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THE POLITICS OF POWER AND GOVERNANCE IN DAVID HARE'S THE ABSENCE OF WAR: AN ANALYSIS THROUGH ORGANSKI'S POWER TRANSITION THEORY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to analyze the power relations and mechanisms of governance in the play *The Absence of War* by David Hare, and intends to use the principles of Organski's theory of power transition as a conceptual framework for a structural reading of intra-party competitions and crises of legitimacy [24]. The approach used is interdisciplinary and attempts to link international relations theory with literary textual analysis in order to show how the symbolic components of the narrative and institutional indicators of the Labor Party in Hare's text represent the general arrangements of the power pyramid. The method of work is based on a content analysis of the dramatic text along with deductive interpretations of the foundational texts of the theory of transition; Scene evidence, dialogues, and the internal structure of characters are examined as primary sources, and indicators such as the identity legitimacy of the leadership, the concentration of institutional resources, and the role of communication tools in determining public satisfaction are extracted as analytical variables. The assumed society of the study is the text of the play, and the analyses are extended from the micro level (intra-party interactions and the role of communication consultants) to the institutional level (lack of collective representative institutions and weak accountability mechanisms) to allow for logical analogy with the processes of power transition in the framework of Organski. The results obtained show that the party apparatus's attempt to engineer the message and modify the personality of the leader [26, 27] both erodes his charismatic legitimacy and weakens the capacity of the opposition party to become a real disgruntled competitor. Such a pattern of behavior pushes authoritarian competition toward conservative convergence, reducing the likelihood of a fundamental transition but increasing

the potential for an identity crisis. The role of the media and communication consultants in insinuating narrative hegemony [25] has shown that controlling discourse has a decisive power in stabilizing the status quo or accelerating the transfer of power, and the lack of intermediary representative institutions and legitimate channels of participation has been identified as a facilitating factor in the growth of discontent and the reduction of governance efficiency. The research conclusion emphasizes the need to rebuild institutional capital and strengthen structural accountability; politicians and civic activists need to recreate intermediary institutions, promote transparency in decision-making processes, and train ethical communication skills [27] at leadership levels to enable a peaceful redistribution of power and restore political legitimacy. Suggestions for future research include quantitative measurement of identity legitimacy indicators and comparative comparison of parliamentary samples within the framework of transition theory to strengthen the generalizability of the results.

KEYWORDS: Politics, Power, Governance, Organski's Power Transition Theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concepts of power and governance are at the heart of political analysis. Power is commonly defined as the ability to influence the actions or beliefs of others [22], and governance refers to the ways in which this power is exercised in the management of public affairs [3, p. 61]. French et al. divided the bases of power into types such as expert power and punitive power. Effective governance often requires a judicious combination of these bases of power [7, p. 160]. de Clercy examines the challenges of modern leadership, including its ethical and democratic dimensions. Within political systems, parties compete to acquire and exercise power through governance [4, p. 4]. Drecker shows that these competitions can lead to complex dynamics such as polarization in public policy discourse [5, p. 8].

The interactions between policymakers and communication managers in the play reflect the competition for control of the public narrative; The ability to control the narrative is considered a decisive variable in consolidating or weakening the position of the leader. Measuring these variables with the analytical tools of the theory of power transition helps to understand the cycles of rise and fall of legitimacy more systematically [18, p. 658]. The presence of structural conflicts in the text disrupts the operational efficiency of institutions and reduces the capacity of the state to implement policies; from the perspective of the theory of power transition, such a situation can lead to the intensification of reformist pressures and an increase in the likelihood of role redistribution [16, p. 404]. The role of the media and public opinion in the play indicates a tool that can strengthen the ascending actors or consolidate the position of dominant actors; the impact of these tools on governance processes is a key aspect of the present analysis [1, p. 42].

The interdisciplinary analysis presented shows that modern governance cannot be separated from the symbolic and structural actions within institutions; the lack of balance between public legitimacy and institutional authority leads to a decrease in public trust and difficulty in implementing policies [8, p. 208]. A suitable theoretical framework for analyzing this conflict is Power Transition Theory, first proposed by A.F.K. Organski in the context of international relations. Organski's theory is based on the principle that the structure of the international system is hierarchical, not anarchic, and is guided by a dominant power that defines and maintains the status quo [16, p. 405]. According to this theory, stability is threatened when

a disaffected and rising power, dissatisfied with the distribution of resources and influence within the status quo, approaches a point of "transition" or parity with the dominant power. This situation significantly increases the likelihood of conflict, as the challenging power seeks to redefine the rules of the game in its favor [20, p. 4]. Although the theory was originally designed to explain major interstate wars, its basic principles of hierarchy, discontent with the status quo, and dynamics of power change are remarkably applicable to the analysis of domestic politics, and in particular the competition between political parties within a system of government.

The politics of power and governance, as a conceptual framework, encompasses a network of relations of authority, legitimacy, and executive power, and the analysis of each specific political case requires a careful review of these concepts. The concept of power in A.F.K. Organski's theory of power transition is formulated as a relationship between dominant and ascendant actors, and the ability to change power relations is introduced as the main factor of political turmoil and reorganization [16, p. 406]. The concept of governance reveals the boundary between the formal authority of institutions and public consent; the lack of synergy between these two elements is the basis for reducing the effectiveness of policymaking and strengthening institutional gaps [17, p. 65].

Organsky argues that the structure of the international system is hierarchical and driven by a dominant power (405). Tammen et al. emphasize that stability is threatened when a disaffected power seeks to redefine the rules. This framework is also applicable to the study of party competition in a domestic system of government (5). Research demonstrates the continuing relevance of power studies at the macro level. The theory of power transition is based on a hierarchical structure in which more powerful actors see their dominant position threatened by rising actors, and control responses often lead to tensions and role redistribution [6, p. 295]. This approach is characterized by simultaneous attention to material indicators of military and economic power and institutional structural indicators that measure the capacity to change the status quo.

The major political parties in a democracy, such as the United Kingdom, can be viewed as "powers" within a closed system in which a ruling party plays the role of the "dominant power." By controlling the state apparatus, the ruling party shapes national laws and narratives in accordance with its ideology and interests, and in effect defines the "status quo" [10, p.

49]. The opposition party, especially if it has been in the minority for a long time, assumes the role of a “challenging power” that must either adapt to the rules set by the dominant opponent or attempt to challenge and change those rules [10, p. 56].

David Hare’s play *The Absence of War* provides a rich context for dissecting these concepts by examining the conflict between personal ideals and the imperatives of the political arena. In *The Absence of War*, David Hare paints a detailed portrait of the British Labour Party. The protagonist, George Jones, is a leader who sacrifices his moral principles to the advice of communications strategists. This scenario depicts the theoretical opposition between soft power and hard power [23]. When we analyze this work from the perspective of power transition theory, Jones’s tragedy becomes more apparent. Rather than being a genuine “disgruntled challenger,” his party becomes an actor simply seeking a replacement at the top of the same hierarchy. de Clercy notes that such ethical dilemmas are among the challenges of modern leadership [4, p. 6]. Hare’s play provides an empirical context in which internal party institutional indicators and political communication tools play roles similar to those of macro-theoretical indicators; such an analogy allows for a theoretical reading of the text as a microcosm of international politics at the national level.

The play’s protagonist, George Jones, inspired by the Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock, is depicted as sacrificing his moral principles to the advice of communications strategists in order to increase his chances of winning the general election. George Jones’s personal tragedy is that he ultimately neither remains true to his original ideals nor succeeds in attracting moderate voters. His attempt to conform to the standards of the status quo empties his political persona and obscures his message. His eventual electoral defeat is the inevitable result of this process of inference.

In examining the power relations and mechanisms of governance in David Herr’s play *The Absence of War*, A.F.K. Organski’s theoretical approach to power transition allows for a systems-oriented and structural reading of intra-party and state-oriented political processes; this theorizing depicts the structure of the international system as a hierarchical pyramid and emphasizes moments of relative balance of power that increase the likelihood of confrontation or redistribution of power. Herr’s text demonstrates how intra-party rivalries and the decentralization of responsibilities at the operational level erode the effectiveness of leadership; Such a

process can be read from the perspective of power transfer theory, because the internal structure of the party can be seen as a micro-reflection of the power pyramid in which structural inequalities and changing expectations of actors become the basis for crisis.

The play’s text accurately depicts the psychological states and entanglement of the party leader in a network of advisors and slogans that can be presented to the audience; Hare’s depiction of a leader unable to make decisive decisions raises fundamental questions about the legitimacy of authority and the capacity to govern, and allows these questions to be aligned with Organski’s power measurement components. Textual analysis requires a focus on three overlapping areas: the institutional and organizational elements of the party, the internal politics that shape public policy, and the new forms of intra-institutional conflicts that undermine the functioning of governance; these three areas, in their intertwining, specify the structure of political opportunities and threats and connect Organski’s reading to the level of national political micro-studies.

David Hare skilfully shows how George Jones, initially a man of deep-rooted and original ideas, is gradually pressured by his party apparatus—composed of communications consultants, pollsters, and Tory politicians—to blunt and blunt any sharp edges of criticism and any proposals for real change. This process neutralizes a potential power transition. Rather than appearing as a genuine disaffected power intent on disrupting the established order, the Labour Party becomes a submissive challenger who only wishes to replace himself at the top of the same hierarchy of power, without any intention of fundamentally changing the rules. This scenario contradicts the predictions of Organski’s theory, where the challenging power is dissatisfied with the status quo, but its strategy is not challenge but convergence and accommodation.

The aim of this article is to present an interdisciplinary reading that links a relatively broad theory of power transfer with a detailed textual analysis of a contemporary dramatic work, to show how political literature has the power to represent and critique the complexities of governance, and how the theoretical tools of political science can help to expand our understanding of the hidden layers of power in cultural texts. The present study examines the representation of domestic politics, political figures, and principles of government in *The Absence of War*. This article analyzes David Hare’s questioning of leadership issues and the

shortcomings of political institutions through the play's plot, characters, and themes. This chapter examines the representation of domestic politics, political figures, and principles of government in the play *The Absence of War*. The main purpose of the analysis is to explore David Hare's critiques of government institutions and leadership weaknesses that are implicitly and explicitly raised in the story, characters, and themes of the play.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the literature on the politics of power and governance in David Hare's play *The Absence of War* shows that existing studies have focused mainly on literary or historical analyses, with little attention paid to systematic theoretical frameworks in political science. Early studies of David Hare's works have identified his trilogy as the most critical works in the study of British institutions.

Study of Özcan (2021) has presented a historical-critical image of *The Absence of War* that focuses on the central focus of the right and left ideological conflict in the UK in the 1970s. The author has shown that the text of Hayer is not merely a critical reign of the Labor Party but also the representation of intra-party processes and leadership imagery processes; The role of electoral rationality and advertising equipment in the transformation of the party's ideological content has been highly highlighted. The research method is integrated and based on historical textual reading and context; The conclusion of the value of the composition of the play studies and political history highlights the understanding of the mechanisms of legitimacy in the dramatic context. The vision of this important article for the present study is to show that the structural theories of international relations are capable of reopening the internal concepts of power, subject to the adaptation of concepts to national and cultural scale.

The article by Takkaç (2006) has presented a comprehensive reading of the play that has marked the link between the concept of "war" and domestic politics at the semantic core of the text. Takkaç's analysis focuses on characters' actions, party advisory structures and communication technologies, arguing that it is a symbolic mechanism for displaying power competition in democracy. The importance of this study is to provide textual evidence of details and scene situations. The methodological criticism of the article focuses on the lack of conceptual explicit bonding with structural change theories based on power distribution, and this weakness provides an opportunity for new study.

Mazanoğlu (2022) has considered the anthropological and archive-oriented role in shaping the image of the dramatic leaders and has read the character of George Jones from the perspective of "the possibility/lack of change". The result of the study was that Hare shows the crisis of legitimacy by showing conflict between professional consultants and party leaders, indicating that institutional and technocratic pressures can thwart the change of leaders. The capacity of this article to link the dramatic narrative to the indicators of political satisfaction at the theoretical level is its strength and will inspire a combination of power transmission framework with text analysis.

The article by Sandra Mayer (2019) has examined the image of Hare from the perspective of "Artistic/Political Elite" and has shown that the author constructs his work in a middle-aged field that makes both institutional criticism and different legitimacy for his political works. Mayer's analysis has emphasized the role of biography, lectures, and non-extensive interventions, and has made the reading of the link between the author's position and the form of power representation in the play. This article is important for current research because it makes it clear that the effect is not the only product of the scene; The textual function is in relation to the author's social persona, and from this perspective, the theory of power transfer can help identify the narrative's motives and clusters.

The fundamental work in A.F.K. Organski (1958) is the beginning of the theory of power transmission, and the foundations of theory are the international power pyramid, the concept of unhappy challenge, and the possibility of conflict between near-relative balance. The theoretical structure of Organski is based on the combination of economic, demographic and political indicators as a criterion of power, and the key doctrine is the higher risk of dealing with the transition periods of power distribution. The generalization of the principles of this theory to the internal political spheres, from our research point of view, enables the recitation of party internal competitions in the form of a "transfer power" process; Such a generalization requires conceptual care and adjustment of indicators, but provides significant theoretical capacity.

A major gap in the existing research is the failure to apply Organski's power transition theory framework to the analysis of *The Absence of War*. Previous studies have been largely descriptive in approach and have not utilized the analytical capacities of political theories. Even those studies that have addressed the political dimensions of

Herr's works have failed to show a systematic connection between the different levels of analysis. None of the studies have specifically examined the concept of "status quo" in Organski's theory and its reflection in the play. By filling these gaps, the present research seeks to provide a new analysis of the power dynamics in the play *The Absence of War* by applying Organski's theory of power transition.

3. RESULTS

3.1. *Political Establishment and Domestic Policies in the Absence of War*

The Absence of War, by David Hare, is an analysis of the political structure and domestic politics in the contemporary world. The domestic politics depicted in the play are reflected critically and analytically, especially in the context of government principles, political decisions, and the social situation of society. In *The Absence of War*, politicians and government leaders face problems and crises that are based on structural weaknesses and inefficiency of institutions. The play reflects the tensions at the leadership level and attempts to portray the failures of political systems and the problems of management in the domestic arena. This part analyzes the domestic politics and political structures present in *The Absence of War*, raising questions about the effectiveness of the system of government, the principles of decision-making, and the handling of domestic crises. Hare examines power relations, domestic policy-making, and moral and social challenges to show how politicians face fundamental problems in realizing their ideals and, ultimately, how the role of leadership and government institutions in this process is strongly influenced by internal weaknesses and shortcomings.

ANDREW: It's a problem with opposition. The government has cars. And teams of civil servants. Resources. Buildings. Access to the facts. But

George has much less. He has only his own private office. (He smiles.)

George has to make do with us.

(LINDSAY smiles politely.)

LINDSAY: Yes.

ANDREW: You've met George already?

LINDSAY: Only socially (*The Absence of War* 14)

In the play *The Absence of War*, Andrew's dialogue illustrates the structural differences between the government and the opposition that reveal the imbalances in domestic politics. The government, as the dominant actor in the political pyramid, is the preventive from the gathering of institutional power and extensive resources that

enables organization, allocation and reproduction; This formal structure consolidates the practical authority of managers with the bureaucratic hierarchy and modest rules. The organization of "cars", the "government staff teams" networks, and the monopoly of access to information, create systematic privileges that play a key role in maintaining power officials and their dominance over decision-making processes. Research on government capacity has shown that organizational capability and the ability to collect data and resources enhance the possibility of centralized policy-making and continuity of penetration of elite. The existence of reliable information mechanisms and selective utilization of data on data, the ability to adjust the public narrative, and control the criteria of performance evaluation to government actors; The use of government information to form major decisions creates a practical advantage in political competition. Finally, executive mastery of the government agents and the ability to select the administrative structures selectively enhance the capacity to advance the rule of the rulers and deepen the control of decision-making processes.

In contrast, the opposition under George is condemned to operate within significant constraints, symbolized by his "private office" and his reliance on personal connections such as Andrew and Lindsay. The personal interaction between Lindsey and Andrew implicitly reflects a broader theme of political establishment. Lindsey's polite response and her limited engagement with George reflect the social and structural norms that reinforce state supremacy and discredit opposition efforts. This dynamic, within Organski's framework, illustrates how difficult it is to achieve a balance or successful transfer of power when institutional advantages strongly favor the incumbent and opposition forces do not have equivalent access to systematic resources [10].

The country is tired. This government is tired.

It has lived out its life. It has been here too long and now it continues without any vitality or effective policy.

(From all round him there are cries of 'Question!', 'What's your question?')

It exists purely for one purpose: it exists in order to continue to exist.

(There is uproar.) (*The Absence of War* 22)

According to Organski's theory of the transition of power, this part of the play depicts the gap between the state and domestic politics. The exhaustion of the state and the state that continues to function "without vitality or effective politics"

reflects the state of a ruling force that has lost its ability to innovate or respond to the needs of society. The reactions of the crowd, such as cries of "Question!" and "What is your question?", indicate public discontent and an attempt to challenge the legitimacy of the state. This excitement and uproar reflect the tension between the ruling classes and the opposing forces, which, within the framework of Organski's theory, indicates a period when there is a possibility of a shift in power and the emergence of a new force in the power pyramid. The state, despite its fatigue and impotence, uses its structural resources to resist this change, but such a situation only leads to an increase in discontent and internal pressures, which can ultimately lead to a change of power [9, p. 29].

ANDREW: She's win-at-all-costs. She's sell-your-own-mother. That doesn't worry me. (He looks round a moment.) It's more ... I know it sounds silly. She makes me nervous. I don't think we know who she is.

(The others frown, restless now. But GEORGE turns calmly to GWENDA, quite level.)

GEORGE: Give me a cigarette.

OLIVER: Look ...

GEORGE: I understand (The Absence of War 27)

This part of the play *The Absence of War* illustrates the complexities of the internal relations of political institutions in the context of internal politics and the struggles of power reveals; Where the description of one of the characters as a person who is willing to pay every price for a price, reveals deep distrust in the political organization and shows an atmosphere in which individuals and groups refuse to cooperate and trust each other to preserve their interests.

George's peace of mind shows a different approach to managing and controlling the crisis, and his simple request for a cigarette is a sign of understanding his situation and peace in the middle of tensions; A sign that highlights the gap between the leader and his surroundings. This gap is a reflection of the internal challenges of the opposite of the opposition that will have to cross tensions and disputes in order to achieve a coherent identity or strategy, and the political dynamics of such conditions show how the relationships between the elites can transition power or change in domestic politics.

We keep George moving. We brief very hard. He learns his lines and he sticks to them.

ANDREW: He has to.

OLIVER: This has been the whole direction of this office. Games theory! If you don't take risks, then you

don't make mistakes.

(LINDSAY looks round, puzzled.)

LINDSAY: Yes, I see.

OLIVER: The great thing with George is he knows he has weaknesses. He wants to get better. He wants to improve (The Absence of War 44).

In this section of *The Absence of War*, the analysis of political structure and domestic politics focuses on managerial approaches and political strategies. The focus on George's constant movement and his adherence to defined lines indicates a political structure that relies heavily on control and careful management to maintain coherence and prevent errors. Oliver's emphasis on "game theory" and risk aversion reflects a survival strategy in an unstable political environment.

Money's a simple master in that way. But our master is different. And causes more argument. Our master is justice. (He spreads his hands ironically.) And no two people agree what that is. (OLIVER is shifting discontentedly wanting to interrupt but GEORGE looks at him before he can.) So – yes, you're right – we always have this dilemma. Justice has no organizations. It has no schools. It did have once. They were called unions. But the communities that produced them have gone (The Absence of War 30).

Conversations in the selected section of the play *The Absence of War* reveal the deep tension of the political structure around the concept of justice; Referring to money as a "simple servitude" is in a firm opposition to justice that is not descriptive and impartial and fosters a contradiction that makes efforts to define and exercise justice in the domestic politics space. The lack of specific institutions or schools for justice creates a gap between the theories of governance and the real needs of society, and therefore reflects the reduction of unions' influence as the collective voice of workers, weakening the defence of rights and a sense of inability; Such a transformation can be a sign of a widespread political crisis that demonstrates traditional mechanisms in responding to contemporary demands.

The interactions of the characters depict the conflict between individual demands and the necessities of collective governance; Oliver's attitude change is a testament to awareness of the inefficiency of the current political dialogue, and George's dominance of conversation is a symbol of power battles in the issues of justice that turns the differences of views into conflict, not into agreement. How to manage the dialogue and determine the presence of the opposite voice plays a decisive role in shaping political ideologies and strategies, and the possibility of achieving a coherent and equitable

policy will be limited until institutions are linked to people.

3.2. *Governance Dissected: Domestic and Political Narratives*

David Hare's play *The Absence of War* presents a portrait of the complexities of politics and government, where domestic issues and political narratives are intertwined. The work examines power relations, domestic policymaking, and their impact on social and political interactions. Using engaging dialogues and deep characters, Hare depicts the challenges existing in government structures and social institutions. The play offers a profound reflection of the contradictions and internal tensions in the process of governance. The characters represent different social perspectives, each seeking to redefine justice and the rules of governance; this diversity of perspectives helps to clarify the theoretical and practical contradictions about the legitimacy of power.

In David Hare's play, the reading of political actions and the struggle for justice can be interpreted by relying on Organski's theory of power transition; Organski has depicted the international structure as a pyramid of power in which the dominant power and the emerging power in the stage of reaching equilibrium create the potential for confrontation [16, p. 315]. The characters in Hare's text can be considered as symbols of different political actors in a social system, each with their own relative share of power and level of political satisfaction; the difference in perceptions of justice and the governance of society, like the difference in interests between the dominant state and the rival in power, leads to political instability and crisis. The political reactions of the actors when faced with demands for justice are similar to the military or diplomatic behavior of states in periods of power transition; When incumbent actors insist on maintaining the status quo and emerging actors feel dissatisfied with the legitimacy structure, a scenario of conflict intensification and threat to the existing order emerges [16, p. 315].

The characters' inner discourses contain indicators of cultural and social discontent that play a role equivalent to the structural drivers of power transition theory; each character's individual narrative reflects the degree of acceptance of the existing order and the willingness to change the structure, a situation that Organski and Kugler have explained in later analyses as the relationship between relative power parity and the likelihood of conflict (19). The institutions that stand up to

demands for justice in the present play act like the dominant powers of the aforementioned theory, and their institutional resistance to change complicates the process of transition; the result of this internal and institutional conflict is the production of political crisis and the need to redefine the rules of legitimacy of governance [17, p. 19].

People do stupid things. Like wear your bloody T-shirt and then vote against you.

GEORGE: It's their right. It's the only right they've got.

(There is a moment's silence.)

You can never depend on them.

(GEORGE looks away, seeming to be thinking of something else entirely. A chill in the room.)

OLIVER: This time we'll be fine (The Absence of War 27).

By examining the reactions, criteria, and patterns of collective decision-making, the dialogues shed light on the dimensions of people's political and social behavior; the phrase "People do stupid things" refers to cognitive deficiencies, information errors, and irrational choices in group behavior, and reveals the role of norms, social pressures, and the lack of transparent information channels in guiding political voting and actions. The aforementioned dialogues highlight the contradiction between the internal narratives of the government system and objective political realities, and indicate the conflict between official meaning-making and the everyday experiences of citizens; analyzing such a contradiction within Organski's theoretical framework indicates situations where the distribution of power is on the verge of change, as a crisis of legitimacy, the inability of elites to respond effectively, and reliance on predetermined procedures make political structures more fragile. The consequence of this fragility is the emergence of negative feedback loops, the intensification of collective biases, and the creation of thresholds of social sensitivity that can accelerate or facilitate power transition processes; in such an environment, the role of effective leaders in rebuilding public trust and redefining political narratives becomes crucial [24].

George is extraordinary. Incorruptible. A great Party leader. As great in his way as any this Party has had. And what's more, still full of ideas. But – if we must identify a political weakness – he cannot in public always give those ideas articulate expression. (He pauses, tightrope-walking.) So we have sought to take this into account. (BRYDEN is watching silently, giving nothing away.) We keep George moving. We brief very hard. He learns his lines and

he sticks to them (*The Absence of War* 44).

George's character as an incorruptible leader full of new ideas demonstrates the importance that the governance system places on a leader's individual capabilities. This contrast between intellectual richness and communication weakness raises serious questions about the effectiveness of existing mechanisms; mechanisms that do not have the capacity to transform pure ideas into practical actions. Such a situation not only limits the possibility of realizing leadership capacities, but also creates a practical gap between theory and practice in governing society. Ultimately, this issue shows that political systems, even with competent leaders, can fail to achieve desirable governance goals due to structural obstacles to the effective transmission of concepts. The team management that sets clear lines for George and requires him to maintain them reflects a structure that attempts to compensate for the leader's individual weaknesses by relying on strict control and direction. The dependence of political systems on coordination and management from above reflects the internal mechanisms of power and hierarchy that are reflected in Organski's theory of power transition. Deciding on predetermined solutions reduces the creative use and inherent capabilities of leaders, making the regime less receptive to change in response to environmental changes [27].

3.3. *Domestic Conflicts and Governance in the Absence of War*

The topic of domestic conflicts and governance in *The Absence of War* examines one of the most complex and important social and political challenges. This issue becomes even more important when we know that internal conflicts may still become a serious threat to the security and stability of countries despite the absence of external wars.

The importance of recognizing the factors that underlie internal conflicts is fundamental; ethnic tensions, economic inequalities, administrative corruption, weak governance institutions, and foreign interventions can each be a strong driver for intensifying disputes and pushing society towards crisis, so governments are obliged to identify the aforementioned factors and develop comprehensive management plans to prevent the spread of conflicts and establish social stability; Strengthening institutions and providing governance structures based on justice, transparency, and accountability play a decisive role in promoting the legitimacy of governance; the independence of the judiciary, improving administrative capacity, and ensuring

transparent accountability in decision-making processes reduce management gaps and lower the likelihood of organized violence; Developing participatory mechanisms in local decision-making and strengthening legitimate channels for resolving disputes makes it possible to curb violent solutions, and creating legal and social platforms based on fairness and accountability is considered a fundamental condition for maintaining lasting peace and security.

Seventy per cent agree with this statement: 'The Labour Party no longer stands for anything distinctive.'

OLIVER: Oh come on, now please!

(ANDREW smiles across at him, amused at the familiarity of this. But

LINDSAY is beside GEORGE who is frowning at the figures.)

LINDSAY: The worst effect, you'll see, is on your own standing. Look there ... These verbals ... There ...

OLIVER: This is poison! George, she's feeding you poison (*The Absence of War* 40).

The aforementioned fragment presents the presence of an actor like George as a decisive factor in the political balance; the high percentage of those who agree with the proposition of lack of partisan distinction indicates a decline in structural legitimacy and an increase in public dissatisfaction, which in the framework of power transition theory is considered to be a breeding ground for escalating political tensions [20, p. 1]. The discursive representation of "he's poisoning you" indicates a widening of elite divisions and a decline in internal unity, and such discourse plays a role equivalent to egalitarian or competitive pressures in transition theory; comparative research shows that low levels of social base satisfaction, combined with the concentration of comparative advantage in one actor, increase the likelihood of the status quo being disrupted [21, p. 102]. When elite actors undermine each other's legitimacy, the process of power transitions tends to form a tight competition of forces, and the likely outcome of such an overlap of forces will be institutional confrontation and even intra-structural violence.

OLIVER: The great thing with George is he knows he has weaknesses. He wants to get better. He wants to improve.

LINDSAY: Well, that's good.

OLIVER: We made a list, early on, of all his worst failings. Each separate failing we put on a card.

ANDREW: (Smiles) Colour-coded.

LINDSAY: I'm sure he was grateful.

OLIVER: Then we presented them to him. In a real, late-night brainstorming session. White-knuckle stuff (*The Absence of War* 44).

The passage in question presents an actor like George as a key player in the political balance; his admission of weaknesses and desire for improvement are signs of the strategic awareness that Organsky's Foundations of Power Transition Theory emphasizes, where the dominant power is exposed to fundamental change and the possibility of crisis on a relative par with a disgruntled rival [20, p. 10]. The behavior in listing George's shortcomings and gathering criticism in a secret meeting is representative of the internal efforts to manage leadership legitimacy that have been explored in recent studies of transition theory; this kind of display of weaknesses, coupled with the expectation of improved power, has the potential to increase implicit legitimacy or exacerbate doubts about elite influence [13, p. 280]. The likelihood of disruption of the political status quo increases when public discontent is combined with the relative concentration of advantage in one actor, a situation that the theory of eroding authority and elite conflict in political systems has analyzed [13, p. 280].

Our master is justice. (He spreads his hands ironically.) And no two people agree what that is. So – yes, you're right – we always have this dilemma. Justice has no organizations. It has no schools. It did have once. They were called unions. But the communities that produced them have gone. The industries have gone (*The Absence of War* 30).

In this part of *The Absence of War*, reflections on justice and the internal crises of governance are clearly visible. Referring to justice as "master" or boss, with a kind of ironic tone, symbolizes the contradiction and confusion within the system of government. This sentence indicates the internal contradictions and challenges in defining and realizing justice in a political system that is no longer able to meet its goals. The emphasis that no two people agree on justice reflects the identity crisis and the inability to reach a common idea among the political and social elites. The issue of justice, which was previously identified with institutions such as unions, is now increasingly lost. This change in the social and political context of society clearly shows that institutions that once played a fundamental role in realizing justice have now disappeared due to economic and social changes.

A crisis in fundamental definitions and principles such as justice, especially when social and economic institutions are no longer able to support these principles, can lead to weak governance and

instability in power [9, p. 32]. In these circumstances, the inability to respond to the basic needs of society and the lack of support for the institutions that should provide justice lead to public distrust and problems within the structure of government.

3.4. The Politics of Power and Reflections on Modern Governance

In the current era, an intersecting network of power influence, ideologies, and diverse interests determines how societies are managed and policies are formed. The mechanism of this network is not only visible in the international arena but also manifests itself in domestic and inter-organizational realms and affects decision-making processes. In this context, various factors play a role that lead to the concentration or distribution of power. Democratic systems and public participation are one of the effective ways to distribute power and reduce its concentration. Governments that operate on the basis of public participation and accountability can achieve social stability and peace by creating equal opportunities and reducing inequalities.

You see in opposition you're always waiting. You go into politics to get something done. And in opposition you do precisely nothing. (He smiles.) But for these three weeks at least you exist. OLIVER: Yes that's right (*The Absence of War* 63).

In this part of the play *The Absence of War*, the expression of the opposition party's situation clearly demonstrates the fundamental problems in modern politics and governance. While individuals enter the political arena to bring about change, in oppositional situations, especially when they are not in power, they feel powerless and powerless. This inability to do basic things and the unattainability of goals are a problem not only for the opposition party but also for the entire government structure. Such a situation can have negative effects on the legitimacy and effectiveness of the government. According to Organski's theory of power transfer, this situation indicates a fragile balance of power in which opposition groups and parties face serious restrictions on access to political resources and instruments. The concentration of power in the hands of the ruling group often shapes the political environment in such a way that opposition groups either seek to directly change the equation or adopt a passive approach, relying on external developments; the opposition's lack of effective access to decision-making processes leads to policy stagnation and undermines the hope of achieving lasting change [27]. The entrapment of opposition parties in short-term power interests reduces their ability to play a

constructive active role and challenges the effectiveness of the governance system, a situation that erodes the legitimacy of the government and reduces public trust. The weakness of the power structure allows for fundamental shifts to occur, and if disaffected actors find the capacity to organize their demands, a change in the political order and even a relative transfer of authority will emerge; the need to strengthen legitimate channels of participation and enhance institutional capacity to manage political competition and prevent governance inefficiency from turning into a full-blown crisis becomes clear from this perspective.

It's this obsession with our enemy ... that's been our madness. It leaves us with nothing distinctive. And by this appalling coincidence, it also robs George of what he does best ... (She nods.) George became Leader because of a quality he had. That quality came from his passion (*The Absence of War* 111).

In this section of *The Absence of War*, the identity crisis in modern politics and governance is explicitly addressed. The characters point out that an excessive focus on the enemy and external threats leads to a lack of distinctive and distinctive features within the party and leadership. In Organski's theory of power transitions, a focus on the external enemy can indicate an attempt to maintain the status quo and deal with immediate threats [11, p. 270]. As a result, such a government that spends its energy on confronting external threats is in fact unable to develop and improve its effectiveness. This situation has negative effects, especially in leaders who use their own special qualities and internal abilities to lead the country and cause those unique qualities and characteristics of leadership to be affected by external crises.

I'm stubborn. I've denied myself everything. (He is quite still.) It would hardly be worth it. To have sacrificed everything. If at the end you were just going to lose (*The Absence of War* 54).

A fragment from *The Absence of War* presents a figure of a leader who reflects deeply on the burden of sacrifices and self-sacrifices; he carries an emotional and moral burden for setting aside many his moral principles and personal desires, and these sacrifices raise deep questions about the legitimacy of leadership and the acceptable boundaries of compromise. When an individual or group devotes all their resources and capabilities to a specific goal, but ultimately does not achieve any results for it, internal crises and political failures will be clearly visible. This issue is not only effective at the individual level but also at the level of the entire

society and the government system.

In Organski's theory of power transition, when a country or party gradually loses its power and becomes vulnerable to new competitors or changes in the internal and external environment, this feeling of hopelessness and doubt in governance and leadership will prevail. When a leader feels that all his sacrifices and self-denials are not producing results, his legitimacy and credibility are severely damaged.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The text of David Hare's play provides a suitable context for re-reading power relations at the national level, and a structural analysis based on Organski's theory of power transition allows for the discovery of hidden layers of party competition. A careful reading of the behavior of internal party agents shows that the concentration of tools and resources in the hands of the ruling power deepens the unequal structure of competition, and the weakness of the opposition's resources reduces the chances of a peaceful transition; such a situation is considered in the theory under discussion to be equivalent to a relative power gap between the strong and the emerging, which increases the likelihood of political crisis. The role of communication consultants and public narrative production mechanisms in the text highlights the symbolic aspects of soft power [23] and shows that symbolic tools can strengthen or weaken the leader's personal legitimacy; When messages do not align with institutional mechanisms, a gap is created between declared identity and actual performance that makes it difficult to challenge the existing order. Hare's focus on the internal actions of characters demonstrates the role of cultural and social factors in determining political satisfaction; public opinion and media images can be a determining factor in accelerating or slowing down transition processes, and from this perspective, a cross-study of literary narrative and theoretical indicators provides additional analytical insights.

Institutional analysis of the text shows that the weakness of accountability mechanisms and the lack of legitimate channels of participation create a vacuum in the capacity for redistributing benefits, and as a result, reformist pressures manifest themselves in a more concentrated form. The role of unions and intermediary institutions that are transformed in Hare's narrative reminds us of the importance of social bonding; The erosion of collective representational capacity provides a platform for widespread discontent and the strengthening of non-institutional responses. At the

micro level, the ongoing practice of the advisory team in preparing the leader's speech and censoring ideas to conform to prevailing norms suggests that the pressure to conform can result in the erosion of the leader's identity, and as a result, a leader who is unable to articulate his or her ideals will lose his or her charismatic legitimacy; such erosion in transition theory is equivalent to a reduction in legitimate advantage, which intensifies the occurrence of intense competition.

The text's confrontation with the issue of justice and the conflict between material interests and moral values offers a critical reading of how the public narrative is reconstructed; the lack of a rational agreement on the meaning of justice leads to policy fragmentation, voter confusion, and institutional legitimacy. Hare's depiction of the leader's willingness to sacrifice and his uncertainty about the outcome of his actions is indicative of the psychological costs of maintaining power, and his personal situation can be read as a sign of the overall fragility of the political system. This psychological dilemma can justify conservative and centralist policies that, in the long run, erode the organizational capacity of the system.

The importance of the media and public opinion in the text as levers for changing the balance of power can be examined; the dominance of professional narrators of the message and the engineering of public opinion can increase or decrease the distance between the official status quo and social satisfaction, and since transition theory emphasizes the relationship between comparative advantage and dissatisfaction, narrative engineering has a decisive power in the path of power transfer. Elites' focus on preserving the status quo by highlighting the external enemy or prioritizing protective means may provide short-term benefits but pave the way for the erosion of internal legitimacy and increase the chances of radical change; Hare's analysis shows that immigration policy based on constant antagonism

leaves party identity and programmatic content transformed and devoid of transformative function.

The policy proposals emerging from this interdisciplinary study require the strengthening of intermediary institutions, the clarification of decision-making mechanisms, and the development of the capacity for authentic leadership expression. Strengthening the independence of oversight institutions and expanding the capacity for social participation increase the possibility of convergence of interests and pave the way for the departure of competition from violence and the peaceful redistribution of power. Training party leaders in ethical communication skills and revitalizing industrial or social representative institutions can fill identity gaps and prevent structural fatigue.

Analysis of the text of Hare's play from a structural perspective shows that the concepts of power transition theory are applicable and methodical at the intra-party and national levels; the concept of the power pyramid and the role of relative dissatisfaction are able to explain many internal party developments and the collapse of leadership identity. The fundamental message of the research is that a mere adherence to message engineering and leaders' surrender to the logic of the survival of the status quo leads to a weakening of the capacity for change and the final failure of reformist projects. The need to reinterpret the spheres of legitimacy, strengthen intermediate institutions, and rebuild bridges of communication between elites and social strata within the framework of institutional mechanisms seems essential.

Suggestions for future research include quantifying party identity indicators and aligning them with transition theory criteria, conducting a comparative study of similar examples in other parliamentary systems, and examining the role of new information technologies in engineering public opinion.

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