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**THE PORTRAYAL OF POSTMODERN SOCIETY AND FAMILY  
DYNAMICS IN APRIL DE ANGELIS' PLAY 'JUMPY': AN  
ANALYSIS USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY,  
ATTACHMENT THEORY AND STRUCTURAL FAMILY THEORY**

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**YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ**

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**Ahmet DÜLEK** tarafından hazırlanan “**The Portrayal of Postmodern Society and Family Dynamics in April De Angelis’ Play *Jumpy*: An Analysis Using Symbolic Interaction Theory, Attachment Theory, and Structural Family Theory** başlıklı bu çalışma, 17.07.2023 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak, jürimiz tarafından **YÜKSEK LİSANS tezi** olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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**Ahmet DÜLEK**

## ÖZET

### YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

#### THE PORTRAYAL OF POSTMODERN SOCIETY AND FAMILY DYNAMICS IN APRIL DE ANGELIS' PLAY 'JUMPY': AN ANALYSIS USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY, ATTACHMENT THEORY AND STRUCTURAL FAMILY THEORY

#### AHMET DÜLEK

April De Angelis, Londra'da İngiliz bir anne ve İtalyan bir babanın çocuğu olarak dünyaya gelen İngiliz oyun yazarı ve senaristtir. Bu çalışma, ilk kez 2011 yılında sahnelenen April De Angelis'in *Jumpy* adlı oyununu ele alarak post-modern toplum ve aile üzerine yoğunlaşır. Bu çalışma, April De Angelis'in *Jumpy* (2011) oyununda üç aile teorisini: Sembolik Etkileşim Teorisi, Bağlanma Teorisi ve Yapısal Aile Teorisi'ni nasıl kullandığını ele almaktadır. Yazarın *Jumpy* adlı eseri, aileyi, evdeki sorunları ve bu sorunların çocuklar ve toplum üzerindeki etkilerini konu alan, on sekiz sahneden oluşan bir komedidir. Yazar, eşlerin ve çocuklarının gerçekçi bir gözle yansıtıldığı iki çağdaş aileyi izleyiciye ve okuyucuya sunar. De Angelis postmodern aile ve bireylerin değişimlerini ve onların topluma etkilerini geçmişle karşılaştırır. Aynı zamanda, yazar iletişim, aldatma, korunmasız cinsel ilişki gibi çağdaş aile ve ergenlik sorunlarına gerçekçi bir anlatımla değinir. De Angelis, değerlerin yok edilmesi ve ahlak, namus, saygı, sevgi gibi kavramların potansiyel kaybı nedeniyle yeni neslin ve kültürün karşılaştığı tehlikelere dair ailelere bir uyarıda bulunur. Ancak De Angelis, aile kavramı yirmi birinci yüzyılda olumsuzluklara uğrasa da toplum içinde sonsuza kadar var olacak en önemli kurum olduğunu göstermeye çalışır. De Angelis, eserlerinde aile teorilerinin varsayımlarını ustaca kullanan bir oyun yazarıdır. Bu çalışma, bu teorilerin De Angelis tarafından nasıl ve hangi bağlamda kullanıldığını, postmodern toplum ve aile içindeki sorunları söz konusu teorileri kullanarak izleyiciye yazar tarafından nasıl sunulduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** April De Angelis, Aile, *Jumpy*, Postmodernizm, Toplum, Aile Teorileri

## **ABSTRACT**

### **MA THESIS**

# **THE PORTRAYAL OF POSTMODERN SOCIETY AND FAMILY DYNAMICS IN APRIL DE ANGELIS' PLAY '*JUMPY*': AN ANALYSIS USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY, ATTACHMENT THEORY AND STRUCTURAL FAMILY THEORY**

**AHMET DÜLEK**

April De Angelis is a British playwright and screenwriter born in London to an English mother and an Italian father. This study concentrates on postmodern society and family as portrayed in April De Angelis' *Jumpy*, first staged in 2011. This study explores how April de Angelis utilizes three of family theories: The Symbolic Interaction Theory, the Attachment Theory, and the Structural Family Theory, in her *Jumpy* (2011). *Jumpy* is a comedy consisting of eighteen scenes that focus on the family and the effects of problems in the household on children and society. In her play, she portrays two contemporary families, reflecting the spouses and their children through a realistic eye to the audience and readers. During the play, De Angelis compares the changes in postmodern families and individuals to the past, as well as the effects of these changes on society. Through this portrayal, she highlights contemporary family and adolescent problems such as communication, cheating, and unprotected sexual intercourse in a realistic manner. The playwright warns families about how the new generations and cultures are in danger due to the destruction of values and the potential loss of concepts like morality, honour, respect, and love. However, De Angelis also demonstrates that even if the family is disturbed in the twenty-first century, it is still the most crucial institution within society that will continue to exist. De Angelis is a playwright who skillfully incorporates family theory suppositions into her works. This study illustrates how these theories are applied and in what context they are used by De Angelis. Additionally, the primary goal of this study is to identify how the playwright presents the problems in postmodern society and family to the audience by using family theories.

**Keywords:** April De Angelis, Family, *Jumpy*, Postmodernism, Society, Family Theories

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background of the Study

The institution of the family has undergone significant transformations in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, primarily driven by changing labour patterns, population diversity, and social movements. These changes have had far-reaching impacts on both the family institution and society as a whole. One significant factor driving change in the family institution since the 1990s is the advancement of reproductive technology (Kuhnt & Witting, 2022). This has led to the emergence of new possibilities for both heterosexual and same-sex families and a redefinition of the concept of family. For instance, through in-vitro fertilization or surrogacy, same-sex couples can now have biological children, which challenges conventional ideas of family formation. This has resulted in some legal challenges to traditional definitions of the family. Legal changes in the area of family law in Britain have not been universally accepted and have faced some opposition. However, these changes represent a significant step forward in recognizing and accommodating the diverse range of family structures and formations in modern society (Weeks, 2014, p. 337). The impact of these legal reforms on family structures and societal norms continues to be a substantial topic of debate and research.

In the last twenty years, the UK government has implemented a series of legal reforms aimed at adjusting moral regulation in accordance with the changing social landscape (Lefebvre, 2013, p. 22). One such example is the Civil Partnership Act of 2004, which granted legal standing to same-sex couples and afforded them many of the same rights and responsibilities as married couples (Ross, Gask, and Berrington, 2011). Another significant reform was the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Act of 2013, which extended the right to marry to same-sex couples (Boertien & Vignoli, 2019). Additionally, the Children and Families Act of 2014 made significant changes to family law, including the introduction of shared parental leave and a new system of special guardianship. More recently, the Divorce, Dissolution, and Separation Act of 2020 eliminated the need to prove fault to be able to get a divorce, while the Domestic Abuse Act of the same year created a new legal definition of domestic abuse, introduced Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders, and made non-fatal strangulation a specific criminal offense (Clarke, 2022). Finally, the Overseas Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act of 2020 extended the

ability to make forced marriage protection orders to individuals who are outside of the jurisdiction of England and Wales.

Beyond these legislative changes, advances in technology, changing attitudes, and evolving societal expectations have also had a significant impact on the family institution in the UK (Weeks, 2014). For people and couples who were previously unable to have children, reproductive technology such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF), surrogacy, and egg freezing has opened up new possibilities (Kuhnt & Witting, 2022). These developments have challenged traditional notions of family formation and have led to ongoing debates and discussions around the definition of the family and its role in contemporary society.

The growth of online dating and social media has made it easier for people to meet and form relationships (Izang, 2016). Furthermore, there has been a shift toward more progressive attitudes toward gender roles and the concept of the traditional nuclear family, with increasing acceptance of non-traditional family structures (Goody, 2004, p. 141). Lefebvre (2013) asserts that there is a growing expectation that both parents should be involved in the upbringing of their children, leading to increased demand for shared parental leave and other family-friendly policies. Another increasing expectation is that the British government should offer support for families, including financial assistance, childcare, and other services. Because of modifications in legislation, technology, attitudes, and expectations, the types of families in the 21<sup>st</sup> century vary greatly, from traditional nuclear families to extended, blended, non-marital, civil partnership, and same-sex families (Wetchler & Hecker, 2014).

These changes in the family were naturally reflected in the theatre of the time period, and playwrights discussed issues related to the family in their plays. British theatre in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has explored a wide range of family issues. The role of parents and children in *The Children* (2013) by Edward Bond, who explores the relationship between mothers and children and the complexities of parenthood, is an impressive example. In the play, Bond demonstrates the changing nature of family structures and the effects of social environment on teenagers.

Moreover, *Blackbird* (2005), by the Scottish playwright David Harrower, portrays the effects of trauma and mental health issues on families and relationships. On the other hand, *Invisible Friends* (1991), by Alan Ayckbourn, presents the impact of communication problems in a family with a child.

The portrayal of the family in dramatic writing requires a thorough examination since playwrights dramatize not only the psycho-social dynamic behaviour of individuals within the family unit but also examine the drastic impact of a rapidly changing social landscape on the individual and the family. While some British playwrights like Simon Stephens and David Eldridge focus solely on domestic relationships, others, like D.C. Moore, Mike Bartlett, and Polly Stenham, put the family in a broader perspective by dramatizing the interaction between spouses and their children to comment on parent-child influence and their children's development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. British playwright April De Angelis is one of the playwrights who focuses on the family from a detailed perspective, such as the impact of societal and political changes on families; the relationship between mothers and daughters; the complexity of family relationships; and the effect of mental health problems on families. Besides, De Angelis is a playwright who expertly incorporates family theory presumptions into her works. This study illustrates how these theories are applied and the context in which they are employed in De Angelis' play *Jumpy*.

This study is consisted of five chapters including the introduction part. The introduction part (Chapter One) contains the background of the study, the aim of the study, the significance/importance of the study, the scope of the study and the limitations of the study, and the method of the study. Chapter Two, entitled “Theoretical Approaches to Family” mainly deals with family theories consisting of symbolic family theory, attachment theory, and structural family theory and their significance to the family in the postmodern age.

Chapter Three, entitled “The Family from Past to Present”, explicates the concept of family and examines the British family institution since the 1900s. An interdisciplinary approach has been used in this chapter to analyse and remark on the family institution and its circumstances. An interdisciplinary approach enables a more holistic understanding of a subject, as it brings together different fields of study and their unique perspectives to analyse and understand a problem or issue. For example, while studying the representation of the family institution in British society and family problems, the interdisciplinary approach involved combining the perspectives of sociology, psychology, and literature to examine the social and psychological effects of family problems and their representation in British drama. Considering the characteristics of the

concept, the British family institution has been examined in terms of evolving family structures and family-related issues of historical significance.

Chapter Four, titled “Exploring Family Dynamics in Contemporary British Theatre Through the Works of April De Angelis” provides information about significant subjects such as the representation of the family in plays staged in British theatres in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The historical context of the relevant period will be examined in detail, and this chapter will explore the British theatrical atmosphere of early 21<sup>st</sup> century and late 20<sup>th</sup> century by presenting contemporary debates and discussions on theatrical concepts and practices. The chapter also considers plays written from the 1990s to the present that depict the family institution. However, the representation of the family on stage is analysed within the context of contemporary British theatre.

This chapter also examines April De Angelis' contributions to British theatre, with a focus on her treatment of society and family in her plays. In point of fact, De Angelis is a playwright in contemporary British drama, drawing on significant social, psychological, cultural, and political movements as inspiration for her work. She has been considered a key figure in the theatre world and a leading feminist playwright in British theatre since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

De Angelis believes that theatre is not only important for a specific segment of society but also for the general public. She views her plays as necessary for social existence and aims to reveal the truth in order to create a better world, and she is constantly evolving as a playwright in the theatre. Her plays, such as *Ironmistress* (1989), *Hush* (1992), *Playhouse Creatures* (1993), *A Laughing Matter* (2002), and *Among Friends* (2007), are reviewed in the study as addressing social issues through the lens of politics, economy, sociology, and psychology.

Chapter Five, entitled “Depicting Family Struggles in April De Angelis’ *Jumpy*” examines the household issues depicted in the play, focusing on the problems of insensitivity, lack of communication, conflict, alienation, deception, and moral corruption faced by an ordinary middle-class family in the context of family theories. It also explores how these issues affect family members, particularly children. The chapter first analyses the communication problems between spouses in *Jumpy* in the context of Symbolic Interaction Theory, using examples from the conflicts between the two couples depicted in the play. In general, the lack of communication between spouses is at the root of many

family problems. In *Jumpy*, the playwright reflects situations such as not showing enough attention to each other, not being respectful, and not making decisions together on important issues about home and family. These obstacles can lead to problems such as infidelity and poor child-rearing, as displayed in the play. Since De Angelis is sensitive to the household institution, the communication problem and its negative effects on the family, children, and society are studied in detail in this section of the thesis.

Further in this chapter, during the analysis of the problem of deceit among spouses, the situations that cause cheating and their types are examined by considering the family members in *Jumpy* in the context of Attachment Theory. In this regard, it is apparent how De Angelis deals compassionately with themes that are strongly tied to society in which family relationships are damaged by spousal cheating. In her play, she does not hesitate to condemn the reasons for the corruption of the modern world's family values, as well as those in the middle-class. In this regard, the playwright demonstrates how the marriage relationship is crucial among the causes of dishonesty. This holds true whether a man or a woman deceives because of low emotional and sexual fulfillment in marriage as well as feelings of dissatisfaction with a marriage.

In a general consensus, cheating is divided into two categories: emotional and physical. This classification is based on specific characteristics such as effective events and motivational variables in the desire to cheat (Hall & Fincham, 2006, p. 508). Emotional cheating refers to a type of infidelity where one partner forms a deep emotional connection with someone else outside of the relationship. This can include sharing personal thoughts and feelings, confiding in someone else, or forming a close bond with someone else. Physical cheating, on the other hand, refers to being physically intimate with someone outside of the relationship. This can include sexual intercourse, kissing, or other forms of physical contact. Both types of infidelity can be harmful to a relationship and are often considered a breach of trust. Since De Angelis reflects the reasons and types of cheating through the behaviours of the male and female characters in the play, all issues related to cheating are considered in depth, and its impact on society is discussed in this chapter.

Besides, with respect to the heirs who constitute the future of society, De Angelis argues in *Jumpy* that any problem in the family can deeply affect the children. Therefore, the playwright skilfully demonstrates the social and household problems of two adolescents

who appear as the main characters in *Jumpy* and reveals how these troubles affect their physical and mental development.

Adolescence brings about various biological and psychological changes, and while some individuals may adjust to these changes well, others may struggle. This is often attributed to individual differences and to family relationships. During this time, a warm and close relationship with parents can support a teenager's psychological adjustment, while an inflexible and rejecting approach can hinder it. Accordingly, De Angelis' play attempts to demonstrate how parents' attitudes and behaviours influence the lives of their children during this phase. Within the context of Structural Family Theory, Chapter Five examines some of the problems faced by adolescents, such as unprotected sexual intercourse, pregnancy, drug use, mobile phone addiction, and social media, as well as the effects of these issues on adolescent development and the society of children raised in problematic environments, as they are addressed in *Jumpy*. Additionally, the concerns of families regarding the problems their children may face will be studied. Overall, De Angelis emphasizes the importance of patience and awareness for families, recognizing that adolescent irritability and obstacles are temporary.

## **1.2. Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to deal with how family theories, namely, The Symbolic Interaction Theory, The Attachment Theory and The Structural Family Theory function in April De Angelis' *Jumpy*. Overall, this thesis takes a critical approach to analysing the changes in the institution of the family and English society after World War II, focusing on the psychological and social effects of household problems. This thesis explores how the family institution is represented in British society, as well as how family issues affect family members, by conducting family theories analysis of April De Angelis' play *Jumpy*. As changes in family structure during this period became more visible than ever, resulting in significant socio-economic and socio-political consequences in Britain, it is also essential to examine the history of the changing family institution in Britain during the study. Even though April De Angelis is regarded as a productive playwright in the world, several studies have been conducted on her works. Those studies mostly focus on how her plays were staged but this study analyses her play *Jumpy* from the perspective of Family Theories.

Our research question is ‘How are family theories applied to April De Angelis’ play *Jumpy* to reflect the family problems and effects on society in the postmodern period to the readers’? The reason why we have chosen April De Angelis is that she is considered to be one of successful playwrights in the postmodern period and is to convey the problems experienced by families in the postmodern society to the audience with a realistic perspective. In summary, this study examines family problems and their effects on society in the postmodern age according to family theory perspectives: The Symbolic Interaction, Attachment, and Structural Family Theory in April De Angelis’ play *Jumpy* (2011) to explore how the playwright utilizes family as a direct response to problems in postmodern society.

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

Our review of the literature revealed that there are few works examining De Angelis’ plays from the perspectives of drama and aesthetic approaches, and there is little material about De Angelis to be found. A few works have been written regarding her works. Since De Angelis is a little-known playwright, many of those works focus on staging methods for De Angelis’ plays and some plot summaries of De Angelis’ works. The writings of De Angelis do not contain any particular works that discuss family theories. Additionally, finding primary and secondary information about De Angelis and her works has been very challenging for us. We would be better equipped to analyze the chosen play by De Angelis in-depth if there had been more research on the family theories used in dramatic texts.

There is only one significant work, titled *April De Angelis* by Rebecca D’Monte, aside from a few interviews with the actors, directors and playwright, as well as some theater reviews. It was published in 2011 by The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary British Playwrights. But in this work of April De Angelis, D’Monte barely touches on De Angelis’ writing purpose. D’Monte focuses mostly on the character categories and plot summaries of De Angelis’ plays.

It is notable that Baştan's *Adolescent Problems and Parental Worries* in April De Angelis’ *Jumpy* is another important work on De Angelis. It is a research article published in the Eurasia International Research Journal in 2021. Baştan analyses the families, adolescent problems and parental worries in *Jumpy*. It is crucial to cite De Angelis’ own work. It is titled *Troubling Gender on Stage and with the Critics*. It was published in 2010 by The

Johns Hopkins University Press. In this work, De Angelis criticizes the social structure dominated men more and considers everything through the eyes of women, also reflects the gender problems of theatre. *April De Angelis Plays I* was published by Contemporary Classics in 1999. The first collection of April De Angelis's plays includes an introduction from the playwright and selections from her works *Ironmistress (1989)*, *Hush (1992)*, *Playhouse Creatures (1993)*, and *The Positive Hour (1997)*.

De Angelis' plays are generally examined with themes of gender, identity, and power; and they highlight the complex and nuanced experiences of women but this study examines her play *Jumpy* in terms of family theories. Many authors and playwrights have included family theories into their works. De Angelis is a playwright who expertly incorporates family theory presumptions into her works. This study illustrates De Angelis's use of these theories and the context in which they are applied. Also, the main concern of this work is to reveal how the playwright presents the problems in postmodern society and family to the audience by using family theories.

#### **1.4. Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study's scope covers De Angelis' *Jumpy*, which was staged in 2011 and highlights a global interest in the family institutions. It discusses the play from a viewpoint of some family theories and De Angelis's application of those ideas. The study is limited to merely examining the play in accordance with some Family Theories: The Symbolic Interaction, the Attachment and the Structural Family Theory. The purpose of the scope is to answer our research question which reads: "How are family theories used by De Angelis in her play to reflect family problems and effects on society in the postmodern period to the reader?" De Angelis' works can be examined from a variety of perspectives. The works of De Angelis can be analyzed using the presumptions of literary criticism schools. We have chosen to emphasize analyzing her play *Jumpy* from the scope of some family theories only.



### **1.5. Method of the Study**

We used the textual analysis method in this study which is used to analyze and interpret the characteristics of texts based on Family Theories: The Symbolic Interaction, the Attachment, and the Structural Family Theory in De Angelis' play *Jumpy* (2011). The qualitative research method which is used to examine nontangible aspects of a subjects has been used to analyze the play. First, family theories were examined to show how the theories work, how they reach their intended purpose, or how some effects are created on the reader, and contribute to the logical structure and basic thinking of the examined theories. Then, domestic and foreign studies on April De Angelis' *Jumpy* were examined, and this study analyses the career of April De Angelis, a prominent playwright in British theatre.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO FAMILY

#### 2.1. Family in terms of Symbolic Interaction Theory

George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), an American philosopher and sociologist, is largely credited as being one of the founders of symbolic interactionism, a significant theoretical school of sociology. Mead created the symbolic interaction theory. This theory focuses on how humans assign meaning to objects in their environment through social interactions and how they interpret their interactions with others. The symbolic interactionist perspective is based on the notion that humans make sense of their social circumstances through communication and social interaction, or the exchange of meaning through symbols and language. Mead argues that the meaning we give to the world is influenced by the interactions we have with other people, ideas, and events (Mead, 1934). According to Mead, our interactions with others affect how we perceive the world and interact with our society, not the objective truth (Carter & Fuller, 2015, p. 6).

According to the symbolic interaction theory, the mutual interaction that provides a healthy relationship between people includes the exchange of symbols (Giddens, 2000, p. 593). When we interact with the other person, we constantly look for clues about what kind of behaviour is appropriate in that process and how to express the intention of the other person. According to symbolic interactionists such as Charles Horton Cooley and William Isaac Thomas attention is to devote our perception to details in interpersonal communication and to understanding the other person. For example, the first purpose of students who have just met at school will be to measure their mutual behavior (Giddens, 2000, p. 597).

Mead states that people are not only aware of other people but also have their capacities in the same process. In this context, while each person interacts with other people symbolically, she/he also interacts with herself/himself. The use of symbols in communication between people means the use of gestures and facial expressions as well as language. Symbols are not constantly changing things. Symbols experience the attribution of meaning within certain processes (Paloma, 2012, p. 233).

This approach has defined the communication process existing in society under two main headings. The first is communication with symbols and the second is communication without symbols. In interaction using symbols, the person interprets the meanings of the other person's gestures, whereas in non-symbolic interaction, the person reacts according to the gestures of the other person. For the concept of family, symbolic and non-symbolic interaction is used. The family, which contains individuals, harbours certain roles and expectations. According to this approach, the study of the family gains meaning firstly through socialisation, how the individual receives and internalises patterns of behaviour, and secondly through explanations of personality, attitudes, values and the ways in which behaviour is coordinated.

Besides, the institution of the family and the concept of marriage should be interpreted in their respective status. The concept of marriage can be explained in the family context and its sub-components, the society they are in, and the social environment. Spoken language among family members makes sense when examined in terms of social context. Individuals in the family learn the behaviors that are accepted and not accepted by society. People communicate with other people by using symbols. Thus, people are also in the status of interpreters. According to the symbolic interaction theory, social identity and reference groups are considered very important dimensions (Paloma, 2012, p. 228).

The phrase symbolic interaction was first used by Blumer, a Mead student. He is credited as the creator of symbolic interaction as a result. According to Blumer (1969), there are two ways that human beings express meaning. (1) Meaning is something ascribed to things like phenomena, events, and other things. (2) Meaning is a physical attachment that humans place on things and occurrences. According to Blumer, meaning is not an intrinsic property of the thing but rather a state that develops through group members' interactions (Tezcan, 2005). As a result, meaning is created through human interaction, and meaning gives people the ability to contribute to the development of some of the facts of the sensory world. According to Thomas (1928), "*whether or not interpretation is accurate is not important.*" He thinks that human viewpoints and historical developments influence what is real (Berg, 2000).

The symbolic interactionist Blumer has examined symbolic interaction under three titles. First, according to Mead's disciple Blumer (1969, p. 197), "*people take a stand towards things according to the meaning that things convey to them.*" Here, the meaning that individuals attach to things may differ. Secondly, these meanings "*emerge from one's*

*interaction with one's interlocutors.*” Finally, he explains that *“the meanings attributed to things are changed by an interpretative process”* (Paloma, 2012, p. 234). The meanings of things, people, events, and circumstances are not inherent in them. These components only have meaning when they are in interaction with people. For instance, a college lecturer might utilize a video player as a teaching tool to show educational movies. The use of this video player by a student to watch movies they have rented is regarded as a source of enjoyment and pleasure. Similarly, this equipment must be defined as the window opening to the outside world for inmates watching the films given to them by their family (Berg, 2000). As this instance shows, humans derive meaning from their own experiences. These occurrences are neither isolated or haphazard.

It is predicted that the clearer the perception of roles in the relationships between family members, the higher the quality of their mutual communication. When the symbolic and non-symbolic communications between family members are not clearly understood, communication problems arise between individuals. Although the symbolic method aimed to strengthen the influence of individuals in the construction of roles, it ignored a number of social phenomenon's minor components and the significance of structural variables (Canatan & Yıldırım, 2009, p. 43-44).

In conclusion, the occurrence of an event is the primary requirement for the construction of a meaning. The experience of these events is the next requirement. As Blumer states that; *“the meaning of things directs action”* (1992, p. 158). Understanding human concepts, meanings, and processes is an essential requirement for comprehending human activities. Social roles, conventional institutions, regulations, goals, and family roles are only a few of the things that give people the starting point for defining themselves. Symbolic interaction in this context stresses interpersonal communication, definitional dispute, and active participation of individuals.

## **2.2. Family in terms of Attachment Theory**

Bowlby (1973) defined attachment as the desire people feel to develop intimacy or a relationship with an object when they are stressed or afraid. Accordingly, parenting styles, which are similar to attachment styles, are crucial in helping to raise people who are mentally and physically healthy as well as confident. The family that will be formed by individuals who are physically and psychologically healthy and self-confident will also

be healthy in society. Bowlby (1973) asserts that a child who experiences early love and trust would believe that she or he is a person deserving of love and trust in the future.

According to Ainsworth (1989), there are three kinds of attachment that emerge during childhood, Ainsworth classifies these attachment styles as secure, insecure (anxious-ambivalent), and avoidant. Secure attachment forms as a result of persistent, thoughtful care during infancy. Because they believe their caregivers are present, newborns often investigate their surroundings. The distress that occurs when the caregiver moves away from the baby lessens and turns into discovery after they are reunited. Babies with insecure attachments are reluctant to explore even in the presence of the caregiver. Being away from the caregiver makes them extremely uncomfortable. When they are reunited with the caregiver, they display an angry mood. The caregiver's rejection of contact and lack of attention causes the avoidant attachment style to develop. As opposed to babies with insecure attachments, those with this attachment pattern do not interact with caregivers. When separated from the caregiver, they do not show any signs of distress and even actively avoid contact (Selçuk, Zayas, and Hazan, 2010).

Ainsworth (1989) points out that the behavior underlying attachment includes internal processes that are thought to originate from neurophysiological processes. Accordingly, internal processes are subject to developments and changes under the influence of genetic and environmental factors. According to Bowlby and Ainsworth, early parent-child interactions as well as later attitudes, expectations, needs, and other social behaviors are influenced by attachment types. Therefore, attachment affects all stages of life, not just childhood. The infant's interaction with the caregiver during this early stage serves as the foundation for future attachment (Özsoy, 2015). Hazan and Shaver state that

*[...] attachment styles in infancy influence individuals' friendship relationships, romantic relations, and spousal relationships in future lives, therefore they directly affect the family structure in society, and secure, insecure, and indifferent attachment styles can also be seen in adulthood.* (1987, p. 517).

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) handled adult attachment styles differ in the context of Bowlby's representations of others and self. Accordingly, they developed the Quadruple Attachment Model according to whether their representations of self and others are positive or negative. This model includes secure, avoidant, anxious, and disorganized attachment styles.

Adults who develop secure attachment can love and perceive themselves as valuable, and display sensitive behaviors towards others. Individuals with this attachment style have high self-esteem and do not feel uncomfortable getting close to others. Adults with a disorganized attachment style develop positive attitudes toward others while feeling worthless. This causes them to try to gain the acceptance and approval of others and to be too busy with relationships. Adults with this attachment style may distance themselves from other people because they act in a very attached style while trying to establish close relationships with others. In the anxious attachment style, the person has negative attitudes towards herself/himself and others. The person thinks that he or she and other people are not worthy enough to deserve the feeling of love. For this reason, adults with anxious attachment avoid close relationships or have problems in their relationships. These individuals, who have difficulties in their bilateral relations, also experience great difficulties in situations such as establishing a family and managing the family. Adults with an avoidant attachment style may love and feel valued despite having negative attitudes toward others. In order not to experience disappointment and rejection, these people avoid close relationships with others, thus they want to maintain their positive self-perceptions by remaining strong and independent (Çalışır, 2009, p. 248).

The impact of attachment patterns on romantic relationships and marital adjustment has been the subject of many studies. Kobak and Hazan (1991) examined the effect of an individual's trust between spouses and self-confidence on marriage. Accordingly, the marriages of people with secure attachment styles show a more constructive and harmonious appearance. Relationship compatibility is related to the attachment style of both couples, and marital adjustment is high in relationships where both couples are securely attached. It has also been observed that being clear in communication increases marital adjustment. Another finding of the study is that individuals in long-term and mutually agreed relationships develop more secure attachment. Attachment styles are also effective in conflict management styles in relationships. Accordingly, individuals with insecure attachment styles behave more reactively in their relationships and evaluate the behavior of their spouses negatively. Individuals with secure attachment style, on the other hand, experience fewer conflict thanks to the positive thoughts they develop about their spouse's behavior (Feeney, 2002).

Bowlby (2012, p. 238) expresses in his book that “*individuals with secure attachment style do not worry about abandonment or intimacy in their relationships, and that they*

*are happy and reliable in their love lives.*” In this context, it has been noticed that individuals who have a secure attachment relationship are happier in their families and live healthy family life. Bowlby (2012, p. 243) defines “*individuals with an anxious attachment as confrontational and combative in the relationship.*” Since these people do not consider themselves worthy of being loved, high jealousy can be seen in their relationships. Therefore, the family established by such people is unhealthier and it is natural to experience various family problems. People with an avoidant attachment style tend to stay away from intimacy. For this reason, they think that the person they are in a relationship with is trying to be closer to them than they should be. The bonds formed in the relationship between these individuals show that the need for intimacy is very intense. However, having at least one secure attachment style in relationships increases relationship satisfaction. According to Ertan;

*[...] with the changing world in the postmodern society, the fact that both people are insecurely attached to marriages makes it difficult to achieve relationship harmony, causing potential conflicts to increase and families to collapse (2002, p. 47).*

Along with all these, marital adjustment is a phenomenon that needs to be evaluated multi-dimensionally. Müşdal Çelebi (2018, p. 6) emphasizes in her study that “*a person with an avoidant attachment style can be securely attached to her partner in a relationship and that every relationship has special dynamics.*” Marriage and relationship satisfaction encompasses environmental factors like equality in decision-making, earnings, job, and environmental challenges as well as personal characteristics like love type, sexual satisfaction, and attachment type (Sokolski & Hendrick, 1999). One of the key elements that destroys the institution of the family is cheating. The phenomenon of infidelity, which disrupts the family institution, affects attachment styles, and is also affected by it. Attachment styles of individuals in marital relations can reinforce concepts such as cheating and cause family problems.

As a result, the marital relationship resulting in infidelity can be evaluated with a multidimensional explanation. Inter-partner harmony and problem solving strategies developed are directly connected to attachment types, and the reaction of individuals to the events experienced in the relationship can also be shaped by attachment styles. For all these reasons, attachment styles may affect the relationship satisfaction of the spouses

and may lead to the end of the relationship with infidelity and the destruction of the family.

### **2.3. Family in terms of Structural Family Theory**

Salvador Minuchin (1921 - 2017) was a family therapist born and raised in Argentina. He created structural family theory, which analyzes interactions between family members or between groups within the family to solve issues inside the family in 1960s (Minuchin, 1974). Structural family theory is a theory that states that individuals cannot live separately from each other, that the individual should be approached within the social environment in which he/she is located and that the family constitutes a larger unit than the sum of individuals (Fıfılođlu, 1992, p. 11). Minuchin emphasized the necessity of examining the interaction patterns among family members to understand family structure. According to this theory, looking at family contact patterns is the greatest way to comprehend a person's symptoms (Üstündađ, 2015). The Structural family theory makes sense of interactions within the family and examines interactions between family members. Within the scope of structural family theory, system and subsystems, boundaries, hierarchies, symptoms in the family role, intergenerational coalitions, power and roles are prominent concepts.

The system is a set of elements that have the capacity to fulfill predetermined tasks and establish mutual connections between them. Each part of the system interacts with the other, and this parts tend to maintain the balance of the system. Otherwise, the balance of the system is disturbed and the system has to disintegrate (Vetere, 2001, p. 134). Systems can be categorised as open, semi-open and closed system. Open systems; resulting from input-process-output processes, self-renewing, with flexible and permeable boundaries and a strong subsystem and hierarchy, are systems that support the development of its constituent parts and respond to external stimuli. Semi-open systems are systems in which the feedback mechanism within the system is relatively incomplete. Closed system with rigid and impermeable boundaries and incompatible reactions to stimuli from the environment, are systems in which new inputs do not take place in the process and interaction and communication between its constituent parts are limited (Nadir, 2013, p. 130).

The family is a system, in accordance with the structural family theory. The members that make up the family are in relationship and interaction and simultaneously form separate



subsystems within each other. The subsystem of spouses, the subsystem of parents, the subsystem of siblings and the subsystem of relatives are evaluated within this scope (Tadros & Finney, 2018, p. 254). The spouses who make up the nuclear family first form this subsystem. Parental roles develop when people are given new responsibilities following the birth of a child in the household. This constitutes the parental subsystem. The parental subsystem is concerned with functions related to the care, upbringing and socialisation of children. The sibling subsystem arises from the relationship between children in the family.

All systems and subsystems that form the family have a boundary. In this context boundaries are defined as “*emotional barriers that protect the integrity of each individual, family and society*” (Minuchin, 1982, p. 657). These boundaries determine how, how much and under what conditions emotions and information are transferred from one individual to another in order to maintain the balance of the system. Therefore, the structure of the boundaries in a system must be clear. In families with unclear boundaries, there is dependency instead of independence and differentiation. In families with such boundaries, there can not be healthy interaction because it is not clear how family members will communicate with each other (Üstündağ, 2015, p. 120).

A coalition is defined as an overt or covert alliance of two or more family members against another member. Alliances develop when family members come together overtly or covertly to counteract the influence of other family members, often in response to life events. According to Minuchin (1982, p. 659), two types of alliances can be formed in the family system. These are stable, permanent and temporary coalitions (Becvar & Becvar, 2013, p. 12). Stable and permanent coalitions are an important determinant of the relationships between family members, whereas temporary coalitions can be defined as family members coming together in times of crisis and stress and seeing one member in particular as responsible.

In structural family theory, power refers to the difference between people on both sides of the boundaries. In other words, power is the variable that shows which member has control in the family and which member has to adapt to this control. Power is also related to structure, because in the family structure there is a clear hierarchy of power. This hierarchy determines who makes the decisions in the family and at the same time defines those who also control the behaviour of their members (Corey, 2016, p. 25). In a family,

parents are usually hierarchically superior to children. Structural family theory also preserves traditional views on the importance of power and hierarchy in the family.

As a result, the functionality of the family is determined by the fulfilment of the tasks expected from the family system. Within this context, it is necessary to analyse the structure of the family. In this theory, it is also important whether the family system is implicit or explicit. Because the closed system feature families who show a rigid boundary framework react inappropriately to changing developmental and environmental demands. Families organised in the form of an open system have flexible boundaries, offer opportunities for individual development and growth and are flexible in structure. Within this context, families with disinterested parents, families with an absent husband, disconnected families, families with immature parents and blended families are exemplified as dysfunctional (Minuchin, 1982, p.655).

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. FAMILY FROM PAST TO PRESENT

#### 3.1. An Overview of the Family

The family is defined as “*a group consisting of one or two parents, their children, and close relatives*” in the Oxford Learner's Dictionary (2014). Michel Foucault, on the other hand, describes the family as the “*parent-children cell*” and “*the privileged locus of emergence for the disciplinary question of the normal and the abnormal*” (1995, p. 215-216). In other words, the group's members are linked to one another through blood, marriage, or adoption. A family can also include grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in addition to the parents and their kids, who constitute the traditional definition of a family. The family unit is considered a fundamental building block of society and is often viewed as responsible for raising children and providing emotional support and a sense of belonging. It appears to be one of the most significant social institutions as a point of human existence, existing in every society with various structures and types in every social order.

The family has been considered as the basis of society for thousands of years, although it has undergone great changes from the birth of human history to present modern cultures. However, in academic literature, various definitions of the family can be encountered, depending on the focus of the study. For example, Parsons (1943) highlights the biological and cultural functions of the family with his assertion that it is the first group found in all human societies, constituting a universal social institution based on the deepest and partly organic characteristics of humans. On the other hand, Ganiyeva deals with almost all the functions of the family by stating that it is a social institution with the purpose of renewing the population, instilling a national culture, socializing and developing children, and providing biological and psychological satisfaction (2022, p. 1576). In addition, Sayın highlights the areas where the family can be associated with socialization and cultural roles as follows

*The family is a structure that protects the survival of the human race as a result of biological relations which first emerges in the socialization process where mutual relations are tied to certain rules, the social norms and customs that are passed down from generation to generation, and has biological, social, economic, and legal aspects (1990, p. 2).*

These varying definitions demonstrate that while the family cannot be defined by a single explanation, it remains a critical and universal institution that has fulfilled the physical and emotional needs of individuals throughout human history. As society continues to evolve, the family will undoubtedly continue to adapt and transform, highlighting the importance of ongoing research and discourse around this vital social institution. Despite the difficulties in defining the family, it is clear that it has been a fundamental and universal institution throughout human history. Families have played a critical role in fulfilling physical and emotional needs, providing a sense of belonging, stability, and support. The family serves as a primary source of socialization, shaping an individual's beliefs, attitudes, and values. Additionally, it offers a fundamental structure for the development of social and emotional skills, helping individuals to form meaningful relationships and to navigate the complexities of human interaction.

The functions of the family have been scientifically revealed and definitions have been made possible by its being a part of sociology. Scientific analysis of the family is considered to have begun in the nineteenth century with Le Play, the pioneer of family sociology, who described it as *“what the atom is to the physicist, the cell is to the biologist, the family is to the sociologist”* (Aydoğan, 1992, p. 3). Sociology has significantly improved our comprehension of the family by examining the ways in which families are shaped by social and cultural factors, including gender, class, and ethnicity. Additionally, sociological research has highlighted the diverse forms that families can take, challenging traditional assumptions and promoting a more inclusive understanding of this vital social institution.

To understand the ontology of family, it is essential to examine its fundamental activities throughout history, including the changes that have occurred as societies have evolved from primitive to modern forms. A clear understanding of the concept of family necessitates an understanding of all its functions. Historically, marriage has been established based on mutual consent between a man and a woman, guided by certain regulations that give rise to the biological formation of the family unit. Beyond the biological functions of the family, sociologists assert that there are numerous other objectives that the family serves, including the provision of physical necessities, the attainment of emotional and material satisfaction, the transmission of culture, personalized child-rearing, education, and integration of individuals into society (Can, 2013a, p. 82).

To delve deeper into the functions of the family, understanding its historical development is key to comprehending the contemporary family. We cannot fully grasp the present state of the family without exploring its past, as it has been a crucial element in the continuation of all societies that have existed on earth. In order to examine the family's historical development, Goody (2004) suggests studying the past of humanity and the societies that have been formed. In this respect, the family, like other social institutions, is a human creation (Can, 2013b, p. 237). Moreover, studying the historical development of the family enables us to identify patterns and trends in its evolution, which can inform our understanding of the present and the future of the family as an institution. Examining the historical effects of social, cultural, economic, and political variables on the family, we can better comprehend its functions and the changes it has undergone and predict its possible directions in the future.

As stated earlier, families are an essential social institution that have a significant impact on how people live their lives and how societies function. One way of categorizing families is through their size and composition. For instance, the most typical family structure in modern Western nations is the nuclear family, which consists of a parent or parents and their offspring. In contrast, the extended family, which can occasionally include close family friends in addition to grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, is more prevalent in collectivistic cultures, where family members often provide each other with social, emotional, and financial support. However, the family structure has undergone significant changes throughout history. In prehistoric societies, for example, the family was primarily an economic unit, with the extended family working together to ensure their survival and reproduction. With the advent of agriculture and the emergence of private property, the nuclear family became more prevalent. This family structure, consisting of a married couple and their children, provided a more stable environment for raising children and accumulating wealth. The patriarchal family, with the father acting as the head of the home and a clear division of labor between men and women, came to dominance in many countries.

During industrial era, the traditional roles of the family changed, along with the rise of individualism and the women's rights movement in 1960s. The nuclear family became the norm, and the father became the breadwinner, while the mother took on the role of caregiver. However, as societal norms continue to evolve, so do the forms of families. Today, there are many different types of families, including same-sex, blended, and

single-parent households, which destroy conventional gender norms and family structures. Regardless of the family's form, it remains one of the oldest social institutions that exist to ensure order among people in all societies and to transfer this structure to future generations, functioning according to certain rules and norms. Furthermore, it is significant to remember that the family is not only shaped by cultural and social factors, but also by economic and political ones. Changes in the economy and politics can have a significant impact on family structures and dynamics. For instance, economic hardships such as unemployment and poverty can put a strain on families and lead to higher rates of divorce and single-parent households. On the other hand, government policies such as social welfare programs and parental leave can support families and promote their well-being. As such, the family is not a static institution, but one that is constantly changing and adapting to the broader societal context.

Findings dating back to prehistoric times show that early humans conducted their lives in irregular groups in a world where social rules were not highly developed. Therefore, based on the research belonging to the prehistoric period, some scientists, who positioned the origin of the family on sexual promiscuity in primitive conditions, associated the form of sexual freedom with the formation of the family institution (Freyer, 1957, p. 170). The idea that the origin of the family is rooted in sexual promiscuity in primitive conditions is often associated with the work of the anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan. In his 1877 book *Ancient Society*, Morgan (2016) proposed the concept of the savagery stage of human development, in which he argued that early human societies were characterized by promiscuous sexual practices and a lack of formalized familial structures. Since it is not possible to talk about the regulatory rules and prohibitions regarding sexual intercourse in primitive times, scientists such as Marx and Engels initially supported Morgan's approach.

However, following the research carried out by anthropologists, the view that sexual promiscuity is only a hypothesis (Gökçe, 1976, p. 53) emerges as a proven fact. For this reason, it is mentioned that there is a certain order that concerns men and women who must live together even in primitive societies where nature and instincts are dominant. It would be an oversimplification to say that nature and instinct were the only factors driving the behaviour of prehistoric societies. Obviously, they had their own unique cultures, beliefs, and structures that shaped their manner and decision making. These societies were

heavily dependent on their environment and had to rely on hunting, gathering, and agriculture to survive.

As a result, individuals would have had a deep understanding of and connection to the natural world around them. They also would have been guided by their instincts for survival, such as finding food and shelter, creating families, and reproducing. It may be surprising that people living in primitive conditions had an established order, and people who were born with the instinct to live with beings like themselves had to interact with the other individuals around them. As social beings, humans have to fulfil certain obligations in order to live with others. It is a natural fact that among the first social rules that primitive people had to follow, there were certain orders regulating the union between men and women, even though they were not as developed as today's rules (Köse, 2018, p. 18).

One of the first and most primitive types of communities in history were clans, in which social rules may have shaped the union of men and women. A clan is a group of individuals bound together by actual or imagined kinship and descent. Clans are often associated with traditional societies, particularly in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, where they played a significant role in social organization and political structure (Ülken, 1966, p. 268).

Since the men and women living in the clans formed the first extended family order, their rules were also formed within the clans, including those related to marriage. As humans, like other living creatures, must continue their lineage, the union of a man and a woman typically occurs in a ceremony. This ceremony is called marriage and is the first institution established between men and women. The first rules that formed the lifestyle of the clan family were also built by the types of marriage that are shaped according to regional differences. In this sense, clans have adopted as a rule to “*marry someone from their group or marry someone from outside their group*” (Ülken, 1966, p. 269) according to their structure.

According to Gökçe (1976), the clan family structure has undergone changes throughout history in response to societal and environmental conditions. For example, as human beings transitioned to a land-based lifestyle, some clans in Eastern Europe adopted communal living and work practices, which eventually led to the expansion of the zadruga family system. The zadruga is a traditional community found in parts of Eastern Europe,

such as Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia. It is a large extended family that operates on a communal basis, with shared property and decision-making. Although smaller in size than the clan family, the zadruga includes many kinships and is considered a precursor to the contemporary family. In this family structure, group's eldest member assumes leadership and governs the family. Therefore, the zadruga can be regarded as the second stage in the evolution of the extended family structure after the clan family (Barnard, 2022).

To sum up, the extended prehistoric family is classified according to the criteria of authority, as well as being divided into types for its formation, such as zadruga or clan. In this sense, the mother family is a type that is *“born from inter-clan marriages, and the lineage is determined according to the mother's side”* (Ülken, 1966, p. 269). An example of this is the asabe family where *“women are valuable, and have a specific position, marriage is based on certain rules”* (Eremrem, 1998, p. 16) that are shaped according to authority.

Regarding authority, throughout history, there have been various family types in which men or women have served as family leaders, depending on their roles in communities such as clans and zadrugas. Patriarchy and matriarchy are two examples of such family types. In this sense, patriarchy is a societal structure in which men possess the majority of power and predominate in positions of moral leadership, social privilege, and property ownership. Matriarchy, in contrast, is a societal structure in which women predominate in positions of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and property control. (Nirun, 1994, p. 23). However, in all societies, the leadership role of the family can sometimes be undertaken by either a woman or a man, depending on the dominant sex in the environment in which the family exists.

According to Kaya, as people started to deal with agriculture, the mother lost the dominant role in the family, and the father became increasingly important (Kaya, 2009, p. 5). According to this idea, the patriarchal period begins with the cultivation of the land, whereas women had dominated the family in the matriarchal era before a land-based lifestyle began to emerge. The fact that the mother dealt with difficult jobs like hunting with primitive methods away from the place where the male lived, and sometimes lost her life because of such hard work, ensured that she dominated the family in prior periods (Başaran, 2013, p. 151). Despite the existence of the father in this period, where economic conditions brought the mother to the fore, the father-always remained behind the mother.



In this matriarchal system, the father was not able to sufficiently take care of the home, while the mother was everything to the family. Moreover, she provided food for her children, raised them, and guarded her home against all dangers. In fact, in the pre-agricultural period, all the work was done by the mother.

Historically, patriarchal and matriarchal kinship structures, which are categorized based on the criterion of authority, were also incorporated in extended families such as the clan and zadruga types. When we look from the past to the present, today's extended family is prevalent throughout the world, spanning from the clan to contemporary culture. In this regard, extended family is a form that appears most often in traditional societies that reflect such characteristics not only in terms of its population, but also in terms of structure and function (Sayin, 1990, p. 5). For example, kinship relations in the extended family are very strong where members sincerely share their troubles and joys, or good and bad situations with one another. As per their traditions, they try to help each other in any situation. Family members are more obedient to traditions, customs, and religious concepts and the situations they require; and boys, in particular, do not leave the household into which they were born, even on the event of their marriage. Naturally, extended families can be very crowded in terms of population. Generally, the eldest person is seen as the manager of the family and is endlessly respected by all members. Family elders try to provide for the needs of the members, such as shelter, food, protection, education, and work, which are necessary for them to survive. As all people work together, the economy is mostly dependent on the land, and the family spends what they earn from it together. Apparently, the family supports each other in their economic situation in every case. The terms patriarchy, matriarchy, zadruga, and clan describe various social structures that exist within extended families. While Zadruga and clan refer to particular sorts of extended family structures that are marked by joint living and economic arrangements, patriarchy and matriarchy refer to power relations within the family.

The nuclear family, which is referred to as the modern household, is the second family type after the extended family, according to the formation of family. Urbanization, brought on by the emigration of individuals from rural to urban regions, is one way that extended families changed over time. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of extended families that live and work together, as well as a decrease in the number of multigenerational households. Furthermore, many families have had to adjust to new

economic realities as a result of the advent of industrialization and capitalism. For instance, the number of people working in extended families has decreased as a result of the reduction in agriculture and the increase in wage labour. Moreover, with the rise of individualism, the traditional roles and responsibilities of extended family members have changed. For example, grandparents are no longer as likely to be responsible for raising their grandchildren, and adult children are less likely to live with their parents (Bester, Malan, & Rooyen, 2015).

Obviously, many people still maintain close ties with their extended family members, even if they do not live together. The nuclear family is made up of a husband, wife, and any unmarried children (Eyce, 2000, p. 230). It would be inaccurate to state that this type is only present in today's societies. As Murdock indicates, "*everywhere and always, it is possible to encounter a nuclear family of husband and wife and underage children*" (1965, p. 3). For example, it is understood that small household units were created according to the nuclear family order in England dating back to the sixteenth century (Goody, 2004, p. 180). In fact, it is assumed that the nuclear family existed long before the sixteenth century.

The Industrial Revolution, which started in Britain in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and expanded to other regions of Europe and North America, had a big impact on how nuclear families were organized. Although the nuclear family structure was present in a number of countries in the past, it is now acknowledged that due to specific socio-economic and cultural developments, the nuclear family is the most prevalent type in the modern period. In this regard, prior to the Industrial Revolution, most families were engaged in agriculture and lived in rural areas. The family unit was typically large and extended, and the economy was based on self-sufficiency (Murdock, 1965). With the advent of industrialization, many people began to migrate to urban areas to work in factories. This led to a significant decrease in the size of the average household and an increase in the nuclear family.

In the new urban industrial society, the traditional extended family system, where multiple generations lived together and shared resources, was no longer practical. The nuclear family became the primary unit of economic production and consumption. Men were the primary breadwinners, working in factories or other industrial jobs, while women were in charge of looking after the family and kids. This led to a separation of the spheres of work and home, as well as a new gender division of labour.

The Industrial Revolution also led to the decline of traditional forms of community and mutual support, and the nuclear family became more isolated and self-sufficient. This new way of life had a significant impact on the family's social and economic function, and it continues to shape family structures in modern industrial societies. By extension, it has brought about alterations in the lives of individuals, and as a result, the institutions they created have changed. Overall, the industrial revolution, which took place in line with various economic and technological developments, caused an increase in urbanization, as noted below:

*With the transition to the machine-based mass production style, human beings have started to acquire a culture of consumption very quickly. In the cities with new settlements, the population grew rapidly, and with the separation from agriculture, the distinction between rural and urban emerged (Lefebvre, 2013, p. 28).*

People who used to depend on the land for survival began to encounter urban life, with its improving business conditions. Goody reports that “*at the very beginning of the twentieth century, the proportion of people dealing with land in England had fallen to ten percent*” (2004, p. 149). In this framework, encountering a different lifestyle has caused some structural transformations in the family. Therefore, depending on the developments in the historical process, some functions of members of the traditional family encountered significant difficulties. These obstacles also contributed to the emergence of the nuclear family as a universal institution. The nuclear family appears as the type of industrialized societies that require an active workforce, where status is achieved not by kinship, but by personal abilities and skills (Kandiyoti, 1984, p. 17). Due to the conditions of this period, the transition from the extended family to the nuclear family has emerged in line with industrialization has risen.

It is possible to recognise the nuclear family of the modern age by analysing its formation as well as by listing its main characteristics. For example, spouses in a nuclear family can make marriage decisions independently of their relatives. Even after the formation of the nuclear family, spouses have less social interaction with their relatives. For this reason, the family should provide emotional satisfaction within itself. Therefore, those in contemporary society who are feeling lonely must look for the warm and welcoming environment that is required within their own nuclear family. As such, the family continues the function of ensuring that its members achieve emotional satisfaction, as well as serving as a psychological shelter (Eyce, 2000, p. 232). Moreover, after the

nuclear family is established, important decisions are made independently of relatives. For instance, couples decide for themselves how many children to have, and they carry out moral control in the family independently of their relatives. Consequently, this family type is both physically and emotionally distant from their relatives, and it is possible for the family's residence and the properties of its relatives to be in various locations.

Sociologists have identified the characteristics of the nuclear family that emerged at the end of the industrial revolution, yet they note that there are variations in its functions. In this regard, the contemporary nuclear family has lost many of the essential functions that were prominent in the extended family structure (Bilgiseven, 1982, p. 251), and the nuclear family has delegated some of its functions to other institutions. For instance, the responsibility of educating a child is no longer solely the family's duty; the family now shares this responsibility with other social institutions. Nevertheless, there remain two fundamental functions that are unique to the family and cannot be outsourced to other institutions. These functions are the biological function of the family and the socialization of the child, as reported by sociologists.

The biological function of the family includes reproduction and the raising of children. Families provide a stable environment for the conception, birth, and development of children. They also meet the children's basic requirements, such as food, housing, care, and affection, as well as their emotional needs. The socialization function of the family includes the transmission of culture and values from one generation to the next. Indeed, families are the primary socializing agents for children, teaching them the norms, beliefs, and customs of their culture. This includes teaching children language, manners, and how to behave in different situations. Families also play a role in shaping children's identities, influencing their self-esteem, and helping them to develop a sense of belonging.

Turner, a British and Australian sociologist, assessed the family from a biological perspective and noted that *"the family is an institution that has characteristics such as marriage, having children and raising them biologically"* (2002, p. 355). Briefly explained, a child's nutrition during development is a part of the biological function, which begins with their birth. The socialization function of the child, on the other hand, includes helping the child to gain personality in the family and society, and to acquire socially accepted behaviours and relationships (Aydoğan, 1992, p. 26). George Herbert Mead was an American sociologist and philosopher who developed the symbolic interactionist perspective, which emphasizes the role of socialization in the development of

the self. He argued that the family is an important socializing agent in the development of individuals' sense of self and their ability to interact with others (Mead, 1934).

In contemporary society, all functions other than these two of the family have been undertaken by many different institutions, causing pessimistic thoughts due to the effects of industrial and technological improvements on individuals. Bilgiseven states that several institutions, such as schools, religious organizations, and government agencies, are gradually taking over the functions traditionally performed by families (1982, p. 251). For example, schools are responsible for educating children, while religious organizations provide moral guidance and support. Government agencies also play a role in providing social services and support to families in need. These institutions become more involved in the lives of individuals and families, the traditional functions of the family may become less important or even obsolete over time, potentially leading to the end of the family as we know it. However, this view is not universally held among sociologists, and there is ongoing debate and research on the role and future of the family in modern societies. The basis of these pessimistic thoughts about the family in the West is the idea that if a contemporary institution disappears, another institution should take its place. According to Giddens (2000), the fulfilment of various functions of the family by other institutions is sufficient for the extinction of the household. While the future of the family is a matter of debate in Western societies, in the East, in Israel, Soviet Russia and China, the functions of the family that had been lost with industrialisation began to be concentrated in the hands of the state. Accordingly, totalitarian regimes

*[...] do not expect industrialization to change the family and the new mode of production, as they adopt a guided approach in transitioning from agriculture to industrialization. They directly try to format it (Kongar, 1986, p. 23).*

Socialist thought, as seen in some societies in the East, argues that a change in the property system would cause the family to lose its existence. In this respect, Engels claims that with the end of the inheritance of the family's property to the children, *“the family as a social unit will disappear in societies where the right to private property ends”* (2012, p. 11). However, whatever has been done with the regime in the East, it would not destroy the family structure.

The family, despite being affected by social changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution in the West and attempts by state power to govern it in some societies in the

East, has proven to be a resilient institution, and sociologists' concerns and fears about its demise may have been overstated. Although the characteristics and functions of the family may change in response to industrial developments and the sharing of some functions with other institutions, the family continues to maintain and even strengthen its existence.

The two great world wars of the twentieth century show how strong an institution the family is because it has not been destroyed against all challenges. Although the wars, through great losses, wore down the institution of the family in some respects, the strength of this foundation can be understood from its bringing the people of the twentieth century back to life. In this sense, people are saved from the post-war depression thanks to the organising and gathering function of the family.

On the other hand, while the wounds in the souls of people, especially due to the Second World War, were healed in the sixties thanks to the unity of the family (Engels, 1977), as industrial societies began to recover mid-century in the twentieth century, the family had to face other problems, even if they were not as devastating as wars. In this period, Shorter mentions three problems that “*concern the family, such as the breaking of family ties, the incompatibility between couples that cause high divorce rates, and the systematic collapse of the concept of home in the nuclear family*” (1975, p. 269). The reason for these problems encountered in the latter part of the twentieth century is cited as negative attitudes and behaviours of men and women towards marriage due to their changing lifestyles. However, the most destructive features are described as follows:

*The primary causes of the issues experienced by the family and the destruction of the home during this period are the unhappiness and imbalance in both men's and women's sexual lives, and the fact that women become more economically independent (Shorter, 1975, p. 278).*

All the problems that disrupt the family naturally reveal a new perspective of the household. This is the concept of the dissolving family, put forward by the view that it has disappeared in modern societies (Sayın, 1990, p. 20). This assertion that the family is starting to dissolve is divided into two as broken and incomplete family units:

*One of the nuclear family's members dying causes a new type of family to form, known as the broken family. The incomplete family, on the other hand, is the nuclear family that was never formed. In other words, the incomplete family usually consists of the illegitimate children and their mothers, and the*

*fragmented family consists of the widows and their children* (Kongar, 1986, p. 32).

The emergence of new forms of the nuclear family can be interpreted as a transformation into a post-modern family. However, the family has always been a social institution accepted and protected by both the individual and by society, despite the changes in its structure and functions over the centuries. As stated previously, the family will continue to alter in the future as it has done throughout history. What is important is developing a good understanding of the importance of an institution wherein individuals and societies have always been preserved throughout the history of civilization, because the family, as a vital institution, will always need people who demand this institution. For this reason, the family is an indispensable social institution and its indispensability is eternal. The continuation of the family means that individuals also maintain their existence according to a given order.

### **3.2. The Family Institution in Britain from 1900s to 2000s**

The family is also studied by academics from a wide range of disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, psychology, history, and economics. For example; Adrian Wilson (1985, p. 2), a sociologist acknowledges in his scholarly work that families constitute crucial social institutions. While Wilson refrains from categorizing or prescribing any conventional or typical family structure, he nonetheless presents a definition of the family as follows:

*In general, a family is a group of people who are related to one another either by blood or by marriage and who live together or interact with one another for the purpose of raising children and providing for their basic needs. The family institution is continually changing, and sociologists can pinpoint a variety of families that are present in a community at any one time* (1985, p. 2).

Masten and Shaffer (2006, p. 10) assert that families play a crucial role in socializing children and shaping their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. As a result, families exert a significant influence on the prevailing cultural norms and values in society. People nowadays are living in a time of increased tolerance when it comes to alternative family models, ones that are different from the family of the past. In the early 1900s, the traditional nuclear family structure was prevalent in Britain, that clearly distinguishes between the labor of men and women. Men were the primary breadwinners, working

outside the home, while women were responsible for domestic tasks and childrearing. Laws and regulations that limited women's access to paid job and higher education helped to maintain the conventional family structure.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, various social and economic changes began to challenge the traditional nuclear family structure. Due to a number of circumstances, the societal perceptions toward women's responsibilities in the home and society underwent a substantial transformation, such as the rise of the feminist movement during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, availability of birth control, changes in the economy, and many others. For instance; the availability of birth control gave women more control over their reproductive choices and enabled them to pursue education and careers alongside their family responsibilities. Moreover, changes in the economy, such as the growth of service-based industries and the rise of women in the workforce have caused old gender norms and expectations to be reexamined. The number of women entering the workforce considerably grew throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and the availability of affordable childcare made it possible for more women to balance work and family. This led to a decline in the traditional nuclear family and an increase in single-parent and blended families (Wilson, 1985).

By the early 2000s and the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the traditional nuclear family structure had become less common, and diverse family structures had become more prevalent. The number of single-parent families, cohabiting couples, and same-sex families had increased, and societal attitudes towards non-traditional family structures had become more accepting.

Under these circumstances, the concept of the family institution in Britain has undergone significant changes over time, closely linked to societal attitudes towards gender and sexuality. The traditional nuclear family structure in Britain was once characterized by strict gender roles, with women functioning as the primary caregivers and homemakers and males serving as the main breadwinners. Laws and regulations that restricted women's access to paid job and higher education served to maintain these gender stereotypes. This view of the family was exclusionary, as it did not account for the diverse familial arrangements that exist beyond the nuclear family.

In recent decades, however, societal attitudes towards gender roles and expectations within the family have shifted. The feminist movement, coupled with changes in the



economy and the availability of birth control, have been instrumental in this change. Women are now able to enter the workforce in greater numbers, providing them with increased autonomy in their personal and professional lives (Bailey et al., 2012). As a result, the definition of the family has become more diverse and inclusive, with families including same-sex couples, single-parent households, and other non-traditional structures.

Foucault explores sexuality by presenting it as a discursive product. He states that until the nineteenth century same-sex sexuality was not thought to constitute a kind of identity but were thought as “*a category of forbidden acts*” (1990, p. 43). He also claims that the homosexual became a persona for the first time in Westphal’s article from 1870, and that from that point forward, “*the homosexual was now a species; the sodomite had been a transient aberration*” (ibid.). In the sexual discourse of the nineteenth century, homosexuality was therefore described as “*a deviation from a privileged and naturalized heterosexuality,*” leading to a “*binarized and hierarchized sexual categorisation*” (Jagose, 1996, 72). However, Foucault notes that

*[...] since the beginning of the 20th century, sexual discourse has expanded rather than rarefied, and while it has brought with it taboos and restrictions, it has also, more fundamentally, ensured the establishment and solidification of a complete sexual mosaic* (1990, p. 53).

Thereby, while the discourse on sexuality has enabled social controls into the sexual lives of the individuals, it has also contributed to the emergence of a reverse discourse.

In regard to sexuality, the family institution has been traditionally viewed as being between heterosexual couples, and the nuclear family structure has been the norm. However, in recent years, societal attitudes towards non-heterosexual families and relationships have become more accepting, and diverse family structures, such as same-sex families and cohabiting couples, have become more prevalent. In this regard, at the beginning of twenty-first century:

*The change in behaviour and thinking towards sexuality was the effect of revolution in private and erotic life that took an essential change in personal behaviour, attitudes and laws. It was not simple or automatic process. Conversely, it was complicated, contradictory and haphazard, with distinguishing phases and unforeseen turns* (Weeks, 2014, p. 321).

One of the prominent factors that contributed to substantial transformations in family arrangements during the twentieth century was the growing involvement of women in

employment. The integration of women into the workforce-initiated changes in gender identities and a reconfiguration of the distribution of labour within society. The trend of feminization of the labour force gained momentum throughout the twentieth century, coupled with the implementation of legal measures that safeguarded women's rights in the workplace.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, government policies were shaped by the prevailing societal view that women should serve as a reserve labour force only in times of necessity. As a result, women faced significant challenges in achieving equal rights and opportunities in the workforce compared to men. The Equal Pay Act of 1970 and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, among other pieces of legislation, helped to secure equal rights for women in the workplace, but over time, women's access to education and employment possibilities increased.

This increasing participation of women in the workforce has led to changes in the traditional roles and roles that men and women have in the family. With more women entering the workforce, the traditional division of labour within families has started to change, and the concept of the male breadwinner and female homemaker has become less prevalent. In terms of providing care and earning a living, this has resulted in a more equitable division of duties between men and women. It has also led to a wider diversity in family structures and lifestyles.

Conversely, during the First World War, women were thought of as a reserve labour source when they were wanted to enter to the workforce. Moreover, although women workers achieved equal pay and were provided with state-run nurseries, they were expected to abandon their jobs and nurseries during the Second World War after the war was done (Garret, 2022, p. 120). Discussions about the role of women did not end even in the post-war period, as women were expected to be primarily responsible for their duties as mother and wife. There were concerns about latchkey children and working mothers were held responsible for child crime (Weeks, 2014, p. 332). Despite these challenges, women's employment contributed greatly to the rise of the consumer economy in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the maintenance of financial stability in the 1970s (Weeks, 2014, p. 331).

In addition to these circumstances, the family institution was severely affected by a series of substantial social movements and major legislative reforms in the twentieth century.

The 1919 Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, the 1948 National Insurance Act, the 1950 Children Act, the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, the Equal Pay Act of 1970, and the 1967 Abortion Act, and the 1989 Children Act were some of the most crucial reforms that occurred in Britain in this regard. These legislative reforms helped to improve the rights and opportunities for women, children, and families, as well as to reduce poverty and inequality. They have had a lasting impact on British society and continue to shape the ways in which families are supported and protected.

Furthermore, during the period between the 1960s and the new millennium, Britain underwent a momentous transformation in sexual attitudes and behaviours, which significantly affected the opportunities for erotic and intimate life for millions of people (Weeks, 2014, p. 321). The sexual revolution of this era was closely tied to social movements such as feminism, sexual liberation, civil rights, and the student protests of 1968 (Hekma & Giami, 2014, p. 2). As part of these movements, sexual oppression came to be viewed as an integral aspect of all social injustice (Weeks, 2014, p. 359), leading women, homosexuals, students, and other marginalized individuals to rebel against traditional social, religious, and educational institutions such as the family, church, and university (Hekma & Giami, 2014, p. 10).

In response to this rapidly changing social environment, formal reforms were deemed necessary to address issues raised by a legislative structure that was no longer suitable in light of shifting social realities (Weeks, 2014, p. 324-325). While these major legislative changes emerged in response to societal shifts, they also helped to reshape public opinion over the long term. However, it is worth noting that the so-called permissive legislation did not promote hedonism or pleasure-seeking, but instead emphasized the removal of obstacles and the reduction of suffering over actively promoting happiness, embodying a form of negative utilitarianism.

The permissive legal measures that had an impact on the family institution during this time were the Sexual Offences Act of 1967, the Abortion Act of 1967, and the Divorce Reform Act of 1969. For example, the Sexual Offences Act of 1967 decriminalized male homosexual actions between two adults that take place in secret, while The Act of 1967 made abortion legal and gave women more of a say in their reproductive activity. With the 1969 Divorce Reform Act, the irretrievable corruption of marriage became the only grounds necessary for divorce to be granted. Thus, through this act, marriage parties could obtain a legal separation without proving to the court any kind of misdemeanour in their

marriage under certain conditions. On the contrary, an examination of the history of divorce in Britain reveals that although the 1857 Matrimonial Causes Act provided common public access to divorce, it created a double standard; specifically, a husband could divorce a wife for having an affair, but a wife could not do the same for her husband, as it was not a sufficient ground for her to obtain a divorce if it was not accompanied by incest, sodomy, desertion, or bigamy. Later, however, the sole basis for divorce under the 1923 Matrimonial Causes Act was adultery committed by either the husband or the wife, and a wife was no longer required to provide evidence of additional husband-related wrongdoings (Changes in divorce: the 20<sup>th</sup> century, 2022). Moreover, with the 1969 Divorce Reform Act, no-fault divorces became available to the public.

In the twentieth century, with the acceptance of the 1969 Divorce Reform Act, divorce rates increased significantly, leading to new family formations such as blended families, single parent families, and stepfamilies through remarriage. Additionally, women's financial freedom also affected divorce rates. Even so, the effect of permissive legislation cannot be overlooked, as such legislation enhanced individual decisions, decreased individual dissatisfaction and suffering, and relaxed marital bonds (McGregor, 1972, p. 55).

With the discovery of the oral contraceptive pill in the middle of the 1960s, another significant shift emerged amid these developments, especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Botting and Dannel, 2000, p. 32). The contraceptive pill not only made it possible to better control women's fertility, but it also changed the nature of relationships and reproduction. During this period, women's sexuality changed significantly under the equalizing standards of the Divorce Reform Act 1969 and the usage of the pill, which enabled self-determination (Hekma & Giami, 2014, p. 10). In this regard:

*The contraceptive revolution eventually severed the connection between heterosexual intercourse and fertility, and the consequences were highly effective: the disconnection of marriage and birth, the detachment of heterosexuality and marriage, and, finally, the separation of heterosexuality and parenting (Weeks, 2014, p. 335).*

In contrast, social, economic and political inequality, such as limited opportunities in paid labour, pay diversity, and women's limited access to university education, as well as under representation of women in the parliament, have still continued. As such, social and cultural behaviours for women and their role in society did not undergo much

improvement in the short term despite the legislative reforms of 1960s. For this reason, women began to fight to guarantee their positions in the context of their employment through strikes and organizing. For instance, Ford Women's Strike in Dagenham (1968) attached importance to the injustice in the workplace and pay inequality. Furthermore, the British Women Liberation Movement (1970) impacted prospective gender equality legislation, and the Night Cleaner's Campaign (1970-73) fought against gender and class based exploitation of women. The Grunwick Strike (1976-78) likewise aimed to achieve a unionised workforce with its mostly women of colour participants, and the Organisation of Women of Asian and African Descent (1979) articulated the need for a Black Women's Movement that would address issues specifically related to the oppression of Black women (Binard, 2017, p. 2-5).

Given all of the feminist struggles mentioned above, the British government was compelled to take action for women workers during the 1970s. Accordingly, the Equal Pay Act of 1970 banned gender discrimination in relation to pay and working conditions (Equal Pay Act, 1970, p. 41); and in 1973, the marriage bar, which required women to resign upon marrying, was removed (Jenkins, 2009, p. 15). Further, the Employment Protection Act of 1975 made rules for maternity leave and pay (Binard, 2017, p. 7); and any kind of discrimination between men and women in the workplace were made illegal thanks to the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 (Sex Discrimination Act 1975, p. 65). Moreover, the Equal Opportunities Commission was founded to defend people's rights against discrimination, and Married women were able to obtain court orders against their husbands under the Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act of 1976. The Housing Act (Homeless Persons) of 1978 enabled beaten wives to benefit from accommodation (Binard, 2017, p. 7). Thus, shifting working patterns, changing gender roles and relations, social movements, and legislative reforms all resulted in alterations to the family structure in the late 1970s.

During the 1980s, there were further changes in societal attitudes towards the family, gender, and sexuality. The conservative government under Margaret Thatcher pursued policies that encouraged individualism and self-reliance, which had an impact on family structures. The economic policies of the Thatcher government led to a rise in unemployment and a decline in traditional male-dominated industries, which affected gender roles within the family. In addition, there was a greater understanding of the

variety of family structures, such as same-sex relationships, cohabiting couples, and single-parent families.

In the 1990s, there were continued shifts in family structures and attitudes towards gender and sexuality. In order to ensure that the welfare of the child was given first priority in all choices pertaining to their upbringing, the Conservative government established the Children Act in 1989. This legislation had implications for the definition of the family and the role of parents. The 1990s also saw the rise of the New Labour government under Tony Blair, which pursued policies aimed at promoting equality and social justice. These policies included the introduction of the National Minimum Wage, the Human Rights Act, and the Civil Partnership Act, which gave legal recognition to same-sex unions.

Consequently, the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw significant changes in family structures, gender roles, and societal attitudes towards sexuality. These changes were driven by a combination of social movements, legislative reforms, and economic and cultural shifts. The result was a more diverse and inclusive understanding of the family, with greater recognition of the rights and needs of different individuals and groups within society.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. EXPLORING FAMILY DYNAMICS IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH THEATRE THROUGH THE WORKS OF APRIL DE ANGELIS

#### 4.1 An Overview of Contemporary British Theatre

In-yer-face theater, sometimes referred to as Neo-Jacobeanism, New Brutalism, and Theatre of Urban Ennui, began “*a revolution in new writing for the British Theatre*” in the last decade of the 20th century” (Sierz, 2001, p. 17). Apart from the in-yer-face theatre, new theatrical trends continued to appear as well, causing the Arts Council in 2007 to reconsider and review its 2000 Theatre Policy document. New theatrical trends also change “*its references to new writing using instead the term new work in recognition of changing trends*” (Radosavljevic, 2013, p. 86).

The textual and dramatic techniques of In-yer-face sensibility have had a significant impact on and helped shape the concept of new writing in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This style of theatre emerged in the 1990s and is known for its raw, confrontational, and often controversial nature. John Bull claims that if one of the primary principles of the extraordinary outpouring of new plays by women in the 1980s was that the private is political, then the work of authors in the 1990s would push and test the consequences of this idea to the crisis point (2003, p. 123). Thus, the policy of new writing began in the nineties and still continues that provides “*the audience to connect the personal to the political, the particular to the general*” (Carney, 2013, p. 233).

During the 2000s, British theatre productions transformed dramatic representation, breaking new territory through form, content, and the manner in which they interact with one another - not always harmoniously (Angelaki, 2013, p. 1). Hans-Thies Lehmann's *Post dramatisches Theater*, which was translated into English in 2006, has been effective in Europe since its first publication, with its impressive ideas. According to Lehmann, “*dramatic theatre is subordinated to the priority of the text,*” and “*the transition to post dramatic theatre is only taken when the theatrical elements beyond language are located properly beside the text and are systematically conceivable without it*” (2006, p. 21-55). Aside from these innovative European theatre ideas explored in Lehmann's book, a tendency away from it and towards obviously non-text-based forms also reflects dialectically the traditional emphasis on literature in British theatre (Radosavljevic, 2013,

p. 90). Accordingly, the revolutionary ideas on theatre caused changes in dramatic representation, and British theatre experienced a moment of internal reinvention, looking outwardly to society, its sufferings and needs, and seeking new sources of communication in the 2000s. In addition, these new dramatic representations have continued to reflect the social tensions in the country in their own effort (Angelaki, 2013, p. 2).

New mediums and various representational techniques changed the atmosphere of British theatre in the first decade of the 2000s. Taking these shifts into account, in 2007, the Arts Council declared that it would place special emphasis on circus and street arts, as well as experimental and interdisciplinary work. Moreover, it would work to create a stable climate where promoters could create new projects and take advantage of global opportunities and alliances (Arts Council, 2006). Since that time, a different perspective toward playwriting has emerged, as described here:

*The existence of theater and its production methods, which involve the author as a cooperating artist or as the constructing force behind a material collage (among many other possible roles), are influencing society and requiring that we view drama as nothing more than the awareness of an author's unique vision (Lane, 2010, p. 30).*

Thus, this repositioning of the dramatist changed the creation and the acceptance of theatrical works. When we compare British theatre in the 1990s and 2000s, Sierz claims that “*if the 1990s were Newtonian, with every cause having an effect and one thing occurring after another, the 2000s were the quantum period, with everything occurring all at once and all over the place*” (2011, p. 26). As such, in the post-millennial period, Haydon argues that English theatre was in its golden age:

*The number of changes in how theater was seen, thought about, and discussed were indicative of more fundamental changes, simplifying an increasing majority of the work available, even though it was claimed that there had not been a single revolutionary movement until the end of the decade — no Look Back in Anger or Blasted (2013, p. 40).*

As a result, new theatrical sensibilities and styles emerged in the British theater scene during the 1990s and 2000s. While in-her-face dramatists made such a significant contribution to the theatre during the last decade of the twentieth century that new writing during that time was thought to be experiencing a renaissance, there also appeared a variety of theatrical practices that would flourish in the 2000s and lead to the formation of a new concept, new work. Accordingly, new works such as verbatim theatre, devised



theatre, site-specific/sympathetic theatre, headphone-based theatre, and immersive theatre caused an important change in the formation and acceptance of theatrical works in the 2000s. The evolution of British theatre heated up literary discussions, as critics and scholars tried to understand and categorize these works. For these reasons, British theatre has been the subject of theatrical discussions focusing on the history and concepts of new writing and work.

#### **4.2. Representations of Family on the British Stage**

The emergence of postmodernism was defined by incredulity towards metanarratives; plays have begun to show the new postmodern cultural ethics of artistic production and reception since the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Theatre postmodernism, which emerged in Britain in the 1990s, questioned conventional ideas of representation and authenticity in performance. It stressed the manufactured nature of all representations rather than accepting the idea that one single objective reality exists that may be depicted on stage. With a focus on the politics of representation itself, this viewpoint encouraged more form and style innovation in British theatre. Along with including several viewpoints and voices on stage, it also utilized pastiche and fragmentation to challenge prevailing narratives. In addition, postmodernism sparked a resurgence of interest in political and social issues by emphasizing how society constructs meaning and power. This resulted in a greater representation of marginalized voices such as those of women, people of colour, and queer communities on stage (Öztürk & Daldal, 2021, p. 12).

In the 1990s, playwrights answered to new realities by revealing “*a retreat into private concerns, a dismissive cynicism, or a renewed criticism of consumer capitalism*” (Sierz, 2012, p. 31). Thus, micro-narratives began to be used extensively in theatrical works since that time (Saunders, 2008, p. 3). Against this post-modern background, it could be said that with the change of attention from grand narratives to micro-narratives, playwrights turned to the family, the smallest and the most effective social unit, the world in microcosm, to comment on the continuing changes and problems in the family institution and in society (Bernard, 2013, p. 5).

Due to major workplace feminization, liberation movements, legal changes, and technology improvements since the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there have been considerable changes in the dynamics and structures of the family. These changes have had remarkable consequences in political, social and economic concerns during the 1990s and 2000s. As

such, Sierz indicates that during these decades, “*if the traditional family was no longer there, new extended families emerged in intricate ways, with numerous ties ranging from single motherhood to step-parenthood*” (Sierz, 2011, p. 163). Shapiro further argues that:

*First, any research on the significance of the family in the shaping of political relations must be included in analysing the genres within which the family reaches the status as a set of representations, and second, it must be recognized that mediation is not enforcedly a deficit* (2001, p. 4-5).

Playwrights have often commented on changing family structures, domestic problems, and other kinship issues in their works. Obviously, whether creative or destructive, connected or divided, friendly or hostile, the family provides an effective ground for the exploration of individuals in dynamic relationships (Neilson, 1998, p. 101). Playwrights have also dramatized the family to interpret social changes and their consequences in households. Furthermore, apart from these representations, many playwrights have drawn attention to the fact that:

*Dangers include 'familyism' that sees families as naturally good and describes 'the family' as an institution to be supported and as a cure for social ills without criticism. In actuality, family dynamics can have a big impact on social issues* (Hill & Tisdall, 1997, p. 66).

A number of plays that focused on dysfunctional and abusive family relationships were staged in England during the 1990s and 2000s. For example, Phyllis Nagy's *Butterfly Kiss* (1994) dramatized the cases that caused twenty-five-year-old Lily Rose to commit matricide. Although *Butterfly Kiss* takes place in a prison cell, Lily's memories and imagination replace the cell with many different scenes, and the time shifts back and forth, progressively revealing Lily's dysfunctional family relationships as the play progresses. Aside from the abusive relationships, the play also pays attention to how the description of the ideal family institution differs from reality through Lily's representative. Jackson indicates “*what I find interesting is that for all the talk about means and averages, most folks I know don't fit the mould*” (Nagy, 2013, p. 68). In this manner, Jackson draws attention to the contradiction between the ideas governing the "average" family unit and the family in reality. Thus, *Butterfly Kiss* illustrates that all the definitions and representations of the average family are fabrications, while in reality, the household is a complicated and dangerous institution in which individuals may be exposed to any kind of mistreatment and abuse.

From another perspective, Debby Tucker Green's *Born Bad* (2003) deals with abusive relationships in a religious Black family. The only character in the play is Dawta, who explores an explanation for resisting her family for a past abuse. The play reveals that the abuse Dawta suffered at the hands of Dad was arranged by Mum through an exploration of a day in the life of the family. Using minimal staging, in the first scene, the play begins with a chair, which increases to five when the family members appear on stage for a confrontation:

*The circle of chairs never allows the characters to leave the scenario or the viewers to join their private space. The spectator is forced to see the family and the system it symbolizes as separate entities in this situation. No one outside the unit can change it or make a route out for someone inside it* (Kritzer, 2008, p. 120).

Unable to exit the circle, Dawta at the end of the play submits and sits between Dad's legs, as the chairs are one too few for the family of six. During the confrontations, while Mum assaults her, saying “*you were born bad*” (Green, 2003, p. 31), Dad, who is silent throughout the play, speaks finally to blame Mum for having chosen the wrong daughter for his sexual impulses.

In other instances, English playwrights handled teenage motherhood in their dramatic works during the 1990s and 2000s. For instance, Rebecca Prichard's all-female play *Essex Girls* (1994) consists of adolescent girls and emphasizes the problem of teen single motherhood. In the first act, The Party, Kelly, Dianne and Hayley, who are just fourteen years old, talk about boys, sex and abortion in the toilet of their school. In the second act, The Holiday, Kelly's seventeen-year-old sister, Kim, who lives in a town flat as a single mother, is visited by her friend, Karen. In the play, “*the lively verbal joke between the girls in Act One is changed [for] a much more depressed tone, stopped by the cries of the infant on a baby monitor*” (Aston, 2020, p. 62). Moreover, these two acts complement each other, suggesting that “*ignorance and immature fantasies cause desperation and weaken life choices*” (Sierz, 2001, p. 227).

Other family plays have also examined problems such as family secrets, reproductive technologies, family conflicts, families outside marriages, economic problems, chronic psychological or physical illnesses, marriage breakdown, crime and death. In one example, Churchill's *Blue Heart* (2014), which consists of two one-act plays, *Heart's Desire* and *Blue Kettle*, family issues are explored. With its poststructuralist aesthetics

opposing the conventional dramatic, the play moves into the territory most commonly argued in terms of its post dramatic or dramatic status (Tomlin, 2013, p. 7). In *Heart's Desire*, Brian and Alice are waiting with their alcoholic son, Lewis, and Brian's sister, Maisie, for the arrival of their daughter, Susy, who is returning home for the first time after spending some years in Australia. As this domestic scene proceeds, “*like a broken record, the play develops to a point when it is drastically sent back to its beginning*” (Angel-Perez, 2013, p. 90). Although each beginning causes alternative scenarios that result in different outcomes in the play, the family conflicts always stay the same.

In *Blue Kettle*, Derek cheats with four women, Mrs. Vane, Mrs. Oliver, Mrs. Plant, and Miss. Clarence, in order to prey on their wealth, because he believes that he was their son whom they gave up for adoption forty years ago. At the same time, his mother remains in an elderly ward. Derek's girlfriend Enid feels disturbed about the situation and asks him “*Blue do you kettle it for? You've a perfectly good mother of your own*” (Churchill, 2014, p.100). The dialogues between Derek and the women reveal the past illegitimate relationships of these women, who could find no solution other than adoption.

Thus, in *Blue Heart*, Churchill handles the theme of the family with constrained writing in order to suggest a playful but inevitably tragic form of theatre, a kind of humor that is capable of showing modernity's inhumanity and linguistic and ethical catastrophe (Angel-Perez, 2013, p. 81). While exploring the relationships in the family, the play deconstructs language to reveal the absolute destruction of all possibilities of meaningful communication or satisfying human connections (Tomlin, 2013). Thus, in *Blue Heart*, the meaning of the play is delineated by the repetitive structure and language games.

From a different perspective, Zinnie Harris's *Nightingale and Chase* (2001) focuses on a family outside marriage by describing the relationship between Nightingale, who is a forty-year-old man, and Chase, who is a twenty-year-old criminal sentenced for “*fraud and shop-lifting and about every other sort of petty crime*” (Harris, 2001, p. 16). The play presents the events following Chase's release from prison through three monologues by Nightingale and Chase, each displaying the characters' perceptions of their relationship. In the play, Chase's coming back home does not go as planned due to stress, and the tension is intensified when Chase learns that their son, Scott, is staying at the home of Laura, Nightingale's sister. Beaten by Nightingale during a violent argument, Chase leaves the house and finds shelter in a municipal boarding house the next morning. The play ends with Chase's arrest for stealing “*trainers, computer games [and] soft toys*” to

make her son happy (Harris, 2001, p. 46). In this manner, *Nightingale and Chase* addresses domestic violence, as well as the impact of crime and imprisonment on household relationships.

On the other hand, Mike Bartlett's *My Child* (2007) shows the effects of divorce on family relationships. Focusing on conflicts between parents, the play explores the problematic relationship between divorced spouses and their children. In *My Child*, the characters are called Man, Woman, Older Woman, Mother and Father, suggesting that the characters are universal, rather than specific individuals. Throughout the play, the child is seen as an object of power between a man and a woman, rather than as a loved one by the family. Although the father seems irresponsible and negligent, the woman is actually a vengeful mother who uses the child for her own ambitions. The child becomes a spoilt child who has no respect left for his father and behaves cruelly toward him in the midst of the parental conflicts. In *My Child*, Bartlett places emphasis on parental conflicts following divorce, as well as the negative effects of family conflicts on children who are made to take sides in parental discussions.

Dennis Kelly's *Taking Care of Baby* (2012) is a play about a mother, Donna McAuliffe, who was convicted of killing her two infant children due to the fictional Leeman Keatley Syndrome. This psychological disorder leads to severe anxiety in the mother, wherein she becomes extremely worried about the dangers in and around the world. Since she cannot cope with her worries, she attacks her children, who are the cause of her pain.

As family problems were often brought to the agenda between 1990 and mid-2000, family plays in this period reveal that “*in the drama, the characters are sometimes themselves illustrative of contemporary preoccupations*” (Sierz, 2011, p. 54). These plays explored parental abuse and neglect, single parenthood, family conflicts, teenage pregnancy, economic problems in the household, reproductive technologies, family disintegration, alternative families, family members with chronic mental and physical illness, criminal family members, and death of a family member. That is, in this period, playwrights reflected and commented on changing family structures, problematic family relationships and family issues in their works, solidifying the theatre's role as a public forum.

#### **4.3. A Brief Introduction to April De Angelis and Her Theatre Analyzing the Plays of April De Angelis: *Ironmistress* (1989), *Hush* (1992), *Playhouse Creatures* (1993), *A Laughing Matter* (2002), and *Amongst Friends* (2007)**

A British playwright with partly Sicilian origins, April De Angelis was born in April of 1960. Before enrolling at the E15 Acting School in London, De Angelis was a teen performer at the Old Vic Youth Theatre. She joined the theater company Monstrous Regiment as an actor before moving on to ReSisters as an actress/deviser. These organizations' titles inevitably contain significant political connotations. Her initial piece of writing, *Breathless*, shared first place at the Second Wave Women's Writing Festival in 1987 (Croft, 1993). She first published *Women in Law* in 1987, followed by *Me* (1988), *Wanderlust* and *Bombshell* (1989). Another radio play, *The Outlander*, appeared as a two-part serial for Radio 5 in 1991 after winning the Young Writers for Radio Festival on BBC Radio 4 in 1988 with *Visitants*. A year later, she received the Writers Guild Award. April De Angelis penned numerous plays that have been staged at the Royal National Theatre and in London's West End, as well as other theatres across the UK and internationally. De Angelis wrote *Breathless*, her first stage play, in 1987, and became one of the most well-known female authors in British theatre since the 20<sup>th</sup> century's latter decades. De Angelis is known for her sharp, witty and socially engaged plays that often focus on the lives of contemporary women and their relationships. Some of her notable works include *Hush* (1992), *Ironmistress* (1989), and *Jumpy* (2011) for their strong female characters. Claire Macdonald comments on De Angelis as follows:

*Her work is intriguingly situated between an earlier generation of writer-makers like Bryony Lavery and Deborah Levy, whose work was produced through the process of hands-on theatre making within the radical theatre generation, and a relatively new generation of playwrights from the 1990s like Phyllis Nagy and Sarah Kane, who may have benefited from the expansion of traditional possibilities* (2000, p. 237).

Her career has undoubtedly changed quickly with the visibility of female playwrights beginning of the new millennium and the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In comparison to 1979, when Pam Gems and Caryl Churchill were likely the only two well-known individuals and hundreds of well-known women now make contributions to British theater. As one of these, in women's drama, De Angelis has significantly contributed to bringing to light some of the most crucial themes, such as the need to give a voice to the

underrepresented and marginalized through a reevaluation of history, the effect of patriarchy on women's disempowerment, and a conviction in the power of women's creativity (D'monte, 2011, p. 134). In this respect, Cheryl Robson indicates that "*women were thought [of] as an attack on the established order since their life perspective differed from the norm.*" By adopting a position outside of traditional theatre and challenging women's predetermined lives, April De Angelis has shown that she is continuously conscious of this (Robson, 1993, p. 10). The playwright has stood out not only in terms of gender, but also on various political issues, such as the success of capitalism and globalization.

As Croft (1993, p. 140) remarks, De Angelis' work arose from 1970s female agitprop, or "*the growth of more lyrical, experimental, and visually theatrical female/ritualistic forms was facilitated by "the "upfront" feminist/revolutionary mode.*" Her knowledge of historical relocation and female subordination is remarkable, and she has tried to undermine conventional language, meaning and, form throughout her career. It's no surprise that she supports "*the concept of play,*" which "*challenges the established relationships between the sign/signifier and the signified of semiotics, asserting that every text is not a self-contained model but that the meaning is always deferred by the play of signification,*" (Croft, 1993, p. 141). And finally, her art is infused with a strong conviction the capacity of the imagination. She once said that "*if they want to control people's opinions, really oppressive regimes, like the one in Beijing, have to be so oppressive*" (Stephenson & Langridge, 1997, p. 56). People do not want to be controlled in this way, so they must be strict and violent. April De Angelis has refused to let political philosophy, passing trends, or established traditions limit her creativity.

De Angelis does not hesitate at being portrayed as a feminist; moreover, her political beliefs and a feeling of social identity are what give her work its greatest strength. Her plays often deal with themes of gender, identity, and power; and they highlight the complex and nuanced experiences of women, which can be regarded as a feminist perspective. However, this is not necessarily an indication that she identifies herself as a feminist or that she wants to be portrayed as such.

As a playwright April De Angelis has made significant contributions to advance the status of women in a historically challenging position. This makes sense in view of the roles played by women she has developed, which offer a balance to theatre that is dominated by men, as well as the way she uses symbolic language and little staging to make a point

about how women are oppressed and losing their history (D'Monte, 2011, p. 136). Furthermore, De Angelis goes beyond criticizing male exploitation to show how 1980s feminist writing reimagined a space for stage sexuality among women where women take charge rather than become victims.

Strong, independent women who frequently struggle to find their place in a society that can be unfriendly to them are typical of the characters in De Angelis' plays. Her plays frequently feature women who are trying to break free from societal expectations and live their lives on their own terms. Her plays focus on the relationships between women and the ways in which they are affected by the structures of power that shape their lives. Namely, she explores the ways in which women are affected by patriarchy and the ways in which they resist it, through their relationships, their work, their bodies, and their sexuality, through an approach that can be depicted as a feminist perspective.

De Angelis shows how easily a person or group can be forgotten and erased from history in her analysis of the links between people's lives and the larger social and political forces in their environment. David Edgar states that De Angelis “*continues working not only to accurately write history but also to approach the present in the same manner*” (1999, p. 18). She argues that theater is a social activity in and of itself and that sharing people's stories and understanding the significance of historical events are both essential to humanity's ability to live.

The feminist perspective, on the other hand, criticizes the male-dominated social structure by looking at issues through the experiences and social situations of women. It is not a philosophy that is inherently opposed to men but rather aims to bring awareness to the ways in which the current societal structure is not equal for both sexes and works towards creating a more equitable society. De Angelis shows how her plays are a societal necessity because she is aware of how important the theatre discipline is for everyone in society, not only for a select set of people (Baştan, 2021, p. 259).

Her plays can be featured as a social necessity in that they challenge the status quo and bring attention to the ways in which societal structures can be oppressive and limiting for certain groups of people. The works often provide a platform for marginalized voices and perspectives and work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society. However, we cannot regard De Angelis as a dramatist who is truly or wholly outside of the feminist movement. She writes plays and works hard to communicate her truth in the hopes of



making the world a better place, and she is constantly renewed in the theatre. In her 2011 play *Jumpy*, De Angelis who is still producing plays in the twenty-first century discusses the importance of familial sensitivity.

De Angelis has established herself as one of the most innovative and incisive playwrights in British theatre. Her plays have been well-received by audiences and critics alike, and she has won several awards such as Winner of the Writer's Guild Award and Whatsonstage Theatregoer's Choice Award for the best new comedy with *A Laughing Matter* (2002). Her notable works such as *Hush* (1992), *Ironmistress* (1989), and *Jumpy* (2011) continue to be performed and studied around the world, and she is considered to be a notable voice in the theatre scene.

*Ironmistress*, which ReSisters commissioned and which Anna Birch directed at the Young Vic on January 24, 1989, was De Angelis' first significant work and the one that made her popular with the general audience. According to April de Angelis, she aims to write in a unique way from previous playwrights: She went on to say, "*When I was writing it, I was attempting to break away from the issue-based, "agit-prop" style that a lot of theatre companies with strong political goals had chosen for themselves,*" adding that she aimed to produce something purposefully theatrical in style (De Angelis, 1999, p. ix). In the play, De Angelis created Martha Darby, a character based on a real-life woman from the nineteenth century, to be uncaring and even "*blameworthy as a patriarchal figure*" (De Angelis, 1999, p. ix). After receiving her late husband's iron factory as an inheritance, Martha has power for the first time after years of sleeping "*in a box. Padded and quiet*" (De Angelis, 1999, p. 41), however, she now spends her days providing supplies for a war-making machine that she has no control over. Little Cog, her daughter's name, metaphorically describes the entire play, in which everyone exists only as part of a "*great machine*" in the global marketplace (De Angelis, 1999, p. 12). Although Margaret Thatcher is not mentioned, the poetic energy of the play alludes to the exploitation of society by capitalism and the yearning for a more empowering kind of feminine (D'Monte, 2011, p. 126).

De Angelis' first collaboration with Max Stafford-Clark was on the film *Hush*, and his demanding rehearsal schedule forced her to constantly consider the motivations of her characters. *Hush* premiered at the Royal Court on August 6, 1992 (Aston, 2003, p. 65). The play was a step forward for de Angelis, who intended to "*raise other topics*" and "*examine my attitude to Britain today from a perspective other than women's*

*responsibilities in society*” (Stephenson & Langridge, 1997, p. 59). Despite maintaining her feminist identity, her work moved away from “*issue-based*” theatre and toward “*the inadequacy of individual responses and isolated, ideological answers to the world difficulties we confront today*” (Stephenson & Langridge, 1997, p. 59). The play's major themes revolve around the anniversary of Jo's disappearance as well as the memories of her friends and family, especially her sister Louise and daughter Rosa, who assemble at the beach where she may have drowned.

The stage is separated into two sections: the home and the beach: “*The rooms appear dusty and abandoned. The beach may surrealistically intrude on the house*” (De Angelis, 1999, p. 75). This was the first production to utilize waves as continuous background noise. The scene is significant, and one of the characters says, “*a lot of wealthy bastards live around here. They're making their way down from the cities to get out of the mess they've created. It's as though you've been infected*” (De Angelis, 1999, p. 96). Individual disappointments are placed against the group's personal loss; for example, Denise looks for solutions in Eastern faiths and New Age philosophies, despite her inability to express what the concerns are, while Rosa deals with the anxiety of being a motherless adolescent. If Jo's aggressive action at Greenham Common is no longer relevant, Louise believes her “*Reclaim the Night*” banner will “*definitely get something on the collectibles market*” (De Angelis, 1999, p. 104). Tony may say, “*What an incredible time to be alive in. Huge empires are collapsing. It's like the end of the ice age,*” (De Angelis, 1999, p. 104); but he, as with the other characters in the play, can only deal by engaging in self-invested avoidance strategies.

There are at least three versions of *Playhouse Creatures*. It was created for a completely female cast and premiered on October 5, 1993, at the Haymarket Theatre, directed by Sue Parrish, with multiple tasks (consisting of two characters that are men) added for Lynne Parker's 1997 production at the Old Vic Theatre. It returns to an issue discussed in *Fanny Hill's Life and Times*, namely the relationship between female sexuality and male abusive behavior. When professional actresses first appeared in 1660, obsessive male dominance was an established feature of the English theatrical. At the opening of the performance, Doll Common, the Chorus-like figure, explains that previously this was a bear pit where animals were baited and fought to death before becoming a playhouse. Their trembling cries are still audible to Doll in the wind (De Angelis, 1999, p. 159), and actors from the

Restoration era return to the historic theater to reflect on the struggles they underwent to be taken seriously alongside their male colleagues.

The humiliations they face on a daily basis are detailed, including sexism; physical and sexual assault; and poverty. For instance, Rebecca Marshall is pursued by the Earl of Oxford's men after upsetting him, who "*rubbed shit into my hair*" (De Angelis, 1999, p. 189). When Mrs. Farley becomes pregnant and has to leave the theatre, she is forced to sell herself, learning "*The Art of Performance... You must act as if you enjoy it. I adore it even more*" (De Angelis, 1999, p. 218). As Mark Fisher (2007) states, for De Angelis, such females were like Wild West pioneers, surviving entirely on their own in an unsafe environment. As Ian Shuttleworth (1997) declares, her main concern is with the numerous women who are trying to fulfill their own potentials in a field that demands that they be objects (either to the general public or to specific viewers in private). However, De Angelis' primary tone is comic, and a sense of community and competition are depicted humorously. Moreover, her lightness of touch avoids moralistic sermonizing.

*A Laughing Matter*, which was presented at the Royal National Theatre on February 6, 2002, demonstrates how laughter can lighten serious attitudes. An amusing examination of Goldsmith and Garrick's debates about "low" vs. "sentimental" humor and stylized vs. realistic acting, this piece was written for Stafford-Out-of-Joint Clark's company. Even though the play's absurd sequences offended some critics, it was a true reflection of theater at the time, which catered to the new middle classes by separating a straight drama into entr'actes and afterpiece amusements, which generally comprised less intellectually challenging songs, dances, and pantomime (D'Monte, 2011, p. 131). Garrick's legacy is often regarded as elevating theatrical standards, although this is indirectly mocked by his substitution of a vicar's third-rate play for Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* in order to satisfy his benefactor: as Garrick informs the dramatist "*I have a responsibility to my theatre. I can't just put on a play because he's impoverished*" (2002, p. 27). In this sense, the play addresses persistent problems about literary ambition and arts patronage, as well as the tension between innovation and commercialism, in which the development of future classics is sacrificed in favour of a less demanding present.

*Amongst Friends*, directed by Anthony Clark and presented on May 21, 2009, at Hampstead Theatre, is a depressing morality play concerning the aftermath of New Labour and the Iraq War. Richard, a Labour MP, and Lara, a tabloid writer, reside in a gated community in London known as a "*compound,*" a "*Cunt*" and "*a Complex*" (De

Angelis, 2009, p. 8). Once a psychological defence system, it is now a retail and residential network (De Angelis, 2009, p. 9). Maxwell (2009) identified the social division that this armour-plated luxury symbolizes, which was brought on by middle-class elite concern over perceived social, religious, and ethnic differences: the title underlines the controlled nervousness. Ironically, these establishment elites welcome their former neighbours, Joe and Caitlin, into this cloister, whose grandfather was a manufacturing worker at the building in the past, contracting “*fuzzy lung...their word for pulmonary sclerosis*” (De Angelis, 2009, pp. 16-17). Shelley arrives from “*the opposite side of the roundabout,*” or “*the sink estate,*” thanks to a malfunctioning entrance phone (De Angelis, 2009, p. 24). She accuses Lara of promoting the war in her newspaper column and Richard of providing insufficient military supplies, claiming her son died fighting in Basra.

According to De Angelis, the play and J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* (1946), which was written between 1944 and 1945 to advance the Labour Party's ideology on the verge of a General Election, have similarities (Sierz, Aleks, interview with April De Angelis). It was picked up on by Coveney (2009), who called it a J. B. Priestley set-up with humorous remarks about lifestyle that was meant to be relevant. Ironically, he adds that there is even a lumpy allusion to MPs' expenses that must have been thrown in last week. Everybody is held responsible for the death of the son, whose names alternate between English (Leigh), Asian (Mukerjee), and Irish (Donal), and who may or may not exist. The ambiguity is essential because he comes to symbolize everyone who feels alienated from society, who connects to no one and everyone at the same time (D'Monte, 2011, p. 133). “*Things can only get better,*” Joe said bitterly, repeating an expression from 1997 (De Angelis, 2009, p. 10), a false reflection just before his suicide, prods at the effect of years of Thatcherite policies on New Labour's ascension in social and political satire. According to the argument, society has shifted from a focus on community and neighbourliness to one fuelled by ignorance, fear, and hatred.

As a result; the 1970s female agitprop, or what April de Angelis refers to as the upfront feminist/revolutionary mode, gave rise to her artistic creations, which later joined the growth of more poetic, experimental, and visually ritualistic styles of theatre among women (De Angelis & Croft, 1993, p. 140). She has generally attempted to undermine established form, language, and meaning, and her observations on female subjugation and historical upheaval are insightful. In addition, in her plays, she included problems that are

closely related to the society. She commends “*The notion of play, central to deconstruction,*” which “*challenges the fixed relationships between the sign/signifier and the signified of semiotics, asserting that any text is not a self-enclosed model but that the meaning is always deferred by the play of signification,*” and this is not a coincidence (De Angelis & Croft, 1993, p. 141).

In the end, a fundamental belief in the power of imagination penetrates all of her work. In her plays, April de Angelis portrayed the events that have occurred in human life from the past to the present without allowing political dogma, passing trends, or social customs to limit her imagination. De Angelis views her plays as a necessity of social life since she is aware that the theater arts are vital not just for a particular group but also for the entire society. She strives to reveal the truth in the service of creating better worlds and continuously reinvents herself on stage. She has achieved such success that she is now recognized as one of the most dependable and sharp playwrights in British theater.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. DEPICTING FAMILY STRUGGLES IN APRIL DE ANGELIS' *JUMPY*

#### 5.1. An Exploration of the Families in *Jumpy*

April De Angelis' *Jumpy* was first performed in London at the Royal Court Theatre in 2011. *Jumpy* takes place in London and has eighteen scenes. The play's title is based on a monkey-shaped toy that Tilly, a teenage girl, has. Parents who have had the difficult, complicated duty of dealing with teenagers whose bodies are inundated with hormones and whose only goal in life seems to be to annoy their parents into an early grave will be able to relate to much of the story. But *Jumpy* is about more than just Tilly, a teenager who is having a hard time making the journey from childhood to adulthood. It also concerns Hilary (Tamsin Greig), her mother, who is 50 and is dealing with aging-related challenges.

The all-gray stage design by Lizzie Clachan is like an art gallery without artwork; there are plenty of colorful characters available in this production, which is all it needs to come to life. Hilary, played by Tamsin Greig, is a liberal-minded, kind lady who oversees a reading support program that is in danger of closing due to budget cuts. She is overly possessive and obsessive with her children, like many parents, which inevitably results in ongoing conflict. Bel Powley makes an enormous impression as the adolescent Tilly, exhibiting the distinctive characteristics of adolescence set on rebelling against parent's authority and strongly expressing control of her own fate. In fact, Ms. Powley easily could have gone further by making her character even more rebellious and wayward, but she wisely restrains herself from going overboard. Frances who is a friend of Hilary (amazingly portrayed by Doon Mackichan) also struggles with turning 50, but she has a more daring outlook on life, as she exemplifies in a stunning burlesque dance routine that includes a horsewhip. The remainder of the ensemble provides excellent support, particularly Ewan Stewart as Mark, Hilary's patient, a down-to-earth husband who must serve as an arbitrator in the conflicts between the two women in the home while also trying to keep his company afloat.

Despite being a comedy, the play nevertheless features tragic scenes. Though some pretty humorous moments, *Jumpy* is not the type of comedy that makes you feel sick to your stomach after seeing it. In reality, it has its poignant moments as well as its uplifting and depressing ones. But Nina Raine does a fantastic job both directing and writing this play, and there are lots of laughs to be had. It surely deserves a West End run because it is so richly entertaining and, at times, so painfully true. Theatre critic Cavendish (2012) states that “*it's the most hilarious new play the West End has seen in a long time. Not only is it humorous, but it's also sharply painful.*” Additionally, *Jumpy* received positive reviews from critics and was nominated for several awards, including the Evening Standard Theatre Award for Best Play. *Jumpy* is praised by renowned theatre reviewer Billington (2011), who describes the play as having a strong traditional element. The play is described as a “*tragedy played as farce*” by Lyn Gardner (2012), another acclaimed theatre critic.

In *Jumpy*, a middle-class family struggles to deal with a disobedient teenage daughter and her conflict with a mother who is going through her own crisis. Additionally, De Angelis depicts various problems such as adolescence, communication, loyalty, and family concerns while reflecting modern British culture. Thus, the play primarily focuses on the ties between mother-daughter Hilary and Tilly as well as the issues that two distinct families are facing. Within the context, De Angelis aims to realistically portray the difficult situation of adolescent girls and the problems facing a middle-class household. *Jumpy* does not have a single remedy for issues, but the dramatist offers a number of suggestions for teenagers and their parents. Thus, De Angelis’ *Jumpy* questions many parts of human life and places every meaning in a comic manner.

The play is engaging and has a lot of drama because it combines several characters, each with their own unique characteristics. According to Gardner (2015), as the play deals with concerns that are prevalent in the twenty-first century, *Jumpy* has drawn parents who take their daughters to the theatre and other audiences. The issues that women confront today are numerous. They hold certain opinions about the identities and functions that people play in society and culture. De Angelis carefully investigates adolescent issues, familial and marital dynamics, and her sexual preferences in *Jumpy*. The play opens the door to new inquiries by making use of the differences of the female characters and revealing various conflicts. *Jumpy* so portrays both the positive and negative traits that individuals exhibit in social life.

The elder and younger generations can be distinguished among the dramatic characters in De Angelis' *Jumpy*. Every generation differs from one another in terms of its unique traits and problems. It is important to note that this difference is overly harsh because some characteristics of the personalities have persisted through generations. In the play, women in particular experience intense irritation and typically go out on the road to their independence. Tilly, a member of the younger generation, completely refuses any role that is given to her and makes an effort to go her own way.

*Jumpy* is set in contemporary times, and the people portrayed in the play are postmodern families. According to social historian Tamara Harevan (2000), a postmodern family is one that exemplifies what it means to live in a postmodern world. Therefore, it may have characteristics like family diversity, individual preferences, and interpersonal connections that go beyond marriage or biological ties. De Angelis reveals a postmodern family with the marital relationship of the families, the family style, the way of life and the communication of the family members with each other in the play *Jumpy*. The play is a commentary on the challenges and struggles that families face in the twenty-first century. In general, the families in *Jumpy* are a mirror of the complexity, change, and challenges that modern families may face.

According to Parsons (1959), a family is any group of two or more individuals who reside together and are related by blood, marriage, or adoption; these individuals are all considered to be members of the same family. If an older married couple lived in the same house or apartment as their daughter, her husband, and their two children, as well as the older couple's nephew, they would all be considered to be a single family. Masten & Shaffer (2006, p. 10) note that as families are often responsible for preparing children for life in society, they serve as the primary influence on culture and norms of behavior. People nowadays are living in a time of increased tolerance when it comes to alternative family models, ones that are different from the family of the past.

The representation of two modern families is questioned in the play *Jumpy*. The first family consists of Hilary and Mark, a married couple with a daughter named Tilly. The family is portrayed as a typical middle-class household, with all the difficulties that come with it. Hilary's relationship with her husband is strained, which adds to her struggles and the tension in the play. In *Jumpy*, Hilary, a mother of fifty, is a defensive, domineering, tiring, and unremarkable-looking married woman in a loveless marriage. In the bedroom, Hilary tries to talk to her husband Mark:



*Bedroom.*

*Hilary's phone beeps. She checks it.*

*She gets into bed beside Mark.*

**Hilary** *Great Expectations?*

*She picks up a book.*

*Where were we? Pip's met Mr Pumblechook.*

**Mark** *I think I'm going to sleep.*

**Hilary** *We'll never get through it at this rate. If you keep falling asleep. At night.*

*Immediately, like this. I could just read a page.*

**Mark** *What's the point? I'll be asleep the minute I close my – (De Angelis, 2011, p. 27)*

In the conversation, although Hilary wants to solve the problem between them by talking to her husband, her husband says that he just wants to sleep without caring about her. Her husband Mark is so consumed with the stress of everyday activities that he neglects Hilary, leaving her feeling alienated and unimportant. De Angelis reveals a loveless marriage by showing the miscommunication between Hilary and her husband in the bedroom scene.

She is dealing with the challenges of raising her daughter Tilly, as well as the changes in her own life as she ages. Tilly, their daughter, is also a source of frustration for Hilary, as she is distant and disrespectful towards her mother. Tilly and her mother are sitting together and watching TV, and they have a conversation:

**Tilly** *You're making me feel shit.*

**Hilary** *Sorry, love. Think next time: 'Is this what I want? Or is it because I want to be wanted, to feel my existence is validated?'*

**Tilly** *What? Like I'm going to think shit like that.*

**Hilary** *Do you know what validated means? It –*

**Tilly** *My period's late (De Angelis, 2011, p. 72).*

The main protagonist of the play, Hilary, finds that her fifteen-year-old daughter Tilly is pregnant and looks for ways to escape the circumstance. Worried about her daughter,

Hilary seeks a solution to her puberty problems by contacting her. But Tilly never listens to her mother, making mistake after mistake. In addition, Hilary's husband, Mark, is not interested in his wife, nor does he show any interest in such an important problem of his daughter. These issues take a toll on Hilary, leaving her feeling hopeless and insecure. She is searching for a way to escape from her problems and find some happiness. Throughout the play, Hilary reflects on her past and wishes she could go back to a simpler time. Moreover, Hilary begins smoking as the play progresses, because she finds it difficult to deal with all the troubles in her life.

The play also highlights the disconnect between Hilary and Mark as parents, with Mark showing little interest in how Hilary raises their daughter Tilly, and his facial expressions gradually revealing his frustration and inactivity as a husband and parent. Battista (1966) points out that "*the best inheritance a parent can give their children is a few minutes of their time each day.*" While Tilly's mother spends the whole day with her daughter, unlike her mother, her father does not spare even five minutes a day for her daughter. De Angelis uses the character of Mark to illustrate how neglect and apathy in a relationship can lead to personal breakdowns and damage to the family unit.

The second family comprises the married parents Bea and Roland, as well as their 16-year-old son Josh. Roland is a performer, while Bea works in banking.; both are quite busy with their careers. The marriage of Bea and Roland is loud and aggressive, full of fighting, and at odds all the time. It is clear from Roland's conversation with Hilary how badly Roland and Bea's marriage is in trouble. For example:

**Hilary** *It's odd what goes through your mind.*

**Roland** *She was punishing me for some crime I never committed. Being in a marriage with her. That's why I'm jealous of Josh* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 36).

Roland gives the appearance of a passive spouse, since Bea makes the majority of family decisions. This couple is thinking about divorcing because they no longer love or respect each other, but Josh is negatively impacted by this decision. The disruption of the balance in Roland and Bea's family and the constant active behaviour of the woman and passive behaviour of the man destroy the structure of the family. According to Minuchin (1974), the disruption of balance in the family negatively affects the quality of the relationship between spouses. Roland, who is getting divorced, wishes to flirt with each and every woman he meets, including Hilary. He expresses his thoughts about Hilary clearly:

**Roland** *When you came to see me and Bea, I thought there's a woman that has passionate convictions* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 45).

In the Roland and Bea couple, who have already lost the balance between the spouses, the quality of the marriage begins to decline as the husband begins to cheat on his wife. Kaya (2021) states that especially cheating and lying lead to increased anger, frustration and desire for revenge in the relationship.

De Angelis' play is divided into eighteen acts; in the opening scene of *Jumpy*, Tilly, a young girl, circles the stage while listening to her iPod. She wears a short skirt and vibrant shoes. Tilly is unaware that her mother, Hilary, is staring at her with a worried expression. Hilary throws two shopping bags to the ground. She pulls a bottle of wine from her bag, unscrews the cap, and pours herself a drink. Mark, who owns a curtain store, is already at home.

Hilary arrives home from work late, and Mark starts to interrogate her. In an effort to justify herself, Hilary shares with Mark her transportation challenges to and from work. Hilary spends two and a half hours on public transportation to get to work, which lasts five hours a day. Every profession has challenges and unpleasant days, but some people are under constant stress and can no longer enjoy life. Hilary is considering changing occupations, as the best illustration of such individuals. In this process, Hilary wants to indicate her age as forty-three on her resume, because she thinks it will be harder for her to find a new job now that she is fifty. She expresses this idea to her husband Mark in a serious manner:

**Mark** *If the person you're talking to happens to be forty-three they might think you look a little older.*

**Hilary** *What's the likelihood of saying I was forty-three to a person who happens to be forty-three?*

**Mark** *Quite high.*

**Hilary** *What would it have cost you, Mark, to say I look forty-three? If it made me happy? Would it have cost you the earth?* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 7).

In the conversation, Hilary conveys to her husband her regret at reaching the age of fifty. She hopes he will compliment her to make her feel better. Mark, on the other hand, tears her heart by telling her that she does not appear young. Hilary responds to this by asking, "Would it have cost you the earth?" (De Angelis, 2011, p. 7). De Angelis aims to reveal

that a couple's level of future happiness is not determined by how in love they were when they first got married. Love, communication, and relationship are frequently at the forefront of women's marriages, and the dramatist effectively expresses Hilary's frustration in this regard (Baştan, 2021, p. 261).

In De Angelis' *Jumpy*, marriage is a central theme that is explored throughout the play. The play delves into the complexities and challenges of contemporary relationships and the institution of marriage, raising important questions about its relevance and suitability in society (Gardner, 2012). The playwright forces the audience to consider the following questions: Is marriage, one of the most contentious institutions of the twenty-first century, appropriate for today's lifestyle? Is it men or women who complicate relationships? What do the married couple want out of their marriage? What are the most common failings of both sexes?

Through the portrayal of Hilary and Mark's marriage, De Angelis attempts to depict the reality of today's marriages and relationships in a logical and nuanced manner. Pearlman (2010, p. vii) points out that marriage is a very important element in policy and academic studies. Similarly, De Angelis' play *Jumpy*, using the lens of two families, Hilary and Mark and Roland and Bea's relationship, offers a realistic representation of the challenges and complexities of couples and relationships, and encourages the audience to question the traditional norms and expectations surrounding marriage.

## **5.2. The Impact of Communication Problems in a Family with Children: A Study of *Jumpy***

Theoretically, symbolic interactionism holds that meaningful face-to-face encounters between people shape society and that these interactions can be used to explain human behavior. In symbolic interaction, it is important to be aware of mutual relations in the family and one's awareness of the other. Speech patterns, gestures and movements are the product of interaction within the family. Family members may give verbal or nonverbal answers to each other's questions, and others may not understand what it is (Giddens, 2000). Communication problems begin to arise in the family when family members do not understand each other's symbolic or non-symbolic expressions.

Communication problems in a family with children can include misunderstandings, lack of open communication, lack of active listening, and difficulty in expressing feelings and

needs. It can also include conflicts over discipline, disagreements over parenting styles, and difficulty in setting boundaries. Additionally, communication problems can be exacerbated by busy schedules, stress, and technological distractions in the postmodern world. It can lead to confusion and resentment and can have a negative impact on the relationships among family members, as well as on children's behaviours and mental health (Romero-Abrio et al., 2019).

It is a fact that in today's postmodern society, many people prioritize physical intimacy over emotional intimacy and connection. This phenomenon has a significant impact on families, as relationships within the family can become superficial and artificial. Kir (2011, p. 395) argues that a real family is a social environment in which the emotional needs of all individuals must be considered, as well as being a shelter where the physiological needs of the individuals are met. The play *Jumpy* also reflects this idea, showing how the family is a place where individuals should feel emotionally supported and valued. The play illustrates that the most important feature that distinguishes a family from an ordinary community is that it is formed around a strong emotional bond. This bond, based on feelings such as love, respect, and solidarity, is what brings the family together and is the foundation of a healthy and functional family.

*Jumpy* shows how the lack of emotional connection and understanding can lead to conflicts and breakdowns in the family. It also highlights how contemporary society's emphasis on superficial and physical relationships affects the families and the importance of emotional connections within the family. In this regard, Satir (2001) states that the creation of an environment of love, respect and solidarity among individuals in the family depends primarily on the realization of appropriate communication conditions in the household. Because the family is a social environment in which its members constantly interact with each other, healthy communication is an important determinant of the quality of interaction between its members. Therefore, all family members should be able to share their feelings and thoughts with each other clearly and frequently. This sharing is necessary for them to achieve sufficient emotional satisfaction. Otherwise, there will be crucial problems related to communication, trust, boundaries, finances, and differing values or goals among the family members.

People develop their roles according to the symbols used by the family and the definitions they are accustomed to in the family. These roles are based on the symbolic meanings attributed to each role (Paloma, 2012). By nature, the individual who needs the most

emotional satisfaction among family members is a child. The child, who first encounters interpersonal relations in the family environment, is the “*being that needs the longest and most important care among living things*” (Kıncal, 2000, p. 31). This care includes not only meeting the physical needs of the child, such as feeding; but also helping the child to establish a warm, emotional relationship with the family and to share their feelings and thoughts. This is an important condition for the child to form a healthy sense of self. For this reason, it is necessary to meet the emotional needs of the child in the family and to create a harmonious and healthy communication environment.

The responsibility for creating a family environment in the family where the emotional needs of the child are met naturally falls on the parents, who have a very good understanding of the meaning of interpersonal communication (Gladding, 2006). It is inevitable that parents who cannot establish a positive communication bond in the family, and therefore are a part of communication problems, harm their children. According to Gladding (2006) the greatest of these harms is spiritual, which can have a negative impact on the children’s physical, emotional and mental well-being and their sense of identity and self-worth. In this sense, children can be harmed spiritually in a family in a number of ways (Romero-Abrio et al., 2019). One way this occurs is if the family does not provide a consistent and supportive environment for the child to explore and develop their spiritual beliefs and practices. In addition, children may be harmed spiritually if the family is not supportive of the child’s unique spiritual path or if the family is not able to provide guidance and support for the child's spiritual growth.

According to Mead (1934), founder of symbolic interaction theory, the healthier the mutual communication in the relations between family members, the healthier the effect on the children. In *Jumpy*, April De Angelis illustrates the psychological harm that can be inflicted on children by their parents due to inappropriate communication within the family. The Hilary-Mark and Roland-Bea couples in the play display clear communication problems which affect not only their relationship with each other, but also with their children, Tilly and Josh. The playwright presents this issue in the first scene of the play by highlighting the negative impact of Hilary and Mark's communication on their daughter. It is clear that the inability of the parents to communicate effectively with each other has a detrimental effect on the children, demonstrating the importance of healthy communication within families in the first scene of the play:

**Hilary** *You know what else I was thinking? That time we took Tilly and her friends down to Brighton for the day right at the end of primary school and in the back of the car they were playing a game. They closed their eyes and took it in turns to tickle the inside of each other's arms, wrist to elbow, and Tilly said that's the equivalent of a quarter of an orgasm.*

*Beat.*

*Would we have said that when we were eleven? I wouldn't. An orgasm.*

*Beat.*

**Hilary** *You'd still have been playing with your Scalextric.*

**Mark** *I may have looked like I was playing – I was cognitively developing.*

**Hilary** *Where are you going now? I'm still talking.*

**Mark Dog.**

*He exits (De Angelis, 2011, p. 8).*

Hilary, who tries to talk to her husband about her daughter at the beginning of the play, is angry with her husband, who does not listen to her, which is an indication that she does not have a good relationship with him. The main reason for this anger is that Hilary had not found a sensitive husband to listen to her feelings and thoughts. During adolescence, when her daughter should complete her moral self-development, her mother even worries about her speech, while her father continues to play without caring. It is not possible to expect a healthy child to be raised in a family where such problems are constantly experienced. Accordingly, the playwright draws attention to the importance of conversation within the family by showing this kind of communication in the first scene.

In this regard, family communication refers to the exchange of information between household members. Studies from the past to the present state that healthy family relationships are of great importance for the protection of the mental health of the society and for its future (Hacı, 2011, p. 29). According to Satır (2001), communication in families with a healthy structure is open, clear and direct. The rules set in such families consist of flexible rules, which can be differentiated according to the conditions, and where the person has the right to choose. Psychologist and family therapist James Alexander & Parsons (1982) explain that functional families can solve their problems, people can connect emotionally with each other, and each member assumes their role.

From Roland's talk about his relationship with his wife Bea, it can be observed what a senseless marriage he had.

**Roland** *I used to lie next to her, my whole flesh weeping to be touched. All I got was, 'You need to take a look at the bathroom grouting'.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 36).

In *Jumpy*, the playwright illustrates an unhealthy family environment by showing that Bea is the dominant one in the relationship between her and Roland; she does not listen to her husband's thoughts and sets strict rules according to her own beliefs. Since the woman has no feelings for her husband, she is not open to communication with him. In addition, the playwright reflects that Mark and Hilary cannot come to terms even on important issues about their daughter, that the father does not fulfil his responsibilities, and that they are a family that does not get along emotionally.

In order for a relationship between parents and children to be healthy, first of all, the conversation between the spouses must be healthy. In this respect, communication between spouses provides important information about the structure of interaction in the family (Köyceğiz, 2017, p. 16). According to symbolic interaction theory, in addition to being effective in meeting the psychological needs and gaining identity, the family also contributes to providing a status in the household by teaching the roles to the individual members (Blumer, 1969). For this reason, the family is the most appropriate place to prepare individuals for social life. In this sense, the individual's life in the family environment prepares them for their vital duties in the future by enabling them to gain experience. As Baştan (2021) states, the family is the place where children's basic sense of trust and responsibility is gained and socialization processes are experienced. It is observed that individuals who are positively affected in the family environment they live in develop better relationships with their peers and elders than other people and are more successful in human relationships. Children reflect this approach to their environment by transferring the positive or negative communication they have acquired in their family to their life outside their home (Demirtaş Zorbaz & Korkut Owen, 2013, p. 60). In the tenth scene, it is clear from Mark and Hilary's conversations about their daughter how negatively they have affected her.

**Hilary** *No. No way. Dinner's in an hour.*

**Tilly** *If we don't go now there'll be no point. We'll miss the train. Chloe's sister's having a party.*



**Hilary** *Out of the question, sorry.*

**Tilly** *Dad says we can. It's going to be really good.*

**Mark** *No, that's not correct. I said a discussion.*

**Hilary** *Why did you say that? That just gives her leverage. We're away. For the weekend. What's so difficult to understand about that?*

**Tilly** *Yes, but we don't like it.*

**Hilary** *None of us like it, that's not the point.*

**Tilly** *Dad.*

**Hilary** *Say no to her for once.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 59).

Thus, the playwright reflects how much impact parent communication has on the child, because she receives her earliest education in the family, and what she learns from it determines her behaviour. However, parents who cannot make a common decision on even a simple matter for their children and who constantly exhibit inconsistent behaviours cannot provide a suitable education for their children (Cüceloğlu, 2018, p. 20-21). Tilly is tired of her family's constant arguments and of living in an uneasy household environment, so she tries to make a better life outside. However, since she has not learned positive interaction within her family, she struggles to have level relationships with her peers outside.

Moreover, she is unable to develop a positive personality, given that family members are of great importance in the character development of a child, apart from genetic factors. Namely, parents and other members living in a household have great influence on the personality of an individual in the postmodern society. According to Mead, the founder of symbolic interaction theory, a person is not born with a sense of self. But first, self-concept develops through communication and social interaction with parents (Paloma, 2012). According to Navaro (2002), a child whose words are ignored, constantly criticized or corrected may become introverted, insecure, aggressive and irritable. On the contrary, an individual who is listened to even if what she says is insignificant, who is allowed to express her thoughts, who is cared for, and who is not constantly criticized, develops a more secure and healthy personality structure. For this reason, in order for parents to engage in healthy communication with their children, they should have an attitude that is respectful to their children, cooperative, accepting, and places importance on their feelings and thoughts. It is only possible for parents to establish a healthy

communication with their children if they train themselves in communication skills. Therefore, parents should approach their children in an accepting manner. They must listen carefully to their child and take care to provide the child with the necessary room to speak. In particular, when children have problems, they should treat their children appropriately by using active listening and developing an empathetic understanding (Çağdaş & Seçer, 2015). However, Hilary and Mark are parents who do not care about their daughter Tilly's feelings and thoughts, do not respect her beliefs, and constantly try to correct her. Hilary never listens to her daughter because she takes on a very protective mother model and wants everything to be as she wishes. Unlike his wife, Mark has a very relaxed fatherly attitude and allows everything without listening to his daughter's problems. Tilly, who has parents who never listen to her, conducts her life as a combative adolescent. In the face of the problems Tilly experiences during her adolescence, her mother fails to develop an empathetic understanding towards her and tries to keep her under control. For this reason, Tilly is always angry with her mother and does not want to talk to her. Moreover, Tilly cannot bear to talk with her mother for even five minutes.

***Hilary** Let's not shout. This is emotional. All I'm saying is – be safe, look after yourself. That's all I'm saying. Tell me.*

***Tilly** What is it you want me to do? Do you want to tell me what to do?*

***Hilary** Listen. You think 'I'm being a strong woman', that's a misinterpretation...*

***Tilly** Like you're so happy.*

***Hilary** What?*

***Tilly** You heard.*

***Hilary** It's never an hour, is it?*

***Tilly** It's never five minutes, is it?*

***Hilary** But did you want to do it? What did you want?*

***Tilly** Did I want?*

***Hilary** Yes. You must know. What you wanted?*

***Tilly** LEAVE ME ALONE. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 42).*

The most important responsibility of the parents in the family is to accept the feelings of the children, to listen to the child and to create an environment that will allow the sharing

of mutual feelings. When the pressure of understood and shared feelings is relieved, it will bring relief to the individual. Alexander and Parsons (1982) indicate that the children who grow up in such an environment, learn not to run away from their problems and not to be discouraged when they experience difficult situations in their future lives, as well as to manage such feelings in a healthy way. By doing so when an individual has painful feelings over time, he/she becomes stronger and better prepared for life (Navaro, 2002). But Tilly makes mistake after mistake because she can never share her feelings with her family and cannot get the necessary support from her parents. The playwright reflects in the play that the mother and father cannot communicate with their daughter in a symbolic or non-symbolic way.

When parents communicate with their children, listening to the child is as important as speaking; parents should allow their children to talk as much as they do. Moreover, they should develop the ability to empathize by trying to understand their children's feelings. A child does not have the experience and knowledge to interpret an event like adults; therefore, what a child says should always be considered seriously. In addition, the body language of adults should also support what is said, and parents should be able to share their feelings with their children, as this will also encourage their children to share their own feelings in return. However, it is better not to talk to the child about issues and emotions that they cannot handle, or their development may be negatively impacted (Coulthard, 2011). Yet, at the end of the play, Tilly sees her mother having sex with her friend Cam, which severely damages her feelings.

In *Jumpy*, April De Angelis attempts to impart an important lesson in communication and empathy to families with children. The playwright deals seriously with the interaction problem in the family by presenting the aggressive behaviour and repeated mistakes of Tilly, who does not receive enough attention, love, respect and tolerance and is not listened to at home. In the play, the adults are all in a group of parents who cannot reach their children's emotional worlds and do not provide them with adequate care, apart from meeting their basic physical needs. However, according to De Angelis, the conditions of postmodern life necessitate careful communication with children in a suitable family environment. Yet, in contemporary society, parents' inability to spare enough time for their children emerges as an important communication problem within the family; "*In fact, children need to be noticed, accepted, and appreciated*" (Önder, 2004, p. 71). These requirements are the condition of healthy communication. De Angelis knows how

important healthy communication in the family is for children as symbolic or not and masterfully manages such an important issue in her play.

### **5.3. The Complexity of Deceit and its Impact on Family Relationships in *Jumpy***

It is a well-known fact that social criticism has become increasingly prominent in English literature, particularly following the Second World War. As a playwright, De Angelis is among those who take on the task of social criticism. She addresses issues that are closely related to society, such as family relations disrupted by cheating of spouses. In this sense, the playwright does not shy away from criticizing the postmodern world and the middle-class family, which she perceives as corrupt (D'Monte, 2011). Obviously, De Angelis works to address matters of marriage and family, breaking away from the outdated and stereotypical portrayals of relationships in comedies. Through this approach, *Jumpy* reveals the serious issues and problems that families may experience, and De Angelis has successfully transformed a significant issue like infidelity into a thought-provoking and insightful theatre play.

Attachment styles are influential on people's relationship satisfaction, infidelity tendencies and decision-making processes. In this context, attachment styles that develop in infancy directly affect a person's romantic relationships. The reflection of people's attachment styles on romantic relationships directly affects the family structure. Therefore, understanding the autonomy and privacy motivations of different types of relationships makes it easier to examine cheating tendencies. According to Allen and Baucom (2004), individuals with an anxious attachment style have more emotionally close and intense relationships, whereas individuals with an avoidant attachment style have a higher tendency to cheat than those with an anxious attachment style. Allen & Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) state that avoidant attachment style is more prone to cheating than secure attachment. Accordingly, women with preoccupied attachment have a higher tendency to cheat than women with secure attachment.

With respect to deceit, *“the concept of deception can be defined as a breakdown of the trust and agreement between the spouses by involving third person emotionally, romantically or sexually”* (Hall & Fincham, 2006, p. 508). According to Polat deceit means breaking the expectations and boundaries of togetherness as a result of the emotional or physical experience of the current relationship with a third person or persons, depending on ad is play of false words and behaviours (2006, p. 16). We can

understand how the concept of cheating in the family which the playwright handles in the play appears from the dialogues of Hilary and Roland that first appeared in the seventh scene:

***Roland*** *Did Bea seem a little caustic to you?*

***Hilary*** *I don't know. Maybe.*

***Roland*** *Or just frigid? I was a fucking eunuch in that marriage. Am I repulsive?*

***Hilary*** *I don't know. No.*

***Roland*** *If I did flirt with other women can you blame me? I was literally starving in that department.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 36).

As Roland's conversation with Hilary reveals, Roland is dissatisfied with his marriage and his expectations towards marriage are not met by his wife. According to attachment theory, marriage brings together two people who have different needs and desires from the relationship. These needs in a relationship are changeable. The ability to meet the needs of the married person directly affects the relationship satisfaction. In this context, attachment theory reviews the needs and variables in marriage (Bowlby, 2012). The harmony and satisfaction of the contextual needs of the married individuals is important in the continuation of the marriage. When the needs required in marriage are not met, cheating may occur depending on the attachment style of the person. Unsatisfied with his marriage, Roland is looking for ways to cheat on his wife. Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman in *Liquid Love* states that:

*There is always a suspicion...that one is living a lie or a mistake; that something crucially important has been overlooked, missed, neglected, left untried, and unexplored; that a vital obligation to one's own authentic self has not been met or that some chances of unknown happiness completely different from any happiness experienced before have to be taken up in time and are bound to be lost forever if they continue to be neglected* (2003, p. 55).

Deception in relationships can arise for a variety of reasons, but the causes are often complex. One of the reasons for deception can be the importance placed on the marriage relationship. Low emotional and sexual satisfaction, suspicion in marriage, feeling neglected, or a lack of satisfaction within the marriage, can lead to a desire for extramarital affairs. Studies have shown that unhappiness in marriage and high levels of conflict may increase the likelihood of infidelity for both men and women (Polat, 2006,

p. 20). The reasons for extramarital affairs can differ between genders, with men often seeking novelty and excitement, ego satisfaction, instant gratification, revenge, or a lack of desire for a meaningful relationship (Norment, 1998a). In *Jumpy*, Roland, Bea's husband, constantly seeks to deceive his wife, as he is not content in their marriage. The play demonstrates how a man's dissatisfaction with his marriage can lead to the destruction of his family. When Roland and Hilary encounter in the cottage at five p.m. Roland continues to approach her in a deceitful manner:

**Hilary** *Yes, there's glitter all over the floor. Like there's been a party.*

*Frances exits, leaving Hilary alone.*

*Roland re-enters.*

**Roland** *I told them I needed a piss. I'm not blind yet. The walking wounded.*

*I wanted to –*

*He kisses her. They kiss.*

*–feel like I'm fifteen.*

*He exits. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 61)*

The need for romance, emotional neglect, sexual dissatisfaction, desire for self-confidence, desire to be with someone who is wealthier or of higher status than their husband, and a desire to escape responsibilities and never-ending household chores have been cited as reasons why women cheat on their husbands (Norment, 1998b). Unfortunately, Mark has been neither a good husband nor a good father, and so Hilary has her own reasons for cheating on her husband in *Jumpy*;

**Hilary** *No, no.*

**Tilly** *OK. Later.*

*Exits. Goes out without her bag.*

*Cam comes out naked with a flower tied to his penis.*

**Cam** *That was fucking close.*

*Tilly re-enters for her bag.*

**Tilly** *Forgot my – (De Angelis, 2011, p. 89).*

In the play, Hilary is looking for the caring and love she cannot see from her husband in her daughter's friend Cam. Mark is emotionally distant and dismissive towards his wife

and daughter and their problems. So, Mark can be cited as an example of a character with an avoidant attachment style. Their family is in disarray, with no clear division of responsibilities or order. Hilary struggles on her own with both her business life and the responsibilities of the household and has conflicts with her daughter Tilly. Hilary can be shown as the best example of an individual with an anxious attachment style. According to the attachment theory, it is emphasized that individuals with avoidant and anxious attachment styles may tend to cheat more easily due to insecurity and lack of communication in their relationships (Bowlby, 2012).

The young girl's inappropriate relationships during her adolescence both worry and concern her mother, Hilary but her father, Mark shows little concern about this situation. This is evident in the following dialogue, where Mark is shown to be unresponsive to his family's problems and lacks interest in his wife and daughter:

**Hilary** *How's your work?*

**Mark** *It's not picking up.*

**Hilary** *I got a text.*

*From Tilly. She's bringing Josh back.*

**Mark** *To stay?*

**Hilary** *Yes.*

**Mark** *I want to go to sleep.*

**Hilary** *They're back together. Thank God. Which is good for Tilly.*

**Mark** *I don't want to hear anything.*

**Hilary** *You won't hear anything. There are walls. Walls.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 29).

April De Angelis highlights how reckless the husband is with the lack of communication between Hilary and Mark. While Hilary tries to talk and find solutions concerning her daughter's inappropriate relationship, Mark shows what a selfish husband he is by declaring that he just wants to sleep. In such a case, it would not be wrong to describe Mark as an ineffective family head who does not put forth any effort at home and does nothing even for his own daughter, and also despises his wife (Baştan, 2021)

In fact, marriage is a very different institution than Mark perceives it; and it is necessary to see marriage as an agreement between a man and a woman, equipped with certain duties and responsibilities. This agreement imposes much authority and responsibility on both men and women. Spouses are expected to exhibit behaviours specific to the responsibilities they have undertaken with their marriage (Robles et al., 2014). However, while Hilary bears the responsibility of marriage, Mark acts as if he is not a married man with children, but as a guest in the house. Although Hilary often warns Mark so that the family balance does not deteriorate further, it cannot be said that he cares about these warnings. For example, in the seventeenth scene Hilary cannot reach Tilly and warns Mark that something might happen but Mark never cares and helps his wife as always:

*Mark Two a.m. I'm knackered.*

*Hilary Are we just going to sit here waiting? We should phone the police.*

*Mark What are they going to do? It's a teenager – partying at the weekend.*

*Hilary This is the second night. The second night. This is not normal.*

*Mark No news is good news.*

*Hilary Why won't anyone take me seriously?*

*Mark I'm going to bed. Tomorrow – if – then –*

*Hilary I know something's happened. I know it. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 92)*

In reality, Mark never behaves appropriately for the role of husband and father. According to Waring (1987), in a home where warm relationships are meant to be formed, the woman is expected to help the man, and the man to help the woman. Thus, maintaining a certain order and balance in the family depends on helping each other. According to Akyüz, if the role performance of the family members remains below the status position, the deterioration of the household balance becomes inevitable (2008, p. 126). In the play, Hilary is unable to cope with her family's responsibilities because of her feelings of loneliness and emotional neglect due to Mark's actions. It is clear from Hilary, Frances and Mark's conversations how much Mark neglects and emotionally deprives his wife as a husband because he does not even celebrate their wedding anniversary.

*Hilary I'll kill myself.*



**Frances** *It was your wedding anniversary today wasn't it? It popped up on Facebook.*

*Congratulations.*

**Mark** *Thank you. We're not – not together at the –*

**Frances** *Oh yes. Sorry.*

*Hilary curls up on the floor.*

*Shall I make some coffee?*

**Mark** *No – (De Angelis, 2011, p. 93).*

In this manner, the playwright reveals how important the family institution is in terms of balance and demonstrates that spouses must take on the necessary responsibilities in order to continue their marriage. In addition, the playwright reveals that men with avoidant attachment style and women with obsessive attachment style have difficulty in meeting their marriage expectations. Unmet attachment needs can lead to deception.

Mark, in this case, not only destabilizes his family by not acting like a husband; his difficulty in establishing a relationship with his daughter also disrupts the household order. He does not really have a sense of fatherhood. Not only does he show no verbal or physical affection towards his daughter; he also fails to realize that his behaviour towards teenage Tilly is wrong. However, Tilly is at the age when a young person's mental, emotional and social personality begins to form; this is the period of development when she needs the support of her parents the most. Without appropriate support, an adolescent girl may make mistakes that will affect her throughout her life. In this sense, it is more important for women to have a good father than a good husband, because they can forgive many things done to them if they are married to a good father. Mark never cares about his wife and allows his daughter to go out, but he is unaware of Tilly's relationship with men.

**Hilary** *She wants to go out. Tell her she can't go out.*

**Mark** *Hello.*

**Hilary** *Just tell her.*

**Mark** *How long for?*

**Hilary** *It's a no.*

*Tilly An hour.*

*Mark OK. That seems OK. If it's an hour. That should be OK.*

*Tilly exits.*

*Bit of an overreaction.*

*Hilary She slept with some boys at a party. She hasn't told us.*

*Mark Hold on. Hold on. What?*

*Hilary That's it. That's all I know. Look at us, we're supposed to be a family.*

*She exits.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 43)

In this conversation, while Hilary shows the necessary sensitivity towards her daughter, Mark never presents a suitable father figure. In addition to Mark's inability to be a caring husband, Mark's inability to be a caring father shows that Hilary's hopes for her family have been destroyed.

Cheating is classified into two categories: emotional and physical, based on characteristics such as the events leading up to it and the motivations behind it (Hall & Fincham, 2006, p. 508). The concept of cheating may also be evaluated according to six criteria: the emotional level of the relationship, the duration of the cheating, the amount of sexual content, one or two partner's relationships, whether the relationship is secret or open, and the sexual orientation of the spouses. Lawson and Samson (1988) additionally classified cheating in three categories: parallel, traditional, and recreational. According to this classification, parallel cheating refers to a situation which is known and implicitly approved by the cheated spouse. In traditional cheating, the deceived spouse is not aware of the situation and never approves the extramarital relationship, as the spouse believes that cheating is an attack on the institution of marriage. In recreational cheating, the extramarital affair is based on the mutual consent of the spouses and takes place in the context of an open relationship.

Psychologist Firestone and his friends analysed cheating in four groups: romantic relationship, sexuality, manipulation, and fictitious sex. A romantic relationship refers to one that starts with an emotional attachment and gains a sexual dimension over time, whereas sexuality indicates a relationship without any emotional attachment. Manipulation refers to the amount of time an individual spends with another person until

finding someone better. Imaginary cheating is a type of infidelity that includes various media such as the use of photos or videos, phone or internet sex (Firestone et al., 2008).

When the concept of cheating in *Jumpy* is examined through the characters, it is clearly seen that first Roland cheated on Bea emotionally with Hilary:

**Roland** *'You should have seen the other fella.'*

*Mark exits.*

*You like my jokes. With Bea they fell on stony ground. I can talk to you so easily.*

*The sound of my voice used to grate on Bea's soul. I could see her flinching. If we were having a dinner party and I launched on an anecdote – you have to do that sometimes at dinner parties, otherwise all you hear is that dreadful clicking of knives on plates – she should have been grateful to me – instead, I could see something slide down behind her eyes.*

*She was postponing her life until after I'd finished and someone else, who wasn't her husband, would say something that might kindle a fire in her.*

*She was a fucking effigy.*

**Hilary** *You're not over her.*

**Roland** *I am now. Can we have some booze?*

**Hilary** *White's open.*

**Roland** *I'd kill for a red*

*I did sleep with other women. By the end. It was a survival thing. And I was quite surprised. These lovely young women, interested in me (De Angelis, 2011, p. 58).*

When Roland and Bea's marital relationship is examined, it is apparent that Roland has actually collapsed emotionally. Although he has done his best to be a good husband and a good father, he cannot make his wife happy. Roland feels a lack of self-confidence because his wife not only treats him poorly, but also dislikes and humiliates him. Roland wants to regain his sense of self-confidence, to be liked, and to have sexual intercourse. In this case, Roland exhibits the behaviors of the individual with the insecure attachment style. He feels the emotional lack and seeks only for Hilary, because just like him, Hilary is someone who takes care of her family, wants a regular home, and is aware of her responsibilities. Thus, De Angelis reveals the feelings and reasons behind men's cheating

through the role of Roland in the play. In addition, the playwright displays the emotional and sexual deception of the woman via Hilary:

*Hilary I just wanted –*

*Cam You really wanted me, didn't you?*

*Hilary Yes, I did.*

*Cam I liked that.*

*Hilary Did you?*

*Cam Yes.*

*Hilary I don't think we should do this anymore.*

*Cam All right.*

*Hilary So that's OK with you?*

*Cam Sure. I mean, have I got a choice?*

*Hilary Because that's the best thing. I'm thinking of getting back with my husband (De Angelis, 2011, p. 86).*

Hilary has had a sexual relationship with her daughter's friend, 20-year-old Cam. In fact, the woman who has devoted herself to her family and constantly deals with the problems of her daughter and husband is now tired of doing these things. She is psychologically weak because of her husband's irresponsibility, her daughter's puberty problems and her menopause (Baştan, 2021, p. 261). In fact, Hilary wants to be desired by her husband both sexually and emotionally. However, Mark's misbehaviour is not just toward his daughter Tilly; he seems to have forgotten that he is Hilary's husband, just as he has a hard time understanding that his daughter is still a teenager, and he is not a family-oriented person. As a result, he has never understood his wife's wishes and desires. For this reason, Hilary can do nothing but try to organize her family, for she has a troubled life and is unable to spare any time for herself. In fact, she is a woman and mother who has let herself go, who is depressed, who no longer has the will to struggle, who cannot find her husband emotionally and physically when she needs him, and who is wrapped in loneliness. In this state of psychological depression, she cannot resist Cam's attention, so she cheats on her husband.

In this respect, extramarital affairs can cause the marital union to be deeply shaken and bring negative and destructive consequences to the cheated spouse. According to Blow (2005a), cheating can produce feelings such as separation anxiety, loss of self-confidence and fear of abandonment in the cheated spouses; and it can be humiliating, making the spouses feel that they are not in control of their destiny. However, cheating may lead to negative repercussions not only for the cheated spouse, but also on the cheater. Since the cheating spouse faces serious judgment by both her close circle and family, this person may also experience feelings of shame and loss. Although the feelings that arise in cheating are intense at the beginning, they can disappear over time. However, it is obvious that this intense pain felt by the individual who has been deceived is never completely erased; it is hidden somewhere in the past, and old pains will come to light when triggering situations occur over time (Blow, 2005b, p. 222).

The problem of deception that De Angelis handles in the play should be thought as proof that she takes the concepts of marriage and family seriously. The playwright continues to make the audience think about the wounds that cheating will cause in a family and how the spouses will react to the act, not only during but also after the play. The wounds that a problem such as cheating will cause in a family belongs to the spouses who are faced with cheating but who also have parental responsibility. Theatre cannot be expected to find a solution to such a social problem, because it has no function of producing remedies for complications. Therefore, it cannot be expected that De Angelis will find a solution to the cheating problem in the play. For this reason, the playwright is content to display the deep wounds caused by a dirty act such as cheating in the family and ends the play with bitter seriousness.

As a result, the conclusion of the marital relationship with infidelity can be evaluated with a multidimensional explanation. As the compatibility between the spouses and the problem solving strategies developed are directly related to the attachment styles, the reaction of the individuals to the events experienced in the relationship can also be shaped by the attachment styles. For all these reasons, attachment styles may affect the relationship satisfaction of spouses and cause the relationship to end with infidelity.

#### **5.4. Navigating Adolescent Issues in *Jumpy***

Adolescence is described as “*the period of life between childhood and adulthood*” by The Mirable Dictionary (2012, p. 12). In this regard, adolescence is defined as a period of development in which changes in cognitive, physical and social domains accelerate with psychological changes and increased autonomy, with unique characteristics (Steinberg, 2007). The period is frequently initiated when youngsters reach the age of thirteen. For both parents and their children, adolescence is one of the most attempting, demanding, and confusing times in life. According to Heaven, adolescence is a time in a young person's life when they are trying to establish their own unique identities (1996, p. 14). Furthermore, it is a stage where the adolescent may experience difficulties with a variety of behaviours. As Heaven indicates, the development of one's sexual identity occurs during the teen years (1996, p. 86), and adolescent romantic relationships are likewise becoming increasingly common.

According to the structural family theory, there are two different approaches to explain parent-adolescent relationships. In the first, it is stated that the main task of adolescence is independence from their parents and it is accepted that conflict is natural. In the second approach, it is emphasized that the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship does not change for most adolescents from childhood to adolescence. Obviously, in this process, while the warm and close relations between family members continue, new interaction patterns are created within the family that aim to adapt to the changing knowledge, skills and preferences of the adolescent (Arnett, 1999). De Angelis aims to show in her play *Jumpy* how the attitudes and behaviours of parents affect the adolescent's life with the respect of structural family theory. Tilly, who is a teenager in the play, cannot establish a close relationship with her mother and father and is in constant argument. De Angelis shows the negative effects of parents in conflict with each other in the role of dominant mother and careless father in the development of adolescents.

According to the structural family theory, the family is a system and family members are constantly interacting with each other. Each member of the family forms a subsystem such as spouse subsystem and parental subsystem. In the *Jumpy*, De Angelis reflects the family that can not form a parental subsystem. Gelles and Maynard (1987) point out that the parental subsystem deals with functions related to the good upbringing and

socialisation of children. The conversation between Tilly and her mother in the fifth scene shows that parents are having trouble raising their teenage daughters;

*Tilly I can't believe you did that, you ruined my life.*

*Hilary Don't overreact. Don't be stupid. How could I have ruined your life?*

*Tilly They won't have liked you. What did you wear?*

*Hilary I don't know.*

*Tilly You didn't wear your jeans? (De Angelis, 2011, p. 25)*

Hilary is overbearing towards her daughter and uses inappropriate words when communicating with her daughter, and the daughter is ashamed of her mother. In this case, according to the structural family theory, Hilary does not fulfil the requirements of the parental subsystem.

Adolescents receive the majority of their socialization at home, where they learn the essential ideals and values of adulthood. The child is now absorbing some of the culture and traditions of the household into which she or he was born. The teenager may learn the behaviouristic expectations for these social roles during the socialization process. During this period, the adolescent may naturally quarrel with family members. Thus, the parent-adolescent relationship is very important for the healthy development of adolescents. In the structural family systems theory, in this period, the adolescent should be separated from the sibling subsystem gradually and more autonomy and responsibility should be given to the adolescent in accordance with her/his age. Interactions between parents and children should change from parent child to parent young adult. Minuchin (1974) argues that the change of the family in this direction will lead to a successful adaptation process. However, some families cannot make the necessary changes according to changing conditions and experience some adaptation problems. Colapinto (2019) states that while individuals in the family communicate with each other, there should be a balance between them. In the play, when Hilary and Mark talk about their daughter, it is clear that they have lost their balance. For example;

*Tilly I don't care.*

*Mark I could do that again.*

*Hilary Look what you're doing. Giving in to her. She just wants us away so she can have a party.*

*Tilly Sleepover.*

*Hilary We'd come back, our loo would be pulled off the wall.*

*Mark I wasn't giving in. I was thinking aloud.*

*Tilly Forget it, Dad, she doesn't want to go with you.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 54).

As it is understood from the conversation, Hilary shows an oppressive attitude towards her daughter while Mark shows a very relaxed attitude towards his daughter and a balance problem occurs between them and this problem negatively affects the behaviour of the adolescent. In families with balance problems, a healthy interaction cannot be mentioned because it is often unclear how family members will communicate with each other (Üstündağ, 2015, p. 120).

In the modern era, it is believed that adolescents can be independent, happy and healthy individuals while maintaining their parental closeness (Steinberg, 2001). While emotional changes occur in parent-adolescent relationships, individuals also experience some biological and psychological changes during the adolescence period. Some may cope with these changes well, while others may struggle with them. Individual differences and the family are indicated as reasons for this situation. During this period, a warm attitude and closeness from a parent support the adolescent's psychological adjustment, while a rigid and rejecting attitude makes adjusting more difficult (Dalkılıç, 2006).

Obviously, children may face problems at every stage of their life, and they may develop strategies to cope with obstacles, such as reaching an object in infancy, facing family conflicts in adolescence, and having difficulties with career choices in adulthood. In this sense, a child may encounter many behavioural and emotional problems, such as moving away from his/her family and drawing closer to a peer group, starting to look for an identity. In this process, parents' attitudes and behaviours, as well as children's perspectives towards problems, may arise, and they may seek different solutions.

Among the problems experienced between parents and adolescents, there are issues such as housework, social life and friends, disobedience, cleaning, sibling relations, coming home and leaving home. The age of 12-18 is stated as the period in which the adolescent most often experiences conflicts with their parents. A certain level of debate is normal and will allow a person to grow. However, serious conflicts may cause emotional and physical harm, frequent and painful friction, running away from home, pregnancy, school



failure, and even suicide (Fetihi, 2002, p. 65). From the dialogues of Hilary and her daughter in the fifteenth scene;

*Tilly You can't control me.*

*Hilary Upstairs.*

*Tilly No.*

*Hilary Don't escalate this.*

*Tilly LOCKED UP LIKE A PRISONER.*

*Hilary I GIVE YOU LIFTS, MONEY – CHRIST, YOUR CLOTHES.*

*Tilly I hope you never get fucked again as long as you live.*

*Hilary Thank you!*

*Tilly You're too old anyway. That's what you are, too old.*

*Hilary Well the world is missing out, that's all I can say. If they can't see what I'm worth.*

*Tilly OLD.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 91).

It is understood that Tilly, who is a teenager, is disrespectful to her mother and that they have problems on almost every issue. Fisher (2016) asserts that a violent temper, misunderstandings, and ambiguities characterize Hilary and Tilly's relationship.

According to the structural family theory, comfortable or uncomfortable boundaries in the family also negatively affect the functionality of the family during adolescence. In families with high cohesion, parents have problems allowing the young person to make independent decisions, travel with friends, and age-appropriate privacy requests. The increased need for autonomy in adolescence may cause parents to be afraid of losing important reinforcements (Robin & Foster 1989). In the play, the playwright highlights Hilary as the mother in the conjoined family. Hilary does not respond to her daughter's wishes for fear of losing her influence over her daughter and prevents her from gaining autonomy. In disjointed families, on the other hand, since independent behavior is a norm within the family, the adolescent's request to take part in the decision-making process is not perceived as a threat. In the play, the playwright presents the character of Mark as the father figure in the heterogeneous family. Tilly cannot fully complete its development, as it grows in both a disjointed and conjoined family environment. According to the

structural family theory, young people who have grown up in such families and have not yet gained the ability to make the right decision can easily make mistakes. Adolescents raised in such families may engage in dangerous behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, theft, school failure, and early sexual experiences (Robin & Foster, 1989).

In *Jumpy*, De Angelis addresses the various risks that adolescents may face in their everyday lives, including unprotected sexual intercourse, pregnancy, drug use, involvement in terrorist groups, smart phone addiction, and the impact of social media. A central theme in the play is adolescent pregnancy and how it relates to the relationship between parents and their children. The playwright suggests that when parents establish warm and close relationships with their children, they are less likely to engage in sexual activity at an early age and are more likely to make responsible choices. Conversely, when parents do not show love, respect, or attention to their children, and instead impose strict and cruel rules and constant control, their children are more likely to engage in risky behaviours such as early sexual activity (Dolgin, 2014). This is seen in the characters of Tilly and Lyndsey, who, due to their upbringing in unsupportive families, become pregnant at a young age in the second act of play;

*Tilly, Lyndsey (pregnant), Hilary.*

*Lyndsey Hello, Mrs Winters.*

*Hilary Hello, Lyndsey. Call me Hilary. I'm a Ms actually, anyway.*

*Tilly Ms. Like the sound you make before you vom.*

*Hilary Well, that's who I am. Goodness, look at you, Lyndsey. When did that happen?*

*Tilly You want to know when it happened?*

*Hilary No, I didn't mean –*

*Lyndsey Lloyd Park, 10.30 p.m. September 2nd 2008. I remember everything because.*

*Hilary What?*

*Tilly Nothing. Is it your business? (De Angelis, 2011, p. 9).*

As the play progresses, Hilary talks to Lyndsey, a teenage friend of Tilly's who is pregnant. In the conversation between Hilary and teenagers;

**Hilary** *Your boyfriend. Is he still – involved?*

**Lyndsey** *No.*

**Hilary** *That's a shame.*

**Lyndsey** *He would be, but he's dead.*

**Hilary** *Dead?*

**Tilly** *Mum, I don't really think she wants to talk about it.*

**Lyndsey** *It's all right. I've come to terms with it.*

**Tilly** *It's cool of Lyndsey to keep this baby because Keiron got stabbed.*

**Hilary** *Oh God.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 9-10).

Tilly reveals that the father of her child was murdered and that he had also impregnated another girl. Through this character, De Angelis addresses the issues of teenage pregnancy and unprotected sex among young people, highlighting the importance of open communication between parents and children about sexuality. Hilary talks with her daughter about sex clearly in the end of second act;

**Hilary** *Was she using contraception?*

**Tilly** *God. Please. I don't want to hear you say that word.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 13).

The playwright emphasizes the responsibility of parents to educate their children about sex and to have open and honest conversations with them to reduce the risk of adolescent pregnancy. As Tilly and her pregnant best friend Lyndsey are leaving for a cafe, Hilary calls her daughter over, shocked by her daughter's friend being pregnant at the age of fifteen. Thus, Hilary questions her daughter about Lyndsey's use of birth control. Tilly, however, reacts angrily when she hears that word, demonstrating her ignorance about contraception. De Angelis underlines the significance of its use by teenage girls; through Tilly, the playwright also displays how teenagers' resistance to using contraception contributes to the high prevalence of teen pregnancies. Parents should also take a close interest in the education of their children to protect and educate them against physical and mental harm. For example, Hilary takes a keen interest in her daughter's education;

**Hilary** *What about your GCSEs?*

*Lyndsey I'm taking them this year. Then a year out then I'm going back to college. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 10).*

Hilary shares her concern that Lyndsey's pregnancy and future baby will have a negative impact on her GCSE result, which is an important step in the British education system. De Angelis may warn teenage girls and their mothers once again. She wants to make clear that the teenage girl's schooling will suffer as a result of the pregnancy, possibly even coming to an end. Hilary emphasizes the need for attending college and subsequently university in order to have important life experiences and a respectable profession. In this regard, Hadley (2020) reports that teenage pregnancy raises concern in low-, middle-, and high-income nations, since it increases the risk of health and educational disparities for young parents and their children. Similarly, Dimo (2019) notes that adolescent pregnancy is a global issue that has an impact on all national programs, including health, healthcare, education, and the economy, and is particularly expensive for the families and countries where it occurs.

In addition to addressing teenage pregnancy, De Angelis also highlights the importance of teenagers' dress choices and physical appearance in *Jumpy*. Tilly becomes upset when she finds out that her mother has spoken to the parents of her crush, Josh, and is particularly concerned with what her mother wore during the meeting. Tilly believes that one's sense of style is a sign of respect and self-confidence and feels that her mother's fashion choices have negatively impacted her life.

The play also addresses how technology and social media can lead to psychological problems, as Tilly and her friend Lyndsey are struggling with the pressure of image in the social media. Undoubtedly, social media makes it possible for adults and teenagers to communicate online by connecting individuals from all over the world. Sharing news or photos makes it possible for everyone to interact with others and to meet new people. In this regard, De Angelis warns parents to caution their children about using social media, including Facebook.

*Tilly On Facebook.*

*Hilary What? On Facebook – what?*

*Tilly There's stuff posted about me.*

*Hilary What?*

*Tilly Facebook-slut stuff. Because (De Angelis, 2011, p. 71).*

As referenced above, in *Jumpy*, Tilly uses Facebook improperly and publishes her private information and images. There are occasionally negative comments made about Tilly, which disturbs the young girl's mentality. Furthermore, Hilary argues that her daughter spends too much time on Facebook and as a result is unable to focus on her studies. According to Cereci (2020, p. 110), the largest danger posed by social media is that it discourages reading and thinking, leading to the development of unthinking, insensitive, and unproductive communities.

Further, De Angelis emphasizes the addiction to mobile phones as another issue affecting teenagers. A smart phone is an important piece of technology that improves people's lives and offers several advantages. It functions as a phone, camera, and minicomputer all at once. But smart phones also have their downsides, and yet they have become indispensable for people today.

*Hilary Five minutes is all I'm asking.*

*I want to talk to you.*

*Tilly God.*

*She sits down.*

*Go on then, speak.*

*Tilly's phone goes. She gets it out and reads a text, laughs. Texts back. Hilary waits till this is over. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 38).*

In *Jumpy*, De Angelis skilfully depicts Tilly's time spent on her phone. Namely, Tilly resists talking to her mother because she is too busy texting or checking social media on her technological device. Tilly declines Hilary's request to chat with her for just five minutes because she is plugged in and on her phone. This situation is causing Hilary anxiety, since, in her opinion, Tilly's mobile phone is interfering with her ability to communicate with her daughter.

To sum up, within the scope of the structural family theory, it is very important for the parents to be consistent in family relations, to maintain their boundaries and power, balance, to gain autonomy and to cope with problems. De Angelis warns parents about the various problems that adolescents may face in their everyday lives by highlighting them in the characters and plot of the play *Jumpy*. For example, Tilly and the character

of Lyndsey, who is only fifteen years old yet is pregnant and informs Hilary that the baby's father was murdered, illustrates the risks of unprotected sexual intercourse among young people. The theme of drug addiction is also present in the play, as the characters are exposed to drugs and some of them develop addictions, which highlights the potential harm that drug use can have on adolescents. Additionally, the play addresses the negative impact of technology on the adolescent's life, as it highlights how social media and technology can lead to psychological problems and how it can affect their self-esteem, relationships and their sense of self. By depicting these issues in a realistic and relatable way, De Angelis is able to convey the importance of addressing these issues to parents and caregivers of adolescents, and to raise awareness on how to prevent and support adolescents who might be struggling with these problems.

### **5.5. A Study of Parental Worries and Their Impact on Family Dynamics in *Jumpy***

The people responsible for ensuring the birth, upbringing, and growth of their children are their parents. In principle, parents have the authority and responsibility to raise their children in accordance with moral principles, traditions, and laws, as well as to protect them from harmful behaviour. However, there are too many risks in the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and parents are increasingly worried about their children. *Jumpy*, by De Angelis, makes it clear that women in particular are more concerned about their children. For example:

*Hilary I'll pick you up.*

*Tilly We're getting the night bus.*

*Hilary You've got GCSEs in a month. Don't forget.*

*Tilly A month. Yeah. I can't stay in every night like you.*

*Hilary Watch your drinks. Don't let anyone put anything in your drinks. You can have two drinks. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 11).*

In the conversation, Tilly and her pregnant friend Lyndsey go to a cafe to have fun. Tilly responds to Hilary's offer to pick up the girls that they will be returning by night bus. Hilary actually favours her daughter staying at home to study for the GCSE, is a document given to 15 and 16-year-olds in the United Kingdom to indicate their completion of secondary education, because she wants her to pursue more study after high school and eventually become a well-educated person. Hilary is also worried, since she previously

met a woman who was drugged while drinking and awoke the next morning in an unknown hotel room. She tells this anecdote to the young girls, who were planning a nice night out, and urges them to drink carefully. Given the dangers and the possibility of rape for these teenage girls, the mother is concerned. Yet, when Hilary informs the girls about drugged drinks, Tilly is unconcerned by her mother's warnings.

In another scenario regarding parental concerns, Frances, a close friend of Hilary's, who is 50 years old and an actor, has never been married and has never had a child. Whenever Hilary and Frances get together, they talk about the past. Conversations between them reveal how involved these close friends were in the 1970s women's movement, even going to street protests. Since so many things have changed in the twenty-first century, it is clear that Frances and Hilary desire their old days. These two women also discuss their personal lives throughout their conversation. For instance, Hilary talks about her concerns as a parent for Tilly, her only child. When Hilary returned home earlier than normal one day, she found her daughter, age 15, and a boy, also age 15, both virtually naked. Frances tries to reassure Hilary by explaining that this is typical behavior for teenagers while she acknowledges that she is uneasy about this situation.

In the following excerpt, after learning that Tilly's boyfriend's name is Josh, Hilary makes the decision to talk to Roland and Bea, Josh's parents, about the matter. De Angelis illustrates the changing sexual preferences of youths in the twenty-first century through the characters Tilly and Josh:

**Hilary** *Because they weren't wearing any clothes. He was in boxer shorts Tilly was in an old shirt.*

**Bea** *It doesn't mean they'd had sex.*

**Roland** *We're not arguing. We agree they did. I thought*

*Josh was looking bloody pleased with himself. I wasn't having sex when I was fifteen. Lucky sod (De Angelis, 2011, p. 21).*

Hilary notifies Josh's parents of their children's sexual activity because she is obviously concerned that they are too young. While Josh's mother tries to defend her son, Josh's father takes this truth more seriously. Additionally, Roland argues that the current situation is not satisfactory because it has changed significantly by drawing comparisons between his own youth and that of his son. When Roland was fifteen, he confesses that, unlike his child, he had not had sex.

In the play, Hilary is going through menopause at the same time her daughter Tilly is going through adolescence. This causes conflicts between the two, as they have different needs and concerns. Hilary struggles with watching her daughter embrace her sexuality and femininity while becoming increasingly anxious about losing her own femininity and attractiveness. Her emotional struggles lead her to make a decision to allow Tilly and her boyfriend Josh to spend the night together at home, as she wants to protect Tilly's future and prevent her from making mistakes. The play shows this interaction when Hilary tries to explain her decision to Mark, Tilly's father:

**Hilary** *Are we just going to sit here waiting? We should phone the police.*

**Mark** *What are they going to do? It's a teenager partying at the weekend.*

**Hilary** *This is the second night. The second night. This is not normal.*

**Mark** *No news is good news.*

**Hilary** *Why won't anyone take me seriously?*

**Mark** *I'm going to bed. Tomorrow – if – then.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 92).

It is clear from the speech above that Tilly's father Mark is not participating in the choices made for her. De Angelis emphasizes that moms worry more about their kids than fathers do, and he counsels fathers to help with these issues and duties. Unfortunately, Mark displays a passive attitude; the only action he takes is to criticize, as in:

**Mark** *Whatever. We fumbled about in the cinema.*

*We waited till university to have full sex. It was all part of the learning experience.*

*Is it respectful – to bring back – into the next room – next to your parents?*  
(De Angelis, 2011, p. 30).

Mark contrasts his own sexual urges with those of teens in the twenty-first century. According to Mark, sexuality was not experienced until a person became a university student in the past. Mark claims that the new generation is broken because of how negatively time has altered. Clearly, he is dissatisfied with the twenty-first century because many values have shifted. Obviously, both Mark and Hilary are complaining about the contemporary generation:

**Hilary** *You know what else I was thinking? That time we took Tilly and her friends down to Brighton for the day right at the end of primary school and*



*in the back of the car they were playing a game. They closed their eyes and took it in turns to tickle the inside of each other's arms, wrist to elbow, and Tilly said that's the equivalent of a quarter of an orgasm.*

*Would we have said that when we were eleven? I wouldn't. An orgasm.* (De Angelis, 2011, p. 7).

The generation gap, especially between young people and their parents, is a shift in attitudes and beliefs from one generation to the next. Mendez (2008) claims that these differences result from older and younger people not understanding one another due to their different backgrounds, worldviews, and behavioural tendencies. In other words, a generation gap occurs when most people have differing ideas regarding the present generation and their previous generation and are unable to communicate with one another about the reasons why they share the same viewpoints.

Although there have always been generational disparities, De Angelis notes through Hilary that the significant differences that the name implies did not become apparent until the twenty-first century. The playwright issues a warning to families about how the new generation and culture are being threatened, with values being destroyed and ideas like values, honesty, respect, and love on the edge of extinction. The generation subject of *Jumpy* is highlighted by theatre critic Gardner as follows:

*Just as Hilary finds it difficult to accept the harsh realities of a life gone wrong, De Angelis hits on something true about the lives of a generation of women who imagined they would live lives quite different from their moms - but never truly faces the subject* (Gardner, 2012).

Accordingly, Hilary insists on speaking with and giving counsel to Tilly in order to protect her from harm and prevent her from making mistakes. Nevertheless, despite her best efforts, Hilary is unable to complete the task. Hilary occasionally tries to be in charge, but she is ineffective because Tilly always avoids talking to her mother. Although she wishes Tilly could stay at home and study as the examinations approach, she is unable to compel her to do so.

On each occasion, Tilly's father Mark grants her permission to stay out late. In fact, Mark has discovered a simple answer to difficulties with his own unique method; when Tilly asks for something, Mark automatically accedes to her request; therefore, he does not assist Hilary with discipline. As *Jumpy* continues on, Tilly's friend Lyndsey, who is now 16 years old, has given birth to a child. Both grandmothers take turns taking care of the baby, according to Lyndsey. De Angelis hereby demonstrates the disadvantages of young

girls being mothers, since they lack the experience to properly care for their children. In this case, the young mother is actually concerned about how to raise her child, and future marriage terrifies Lyndsey because she fears her son's stepfather will abuse him:

**Lyndsey** *How I'm going to support him?*

*Will I meet someone who'll be a good dad to him? When I see on the news – stepdads who starve kids, put them in black plastic bags in the bath and the mothers stand by, I'm scared, but I won't like anyone like that, will I? Unless I change in some way, get depressed, I start taking drugs, my life spirals out of control, I end up homeless, a crack whore – but apart from that I'm fairly positive. (De Angelis, 2011, p. 79).*

*Jumpy's* turning point is Tilly's pregnancy, which inevitably causes a significant family issue. According to Bağırlar (2020), one of the reasons women are alienated from social and cultural life is that giving birth is also a type of assault on the female body. As stated before, because of the pregnancy, Hilary is worried about the future of her daughter's education and social life. Josh and Tilly's parents are absolutely opposed to having a child, and particularly Hilary fears that her life will be destroyed by her daughter's pregnancy. During an intense argument between the two families, Bea who is Josh's mother, like Hilary, claims that her son is just sixteen years old and is too young to be a parent:

**Bea** *Do we think it's OK for girls to be hyper-sexual and not bring upon themselves the, OK, unfair consequences? Josh would be expected to go to a university but as the father of a young child, he won't be developmentally experiencing what he needs – freedom – to learn – to socialise.*

**Hilary** *The same for Tilly. (De Angelis, 2011, pp. 77-78).*

Both families are deeply affected by the unexpected pregnancy and are worried about the future for their children. They come to the difficult decision that Tilly should have an abortion, but due to her emotional state, she miscarries the baby. This tragic event brings an end to the problem and also puts an end to Tilly and Josh's relationship. In the aftermath, Josh pursues a career in theatre, as encouraged by his mother, while Tilly works hard to excel in her studies. Through their kindness and consideration towards one another, Hilary, Mark, and Tilly are able to reconcile and present a united front as a happy family. De Angelis' play, *Jumpy*, illustrates the common struggles that families face during adolescence and emphasizes the importance of patience and understanding during this challenging time, allowing conflicts and difficulties to eventually pass.

*Jumpy* also highlights the importance of open communication and the role of parents in guiding their children through difficult situations. Hilary and Mark, despite their initial disagreements and struggles, ultimately come together to support Tilly and make the best decision for her future. The play also shows the complexity of mother-daughter relationships during adolescence, as Tilly grapples with her own identity and independence while also trying to navigate the expectations of her mother. The play highlights the importance of understanding, patience, and open communication, and shows how families can come together to support each other during difficult times.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

History is full of examples proving that it is impossible for the institutions created by human beings to be unaffected by social events. This inevitable truth is also valid for the family, which is the most important social institution. The most obvious example of this is how the family has changed over time, a phenomenon with a history that is as old as humankind itself.

Social changes and transformations have shaped humanity's journey from clan to nuclear family. The most important events that have had an impact on today's family are portrayed as the industrial revolution and the two great world wars. The nuclear family, born with the industrial revolution, underwent a metamorphosis, especially after the Second World War. This war caused great confusion in the inner world of the individuals and dulled their sense of home. Thus, the families formed by these individuals, and in which they exist, have been adversely affected in parallel with the chaos in the person's inner world.

The chaos, conflict, or loosening of family bonds observed in the post-war family structure in the West is naturally reflected in the theatre of the period. Because theatre may be impacted by any social occurrences, it cannot be expected to remain unaffected in the face of the negativities experienced in the family. In consequence of this, every post-World War English playwright has included issues affecting the contemporary family in their works (Chandika, 1993, p. 163).

Without a doubt, April De Angelis is one of the most significant writers to have incorporated the trauma experienced by the family in England during the final years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century into her plays. It is an undeniable fact that De Angelis, who started her career in London in 1980, deals with important issues related to the family in her works in the manner of a sociologist. The playwright, who aims to reflect the difficult life of family members and the reflections of its conflicts on society from her own perspective, thus handles serious issues and social behaviours in her comedies.

The significant issues that De Angelis deals with, mainly in the context of the families' increasing crises, are certainly not far removed from the realities of the age, as the playwright sees life as it is and as it should be. For this reason, De Angelis portrays the family as a dominant reflection of real complex lives in her plays. The playwright

consistently reveals the problematic life story of society, starting from the fact that the family is raw material for the theatre that will never lose its importance. April De Angelis is aware of the fact that the family is an environment that the theatre audience will not have difficulty in understanding, and that it is suitable for creating an emotional impact and making them think. She consciously chooses impressive family-related topics and establishes a warm relationship with her audience through the topics she chooses. In this communication comfort, she develops her subjects to the extent she wishes.

De Angelis' plays reflect problems such as insensitivity, lack of communication, lack of love, and cheating, as well as problems such as irresponsibility, parent and child conflict, alienation, and moral corruption, which concern the whole family; thus, demonstrating that the writer does not demonstrate the English middle class family alone rather, the family problems that she deals with in her plays are common issues affecting all contemporary families in general. Therefore, it is necessary to look at her plays from the perspective of family theories. The extracts have been selected to analyse, and the chosen extracts have been used to depict the Symbolic Interaction, Attachment and Structural Family Theory. The responses of the characters and the audience to these theories have been discussed. As a result of the study, it has been demonstrated that playwright reflects the family problems in postmodern period by using family theories.

Furthermore, the family issues that April De Angelis sensitively portrays in her plays with the skill of a playwright are too vast to be judged only by the complexity of male-female relationships. These problems concern the whole family, consisting of parents, children, and other relatives, and even society itself. For this reason, this thesis has attempted to analyse April de Angelis' play *Jumpy*, which includes all these problems and mirrors the British society.

This study has focused on Mead's Symbolic Interaction theory, Bowlby's Attachment Theory and Minuchin's Structural Family Theory to analyse the selected text. It has demonstrated that family is a fundamental tool used by De Angelis to show the conflicts of postmodern period to her audience within their social domestic environments. Moreover, it has shown that De Angelis is a great playwright who properly uses postmodern family in her play *Jumpy*. In her play *Jumpy*, she explores values, concerns and domestic and social issues of the postmodern family.

The family theories, we have employed to analyse the selected text, suit well to the family structure De Angelis utilizes in her play. The family theories used by De Angelis attract the attention of the audience and help them perceive the problems that may occur in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Since the play's themes are based on real-world occurrences and conversations from everyday life, the audience can identify with them. This study has shown that there are parallels between the social causes of family difficulties and the reasons for actual conversations or events. It has been noted that several family theories are employed in the play extracts.

Communication problems in the play are discussed in the context of symbolic interaction theory. According to the symbolic interaction theory, there is meaning making on the basis of social interactions between people. People share common symbols such as language and signs. The basis of the theory is the interpretation and making sense of these symbols. Everyone has a certain place in the family and has to fulfill certain roles. Symbolic interaction theory emphasizes issues such as mate choice, family roles, marital interaction and child rearing. April De Angelis also examined two different families in the *Jumpy* play and analyzed their fulfillment of their roles in the family. She clearly reflected the communication problems that can be encountered when the members of the family do not fulfill their duties and the consequences of these problems in the dialogues of the individuals in the play with each other. It is possible to encounter the problem of cheating in a family where there is a communication problem.

The problem of deceit in the play is discussed in the context of attachment theory. According to attachment theory, an individual's sense of attachment begins in infancy and affects her whole life. In addition to childhood attachment styles, this situation reveals the importance of their effects in adulthood. One of the most crucial factors in explaining adjustment and behavior patterns in romantic partnerships is adult attachment types. In this case, inferences can be made on many issues such as relationship adjustment, tendency to cheat and desire for divorce, according to attachment style in romantic relationships. There were many common aspects between attachment styles and marital adjustment relationship. The most notable of these can be considered as the discomfort of people with avoidant attachment style from intimacy in the relationship and the reflection of conflict situations experienced by anxious attachment style to the relationship. April De Angelis also reflected the reasons and consequences of infidelity

of married individuals by addressing which attachment styles the characters have in her play.

It is inevitable for children who grow up in families with communication conflict and deception to have problems within themselves and in the society. Therefore, the problems experienced by the adolescents in the play were examined in the context of structural family theory. According to the structural family theory, the family is a system that exhibits a consistent behavior and is limited to the sum of the elements that are in a harmonious relationship with each other. Structural family theory emphasizes that the family should create a system to cope with internal and external problems. Within the theory, there are many basic concepts such as parent subsystem, sibling subsystem, boundaries, power and balance. April De Angelis points out the problems that adolescents may encounter when parents cannot establish this system in a healthy way in *Jumpy*.

On the verge of family theories, the events such as deceit, miscommunication between spouses and conflicts that revolve around mothers-adolescents in De Angelis' *Jumpy*, staged in 2011, are remarkable. In the play, the playwright examines the situations that may cause cheating between spouses and the problems that may arise as a result of cheating, taking the life of an ordinary English family as an example. One of the most important reasons for cheating is undoubtedly communication problems between spouses. A couple who cannot communicate with each other sets a bad example for both their children and the society they live in. A child who is in the middle of constant conflict within the family cannot develop healthy relationships in the household and the environment. Since children complete their personal development during adolescence, the environment they live in is of great importance for their future and for the structure of society.

In this regard, adolescence, which marks the passage from childhood to adulthood, often begins when a child reaches the age of thirteen. In *Jumpy*, De Angelis shows how adolescence is unquestionably one of the most unexpected, demanding, stressful, and perplexing periods of development for both the young people themselves and for their parents. *Jumpy* serves as a warning to parents about the risks that teenagers face on a daily basis, particularly in the twenty-first century, addressing inappropriate sexual interactions, pregnancy, narcotics, joining extreme groups, mobile phone addiction, and social media in order to depict the crippling issues that youth may experience.

In *Jumpy*, Hilary and her daughter Tilly frequently argue about Tilly's need to demonstrate that she has matured despite still being just fifteen years old. They both become tense over small issues, and Tilly's voice becomes especially angry. However, her mother regards her as just a little girl, and Tilly claims that her mother is oppressive and tries to control everything. Additionally, she feels contempt for Hilary, since she thinks her mother does not look good in her clothes.

Children are naturally highly important to parents, and as a result, they want to keep them safe from any potential dangers in the outer world. In *Jumpy*, however, the mothers care for their children more than their fathers; thus, it stands to reason that mothers are significantly more concerned about their children's education and futures. Furthermore, De Angelis demonstrates in *Jumpy* that challenges with mother-daughter relationships are common in adolescence and appear to improve over time.

The themes in her plays, which reveal that April De Angelis is an original playwright, also prove that she takes on universal issues and is constantly evolving. The most distinctive development that the writer has demonstrated in her profession is viewed as her exploration of the spirit worlds of the family members she brings to the stage. As De Angelis develops her talents, she begins to act more like a psychologist than a theatre actor in her plays, shedding light on the inner worlds of her family members. It cannot be considered as a coincidence that the characters whose internal worlds the playwright examines are mostly composed of women and children. Because of the problems in the family, women and children are more often negatively affected due to their biological and mental structures. As a result, it can be understood more easily why the playwright portrays spiritual darkness in the world of women and children in her plays.

Through this undertaking, De Angelis asks the individual to look at him/herself in the mirror she holds up in her theatre and to put a check on family life. In so doing, the playwright strives to keep the family upright despite all the difficulties faced by the household in postmodern society and does not allow it to collapse at the conclusion of her plays. Thus, it can be said that De Angelis, with a conservative perspective, believes that the family should always be a whole and that her heart does not allow children to lack a happy home throughout their lives. Moreover, the playwright not only reflects the visible world of the members of the family, but also reveals how its lifestyle will affect a society. Therefore, while the playwright presents the tragedy of the postmodern family in reality through her comedies, she knows well how indispensable a sacred institution the



household has always been for the society and shares this belief with her audience and readers.

The study has tried to introduce April De Angelis to the theatre and literature lovers as no specific study has been done on her in Turkey so far. The family theories have recently been applied to dramatic text. Future researchers can study April De Angelis' works from different perspectives to introduce her works to readers, theatre and literature lovers. De Angelis' play shed light on the family structure of postmodern society. Moreover, April De Angelis' *Jumpy* can be incorporated into a moral corruption in postmodern period. All in all, we could say that the family is the building block of society and it is an institution that will exist forever despite all the problems.

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