



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

British Cultural Studies

**REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WELFARE STATE POLICIES  
IN POST-WAR BRITAIN IN JOHN ARDEN'S *LIVE LIKE PIGS* AND  
*THE WORKHOUSE DONKEY***

Melike İrem ŞİMŞEK

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2019



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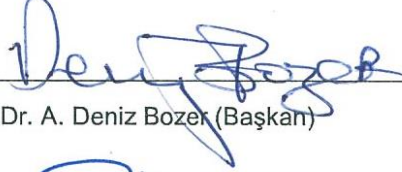
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Melike İrem Şimşek tarafından hazırlanan "Representations of the Welfare State Policies in Post-War Britain in John Arden's *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey*" başlıklı bu çalışma, 20 Haziran 2019 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.



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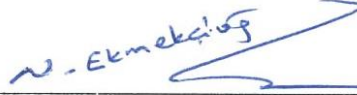
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## ETİK BEYAN

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## ÖZET

ŞİMŞEK, Melike İrem. John Arden'ın *Live Like Pigs* ve *The Workhouse Donkey* Adlı Oyunlarında Savaş Sonrası Britanya'sı Refah Devleti Politikalarının Temsilleri. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2019.

İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın sonuçlarından dolayı Britanya'nın savaş sonrası sosyo-ekonomik koşulları Britanya halkı için yıkıcı olmuştur. Refah devleti politikaları, teoride ülkenin sosyo-ekonomik durumunu iyileştirmek için hayata geçirilmiş olsa da, pratikte bu politikaların yetersiz kaldığı görülmüştür. Dolayısıyla bu tez, John Arden'ın (1930-2012), sol görüşlü bir oyun yazarı olarak, refah devleti politikalarının uygulanmasındaki başarısızlıkları, konutlandırma, sosyal güvenlik, eğitim ve Ulusal Sağlık Hizmeti politikalarının temsilleri yoluyla *Live Like Pigs* (1958, Domuzlar Gibi Yaşa) ve *The Workhouse Donkey* (1963, Düşkünlerevi Eşeği) adlı oyunlarında nasıl eleştirdiğini tartışmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın giriş bölümü, Arden'ın söz konusu oyunlarının politik, ekonomik ve kültürel yönlerden analizini yapabilmek için gerekli olan İkinci Dünya Savaşı-sonrası Britanya'sının tarihsel bağlamını, özellikle İngiltere İşçi Partisi'nin refah devleti politikaları üzerinde durarak ortaya koymaktadır. Tezin birinci ana bölümü, Arden'ın, *Live Like Pigs*'te yer alan refah devleti politikalarının – konutlandırma, eğitim, sosyal güvenlik ve Ulusal Sağlık Hizmeti – uygulamalarındaki başarısızlıklarını nasıl eleştirdiğine odaklanmaktadır. İkinci bölüm ise *The Workhouse Donkey*'de yer alan refah devleti politikalarının – eğitim ve Ulusal Sağlık Hizmeti – kamu görevlilerinin karıştığı yolsuzluklara bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan başarısızlıklarının farklı yönlerini incelemektedir. Son olarak, sonuç bölümünde, Arden'ın oyunlardaki karakterlere ve politikalara yönelik olarak takındığı tarafsız tutumun altı çizilerek refah devleti politikalarının başarısızlığının temelinde yolsuzluk, baskı ve/veya eylemsizliğin yattığı vurgulanmaktadır. Oyunlardaki bazı temel epik öğelere de değinilerek epizodik yapı, şarkı, anlatıcı ve seyirciye doğrudan hitap etme gibi biçimsel öğelerin içerik üzerindeki etkisi de gösterilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** John Arden, *Live Like Pigs*, *The Workhouse Donkey*, savaş sonrası Britanya'sı, refah devleti politikaları



## ABSTRACT

ŞİMŞEK, Melike İrem. Representations of the Welfare State Policies in Post-war Britain in John Arden's *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey*. Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2019.

Due to the consequences of World War II, the socio-economic condition of Britain during the post-war period was devastating for the British people. The welfare state policies were initiated to improve the socio-economic situation of the country in theory, but they proved to be inefficient in practice. Accordingly, this thesis discusses that John Arden (1930-2012), as a left-wing oriented playwright, criticises the failures in the implementation of the welfare state policies in *Live Like Pigs* (1958) and *The Workhouse Donkey* (1963) through representations of housing, social security, education and the National Health Service policies. The introduction part of this study provides the historical context of the post-World War II period in Britain with a specific focus on the Labour Party's welfare state policies, which is essential to an analysis of the political, economic and cultural aspects of Arden's two mentioned plays. The first main chapter focuses on Arden's criticism of the failures in the implementation of the welfare state policies, which are housing, education, social security and the National Health Service, respectively in *Live Like Pigs*. The second chapter, which is on *The Workhouse Donkey*, explores the different aspects of the failures of the welfare state policies, related to health and education, due to the corruption of public servants. Finally, in the conclusion part, emphasising Arden's objective approach to the characters and/or policies, it is underlined that the failures in the welfare system are caused mainly by corruption, oppression and/or inertia of people. Also by touching upon some of the fundamental epic elements in the plays, such as episodic structure, song, narrator and direct addressing to the audience, the effect of the formal elements on the content are presented.

**Keywords:** John Arden, *Live Like Pigs*, *The Workhouse Donkey*, post-war Britain, welfare state policies

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## INTRODUCTION

John Arden (1930-2012) is one of the most remarkable playwrights of the post-war period in Britain, for throughout his writing career, he “provide[d] an alternative ‘anti-illusionistic,’ Brechtian direction in British drama, [...] consistently forced the audience to expand its conception of theatre beyond the confines of traditional stage [and] achieved considerable prominence in the canon” (Wike xi). Since Arden lived through the post-World War II period, he reflected post-war Britain’s socio-economic and political problems in his plays. The welfare state policies initiated by the Labour Party seemed to be the solution to these problems in theory, but they proved to be inefficient in practice. Accordingly, Arden, as a left-wing oriented playwright, criticised the Labour Party’s policies and reflected the reasons that caused the failure of these welfare state policies, which were related to housing, education, social security and health services, in his plays *Live Like Pigs* (1958) and *The Workhouse Donkey* (1963). In order to understand Arden’s criticism of the welfare state policies, it is necessary to examine, first, the concept of the welfare state and its history in Britain.

It has been argued that the phrase “welfare state” derived from the German word *Wohlfahrtsstaat*, which dates back to the late 1920s, and the word was first used by the German Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck (1815-1898) who is generally credited with the creation of social policies aiming to better citizens’ lives (Rustemi 1). However, the English phrase “welfare state,” inspired by Bismarck, first appeared, in the written form, in William Temple’s *Citizen and Churchman* (1941) in which the writer establishes a strong link between the welfare state and democracy (35). He contrasts power states with welfare states, as the former is created by dictators to serve themselves and the latter by democracies to serve the common interest of all citizens (35). Temple thus gives the welfare state a positive meaning, perceiving and presenting it as a product of democracy, not tyranny. In his book, published in 1941, that is during World War II, Temple presents the necessity of “welfare states” as a means to better the socio-economic conditions that were deeply damaged by the on-going war.

The phrase “welfare state” was popularised in Britain in the early 1950s. In 1951, Clement Attlee used “welfare state” as a slogan for the Labour Party’s campaign, and within a short time the term spread dramatically across the country, entering the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 1955 as “a polity so organised that every member of the community is assured of his due maintenance and the most advantageous conditions possible for all” (Bédarida 192). Despite the fact that this early account of the welfare state is too prototypical, it embodies the fundamental idea of caring for the interests of all citizens, which is still the core of a welfare state. In the *Oxford English Dictionary* published in 2018, the term is defined in a more detailed way:

A system whereby the state undertakes to protect the health and well-being of its citizens, especially those in financial or social need, by means of grants, pensions, and other benefits. The foundations for the modern welfare state in the UK were laid by the Beveridge Report of 1942; proposals such as the establishment of a National Health Service and the National Insurance Scheme were implemented by the Labour administration in 1948.

The definition of the welfare state above is especially linked to the Beveridge Report and the Labour Party. However, as argued by Schweinitz, the practices of the welfare state did not come out suddenly with William Temple, Sir Beveridge and/or the Labour administration (32). Although the term was coined in the 1940s and popularised by the Labour Party, the welfare state, as a practice of bettering people’s life standards, existed in the early nineteenth century. Therefore, in order to fully understand how the services of the welfare state emerged in Britain, one has to look at its history.

Long before the idea of the welfare state was popularised, its rudimentary practices, which covered only the poor in the beginning, existed in early 1800s Britain. According to Mowat, The Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) marks the beginning of the services of the welfare state (55). The law ensured that “the poor were housed in workhouses, clothed and fed [...] [and] in return for this care, all workhouse paupers would have to work for several hours each day” (“The Cabinet Papers” n.p). However, this amendment did not solve the existing problem of poverty; it rather temporarily bettered the paupers’ living conditions only to a level “which was below that on which the poorest labourer could survive” (Field 3). Thus,

this amendment can be seen as an initial step taken by the state to help those situated at the very bottom of British society in terms of finance.

The Poor Law Amendment was not, however, welcomed by the majority of the economically independent classes in society, since they believed that every relief provided to the pauper actually impoverished them. Moreover, there was the general opinion that “poverty was a crime and unemployment laziness,” disregarding the underlying social reasons beneath these problems (Mowat 55). Therefore, the official services for the protection of the poor were not approved of and were considered to be a luxury for the people in need (Mowat 55-56).

In the late nineteenth century, the public opinion was influenced relatively positively by the authors who advocated these services and even promoted more of these services. In 1878, Canon W. L. Blackley, “the pioneer of old age pensions schemes not only in Britain but in other parts of the world, and the founder of the National Providence” (Briggs 22), proposed a compulsory and universal insurance for the elderly and the sick, arguing that old-age and sickness pensions could be financed by every working citizen aged between eighteen and twenty-one, and if their contribution was added to by the state, the amount would accumulate in time and would provide pensions at the age of seventy (Cordery 160). In 1886, T. H. Green, in his *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, argued that the state should provide people with sufficient health service, housing and education in order to achieve the development of “social capacity” (qtd. in Mowat 57). As a result, Joseph Chamberlain from the House of Commons took these arguments into account and expressed the following in Parliament: “[The fact] that there is a very large number of people who have led ordinarily respectable lives but who in old age are forced to go upon the Poor Rates . . . [is] a scandal upon our civilization” (qtd. in Wilson and Mackay 26). Chamberlain’s remark is significant not simply because it stresses the fact that at the time those who could not work due to old age were economically in poor condition but also because it indirectly introduced the idea of caring for those who are in need due to old age as part of the responsibilities of the state, since Chamberlain accepted the existence of such an issue as a disgrace to the state. Chamberlain’s words and ideas became quite popular among the public, affected the public

opinion in relation to the official services like the Poor Law and led the public to sympathise with the poor (Wilson and Mackay 27).

In the early 1900s, after the causes of poverty were investigated and presented in the official reports of the Royal Commission, the idea that the state was responsible for the welfare of the citizens, as much as individuals themselves, gained recognition (Gazeley 35). According to the reports, poverty was rooted in old age, illness, poor housing, insufficient wages, temporary labour, blind-alley jobs and unemployment, instead of laziness and extravagance (Gazeley 35). As a result, in 1905 the Conservatives passed the Unemployed Workmen Act that formed “distress committees in every borough to help the unemployed by finding or providing them with work or assisting them to emigrate” (Mowat 58). Through this act, the state aimed to become a part of the solution to the problem of unemployment and decrease poverty in society. Following the Unemployment Act, the Old Age Pensions Act was passed in 1908. It provided five shillings a week for the citizens who were seventy years old and with good behaviour (Orloff 16). They were also expected to have been wage earners until their senility and pass the Means Test, which evaluated the applicants’ economic conditions (Orloff 16). The elderly who received their financial relief proved that poverty was not a defect or fate of individuals; it was rather a consequence of the social problems that could be eased by the state.

The Old Age Pensions Act was introduced to Parliament by the Liberal Party, but it was actually the consequence of the efforts made by Joseph Chamberlain over Canon Blackley’s proposal, which underlines the gradual and cumulative development of the welfare services, for which there were still obstacles in the way (Orloff 18). For example, even though the oppositions to help the poor were reduced, the members of the Royal Commission, representing the opponents, were in the majority, and they wanted to maintain the Poor Law system only on the condition that its name would be changed and its cost and burden to the state reduced. However, the minority in the commission wanted to abolish the Poor Law in order to establish an even more comprehensive system that would provide “specialized services dealing with birth and infancy, medical provision on public health lines, homes for the aged, and a national ministry of labour to help the unemployed” (Mowat 59). The change

was needed due to the fact that the Poor Law kept people from starving, but this was not an “adequate fulfilment of social duty” (Webb 396-97). A more comprehensive system of the Poor Law proposed by the minority was thus comparatively closer to a welfare state; however, since the opponents had the majority, Poor Law system continued with its deficiencies (Gazeley 10). This was a postponement of the realisation of the welfare state.

Meanwhile, other reforms continued to “add timbers to the structure of the welfare state” (Mowat 60). In 1908 the Labour Party proposed the Children’s Act, suggesting that every child should get standardised meals at school, provided by the state. Moreover, children should be offered free medical services at school, which was also seen as one of the responsibilities of the state as a result of the efforts made by the Labour Party. The party’s number of seats in the Commons was enough to realise this proposal. Another reform, the National Insurance Act 1911, which would better the living conditions of a group of working-class men, was introduced by Lloyd George (Watts 160-61). The act promoted the idea of compulsory insurance, including both unemployment insurance and health insurance, which covered only builders, engineers and shipbuilders (Mowat 59). This insurance improved workers’ conditions of sickness and invalidism, if not permanently treating them. However, all citizens could not benefit from it: Women, children, elderly and a number of workers whose job or income did not meet the requisites of the insurance did not have the opportunity to be covered by the National Insurance (Mowat 60). The fact that these groups of people were left outside indicated that this service needed to be improved. After all, although the Insurance Act had certain defects, both the Children’s Act and the National Insurance reforms contributed to the view that it was a duty of the state to provide decent services to enhance the welfare of its citizens.

During World War I, there were not considerable developments in terms of social security services, but after the war, the developments continued especially due to unemployment. Since unemployment turned into an urgent national problem to be solved after the war, and the poor law and insurance benefits were not enough, the state supported the unemployed through the “out-of-work donation” (dating from 1918) and the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1920 (Lund 85-86). The donation covered ex-servicemen and war workers, while the

insurance covered almost all ex-workers (Crew 7). Other developments were the 1918 Education Act “allowing public funds to be spent by local education authorities” for nursery schools, the 1918 Maternity and Child Welfare Act providing day nurseries operated by local health authorities for children under five, alongside contributory pensions given to widows, orphans and the elderly over 65 in 1925 (Lund 94). These developments indicated that the state gradually became more inclined to ensure public welfare.

In the 1940s, World War II became the major driving force that accelerated the transformation of the state in Britain into a welfare state because of its catastrophic results, which necessitated the urgent reconstruction of the country through a comprehensive system of government like the welfare state. On account of the fact that the war had affected many people from different classes in Britain in a similar way, it became a “people’s war” (Fraser 194). Since factories were bombed, production decreased; furthermore, since the country was in heavy debt, importation decreased. Rationing turned out to be necessary in these circumstances, and even the royal family ate spam which is a product made of tinned ham (Fraser 193). In addition, the war was being experienced everywhere in the country. In other words, there was no front anymore because not only soldiers but also civilians experienced the bitter reality of the war (Titmuss 508). For example, the bombs coming from Luftwaffe air raids that lasted for almost a year, between 7 September 1940 and 11 May 1941, knew no occupation or social class; therefore, the destruction they wreaked created a common experience among the British (Fraser 193). The bombs and other incidents caused by the war left injured people from all classes in need of immediate health care, which resulted in the use of the emergency medical service like a national hospital service in practice, foreshadowing the future National Health Service (Rivett 238). Thus, through the emergency medical service that provided voluntary treatment to the casualties of the war, people saw that “it meant little that one had or had not a bank account” (Mowat 60). Another example is the evacuation of the slums: In urgent need of housing, people living in the bombed slum houses, mostly working-class people, were moved into country houses. During the evacuations, the under-nourished children of bombed cities revealed the poverty of urban working-class life to rural areas (Fraser 195). Still another example that shows World War II



as a “people’s war” is the Dunkirk evacuation, which necessitated civil help for the evacuation of the British soldiers from the port in France. For the evacuation, instead of the royal ships, civil boats were used to rescue the soldiers because in this way they would be either ignored or unnoticed by the enemy forces (Gardner 124). This incident shows the obvious involvement of civilians in the war. All these examples disclose that World War II was experienced as a “people’s war” that created a common experience, or common suffering, and aroused the nation’s social conscience. Fraser argues that during World War I British society’s dream was to go back to the pre-war situation; however, during World War II, society knew that going back to the pre-war situation would not be enough this time because the establishment of a better future for all classes was now seen as necessary (194). Concordantly, in 1940 an article in *The Times* argued:

If we speak of democracy we do not mean a democracy which maintains the right to vote, but forgets the right to work and the right to live. If we speak of freedom, we do not mean a rugged individualism which excludes social organisation and economic privilege. If we speak of economic reconstruction, we think less of maximum production (though this, too, will be required) than of equitable distribution. (qtd. in Titmuss 508)

The extract from the article underlines that the previous othering of the poor radically changed, and society began to see that all the classes and British citizens were in the same conditions; therefore, the state’s protection of and support for the members of British society were seen as its crucial responsibilities. This new perception paved the way for the creation of the Beveridge Report, which is regarded as “the blueprint of the welfare state” (Obelkevich and Caterall 77).

The publication of the Beveridge Report, or *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, written by Sir William Beveridge in 1942, laid the foundations of the welfare state in Britain, and it was very popular with the British public. Since it formed the basis of the welfare state policies, it is even regarded as the “Magna Carta of the welfare state” (Harris 21). The report was created after Beveridge was invited to share his recommendations on social insurance and allied services (Beveridge 3). It mainly proposed that every citizen should be under the care of the state “from the cradle to grave,” an idea based on tackling the “Giant Evils” in society, namely squalor, ignorance, want, idleness and disease (Beveridge 6). There were certainly

primitive welfare services against these evils before they were named in the Beveridge report; however, the significance and authenticity of the report came not from its detection of the problems, but from the solutions Beveridge proposed in it. The proposal widened the notion of social services for the people in need (the elderly, mothers and children) to a system of social security, which was, according to Beveridge, based on “unified universal contributory insurance to ensure at all times to all men a subsistence income for themselves and their families as of right” (qtd. in Woodroffe 304). In other words, Beveridge unfolded a National Insurance and National Health Service plan that meant to support every citizen throughout his life. He further suggested that his plan could have been funded by both the state and the contributions of the citizens over sixteen; as a result, “a medley of welfare services would be replaced by the welfare state” (Mowat 62). According to a survey on the Beveridge Report in 1943, ninety-five percent of the British public were aware of the report and the majority approved of it (“The Cabinet Papers” n.p). The government bookshop was crowded with people trying to buy a copy of the report, which sold half a million copies, outselling “any official report on any topic to date” (Whiteside 1). Fed up with the household means tests, the British embraced the idea of being protected “from cradle to grave” as citizens (Whiteside 1). So, as Fielding defines it, the report was “the most significant event of the war” (43), which can be deduced from the massive attention paid by the public to the report.

During the post-World War II period, Britain went through dramatic economic and political changes, since the war “brought a vastly altered economic situation, new attitudes toward economic power and the distribution of economic resources, new expectations of the role of government, and changes in Britain's political leadership” (Gerber 212). One of the fundamental reasons for the economic problems in Britain in this period was the heavy air raids that destroyed the industrial areas and many factories in Britain, resulting in a decline in the production of goods in the post-war years. The severe decline in production caused an increase in importation because factories could not meet the needs of the country (Gerber 212). However, Britain did not have the sufficient financial capacity to afford importation due to massive war debts (Fraser 193). Under these economic conditions, the distribution of economic resources had to be handled carefully and fairly; thus, certain measures were taken.

Serving the benefit of society rather than individuals, wages were reduced so that more people could have a chance to be employed (Gerber 213). People, therefore, altogether shouldered the burden of low wages (213). Hence, severe economic conditions in the post-World War II period led to changes in political expectations.

It was first seen in the political elections immediately after the war that the British were not content with the post-war economic conditions of the country and therefore demanded change. Since they desired better living conditions, the reconstruction of the country turned into the most urgent matter during the 1945 elections. Although both the Conservatives and the Labour made similar promises such as providing food, work, home and insurance for the British people, Labour's plan – which was parallel to the Beveridge Report – was more detailed and seemed more realistic (Gregg 32). Ironically, the leader and wartime hero of the Conservative Party, Winston Churchill (1874-1965), argued that “Beveridge was an awful windbag and a dreamer’ promoting [with the Beveridge Report] false hopes and visions of Eldorado” (Cockett 62). Moreover, there was a minor group within the Conservative Party that supported Churchill on this topic and regarded the Beveridge Report as too expensive to realise and as something that would encourage laziness because of the benefits it offered (Clarke 242). However, the majority of the Conservatives, though they thought the report had socialist aspects, believed that the basic content of the report was plausible for the reconstruction of the war-torn country (Gregg 32). In short, the Beveridge Report was a matter of debate not only between the different political parties but also among the members within the same party, as seen in the instance of the Conservatives.

The election promises made by the Labour Party, which included the initial forms of the welfare state policies, were mainly based on the Beveridge Report. Ironically enough, Beveridge himself was a candidate from the Liberal Party, but the Labour Party won the elections by promising the reforms suggested in the report as well as focusing on specific issues such as education, housing and nationalisation more deeply (Gregg 32). All in all, all the three major parties promised the reconstruction of Britain; however, the Labour Party's promises were more appealing, for they not only covered the good aspects of the Beveridge Report but also added some other developments.

After winning the elections, Aneurin Bevan, the Health Secretary of the Labour Party, stated in the party's victory speech that "[they] are going to see the right people squeal for a change" (qtd. in Giannetti 5). Now it was time for the Labour Party to put into practice the things they promised during the election campaign. One of the utmost urgent issues was social security.

Social security can be defined as "a system that provides monetary assistance to people with an inadequate or no income" (Bach 185). With the aim of fighting "want," which can be defined as the condition of lacking essential needs, the Labour Party's legislations for social security were the Family Allowances Act (1945), the National Insurance Act (1945), the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act (1946) and the National Assistance Act (1948), respectively.

The very first act initiated under social security was the Family Allowances Act (1945). This was seen as an "endowment of motherhood" since the allowance was directly paid to mothers (Lund 108). The government supported mothers economically in order for them to raise their children in better and dignified conditions (Webb 19). In 1945, the government promised 5 shillings a week for each child after the first, the aim of which was to increase the population (Macnicol 194). A significant driving motive for the family allowances was that it could undermine the pressure for wage increases (Macnicol 194). Hence, even though the allowance looked like a financial burden for the government, requiring a high amount of funding, it actually relieved the government since it reduced the demand for wage increase.

Another significant dynamics of social security was the National Insurance Act (1945), a tax system that aims to fund the benefits provided by the state. The National Insurance provided for any individual in case of an "interruption of earnings," in other words, loss of employment or failure to earn enough to survive due to illness, unemployment or old age ("The Cabinet Papers" n.p). Each worker between the ages of 15 and 65, who works for himself or was employed by somebody else, was required to pay each week a commitment to the national insurance fund, the employers paying the commitment for their employees (Marquand 5). The state likewise contributed to the fund, and as a result, an extensive fund was developed (Marquand 5). This fund provided benefits for the widow's pensions and retirement pensions

at the age of 65; however, its main purpose was to support the unemployed who had contributed to the insurance for a sufficient period and who were actively seeking work (Marquand 5-6). While Beveridge had recommended that unemployment insurance be provided for an unlimited period, the Labour Party limited the period to thirty weeks due to the expenses. However, Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Minister, argued that this would be unfair for the people who sought work but could not find any in thirty weeks, which led to “a right of appeal to a local [authorities]” for an extension (“The Cabinet Papers” n.p). Moreover, if the unemployment was caused by illness, the payment under the name “sickness benefit” continued as long as the person was sick (Field n.p). Clement Attlee stated that the National Insurance Bill “is designed not for one class but for all, and it is a point to be noted how the emphasis of social provision by the State has rightly moved from the conception of doing something just for one class... are at the bottom of ladder... and seeks to provide equal benefits in exchange for equal payments” (qtd. in Gregg 44). Therefore, the bill was intended to cover all classes.

In addition, the National Insurance – (the Industrial Injuries Act) (1946) was passed by the Labour Party, after James Griffiths, the Minister of National Insurance, introduced the second reading of the Industrial Injuries Bill in 1945 (Gregg 43). With the aim of “compensate[ing] for industrial injuries a part of this country’s social services,” the act offered extra benefits for employees injured at work, on condition that every employer was required to contribute weekly to the fund, acknowledging that industrial type of injury should be given a higher amount of benefit than casual illness that prevents working (Gregg 43).

For those who were excluded from the scope of the National Insurance due to their region, the National Assistance Board was established through the National Assistance Act (1948) (Marquand 6). The Assistance Board targeted the country people, to support anybody in need, with a book of coupons, “a regular weekly payment that was cashable at the post office” (Marquand 6). *The Times* described the act as “the last defence against extreme poverty” (qtd. in “The Welfare State: Benefits” n.p).

Here it should be noted that the National Insurance system was criticised due to the fact that the fundamental financial resources of this system was the very taxes that the public paid. Gregg argues that the whole cost of the services supplied by the taxes was between 44 and 64 per cent (46), which indicates that the financial burden of the National Insurance was actually on the shoulders of those who worked and paid their taxes. In consequence, taxpayers did not tolerate the fact that some of the unemployed people abused the system through the unemployment benefit (Brown 12). Hence, those who worked were not content with the system since they thought that they worked and paid taxes but others benefited from it (Brown 12).

The Labour Party's most revolutionary relevant act was the 1946 National Health Service Act, which proposed "free health care for all" (Schultz 378-79). It took two years to launch this act because the NHS was harshly criticised by the British Medical Association (BMA) for the reason that it was an expensive system and therefore would turn into a disaster in a short period (Gregg 57). Since the members of the BMA, namely doctors and medical students, were going to be at the very centre of the NHS system, Bevan tried to reach a consensus with them. However, in addition to the criticism of expenses, there was another problem disturbing doctors: The NHS itself was to be administered in three parts: services run by local authorities, hospital and specialist services, and the personal practitioner service (51). This division left doctors with the burden to decide in which division they were going to work, which meant that doctors would no longer be able to work at a hospital and run an independent clinic at the same time. Doctors reacted against this coercion, which would alter their way of earning money and lead to a change in their maintenance of a certain life style. Not wanting these changes, which apparently posed a threat to their socio-economic condition, to happen, they went on a strike (57). After a series of talks in which Bevan tried to ensure doctors that he would "revise the idea of the [...] basic salary," (Gregg 61), he ultimately reached a consensus with the majority of them.

Following the consensus, the NHS was put into practice in 1948 by Aneurin Bevan, who was now the Minister of Health, with the aim of a free health system that would provide treatment for everybody from all classes without discrimination. Known as the "chief architect of the

British NHS” (Fincham 27), Bevan knew the conditions in which the working class struggled for a living, as he was the son of a miner; he also knew how hard it was for a working-class family to afford medical expenses (Gregg 55). In his words, the aim of the NHS was “to make provision for all the sick, whatever their age, profession, income or circumstances” (Bevan qtd. in Gregg 55). Considering that people paid high amounts of money to hospitals and doctors unless they were covered by the limited extent of their health insurance, the NHS was a revolution in the health service in Britain.

In other words, the importance of the NHS comes from the fact that it was not an insurance system. After the previous Health Insurance scheme was abolished, the two functions of the scheme were separated in practice: “the payment of monetary benefit during sickness and the provision of free medical service” (Gregg 62-63). Thus, sickness benefits were provided by the National Insurance from then on, and medical service gained a new framework. Klein clarifies this new framework, into which the NHS integrated medical service, as follows:

[The NHS] is the first health system in any western society to offer free medical care to the entire population. It was, furthermore, the first comprehensive system to be based not on the insurance principle, with entitlement following contributions, but on the national provision of services available to everyone. It thus offered free and universal entitlement to state-provided medical care. (1)

The apparent positive result of the NHS was that individuals and their families were no more considered the only ones responsible for a sick person’s health; in addition to that, the state’s responsibility was no longer limited to the provision of public health, such as preventing epidemics (Marquand 3). Instead, it became a commonly held idea, in the process of implementing the NHS policies, that primarily the state was responsible for restoring sick people to health by providing them with free medical health care (3).

However, the act resulted in negative impacts as well. The BMA’s prediction that the NHS would burden British society with a financial collapse came true. While the predicted expenditure was 187 million pounds, the actual expenditure was 355 million, which led the Ministry of Health to collect an extra tax from the citizens in order to maintain the system (Chandler 25-26). Moreover, the ministry stopped providing free dental care and prescribing

free glasses (Brown n.p). The excessive demand from the public could not be answered by the failing infrastructure of the system, as a result of which if someone wanted to make an appointment at a hospital, he/she had to wait for months (Aaron and Schwarts 20). Put differently, the NHS made the health system free of charge in theory; however, it failed in practice. As a result, the NHS system continued, but its founder and the biggest supporter, Aneurin Bevan, resigned from the ministry (“Aneurin Bevan” n.p).

Apart from the issue of national health, the need for housing was also on the agenda of the Labour Party. During World War II, adding to the fact that house building generally ceased, the air raids destroyed almost 500,000 houses, besides damaging 3 million people, causing the citizens living in city centres to lose their houses and then either to move to slum areas or to be homeless (Lund 121). In total, almost 750,000 new houses were needed immediately after the war, which meant a severe housing shortage (Giannetti 3). Under these circumstances, even abandoned army camps were used for residence by almost twenty thousand squatters after the war, which further indicates the severity of the shortage (Cooper 45-47). In 1945, public opinion polls made clear that people considered housing the most urgent problem in Britain (Francis 115).

Furthermore, the private enterprise, taking advantage of the housing crisis, raised the rent and price of the houses still available, even if they were in bad condition. The government, in order to take this situation under control by keeping the rents and prices at a modest level, passed the Building Materials and Housing Act in 1945 (Kemp 38-39). The act prevented individuals and companies from being profiteers of the housing shortage through the selling or renting of houses at unreasonable prices. Moreover, in the same act, it was legislated that one was allowed to build a house only if one could demonstrate the housing need in the region (Kemp 39). This supplied a more or less even distribution of houses among regions. Additionally, to prevent the houses in bad condition from being rented, Bevan tried to standardise the quality in housing, announcing that the new local authority homes would be of high quality with “a water closet, both upstairs and downstairs, in each family dwelling” (qtd. in Lund 121).



So, in addition to regulating the rent, price and quality of the existing houses, the government aimed to build new ones to relieve the housing crisis. For this purpose, four major acts were passed by Parliament: the New Towns Act (1946), the Town and Country Planning Act (1947), the Children's Act (1948) and the Housing Act (1949). Firstly, the New Towns Act authorised and funded local administrations to build new towns at places such as Stevenage, Basildon, Newton, Aycliffe and Peterlee (Roze 125). Secondly, the Town and Country Planning Act determined a target of building 300,000 new houses a year and 1.25 million council houses to be built between the years 1945 and 1951 (De Smith 73). Thirdly, the Children's Act, whose objective was ensuring official service for the children in need of "a normal home life," authorised local authorities to be the caretaker of those children and to use their competence for children's interests (Cretney 204). Lastly, the Housing Act removed the requirement that limited local authorities to provide public housing for only the working class (Ambrose 87). In respect to this, Bevan encouraged local authorities to "reserve [houses] for the higher income groups at higher rents," which was intended to be practised after the housing crisis was over (Lund 121-22). The act also widened the scope of utilities provided by local authorities for the tenants of municipal flats and housing estates, enabling the authorities to operate restaurants, canteens and laundry facilities and to sell furniture to the tenants (Pritt 305).

Although the government aimed to solve the housing crisis through these acts, they were not enough for a solution, which resulted in criticisms that the projects were too idealistic and optimistic. Burnett argues that the new town projects were so idealistic that they "did not provide enough urgently needed units" (301). The government was criticised for poor calculation of materials, building materials, land and labour, which were already very limited (Shepherd and Shepherd 38). As a result, by 1951, the shortage reached 1,500,000 units (Timmins n.p), which reflects that the acts of housing initiated by the state did not meet people's needs.

Besides housing, education was also an urgent matter in post-war Britain. The Labour Party's educational policies in the welfare state aimed to achieve equality and social mobility among the classes, beginning with the implementation of the 1944 Education Act in 1945 (Lund

118). Predicating on the act, the Labour Party actualised the Tripartite System, which intended to distribute students to three types of schools according to their abilities: grammar schools, secondary modern schools and secondary technical schools (Dean 234). All the three types provided free secondary education to students as they were funded by the state. Moreover, the schools could provide financial assistance for poor students (Lund 118). In this way, secondary education was now seen as a right, instead of a privilege that only the upper and middle classes had (Lund 118).

The distribution of students was managed by the Eleven Plus exams, in which 11-year-old students participated, and according to the results, they would go to the type of school that was found to be most suitable for them (Giannetti 17). The most successful ones would go to grammar school, and the others would usually go to the secondary modern school because the secondary technical schools were few in number due to the lack of finances and shortage of qualified teachers in some branches (Vaizey 33).

Grammar schools were created for academic pupils, having a highly academic curriculum, and abstract concepts with a broad perspective of intellectual subjects, such as literature and complex mathematics (Rosen 67). Since such a curriculum would increase chances of success at university entrance exams and further education, grammar schools were highly popular and prestigious in British society (Rosen 67). Almost 25 per cent of children in Britain went to grammar schools, while 70 per cent went to secondary modern schools (Sampson 162). The imbalance was not only in the percentage, but also among the regions in the country. For instance, in the South of England, there were more grammar schools than the rest of Britain (Sampson 170).

As a sub-branch of grammar schools, public schools should be mentioned here, since they occupied an important part of the British educational system and class structure. Public schools mostly resembled grammar schools in their curricula; however, they were not fully funded by the state since they were independent private schools. Giannetti argues that a large number of parents had the idea that “an education at a minor public school is still a better passport to life than even the best of the grammar schools” (19). Vaizey states that graduates

of public schools dominated British life, in line with a 1958 survey which indicated that almost all the officers in armed forces, High Court judges, bishops, Conservative M.P.s, a third of the Labour Party M.P.s – including Clement Attlee – and their cabinet were public school graduates (31). Hence, it can be argued that public schools produced the core of the British upper class that had the largest wealth, network, power and prestige in society.

Secondary modern schools, in contrast to grammar schools, taught practical and non-academic subjects, “by less qualified teachers, in classes twice the size of those grammar schools” (Giannetti 16). As a secondary modern school student had only one chance in seventy of being transferred to a grammar school, his chances of studying in a university were also as low as one in ten thousand (Northcott 62). Additionally, the majority of secondary modern school students had a working-class background (62). According to Marsden, “the system has excluded working-class children so effectively for so long that parents” tend to believe that their children “simply haven’t the necessary brains” (14). Moreover, working-class students tended to leave school after the age of fifteen, an early age to leave one’s education, probably with no hope of entering a university (Giannetti 17).

Apart from these, there were also Church Schools in the educational system of Britain. In 1944 Butler Act, Richard Austen Butler, the minister of education, and the churches decided that Church Schools would choose either to become controlled or to become aided (Lund 118). If the school chose to be controlled, local authorities would fund the school, appoint its teachers and control its syllabus thoroughly (118). However, if it chose otherwise, the school would be aided or sponsored by other entities which could appoint its teachers and direct its religious education (119).

The celebrated results of the revisions made by the Labour Party, based on the 1944 Education Act, were that the opportunity for higher education was given to more children and the age for compulsory education was increased to 15 (Marquand 5). In the previous system, only a few exceptional children of the working class could get scholarships and higher education, and the age for compulsory education was 14 (5).

However, criticisms were piling up. Besides the major types of schools, the 11-plus IQ test, too, was criticised. The fact that the 11-plus IQ test heavily influenced the students' future was harshly criticised because it was simply an achievement test, not a test for measuring intelligence, unlike it claimed to be (Giannetti 18). In relation to this, some of the pupils who had failed the test grew into students with high intellectual capacity, while some of the "successful" pupils, who had been "bookworms" at the age of 10, became craftsmen or technicians in the end (Pedley 5). Therefore, the accuracy, legitimacy and importance of the test became controversial. Some critics argued that intelligence was "something which respond[ed] and gr[ew] with experience"; thus, environmental factors were the major actors during this exam, which would highlight the differences of class background between students (Giannetti 18-19). For example, the houses in which working-class children lived were more likely to be noisy, crowded places with few books and therefore not suitable places for studying or reading (Marsden 11). Also, "working-class speech patterns tend[ed] to be more concrete [and] less fitted for abstract thought," which resulted in the fact that working-class students could achieve less success in verbal-reasoning question types (Marsden 11).

After these issues related to the 11-plus test made the need for a reform in the education system more apparent, the Labour Party launched the project of the comprehensive schools in 1950 and intended to provide equality of opportunity in the existing educational system (Dean 234). Since the comprehensive schools offered a mixed curriculum (of the grammar, secondary modern and technical schools) and had a "stream placement" system that categorised students in A, B or C categories according to their abilities, these schools were thought to provide an equal base for the students (Lynch 50). However, this proved to carry or promote class division (Lynch 51) because the categories themselves were hierarchically ordered. For instance, the best stream would be the A stream, and the others would respectively follow it. According to Ford, the very "ability itself is related to social class"; therefore, middle-class students were much more likely to be placed in the A stream than working class students (27). In terms of behaviour, success and tendency to leave school early, students placed in the lower streams were compared to secondary modern school

students, and higher stream students were compared to grammar school students (Ford 28-29).

Although the Labour Party aimed the educational system to be an agent to generate equality among the social classes, the educational system, in practice, continued to be an agent of maintaining the class structure in Britain (Giannetti 15). The Tripartite System, and then the comprehensive school system, which intended to distribute students according to their abilities, became systems that distributed students actually according to their classes. According to Barker, “the Party showed little desire for drastic reconstruction. Those voices that advocated changes in the curriculum or even the creation of a new system with different values and beliefs found themselves ignored” (qtd. in Dean 234). In other words, the welfare state did not change much of the existing education system, apart from improving it partly through comprehensive schools, which also sparked controversies and did not meet people’s expectations from an educational system promising equality.

Having experienced the welfare state years, John Arden writes out of first-hand experience of the post-war period in his plays. He was born in South Yorkshire, Barnsley, a small town on the coalfields populated mostly by the working class and the lower-middle class (Hunt 14). Since the Industrial Revolution, the town held an important place in the history of labour-movement militancy (Counts 3). Counts states that even though Arden had an upper-middle class family, his political perspective was influenced by the town in which he was born, and which was dominated by the working-class culture (3). As McDonnell puts it, his mother was trained as a primary school teacher; his father, a liberal activist, came from a wine-making dynasty, but he rejected the family business in order to manage a glass-making factory (85).

Arden started his education at a local primary school, where he was bullied frequently, which resulted in changing his school to a preparatory school near York (McDonnell 86). Later, on the eve of the war, he was sent to a public school, Sedbergh School, in Cumbria, to escape the bombing raids (Leeming 3). Leaving Barnsley relieved him not only from the raids but also from the fact that he was the minority in the class conflict there as a member of the upper-middle class, which can also be observed from the fact that his family could afford the

fee of a renowned public school. Back in Barnsley, his nice clothes would often be a reason to get attacked in the street (McDonnell 86). It can be argued that the class issues he witnessed in his childhood had a deep impact on his career as a writer.

According to Leeming, Arden wanted to be a writer since his childhood, but he did not prefer having a degree in English literature because he thought that such an education would consume his creativity, instead of enhancing it (3). Therefore, he studied architecture at Cambridge University for three years and then at Edinburgh Art College for two years. The influence of his education in architecture can be found in his plays, in which there is “a sense of proportion and a feeling for structural coherence,” according to Trussler (4). Arden began writing plays when he was a university student, and he wrote in various genres from medieval epic drama to Victorian comedy. For example, *All Fall Down* (1955), a Victorian romantic comedy, is a play he wrote when he was a student. It was never published, though performed by his friends at the university (Leeming 3). After his graduation, he started to work as an architect in London for two years (Counts 3) until his plays received awards.

When one of his plays, *The Life of Man* (1956), won a prize in the BBC Northern Region Competition, he was discovered by the theatre director George Devine (McDonnell 87). Devine arranged a performance of another of Arden’s plays, that is *The Waters of Babylon* (1957), at the Royal Court Theatre. This, together with his other play *Live Like Pigs* which was commissioned by the Royal Court, was a very significant success for him after which he quit working as an architect and focused only on writing (McDonnell 87). After he wrote his most well-known play, *Serjeant Musgrave’s Dance* (1959), he received a playwriting fellowship at Bristol University (Counts 4). In the same year, he also won the Evening Standard Drama Award, an award presented annually for outstanding achievements in London theatre (“London Evening Standard” n.p), for the same play (Counts 4).

A significant characteristic of Arden is his leftism, which can be observed in both the content and form of his plays. As for the content, his plays generally reflect the bitter condition of oppressed individuals and the misconduct of officials, which are embedded in such issues as immigrants’ problems in *The Waters of Babylon* (1957), the oppression of official institutions

and racism in *Live Like Pigs* (1958), the apathy of the working class in *When is a Door not a Door?* (1958), colonial violence in *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* (1959), municipal corruption in *The Workhouse Donkey* (1963), suppression of individual expression in *Ars Long Vita Brevis* (1965; co-author Margarete D'Arcy) and anti-imperialism in *The Island of the Mighty* (1972; co-author Margarete D'Arcy). All of the examples above reflect how Arden's plays are contextually merged with politics.

As for the form, the writer chose to reject “the established theatre with illusionist aesthetics and middle-class, individualist ideology” (Malick 5). Arden actually tried to enable the audience to have a critical gaze and consider the events presented in the play through the alienation techniques of epic theatre. The techniques of the Bertolt Brecht's (1898-1956) epic theatre were first introduced to the British playwrights when the Berliner Ensemble visited London in 1956 (Bull 43). After seeing the production by the Berliner Ensemble, Arden was influenced by Brecht's theory and use of epic theatre, since its aim of creating a critical distance between the play and the audience coincided with Arden's understanding of the theatre (Gaston 151). According to Arden, the art of the theatre has not changed much since the ancient times because basically, “[t]he actor on the stage [has] pretend[ed] and present[ed] the pretence to the public” since then (*To Present* 11). Arden's remark emphasises the representational and playful nature of the theatre that highlights the fact that what is happening on the stage is not real. Therefore, in order to break the illusion of reality on the stage deliberately, the playwright used Brechtian epic elements such as the episodic structure, historicisation, songs and the narrator in his plays. These elements, breaking the fourth wall – an “imaginary wall between the actors and the audience which keeps [the audience] as observers” (“Epic theatre and Brecht” n.p) – and preventing the audience from being seized by the illusion of reality and emotions during the performance, alienate the audience from the play and enable them to critically observe the incidents and characters. At that time, Arden's effort was not appreciated or did not receive much attention, but the fact that he reintroduced Brecht to Britain would later on bring Arden the nickname “Britain's Brecht” (Malick 1).

The fact that Arden used epic elements in his plays differentiated him from his contemporaries, namely Arnold Wesker, Harold Pinter and John Osborne, although he had common grounds with them in the sense that he, similar to his mentioned contemporaries, was a leftist playwright and he criticised post-war problems such as class conflict, the oppression of the state's institutions and the failure of the post-war reforms in his plays. Concerning his differences from his contemporaries, Arden was the only university graduate and, not surprisingly, architect among them (Dermiş 4-5). He was, furthermore, the only political dramatist with a "middle" class background, let alone upper-middle, since the others were predominantly coming from Eastern regions with a working-class background. Therefore, his socialist tendency might be regarded as exceptional in contrast to his contemporaries.

In 1957, Arden married Margaretta D'Arcy (1934- ), his life-long partner, mother of their four sons and co-author of many plays such as *The Happy Haven* (1962), *Ars Longa Vita Brevis* (1965), *The Royal Pardon* (1967) and *The Hero Rises Up* (1969). As well as commercial plays, they together wrote and directed plays intended for villagers and local communities, which is known as community theatre, in addition to organising "a Festival of Anarchy" (Sandford 313) in 1963 that lasted for thirty days and hosted many small fringe theatre troupes (Gray 23). D'Arcy had a significant impact on Arden's development as a playwright because she had knowledge of the theatre circles around the Royal Court, which provided a network for their collaborative works (McDonnell 87). Moreover, she introduced to him Brecht, Beckett, Strindberg and Behan, which broadened Arden's perspective and knowledge as a playwright (Arden "John Arden" 29). They lived in Kirkbymoorside, a village in Yorkshire, and had "occasional noteworthy productions [in] the National Theatre Company" (Leeming 5).

As of the mid-1960s, after travelling to India, the couple directed their attention to the issue of political effectiveness and embraced more militant ideas (Efe 14) because in India they witnessed the bitter impact of all the years that India experienced under the British Empire (Leeming 5). In his Introductory Note to "Two Autobiographical Plays," Arden expresses that D'Arcy and he witnessed "the war between the fed men and the hungry men, the clothed



men and the naked men, the sheltered men and the exposed men” in India (Arden *Plays: Two* 378). After returning to England, the couple moved to Muswell Hill, London, and started working with the Aldwych Theatre. However, they had serious problems with its administration in 1972 owing to a quarrel over the pro-colonial representation of his *The Island of the Mighty*, which led Arden and D’Arcy to leave the company, expressing that they “would never write for [them] again” (Gray 73). Arden’s political radicalisation can be observed in this example because when he realised that his play had been staged in a way that promoted colonialism, he radically protested against the administration before the theatre building (Gray 73). The writer describes his political radicalisation and commitment to anti-colonialist and socialist ideas in *To Present the Pretence: Essays on the Theatre and Its Public* (1977) as follows:

‘[A] genuine Arden work’ in fact meant ‘a play like *Serjeant Musgrave’s Dance*, which does not come to any very positive conclusion’ – whereas *non-genuine Arden* would be ‘Arden at last affirming from his own hard experience the need for revolution and a Socialistic society ...’. Twelve years ago I looked on at people’s struggles, and wrote about them for the stage, sympathetically, but as an onlooker. Without consciously intending it, I have become a participant. (158)

Arden here refers to what he holds as the audience’s and critics’ prejudgemental way of thinking about his plays, believing that they approach all of his works expecting to find another *Serjeant Musgrave’s Dance*. *Serjeant’s* most significant characteristic is that “you never know where [Arden] stands in the play,” which is actually true for most of Arden’s early plays (Taylor 332). However, as Arden implies in the above quotation, his plays have become more subjective in time, reflecting his expectation and aspiration for a socialist revolution in Britain. In the light of this change, critics divide Arden’s playwriting career into two periods, as the early and late periods (Hunt 15-16). In the early period, his stance on what he criticises is objective. He does not judge his characters. Nor does he demonise or romanticise them. About the major characters in his second professional play, *Live Like Pigs*, he, for example, comments that he “approve[s] outright neither of the Sawneys nor the Jacksons” (Taylor 91). So, *The Waters of Babylon* (1957), *Live Like Pigs* (1958), *Serjeant Musgrave’s Dance* (1959), *The Workhouse Donkey* (1964), and *Armstrong’s Last Goodnight*

(1965) are his early period plays, which are marked by an objective stance on the characters, even though these plays harbour political criticism. However, as for his late period, in *The Bagman*'s "Introductory Note" (1971), Arden states:

Mao Tsetung, that succinct poet, has said. 'Whatever the enemy opposes, we must support: whatever the enemy supports, we must oppose.'... I hope I have made it clear in *The Bagman* [...] that I recognize as the enemy the fed man... the clothed man... the sheltered man... whose food, clothes and house are obtained at the expense of the hunger, the nakedness, and the exposure of so many millions of others: and who will allow anything to be said, in books or on the stage, so long as the food, clothes, and house remain undiminished in his possession. (381)

So, he radically identifies the "enemy" from his socialist perspective, which leads him to be biased in his plays. This is the period of *The Royal Pardon* (1967), *The Hero Rises Up* (1969) and *The Island of the Mighty* (1974). This is also the period in which Arden became an official Sinn Fein member, as a result of his growing affinity with Irish nationalism (Gray 98). Therefore, some of the plays he penned in this second phase of his career deal with Irish politics and politicians, this time reflecting Arden's revolutionary stance more clearly, in contrast to his early plays (98). For example, in *The Non-Stop Connolly Show: A Dramatic Cycle of Continuous Struggle* (1977), Arden is inspired by the life and struggles of an Irish politician, James Connolly, and "[the play] probably [is] the most ambitious attempt in English to dramatize working-class and socialist history" (Cohen 78). In another play, *The Ballygombeen Bequest* (a.k.a. *The Little Gray Home in the West*) (1982), Arden portrays an English absentee landlord's attempts to cruelly evict his Irish tenants, and he satirises the landlord's oppression.

In his late career, Arden also wrote novels, like *Silence Among the Weapons* (1982) in which he "allows [readers] vivid glimpses of a world in turmoil under the heel of colonial ambition and of the furious resistance that this has aroused amongst the subject peoples" ("Silence among the Weapons" n.p), and radio plays, like *The Bagman* (1972), a play about Arden having a dream in which he finds himself in a dystopian land, and *Pearl* (1978), a play that is set in seventeenth-century England and covering the issue of Irish sovereignty (Counts 9-10).

This thesis will discuss the representations of the welfare state in Arden's plays, namely *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey*, which are Arden's early period plays and the only ones to deal with the welfare state policies. In these early plays, the characters and/or policies, though being criticised, are never represented as simply good or simply bad; in other words, they are rather presented with an objective approach (Leeming 8). In the chapter analysing *Live Like Pigs*, it will be discussed that Arden presents the failure of the welfare state policies, specifically housing, education, social security and the National Health Service, in post-World War II Britain mainly from two angles: firstly, the failure of the state in implementing the welfare state policies; secondly, the indifference of people to these policies which actually aim to aid them. In the analysis of *The Workhouse Donkey*, it will be argued that even though the welfare state policies, those of education and the NHS, are promising in theory, they fail in practice due to municipal corruption and the fact that the idealistic members of local authority who desire to achieve the true purpose of the welfare state policies are too passive to resist the corrupt members. Hence, it will be shown that Arden's criticism of the welfare state in the mentioned two plays is diverse, for it is directed at the policies, the practitioners of these policies, that is corrupt individuals who prioritise their own self-interests over the common good, the idealistic yet passive members of local government and apathy of people. In this respect, one may possibly claim that Arden's criticism is objective since he does not take sides but rather presents the defects of all parties.

In the light of the background information on the welfare state given in the Introduction, this thesis aims to discuss Arden's criticism of the implementations of the welfare state policies, specifically housing, education, social security and the National Health Service, in *Live Like Pigs* and education and the NHS in *The Workhouse Donkey*.

## CHAPTER I: *LIVE LIKE PIGS*

John Arden's *Live Like Pigs* was first performed by the English Stage Company at the Royal Court Theatre in 1958. The play is a significant turning point in the playwright's career because Arden was "commissioned by the English Stage Company to complete [this play]; upon which he gave up his job in an architect's office [and] devoted himself full-time to writing ever since" (Trussler 5). However, the play did not live up to financial expectations, which can actually be said for almost all of Arden's plays.

Although Arden received many awards as a playwright, his works failed at the box office. Gray states that "[b]etween 1956 and 1961, the Royal Court Theatre made about £50,000 producing the plays of John Osborne and lost £14,857 producing those of John Arden" (1). *Live Like Pigs* is among those failures at box office, and in an interview, Arden explains the reason why it is so:

The play was unsuccessful because people thought it was a social documentary, that I was dealing with the position of traveling people becoming settled in housing estates, that I was handling it as if I was working from field research and writing a document which pointed out a serious social problem. I wasn't. There was no research of that kind in my play at all. (qtd. in Gaston 153)

Arden's remarks apparently point to his belief that *Live Like Pigs* could not succeed because the audience misinterpreted the play, seeing the play as a social documentary, although the writer, as he states in the "Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*," "was more concerned with the poetic than the journalistic structure of the play" (101).

Set in an anonymous northern English town in the 1950s, *Live Like Pigs* centres around the story of the Sawneys, a nomadic or gypsy family, who are coerced to leave their tramcar and resettled in a council house. They are thus made to begin a settled lifestyle alien to them, which leads to their conflicts with their acquaintances, neighbours, specifically the Jacksons, a "petit bourgeois" family (Hiçdurmaz 36) and, most significantly, to their opposition to the state, presented through the Official, the Police and the Doctor.

Through these conflicts, Arden criticises the defects in the implementation of the various welfare state policies in *Live Like Pigs*, while also presenting the fact that these defects alone are not the only causes of the failures of these policies since the people who either distrust the system or are unaware of its benefits also contribute to the lack of success. Accordingly, this chapter aims to discuss Arden's criticism of the failures in the implementation of the welfare state policies, which are housing scheme, education, social security and the National Health Service, respectively.

The play begins with the Official, an employee who works for the Housing Estate, introducing a council house to the Sawneys, namely Sailor, Rosie, Sally, Rachel and Col. While discovering what is inside the bathroom, Sally (Rosie's daughter) begins to play with the tap water, wets the floor and therefore gets chased by the Official who wishes the family to behave "appropriately" in the house. The family resents the Official's attempt to dominate them, stands up against him and sends him out of the house.

The very next day, the dialogues between the members of the family, such as those between Rosie (Sailor's daughter) and Rachel (Sailor's partner) and also Rosie and Blackmouth (Rosie's unfaithful boyfriend and the father of her children), demonstrate the minor conflicts between them. What is more, their next-door neighbour, Mrs Jackson, drops in to greet them in a "very friendly" (*Live Like Pigs* 1.2.112) manner, but when she begins to boast about her husband's new job in the Housing Estate, Rachel and Rosie get irritated by her and send her away. This incident marks the beginning of the continual hostility between the Jacksons and the Sawneys.

It can be inferred from the Sawneys' conversation among themselves that they earn their living by theft and selling sundries. Meanwhile, Col (Rachel's son) meets the Jacksons' daughter, Doreen. Their lifestyles are quite different in that they come from two contrasting families, but they share a common love for dancing and each other. Mr and Mrs Jackson tend to prevent their union by being over-protective of Doreen – though, ironically, Mr Jackson commits adultery with Rachel. Despite her parents, Doreen secretly goes on a date with Col to dance at the disco one night, which ends up with an unsuccessful attempt of sexual intimacy due to Doreen's withdrawal.

Meanwhile, Blackmouth, Daffodil and the Old Croaker, a group of gypsies like the Sawneys themselves, come to stay in the Sawneys' house for a period of time since Blackmouth is a fugitive and seeks for a hiding place, Daffodil is ill and looks for a safe place to recover, and the Old Croaker wants to settle down. Although they come in the hope of a safe place, they are unwanted by the Sawneys because they cause many problems in the house. Blackmouth, with all his unbalanced behaviours, presents a threat for both the Sawneys and the neighbours. The Old Croaker is an uncompromising lunatic who constantly tears things – fabrics, newspapers, washings, etc. – apart. Daffodil, Blackmouth's ex-mistress who is notorious for her wild and seductive manners, develops an intimacy with Col. When Blackmouth busts them in bed, he goes mad, tries to kill Col, but fails to do so and runs away, threatening the Sawneys while leaving. Furthermore, Blackmouth's howling at night causes panic among some of the neighbours, including Mrs Jackson who has already been worried about her missing cat. She associates both of these incidents with the Sawneys and concludes that they ate the cat.

Meanwhile, the Sawneys come into a number of conflicts with the units representing the welfare state. For instance, the National Insurance letters keep coming to the house, and the Sawneys burn them in order to avoid any interaction with the state. Apart from this, the Doctor from the National Health Service pays a visit to them so as to examine Daffodil. She is appalled by the state of the house and advises the members of the household to be neater. She also advises Rosie to send the little girl, Sally, to school, which is opposed by Rosie and Blackmouth since they do not trust the official education system.

Their conflict with the Doctor is followed by their conflict with the Police Sergeant who drops on the Sawneys to question them about a recent crime, that is the stabbing of a police constable in the middle of the night. The Sawneys face the prejudice of the sergeant who suspects the family members to have committed the crime. When Daffodil claims that Blackmouth is the convict, the sergeant goes after him since he is already a fugitive. The unfair accusations against the Sawneys continue with Mrs Jackson's raid on the house, searching for her lost cat as well as her washings. To send her away, Daffodil informs her about Mr Jackson's adultery. Furious, Mrs Jackson unites other women from the nearby

houses, and together they attempt to lynch Col in the street, but Col manages to run away taking shelter in the Sawneys' house. Thus the neighbours' assault now targets the Sawneys' house. Hostile, they begin to throw bricks at their windows. The crowd gets larger and keeps attacking the house more violently as time passes. The Sawneys desperately wait in the house until the police sergeant arrives. The sergeant comes to save them, and the Sawneys let him in with gladness. However, after saving the family, the police suspects the Sawneys of provoking the crowd, and in an attempt to find evidence for it, they search the house without a warrant. When they find stolen items, Col and Daffodil run away in guilt, and the police chase after them. In the struggle, Sailor is pushed down the stairs by the sergeant, and he breaks his leg. At the close of the play, fed up with the Sawneys and the neighbourhood, Rachel leaves the house to start a new life. In the house, Sailor, the Old Croaker, Rosie and her children wait for an ambulance to arrive.

Although, as stated earlier in this chapter, Arden did not consider the play a social documentary, Hunt opposes the dramatist's statement. He argues that all of Arden's plays are concerned with social issues, and among them "*Live Like Pigs* is [...] the closest to a social document," suggesting that it is actually linked to the realities of the period to a certain extent (Hunt 80). Arden's statements in "Who's for a Revolution?: Two Interviews with John Arden" strengthen the link between the reality and his play, revealing that the characters in *Live Like Pigs* are based on Arden and D'Arcy's neighbours in a small town in North Yorkshire, where the couple bought a cottage and found out gypsy dwellers "half a mile away in a funny little collection of houses by a disused railway" ("Who's for a Revolution?" 43-44). Arden further describes the area and the houses as follows:

They were very odd houses, rather squalid looking and yet you could see through the windows that they were highly decorated inside, enormous quantities of vast candle-sticks and things. Anyway we bought this cottage and had it decorated. We discovered that our neighbors were all of the class of people I was writing about in *Live Like Pigs*. They were traveling gypsified tinkers who [...] are closely interconnected by marriage, forming a sort of clan structure. They have their own very strict codes. The ones I had written about in *Live Like Pigs* were rather wilder, but the same sort of casts. The life of these people is an extension of old nomadic habits. ("Who's for a Revolution?" 44)

So, it is evident that Arden connects his real-life neighbours in North Yorkshire with the Sawneys and the other characters in the play. Moreover, he states that what led him to write this play was “an account in a North Country English newspaper of a riot in a low-cost housing development area” (“Who’s for a Revolution?” 46). This incident triggered Arden to pen a play on “a certain family that was so wild and ill-disciplined and alienated from conventional society that they couldn't live in a house” (Arden qtd. in Gaston 153). Even though the play was not intended to be a social document by Arden, one can still argue that it harbours political criticism of the welfare state policies developed by the Labour Party in the post-World War II period. As a matter of fact, in contrast to the rest of his relevant statements, even Arden himself once remarked that “I don't think that it's possible not to be a political or sociological playwright [for] living together [in] a society is a technical problem about which everybody should be concerned. Therefore any play which deals with people in a society is a political play” (“Who’s for a Revolution?” 45). *Live Like Pigs* is, in this respect, definitely a political play since it criticises the state’s forced implementations of the welfare state policies through a conflict between the officialdom and the nomads.

Even the title “Live Like Pigs” reinforces the socio-political aspect of the play, for it is based on this very conflict between the state and the nomadic family centralised in the play, highlighting the state’s perspective of the nomads, represented by the Sawney family. The Official introduces the estate house to the Sawneys and compares it with their previous home, the tramcar, in order to show the supposed superiority of the estate houses:

Your old place down by the caravans has had to be condemned, well I mean rightly – I mean a broken tramcar with no wheels no windows, I wouldn't put pigs – all the rain coming in on you and all why...”

RACHEL: Our place, mister” (1.106)

The quotation above is a good example of how the state perceives a nomadic lifestyle, for the excerpt reveals the mentality of the Official who stands for the state in the scene. By referring to their previous home as a place that he “wouldn't put [even] pigs,” he implies the nomads to be animals since the tramcar that the Official belittles was their lifestyle for a long time. Because the state considers their nomadic life in the tramcar inappropriate, it imposes



a “proper” understanding of an ideal lifestyle, which consists of living in a house, having National Insurance, getting children educated in official schools and benefiting by the National Health Service. This is an imposition that leads to a conflict over the issue of way of life. In the following quotation, Arden briefly touches upon the nomadic manner of living and mentions the history of the nomadic people’s lifestyle in Britain:

The Sawneys are an anachronism. They are the direct descendants of the ‘sturdy beggars’ of the sixteenth century, and the apparent chaos of their lives becomes an ordered pattern when seen in terms of a wild, empty countryside and a nomadic existence. Put out of their fields by enclosing landlords, they found such an existence possible for four hundred years. Today, quite simply, there are too many buildings in Britain, and there is just no room for nomads. (“Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*” 101)

This statement offers the reader/audience a perspective of the existence of the nomadic people, thereby helping them understand the culture to which the Sawneys are born. When he states that “[t]he Sawneys are an anachronism,” as “the direct descendants of the ‘sturdy beggars’ of the sixteenth century,” Arden contends that their existence has been seen chaotic, but that actually they have had an ordered nomadic pattern of living in the “wild, empty countryside.” In the play, even though the Sawneys seem to have a more chaotic way of life than the Jacksons, they, too, have an ordered pattern that is predominantly nomadic in its existence. Hence, the state’s intervention in their lives by “bringing order” to their lifestyle can be discussed in the light of Arden’s words above. The Sawneys already had their own understanding of order, which was quite in contrast with the concept of order held or proposed by the state. Therefore, it seems possible to assert that for the state, an ordered pattern of lifestyle is nothing but compliance with its own concept of a supposedly normal way of life, which requires living in an estate house, not in a tramcar. In *Live Like Pigs*, the nomadic family is forced to leave their nomadic life for a permanent settlement. However, the state did not bring order to their lives. It actually destroyed it all for the family by means of coercion. In the play, Arden criticises this practice of coercion, not the welfare state policies per se, specifically housing, education, social security and the NHS. In this respect, the play is indeed about the socio-political issues of the post-war period, as seen with the references to the mentioned welfare state policies.

Arden states, in his introductory note to the play, that the leftists accused his play “of *attacking* the welfare state” (101), with which he does not seem to agree. It might be possibly argued that Arden’s criticism was not intended to be destructive. It was rather intended to be constructive for the criticism in the play is not necessarily directed at the welfare policies themselves but at the way they are implemented. Moreover, the fact that Arden gives voice to various characters whose opinions on the welfare state policies are different from one another is an indicator of his objective approach. In this sense, it can be argued that his criticism of the welfare state is in the form of showing the reader/audience what could be improved or revised by the government for practices better than coercion.

So, even though Arden says he does not aim at “a journalistic structure” or journalistic realism, he gives hints that reflect the socio-political issues of his time by touching upon the lives of different groups in British society. The play provides insight into the conflict between a nomadic family and the official representatives of the state (along with the Jacksons) and provides a discussion over this conflict. As the state dictates permanent settlement, its authority and policies upon the Sawneys, the family cannot help being disturbed by these. The play makes the reader/audience question the effects and results of these policies developed by the Labour Party.

Of all the welfare policies, the one that Arden focuses on most in *Live Like Pigs* is, without doubt, the housing policies. In the play, Arden appears to disapprove of the practices related with these policies. At this point, it may be beneficial to touch upon the then-contemporary condition of the council houses for a better understanding of the council houses in the play. Shepherd and Shepherd describe the council houses in the 1950s as follows:

Homes generally had two or three bedrooms, a merged dining/living room, internal toilet and a fitted kitchen with stainless steel sinks. Concrete floors were often covered in linoleum, especially in kitchens. The traditional pre-war front ‘parlour’ gradually disappeared. Costs were reduced as less wood was needed. (41)

This description reflects the common structure of the post-World War II council houses built by both the Labour Party and the Conservative Party governments. As is mentioned in the Introduction of this thesis, Bevan desired these houses to be of high quality, especially in

terms of bathroom standards (Lund 121). However, there were many problems in the council houses in terms of structure and materials used in the construction. For instance, it was a general complaint that the walls were very thin; therefore, any noise would be easily heard from the next room (Shepherd and Shepherd 43).

In his “Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*,” Arden states that “[t]he setting is the interior and exterior of a typical council house,” adding that “[t]he sort of council house [he] had in mind is the dull sort [...]” (102). Arden identifies the rooms of the house in the play as follows:

Downstairs: Living-room; hall, with staircase, front door, and door into kitchen.

Upstairs: Large bedroom; small bedroom; landing, with door into bathroom. The kitchen and bathroom are not seen on the stage.” (“Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*” 102)

As it can be seen above, the council house that the writer presents in the play is quite realistic for his period. Moreover, the representation of the house is so down-to-earth that the playwright does not miss the detail of the thin walls. Even though Arden does not directly describe the thinness of the walls in the play, this can be inferred from the characters’ reactions to the sounds they hear from the next room. For instance, when Sailor and Rachel have a conversation in their bedroom, Col, sleeping in the next room, wakes up because of the noise; beating on the wall, he shouts: “Shut the bloody row!” (12.158). However, neither Rachel nor Sailor cares about his warning, and Col keeps beating. There is another example of the thin-wall issue, which has a significant influence on the plot of the play. When Mr Jackson is alone with Rachel in her bedroom, shortly before they commit adultery, his obscene talk is heard by the Old Croaker who is in the next room:

[*CROAKER suddenly cackles with laughter.*]

JACKSON: What’s that!

RACHEL: That’s the Old Croaker, that is.

JACKSON: Oh, aye, so it is... (7.139)

The Old Croaker’s finding out about the adultery starts a chain of events in the plot: She tells this incident to her daughter, Daffodil, who deliberately gives this information to Mrs Jackson

to make her leave their house in Scene Fourteen. Mrs Jackson, upon discovering the adultery of her husband with Big Rachel, gathers her neighbours to lynch the Sawneys, which leads to a chain of riot-like events, eventually causing the Sawneys to dissolve and some of its members to flee the council house, as mentioned earlier on. Therefore, the structure of the council houses has a dramatic impact on the families and the plot itself.

It can, as a matter of fact, be argued that the majority of the play focuses on the effects of the Housing Estate on the resident characters' lives. Arden deals with this issue specifically through the Sawneys and the Jacksons, whose attitudes towards the housing policies of the welfare state dramatically clash due to their contrasting lifestyles. The lifestyles of the two families are incompatible in the sense that the Sawneys carry the characteristics of nomadic life, which they enjoy, while the Jacksons have been leading a settled life. Hence, they have different attitudes towards the housing policies of the welfare state. The Sawneys see it as a misfortune bestowed upon them while the Jacksons see it as a chance to step up the social ladder.

As for the Sawneys' nomadic lifestyle, probably the first thing that attracts the attention about them is that none of the family members have a regular job. To earn money, Col works part-time in a construction site; Rosie sells clothes pegs; and they sometimes sell stolen stuff and often commit minor theft. Furthermore, as part of their daily lives, they go to the "boozers" (3.114), that is, a pub. Although the Sawneys are portrayed as undisciplined and mischievous through these examples, they are not portrayed as savages or villains. Instead, Arden delineates them as people who resist the conventional norms of society and value individual freedom. Therefore, as the most important element of the Sawneys' nomadic life, Arden often brings the concept of "freedom" to the forefront in the play through the characters' statements. Sailor, as a case in point, says: "More nor that, I've seen. New York. Archangel, Hard iron towns and they kill in them towns. Oh aye I've seen 'em die [...]. But after that – but after that – where is it, his glory? It's in the folk around him and his sweet liberty to hold their lives and glory" (12.156). It can be inferred from the quotation that Sailor glorifies friends, family and one's freedom more than anything else, which seems to be consistent with his nomadic style of life. Sustaining the consistency, he describes metropolises as "hard

iron town[s]” (12.156), which is in the same vein as Arden’s comment on the existence of nomads in cities: “Today, quite simply, there are too many buildings in Britain, and there is just no room for nomads” (“Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*” 101), which arguably emphasises the dominance of the settled culture in Britain that excludes or oppresses nomads and the nomadic culture. So, it can be suggested that these cities are built for a settled life, and they restrict nomadic people’s freedom.

Sailor’s partner, Big Rachel, also values her freedom in terms of liberty of choice, as revealed when she says, “What does it matter which way, so you make your true own choice of it? Hey?” (12.157). Put differently, how one does something is not very important; what matters is whether she/he does it with free choice or not. The song Rachel sings in the play is also about freedom: “For I was as free as a bird on the mountain, / For I was as free as a swallow so high. / I was free as a bloody great eagle” (12.158). Here the use of three animals, namely bird, swallow and eagle, serves the purpose of reflecting Rachel’s close connection to freedom since all of these animals, with which Rachel associates herself, are presented in their close relation with freedom. This can be inferred from the fact that Rachel always uses the word “free” to underline these animals’ association with freedom. So, it can be seen that Arden portrays the Sawneys as people who care a lot about their freedom, which is highly reminiscent of nomadic ways.

The Sawneys dislike the house not only because a council house is not appropriate for their nomadic way of life or culture, but also because it is not appealing or attractive at all. Arden himself justifies the Sawneys’ point of view with such words as “The Housing Estate has only too obviously been laid out by an unimaginative Borough Surveyor. It is wearisome to look at and contains no real feeling of a living town. Col’s criticism of it to Doreen in Scene Three is entirely justified” (“Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*” 102). Specifying the defects in the planning of the Housing Estate, Arden describes the place as “wearisome to look at” and adds that the place “contains no real feeling of a living town,” which matches up with Shepherd and Shepherd’s argument that the council houses had “a concrete, urban sledge-grey look” (38). So, both arguments portray the exterior of the council houses as quite

gloomy, which justifies Col's antipathy to the place. In Scene Three, Col tells how he feels entrapped in the neighbourhood, which is organised too orderly and is colourless for him:

Look at it. You got a house you got a house. Then you got a bit of garden then there is house and house. Then you got a bit of garden. A house a house a bit of garden. Then you got the concrete bloody road and two blue coppers thumping up and down it. I'll tell you, I'm going off me nut already... (3.117)

In the quotation, Col expresses that the design of the neighbourhood depresses him because of the unpleasant uniformity of the houses. The uniformity here disturbs Col for it symbolises loss of differences, individuality and freedom under the dominance of the Housing Department, which expects every resident to accept the architectural tastes of the Housing Estate.

As for the interior of the council house, Col's opinion about it is not much different from his opinion about the neighbourhood: "I can't abide inside, you'd be a tortoise or summat, you've to live in this dump" (3.115). Col states that he feels like a tortoise in the house, which means that he feels his movements are restrained and slowed down as if he had a burden on his back. As in the case of a tortoise, Col's house is his burden. In other words, the tortoise is a symbol Arden employs to disclose the feelings of the character who sees the council house as a burden on his life and therefore prefers not to be in the house as much as possible.

Bathroom is another symbol that shows the Sawneys' disharmony with the house. At the beginning of the play, while the Official introduces the house to them, the Sawneys find the bathroom most strange:

ROSIE: Did you say it was a bathroom?

THE OFFICIAL: God help us. Of course, love, I said it was a bathroom.

SALLY: Bathroom? Is there water? Is there taps of water, mister? (1.105)

It is obvious from the dialogue that most probably Sally and Rosie have never used a bathroom before. In a later scene, Rachel also expresses her disturbance by the state's expectations from them through the bathroom:

You know what they did? They put us in this house the last day. And they're holding us in it and all. They've even put a bathroom for us, to be certain sure

we're clean for their snow-white garden paths. I don't go for baths regular. It's not my common life. But I'll strip me down one day for this one, and you can be there to see me do it. Then you tell the copper and the Council that Big Rachel's had her bath, all like they like it. (3.118)

The Sawneys feel restrained by the existence of the bathroom, because they think that it is one of the symbols that reflects the expectations of the state from them; and Rachel thinks that these expectations include the residents' cleanliness.

Another example of the characters' disharmony with the house is the properties that remained from their nomadic days and culture: "a chamber pot," "a home-made barrow" (1.108), "a pile of bedding" and "a tin bowl" (4.121). The chamber pot is an object that might possibly be associated with nomadic life since it would be quite useful during their constantly mobile life, in contrast to the bathroom; therefore, it indicates how far the Sawneys are from the concept of the bathroom since no such concept or structure exists in nomadic life. The "home-made barrow" also emphasises the idea of mobility because it means that their goods and belongings are so few that even a barrow can be enough for them to move their items to a new place. The pile of bedding is, again, a sign of mobility as it is more manageable and movable than the combination of a mattress and a bed. The tin bowl is also an object that is light to carry and used commonly in nomadic culture (Kenrick 276). The use of tin in the play is significant in the sense that tin culture has been closely associated with gypsies in Britain from the early twelfth century onwards (Kenrick 276). So, it can be argued that they moved in to the council house; however, they did not let go of their previous nomadic habits totally, which makes it hard for them to adapt to a new style of life.

In contrast to the Sawneys, the Jacksons enjoy the Housing Estate since permanent settlement is a normal part of their lives. Arden presents the Jacksons, starting with the father of the family, as follows: "Mr Jackson is a man of forty-five [and] there is nothing much to be said against him. He knows he has a dull life" ("Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*" 104). As Mr Jackson accepts the dullness of his life, he is probably not affected by the monotonous order of the council houses, unlike the Sawneys. As for Mrs Jackson, the writer describes her as a woman who "has grown older quicker than her husband and has not had a figure for several years, but does not mind. She loves her gossip, and in general much resembles her

neighbours” (104). These features indicate that Mrs Jackson has no problem of adaptation to the Housing Estate inasmuch as she gets along well with her neighbours and they share a common gossiping culture. So, similar to Mr Jackson’s acceptance of the dullness of his life, Mrs Jackson seems to be accepting this truth even more readily. As Doreen tells Col about their everyday lives, the Jacksons “watch the telly sometimes. Or [they] go to the flicks” (3.117). These words uttered by Doreen, too, provide an insight into how they spend their time, which is apparently very different from the Sawneys’ turbulent life. Another significant detail about the Jacksons is that before moving in to the council house, they had a miserable life in Balaclava Road, which is most visible in the play:

JACKSON: Cos look: How long have we been on this Housing Scheme?

MRS JACKSON: Two year.

JACKSON: Well! Did we live afore that?

MRS JACKSON: You know where we lived.

JACKSON: Then you don’t need me to tell you. Balaclava Road – lovely place warn’t it? I would enough of it at work, I can tell you. ‘Hello Ben, how’s the thieves’ kitchen this morning?’ ‘I see there wor another Griavous Bodily Harm up your way last night, Ben – ooh – you will have to watch it, Ben – Yer getting too well known to the coppers.’ Ha ha. Funny Jokers.

MRS JACKSON: Well. It wor as bad for me.

JACKSON: Aye. And when at last Corporation’s good enough to let us get out up here and get a new house. (13.160)

In this sense, the Jacksons are already used to a settled life, but they just wanted it to be better. Thus, moving from Balaclava Road to the council house was a dramatic upgrade for them. While their previous neighbourhood was a horrible place, a “thieves’ kitchen,” where severe crimes such as grievous bodily harm were usual, the safe routine of the Housing Estate was a heaven for them. Mrs Jackson acknowledges this while talking to Rachel about the Housing Estate:

[W]e think it’s lovely. [...] I’ll tell you where we used to live – you know when you went pass the Town Hall down by the Catholic Church – all them little mucky streets – eh it wor terrible. But they moved us out, moved us all out and pulled the lot down. That’s where they are building new Corporation Offices. [...] Isn’t it lovely here, though? Wide streets, bits of garden and all... (2.113)



As indicated, differently from the Sawneys, the Jacksons are content with living in the Housing Estate; and they did not mind their previous home being demolished by the state to build new Corporation Offices. In comparison with their previous place, the Jacksons prefer “wide streets” and small gardens.

It is significant here to underline that moving from Balaclava Road to the Housing Estate is not only an upgrade in terms of material gains, such as having a better house and garden, but also a means of social mobility for them, which can be inferred from Mrs Jackson’s words:

My husband he works for Co-op you know; like he’s their agent, drives around the villages all day in his van to the local branches; just in the grocery he used to be, but he got made Agent last year. [...] He’s got his van, you see: He’s like his own master now... (2.112-13)

Climbing the social ladder, as can be observed above, is of high significance for Mr Jackson. Furthermore, Arden himself expresses that Mr Jackson “is in process of being promoted from the working-class proper into the lower-middle” (“Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*” 104). As a “petit bourgeois family,” the Jacksons aim to improve their living standards, and they see working and living in the Housing Estate as a step towards it (Leeming 7). In this respect, they appreciate and enjoy the policies of the Housing Department, which made them leave their previous place in order to build new Corporation Offices on the land. Moving into a council house, for the Jacksons, therefore, marks both an upgrade in terms of material gains and perhaps more importantly moving up in the class structure.

While the Jacksons were happy in their council house and the Sawneys were happy in their tramcar, the Housing Department’s practices that force the Sawneys to move in to the Housing Estate causes these two lifestyles to clash, as is previously adverted to. Their conflict begins with the Sawneys’ harsh attitude against Mrs Jackson’s welcome, which can be exemplified with Rosie’s response to Mrs Jackson: “Why don’t you folk leave us alone? We didn’t come here cos we wanted; but now we *are* here you ought to leave us be” (2.113). As it can be understood from Rosie’s response, the Sawneys do not want to be disturbed by the neighbours as they cannot internalise the fact that they have to live in this council house from

then on. Their conflict continues after Rachel and Mr Jackson have a sexual affair and Rachel demands money for the physical act, which drives Mr Jackson to insult Rachel:

RACHEL: You don't find much o' my sort of loving up and down this *town*, likely?

JACKSON: [*in outrage*]: No and it's a damn good thing we don't – what you want a lump of raw meat shoved in the bars of the cage to tear at, *you* want. By, I've never met the like. You bloody animal. What do you want to carry on like that for? We could have had us a right nice time this afternoon if you'd only – Well I didn't expect it like that, I can tell you. (8.140)

It can be observed that after committing adultery with her, Mr Jackson accuses Rachel of being immoral, echoing Mr Jackson's two-faced understanding of morality, which applies to the Sawneys but not to himself. After he judges Rachel as a prostitute, he judges the whole family of the Sawneys for the poor maintenance of their house. In a sense, he does not feel bad for cheating on his wife, but he feels bad for committing adultery in a house which he characterises as “[f]air shocking disgusting” (8.139) and adds:

[I]f I want a tart again – it's the last time I come to *this* house. I've had my lot of you, and that's for truth. I'd sooner spend my afternoons rolling in a muck tip! It'd smell a bit sweeter, anyroad [...] I could call this house a Public Nuisance, you know. I could tell the Sanitary Department a thing or two about this house. (8.140)

Mr Jackson's satirical and threatening words are directed at Rachel due to the bad condition of the house. It can be suggested that his excessive reaction points out the huge difference between the two families' habits of home care. Arguably, in the Jacksons' house, such neglect would not be accepted.

According to Leeming, the Jacksons' “sense of security [is] threatened by the Sawneys' noise and sexuality” (8), and they eventually begin to blame the Sawneys every time a problem occurs in the neighbourhood, including when Mrs Jackson's cat goes missing:

MRS JACKSON: It wouldn't surprise me if they'd not eaten her, the poor little thing.

JACKSON: Now who would eat a cat? You're talking soft.

MRS JACKSON: *They'd* eat a cat. We wor better off with them black Americans in the war and that's no story... Yelling in the streets twelve o'clock at night. And besides – we ought to go to the police. (13.159)

Even though it was Blackmouth who was “yelling in the streets twelve o'clock at night” (13.159), Mrs Jackson believes that it was the Sawneys because she developed a serious prejudice against them. Holding the Sawneys responsible for her kitten's disappearance, she even thinks that they ate her cat, as is mentioned earlier, which is only an instance of many other scenes of conflict between the two families. Therefore, Arden's indirect criticism of housing policies can be observed mainly through the clash between the two socially very different families, made to live in close proximity, and their opposing perspectives on the issue of the housing scheme of welfare policies.

Alongside the two families in conflict, Arden also presents a group of unwanted visitors to the Sawneys, namely Blackmouth, the Old Croaker and Daffodil, whose attitudes towards the council houses have a significant role in reflecting Arden's reproof of the implementation of housing schemes. Despite the fact that these characters share a nomadic background with the Sawneys, they actually enjoy the council house. They see the Sawneys' house as a safe shelter that they appreciate to have, in contrast to the Sawneys. Firstly, Blackmouth uses the house as a hiding place from the police since he is a prisoner on the loose and explains why he feels safe in the house:

They look for me on the roads. I'm always on the roads, eh? Eh? They'd never look in a house, would they? [*He starts beating the walls and floor with his hand.*] Walls, you see? Roof, you see? Floor. Clench you close and safely. (4.127-28)

Blackmouth's statement discloses his fear of the police and his belief that they cannot find him in the house, which causes him to feel safe inside. Secondly, Daffodil finds the house safe because she is very sick and needs a place to rest and get well. In order to convince Sailor to let them stay longer, she pretends to be sick, even though she recovers from her illness. Thirdly, the Old Croaker feels safe in the house and enjoys being there because she thinks that she is too old to continue living on the road. When Sailor does not want them to stay anymore, the Old Croaker, ironically, complains about him to Mrs Jackson, saying “ –

do you know what they're at? Them Sawneys? They want to put, us, on, the road. Put-us-on-the-road!" (9.142). The irony here is that Mrs Jackson and her neighbours in the first place do not want her or the Sawneys in their neighbourhood; they even refer to the Old Croaker as "the old crooked devil" and "the bloody bitch" in their conversations (15.175).

The contrasting attitudes towards the council house between the Sawneys and their visitors may be rooted in the fact that the Sawneys are forced to live there because their tramcar was destroyed; however, their visitors choose to be there by their own free will. So, here, it can be seen that Arden shows the importance of freedom of choice that can change people's lives, which is in consistency with his criticism of the improper realisations of the housing policies that restrict people's freedom.

Arden pictures the probable results of the improper implementations of the housing policies also through the oppression of the Sawneys by the Housing Department, which can be observed throughout the play. In the beginning, the Sawneys are moved from their tramcar in the caravan site to a council house, where they are expected to pay rent. Total strangers to the concept of living in a house on their first day in the house, they have to be taught by the Official how to use the house. When the Sawneys cannot adapt to the house and the district, the neighbours file complaints against them, which results in the Official's warning:

THE OFFICIAL: Well. My instructions, Mr Sawney, are to tell you that unless something is done, steps will be taken, Mr Sawney, by the Department, to put you out; and that's that. I'm sorry. There it is.

SAILOR: And where will we go? The institutions, isn't it? Cos you've burnt the tram-car we used to live in. We can't go on the road, we've two little kids with us. We've not got money for a wagon. So what do we do?

THE OFFICIAL: If you take my advice, you'll clean the house. Hang some curtains up. Tidy the garden. And get rid of your lodgers. (14.165-66)

The Official tells them about the neighbours' complaints and makes it clear that they will be evicted unless they take his warning into consideration. So, he expresses that they must live in the house according to the Housing Estate rules and advises them not to host gypsy visitors anymore. The Official's statements show how the Sawneys oppressed by the state. The

Official controls not only how the family maintains the house, but also whether their friends can stay with them or not. Hence, through the conflict between the Official and the Sawneys, Arden criticises the state's violation of the private sphere. The fact that the Official does not have a name or surname, and also his statements such as "I told you before, I'm not responsible [...] if you lot get evicted [...]" (14.166) and "I'm only the bottle-washer in the department" (14.165) strengthen the idea that he stands for the Housing Department. So, through Sailor's self-defence against the Official, in the above quotation, Arden presents how an individual or even a whole family can be adversely affected by the improper practices of the Housing Department.

Arden's use of two strikingly different families enables him to achieve an objective criticism of the housing scheme of the welfare state policies. He does not take sides or approve either of the families (Trussler 10). In the case of the Sawneys, although in the "Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*" he treats the history of the nomadic people in Britain and perhaps creates sympathy for them in the reader/audience, he does not simply reflect them as victims of the problems they face. Instead, he presents the faults of both the state and the family, in line with his comment that he "approve[s] outright neither of the Sawneys nor of the Jacksons. Both groups uphold standards of conduct that are incompatible, but which are both valid in their correct context" ("Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs* 101).

Another significant issue related to Arden's objective approach in *Live Like Pigs* is the plurality of perspectives. The play juxtaposes the perspectives of the Sawneys, nomadic people forced to live in the house, the Jacksons who moved their house of their own volition and enjoy being there, the Official who sees the council houses as a grace bestowed upon the poor and who therefore holds that they should obey whatever the state would require them to, and lastly the second group of nomadic people who desire to stay at the council house deeming it a place of safety and comfort. These four distinct perspectives aim to provide the reader/audience with various points of views about the housing issue; and Arden's distanced stance on the perspectives of these four groups leads to an objective criticism of the housing policies of the welfare state.

Apart from housing, *Live Like Pigs* also concerns the welfare state policy of education. Although the state provides free education for children, the fact that it shapes and controls individuals' freedom and identity seems problematic in the play. The following song focuses on the conflict between the individual's liberty and the discipline of an obscure authority:

[I]f you want your freedom kept  
 You need to fight and strive  
 Or else they'll come and catch you, Jack,  
 And bind you up alive. (1.105)

It can be suggested that this first song from the beginning of the play reflects the Sawneys' desire for freedom, and as it is explained previously, the Sawneys attach a lot of importance to their freedom, which is part of their nomadic culture. Flaumenhaft affirms that the Sawneys have "that sense of a vaguely defined 'they' from whom they must protect themselves" (53). Therefore, they are ready to "fight and strive" for their freedom on any ground. The fact that they lost their tramcar implies that they were not able to win their fight against the state when the caravan site was being demolished by the officials of the Housing Department. However, the Sawneys keep fighting against the state, though in a different field, through their opposition to the education system of the welfare state.

The Sawneys, with a desire to preserve their freedom in all spheres of life, believe that the official education system is likely to restrict their liberty and indoctrinate their children with the ideology of the state. According to Althusser, education or "the School" (154) is the most important ideological "state apparatus" which

takes children from every class at infant-school age, and then for years, the years in which the child is most 'vulnerable,' [...] it drums into them, whether it uses new or old methods, a certain amount of 'know-how' wrapped up in ruling ideology or simply the ruling ideology in its pure state. (155)

From an Althusserian perspective, the pronoun "they," mentioned above by Flaumenhaft and also in the song, might be pointing out the ideological state apparatuses themselves; therefore, the Sawneys might be trying to protect themselves from these apparatuses. In the play, the fact that the Sawneys do not want to send Sally to school is revealed by the dialogue between the Doctor and Rosie:

DOCTOR: Why doesn't she go to the school?

ROSIE: Why should she go to the school? They'd not learn her nowt there. They'd knock'em about there. I've heard of it. Hurt her. Keep her book-reading at night when she ought to be having her play and her sleep. We'll not let them take my Sally for the school. Oh no no, we don't. (6.134)

Rosie's words stand for the Sawneys' way of looking at the education system. They think that it can be harmful for Sally to go to school, first of all, because of its workload. Finding the workload of students too much, they believe that it would prevent Sally from playing or sleeping enough as a child. Children, from their point of view, should be able to live their childhood freely while they can, which is in accordance with their idea of the freedom of an individual. They do not trust the education system, thinking that it can harm Sally by depriving her of freedom. Moreover, the education children get in schools is, in the Sawneys' opinion, futile. It does not teach anything useful to them, which points to the fact that the Sawneys do not approve of the official education deemed suitable by the welfare state. In addition to the Sawneys, Sally's father, Blackmouth also opposes the idea of sending Sally to school. He once states: "Hey hey Sally, who's off to send you to school? Anyone to send you to school, they've to sort wi me first: let'em sort it with your dad, what about it?" (6.135). As a result, Sally does not want to go to school, either. Finally, it is perhaps possible to claim that through the Sawneys' attitude towards the system of education, Arden suggests that despite all the innovations and developments initiated by welfare policies, education still fails to reach people.

Since Sally does not go to school, she is educated by her family at home. For instance, Rosie teaches her how to make clothes pegs, which implies that one day she may earn her living by selling clothes pegs, just like her mother. However, she also learns the particulars of how to make money out of stolen properties since Col guides her about it. To illustrate, he shows her the stuff he stole from his workplace: "Off of the building site, these. How much for 'em, Sally, eh? Two quid? Sell'em to Charlie, up to Sheffield Road. He'd give me two quid; two quid ten maybe?" (3.115). After Sally sells everything, she merrily informs Col about her "success":

SALLY: Col! Col! I done it, Col. I done it like you told me, Col.

COL: You give them tools to Charlie?

SALLY: Snotty Charlie. [...] He warn't going to let me have more nor a quid, Col; but I says to him, I says: 'Col says my dad Blackmouth's home and he did a Screw right dead and if you don't give me more nor two quid he'll do you too, good and proper,' I tell him. So he give me thirty bob for 'em. Here, see. [*She gives him the money.*] (9.143)

The dialogue clearly shows that Sally is very successful in learning these practices and therefore is likely to continue selling stolen objects in the future, too. In other words, she will carry on her family's manner of making a living in the future and keep opposing the education system imposed by the state. Arden describes the Sawneys' general dissentient attitude as follows: The Sawneys "are as violent as they are amorous, and quite astonishingly hostile to good government and order" (qtd. in Roberts 38). The case of education also affirms the Sawneys' distrust of and opposition to the system for they believe that letting their Sally get educated by the state will lead her to be indoctrinated by whatever the state wants, and by refusing to let her go to school, they actually eliminate that possibility. To put it differently, although the welfare state provides free education, it fails to gain the trust of and reach nomadic families like the Sawneys who are apprehensive about losing their nomadic identities and ways.

Another significant topic under which various features of the welfare state are put forward in *Live Like Pigs* is social security. Through this umbrella term, Arden touches upon certain services of the welfare state such as the National Assistance, Family Allowances and the National Insurance, alongside issues such as inequality in wages and the unjust distribution of wealth in society. Arden begins reflecting these issues with a song again:

Wages at four bob an hour  
 What labourer will decline?  
 Yet you can earn much more than that –  
 And I don't mean overtime. (3.114)

In this song, through the character Col, Arden points out the wage gap between the social classes: While the labourers do not have the luxury to decline a job even if it offered a low



wage, there are others who “can earn much more than that” without having to work long hours. The gap or inequality between classes can be so profound that a labourer is not likely to close the gap however hard or long he works. In other words, working legally longer hours or working harder does not enable a labourer to earn a sufficient amount of money, let alone earning more. So, it is implied that if a labourer desires to make more money, there are other ways, which are most probably illegal. Col’s song reflects the Sawneys’ way of thinking about the unjust distribution of wealth in society, that is those who work harder do not necessarily earn enough or more, but those who take part in illegal activities earn much more. Therefore, probably it will not be wrong to argue that Arden indicates that the unjust distribution of wealth in society channels the poor into illegal practices, which is the case with the Sawneys.

A good example for this state of affairs would be the wallets “found” by Big Rachel (3.114). When Col asks how Sailor and Big Rachel were able to find money for alcohol, Sally answers:

Big Rachel found, like, wallet. In the road she found it. Three quid in it, see.  
Me mam had a half-a-dollar too. That mister he dropped in the bathroom  
yesterday when I wor running the taps. He dropped it, see. Then me mam  
made me give it to her. (3.114)

It seems probable under the circumstances that Big Rachel, though aware of the fact that the Official dropped the wallet, did not tell Sally to give it back to him. She rather kept it for herself to buy some drink, indicating that when there is an opportunity, she does not hesitate to abuse it for her own benefit since her financial condition does not allow her to buy alcohol. Finding a wallet on the road also sounds suspicious and may bring to mind the possibility that she stole it. Hence, the lack of financial income may well have led Big Rachel to commit a crime, and it is now her daily routine.

Still another example of the Sawneys’ reaction to the unjust distribution of wealth is provided by another member of the family, Col, who “throws his haversack down and takes out a number of carpenter’s tools” (3.114) that he stole from his working place. His words to Sally are: “Off of the building site, these. How much for ’em, Sally, eh? Two quid? Sell’em to

Charlie, up to Sheffield Road. He'd give me two quid; two quid ten maybe?" (3.115). This manifests that Col steals objects from his job and sells them through Sally. Or, stated otherwise, just like his mother Big Rachel, he does not miss the chance to make money even if it is in an illegal way. The cases of both Big Rachel and Col suggest that their lack of financial means, even if it is not the only reason, pushes them to illegal activities, as summarised in Col's song: "Yet you can earn much more than that / And I don't mean overtime" (3.114).

From the Official's statements in the first scene, it can however be inferred that there are units of the welfare state that can support poor people: "This is your place. You've to pay rent, of course, it's not much, though. You'll easy afford it; if not, you can go on the Assistance, you see" (1.106). The "Assistance" mentioned in the excerpt is the National Assistance, which is one of the services of the social security system in the welfare state. The National Assistance is designed for the people living in the country, and it provides them with "a book of coupons cashable at the post office," food, clothing and shelter (Marquand 6). In addition to the benefits of the Assistance, there are the Family Allowances, part of the welfare state policies, which aims to help parents and children in poor condition, and it was therefore another option for the needy to get monetary benefit in the 1950s.

However, these benefits and allowances were not enough to eliminate the socio-economic inequality in the post-war British society (Crick 43). Family allowance was five shillings a week in 1945, and after 1952, it became eight shillings a week for each child (Macnicol 194; Abrams n.p). In order to understand the labourers' financial situation in the 1950s better, one can compare the value of the pound: 1955's £1, for instance, equals to 2019's £23.87 in terms of purchasing power ("Calculate Purchasing Power"). Since there are twenty shillings (bobs) in a pound (£), it can be understood that Col's hourly wage in *Live Like Pigs*, which was four shillings in 1955, equals to £4.7 in 2019. Considering that the average hourly pay in the United Kingdom in 2019 is £11.34 ("Average Hourly Pay"), the insufficiency of Col's wage becomes a bare fact. So, regarding the purchasing power of Col's money and the fact that he gets four shillings per hour in an unqualified job, eight shillings a week given as an allowance would not make much of a difference for the well-being of his family. Although the National

Assistance benefit was higher than the family allowances on a weekly base, it was still little in amount, as it provided nearly 35 shillings per week (Marquand 6). To compare this amount in terms of today's purchasing power, it can be stated that 35 shillings or £1,15 in 1955, is nearly equal to £41 in 2019 ("Calculate Purchasing Power"). On the condition that a labourer works eight hours a day, five days a week and is paid four shillings an hour, he gets £8 a week in 1955. This calculation reveals the insufficiency of the benefit, which is only £1,15 per week. Therefore, Col's song can be taken as an indirect criticism of the welfare state which was inefficient to close the profound wage gap between the classes, since benefits were too little to be useful and far from being a solution to the problem of poverty in Britain.

Furthermore, in order to get the Assistance benefits and allowances, people had to be eligible in terms of their economic conditions, in addition to the requirements that they had to live in a small settlement outside large urban areas to get the Assistance benefits, and they had to be employed parents to get a family allowance (Fraser 214). In other words, one had to have at least one child and a job in order to get a family allowance since it was paid to parents for childcare (Fraser 214). The Sawneys in the play are not eligible for the family allowance because only Col is working legally and he has no official familial connection with Rosie or Sally, which means that the Sawneys could get only the Assistance benefit since they live in the country.

As a matter of fact, Arden criticises not only the inefficient support given by the social security system, but also the Sawneys for their lack of awareness of the welfare state policies, which prevents them from benefiting by the system. Even though social security provides little support for poor people and therefore proves to be unsuccessful in solving the economic depravity of the lower classes, the Assistance benefit could still be of help to the Sawneys if they had only applied for it. In Scene Two, Rachel complains that they need money because they "[ha]ve got a rent to pay for" the council house (2.111), and apparently, the Assistance coupons for rent would ease their financial stress. However, they do not apply for the Assistance in the rest of the play, although the Official advises them to do so. They either ignore or fail to grasp the Official's advice on the benefits of the National Assistance benefits. In this respect, Arden indirectly criticises people who are unaware of their rights and

opportunities provided by the welfare state or are too lazy to pursue their rights, in accordance with Jones and Lowe's remark that a number of people who were "eligible for national assistance [were] not receiving it" in those years (75). The Sawneys, too, fall into this category of people who, though eligible for the Assistance, fail to receive it due to their own flaws.

Another significant aspect of the social security system is the National Insurance, which is related to injury, unemployment and sickness benefits. In Scene Fourteen it is indicated that the National Insurance forms were periodically sent to the Sawneys' house. However, they simply ignore these letters and burn every single one of them without even bothering to open them until Rachel tells Sailor that they should not do so because "Jock Fa [a friend of Rachel] once tell'd [her] he burned a whole quid in a letter one" (14.164). Then they start opening the letters with the hope of finding cash inside, but they are disappointed to find out that the National Insurance has sent them only printed forms:

RACHEL: This printed one. It's a form. For filling-in, see.

SAILOR: Then burn it. We've never had it.

RACHEL: Ach, I dunno. It is the National Insurance.

SAILOR: What about it? Those bastards'd chase ye from Newcastle to Cornwall. They're worse nor the bloody Peelers. (14.164-65)

As can be observed in the excerpt above, Sailor simply rejects the letter not only because it does not contain money but also because he associates it with the officialdom which he does not trust and deems total abusers. However, Rachel suspects that the letter could be about "an Entitlement" (14.165) related to Sailor's "bad leg" (14.165) since he has been suffering from an injured leg for a long time. The reference to the Entitlement is actually true, for the National Insurance supports the employee injured at work; however, this is on condition that the employee periodically contributes to the insurance system (Gregg 43). In the play, by rejecting to fill in the form or even bother to read it, Sailor actually misses the chance to receive entitlement or benefit for his chronically injured leg. In this respect, it can be argued that his prejudice against the state leaves not only his very own self but also his family short

of financial support. To state the same thing differently, through this issue of letters sent by the National Insurance, Arden presents Sailor himself as the very victim of his own actions.

Besides the National Insurance system, the National Health Service is presented as another major pillar of the welfare system in the play. As it is examined in the Introduction of this thesis, Aneurin Bevan has revolutionised the health system in Britain by establishing the National Health Service, which provides all the British citizens with free health care. In the play, Arden, on the one hand, presents the positive aspects of the NHS, but on the other, he criticises the corruption in the health system through the Doctor. Similar to the case with the Official, the Doctor does not have a name or surname, which bears the implication that the writer criticises a group of doctors in the NHS, instead of a specific individual.

In the “Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*,” Arden describes the Doctor as follows: “The Doctor is a lady doctor and not a very pleasant one. She is impatient with the members of her panel and by no means inclined to put herself out for their convenience. Her diagnoses are accurate. She is fifty years old” (104). The description implies that the Doctor is a successful but troublesome agent of the health system due to her impatience and unpleasant attitude. Flaumenhaft argues that although the Doctor is disturbed by the wild nature of the Old Croaker, she “is no less bewildered by her patient” (54). That is to say, the Doctor and her patient are alike. The Doctor’s hot-temper can be observed in her reaction to the Sawneys’ house. She says: “This house is appalling, you know, the condition of it: appalling. Look at the state of this room. Supposed to be a sickroom, filthy” (6.133). Afterwards, she further comments on the house in a similar way: “Filthy. I was appalled by the bathroom, appalled. This is quite a new house. You ought to know how to treat it properly” (6.134). She becomes disgusted by and/or angry at the state of the house and advises them to maintain it properly, constantly judging them. These examples seem significant in the sense that Arden indirectly shows the inconvenient situation created when a public servant adopts a patronising attitude, which suggests that a representative of an institution of the state, in this case the NHS, should not look down on the public. However, the Doctor’s following words deepen the contrast between her and the Sawneys: “She [Daffodil] [should] be [...] properly fed. There’s no reason why not, these days” (6.133). The fact that she cannot imagine a family to be

undernourished makes the Doctor even more alien to the Sawneys and highlights her inconsiderate attitude.

In addition to her attitude, her greed, too, is criticised as can be seen in the song at the beginning of the Scene Six: “The Doctor’s trade’s a very good trade. [...] The Doctor’s trade’s a dangerous trade” (6.131). Arden uses the word “trade” to describe the Doctor’s merchant-like practices and to imply that she is corrupt. Furthermore, she invites Daffodil to her office for her further services: “Come and see me in my surgery on Monday if you’re still not feeling right” (6.133). Instead of visiting her at home again, the Doctor offers her treatment in her own office, which is ambiguous whether her office is a private clinic or not. This instance can be related to the fact that doctors protested against the NHS when it was first initiated since its policies restricted their way of making money within the health system:

Doctors regarded the goodwill that they built up over years of medical practice as something saleable, and on giving up a practice would sell it to the incoming doctor. It was generally assumed that the money received was a kind of retirement bonus or realisation of an investment and that the doctor was entitled to the best price he could get. (Gregg 56)

It can be understood from the passage that it was common among doctors to sell their medical practices. Arden indirectly criticises this merchant-like mentality among doctors, putting aside the idealistic ones. Certainly, the NHS system distorted the previous system that had been continuing for the favour of doctors for quite a long time: Since the NHS diminished the doctors’ income in general, the Doctor in the play looks for other means to earn more, which explains why she offers treatment to Daffodil in her own office. Yet, even though Arden presents her as a corrupt character, he does not demonise the Doctor. It is obvious that she helps the Sawneys by coming to their house, examining Daffodil and writing a prescription for her as well as becoming concerned about Sally. Therefore, it can be argued that the playwright maintains his objective stance in the play by presenting the character from various angles.

Additionally, Arden criticises not only the Doctor but also the Sawneys in their relationship to the Doctor. He shows that Sally could be cared for better if the Sawneys had benefited from the NHS more:

DOCTOR: [*Looking closely at Sally*] How long has she had these sores on her face?

[*They are silent.*] [...]

DOCTOR: I don't understand your attitude. Present day and age. House in this condition, child needs attention – what do you imagine the Health Service is for? Why don't you take her to the children's clinic? (6.133-34)

Sally's sores probably prove how the Sawneys themselves are negatively affected by their own distrust of the institutions initiated by the system. They try to dissociate themselves from every implementation or service of the health system and find themselves in difficult situations like the above one. However, in the end, they are desperately in need of this very health system because a police sergeant calls for an ambulance for Sailor's broken leg and the Sawneys are shown as helplessly waiting for the ambulance to come. It appears that through the emergency service, the National Health Service will help the Sawneys, again. Hence, it can be averred that Arden presents the NHS as a useful unit of the welfare state, but also criticises its corrupt agents, alongside the Sawneys for their ignorance.

In respect of the form of the play, it serves the purpose of supporting the content. Arden uses Brechtian epic elements in *Live Like Pigs* in order to create an aesthetic distance between the reader/audience and the play, so that the reader/audience can adopt a critical perspective of what happens in the play. The elements of epic theatre employed in *Live Like Pigs* are particularly the episodic structure and songs.

As for the episodic structure, the play consists of seventeen scenes, and "every scene is," according to Clayton, "an independent 'sketch'," which means that every scene has a separate sub-story that offers new details about the story and characters, but "also contains a strong element of repetition [because almost] each scene repeats the conflict" between order and disorder by means of the Sawneys and the others (120). Therefore, the absence of some of these scenes, repetitive in terms of conflict, would not disturb the whole of the play or the

chain of events. So, it can be argued that through this loose structure, Arden may have aimed to stimulate the reader/audience to critically think about the action, just like Brecht tried to do. Brecht

believed that the tight structure of traditional drama induced audiences to think of events in the world as inevitable and preordained; he hoped that his own looser theatrical structures would induce audiences to imagine the possibility of change and human intervention. Whether human liked it or not, Brecht believed, they created their own history [...]. (Brockmann 83)

Accordingly, Gray states that “Arden, like Brecht, is interested in making us question the ‘self-evident,’ in making us see the everyday world with fresh eyes” (13). Hence, the alienation effect, which is in this instance achieved through the episodic structure, leads the reader/audience to have a critical approach towards the events in the play.

Regarding the songs, Arden clearly states in the “Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*” that “[t]he stanzas of songs at the beginning of each scene are intended to be sung as an introductory statement either just before the set is discovered or while the lights are coming up” (104). So Arden uses them for the functional purpose of commenting on the scenes, which is a technique used in epic theatre in order to give a message and create a critical distance from the play (Brecht 43). Almost each scene starts with an introductory song in *Live Like Pigs*, and the songs prepare the reader/audience for the upcoming scenes by commenting on the events and characters:

The rage of angry wives awaits  
No trumpet-call nor drum:  
When once it breaks, like thunder it breaks  
And they run around the town.

For their hearts are hurt and their houses hurt.  
Their houses are their heart.  
And those within their houses are  
The least important part. (15.172)

This song interprets Scene Fifteen because it portrays the “angry wives[’]” upcoming actions in the play. The “angry wives” represent Mrs Jackson, Rachel and the other wives in the town. They are all angry with somebody or a group: Rachel with the neighbours, Mrs Jackson



with the Sawneys; and other anonymous wives of the Housing Estate join Mrs Sawneys' anger with the gypsies. The song comments on the scene suggesting that "[t]heir houses are their heart" (15.172), which means that their houses, the embodiments of their lifestyles, are at the centre of these women's lives, reflecting the significance they attribute to their way of living. The song also presents their aggression. They are hurt, and their disturbance induces them to protect their houses, which is metaphorically their lifestyle, and their lives against the people or policies that disturb them. Therefore, "they run around the town," or in other words, riot on the streets, against the disturbers. In this respect, the riot implied in the song is the lynching of the Sawneys attempted by the neighbours at the end of the play. In an interview, Arden stated that he "see[s] prose as being a more useful vehicle for conveying plot and character relationships; and poetry as a sort of comment on them" (qtd. in Zarhy-Levo 134). So the playwright himself expresses that he uses the songs to comment on the scenes in the play.

In order to increase the distance between the reader/audience and the play, Arden specifies that the songs will not be sung to a musical background. In the "Introductory Note to *Live Like Pigs*," he instructs the directors and the reader/audience that

[t]his song needs no instrumental accompaniment, and the same tune, basically, could be used for each scene. It should be a typical melancholy street-ballad, dragging and harsh, and sung with the peculiar monotony associated with the old fashioned street singers. The same singer need not sing each stanza if it is considered that a better effect would be produced by varying the voices. [...] The songs sung by the actors in the course of the play should be to airs of the usual folk-song variety, and unaccompanied. (104)

The fact that no music accompanies the songs in the play suggests that the songs address the mind, instead of the emotions because the absence of music helps the reader/audience focus on the words, rather than the melody. So, it can be suggested that the songs are not included in the play for just aesthetic purposes. They are not lyrical or romantic songs; instead, they carry messages.

Finally, the use of Brechtian techniques, the episodic structure and the songs, are functional as they serve the content of *Live Like Pigs*. These techniques can indeed be interpreted as the

indicators of Arden's attempt at rendering his reader/audience to critically approach the welfare state policies presented in the play, making the play definitely a political one.

So, in *Live Like Pigs*, Arden touches upon the troubles related to the welfare state policies, namely housing, social security, education and the NHS. As for the housing policies, he problematises the oppressive aspect of these policies through the Housing Estate and contrasts nomadic and settled lifestyles in order to present different responses to these policies. Apart from this, Arden introduces the conflict between the Sawneys and the education system offered by the state in the sense that although the welfare state initiates its education policies to offer free education for all, the Sawneys' mistrust of these might signify the state's inefficient attempt to reach nomadic families. However, in the context of social security services, Arden criticises the Sawneys for they constantly ignore the National Insurance letters, which might actually be in favour of them. In the play, also the inefficiency of the National Assistance and the Family Allowances is indirectly dealt with due to the fact that their benefits are insufficient to put an end to poverty. Lastly, criticising the corruption in the NHS system, Arden presents the Doctor as a patronising and greedy figure. However, the playwright also criticises the Sawneys for their inertia in not using the NHS more beneficial for themselves. Overall, Arden shows that the inefficiency of the welfare state policies to solve the problems in society is not always related to the failure of the implementation of the policies; it may sometimes be caused by the very people in society, as seen with the example of the Sawneys. Therefore, it can be argued that the writer presents an objective approach to the problem since he shows the negative sides of both parties.

## CHAPTER 2: *THE WORKHOUSE DONKEY*

Commissioned by the English Stage Company, *The Workhouse Donkey* was rejected by the Royal Court Theatre; therefore, the play could not reach the mainstream audience in London (McDonnell 119). As the play was performed in the Chichester Festival on 8 July 1963 (Roberts 109), it was, Hunt argues, “first staged and then buried in the staid environment of Chichester” (48) and it “hasn’t had the production it deserves” (60). Further, Wardle states that Arden’s “work has been persistently undervalued at the time it appeared” (2). Nonetheless, although the play could not be visible enough and was undervalued by the critics in 1963, it is still a significant work for the scope of this thesis because it sheds light on the representations of the welfare state policies in Britain. Arden indicates that despite the fact that these policies were designed to aid desperate people in theory, they failed in practice due to corrupt people who prioritised their self-interests over the common good. Accordingly, this chapter aims to discuss Arden’s criticism of the failures of the welfare state policies in practice due to the corruption in the local government, with a specific focus on two policies, those of education and the National Health Service, in *The Workhouse Donkey*.

The political corruption presented in the play is based on real events, as Arden states in an interview: “*The Workhouse Donkey* [is] set in an unnamed town in the North of England which is more or less Barnsley, where I was brought up” (“Who’s for a Revolution” 45). He further remarks that he “wanted to set on the stage the politics, scandals, sex life, and atmosphere of Barnsley, as [he] remember[s] shocked Conservative elders talking about it in [his] youth (“Who’s for a Revolution” 49). So, Arden “collected from [his] memory a whole lot of such scandals and amalgamated them” (“Who’s for a Revolution” 46). In this respect, it must be plausible to argue that the play harbours Arden’s autobiographical reflections. As Arden himself elaborates on the subject,

[m]any of the characters [in *The Workhouse Donkey*] are taken from life. Certain key incidents – the burglary at the town hall, the incident at the Victoria, the politics of the art gallery, and so on – belong in a not-so-veiled form to the politics of Barnsley. The chief constable controversy is based upon a row they had in Nottingham a few years ago. (“Who’s for a Revolution” 49)

The row was in the newspapers when the suggestion of writing a play out of it was made to Arden by Lindsay Anderson who “was directing *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* [and] said ‘You ought to make a play out of that’” (Gaston 160). Thus, persuaded by Anderson, Arden started the composition of *The Workhouse Donkey*.

In the play, political corruption is criticised mainly through Charlie Butterthwaite. McDonnell draws a parallel between this character and a real political figure of the period in which the play was written, namely T. Dan Smith who was

[a] former Newcastle City Council leader [and] sentenced to six years in prison for corruption. Born into a mining family, Smith had been council leader between 1960 and 1965, and had overseen the redevelopment of the city, clearing its slums and providing good housing [...]. Known as ‘Mr Newcastle’, he was a charismatic, ambitious, combative politician. He was also corrupt, holding pecuniary interests in firms which received council contracts. Smith was one of a generation of Labour Party politicians who came to power in the 1950s and 1960s [...] and who [...] were socialists of an instinctive, ideologically pragmatic and tribal kind. (124)

Similar to Smith, Butterthwaite is a powerful and corrupt Labour Party politician with a lower class background. “Born in the Workhouse, a lower class foundling, Butterthwaite worked his way to power and fame,” says Flaumenhaft (114). So, it seems that both of them are ambitious figures of the Labour Party and they both advanced remarkably in their political career by being involved in the administration of their towns and then became corrupt. Butterthwaite is introduced in the play as the “Chairman of the Regional Branch of the Labour Party, Secretary of the local Mineworkers’ Union, controlling spirit of one-hundred-and-one hard-working committees: and [...] the man who has held the office of Mayor of this borough not fewer than nine times altogether” (1.1.16). After nearly thirty years of mayorship, representing the Labour Party and its policies, he leaves his post to another Labour member, Boocock, and becomes an alderman. Abusing his status as an alderman and ex-mayor, he exerts his influence on the local administration and dominates Mayor Boocock who is a naïve and idealist leader. Throughout the play it can be observed that the late mayor’s dominance and corruption lead to the failure of the welfare state policies related to education and the NHS.

Although Butterthwaite is the main corrupt figure in *The Workhouse Donkey*, the other members of the town also seem to be degenerate and have a negative influence on the welfare state system. For example, the borough councillors – Hopefast, Hardnutt and Hickleton – who appear in the local government are also presented as unscrupulous figures whose partisan attitudes contribute to the inefficiency of the comprehensive school, an educational policy of the welfare state, which is initiated in the town. Apart from the councillors, the doctor of the NHS, Blomax, introduces himself as “a corrupted individual” (1.1.17) who forges false documents, accepts bribery and writes “over-indulgent prescriptions” (2.6.94), which reflects the problems within the NHS.

Before analysing the negative effects of corruption on the welfare state policies thoroughly, it would be useful to have a look at the synopsis of the play since it has a complex plot. Even Arden himself asserts that *The Workhouse Donkey* has “a labyrinthine plot – admittedly difficult to follow” (“Who’s for a Revolution” 49). In the first scene, during a ceremony in which the foundation stone of the new police headquarters is laid, Boocock delivers a speech as the mayor, but he is often interrupted by Butterthwaite. This incident is the first instance in which the reader/audience sees the dominance of Butterthwaite over the townspeople and even the mayor himself. With the arrival of the new chief constable, Colonel Feng, Butterthwaite worries that Feng will discover his and the Labour Party members’ illegal practices, such as drinking after licensed hours. Therefore, he and his partisans try to inveigle Feng.

Mr Sweetman, the local leader of the Conservative Party, is another deceitful figure in the town, just like his family and some of the other Conservative members. Since he is also afraid that Feng will discover and mess with their illegal doings, he attempts to win him over as well. As a person of honour and ideals, Feng, however, refuses to take any sides. Meanwhile, the Labour Party councillors meet in the Victoria and Albert Hotel and make plans on how to distract Feng and canalise his attention to the Copacabana Club, which is secretly owned by Mr Sweetman. At the meeting, they decide to report Sweetman’s club because it is an undercover striptease club and it offers after-hour drinking that is illegal in town. While conspiring against the Conservatives, ironically, the members themselves get busted by the

police officers since they have been drinking after hours. Consequently, the event turns into a scandal damaging the reputation of the Labour Party.

The very next day, Blomax pays a visit to police headquarters and tries to bribe a police officer, Wiper, in order to avoid the penalty for his offense, for he was among the after-hours drinkers. When Wiper does not accept the bribe, the doctor blackmails him about his liaison with Gloria, the manageress of the Copacabana Club. The doctor finds out about their affair because Gloria is his NHS patient and she asks him to end her pregnancy, not wanting to have an illegitimate baby.

In the next scene, Mayor Boocock and Mrs Boocock have a conversation about Butterthwaite's influence and practices in the Rates Office, which seem illegal since Butterthwaite is not the mayor anymore. He is only an alderman and therefore does not have the authority to interfere in the workings of the Rates Office. Mrs Boocock emphasises how fraudulent Butterthwaite is, and she thinks that her husband is being manipulated by him since Mr Boocock does not object to his illegal deeds. Their conversation is interrupted by Butterthwaite himself who claims that Sweetman has organised the police raid on the Victoria and Albert Hotel, and he asks for Boocock's support on this. Agitated by his wife, Mr Boocock does not back him up, which leads Butterthwaite to find another partner to plan on Sweetman and Feng. Accordingly, he inveigles a police officer, Leftwich, to conduct a raid on the Copacabana Club. Before the raid, Butterthwaite and the Labour councillors visit the club to witness what happens inside and pay a great deal of money to enter. In the club, they drink after hours again, flirt with the waitresses, and this scene reveals the lechery of the Labour Party members. All of a sudden, the waitresses' half naked costumes change into modest uniforms, the drinks disappear, and the seductive music changes into classical music. While the Labour members are in shock, Gloria explains that they heard about a raid at midnight and therefore went undercover. In less than no time, the police officers visit the club as customers, and seeing that everything is legal, they apologise for the inconvenience and leave, even though Butterthwaite tries to stop them and tells them everything he has seen.

Wiper, in fear of Butterthwaite's revenge, takes shelter in Sweetman's house in the middle of the night. He threatens Sweetman for he knows about Sweetman's share in the Copacabana

Club and demands protection for his unseen guardianship over the club as a policeman. So, they make a plan together to put Butterthwaite in a disadvantageous position. According to their plan, all the employees and customers will be made to testify in favour of the club's innocence and Butterthwaite's hooliganism. While they are arranging this, Butterthwaite brings about his own downfall by his actions: When Boocock begins to make a statement to the press in favour of the Labour Party members about what happened in the club the previous night, Butterthwaite interrupts him rudely and delivers a speech on his desire to see Feng retired due to the constable's incompetence in preventing the illegal activities in the Copacabana Club. During his speech, his oppressive attitude as a local authority is revealed, again. As a result, Boocock tries to handle the situation and sends the reporters away.

In the police headquarters, Feng briefly responds to the alderman's allegations against him. Feng seems so confident that he welcomes an inquiry conducted by the Home Office in the town. He also assigns Wiper to investigate what happened in the club that night and adds that he will investigate Wiper himself.

Blaming Butterthwaite for this inquiry, the Sweetmans decide to passivise him in the town. For their aim, they inveigle the manageress of their club, Gloria, who has recently married Blomax. Together, they threaten Blomax with his "over-indulgent prescriptions" (94) so that he helps them put Butterthwaite into trouble. In this way, Blomax ends his friendship with him and demands Butterthwaite to pay his debt immediately. Since the debt is high, the ex-mayor takes the doctor to the town hall safe in the middle of the night, opens the safe with a key and pays his debt to Blomax. In confusion, Blomax accepts the money and together they try to make it look like burglary. However, Feng soon begins to suspect the two and takes them under custody.

Meanwhile, Feng falls in love with Dr Blomax's daughter, Wellesley, who looks down upon the town and townspeople due to her private school education out of town. When she and Feng come across at a café, they have a conversation in which Feng declares his love for Wellesley. Even though Wellesley fancies the richest bachelor in the town, Young Sweetman, she gives false hopes to Feng in order to convince him to not arrest her father. After an internal crisis, Feng chooses love over duty and lets the suspects go.

Although Butterthwaite seems to be acquitted, both the Conservative and Labour Party members still regard him as guilty, and this makes Butterthwaite furious. Buying drinks with his last pennies, Butterthwaite, who is also referred to as the workhouse donkey, gathers the drunkards of the town and leads them to create a chaos. Since the members of both parties accuse Feng of being incompetent to stop the chaos and letting Butterthwaite go, they press him to resign. After his resignation, Wiper becomes the chief constable and arrests Butterthwaite, which relieves everyone. In the end, people of the town get back to their corrupt lives as if nothing ever happened.

As already mentioned in the Introduction of this thesis, the purpose of the welfare state was to provide equality of opportunity to all through free education, and in order to achieve equality, the Labour Party put the comprehensive school project into effect (Pedley 17). Comprehensive schools offered an alternative to the existing secondary education system with their curriculum and non-selective system that eliminated the unequal competition among children from various backgrounds (Fletcher 9-11). As previously stated in the introduction again, before the introduction of comprehensive schools, there was the Tripartite System, which included three distinct schools: grammar schools, secondary modern schools and technical schools. However, only the grammar school was able to provide a better future for its students while others failed to do so since the number of students who got into the university was high only in grammar schools (Rosen 67). In this respect, the ratio of getting into the university among students from the secondary modern schools and technical schools was drastically lower (Rosen 67). Moreover, since the number of students that could go to grammar schools was quite limited, it created a dramatic inequality in the Tripartite System. The comprehensive school system therefore was initiated as an alternative to this unequal education system.

The decision of transforming the present schools in a town into comprehensive schools was left to the local authorities (Fenwick 60). In the play, Mayor Boocock expresses his pride in the Labour Party's initiative of the comprehensive schools in his town: "We're up here to show the Tories / How honest man can rule. / We've built [...] a comprehensive school" (1.7.50). As an idealistic member, he cares about the education policies of his party and



boasts about the comprehensive school they have provided for the town. He believes that comprehensive schools are the answer to the failure of the selective system. Hence, it can be argued that Mayor Boocock was well aware of the flaws of the Tripartite System of education and he therefore initiated the comprehensive schools, a policy of the welfare state, which was optional. The comprehensive school system was the solution to the ongoing problems in education in theory; nevertheless, the practice proved to be the opposite.

Since Boocock is extremely focused on the success of the comprehensive schools, he cannot see the quality problems they have, which is in contrast with the high quality of the public schools in the play. The contrast between these two types of schools makes the inefficiency of the comprehensive schools more visible. The characters' comments on the comprehensive schools point to their inefficiency.

While many characters are not content with the local state schools, it is seen that public schools provide exclusive education that only wealthy families' children can obtain. Mr Sweetman's song reveals his family's wealth and his children's education:

But to what eminence? Financial, yes.  
 And social: yes indeed. My wife has mink,  
 My daughters, jewels and suitors: My three tall sons  
 Inhabit, or have inhabited, public schools.  
 They grow to love the world I set them in,  
 And, loving it, become it as they walk. (2.1.69)

The song reflects Sweetman's financial and social status. Since he is a wealthy man, Mr Sweetman sends his sons to public schools so that they can have high living standards in the future. Through his wealth he creates a "world" in which his children can flourish "as they walk." Related to this matter, Giannetti states:

[S]ending their children to public schools, many parents feel that their boys begin at the Top, for the public schools offer the crucial advantages of the right accent, manners, values attitudes, and social connections. These advantages in turn are the major determinants for occupation, and hence, of income, power, and prestige. (20)

It can be argued that these advantages provided by public schools will be evident in his sons' lives. Emphasising the significance of public schools due to their high quality, Jenkins argues

that the elite regarded the public school education as the only worthy option for their children's education (99). Therefore, these children

inculcated with the belief that they are society's "natural" leaders, with all the snobbish elitism this phrase suggests. They are deliberately isolated from over ninety-five per cent of their fellow country-men – presumably the very people they are supposed to lead. [...] Public school children also tend to conform to their parents' values, which are usually identical with those of the school administrators and faculties. (Giannetti 20-21)

In the play, this kind of belief can be observed in Mr Sweetman's song in which he considers himself the natural leader of his town owing to his aristocratic background and public school education:

I am a prince, I am a baron, sirs!  
And yet I have no sovereignty, no.  
For what is power of gold when politics  
At every turn deceive my high aspiring. (2.1.70)

These words disclose Mr Sweetman's extreme confidence in himself in terms of leadership, making him think that he is the rightful head of the town. He even calls himself "a prince" and "a baron," aristocratic titles that stand for his high self-confidence, which was probably shaped in his school years to some extent. So, it can be suggested that the system of education creates a distance between public school students and the local people who received education in local state schools, which results in "elite" students' looking down upon the common people.

Most of the characters in *The Workhouse Donkey* find the local education incompetent for providing a better future for them. As a case in point, Young Sweetman thinks that the town's local education, the comprehensive school, fails to offer efficient intellectual vision to students. He states: "I represent the standards of civilisation in this paleo-paleo-paleolithicalolithealithic community. I've had an education" (1.9.59). He identifies himself as "civilised" while positioning the townsfolk as uncivilised, as can be observed through the adjective of "paleo-paleolithical," which is a reference to pre-civilised life. He receives a highly qualified public school education out of the town, thereby emphasising that he "had a

[proper] education” (1.9.59). He thinks that the town, which he refers to as a “paleo-paleo-paleolithiclolithealithic community,” does not offer a qualified or proper education.

Wellesley’s father also looks down upon the town and its institutions. Therefore, Blomax advises his daughter as follows: “What you want, my sweetheart, is the altogether opposite aspect of this deplorable townscape” (1.1.18). His words manifest that the local life in the town is not suitable for Wellesley because it does not ensure a promising future for her. Therefore, he makes it possible for her daughter to receive “her education [...] at [his] expense” in a private school outside the town (1.1.18). Although her daughter has better education than most of the people have in the town, Blomax, on account of his very high standards, considers Wellesley’s education “regrettably incompetent” (1.1.18) in contrast to his “superior education” (2.5.87). In spite of her father’s remarks, Wellesley is still proud of having been educated outside the town in a private school. So, in parallel with Young Sweetman’s thoughts, she expresses her opinion on the local education as follows:

Educate? . . . Oh, I’m so glad I didn’t go to school here. I’ve got my father to thank for that if for nothing else. The day that you leave school here you’re expected to reach the age of forty in about three hours and that’s all. If you won’t do it, you know what you get? Hump of the old shoulders and the old grunt comes out at you!  
 Too young, too tall, and your eyes too bright,  
 You look too near and you look too hard,  
 You dream too deep in the deep of the night,  
 And you walk too long in my backyard.  
 You stand and ask for your white bread  
 And you stand and you ask for your brown,  
 But what you will get is a good horse whip  
 To drive you out of town. (2.4.76)

Wellesley thinks that local education would not have provided the opportunity or vision for her future. On the other hand, she thinks, her education enabled her to have a career and leave the town. In other words, it gave her freedom. Therefore, she is content to have studied out of the town.

The characters’ comments indicate that the Labour Party failed in its aim of providing equal quality in the education system. Despite the fact that local state schools are free of charge,

they do not have the same quality as public schools. Therefore, the existence of public schools in the play indirectly serves as a contrast to the newly initiated comprehensive schools and shows its failure. As the public school fees are especially high and can be afforded only by the moneyed class of society, the townspeople in the play are not able to meet the expenses. In this respect, it is visible that despite this very policy of the welfare state, comprehensive schools, though achieving their aim of free education, fail in terms of quality. The practice of comprehensive schools, as indicated in *The Workhouse Donkey*, does not live up to the quality the Labour Party desired in theory.

One of the fundamental reasons why comprehensive schools fail in practice is that although some of the idealistic members of the party put interests of the public before their own, the majority of the Labour Party in the play is composed of corrupt ones. Furthermore, the corrupt are dominant while the idealists are passive. So, these problems within the Labour Party cause comprehensive schools to fail despite the early positive intents of the idealistic members.

Firstly, the corrupt members abuse the fiscal resources of the town while the money could be used for providing better schools. The capital they steal varies in terms of amount. For example, Butterthwaite offers a drink to the police officer, Liversedge, from the municipality fund: “Evening, Liversedge. How are you? Have pint of ale. It’s on the Corporation” (1.3.33). The corporation he mentions is a municipal corporation that is funded by the town. In the very conversation they are having, Butterthwaite uses the town’s money for his own purpose which is to inveigle Liversedge into being on his side. In another example, Butterthwaite and some of the Labour members pay an unexpected visit to the Copacabana Club in order to collect evidence of the illegal activities there, such as striptease shows and drinks offered after licensed hours. However, they realise that they have to be club members to enter the premises. Because they do not want to pay the expensive entrance fee themselves, they use the party funds:

HOPEFAST: I expect we’ll have to be members.

HARDNUTT: It’ll cost us at least a quid apiece, you know.

BUTTERTHWAITE: Out of the party funds, lad. It's a delegated investigation, this. And I'll answer to the secretary if there's any questions asked. (1.8.56)

In the dialogue, Butterthwaite leads the Labour members to use the monetary source of the party for their illegitimate dealings. Hence, together, they squander the party funds which could be spent on the well-being of the town and its schools, instead of being spent for a club's entrance fee. After spending the town's and the Labour Party's money carelessly here and there, Butterthwaite siphons off the town's vault at last:

BUTTERTHWAITE: Wellington, you'll have your money, but out o' my bank balance? Oh dear . . . How are we going to manage?

BLOMAX: I don't know. How are we?

BUTTERTHWAITE: Burgle t'Town Hall.

BLOMAX: It's all right laughing . . .

BUTTERTHWAITE. Wellington, I'm not laughing [...] Now then, it's none so very difficult. All you need to know is the right key to t'safe. I've got it on me watch chain. We make a quick glance around in the interests of security, good, they've all gone home to their teas, we open it up . . . (*He opens the safe.*) And . . . the Borough Treasurer's petty cash! (2.6.95-96)

In order to pay his debt to Blomax, the ex-mayor opens the town's safe with a key, which he should not have had in the first place, for he is no longer the mayor. He takes all the cash except for few banknotes and makes it look like burglary. Despite this "burglary" is nowhere near the previous thefts of the Labour members mentioned above, all of them are very significant examples of corruption, reflecting the integration process of illegitimate practices into these political figures' lives. It looks like they normalised stealing from their municipality, their party and their town while the financial source of these three units could be used for the improvement of the comprehensive school in the town.

Secondly, it can be argued that the figures holding the power in the town are so sunken in their own self-interests that they do not care about the policies of education. For example, there is a meeting of the town committee that shows how quickly the decisions on these policies are made:

MRS BOOCOCK: We've got no time to waste. Come on...

[...]

HOPEFAST: Now then, Borough Education. I declare the Committee in session, have we a quorum?

MRS BOOCOCK: I'm in on this one.

HOPEFAST: Councillor Hickleton deputy secretary, change about places... Councillor Hardnutt i' t' chair...

HARDNUTT: Minutes of previous meeting...

ALL: Etcetera etcetera...

HARDNUTT: Motion before... etcetera etcetera... Who's to replace him?

MRS BOOCOCK: I move that Councillor Hartwright be deputed to do so.

HARDNUTT: Seconded. Passed... Parks Playgrounds and Public Baths Committee. (3.3.111)

Here the reader/audience witnesses how hastily the Labour Party committee works on the issues they do not consider important. The excerpt also shows that they do not even have a discussion over the Borough Education. They only mention the topic and pass. Immediately after the issue of education, they move on to the next subject: "Parks Playgrounds and Public Baths Committee" which has nothing to do with education.

Hunt states that "when he [Butterthwaite] talks about his reign, it is not in terms of comprehensive schools, revolutionary drainage schemes and new town halls" (1.7.55). As the critic too calls attention to, Butterthwaite says: "Oh, oh, oh I have lived. I have controlled, I have redistributed" (3.4.124) which reflects how totally indifferent Butterthwaite is to the issues of the town.

Seeing that the people who are responsible for bettering the local education neglect the negative condition of comprehensive schools, the needs of these schools are not answered. Hence, the inertia of the local authorities to improve the policies of education leaves the problems of education unsolved.

One of the fundamental reasons behind the failure of comprehensive schools in practice is the fact that the larger part of the members of the Labour Party in the play are corrupt, and they constitute the dominant group in the administration of the party. Certainly, there are

those idealistic individuals too, as seen in the case of Boocock, but being dominated by the corrupt, they cannot be influential. Therefore, their idealistic aims and dedication cannot enhance the quality of education.

Arden's criticism here is directed against not only the corrupt who are overwhelmed by their self-interests but also those idealistic ones who are so passive that they cannot resist the suppression of the corrupt ones. The dominance of the corrupt administrators is disclosed in the following passage:

BLOMAX: What about uncle Charlie? Is he at the Town Planning?

LEFTWICH: He isn't. He's down at t' Rates Office. One of the accountants discovered a discrepancy and there's a fair foaming fury going on about it, I can tell you.

HARDNUTT: What's he got to do wi' t' Rates Office, for God sake? It's none o' his department. He can't keep his nose out, can he?

[...]

HICKLETON: He's only cooking up the books for his summer holidays, I dare say. (1.7.49)

As can be seen from the quotation above, "uncle Charlie," who was the mayor of the town for over thirty years, pretends to still be the mayor, and he "can't keep his nose out" of the municipal units. Hickleton's remark that he is "cooking up the books," which means "altering facts or figures dishonestly or illegally" (*The Oxford English Dictionary*), indicates that Butterthwaite is collecting money "for his holidays" (1.7.49). In other words, he uses his authority as alderman and ex-mayor over the accountants of the municipality for his self-interest.

Another example of the dominance of the corrupt is again presented through Butterthwaite. Sweetman, the local leader of the Conservative Party, states: "Monopoly and party have controlled / This town for thirty years" (1.2.23), which is a reference to Butterthwaite's "reign" for thirty years in which he monopolised the power in the party. This can be seen in the councillors' reactions to Butterthwaite's speech:

BUTTERTHWAITE: In our party and our principles, upon which we stand four-square – do we or don't we? –

COUNCILLORS: We do. (1.7.52)

[...]

BUTTERTHWAITE: Am I right, fellow Councillors?

COUNCILLORS: Aye... I dare say... I wouldn't dispute it... etc. (1.7.53)

Then Butterthwaite and Boocock discuss delicate and crucial matters, but none of the councillors speaks. Only after Butterthwaite finishes his words, the councillors utter: "Aye... Well... we'll see how it turns out... etc" (1.7.53). The councillors keep nodding to every word Butterthwaite says, without questioning. That they always yield to his statements suggests that Butterthwaite is still dominant within the party although he is not the current mayor. Blomax is also very much aware of this fact as evidenced when he says: "He was sole author of his power / And he piled his private wealth. / He kept his throne with sword and gun" (1.3.26). In this respect, the authority of Butterthwaite, the self-interested tyrant-like figure for many years, indicates the prevalence of corruption within the party.

Additionally, the mayor's inability to run the municipality independently is another reason for the failure of the policies of education in the town. Although Boocock is highly idealistic as a mayor, he is manipulated by the ex-mayor, which is reflected in Mrs Boocock's words:

MRS BOOCOCK: Aye, the famous nine-times Mayor . . . or are you sure it isn't ten?

BOOCOCK: I am the Mayor, Sarah.

MRS BOOCOCK: You wear the chain.

BOOCOCK: I hold the Office!

MRS BOOCOCK: The office of what? He's selected you this season to play the centre-forward in his own private football team, but don't you imagine that gives you any control over fixture-lists, transfer-fees, or owt else o' t'manager's business!

BOOCOCK: My God, she's never been to a football match in her life.

MRS BOOCOCK: All right and I haven't. They call me Madam Mayoress and I belong in t'kitchen to mash you your tea and fry up your bacon, but happen I might wonder who really owns the belly where it lodges on its road. That's all, I say no more... (1.7.51)

Mrs Boocock confronts her husband with the reality that he is deceived and abused by Butterthwaite. Boocock, according to Flaumenhaft, is the "puppet" of Butterthwaite, the



embodiment of corruption (3.4.122), which may well be taken as the playwright's criticism of Boocock for being incompetent in the administration of the municipality. Thus, it seems possible to assert that due to the impact of the disreputable and negligent local administration, the educational policy of the welfare state, or the comprehensive school, fails. So, Arden indicates that even though comprehensive schools appear to be a good alternative to the current problematic Tripartite System in theory, they prove to be unsuccessful in practice because the town community who should help this policy of the welfare state fail to provide essential support.

Apart from education, a significant policy of the welfare state that is highly focused on in *The Workhouse Donkey* is the National Health Service, which is generally accepted as "the greatest monument" of the Labour Party (Brown n.p). The aim of the NHS was to provide free health service to all members of society. Yet in practice, there were problems. In the play, Arden indicates that due to corruption, the NHS becomes insufficient to solve the health problems of people. This issue of corruption is portrayed through Blomax.

One of the most corrupt characters in the play, Dr Wellington Blomax, is a member of the NHS. Through this character's infamous deeds, Arden presents the existence of misconduct in the NHS system. Apart from his personal dishonest dealings, including gambling, Blomax, as a doctor, forges documents (health reports) for criminals using the medium of the NHS, and he also conducts back-alley abortion in his office.

An instance of corruption, in which Blomax abuses the NHS for his own self-interest, is as follows:

BLOMAX: Hello, hello, hello, I don't know you. You're not one o' my patients?

4<sup>th</sup> DRINKER: Not exactly, no... but I dare say I *could* be? (1.3.24)

BLOMAX: (Clearing a space on a table, takes a pad of forms out) Very well then, so be it. Always carry me blank forms ready. You see... Name, address and previous medical adviser?

4<sup>th</sup> DRINKER *whispers in his ear.*

(*Writing*) Now sign on the line, sir... Now then, what's the trouble? And how can I cure it? A little matter of a certificate perhaps? Easily arranged...

*4<sup>th</sup> DRINKER whispers again.*

Aha, you were down with a runny tummy, were you, so you couldn't possibly have been out burgling? Couldn't you? I wonder... No, it won't do. I steer very clear of courts of law, my dear sir. If it had to come up anywhere else, I would do your documents with pleasure... but...

*4<sup>th</sup> DRINKER shoves some money over to him. (1.3.25)*

Blomax takes a bribe for forging a document that would help the burglar dodge the accusation of burglary since the document proves that the burglar was quite ill at the time. Put differently, he exploits his power as an NHS doctor for money.

The doctor finds out about the police officer Wiper's affair with Gloria because Gloria is his NHS patient who seeks an abortion so as to not have an illegitimate baby. When the Labour councillors want inside information about Gloria, in order to use it against her and the Copacabana Club, Blomax says: "Mr Mayor, all I know of the lady is that she is a patient. She is under the seal of the oath of Hippocrates, which is not the same thing as the French word for hypocrites. I'm sorry, there it is" (1.3.29). As it can be seen from the quotation, Blomax does not use his patient's private information and gives a lecture on ethics, indirectly accusing the councillors of hypocrisy. However, it is later revealed in the play that he is the very hypocrite because Blomax's concern is never being loyal to the Hippocratic Oath of doctors. The following example clearly shows that he violates his patient's privacy and blackmails Wiper:

BLOMAX: You see, our Gloria herself's a patient of mine. She came to me last night for an abortion. Your abortion, Alfred [...] I refused her request... at least for the time being. I never act precipitately. I always prefer to know just how it all sets up.

WIPER: I'll tell you how it all sets up. I'm a married man!

BLOMAX: Oh yes, I know that... (1.5.41)

The main problem here is that Blomax abuses his position as the NHS practitioner by using confidential information about his patient to blackmail a police constable. Stated otherwise, he abuses the authority granted to him as an NHS practitioner to promote his own self-interest.

The issue of abortion is another significant matter, which is abused by Blomax for his own benefit again. It is palpable from Gloria's words that Blomax prescribes certain pills for his patients who want to end their pregnancy:

GLORIA: Suppose [the policemen] were to hear about what you've been prescribing for certain other of your female patients?

BLOMAX: An issue of mercy, their condition demanded it... (2.5.85)

Blomax's remark that he gave illegal prescription out of "mercy" sheds light on the fact that he indeed exploits his role as an NHS doctor. Gloria's threat to inform the police about Blomax's wrongdoings indicates that what he does is indeed illegal. He "helps" pregnant patients illegally in return for his own profit.

Another instance of corruption is, once more, related to abortion. This time Blomax refuses to prescribe miscarriage pills to his patient; however, he does so not because he thinks it is unethical, but because it is more profitable for him. He explains his rejection of prescribing pills by fabricating an excuse:

GLORIA: Well, have you changed your mind? Are you going to arrange it then?

BLOMAX: Oh dear me, no. With this unprecedented Feng prowling round the tent of Midian, illegal operations are very definitely out. (1.6.45)

In the extract, Blomax refuses to give what Gloria wants seemingly in fear of Feng. Nonetheless, he imparts the actual reason to the reader/audience: "I see very little reason why I should help Alfred Wiper out of his self-created midden. Except my permanent necessity to have at least one copper bound to me by an obligation. And besides: I'm fond of Gloria" (1.6.44-45). His last sentence is a foreshadowing of his and Gloria's marriage, which she agrees only to eliminate the rumours due to her pregnancy. So, he uses her pregnancy against her to marry her. Also, since he wants "at least one copper bound to" him, he desires not to lose his advantage over Wiper. As a result, not operating the abortion is more profitable for Blomax; therefore, he chooses not to do so.

In this respect, it may well be averred that through the doctor, Arden presents how the NHS is abused in practice. Blomax, as a member of the NHS, should but fails to provide an ethical health service, prioritising his self-interest over the common good of people, which ultimately points to the fact that the NHS is not working properly in practice because of the corruption of individuals.

The NHS, as a policy of the welfare state, is dealt with in the play also through the problem of turning the municipal art gallery into a hospital. The late Labour Mayor Butterthwaite transforms the gallery, arguing that he does so for the sake of people. However, this decision upsets the art lovers who actively use and appreciate the gallery, which creates a tension within the play. The reason why he turns the art gallery into a hospital is not because he believes that the art gallery is insignificant and thus should be turned into something useful like a hospital, but because he has no other alternative since there is not enough money in the town's treasure due to the corruption of the local authority. Butterthwaite tells how the art gallery is transformed into a supplementary building of the town's hospital:

I'm sick to bloody death of that art gallery. In 1939 we took it over as an emergency annexe to the Municipal Hospital. There wor no opposition. Since then it's proved its necessity one hundred and ten per cent. Every single meeting of the Hospital Management Committee has confirmed the state of affairs. Dammit, the Chairman is my cousin's brother-in-law. I ought to know.  
(1.3.31)

He tries to justify his alteration of the art gallery by presenting it as something not useful. However, Boocook opposes Butterthwaite and states: "Sweetman lays claim we could afford a new hospital and return the art gallery to its original function" (1.3.31). Sweetman states that the local government has the financial capability to build a new hospital, which would enable the re-opening of the art gallery which had been closed for nearly twenty years. However, Butterthwaite ignores the demand for an art gallery in the town. Boocock insists that the issue of the art gallery should be discussed in the Committee of Ways and Means, and when he leaves, the Labour members hold a quick meeting about Sweetman's demand:

BUTTERTHWAITE: Now look here, I'm not having it. If everybody in this Council was to dilly-daily around after Barney Boocock's formalities, nowt'd

get done. Nowt. Who have we got here belonging to the Ways and Means? One, two, three. Right. There's enough for a quorum. Alderman Butterthwaite i't' chair, councillors Hopefast, Hardnutt and Hickleton present in committee - er - Doctor Wellington Blomax, Deputy Secretary. I declare the Committee in session.

HOPEFAST: I move that the minutes of the previous meeting be taken as read.

HARDNUTT: Seconded.

BUTTERTHWAITE: Votes? All right. Passed. So the motion before this Committee is that the time is not yet ripe for consideration of the reversal of the Municipal Hospital Annexe to its original function.

HICKLETON: Seconded.

BUTTERTHWAITE: Right. Anybody agen it? I should bloody well hope there's nobody agen it... All right. Very good. Motion passed, nem con. And our flash Harry Sweetman can wear that in the brim of his Anthony Eden and go to church with it. (1.3.32-33)

This meeting is held hastily and deliberately without Boocock, Sweetman and the other members of the committee who are known to be pro-art-gallery. Hence, Arden here again reflects the consequences when the corrupt are dominant in the local administration. The example of transformation of the art gallery into a hospital (due to lack of money that results from corruption) is indicative of how policies of the welfare state fail in practice due to their handling by people who prioritise their benefits over the welfare of people.

In terms of technique, apparently in order to make the reader/audience question these issues, Arden uses the devices of epic theatre. Martin Esslin argues that *The Workhouse Donkey* is the most Brechtian play since *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Brecht's 1944 play which is generally considered the epitome of epic theatre (Esslin 84). Epic elements such as the use of narrator, direct address to the audience and songs are used in the play in order to alienate the audience and create a critical distance between the audience and the action. Arden himself states in the Introductory Note that "The band was seated on an upper balcony of the stage and remained in view of the audience throughout the action" (3). By positioning the band where they can be seen by the audience, Arden breaks the illusion of reality created by the play.

As an example of direct address to the audience, the below scene can be given:

BUTTERTHWAITE (*to the audience*): Will you all take note of what I am about to say. I have been called to this police station by' Superintendent Wiper. I have been waiting here for five or six hours, and not one o' these incontinent coppers has taken a blind bit o' notice! (3.2.106)

Butterthwaite's directly referencing the audience breaks the fourth wall, an "imaginary wall between the actors and audience which keeps them as observers" as mentioned earlier on ("Epic theatre and Brecht" n.p). The character is very much aware that he is being watched by the audience, which creates an alienation on the audience. This very technique enables the audience to distance themselves from the play.

The narrator in the play is also quite significant because his comments on the events and characters alienate the audience from them. What is more, Flaumenhaft finds it "interesting that, in this play, it is Blomax who serves as a 'presenter' for the audience. He introduces the action and characters and comments upon them with intelligence and a distance which the other characters lack" (121). In other words, since Blomax takes sides with no one except himself, the character has the advantage of distance from the other characters in the play. So, when he comments on incidents, he shares his objectivity with the audience. That might be the reason why Arden chooses to make him the narrator of the play. For example, when Blomax comments on what will happen in Act Three, Scene Four, he interprets the forthcoming events from a distanced perspective:

BLOMAX (*to the audience*):  
 And so we lead on, to the final cruel conclusion  
 Compounded of corruption and unresolved confusion.  
 I think the time has come to resolve it, if I can.  
 [...]  
 But out in the dark back lane  
 The great grey cat still waits by the mouse's hole. (3.4.115)

As the narrator, he prepares the audience for the upcoming action by commenting on it. He says that the play is close to its conclusion, in which he will try to solve the conflicts and chaos that are caused by the characters' corruption. Nevertheless, he will not be able to succeed, he says, as the problems will go on existing "in the dark back lane" where the power relations in society will continue, which is symbolised by "the grey cat" waiting for the mouse "by [its] hole" (3.4.115). In other words, Blomax refers to the social order in which

there is strife, instead of concord, between the members of society since the powerful pose danger for the weaker. Considering the welfare state's aim of providing equality in society by protecting poor and disadvantageous people's interests, the narrator's comment signals that the balance between the weak and the powerful, as well as the poor and the wealthy is not achieved.

As for the songs, Hunt points out that the "boisterous" nature of the songs in the play creates an alienating effect (59). The songs are functional, rather than just lyrical, as they serve as a mechanism that alienates the audience. For instance, the use of Blomax's comical song in a serious scene functions as an alienation device:

To whom I have a manifest duty, she being in her origins an unfortunate mistake; as was also dear mother, now- alas – divorced and forgotten, but traumatic in my history.

*(Sings)*

I married my wife because I had to  
 Diddle di doo: Di doo doo-doo  
 My wedding day in the month of May  
 The honeymoon in flaming June  
 A babe of shame of such ill fame  
 All it wants is an honest name  
 I married my wife because I had to  
 Diddle di doo: di doo doo—doo... (1.4.36-37)

In a tense scene, while Blomax is having a quarrel with Young Sweetman, Blomax suddenly begins to sing this light-hearted song, which interrupts the action, thereby enabling the audience to emotionally detach themselves from the character of Blomax. Hence, the use of the song after Blomax's speech, in which he presents himself as a victim of trauma due to his marriage, is noteworthy, for it breaks the atmosphere of pity. The tense atmosphere, as can be observed in phrases like "unfortunate mistake" and "divorced and forgotten," is interrupted by the carefree rhyme, "Diddle di doo: Di doo doo-doo" (37). Roberts underlines this issue stating that "the comic songs" Arden uses in *The Workhouse Donkey* "lend themselves well to creating the air of frivolity and foolishness which pervades this play" (112).

The song also presents the hypocrisy of Blomax who mentions the woman he married as the “dear mother” of his daughter in his daily conversation, while he confesses that “[he] married [his] wife because [he] had to” in his song. Thus, the song here serves as a tool that provides a sceptical perspective to the reader/audience by showing the doctor’s contradictory expressions.

As a concluding remark, it can be stated that Arden’s criticism of the failure of the welfare state policies in *The Workhouse Donkey* focuses heavily on the corruption of the local government. The policies related to education and health are presented as idealistic in terms of their aims; nevertheless, in practice, they do not function properly due to the fact that the characters who should be helping these policies flourish actually impair them for the sake of their own profit. In the case of education, Arden shows that the local government’s abuse of the fiscal source of the town negates the possibility of improving the comprehensive school, which is initiated as a welfare state policy. The playwright directs his criticism at both the corrupt members who comprise the majority in the Labour Party and the idealistic ones who fail to resist the dominance of the corrupt.

The NHS, as a welfare state policy, in the play, also gets a fair share of the local corruption. Blomax, as a member of the NHS, abuses his position for his self-interest. The case of turning the art gallery into a hospital is also a good example through which Arden reflects how the corruption within the NHS forces the local administrators to find a solution to disguise their own corruption. Apparently, Arden shows that both examples of comprehensive schools and the NHS are, in theory, approvable policies of the welfare state, but they fail in practice, being implemented by corrupt individuals.



## CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that Arden himself denies that *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey* are not social documentaries, they indeed shed light on the socio-economic and political problems in Britain. This thesis has put forward that Arden criticises the failures in the implementation of the welfare state policies in *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey* through representations of housing, social security, education and the National Health Service policies. In *Live Like Pigs*, the playwright introduces the improper implementations of the housing policies through oppression by the Housing Estate, social security services whose benefits are either inefficient or unknown by the public, the policies of education which cannot reach nomadic families and the National Health Service that has corrupt public servants and ignorant patients. In *The Workhouse Donkey*, Arden presents the inefficiency of education and the negative effects of corruption in the National Health Service. It seems, therefore, important to point out the conclusions one can draw from a comparative analysis of these two plays.

In *Live Like Pigs*, Arden's criticism of the education in the welfare state is quite broad in the sense that the dramatist does not criticise a specific type of school. Instead, he criticises that the welfare state education system fails to gain the trust of and reach nomadic families. In the play, the Sawneys avoid official institutions of education altogether, including both the state schools and the private schools. The family thinks that the official education tends to limit their freedom and indoctrinate their children with the ideology of the state, which is in conflict with their nomadic culture and identity. Their experience with the Housing Estate, which first destroys their tramcar and secondly imposes a certain way of living in the council house, is an example of the oppressive ideology of the state that threatens the Sawneys' nomadic identity and lifestyle. Therefore, even though the welfare state develops education policies to provide free education for all, the Sawneys' distrust might indicate the state's failure in reaching these nomadic families.

In *The Workhouse Donkey*, Arden deals with the issues related to the education system of the welfare state based on a local example in which he presents the contrast between two

secondary schools – comprehensive schools and the public schools. The characters indirectly reveal that public schools are much more qualified than the state schools, as in this case of the comprehensive school, which is initiated by the welfare state policies. It can be argued that the difference of quality between these institutions deepens due to the neglect of the local comprehensive school by the municipal authority. In this respect, Arden introduces two relevant reasons of the inefficiency of the comprehensive school: Firstly, the majority of the Labour Party in the local government is corrupt, for they exploit the town's treasure and the Labour Party's funds which could be used for the improvement of the local schools. Moreover, they do not care about the policies of local education since they focus only on their self-profit. Secondly, the corrupt members are dominant in the local administration while the idealist ones are passive and the public is indifferent to the corruption. Since all these reasons cause inefficiency of local schools, the town's children whose parents cannot afford public school fees experience inequality of opportunity in education.

Accordingly, in *Live Like Pigs*, Arden presents the nomadic people's problems with the education system, while in *The Workhouse Donkey*, he presents settled people's problems with the same system. While the former group think that official education is a threat to their lifestyle, the latter group complain that the state schools in the education system fail to improve the quality of their lifestyle. From a broad perspective, Arden shows that the present education policies of the welfare state fail to please people of wide-ranging backgrounds.

In *Live Like Pigs*, Arden criticises the corruption in the NHS through the Doctor and inertia of the public to this free health system through the Sawneys. Through the Doctor, he criticises the corruption in the NHS from two aspects: Firstly, it is problematic that as a public servant she embodies a patronising attitude by continuously judging the way the Sawneys use the house. So, as a representative of the NHS, instead of trying to understand her patients, she looks down upon them. Secondly, through her greed, Arden criticises the corrupt merchant-like attitude of the doctors, which can be interpreted as the legacy of their pre-NHS methods of moneymaking through private clinics and hospitals. However, Arden problematises not only the doctors' corrupt behaviours but also the indifference of the public towards the problems related to the NHS. In the play, the Sawneys do not take Sally to the children's

clinic, which is a service of the NHS, despite her sores which worry even the Doctor. This very example indicates that the public should be more conscious about the NHS services and benefit from them. In this respect, Arden introduces this beneficial aspect of the system through the Doctor's visit to the Sawneys' house to examine Daffodil in which "her diagnoses are accurate," as the dramatist specifies in his introductory note to the play (104). So, except for her attitude and greed, it seems that she does her job properly. Additionally, the fact that the doctor has no personal name strengthens the idea that she represents a group of doctors in the NHS.

On the contrary, in *The Workhouse Donkey*, the doctor has an individual name, "Wellington Blomax," which was actually fabricated by Arden's nephews for their invisible friend, as the playwright states in his preface to *The Workhouse Donkey* (13). He chose to use this name because he thought that this "extraordinary" and "impenetrably consequential" name was appropriate for the character's inconsequential and "boisterous" personality (Preface 13). Arden's choice of using a personal name for the doctor might indicate that Blomax represents a more specific type of the medical staff in the NHS who are as boisterous and corrupt as this character. Through Blomax and this type of doctors, Arden criticises the corruption in the NHS, similar to his criticism in *Live Like Pigs*, for he criticises the greedy attitude among the NHS doctors, again. However, in contrast to the Doctor in *Live Like Pigs*, Blomax does not do his job properly in that he prescribes abortion-inducing pills while he has no authority, violates his patient's privacy and forges fake health reports in exchange for a bribe. It can be observed that Arden now criticises a doctor type, which is more specific and more corrupt than the Doctor in the former play. This evolution of the doctor figure might indicate that the writer's criticism of the corruption in the NHS has become harsher in the course of time.

Differently from *Live Like Pigs*, *The Workhouse Donkey* presents how the corruption in the local government negatively affects the interests of the public through the NHS infrastructure. Since Butterthwaite abuses the financial source of the municipality, there is no fund left when he decides to build an annexe for the Municipal Hospital; therefore, he closes the only art gallery in the town which aggrieves the townspeople who appreciate art. By way of this example, Arden criticises that the corruption of the local authorities causes

failure in the provision of the health service of the welfare state, and in order to compensate for it, the town's refined needs, which is art in this case, are sacrificed.

As for the housing policies of the welfare state, it can be said that Arden's criticism of the Housing Estate comprises the core of *Live Like Pigs*. In the play, the criticism is implied mainly through the different effects of the same housing policies on nomadic and settled ways of living, as in the case of the Sawneys, the Jacksons and the Sawneys' unwanted visitors. While the Jacksons and the visitors enjoy the council houses due to different motives – the Jacksons prefer it for class-mobility and the visitors for a safe shelter – the Sawneys themselves do not relish it because of the oppression of the Housing Estate, which destroys their tramcar and controls the way they live in the house. Arden here criticises the coercion of the state in exercising its policies and that it forces the nomadic family to live in a council house, which is in contrast with their nomadic culture. Hence, through the Jacksons who belong to the settled culture, Arden reflects the usual demand of people for the council houses in the post-World War II period when housing shortage was already a critical issue (Pritt 301). However, through the Sawneys who are nomadic and unwilling to live in a housing estate, Arden provides the reader/audience with an unusual perspective towards the council houses which is stiffened by the oppression from the state. In this respect, besides showing the common facts of his time, namely the high demand for the council houses, Arden shows also the inconspicuous possibility, as can be observed with the example of the Sawneys' discontent with these houses.

On the contrary, in *The Workhouse Donkey*, there are only two minor references to the council houses, which are not enough to elaborate on the housing policies of the welfare state. The first reference is in Boocock's song in which he is proud of the Labour Party's housing policies: "We lead the whole West Riding [i]n our public schemes of housing" (1.7.50). Since Boocock represents the idealistic members in the borough council, it is not surprising that he names the housing schemes among their accomplishments. The second reference is rather indirect. as can be observed in Blomax's words when he asks Wiper "why [he has] abandoned [his wife] in such very hot weather with all the washing-up in a stuffy little kitchen?" (2.5.79). It can be suggested that the kitchen in the excerpt might possibly belong to one of the council

houses, which are infamous for the smallness of their kitchens (Shepherd and Shepherd 41). In this respect, it might be plausible to assume that the council houses, which are actively used by the townspeople, have not improved since. Apart from this, the reader/audience is not provided with either positive or negative consequences of the housing schemes; therefore, it is not likely to make a detailed comment on the significance of the welfare state's housing policies in the play. Regarding the fact that *The Workhouse Donkey* was based on Arden's memories and amalgamations of the political scandals in his home town, Barnsley ("Who's for a Revolution" 46, 49), it is also probable that nothing related to the housing schemes reverberating in his mind was significant enough to infuse into the play.

Similarly, in *The Workhouse Donkey*, Arden omits the social security policies of the welfare state, which might be possibly due to a reason similar to the one mentioned above. However, in *Live Like Pigs*, the playwright touches upon three major policies of the welfare state's social security plan: the National Assistance and the Family Allowance whose benefits seem to be insufficient and the National Insurance which is imposed through constantly mailing residents, and therefore overlooked by the Sawneys. Although Arden criticises social security for offering very limited payment to poor people and failing to eliminate poverty, he also criticises people's unawareness of the benefits of these policies, as in the case with the Sawneys. Thus, in terms of presenting the flaws of both the policies of social security and people, the writer seems to have an objective stance in the play.

As a matter of fact, both *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey* reflect Arden's objective approach in his early plays. In *Live Like Pigs*, Arden does not take sides with any characters since he presents all of them with their faults and good sides. In this sense, he points out the officials' despotism, the Sawneys' excessive opposition to the state, which actually harms the family itself at times, their unwanted visitors' awkward deeds which put the Sawneys in a difficult situation and the Jacksons' double standards of morality which indirectly cause the Sawneys' collapse. In *The Workhouse Donkey*, although the corruption is seemingly centred on Butterthwaite since he is the latest Mayor whose influence on the town's administration dramatically continues, Arden criticises almost every character for the corrupt politics of the town. For example, the Labour councillors are too passive, and Mayor Boocock

is too naïve and open to manipulation. Additionally, not only the Labours but also the Conservatives are criticised through Sweetman's and the illegal dealings of his fellow associates. Apart from politicians, the doctor and police officers are also criticised for their corruption and the townspeople for their indifference.

What is more, in both plays, Arden presents most of the criticised characters' motives that lead them to do what they do. For example, although Butterthwaite seems to be a villain, his songs reveal his workhouse background in which he was mistreated as a child and believed that he was a donkey until he saw himself in the mirror which made him realise that he was a human, and therefore, deserved to be treated so. The ex-mayor's remarks about his past gain the reader's/audience's sympathy and provide a deeper understanding of the character, even though it does not justify his misdeeds. Besides the characters, Arden introduces the welfare state policies from various angles, for he demonstrates both their benefits and troubles. For instance, the housing policies are appreciated by the Jacksons while resented by the Sawneys. So, in these plays, the dramatist leaves the judgement to the reader/audience. Hence, it can be said that Arden's approach towards the characters in the plays and policies of the welfare state is objective since he gives voice to all of his characters, presents a diverse range of their either active or passive relation to corruption and provides both the positive and negative aspects of the policies.

The fact that the main issues related to the welfare state are not resolved at the end of both *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey* indicates that although the names and positions of the characters change, the problems seem to continue. In the former play, the problems in the Housing Estate are reflected primarily through the Sawneys whose occupancy in the neighbourhood is uncertain to go on in the end. The point is that, whether they stay there or not, the oppression of the Housing Estate will probably continue and aggrieve another nomadic family. What is more, even though all of the officials in the Housing Estate are replaced with new officials, there is no indicator in the play that the coercion of the state will cease. In *The Workhouse Donkey*, Butterthwaite says, "I turned tramcars over" (2.6.92), which can be interpreted as Arden's indirect reference to the Sawneys' tramcar in *Live Like Pigs*. Butterthwaite's turning the tramcars over, in other words his destroying them just like

the Housing Estate official in *Live like Pigs*, points out the methodical despotism of the local authorities. Arden employs a similar implication with the arrest of Butterthwaite in the sense that his disappearance does not mean that systematic corruption will end in the town or the local government will realise the welfare state policies more successfully. So, at the end of both plays, townspeople and local authorities pick someone or a family as a scapegoat, lead them to their downfall and then “whitewash” their misdeeds as seen in the chorus song at the end of *The Workhouse Donkey*: “We have washed them white and whiter / Than the whitewash on the wall” (3.4.129). However the fact that the core of the institutional problems related to the welfare state policies remains unsolved in both towns manifests that Arden’s fundamental criticism is directed at the institutions.

In terms of form, Arden uses Brechtian epic elements in both *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey*, which is quite functional since the form supports the content of these plays through enabling the audience to have a critical gaze towards the reasons behind the failure of the welfare state policies. In *Live Like Pigs*, Arden uses an episodic structure and songs. The episodic structure of the play enables the playwright to break the dramatic illusion and lead the audience to realise what they watch is indeed a play. The case of song in the play is quite interesting, for it not only serves to prepare the reader/audience for the upcoming scenes by commenting on the events and characters but also adds decorum to the play in the sense that the songs uttered by the Sawneys carry the characteristic traits of gypsy slang and culture. In the case of *The Workhouse Donkey*, Arden uses direct addressing to the audience, which breaks the dramatic illusion of the play, and songs, which are functional rather than lyrical since these songs serve as a mechanism that alienate the audience. Hence, the use of Brechtian epic elements in both plays enables the audience to critically approach the policies of the welfare state and their implementation.

Consequently, the post-World War II period was influential on Arden’s works through its socio-economic and political impacts on British society, among which the Labour Party’s establishment of the welfare state in Britain can be named. Witnessing the failures in the welfare system, caused mainly by corruption, oppression and/or inertia of people, Arden reflected these issues in *Live Like Pigs* and *The Workhouse Donkey* as a politically conscious

playwright. In the light of Arden's criticism in the two plays, it can be said that in a community in which public servants are corrupt or oppressive and the public is inert, it is presumptive that the welfare state will not be able to realise its potential; therefore, the living standards of the people comprising the very community will not be able to improve.



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## APPENDIX 1: ORIGINALITY REPORTS



**HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
**SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ**  
**YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU**

**HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ**  
**SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ**  
**İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA**

Tarih: 01/07/2019

Tez Başlığı : JOHN ARDEN'İN *LIVE LIKE PIGS* VE *THE WORKHOUSE DONKEY* ADLI OYUNLARINDA SAVAŞ SONRASI BRİTANYA'SI REFAH DEVLETİ POLİTİKALARININ TEMSİLLERİ

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 87 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 01/07/2019 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 2'dir.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

- 1-  Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç
- 2-  Kaynakça hariç
- 3-  Alıntılar hariç
- 4-  Alıntılar dâhil
- 5-  5 kelimedenden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

01/07/2019

**Adı Soyadı:** Melike İrem Şimşek  
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**Programı:** İngiliz Kültür Araştırmaları

**DANIŞMAN ONAYI**

UYGUNDUR.

Doç. Dr. Şebnem Kaya



**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
MASTER'S THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT**

**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT**

Date: 01/07/2019

Thesis Title : REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WELFARE-STATE POLICIES IN POST-WAR BRITAIN IN  
JOHN ARDEN'S *LIVE LIKE PIGS* AND *THE WORKHOUSE DONKEY*

According to the originality report obtained by myself/my thesis advisor by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options checked below on 01/07/2019 for the total of 87 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction, c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is 2 %.

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01/07/2019

**Name Surname:** Melike İrem Şimşek  
**Student No:** N15227309  
**Department:** English Language and Literature  
**Program:** British Cultural Studies

**ADVISOR APPROVAL**

APPROVED.

Assoc. Prof. Dr Şebnem Kaya

## APPENDIX 2: ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORMS FOR THESIS WORK



HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KOMİSYON MUAFİYETİ FORMU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Date: 01/07/2019

Tez Başlığı: JOHN ARDEN'İN *LIVE LIKE PIGS* VE *THE WORKHOUSE DONKEY* ADLI OYUNLARINDA SAVAŞ SONRASI BRİTANYA'SI REFAH DEVLETİ POLİTİKALARININ TEMSİLLERİ

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmam:

1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,
2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.
3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.
4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, mülakat, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kurul/Komisyon'dan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

01/07/2019

**Adı Soyadı:** Melike İrem Şimşek  
**Öğrenci No:** N15227309  
**Anabilim Dalı:** İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı  
**Programı:** İngiliz Kültür Araştırmaları  
**Statüsü:**  Yüksek Lisans  Doktora  Bütünleşik Doktora

### DANIŞMAN GÖRÜŞÜ VE ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Doç. Dr. Şebnem Kaya



HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
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ETHICS COMMISSION FORM FOR THESIS

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
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Date: 01/07/2019

Thesis Title: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE WELFARE-STATE POLICIES IN POST-WAR BRITAIN IN JOHN ARDEN'S *LIVE LIKE PIGS* AND *THE WORKHOUSE DONKEY*

My thesis work related to the title above:

1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.
2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).
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I respectfully submit this for approval.

01/07/2019

**Name Surname:** Melike İrem Şimşek  
**Student No:** N15227309  
**Department:** English Language and Literature  
**Program:** British Cultural Studies  
**Status:**  MA  Ph.D.  Combined MA/ Ph.D.

**ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL**

APPROVED.

Assoc. Prof. Dr Şebnem Kaya