyielding in her stance, asserting that she is not meant to be understood:

Galactia: Don't you see? Oh, you miserable, well-meaning, always-on-the-right-side, desperate little intellect! Death to be understood. Awful death...

Rivera: They are flocking to the exhibition. The hanging in San Marco. Doors are jammed and –

Galactia: Any soldiers trampled on their tunics? Much mutiny down the docks?

Rivera: What?

Galactia: I can't hear rioting, but the curtains are thick... (Barker, *Scenes* Scene Nineteen)

In this compelling dialogue, Galactia vehemently expresses her frustration to Rivera, dismissing the well-intentioned intellect that fails to grasp the true essence of her art which is simply death. The word 'death' introduces a profound contrast between Galactia's intended revolutionary message and the potential co-opting of her art by the authorities. In fact, her being unmoved by Rivera's report of crowds flocking to her exhibition testifies to the death of her own art due to the authorities' interference. The mention of thick curtains in this speech also serves as a poignant metaphor, symbolising the severance of the artist from the society, leaving her in a state of darkness and deafness to social problems. Through her ironic statement that she cannot hear the voice of rebellion through the thick curtains, the failure of her art and the revolutionary stir it has intended comes to the fore. The scene skilfully captures Galactia's deep frustration and disappointment, highlighting the stark gap between her artistic intentions and the reception and utilisation of her work by those in positions of power.

In the final scene of the play, Barker takes an unexpected approach to Galactia's intellectual stance, challenging the initial portrayal of her as a committed intellectual, which was in line with Julian Benda's definition of a true intellectual. As noted by Rebellato, "It [the play] begins as one might expect as a play about a dangerous artist wanting to tell the truth about war; it ends numbed and unable to know where one stands to change the world". He further notes that:

This has the most decisive effect on the final scene. It is the hall in which the painting is displayed. The crowds pass in front of the painting. Sordo is touting for business. The cardinals are bustling. Into this walks Galactia. For some reason, the production now has her in an elegant black dress. Throughout the play she's been in rough linen clothes, in earthen colours. Now she looks dressed up to the nines. And why not? It's not every day you have a major painting unveiled by the state. But this anticipates her capitulation to state power at the end of the play. (Rebellato)

Rebellato's analysis underscores a notable shift in Galactia's appearance and demeanour in the final scene, emphasising the significance of the setting in the hall where her painting is displayed. The change in Galactia's dress, from rough linen clothes in earthen colours to an elegant black dress, is highlighted as a visual representation of her transformation. The unveiling of her major painting by the state marks a momentous occasion and Galactia's seemingly more polished appearance reflects the acknowledgement of this significance. The contrast in her clothing becomes a symbolic prelude to a shift in her stance and resistance, indicating a further compromise with the authorities. The choice of an elegant black dress, traditionally associated with formal and sophisticated occasions, implies a degree of conformity or alignment with the official presentation of her artwork. This visual transformation serves as a hint towards the complex dynamics and decisions that unfold in the final scenes, highlighting the interplay between individual artistic integrity and the pressures exerted by state power.

The transformation in the final scene encapsulates Barker's avant-garde theatre philosophy, emphasising his intentional departure from contemporary theatre norms, notably clarity and realism. Barker eloquently expresses this departure when he writes, "To do this has involved transgressing in the two sacred groves of contemporary theatre – Clarity and Realism" (Barker, *Arguments* 51). Barker's theatrical vision goes beyond the surface-level interactions of characters portrayed on stage. Instead of merely depicting the immediate relationships among characters, Barker's theatre aims to delve into the foundational aspects of human connections, conditions and moral principles. By challenging the fundamental predicates that govern morality, the play prompts the audience to reconsider and question the underlying beliefs and values that shape human relations at a more profound level. The unexpected submission of Galactia becomes a poignant representation of the intervention, illustrating the broader impact on the core dynamics of human relations and morality within the theatrical narrative. In Barker's avant-garde theatre, there is a deliberate encouragement for the audience to question and reevaluate the validity of established categories, including those related to intellectualism. The play challenges the traditional roles and expectations associated with intellectuals and intellectual discourse. Within the avant-garde context of *Scenes from an Execution*, intellectualism is not treated as a monolithic, unquestionable authority. Instead, Barker invites the audience to critically examine and reconsider established categories,

recognising that intellectual discourse itself is subject to evolution and redefinition. The play encourages audiences to question assumptions about intellectual roles and the nature of intellectual engagement. In this context, his avant-garde theatre becomes a space of intellectual exploration that transcends traditional boundaries. It promotes a dynamic and participatory intellectualism in which the audience is an active participant in the process of questioning and re-evaluating the established norms. Barker's rejection of traditional clarity and realism extends to a broader rejection of fixed intellectual categories and fosters an atmosphere of intellectual freedom and fluidity.

As the play unfolds within the avant-garde realm of Barker's theatre philosophy, encouraging the audience to question established categories and intellectualism, the setting shifts to the exhibition hall filled with crowds and bustling cardinals, becoming a dynamic canvas for Barker's catastrophic vision. In line with his Theatre of Catastrophe, this scene occupies "the area of maximum risk" (Barker, *Arguments* 53) where the audience is exposed to unbidden thoughts and moments of loss. An area of maximum risk suggests a space where traditional theatrical norms are pushed to their limits or even transgressed. This could involve breaking away from established conventions, challenging audience expectations or confronting uncomfortable themes. The moments of loss also point to the emotional or intellectual challenges that the audience faces during such unconventional performances. It could be the loss of preconceived notions, the discomfort of encountering the unfamiliar, or the emotional impact of confronting the catastrophic visions presented in Barker's avant-garde theatre. In Barker's own words, "The aim of a Theatre of Catastrophe in overwhelming the normal barriers of tolerance in its audience opens it to the complaint most frequently levelled at my work – the charge of pessimism" (Barker, *Arguments* 53). In this context, 'pessimism' does not necessarily refer to a negative outlook on life but, rather, to the challenging and often discomforting nature of the content which encompasses the substance of the play, its narrative, characters and the ideas it explores. Barker's acknowledgement of this complaint suggests that he recognises the potential discomfort or unease his work might generate but sees it as an essential aspect of pushing the boundaries of theatrical experience.

In the final scene, Galactia's unexpected transformation and the imposing, discomforting experience for the audience align seamlessly with Barker's vision of Catastrophe. The play embraces complexity and dismantles routine moral distinctions

and, as Barker articulates, “lends its audience the potential of a personal reassessment in the light of dramatic action” (Barker, *Arguments* 52). Thus, *Scenes from an Execution* becomes a testament to Barker’s theatrical revolution, inviting the audience into a realm where tragedy, pain and “charismatic defeat” (Barker, *Arguments* 54) hold the power to reshape perspectives. In the context of Barker’s philosophy and the play, charismatic defeat suggests that the play depicts a defeat or setback that, although discouraging or challenging, is presented in such a way as to captivate and leave a lasting impression on the audience. Defeat is charismatic not in the sense of celebrating failure, but in the sense of recognising the profound and transformative nature of the challenges faced by the characters.

As the play seamlessly weaves through Barker’s vision of Catastrophe and the transformative power of defeat, Galactia’s poignant declaration, “Nothing’s in vain! Nothing is wasted!” (Barker, Scene Twenty) resonates with Barker’s rejection of the oppressive clarity often lauded in contemporary theatre. The deliberate breaking of the narrative thread and suspension of the story challenge the audience’s habitual mode of perception, echoing Barker’s rejection of fetishisms of ‘clarity and realism’. Finally, Galactia can be evaluated as a self-portrait of Barker as Gökem Neşe Şenel notes:

In *Scenes from an Execution*, the Theatre of Catastrophe also manifests itself with the biographic reading of the main character with its embodiment of Howard Barker himself. Galactia can be referred as a self-portrait of Barker with her intentions of criticizing her contemporary artists who are co-opted by the state just like the manner Barker criticizes his contemporary dramatists who ideologically shape their works to deliver a transparent related message, which is profoundly opposed by Barker within the context of his Theatre of Catastrophe. Barker is against market theatres of his time that carry a political mere message to be distributed to the audience. This notion is circulated throughout the play via Galactia and her artistic concerns. (587)

The comparison between Galactia’s criticism of his contemporaries and Barker’s criticism of contemporary theatre writers reinforces the parallel between the character and the playwright. Both seem to share a common dissatisfaction with prevailing trends in theatre, especially those that prioritise a direct, politically motivated message over a more complex and intellectually challenging theatrical experience. The reference to Barker’s opposition to market theatres aligns with his broader theatrical philosophy. Barker rejects the idea of theatre as a mere vehicle for delivering politically charged messages to the audience. Instead, he advocates for a more complex, challenging and intellectually

stimulating form of theatre that engages the audience in a deeper exploration of moral and existential questions, a sentiment echoed by Galactia when she claims that ‘Nothing’s in vain!’.



CONCLUSION

The theatre is a spiritual and social X-ray of its time.

—Stella Adler

Stella Adler's profound insight resonates deeply with the core argument presented in this thesis. Just as an X-ray reveals the inner workings of the body, so too does the theatre unveil the underlying tensions, conflicts and aspirations of society and provide a dynamic platform for playwrights. Within this theatrical arena, the portrayal of intellectuals emerges as a central theme that reflects the dynamics of the time. Thus, drawing upon the theoretical frameworks of philosophers and sociologists such as Antonio Gramsci, Louis Pierre Althusser, Julien Benda, Edward Said and others, the thesis provides a detailed X-ray of British society through the portrayal of the social functions, responsibilities and representations of intellectuals. Intellectuals find themselves endowed with a range of roles in contemporary British theatre.

From acting as catalysts for transformative change to acting as wise observers amid social upheaval, intellectuals inhabit a multifaceted landscape of ideas and ideals in theatre. Their portrayal on stage is not only a reflection of individual characters but also an examination of broader intellectual currents inspired by a rich array of theoretical frameworks. Their responsibilities and roles extend to challenging norms, advocating for social justice and fostering critical thought. However, they also face challenges such as navigating censorship, balancing artistic expression with social acceptance and negotiating authenticity in representation. Despite often being depicted with positive traits, there is also a negative discourse surrounding intellectuals who wield their intelligence for oppressive purposes, manipulate public perception or co-opt with power.

The thesis reflects the evolving portrayals of intellectuals and their relationship to socio-political issues through a historical survey of plays spanning different decades. Beginning with John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* in the 1950s, this thesis outlines the intellectual discontent of post-war Britain, challenging social norms and revolutionising theatrical expression. In the 1960s, Robert Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* interweaves historical context with the timeless themes of individual conscience, power and law. Transitioning to the 1970s, Trevor Griffiths' *Occupations* and *The Party* reflect Brechtian influences, which politicise personal dilemmas and underscore the disconnect between

intellectual theory and practice. These plays encourage audiences to critically engage with issues of activism and social change by serving as vivid reflections of the socio-political currents of the time. Howard Barker's *Scenes from an Execution*, which premiered in 1990, defies conventional theatre boundaries by inviting audiences into a realm of intellectual and moral dilemmas. Barker presents uncomfortable facts to his audience and questions conventional narratives in his avant-garde theatre, *Theatre of Catastrophe*, which encourages discussion and reflection. Finally, in the more recent context of the 2010s, Tom Stoppard's *The Hard Problem* stimulates profound exploration of consciousness and ethics, challenging audiences to reconsider traditional notions of intellectualism. Acting as a testament to the timeless importance of intellectual investigation in a world that is constantly evolving, Stoppard's play compels spectators to confront fundamental inquiries about the essence of knowledge and morality.

Despite the rich tapestry of plays analysed in this thesis, spanning different decades and thematic landscapes, a common thread persists in the portrayal of intellectuals in contemporary British theatre. Despite their noble ideals, the intellectual protagonists, without exception, are portrayed as impotent figures, who are unable to bring about significant change in society, to guide it, or to transform the thoughts of the individuals into action. Ultimately, they often find themselves isolated, marginalised and silenced by society, authorities or the institutions they work for, with the looming risk of being co-opted by the very systems they endeavour to challenge.

Indeed, the portrayal of intellectuals as impotent figures in contemporary theatre serves a dramatic purpose that goes beyond simple characterisation. This portrayal underlines the challenges and constraints that intellectuals face in their efforts to challenge established norms and advocate for social transformation. Through this lens, the playwrights invite audiences to consider the inherent tensions between intellectual aspirations and the practical realities of social, political and institutional power structures. By highlighting the risks of isolation, marginalisation and co-option faced by intellectuals, playwrights encourage audiences to contemplate the ethical dilemmas and compromises inherent in intellectual engagement with contemporary society. Ultimately, this portrayal serves as a catalyst for dialogue and introspection, which prompts audiences to interrogate the role of intellectuals in shaping cultural discourse and challenging the status quo. Playwrights also aim to evoke empathy, anger or self-reflection among the

audience. This provocation encourages audiences to question their own assumptions and beliefs, as well as the broader power dynamics at play in society. Playwrights harness the power of storytelling, thematic exploration and dramatic technique to challenge audiences intellectually and emotionally and inspire them to reconsider their perspectives and engage more deeply with the world around them. Through the creation of compelling characters, thought-provoking themes and engaging narratives, playwrights facilitate a dynamic exchange between the stage and the audience and foster dialogue, introspection and ultimately, personal growth.

Beyond serving dramatic purposes, this portrayal of intellectuals reveals a deeper and more important truth embedded in society: it is the reflection of the anti-intellectual tendency rooted deeply in Western civilisation. As Isaac Asimov, the famous science fiction writer and intellectual, once observed, anti-intellectualism is not just a passing trend but a lasting force that has managed to penetrate the texture of our political and cultural landscape. He wrote, “The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that ‘*my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge*’” (19). Through these words, Asimov draws attention to a disturbing phenomenon: the proliferation of anti-intellectual¹⁵ attitudes fuelled by a misinterpretation of democracy. While democracy upholds the principles of equality and inclusiveness, it can unintentionally provide a fertile ground for the spread of anti-intellectual ideas¹⁶. In a democratic society, where all voices seemingly have equal weight, there is a tendency to

¹⁵ Anti-intellectualism is a socio-cultural phenomenon characterised by hostility, distrust or disdain towards intellectual pursuits, knowledge and those who engage in them. It encompasses a range of attitudes and beliefs that devalue or marginalise intellectualism, often favouring practicality, simplicity or emotional appeal over critical thinking, expertise and rational discourse.

¹⁶ Rooted in Plato’s critique of democracy in his work, *The Republic*, this idea has been revisited and expanded by numerous thinkers dealing with the complexities of democratic governance and its implications for intellectual discourse. John Stuart Mill uses the concept of “the tyranny of the majority” (76) warns against the oppressive nature of majority rule, particularly in stifling dissent and minority viewpoints, thereby hindering intellectual progress and the pursuit of truth. This notion has been further developed by contemporary scholars such as Richard Hofstadter, who in *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (1963), examines the historical roots and consequences of anti-intellectualism in democratic societies, emphasising its threat to rational discourse and governance due to populism (154-155). Additionally, in his work, *The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data* (2016), Michael P. Lynch argues that the democratisation of information through the internet can create a false sense of expertise and encourage a superficial engagement with sophisticated issues and ultimately undermine the pursuit of knowledge and rational discourse (Ch.1).

favour views based on populism or emotional appeal over those that relate to knowledge and expertise. This quote, thus, serves as a vivid reminder of the dangers inherent in a society where ignorance is equated with, or even held superior to, knowledge. Asimov's words urge us to confront the depth of anti-intellectualism and its implications for democratic discourse and intellectual progress and to recognise the profound challenges posed by prioritising emotion and populism over knowledge and expertise.

John Wellens' analysis in his article, "The Anti-Intellectual Tradition in the West", further elaborates on the origins and perpetuation of anti-intellectualism in Western societies. He specifically focuses on historical underpinnings and contemporary manifestations of anti-intellectualism particularly in Britain and the United States. He identifies two main sources contributing to this tradition: 'The Industrial Revolution' and 'public school, colonial ethic' (22-23). During the Industrial Revolution, practicality and independence were valued over academic learning. Innovators who developed new technologies independently reinforced this tendency. Universities remained detached from the burgeoning industrial sector, which has led to the estrangement between academia and industry that still persists today:

As though to emphasize the conflict between the two worlds the industrialist created two myths; the 'hard way man' and the 'man with paper qualifications'. The former he endowed with all the virtues and on the latter he poured his unconcealed scorn. The glorification of the 'hard way man' is one of the two great manifestations of the anti-intellectual tradition in British industry. (Wellens 23)

The quotation highlights the pervasive influence of anti-intellectualism in British industry which shapes attitudes and perceptions towards education, qualifications and achievement. It also highlights how certain myths and stereotypes perpetuate the marginalisation of intellectualism and lead to a wider social divide between academia and industry. The other reason behind anti-intellectualism as identified by Wellens, the colonial ethic, shaped educational priorities through a particular rhetoric pillared on courage, independence and conformity. This ethic, rooted in the "code of the frontiersman"¹⁷ (Wellens 23), celebrated physical strength and social adaptation over

¹⁷ In the colonial context, the 'code of frontiersman' encompasses a set of ideals and values that guided the behaviour and aspirations of individuals living on the colonial frontier. These ideals included courage in the face of adversity, resilience in harsh conditions, independence in decision-making and resource management, loyalty to colonial authorities and a competitive spirit in the pursuit of opportunities for land, wealth or status.

intellectual pursuits. The public-school system in Britain and the evolving educational landscape in the United States reinforced these values, which has led to an anti-intellectual bias within society that persists to this day.

Echoing observations made by both Asimov and Wellens, the portrayal of intellectuals in contemporary British theatre, as evidenced by the plays analysed in this thesis, offers a critical reflection on the pervasive influence of anti-intellectualism in society. Across the spectrum of these plays, especially the protagonists representing intellectual integrity and moral conviction often find themselves struggling with difficult challenges and constraints. As they struggle with power systems and strive to bring about meaningful change, they are often marginalised, silenced or repressed by oppressive forces, reflecting the social attitude that democracy equates ignorance with knowledge.

Expanding on Wellens' ideas, anti-intellectualism in Britain stems from a variety of historical, cultural and socio-political factors. Historical precedents, such as periods of suppression of intellectuals by religious institutions, have left a lasting impact on public attitudes. Class division has also contributed to society's resentment towards intellectuals who are often perceived as part of an educated elite. Besides, cultural scepticism has prioritised practicality over abstract thinking, as media portrayals keep reinforcing negative stereotypes of intellectuals. Another issue is that the political discourse which targets experts and intellectuals from time to time, especially when a scapegoat is needed, fuels mistrust. Economic inequalities and limited access to education also exacerbate anti-intellectual sentiments. Thus, addressing the widespread attitude of anti-intellectualism requires dealing with these multifaceted issues to promote critical thinking and inclusivity in intellectual discourse.

Within the realm of this thesis on contemporary British theatre, playwrights adeptly capture these social tensions and offer detailed portrayals of intellectuals fighting with the pervasive influence of anti-intellectualism. Each play serves as a microcosm reflecting broader social attitudes towards intellectual pursuits by shedding light on the challenges faced by intellectuals in navigating a world often hostile to their ideas. Bolt's *A Man for All Seasons* encapsulates this struggle through Sir Thomas More, highlighting the historical battle against intellectual suppression. Similarly, Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* presents Jimmy Porter as an intellectual confronting social prejudices and class

distinction, reflecting the challenges intellectuals face trying to operate within an anti-intellectual culture. Stoppard's *The Hard Problem* and Howard Barker's *Scenes from an Execution* delve into intellectual inquiry amidst scepticism and repression and illustrate the difficulties of gaining recognition in a society that devalues critical thinking. Griffiths' *Occupations* and *The Party* further underscore the barriers intellectuals encounter by emphasising the clash between class and political engagement within an environment steeped in anti-intellectual sentiments.

Collectively, these plays offer a reflection on the lasting impact of anti-intellectualism in society. They force audiences to confront the repercussions of social views on intellectual endeavour. Through complex portrayals of characters and compelling storylines, the playwrights shed light on the systematic oppression faced by intellectuals within existing power hierarchies. This portrayal aims to trigger dialogue and introspection, prompting the audience to re-evaluate prevailing anti-intellectual prejudices and their consequences.

Building upon the discourse presented so far, it becomes evident that the portrayal of intellectuals in contemporary British theatre not only reflects the enduring influence of anti-intellectualism but also anticipates the emergence of a phenomenon increasingly prevalent in modern society: post-truth¹⁸. In today's world, truth is often overshadowed by narratives that are practical or emotionally resonant, which lead to a blurring of the lines between fact and lie. The proliferation of misinformation, the rise of populist rhetoric and the erosion of trust in traditional sources of authority all contribute to the prevalence of post-truth dynamics in contemporary society. Lee McIntyre has further argued that "post-truth amounts to a form of ideological supremacy, whereby its practitioners are trying to compel someone to believe in something whether there is good evidence for it or not" (12). McIntyre's quote captures the essence of post-truth as a phenomenon where facts and evidence take a backseat to ideological agendas. In essence,

¹⁸ The term 'post-truth' is defined as "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief" ("Post-truth"). While post-truth undeniably holds relevance to the ongoing social discourse, its direct theoretical connection to the specific thematic focus of the thesis is limited. Thus, the conclusion emerges as an opportune juncture to broaden the analytical scope and contextualise the findings within a broader socio-political landscape. By discussing post-truth in relation to intellectualism, the thesis aims to bridge the gap between theoretical exploration and practical application, thereby illustrating the relevance of its findings to contemporary debates surrounding truth, knowledge, and intellectualism in society.

post-truth represents a departure from traditional notions of truth-seeking, where objective facts and evidence form the basis of rational discourse and decision-making. Instead, in a post-truth environment, the goal is not necessarily to convey accurate information but rather to advance a particular ideology or narrative, regardless of its factual basis.

While the term, post-truth, may be relatively new, its definition encompasses concepts and practices that have historical roots predating its formal coinage. The idea of disregarding objective facts in favour of subjective beliefs or emotions has manifested in various forms throughout history. From propaganda campaigns to ideological indoctrination, societies have struggled with the manipulation of truth for political or social purposes long before the term post-truth gained prominence. Indeed, the dissemination of misinformation, the distortion of reality for propaganda purposes and the prioritisation of emotional narratives over reason have been recurring features of human discourse across cultures and eras. In the context of contemporary British theatre, the exploration of post-truth phenomena adds another layer of complexity to the portrayal of intellectuals. Playwrights have the opportunity to delve into the ethical dilemmas faced by intellectuals in a world where truth itself has become a contested terrain. Characters struggle not only with the challenges of anti-intellectualism but also with the manipulation of truth for political gain, the dissemination of misinformation and the erosion of trust in expertise and evidence-based inquiry.

Stoppard's *The Hard Problem* takes on renewed significance in this context, as it prompts audiences to confront the philosophical implications of a post-truth society. The play's exploration of consciousness, morality and the nature of knowledge resonates deeply in an era marked by epistemological uncertainty and moral ambiguity. Similarly, Barker's *Scenes from an Execution* challenges audiences to interrogate the role of art in a post-truth world, where the boundaries between reality and representation are increasingly blurred. Griffiths' works, *Occupations* and *The Party*, offer a critical examination of the intersection between politics and truth, highlighting the challenges faced by intellectuals in navigating a landscape where truth is often sacrificed at the altar of power. By confronting the complexities of intellectual engagement in a post-truth society, these plays compel audiences to reflect on the ethical responsibilities of intellectuals in an era of misinformation and manipulation.

In contemporary British theatre, playwrights often portray intellectuals as figures engaged in the difficulties of making their way in a society where truth is often sacrificed when confronted with authorities and power institutions. These intellectuals find themselves caught in a web of competing narratives in which objective truths are overshadowed by subjective interpretations and emotional appeals. As interpreters of social reality, they are tasked with distinguishing right from wrong amidst a cacophony of conflicting voices and agendas. However, in a post-truth world, the authority of intellectuals is frequently called into question. Their expertise and knowledge are often dismissed or undermined by populist rhetoric and anti-intellectual sentiment. This marginalisation of intellectuals not only undermines their ability to contribute meaningfully to public discourse but also erodes the foundations of rational inquiry and evidence-based decision-making. Moreover, intellectuals in a post-truth world face significant ethical dilemma. They must navigate the tension between speaking truth to power and succumbing to the pressures of conformity and self-preservation. The temptation to align with prevailing ideologies or pander to public opinion can compromise their integrity and credibility, further undermining their role as guardians of knowledge and truth.

In essence, the representations of the intellectuals in contemporary British theatre encapsulate their precarious position within society. Through the lens of the theatre, the playwrights offer an incisive portrayal of intellectuals as individuals preoccupied with the shifting terrain of truth, authority and conformity in an age marked by liquidity. These intellectuals are depicted as figures confronting the daunting task of upholding their integrity and credibility in the face of pervasive anti-intellectual sentiment and the erosion of trust in traditional sources of authority. Their stories serve as a poignant reminder of the profound challenges they face in navigating a world where objective truth is increasingly elusive and where intellectual authority is constantly contested. Ultimately, these plays serve as a call to action, urging audiences to confront their own biases and assumptions and to engage in meaningful dialogue about the ethical responsibilities of intellectuals in an age of uncertainty and misinformation. Through their thought-provoking narratives and compelling characters, contemporary British theatre offers a profound testament to the enduring importance of intellectual inquiry and critical thinking in an ever-evolving society.

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