



**THATCHERISM IN CARYL CHURCHILL'S TOP
GIRLS, FEN, AND SERIOUS MONEY: A
CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING**

**2023
PhD THESIS
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

Hameed Abdulameer Hameed ALKHAF AJI

**Thesis Advisor
Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN**

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Hameed Abdulameer Hameed ALKHAFI

Thesis Advisor

Assist.Prof.Dr. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN

T.C.

Karabuk University

Institute of Graduate Programs

Department of English Language and Literature

Prepared as

PhD Thesis

KARABUK

July 2023

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the dissertation submitted by Hameed Abdulameer Hameed ALKHAFAJI titled “THATCHERISM IN CARYL CHURCHILL’S TOP GIRLS, FEN AND SERIOUS MONEY: A CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a dissertation for the degree of Ph.D.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEİDARZADEGAN

Advisor, Department of English Language and Literature

This dissertation is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English as a PhD dissertation. July 21,2023

Examining Committee Members (Institutions) Signature

Chairman :Prof. Dr. Abdul Serdar ÖZTÜRK (KBÜ)

Member :Prof. Dr. Sinan YILMAZ (KBÜ)

Member :Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEİDARZADEGAN (KBÜ)

Member :Assist. Prof. Dr. Yıldırım ÖZSEVGEC (RTEÜ)

Member :Assist. Prof. Dr. Halil İbrahim ARPA (KARATEKIN)

The degree of Ph. D by the dissertation submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

Prof. Dr. Müslüm KUZU

Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

Name Surname: Hameed Abdulameer Hameed
ALKHAFAJI

Signature :

FOREWORD

It is crucial to encounter individuals who illuminate our path and guide us in the right direction throughout the various stages of life. In my educational journey, I have received unwavering assistance and support from numerous individuals. Among them, the head of the Department, Prof. Dr. Abdul Serdar ÖZTÜRK, stands out prominently for the invaluable help and support he has extended to me over the years.

Furthermore, I take great pride in acknowledging the immeasurable debt of gratitude I owe to my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN, whose unwavering support and patient guidance have been truly invaluable. She consistently went above and beyond to offer assistance, serving as a guiding light during the darkest moments of my research and providing a haven amidst the tumultuous storms of ideas. Words alone fail to convey the depth of my appreciation.

Additionally, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my parents and honest wife who have consistently offered their support. They have nourished the tree of hope, watering it whenever possible. Their presence has added vibrant hues to the beautiful days of studying. I humbly dedicate my words of thanks to every one of them.

ABSTRACT

This research delves into studying three plays by Caryl Churchill, *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls*, which provide insightful portrayals of the social, economic, and political transformations that occurred during the Thatcher era in Britain. By deriving benefit from the theoretical perspectives of Cultural Materialism, the research aims to comprehensively analyze the influence of Thatcherism represented in the three plays. It explores the themes, characters, and narrative strategies employed by Caryl Churchill to critically engage with the socio-political climate of Thatcher's Britain. Through a meticulous examination within the frameworks of Cultural Materialism, the research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the involved interplay between literature, history, and society during that transformative period. In the first chapter, it highlights the explanations of Thatcherism, Caryl Churchill's orientations, and the dimensions of Cultural Materialism. At the end of chapter, the literature review examines the previous studies. In the following three chapters, the research examines how Caryl Churchill reflects Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's policies in the plays and consider the historical and cultural outcomes of Thatcher's policies in society. The research aims to uncover both the positive and negative effects of these policies on the lives of individuals through analyzing the targeted plays. The conclusion of the study aims to emphasize the exceptional insights that emerge from applying Cultural Materialism to these three plays, shedding light on the profound impact of Thatcherism on the lives of British citizens.

Keywords: Caryl Churchill, *Fen*, Government, Margaret Thatcher, Policies, *Serious Money*, Thatcherism, and *Top Girls*.

ÖZET

Araştırma, İngiltere'de milletvekili Margaret Thatcher döneminde meydana gelen sosyal, ekonomik ve politik dönüşümlerin içgörülü tasvirlerini sağlayan Caryl Churchill'in, *Fen*, *Serious Money* ve *Top Girls* oyunlarını incelemeye odaklanıyor. Araştırma, Yeni Tarihselcilik ve Kültürel Materyalizm'in teorik bakış açılarından yararlanarak, Thatcherizm'in bu oyunlar üzerindeki etkisini kapsamlı bir şekilde analiz ediyor. Caryl Churchill'in Thatcher Britanya'sının sosyo-politik iklimiyle eleştirel bir şekilde ilişki kurmak için kullandığı temaları, karakterleri ve anlatı stratejilerini araştırıyor. Araştırma, Kültürel Materyalizm çerçevesindeki titiz bir incelemeyle, bu dönüştürücü süreçte edebiyat, tarih ve toplum arasındaki karşılıklı etkileşime dair daha derin bir anlayış kazanmayı amaçlıyor. İlk bölüm, Thatcherizm'in açıklamalarını, Caryl Churchill'in yönelimlerini ve Kültürel Materyalizm'in boyutlarını vurgular. Bölümün sonunda, literatür taraması, oyunları farklı görüşler ve uygulanan teorilerle tartışan önceki çalışmaları vurgulamaktadır. Takip eden üç bölümde araştırma, Caryl Churchill'in üç oyunu aracılığıyla Başbakan Margaret Thatcher'ın politikalarına nasıl yansıdığını inceliyor ve Thatcher'ın toplum politikalarının sonuçlarını ele alıyor. Araştırma, hedeflenen oyunları analiz ederek politikaların bireylerin ve toplumun yaşamları üzerindeki hem olumlu hem de olumsuz etkilerini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın sonucu, Kültürel Materyalizm'in bu üç oyuna uygulanmasından ortaya çıkan istisnai kavrayışları vurgulamayı ve Thatcherizm'in İngiliz vatandaşlarının yaşamları üzerindeki derin etkisine ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Caryl Churchill, *Fen*, Hükümet, Margaret Thatcher, Politikalar, *Serious Money*, Thatcherizm, ve *Top Girls*.

ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

Title of the Thesis	THATCHARISM IN CARYL CHURCHILL'S TOP GIRLS, FEN AND SERIOUS MONEY: A CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING
Author of the Thesis	Hameed Abdulameer Hameed ALKHAFAJI
Thesis Advisor	Assist. Prof. Dr. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN
Status of the Thesis	Ph.D
Date of the Thesis	21/07/2023
Field of the Thesis	English Language and Literature
Place of the Thesis	UNIKA/IGP
Total Page Number	137
Keywords	Caryl Churchill, <i>Fen</i> , Government, Margaret Thatcher, Policies, <i>Serious Money</i> , Thatcherism, and <i>Top Girls</i> .

ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ (in Turkish)

Tezin Adı	CARYL CHURCHILL'İN “EN İYİ KIZLAR, FEN VE CİDDİ PARA” OYUNLARINDAKİ THATKARİZM: KÜLTÜREL MATERYALİST BİR OKUMA
Tezin Yazarı	Hameed Abdulameer Hameed ALKHAFAJI
Tezin Danışmanı	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi. Nazila HEIDARZADEGAN
Tezin Derecesi	Doktora
Tezin Tarihi	21/07/2023
Tezin Alanı	İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Tezin Yeri	KBU/LEE
Tezin Sayfa Sayısı	137
Anahtar Kelimeler	Caryl Churchill, Fen, Hükümet, Margaret Thatcher, Politikalar, Ciddi Para, Thatkarizm ve En İyi Kızlar.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Literature reflects the thoughts, opinions, aspirations, political, economic, and social circumstances, and conflicts inside society. Thus, the literary writers express and reflect these concepts via their literary works. It is well-known that the literature represents an echo for what the readers and audience look forward to watching or reading. One of the significant factors in the literary works is the politics and politicians. In our daily life, the political figures, via their policies, have an influential role in literary works because the writers try to highlight the impacts of the politicians on the lifestyle of the people. Therefore, the study of political figures is one of the essential topics for many researchers in Western history, whether in the past, contemporary or modern history, because of the significance of identifying their policies, their influential relationships in making events, and the impacts of the circumstances on the lifestyle of the people.

The dissertation examines the theatrical works *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls*, authored by Caryl Churchill via offering perceptive depictions of the societal, economic, and political changes that transpired in Britain during the Thatcher era. The research endeavors to comprehensively analyze the impact of Thatcherism on these plays by employing the theoretical perspectives of Cultural Materialism. This analysis delves into the various themes, characters, and narrative strategies utilized by Caryl Churchill to critically examine the socio-political environment prevalent during the era of Margaret Thatcher's leadership in Britain. By conducting a thorough analysis within the theoretical framework of Cultural Materialism, this research aims to enhance comprehension of the intricate dynamics between literature, history, and society during that pivotal era. The first chapter provides an overview of Thatcherism, Caryl Churchill's perspectives, and the various aspects of Cultural Materialism. The last part of the chapter encompasses a comprehensive review of the previous studies to be critically evaluated. This study strives to shed light on the portrayals of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's policies in the three plays selected by Caryl Churchill across the following three dissertation chapters. The analysis also digs behind Thatcher's policies, like privatization, economic policy, enterprise culture, housing, and education, to evaluate their positive and negative consequences. The study's conclusion seeks to underscore

the noteworthy insights that arise from applying Cultural Materialism to these three plays, thereby illuminating the significant repercussions of Thatcherism on the lifestyle of British citizens. Although the policies may support the economy and material life, they create individualism and dehumanization, Classes discrimination, Social Inequality, immorality, and absence of values among people.

Through a comprehensive analysis of the convergence of politics, society, and literature, the present research endeavors to provide insight into how the era of Thatcher exerted influence on dramatic depictions, as well as how the plays of Churchill reacted to and depicted the noteworthy political and critical social transformations

1.2. MARGARET THATCHER'S PREMIERSHIP AND CARYL CHURCHILL

The name of Margaret Thatcher was associated with the details of the United Kingdom's history, which dealt with policy for more than 45 years, starting from 1949 to 1990. She was one of the powerful political figures who left a drastic change on the overall political, economic, and social life of her country especially during her premiership. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's visions will remain sparkling for the future generations of the Britain due to an honorable history she drew for their country. In fact, she is regarded one of the great European Stateswomen despite some points taken by her competitors and opponents.

Woman's presence in the British plays tended to take feminism in most of the play writings during 1980s. Considerably, Thatcher's policy inspired the British Theatre, and this period is called Thatcher's Theatre. As Margaret Thatcher was a prominent character in British history, her charisma, manner and opinions about the society and woman reflected a significant period of a dramatization. The political viewpoint of PM Thatcher was a main theme of most women's plays particularly critiquing the need for solidarity and sisterhood among the women.

The character of Margaret Thatcher had psychological, political, and economic dimensions acquired the values which she had grown up with. From the early seventies of the twentieth century until she left the political work in 1990, the strength of her personality and diplomatic brilliance had an essential impact on holding the threads of policies, and strategies due to preserve Britain politically and economically. Moreover,

she worked to reform the regression and recession of the Britain and tried her best to keep the country robust despite the multinational ethnicity's challenges, especially in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Caryl Churchill is one of the greatest playwrights interested in Thatcher's ideologies. That was explicitly reflected her adaptations in her plays during the same era. Churchill carried the worries and feelings of British classes of society. She wanted to picturize the economic transformations resulted from Thatcherism via her plays. Those transformations led to societal changes of relationships, too. Therefore, she was keen to highlight those changes and their repercussions.

During the premiership of Thatcher, Caryl Churchill wrote many plays that illustrated the lifestyle changes and dramatic transformations in Britain during the same era. The dissertation has studied the main three of them, *Top Girls*, *Fen*, and *Serious Money*. They would be the raw material and fruitful substance for searching about the dramatic lifestyle changes. The three plays would be analyzed and read based on a productive critique to find out the outputs of Thatcher's policies on the lifestyle which emerged after her premiership.

Churchill used several implications and characters to mirror the new applied policies adopted by Thatcher's government over eleven years of her premiership. Churchill had creative works through which the readers or critics can feel how the lifestyle was transformed to have unique outcomes. The follower of Churchill's writings finds that the legacy of Thatcher has remarkable traces in the arts in the UK. Billington confirmed the fact that Thatcher left "an emphatic mark" on arts due to her policies (Billington, 2013).

The current study aims to find new perspectives through exploring:

- a. The developing stages of Thatcher's influences through tracking three of Churchill's plays; *Top Girls*, *Fen*, and *Serious Money* which were written during Thatcher's premiership.
- b. Application of Cultural Materialism Theory for understanding Thatcher's era and its outcomes in the three literary works of Churchill as a research material.

Those two points are the subject matter of the dissertation and the gap targeted would be filled by analyzing the three plays mentioned.

Although many studies have dealt with the policies and procedures of Margaret Thatcher or what is called Thatcherism, the political and social effects of transformations of the policies on the British lifestyles, few of those studies have focused on overlapping and intervention of Thatcher's policies on the literary arts of Caryl Churchill during the same period. Moreover, the research demonstrates the interaction of the literary texts with policies of Margaret Thatcher. Caryl Churchill was one of those who could depict the manifestation of the new era in her plays; *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money*. Therefore, the research aims to highlight the need to study such subject in detail for identifying the most important political and social changes brought by Thatcherism through the three plays of Caryl Churchill.

1.3. PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

One of the essential political and economic strategies adopted during the Thatcher's era was the transformation to individualism rather than socialism as a new way of life in British society. To put it another way, it is a shift from welfare capitalism to privatization. Through her reforms to heal the economic regression, Thatcher took many procedures creating a new lifestyle for the British citizens by focusing on supporting the individual economic thought. Thatcher encouraged the citizens to create small private business rather than governmental jobs or social welfare. This new strategy has reflected new societal standards. This the way of thinking pushed the British woman to think about her private life isolated from the man. The woman started thinking how to build her career and behaving as a man in the business field. This tendency made the woman not thinking about her femininity which created unrest or unstable social circumstances among the British citizens.

The motivation behind this study is to investigate portrayals of Thatcherite ladies who are "in influence" in Caryl Churchill's plays *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* through realist woman activist analysis. As a writer added to the women's activist theater, Churchill got fundamental consideration during the 1970s and 1980s. Churchill took on a Marxist/Communist women's activist standpoint, and she has chronicled changes of the eighties and nineties in her plays. The study would highlight the Thatcherism via Churchill's eyes to mirror via woman's rights happened the dramatics.

Therefore, this study aims to shed the light on the manifestations of Thatcherism in the plays of Caryl Churchill, as well as to clarify the most significant changes that

occurred in social trends during the Thatcher period through her plays, *Top Girls*, *Fen*, and *Serious Money*.

This study addressed Thatcherian policies and its implications for drama and theater in general and for the plays of Caryl Churchill in particular, through which the study is trying to shed the light on social and political trends resulting from Thatcherism. Another explanation that pushed the research to deal with these plays are incredibly typical of having variation parts of Churchill's works. Aside from most likely being her best play to date, *Top Girls* embodies her combination as a writer, which occurred during the 1980s, when her other considerable achievement, *Fen* and *Serious Money*, were composed and performed.

The three selected plays, consequently, epitomize Churchill's stand as a playwright, and this, likewise, motivates the research to restrict the study to three plays referenced. They contain many points that are overspread her works, such as the battle against frameworks of abusing individualism, the foundations of elective methods of living by persecuted individuals, to worry about confiscating the rights, and an investigation of force structures.

The study would reflect the intervention and interaction between the government policies and the literary works. In other words, the government policies impact the visions and thoughts of the writers and citizens. Furthermore, the study aims to shed the light on the overlapping of power, history, and culture in creating a lifestyle depending on new concepts adopted by the governmental authorities which is crucial for revealing the interaction of audience with literary works, including the governmental policies taken.

This study would encourage the researchers to focus on the works that deal with society's problems, needs, interests, and challenges. Moreover, through the analyses of the plays, it would be necessary to read how the interactions among power, historical reading, and culture produce a lifestyle which pushed Churchill to write several plays about it for expressing these changes through her literary works.

1.4. CULTURAL MATERIALISM

The study would apply the Cultural Materialism to analyze Churchill's plays. So, it is essential to shed the light on the characteristics of Cultural Materialism as shown on the following clarifications.

Cultural Materialism refers to an approach of literary criticism that requires the interpretation of the literature in terms of the context from which it emerged. It is a significant interpretation method that emphasizes power relationships as the most essential background for all types of texts. It means that literary text is a venue, where power relations are made evident via Cultural Materialism as a crucial technique, to understand the text. Therefore, it works to conclude and find out the facts of the text not through reading the text itself only, but through reading and knowing the circumstances whether social, historical, cultural or political to understand all dimensions surrounded the text. This method of analysis can give much more reliable logic facts about the targeted texts of study.

Raymond Williams introduced the term cultural materialism. The phenomenon under consideration can be characterized as a fusion of culturalism rooted in leftist ideologies and an analytical framework influenced by Marxism. The emergence of this theory occurred during early 1980s. Cultural Materialism pertains to the examination and interpretation of distinct historical records in an effort to analyze and reconstruct the prevailing system of principles or convictions during a specific period in history (Williams, 1980).

Jonathan Dollimore and Allen Sinfield have identified four key characteristics of cultural materialism.

First: The historical context surrounding the creation of this work encompasses the events and circumstances that occurred during that particular period.

Second: The proposed theoretical approach involves the integration of established theories and models, namely structuralism and post-structuralism.

Third: Close This study focuses on conducting a textual analysis that builds upon the theoretical analysis of canonical texts recognized as significant cultural icons.

Fourth: Political commitment involves the integration of various political theories, including Feminist and Marxist theory.

Furthermore, Cultural materialism is a theoretical framework that examines the relationship between culture and material conditions, emphasizing the influence of economic factors on culture.

Moreover, Dollimore and Sinfield suggest that Cultural materialism is a methodology employed in analyzing literary texts, which centers on comprehending the material and economic circumstances that influence cultural creations, such as literature. When employing the cultural materialist approach for literary analysis, various significant factors are involved:

1. The field of cultural materialism aims to elucidate how the material circumstances within a society influence literary creations. This entails an analysis of the economic system, technological advancements, geographical factors, and the range of resources at hand. Literary texts have the capacity to mirror the economic disparities or technological advancements prevalent in a specific temporal and spatial context.
2. The analysis examines the impact of economic structures and relationships on literary themes, characters, and plotlines within economic relations. This study examines the representation of various social classes, hierarchical structures, and modes of production within literary texts.
3. Cultural materialism examines the impact of ideology and power dynamics on literary texts. This study examines the influence of dominant ideologies on literature, focusing on how power dynamics are depicted in narratives and character portrayals.
4. The consideration of the social context in which a literary work is created and received holds significant importance within the framework of cultural materialism. The comprehension of the historical, political, and social context aids in the interpretation of the messages and themes conveyed in the text.
5. Cultural materialism is a theoretical framework that analyzes the portrayal of cultural practices, rituals, and customs within literary works. The objective is to

comprehend the correlation between these practices and the material circumstances of the society under examination.

6. The analysis focuses on portraying and depicting class and gender within literary works. This study examines the correlation between these depictions and the era's prevailing economic and social conditions.
7. Cultural materialism also examines the influence of authors and readers in constructing literary texts. This study investigates the potential influence of an author's social position and personal experiences on their literary work and the impact of readers' cultural backgrounds on their interpretations of said work (Sinfield & Dollimore, 1985).

Therefore, The cultural materialist approach to literary analysis places significant emphasis on the interdependence between literature and the material conditions of society. The statement acknowledges the interdependence of literary works with their cultural and economic environments, emphasizing that these contexts significantly influence and mold the creation of such works.

Cultural Materialism refers to an approach of literary criticism that requires the interpretation of the literature in terms of the context from which it emerged. It is a significant interpretation method that emphasizes power relationships as the most essential background for all types of texts. It means that literary text is a venue, where power relations are made evident via Cultural Materialism as a crucial technique, to understand the text. Therefore, it works to conclude and find out the facts of the text not through reading the text itself only, but through reading and knowing the circumstances whether social, historical, cultural or political to understand all dimensions surrounded the text. This method of analysis can give much more reliable logic facts about the targeted texts of study.

Williams and other Cultural Materialists are especially interested in indicators of contingent social practices. As a result, the questions that should be asked are how those experiences and collective views were designed, transferred to another medium, centered in practicable aesthetic modal, and having availableness of a consumption to exploring the boundaries separating practices of culture treasured to be art forms from other connecting forms of expression (Williams, 1980).

Williams, on the other hand, focused on the concept of social energy that while there is no direct link to Shakespeare's plays, the life of the literary works lives on after an author and a culture die. It is a historical repercussion or social energy that is encoded by such works at the outset (1980). Williams clarifies that the connection between the literary work and its author is alive and active as long as the cultural and historical circumstances still exist. This is called the social energy when the energy stays on because of historical validation.

Williams also emphasized that the influences of changes in political patterns and historical force play a significant role on generic codes when one type of transformation may be the cause of chain reactions creating progressive circumstances (1980). Williams insists that while works of art may be the result of individual creative intelligence and private obsessions, they are also the result of collective negotiation and exchange (1980). Williams continues to clarify the outcomes of the interaction between social and political values reflected on the text. Williams also highlights the inevitability of registering the transformations of the interests and values created in political and social conflicts whether it is required to or not (1980).

Cultural Materialism can be a disheartening approach to interpretation because it assumes that there is no space for opposition to power. The language and society are viewed as a self-regulating and dominant system, leaving no opportunity for opposition to arise freely (Williams, 1980). This is not to say that there is not any opposition, or subversion, as it is known in Cultural Materialist writing.

Power requires disruption; any other way, it would not be able to clarify its reality and make itself clear in that capacity. The meaning of the power saves behind it for the following segment of the study, yet power's inescapability is a typical suspicion among Cultural Materialist analysts like Foucault, who mentioned that the power exists all over the place and it is not on the grounds embracing everything, but it derives from all over (Foucault, 1981). Therefore, Cultural Materialists typically regard their work as one of exposition, explaining power's processes so that it can recognize power's goals and stakes more easily when reading culture.

Cultural Materialists typically regard their work as an exposition, explaining power's processes and operations so that it can recognize power's goals and stakes more

easily in reading the culture. Furthermore, it is essential to understand the context of power for Cultural Materialists whether the form is taken or not. The Cultural Materialists regularly endeavors to have the structure's power controlling the shifts starting with one time then onto the next, or, as Paul Hamilton says, "the reiteration of force by means of progressive epistemes" (Hamilton, 1996). Cultural Materialism centers a large portion of its endeavors around distinguishing and uncovering these different verifiable knowledges, just as the chronicled advancement of originations of the state, citizen, culture, family, etc. Thus, it is not difficult to perceive how it has been interpreted as a re-visitation of history by numerous analysts. The prominence of the textuality, the language, and the representation, as the foundation of historical analysis, is most noticeable regarding the methodologies of historical analysis. It is essentially a literary criticism applied to history as a text (Sinfield & Dollimore, 1985).

Cultural Materialism highlights power relations as the main scenery for understanding messages. Social realists explore artistic messages with regards to introduce power relations. The traditional governmental issues of Thatcherism in 1980s provided the backdrop for Cultural Materialists to reassess readings of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Webster, Dickens, and Post-war British literature. Texts always had sort of material function within the modern power structures, according to Cultural Materialists (Sinfield, 1992).

Dollimore and Sinfield, in general, clarifies that the major result of cultural output would be a reproduction of a present order (1985). Cultural Materialism explores the ways and tactics via which the present system maintains or strives to modify itself. Also, it offers a skeptical assessment of effective resistance to the dominant order. However, the Cultural Materialism is slightly more hopeful, and there are enough gaps and contradictions in the system for a critic like Sinfield intervene. According to Cultural Materialists, it is conceivable to expose these contradictions to a degree that allows for evasions of the 'structures of confinement'. In Cultural Materialism, the relationship between power and subversion is not as complete and closed. Cultural Materialism, in some ways, extends the implications of Cultural Materialists work by historicizing the applications within power relations (Sinfield & Dollimore, 1985).

Cultural Materialism techniques recognize the literary works based on cultural and historical artefacts. In addition, Cultural Materialism investigates the implications

of the literary texts within history as explained in *Political Shakespeare* (Sinfield & Dollimore, 1985).

The Materialist approach to study the culture emerged from the context of new and challenging discourses. Raymond Williams was fascinated with the concept 'culture' via debating its meaning, application, and history of conformation of the culture towards society, Marxism towards literature, and Materialism towards culture (Williams, 1980). Milner claims that 'social realism' is occupied with a venture of understanding the development and capacity of culture inside society's material construction, and that this examination is expounded into a kind of political fight with moderate propensities inside that society. Milner's social realism seems to have as its objective the acknowledgment of 'an emancipatory governmental issues' (Milner, 1993, p. 114).

In other words, in the context of new and challenging ideas being discussed, The Materialist approach to studying culture emerged. Raymond Williams, a scholar, was intrigued by the concept of culture and engaged in debates about its meaning, application, and history, particularly in relation to society, Marxism, and Materialism. Another scholar, Milner, proposes that "social realism" is a way of understanding how culture develops within a society's material structures. This type of study aims to promote more freedom and equality in society and is connected to a political fight against moderate tendencies within that society. Essentially, social realism seeks to acknowledge and address issues of inequality and oppression by examining the role of culture within a society's material conditions.

Cultural Materialists believed in looking at literature in a historical and political way. The difference between them was that Cultural Materialists wanted to take responsibility for their political views and analyze literature as a way to support their beliefs. Cultural Materialists believed that the time they lived in was a difficult one politically and philosophically, and that literary analysis could not be unbiased. They studied how literary texts supported moderate beliefs during a time when liberal beliefs in Britain were being replaced by new conservative ideas under Thatcherism. Cultural Materialists disagree with an older way of studying literature called formalism. Instead, they want to look at literature in a historical and political way (Brannigan, 1998).

Cultural Materialists are different from New Historicists because they think it is important to think about politics when they read literature. They believe that art cannot be unbiased because it is created in a time with political and philosophical difficulties. In Britain after World War II, there were liberal political ideas that helped people like the national health service and local governments. But these ideas were destroyed by new conservative beliefs, and Cultural Materialists like Dollimore and Sinfield looked at how literature supported these moderate beliefs.

The Cultural Materialists are interested on how disobedience, disagreement, resistance, or any other styles of political opposition are formulated, represented, and achieved. Cultural Materialists investigate the historical and current possibilities of the subversion, whereas New Historicists strive out to illustrate the activities of power in the past. The Materialists additionally produce insecurity that could be a destruction. As indicated by Dollimore, social realism share a similar concentration, yet for contradicting closes (Sinfield & Dollimore, 1985). Dollimore described the primary difference of New Historicism with Cultural Materialism in this remark. New Historicism looks at the right ways in which the power reaches its objectives while Cultural Materialism looks at the instability which can lead to its demolition.

On other word, there is a subversion, could be endless subversion, not only for us as Greenblatt briefed in *Invisible Bullets* (Greenblatt, 1985). It means that the New Historicists focus on how those in power maintain control, while Cultural Materialists examine how people resist and challenge authority. According to Dollimore, New Historicism and Cultural Materialism have similar focuses but for different reasons. New Historicists want to understand how power is exercised, while Cultural Materialists want to understand the instability and potential for resistance that exists within power structures. Dollimore argues that it is important to analyze the social assumptions and beliefs that have influenced traditional interpretations of Renaissance literature. He also cautions against relying on outdated and oppressive ideas about sex, race, and class when interpreting texts. This approach can help to reveal new perspectives and challenge traditional power structures.

Dollimore's critique of popular Renaissance theatrical interpretations does not aim to replace them with newer, more theoretically informed readings alone. It also seeks to examine the social assumptions and beliefs that underpinned traditional

scholarship, which not only dictated abstract norms and interpretations of that era, but also upheld a set of conservative social and political values. Dollimore further argues that there is little difference between extreme and critical views that simply reproduce outdated and insensitive clichés regarding issues of sex, sexuality, race, or class (1989). In his seminal work on Renaissance literature, Dollimore asserts that there is much more to Jacobean tragedy interpretation than what formalist and humanist critics allowed, and that traditional translations have indeed enforced a conservative political consensus by promoting optimistic and essentialist categories of knowledge.

Belsey, (1985) and Dollimore (1993) urge for a major reinterpretation and reorientation of our knowledge of the relations of power in the past and present at the end of their investigations. Cultural Materialism is distinguished via its increased correlations with the politics of culture, which is characterized by their calls having the urgency of a political manifesto. It can be said that Belsey and Dollimore believe that there is a need to reconsider our understanding of power dynamics in history and the present. They prefer Cultural Materialism over other theories because it is more closely linked to the politics of culture. Their calls for this approach are passionate, like a political manifesto.

A portion of the more noticeable attributes of social realism have become clear at this point: the attention on disruption prospects, the bifocal viewpoint about the past and the present, a conviction of objects of examinations and strategies via which they study types of dissidence, and the types of interpretation are occupied with political battle. Those are only a couple of the other conspicuous qualities of Cultural Materialists.

Sinfield (1992) has been writing assessments of Cultural Materialist for many parts of British literature and culture since early 1980s, ranging from the Renaissance through the Victorian eras, as well as the postwar duration in the contemporary British history. he emphasized, in each example, how culture serves as a tool for reactionary ideas, but he has also shown how culture contains inconsistencies, ambiguities, and tensions that allow for the expression of dissident or subversive viewpoints.

For Cultural Materialism, the concept of dissidence is extremely important. Dissidence is neither diametrically opposed to power, nor is it an antithesis that strives

to reverse power's values, tendencies, and strategies. Instead, it bears a striking resemblance to power structures, and it is formed by these institutions' intrinsic conflicts.

On the other hand, the 1980s also witnessed the emergence of most critics and anthropologists who were interested in having a new theory and a critical practice represented by New Historicism. There were some similarities in thoughts between Cultural Materialists and New Historicists.

Stephen Greenblatt was one of the most famous founders of the New Historicism theory. He highlighted the role of circumstances in analyzing the texts and the impacts of the interpretations of writers in understanding the context. The interest of critics in involving the circumstances of analyzing texts generated more reliable and realistic understanding than before because any interpretations of any texts without reading the environments of its writing would give partial and incomplete view.

New Historicism, according to Greenblatt in *Shakespearean Negotiations*, is a move away from formal and decontextualized analyses toward embedding cultural items within historical contexts (1988). In New Historicism, the term "man" is not conditioned to be used as a general concept for the human beings who think to make appropriate decisions within specific conditions in specific periods because the reality does not exist in the "abstract universal" (Greenblatt, 1988). The emphasis of that approach stand on specific contingent cases in which identities are formed and act in accordance with a given culture's generative rules and conflicts. Individual expectations of class, race, religion, gender, and national identity shape and reshape the history. According to Greenblatt's interpretation of anthropological criticism, culture serves as a metaphor for reality. These literary interpretations must be self-aware and recognizable as part of the culture's sign system (1980). Greenblatt's perspective aims to involve the cultural dimensions when the critic wants to analyze the text. He believes any isolation between text and circumstances of its writing would produce insufficient analyses.

In the *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, Greenblatt argues that during the Renaissance, social institutions were primarily responsible for the formation and expression of identity. As a result, he defined New Historicism as a self-fashioning process in which each individual's subjectivity is created through a wider awareness of

own position and power structures. In another word, both social identities and literary arts are produced via the culture, and both processes as integral to society and culture (Greenblatt, 1980).

Furthermore, Greenblatt believes that social structures shape public imagination, and that art, as a social construction, aids in the modification and shaping this pattern. History and literature are inextricably linked in their roles as agents (1988). As a result, Dogan explains that Greenblatt characterizes,

The New Historicist effort to establish relationships between various discursive practices as an attempt to develop terms to describe how literary work is transferred from one discursive sphere to another and becomes aesthetic property. If the circumstances of a literary text are unrecoverable, the literary critic's concern should be to recover the ideology that gives birth to the text and that the text helped to spread within the culture (Doğan, 2005).

Greenblatt clarifies that literature performs within the system in three interconnected approaches: as a manifestation of its specific author's concrete behaviors, as an expression of the codes that shape behavior, and as a reflection on those codes (1980). As a result of this, Dogan mentioned "the author, social factors, and the text all contribute to a better understanding of the larger picture." (2005). These three functioning factors are addressed in New Historicist criticism, and literary critics must address all three. Dogan, in his clarification, regards that the triangle of the writer, the circumstances, and text itself composes the targets through which the New Historicist can analyze the text professionally.

Furthermore, Greenblatt thinks that the forces of cultural dialectics are evidenced by the two pieces from Shakespearean Negotiations, "*Fiction and Friction*" and "*Shakespeare and the Exorcists*." He concentrates on society's marginalized groups, individuals, and phenomena. When analyzing texts, he looks at the "margin" or subplot, rather than the primary plot. These "marginalia", like the previously described petites histories, are designed to resist any attempts to incorporate them into a comprehensive and totalizing structure (Greenblatt, 1988).

The idea being expressed is that Greenblatt's way of interpreting texts is somewhat uncertain. He takes a small part of the text and puts it in a larger context to

see if it has a bigger meaning. This can change the way to understand the text. Greenblatt thinks that small, insignificant things can be important.

Greenblatt wrote an article called "*Fiction and Friction*" where he talked about how people in the Renaissance period created their identity, especially when it came to things like cross-dressing and sexual identity. He found that people's desires changed over time, and they started to care more about what others thought of them, rather than just themselves (1988).

Greenblatt believes that the Renaissance was a time when people were interested in unusual things, and they were open to new ideas. They did not think of sexual roles as being fixed, like what happens today. Instead, they thought that people could change over time (1988).

According to Greenblatt, "Social Energy was circulated in early modern England" (1988). His definition about the energy is similar to that of Foucault, who defined it as "power, charisma, sexual excitement, collective dreams, wonder, desire, anxiety, religious awe, and free-floating intensities of experience" (1981). Greenblatt's theory, unlike Foucault's, refers to incorporate the market,

Social Energy, itself the expression of an expansionist, mercantile society, circulates into the theatre simultaneously through social, economic, and rhetorical channels, which constantly displace the intensities through which energy is experienced (1988).

While studying Elizabethan English theater, Greenblatt states, "Social Energy is best understood through a series of abjurations" (1988). Dogan listed them as following:

1. No one can claim that genius is the sole source of great art's energies.
2. There cannot be anything created without a purpose.
3. There can be no representation that is transcendent, timeless, or immutable.
4. Artifacts that are self-contained are not possible.
5. There can be no expression without an object or origin, a from and for.
6. Without social energy, there is no art.

7. There is no way that social energy can be generated on its own (Doğan, 2005).

Furthermore, Greenblatt lists a number of 'Generative Principles' associated with these negations:

1. Negotiation and exchange are always present in mimesis, and mimesis is always produced by them.
2. Art can be a part of exchanges, but it can also be a part of other currency. Cultural capital comes in many forms. Money is just one of them.
3. Individuals may appear to be the agents of exchange, but individuals are the products of collective exchange (Greenblatt, 1988).

When the research highlights the notion of Cultural Materialism, it is essential to say that the starting point is the most important distinction. Cultural Materialism, on the other hand, was fueled by a reaction to England's traditional view of literary history. These interactions were later incorporated into both critic concepts of one theory.

Overall, the Cultural Materialism, based on Williams's viewpoints, is the approach to analyze and understand the dimensions of Churchill's plays. It refers to a method of evaluating writings from any time period. It is a technique for determining how a text's historical context influences and how it should understand it. It is also a tool for understanding how your reading of a text (and its context) is based on your own experience. The Cultural Materialist also focused on the events that happened at the time the literary work was being written, how it evolved with time to the form in which it is present today, and what message did it carry to the very first audience of the literary work and what did it mean to the readers.

In other words, Cultural Materialism is a literary analysis method that focuses on interpreting the social, cultural, and political variables that influenced the author, hence changing the context in which the writer composed the text. Moreover, it is interested in economic issues such as circulation, negotiation, profit, and exchange, as well as how some activities that appear to be above the market, such as literary work, are in fact driven and influenced entirely by market forces. Therefore, the study will follow

Raymond Williams method in analyzing texts of the plays *Top Girls*, *Fen*, and *Serious Money* in the following three chapters.

1.5. THATCHERISM AND THE BRITISH LIFESTYLE

Thatcherism is the political and financial strategies implemented by the previous British Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. These political and economic applications were created to produce a particular way of lifestyle in the UK. Jessop, (2015) clarifies that the characteristics of the Thatcherism extended to include:

1. Thatcher's attributes and powers.
2. Conviction of governmental issues dealing with the authorities of dominance.
3. The economic and political procedures supervised by PM Thatcher and her bureau.
4. the typical arrangement of the financial strategies employed in Britain.

Administration of Thatcher was related to extremist conservative financial methodologies and unmistakable resistance to the idea of government assistance to 'private enterprise', which had significant social results (Marwick, 1990). When Thatcher settled to the power, the United Kingdom confronted extreme financial instability due to high expenses, constrains, and lack of job vacancies. Those challenges caused depression in the British citizens who were looking for economic solutions to avoid further repercussions of their life and business. PM Thatcher realized the challenge and she decided to draw a plan to stop the collapse of the economy. Her procedures led to save the economy, but in the meantime, they caused a change in the lifestyle of citizens as will be explained in detail later.

Moreover, Thatcher became a phenomenon called Thatcherism due to her policies. She implemented a number of policies and decisions that had a significant impact on the lifestyles of British citizens (BBC News, 2013). Some of her key policies and decisions are as follows:

Privatization: Thatcher was a strong proponent of privatization, selling off state-owned industries such as British Telecom, British Gas, and British Airways to private

companies. This led to increased competition and lower prices for consumers, but also resulted in job losses and reduced public control over key industries (Peck, 2010).

Trade Union Reform: Thatcher's government introduced a series of reforms aimed at reducing the power of trade unions, which she believed were damaging the economy. This included laws restricting the right to strike and reducing the legal protection for workers engaged in industrial action (Farnsworth, 2013).

Housing: Thatcher's government introduced the 'Right to Buy' scheme, which allowed council tenants to purchase their homes at a discount (Thatcher & Thatcher, 1993). While this was popular with many people, it also contributed to a shortage of affordable housing and rising inequality.

Economic Policy: Thatcher pursued a policy of monetarism, which aimed to reduce inflation by controlling the money supply. This led to high interest rates and unemployment in the short term, but was credited with helping to bring down inflation in the long term (Evans, E., & Jenkins, 2017).

Education: Thatcher's government introduced the National Curriculum and standardized testing, which aimed to improve standards in schools. However, these policies were controversial and led to criticism from teachers and educational experts (Giddens, 1991).

Taxation: Thatcher introduced a number of tax reforms, including cuts to the top rate of income tax and the introduction of the poll tax. These policies had a significant impact on the distribution of wealth in the UK, with some arguing that they contributed to rising inequality (Kavanagh, 2019).

PM Thatcher put an activity intended to handle essential circumstances that included efficient social methodologies focusing on limiting the mediation of the state via; empowering the major nationalized modern to the privatization, instructive, and medical care frameworks. In addition, she worked on diminishing the force of the labors' unions through the fulfilment of new guidelines by encouraging individuals to drive independent companies, decreasing direct tax collection, encouraging the competition of the free market and dropping public expenditures (Vasile, 2010). Those steps reveal the way of thinking that Thatcher adopt to save the economy and develop it later. The

steps' outcomes generated sort of condition pushing the citizens to think alone and separated from each other. They should think privately about his profits coming from private enterprise he/she has it regardless moral or unmoral procedures taken to do so.

Vasile clarifies that one might say that Thatcher's strategy has prevailed with regards to reduce inflation, having recognizable decrease in unemployment which causes serious common unsettlement (2010). The individualism has been apparent in the statement of Thatcher when she had said "there is a society consisting of individual men, women and families" (Naismith, 1991: p. xxxvii). Thatcher's statement gives an explicit vision how she was thinking and working to apply her view. She explained that the society is not groups of people when she wants to deal with. The society regards numbers of individuals whether man or woman and they should take care of their own privacy separately and away from the society.

Monforte stated that PM Thatcher adopted the "Enterprise Culture" that indicates to recede state's responsibility and the emergence of the individualism to become competitively pure in the economic, political and social stages of the life (2001). This lifestyle of thinking focusing on generating culture from the business she/he has. The culture, as mentioned, takes care of the personal benefits regardless anything else.

Furthermore, Marwick stated that the enterprise philosophy adopts individual initiative, and that freedom can switch to dependency (1990). The individualism, Thatcherism's emphasis on, establishes new lifestyle in the Britain. The citizens had concerns about themselves and the desire of making as much money as possible. It resulted in the emergence of different classes of society. Moreover, such environments resulted in a significant reduction in job vacancies (Vasile, 2010). Churchill captured this point in *Top Girls* as it will be mentioned later.

The 1980's and later was a period of rapid change in the United Kingdom. With the labor market's competitiveness rising rapidly, the term of the 'Superwoman' emerged as a result to the changes which indicates woman's distinction in all aspects of life, whether public or private. The term was inspired by Margaret Thatcher who was a grocer's daughter and a mother of two children, but she was able to build a career and become a one-of-a-kind symbol of the capitalist superwoman of politics. Marlene, the main protagonist of *Top Girls*, was a perfect example of Thatcher's character (2010).

Even though that era could build woman personally, most women were stigmatized as superwomen due to the difficult and exhausting employment conditions of the time. As a result, only a few women have good positions in *Top Girls*, but the majority have been positioned at the end of hierarchy as in '*Fen*' in terms of law payments and opportunities for progression (Vasile, 2010). The term of superwoman was crucial to build businesswoman, but it made her losing part of her feminine because she sometimes could balance between both scales of feminine and self-benefits.

Thatcherism had a continuous impact on the feminist theater and the feminism wave. As previously stated, the social and political climate in the 1970s was distrustful due to the lack of job vacancies and fluctuating standards of living. Therefore, the power tendencies and monetarism have been emerged. Those tendencies created noticeable societal classes which may lead to sort of careless regarding possible societal consequences.

The study would also highlight the feminism movement due to the impacts of Thatcherism, as well as Caryl Churchill's works would be mirroring these transformations through her main plays, particularly *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money*. The literary contribution of Churchill is related to the pattern that allows to comprehend that entire period.

The concentration of the study would present the effects of Thatcherism on the development of female liberation which the works of Caryl Churchill were mirroring the changes especially in *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money*. The literary contribution of Churchill could be classified as a trend through which such copious era of Thatcher could be comprehended.

1.6. LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic of the study is concentrating on the interactions of the political and economic strategies of Thatcherism on the literary works of Caryl Churchill. Therefore, the study tries to reveal how the policies of the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher have impacted Churchill's plays during the same period. That reveals how the relationship of policy with literature is interactive and communicative. Moreover, the period refers to historical and cultural outcomes of Thatcher's policies on the society. Then, those outcomes have been reflected and shown on the Churchill's plays, *Top Girls*, *Fen*, and

Serious Money. For crystalizing these notions, the study was benefited from the theory of Cultural Materialism, which has not been applied before on the three Churchill's plays during Thatcher's period, for having pros and cons resulted from analyzing the plays which would be evidence to the depth of ties of cultural influences.

Concerning literature review, many studies have dealt with Churchill's plays during the Thatcherism era, but most of them were focusing on one play which is *Top Girls*. In addition, the studies focused on the feminist transformations based on the feminist theories, but the current study would analyze and get results based on the Cultural Materialism for having different viewpoint to the Thatcher's era.

The study of Ravari & Naidu, (2011) titled "*Top Girls: Implications of Predominance, Wealth, and Reputation of Women*", To build a Patriarchal-Capitalist Ideology, the study focused on the interaction of class, gender, capitalism, and patriarchy. They highlighted how has working-class women suffered as a result of their economic issues in patriarchal-capitalist society. In this view, the goal of this research is to demonstrate the issues of gender equality and social discrimination based on class hierarchies among women, and the dominance of capitalist forces over marginalized groups. Marxist feminism, which focused on class in connection to capitalism, was considered in the context. The researchers compared the oppression of middle-class women to working-class women in their study. They discussed many relationships representing the oppressor/oppressed and the exploiter/exploited in the *Top Girls* to highlight how these middle-class individuals rule the lower classes.

The study found that *Top Girls* is a play about the different classes of women in society and how middle-class women oppress working-class women. In a patriarchal / capitalist society, the play portrays a group of marginalized working-class women who are oppressed by an upper class. The play demonstrates that women oppression is rooted in the fact that the society lives in a class system. As a result, some women who have achieved success in class hierarchies have had to 'sacrifice' of their own gender. The social and familial connections of women were influenced by this class order. Although class gives women riches, power, and a good name in society, it often strains family relationships, especially when upper-class members ignore lower-class members. Between Marlene and the other women, there are class divisions. In such class hierarchies, she is an upper-class woman, whereas other women are lower-class.

Marlene is at the top of the hierarchy, Nell and Win are below Marlene in the hierarchy, Mrs. Kidd is below Nell and Win in the hierarchy, interviewees are below Mrs. Kidd, and finally Joyce and Angie are at the bottom of the hierarchy. Indeed, Marlene, her sister, and her daughter are at the top and bottom of the hierarchy, respectively. Churchill demonstrates in the play that class is the basis of oppression of oppressed groups, such as working-class women. As a result, working-class women are dominated and oppressed by middle-class women who benefit from the society's discriminatory methods. She frequently depicts working-class characters stuck in a system of economic and familial relationships, and she claims that the vast majority of women in society have little possibility of getting to the top.

The study focused on the capitalism and patriarchy in the play *Top Girls*, but the current study focuses on the Thatcherism via Caryl Churchill's plays *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* according to the theory of Cultural Materialism.

The study of Aston & Reinelt, (2000), entitled *The Cambridge companion to modern British women playwrights* focuses on the work of female playwrights in the United Kingdom during the twentieth century. It looks at how women have written for the stage in historical and theatrical contexts, as well as particular playwrights' works. The study found that in *Top Girls* (1982), Marlene (as Thatcher), the leading character of the play, has "made it" to the top. However, Churchill does not merely illustrate Marlene as a successful woman. Rather, Churchill questions how complicated Marlene's attitudes are and what price she pays for being successful. Moreover, the play *Top Girls* testifies women, who have made it in man's world, will accept capitalistic structures and learn to function within. Aston and Reinelt focused on the impacts of the Thatcherism on the feminist movement. So, they illustrated *Top Girls* on terms of the feminism criticism.

This study sheds the light on the work of UK female playwrights such as Caryl Churchill, but our current study focuses on the study of Thatcherism via Caryl Churchill's plays *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* according to the theory of Cultural Materialism.

The study of ÜLKER, (2019) entitled *A Socialist Feminist Reading of Thatcherite Women in British Feminist Plays*, looks at how women are portrayed in

British feminist theatre that questions gender stereotypes, and how they falter as they rise to power as a result of Margaret Thatcher's policy, which made her the first British woman to be a Prime Minister. Overly ambitious women who reject patriarchy, flip gender stereotypes to seek power, and are eventually left alone at the top as Thatcher are discussed in the text. Marlene in Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, Marion in Churchill's *Owners*, and Mary Traverse in Timberlake Wertenbaker's play *The Grace of Mary Traverse* are examined. Marlene, Marion, and Mary are emblematic of the disastrous consequences of Thatcher's England's thirst for power. To critique selfish Thatcher stereotypes of strong women and to emphasize the lack of feminist solidarity that would develop women's views, feminist Socialist/Materialist criticism theory is applied to plays.

The study finds that because the global experience of women does not change, both Churchill and Wertenbaker turned their subject to women and history to illustrate the struggle of today's women. Through reviewing women's history, it always highlights their fight for survival in patriarchal societies. The three plays addressed have an open epilogue that dramatically depicts the condition and misery of women who should be re-examined. It is up to the public to consider whether the position of women in the past has changed in the modern era. The adoption of excessive authority and the reversal of gender roles are portrayed as undesirable for upper-class women. A few 'strong' and successful women will not be enough to overcome women's collective subjugation unless patriarchal philosophy is completely changed. In the three plays under consideration, destructive and ambitious female characters that promote intra-sexual oppression of women are depicted by criticizing Thatcher's policy. Upper-class women in positions of authority enjoy several benefits while exploiting working-class women, as depicted in Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* and *Owners* and Wertenbaker's *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. Because Thatcher's policy favors upper-class women like Marlene, Marion, and Mary, there is no improvement in women's collective situations. This is the hidden message of both Churchill's and Wertenbaker's plays, implying that one woman's triumph is meaningless if it does not benefit other women. Then, for the wellbeing of all classes of women, a collective attitude should be developed.

The playwrights in question emphasize the necessity of collective action for the benefit of women of all classes. To criticize the plays, they use a socialist feminist

perspective to point out the lack of sisterhood and collaboration among women. The rise of successful career women tends to distance them from feminism, leaving them alone at the top while also leaving little possibility for sisterhood and solidarity among women. Through Socialist feminist criticism, the playwrights emphasize the need for a social/political revolution. The plays successfully promote awareness about the idea that women should work together to achieve their goals; otherwise, the future of women will remain hazy and unsettled.

The researcher notes that this study focuses on the study of Thatcher's women in the plays of Caryl Churchill, Marlene, Marion, and Mary according to a feminist perspective. But our current study focuses on the study of Thatcherism via Caryl Churchill's plays *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* according to the theory of Cultural Materialism.

Hayder Gebreen & Mujtaba Al-Hilo, (2021) in *Thatcherism in Caryl Churchill's Top Girls*, Margaret Thatcher is widely assumed to have opined, possibly on multiple occasions and possibly underhandedly. This initially stunning claim can be understood in terms of a few key transitions between radical Thatcherism and liberalism. In Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, the essay focuses on the neoliberal administration's legacies as they migrate foundations beneath Mrs. Thatcher. Women in her plays are also represented as warriors and survivors, not merely as victims in a patriarchal society. When Margaret Thatcher was elected Prime Minister of England, Churchill composed her plays, which represent the challenges and conflicts of women living in the late 1970s and 1980s under the authority of the "Iron Lady." In essence, her plays are concerned with gender issues. She also looked at the complexity of family interactions, gender stereotyping, and socioeconomic problems.

According to the research, *Top Girl* is a play that portrayed many women's difficulties that were prevalent at the time, but when read today, similar themes are still prevalent. The most essential topic highlighted in this paper is the control of a woman who has achieved a level of power and success over other women who are powerless or have not had the opportunity to show themselves. This issue is shown by Marlene. Because she is at the top, she has complete power over everyone around her and does not allow people to improve their lives.

The play makes a clear division between classes; women were defined by their social status. A lady from the middle class had far more freedom than women from the working class. Working-class women were suffering at the time as a result of the dire economic situation. One of the reasons the working class suffered was because Margaret Thatcher, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, was a conservative who did not pay much attention to help the working class, preferring instead to support the middle class in order to enhance the country's economy. That is why the middle class, which controlled the economy and benefited from Thatcher's politics, repressed the working class, particularly women.

Margaret Thatcher is satirized in this play because she was a woman in a position to alter everything in the country; if she had been a true feminist, she could have made all the difference, she could have changed the plight of women in her country. But she was a woman who had taken on masculine characteristics to the point where she no longer cared about women.

The women in this play used several techniques to confront men's and society's oppression. For example, Pope Joan wanted to finish her study, but she could not since she was a girl, so she changed her identity and assumed a new shape in order to acquire her proper education. Lady Nijo, who felt she was not at the top of her game, refused to stay in her position and fled the palace to become a nun. Aside from that, Churchill gave examples of women like patient Griselda and Mrs. Kidd who quietly accepted their lives as subjugated women.

The researchers find that this study is shedding light on Thatcherism in the play *Top Girls*, by relying on social feminist theory. The difference between this study and our study is that our study depends on dealing with three plays From Caryl Churchills *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* based on the theory of Cultural Materialism.

Radiani Umi Kulsum (2016) in *Marlene and Joan's struggle against Patriarchal society in the Caryl Churchill's play Top Girls*, the study is about the fight of Marlene and Joan against patriarchy in Caryl Churchill's drama *Top Girls*. The goal is to analyze the story's inherent and extrinsic parts. Character, place, and conflict are among the intrinsic aspects examined, while the writer applies Bell Hooks' (1984). The feminist theory used to have the extrinsic elements. In drama, library research and sociological

methodologies are utilized to analyze stories. The author obtains sources from similar books in the library and many other online references using the library research method, and the author analyses the study via using the sociological approach. According to the findings of the study, Marlene and Joan should strive for a social status comparable to the men. Despite the fact that their fight for equality was not easy, they eventually gained the same rights as men in all of the areas for which they campaigned. Joan was able to attain equal rights with males in terms of schooling, whereas Marlene was able to become the main director of her workplace, the girls' employment agency, which was dominated by men. There are feminist elements in the play. The stages of Marlene and Joan's struggle against patriarchal society are used to apply the aspects. The first is the background of the conflict, which explains Marlene and Joan's purpose for fighting patriarchal society. Marlene's passion for fighting stems from her family's history of violence. Joan is the other character, and her purpose for joining the organization is to be able to study because she is not allowed to access libraries like males because she is a woman. Marlene and Joan are both fighting for social equality with males.

The second element is the conflict itself, which depicts Marlene and Joan's struggle for social equality with men. Their struggle was founded on their right to choose their own destiny. Because of Marlene's efforts to achieve social equality with males, she is forced to compete with a man, Howard, for the coveted position of managing director at *Top Girls* Employment Agency. She wins the competition by scoring more points than Howards. She does not want to be a mother because she believes that will jeopardize her work achievement. Joan's struggle is far more intense than Marlene's. Because she is not allowed to study as a woman, she disguises herself as a boy and travels to Athens to study. She travels to Rome not just to study but also to teach.

The third stage represents the culmination of their battle, which has resulted in success as a result of their unwavering commitment to achieve social equality as men. Marlene, who has fought for social equality with males, has now gotten a job as a managing director at her office, which is generally held by men. It demonstrates that not only men, but also women, are capable of achieving the position. Following that, Joan's quest to enter school to study is likewise a success thanks to her disguise. She is not only studying but also instructing while dressed as a man. It demonstrates that a woman has

the same academic rights as a male. Marlene and Joan attend a dinner party in a restaurant on Saturday nights to celebrate their achievement.

Other factors like character and characterization, setting, and conflict are linked to the three stages of struggle. Marlene and Joan are the main characters, and their characterization is depicted through dialogue; setting depicts the locale and time period of the play, implying that tensions existed; and conflict depicts the key issue in Marlene and Joan's lives that drives them to struggle.

The stages of the struggle are about Margaret Thatcher faced in the struggle against the patriarchal system through the play *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill. This study is based on studying three plays From Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* from Cultural Materialist perspective.

Marandi & Anushiravani, (2015), in *Bourdieuian Reading of Caryl Churchill's Serious Money*, focused on Caryl Churchill who is one of the most well-known women playwrights in modern British theatre. She is undoubtedly the most well-known and accomplished socialist-feminist dramatist to emerge from the Second Wave feminism movement. Her plays have been shown over the world. She depicts issues of culture, education, power, politics, and myth in her materialist plays. Her work focuses on the material conditions that reflect power dynamics in society at a specific point in time. Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist and cultural theorist, emphasizes the dynamics of power relations in social life through concepts like capital, field, habitus, symbolic violence, and theories of class and culture. The main goal of this essay is to examine Churchill's *Serious Money* (1987) through the lens of Bourdieu's sociological conceptions. According to Bourdieu, there are several types of capital (cultural, economic, social, and symbolic) that define each individual's place in society and in relation to others. The current study aims to demonstrate that in *Serious Money*, capital, particularly economic capital, is the foundation of social life and determines one's position within the social order, as well as the power discourse in the matrix of social life.

The study found that *Serious Money*, as the title suggests, is all about business and economy. The sociological theories of Bourdieu, particularly his concept of distinct capitals, are pertinent to this play. The best fit is economic capital. Agents compete for

profits in order to gain a higher social rank. This is evident throughout the play: dealing with money, striving for having higher position, and forging alliances with people in order to increase financial benefit. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that literature can be read in terms of sociological ideas, and that the reader can easily see these social concepts in the play's characters. Churchill has positioned herself as an anti-capitalist and anti-globalization figure. She described her ideal society, that she likes, is when the people have a freedom of their feeling and control their lives within decentralization, non-sexism, non-authoritarian, and communism (Aston, 2010). Such unrealized dream is always present in all of her critical plays, including *Serious Money*.

This dissertation is based on addressing the play of *Serious Money* through Bourdieu's social concepts that are based on economics and business, while our current study is based on studying three plays from Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* based on the theory of Cultural Materialism.

Al-Khafaji & Al-Maraabi, (2017), in *The Reversible Image of Successful Women in Carly Churchill's Top Girls*, investigated Caryl Churchill's well-known play *Top Girls* (1982). The focus of the study is on Marlene, the main character in the play, and the strange visitors she invited to her dinner party. It analyses Marlene as a character and compares her to Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, by discussing her achievement, her manner of life, and her treatment of other women. The piece also analyses Marlene's guests' stories and how they see themselves as successful. It depicts the success stories of these ladies and how they overcame adversity to achieve their goals. The study examines how these women's success and recognition might be viewed as a failure for the feminist case, as their achievement cannot be taken as a landmark for success for other women, nor should other women follow in their footsteps exactly.

Top Girls (1982), like *Owners* (1972), *Vinegar Tom* (1976), and *Cloud Nine* (1979), focuses primarily with political and societal challenges relating to gender issues as perceived through a feminist lens (Al-Khafaji & Al-Maraabi, 2017). *Top Girls* is Churchill's play that has gotten the greatest attention and criticism. The goal of the playwright is to dramatize women's ongoing oppression throughout history. Furthermore, Churchill wishes to emphasize the long-forgotten role of women throughout history and to demonstrate women who have been concealed from view (2017). Because many British dramatists were influenced by this approach, many critics

hailed the play's opening scene, in which Churchill hosted a star dinner for some historical and literary women, as an 'innovative' technique with overlapping speech. Caryl Churchill created a new way of writing plays that included overlapping dialogue. Her work became popular among feminists because it helped to express women's concerns in a unique way. By breaking up language, Churchill's plays allowed women to have a voice that was heard and understood. This was important because women's voices had often been ignored or silenced in the past. Churchill's innovative approach to writing plays helped to give women a platform to express themselves and their ideas.

Al-Maraabi & Al-Khafaji studied the play *Top Girls* from a political viewpoint, explaining the challenges facing women and the oppression they are subjected to in the patriarchal society, while our current study is based on studying three plays From Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* based on the theory of Cultural Materialism.

Caught in a Vortex: The Portrayal of Women in Caryl Churchill's Fen (2017), aims to expose women's exploitation in a capitalist system. It claims that much of women's misery stems from their economic reliance on a society that neither provides equal work possibilities for women nor compensates them with equal pay. Any Marxist Feminist debate revolves around the abuse of power and the reality of economic need for survival, especially for women. This is a recurring motif in several of Caryl Churchill's plays, which revolve around the lives of women trapped in a terrible cycle of economic dependency. *Fen* (1983), for example, is a play that depicts the wretched lives of women who survive by picking potatoes, with no way out of the dreary life of struggle and cruelty. The purpose of this study is to look at how she presents women in light of her Marxist Feminist ideals.

Churchill presents a striking image of how the economy plays a fundamental role in shaping the social order in which women like Val are trapped with no possibility of escaping into a better life as a Marxist Feminist.

The play reveals suffering of women in the capitalist system, and how the economy affects their social status through the play *Fen*, while the current research is based on the theory of Cultural Materialism, and the applications would be three plays From Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money*.

Ravari (2015), in *Investigating Voice and Agency in Caryl Churchill's Selected Plays*, studied minority characters are given voice and agency to oppose gender and class discrimination, as well as the subject of resistance to various types of oppression. The characters' ability to exert agency and overcome repressive influences was examined using Judith Butler's definition of agency. Their right to speak out against oppressive forces is also investigated as means of identifying their resistance to patriarchal agencies. Each of Churchill's plays contains revolutionary characters who fight oppressive forces in patriarchal societies that are oppressive to them. Furthermore, this study added to the literature by discussing various types of resistance to oppression in each play and underlining the fact that the characters in Churchill's plays use similar and different techniques to resist oppression. It is also worth noting that not all of the characters are able to triumph over persecution.

This article adds to the body of knowledge by analyzing gender and class oppression resistance. As a result, it looked at whether the characters could exercise agency and resist repressive factors using Butler's definition of agency. Their right to speak out against oppressive forces is also investigated as means of identifying their resistance to patriarchal agencies. The study added to the literature by analyzing distinct types of resistance to oppression in each play and highlighting how the characters in Churchill's plays use similar and different techniques to oppose oppression. It is also worth noting that not all of the characters are able to triumph over persecution.

The study illustrates the ability of women to struggle in light of the oppressive regime prevailing in their society through the plays of Caryl Churchill, *Top Girls* and *Vinegar Tom*, while our current study is based on studying three plays From Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money* based on the theory of Cultural Materialism.

Mayson Muhi (2018), in *Breaking the Stereotype Image of Women in Caryl Churchill's Top Girls*, looked at Caryl Churchill's portrayal of the stereotypical female image in *Top Girls* (1982). The play describes how, throughout history, women have struggled to fight men's oppression and had attained sort of freedom and power utilized for governing female gender with no compassion. The play's major character, Marlene, is a woman taken male characteristics in terms of her logical conclusion. Marlene sacrifices her child, family, and love in order to climb the corporate ladder to the top. In

addition, the drama depicts repressed, dependent, and sacrificial women who have been denied the opportunity to be independent and free. Furthermore, the study explores the reactions of various social classes, particularly the working class, to Margaret Thatcher's policies as the UK's first female prime minister, the Iron Lady.

The study found that *Top Girls* is a play that depicted many women's difficulties that were prevalent at the time, but when read today, it is clear that similar themes are still prevalent today. The most essential topic highlighted in this paper is the power of the woman who achieved sort of power and success over other women who were powerless, or they did not have an opportunity to be presented. Such issue has been shown via Marlene. How? because she is at the top, she has complete power over everyone around her and does not allow people to improve their lives.

The drama makes a clear division between classes; women were defined by their social status. Women from the middle class had freedom greater than women of the working class because they were still suffering as a result of the dire economic situation. PM Margaret Thatcher was a conservative and she did not pay much attention to assisting the working class, preferring instead to support the middle class in order to boost the country's economy. That is why the middle class, which controlled the economy and benefited from Thatcher's politics, repressed the working class, particularly women.

Margaret Thatcher is satirized in *Top Girls* because she had changed everything in Britain. If she was a true feminist, she could have made difference required. She could have changed the plight of women, but she had taken on male characteristics to the point when she no longer cared about women.

The women in this play used several techniques to defy men's and society's oppression. For example, Pope Joan wanted to continue her study but was unable to do so because she was a girl. As a result, she changed her identity and assumed a new shape in order to acquire her proper education. Moreover, when Lady Nijo felt she was not at the top of her game, she rejected to stay in her position. Then, she fled the palace to become a nun. Regardless of that, Churchill gave samples of women like patient Griselda and Mrs. Kidd who quietly accepted their lives as subjugated women, but the

current research is based on the theory of Cultural Materialism, and the applications would be three plays From Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money*.

Mustafa (2020), in *Elements of Brecht's epic theatre in Caryl Churchill's Mad Forest and Sarah Kane's Cleansed* (2020), focused on Caryl Churchill's plays incorporate themes from numerous isms, including feminism, sexism, capitalism, and socialism, describing her dramaturgy as an eclectic mix of social philosophies and political beliefs. Caryl Churchill is really unique and distinctive in her writing and theatrical techniques, and she was not shy away from drawing on previous European theatrical theory, practice, and culture. In this way, she is a playwright who benefits much from the Brechtian epic theatre's thematic and technical qualities, which can be seen in her *Mad Forest*. Sarah Kane, on the other hand, is no less different from her predecessor Caryl Churchill in terms of embracing challenging, confrontational ideas and reflecting them in her plays, with her experimental dramaturgy that stretches, and twists features of realism and naturalism into new post-dramatic forms. Despite her openness to new dramatic approaches, Sarah Kane acknowledges older dramatic aesthetics in her play *Phaedra's Love*, which is an adaptation of Seneca's *Phaedra*. Similarly, Sarah Kane employs elements of Brechtian epic drama in her novel *Cleansed*. In light of these considerations, this article examines how and to what extent Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane maintain Brechtian dramatic characteristics in their respective works, *Mad Forest* and *Cleansed*. The study attempts to reframe the dramatic links between three seemingly distant authors of various decades by investigating this tripartite relationship between Bertolt Brecht, Caryl Churchill, and Sarah Kane.

This study shows that both Caryl Churchill's *Mad Forest* and Sarah Kane's *Cleansed* reflect important aspects of the Brechtian epic theatre. While *Mad Forest* is rifer with the Brechtian aesthetics, *Cleansed* is slightly more selective in terms of mirroring some major characteristics of it. Another significant finding of this research is that it places Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane in the framework of Brechtian epic theatrical aesthetics for the first time. The epic elements in the plays they both produced in the 1990s hint and reveal a continuity in their work, but the current research is based on the Cultural Materialism and its applications would be three plays From Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, *Fen* and *Serious Money*.

The current analysis of the dissertation aims to find a new potential through exploring.

A. The developing stages of Thatcherism when the Prime Minister Thatcher adopted the individualism and privatization policies through tracking three of Churchill's plays.

B. Having the applications of Cultural Materialism for understanding and proving that the scenes and outcomes of Caryl Churchill's literary works mentioned are a result of dramatic political and economic directions implemented by PM Thatcher.

Those two points are the subject matters and problems of the dissertation and the gap targeted to be filled by analyzing the three plays mentioned.

2. CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING OF THATCHERISM IN *SERIOUS MONEY*

2.1. CARYL CHURCHILL'S *SERIOUS MONEY*

Serious Money is one of the significant plays written by Caryl Churchill in March 1987. Churchill is one of the greatest playwrights interested in Thatcher's ideologies, reflecting them on her plays during the same era. Her *Serious Money* would be analyzed to find out the touches and outputs of the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's policies on the lifestyle of people during her premiership (1979-1990). Churchill used several implications and characters to mirror the new applied policies adopted by Thatcher's government. Churchill had creative works through which the readers or critics can feel how the lifestyle was transformed to have unique outcomes.

Serious Money focuses on the lifestyle of the stockjobbers and financiers who are looking for their self-interests regardless the human values and how some sequences of plots led to clarify such outputs. Such feelings created new lifestyle among UK citizens and reflected a sort of changes, implications in the thinking ways and the tendencies due to Thatcher's adaptations.

Serious Money is a play written by Caryl Churchill that explores the world of finance and corruption in the 1980s. The play is set in London and focuses on a group of stockbrokers and bankers who are involved in illegal activities to make a quick profit (Kubiak, 1998).

The play *Serious Money* begins with a young and ambitious stockbroker named Scilla Todd, who has recently been promoted to the mergers and acquisitions department of her firm. She is determined to make a name for herself in the cut-throat world of finance. However, Scilla soon discovers that her company is involved in illegal insider trading, and she is forced to choose between her moral values and her desire for success (Buse, 1990).

The first story is about the brothers, Scilla and Jake, Todd who have a high level lifestyle. They are sons of the greedy stockbroker Greville. Jake, who is suddenly murdered without knowing the reasons or criminals. Still, Frosby, the disgruntled retired stockjobber who thoughts that Greville and his children made him lost his trade. He confesses that he was a part of process to turn Jake Todd over the department of Trade

and industry due to his insider trading, which regards illegal trading deals on the stock exchange leading to have an advantage via getting access to classified information. Scilla tries to find out the fact of the killing but her honest feelings have been changed. At the end of play, Scilla blackmails someone for having her interests.

Another plot is about two aggressive bankers, Merrison and Durkfeld. They are co-chiefs of Klein Merrick. The greediness and power dominate Durkfeld and forces his colleague Merrison to resign to meet his desire. As a result, the revenging desire of Merrison generates aggressively against Durkfeld and he could destroy Durkfeld by assisting Marylou, the resourceful and greedy women. The factors of greediness, power, and deception dominate not this plot only. They cover most of the scenes and circumstances of *Serious Money*.

The other main story is also about the trail of two traders to dominate Albion company and how the desire of the greediness controls them to take over the company by using any possible trick or corruption. The traders are Billy Corman, a powerful and wealthy stockjobber, and Zac Zacherman, the US banker who supports Corman to dominate the Albion Company.

Serious Money's title is related to the murdered Jake Todd. He was involved in illegal deals in the stock markets. He was a spy for having unclassified information or data to get benefit of it. It is also called Insider Trading. Therefore, the *Serious Money* as a norm is connected to Jake's unlawful job due to the insider trading deals. In addition, when having a general sight of *Serious Money*, it reflects sort of suspense feelings and dramatic events which inform the audience a fact that everyone has own perspective adopted to achieve self-benefit. Moreover, the feelings of some actors are changeable based on the near or far from the humanity and social sense as in Scilla's or Frosby's behaves.

The feelings and desires are directed by variant political and economic impacts. Those impacts have been redesigned by the prime minister Margaret Thatcher, who tried to establish and market new concepts to the UK society.

2.2. THATCHERISM IN CHURCHILL'S *SERIOUS MONEY*

Therefore, it is crucial to mentioned briefly about the main policies of PM Thatcher related to the markets and businesses. She implemented several policies and made significant decisions during her time as Prime Minister that impacted the lifestyles of British citizens. Kavanagh (2019) and Peck (2010) mentioned those policies that the implementation of economic reforms, including privatization, trade union reform, housing policies promoting home ownership, and tax reforms, brought about positive outcomes like increased competition, improved efficiency, and higher rates of home ownership, but also resulted in job losses, higher prices for some services, a shortage of affordable housing, rising homelessness, and increased wealth inequality. Overall, Thatcher's policies had a profound impact on British society and the way of life for many citizens (Evans, E., & Jenkins, 2017).

In *Serious Money*, Churchill sheds lights on a significant change done by PM Thatcher related to the stock market and trade. London Stock Exchange and London International Financial Futures Exchange (LIFFE) were redesigned during the PM Thatcher to have deals of international marketing and sales and trading not only within the UK but having international dimensions too. The markets have been released from many restrictions which never ever happened before. PM Thatcher played a significant role to change the economic style of the British citizens and made them focusing on developing their businesses as much as they can. That stimulation made by the Thatcherism imposed a new lifestyle. The Cultural Materialism would confirm that facts later. Moreover, when the rules of Thatcher are tracked, it can find that she made a huge merger for the department of Industry with the Trade Department to have Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). It regulated all functions and business of the United Kingdom. Thatcher strived to have apparent removal of restrictions and regulations of the industrial and trading sectors. Both DTI merger and deregulation process strengthened the business sector successfully. As a result, the norm "The Big Bang" became a banner of those changes. The big bang refers to how Thatcher's policies stimulated UK citizens to keep pace with the new dramatic jobs and lifestyle. (Moore, 2015).

Moreover, the insider trading idiom has been circulated much due to the transformations of society happened 1980s. At that time, the British citizens exposed to

new governmental directions when the PM Thatcher adopted the individualism and leaving the social capitalism gradually. That transformation generated new lifestyle of the British society.

2.3. STUDYING *SERIOUS MONEY* VIA CULTURAL MATERIALISM

As further mentioned in the first chapter, for having applicable analysis and better understanding of the *Serious Money*, the research would apply the Cultural Materialism as a method of clarifying the events of the play. The method would show the horizons related through having selective events reflecting the facts behind scenes. As an interpretive method, Cultural Materialism would try to study the interaction of the UK society and the State Power representing the economic policies and legislated laws implemented by the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Therefore, Cultural Materialism is a literary analysis that focuses on interpreting the social, cultural, and political variables that influenced the author, hence changing the context in which the writer composed the text. Moreover, it is interested in economic issues such as circulation, negotiation, profit, and exchange, as well as how some activities that appear to be above the market, such as literary work, are in fact driven and influenced entirely by market forces.

Serious Money would fit to the Cultural Materialism analyses. The terminology of bankers, stocks, shares, stockjobbers, and traders circulates in it. They reflect the society interested in Materialism regardless the morals, values or the damages of humanity resulted from it.

Churchill reflected that formation through the events and plots of the *Serious Money*. Therefore, it shows that most of the characters are interested in their self-interests without caring about the society as a whole.

In addition, the plot of the *Serious Money* is related to the illegal transaction or financial practice taken for getting interest. The violation of law reflects the practices resulted from the greediness and selfishness of those stockjobbers and financiers who can break rules for having their targets. Moreover, by highlighting those policies, the analysis of *Serious Money* by applying The Cultural Materialism would reveal the influence of those policies on the dramatic changes of the lifestyle of British people.

Serious Money also refers to how the characters' greed and ambition lead them to engage in corrupt activities, including tax evasion, insider trading, and bribery (Luckhurst, 2003). The play also touches upon themes of gender and power, as Scilla struggles to navigate the male-dominated world of finance.

Moreover, one of the most notable features of the play is its use of language. Churchill employs a unique style that combines elements of poetry, rap, and satire to create a fast-paced and energetic dialogue. The play is also known for its use of multimedia elements, including video projections and live music (Carroll, 1995).

In General, *Serious Money* is a provocative and engaging play that explores the dark side of finance and the human cost of greed. It is a cautionary tale about the dangers of unchecked ambition and the need for integrity and ethics in the business world (Carroll, 1995).

Moreover, *Serious Money* tends to sort of disappointment due to the immorality and societal irresponsibility resulted from a lack of feminist movement's solidarity or to dominate the capitalism ideologies (Ognjenovic, 2021).

Overall, the two essential plots of *Serious Money* are focusing on how the greediness and individuality thinking increased and controlled on the British mentality due to the impacts of the political and economic policies adopted during the government of the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. During her premiership, PM Thatcher adopted the privatization, individualism and leaving the social capitalism gradually (Jessop, 2015).

2.4. SCILLA'S ORIENTATION AND TENDENCIES

Scilla Todd is one of the protagonists of the *Serious Money*. It is crucial to highlight her role and events related. Her brother, Jake Todd, and she are living a high-class life. Their father, Greville Todd, is an old fashion trader and he cannot balance the new economic policies adapted. Scilla thoughts that his father was involved in killing Jake and he disliked the deals with women. He denied her claims. Scilla and Jake work together and have a productive business of shares and stock markets. Amongst the busy events and plots of *Serious Money*, Jake, who deals illegally with insider trading is killed. He was part of a big illegal network of stockjobbers and traders. His murder

causes a shock and fears for many businessmen because they were involved with him in an illegal business related to the insider trading. Zac Zackerman, one of the powerful wealth traders, expresses this fact when he talks to Jake, “You are the kind of loose thread, Jake, that when they pull you the whole fucking City could unravel” (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 256).

The sentences above reveal the wide complicated network that Jake is involved with in the illegal insider trading. It is a critical. Scilla could not realize what happened. So, she decides to find out the killer. At the beginning, Scilla’s feelings seem honest but after the sequences of the events, she changed mind. She tries to know the fate of the money of his brother. She accused Marylou Baines, one of brother’s partners in some businesses, in killing Jake. Then, she blackmails her to get some interests;

Scilla to Marylou: I’d been wondering if you killed Jake, but now I hardly care. It is not going to bring him alive again, and the main thing is to get my share. You were Jake’s main employer so tell me please, How did pay him his enormous fees? Did he have a company and what’s its name? And how can I get in on the game? If you do not help me, I will go to the authorities to tell them. Marylou: Is this blackmail? Scilla: Yes, of course. I can put you in jail. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 304-305).

In this argument, Scilla confronts Marylou about her suspicions regarding Jake’s death and demands information about his business dealings. Scilla is portrayed as a ruthless and calculating character who is willing to resort to blackmail in order to achieve her goals. Here are some details about this argument:

1. Scilla begins the conversation by expressing her suspicion that Marylou may have been involved in Jake's death. However, she quickly dismisses this idea and instead focuses on her desire to obtain information about Jake's business dealings and her share of his profits.
2. Scilla demands that Marylou provide her with information about Jake’s business, including the name of his company and how he was paid his fees. She is determined to get in on the action and secure her share of the profits.
3. Scilla then threatens Marylou with blackmail, saying that she will go to the authorities if she does not receive the information she wants. She suggests that Marylou could be put in jail if she refuses to cooperate.

4. Marylou is initially taken aback by Scilla's demands and threats, and questions whether Scilla's actions constitute blackmail. However, she ultimately agrees to provide Scilla with the information she wants, suggesting that she is intimidated by Scilla's aggressive and confrontational behavior.

The argument highlights the cutthroat nature of the world of high finance depicted in the play, as well as the lengths to which characters like Scilla will go to secure their own financial gain. The scene also raises questions about the morality of such actions and the impact they can have on individuals and society as a whole. The argument clarifies how Scilla changed her mind and did not care of whom killed her brother. Instead, she blackmailed Marylou to get Jake's wealth.

Then, the greediness and rude behaves of Scilla clearly appeared in her rest argument with Marylou:

Scilla to Marylou: You stick your arbitrage up your arse. If you do not tell me about his company, You'll find me quite a dangerous enemy. I'm greedy and completely amoral. I've the cunning and connection of the middle class and I'm tough as a job. Marylou: Scilla, do not let's quarrel (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 305).

From the dialogue mentioned, it is apparently that Scilla severely misbehaved towards Marylou. The engine of losing the ethics and humanity was because of the greediness and selfishness. Scilla's mentality is directed to self-interest and careless regarding others. The climate of Scilla's family business pushes her to think in greediness.

In this conversation, Scilla confronts Marylou about her demands for information about Jake's business dealings. Scilla is portrayed as a ruthless and aggressive character who is determined to get what she wants, while Marylou is depicted as more conciliatory and hesitant to engage in conflict. The clarifications of the conversation can be briefed:

1. Scilla's aggression: Scilla begins the conversation by insulting Marylou and threatening her with physical harm if she does not provide her with the information she wants. She uses vulgar language and crude imagery to emphasize her point, highlighting her aggressive and confrontational personality.
2. Scilla's amorality: Scilla admits to being greedy and completely unethical, suggesting that she has no worries about engaging in unethical or illegal behavior

to achieve her goals. This further underscores her willingness to use any means necessary to get what she wants.

3. Scilla's social status: Scilla also claims about her connections and social status, suggesting that she has the resources and support necessary to succeed in her endeavors. This further reinforces her sense of power and confidence.
4. Marylou's response: Marylou is taken aback by Scilla's aggression and attempts to defuse the situation by suggesting to avoid quarrel. This suggests that Marylou is more conflict averse than Scilla and prefers to avoid confrontation whenever possible.

Overall, this conversation highlights the tension and conflict that can arise in the cutthroat world of high finance, as well as the stark differences in personality and approach between characters like Scilla and Marylou. The scene also underscores the potentially dangerous consequences of greed and amorality in this world, and the ways in which individuals can be drawn into unethical behavior in pursuit of wealth and power.

Moreover, Kęłowska-Ławniczak mentions that *Serious Money* strives to eradicate the real feelings because of influence of the market to show it as a sexy greed. (Kęłowska-Ławniczak, 2017).

On the other hand, Marylou Baines is a US powerful wealthy trader with cold hearted and greediness. The argument mentioned reflects that despite Marylou was also greedy but she was self-control and she did not give an opportunity to Scilla to got what she wanted.

Through reading the context of *Serious Money*, many outputs could be noticeable due to Thatcherism policies which led to such attitudes and behaves.

The discussions in LIFFE Champagne Bar among Scilla, Jake, and Grimes show the level of the interest how to be wealth and powerful within short time. When they talk about their possible deals, Scilla mentioned they are struggling due to the old version of traders like her father:

Scilla: (There are at least two dozen people in the City now getting a million a year) Think of the ones at the top who can afford To pay us to make them money, and they're on the board. Grimes: They are for the chop Jake (simultaneously): I'm on the board.

Scilla: True, you're on the board, But how many of us will make it to the top? If we've a Porsche in the garage and champagne in the glass We do not notice there's a lot of power still held by men of daddy's class. Grimes: No but most of them got no feel (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 205).

The context reveals three crucial points:

1. The excessive ambition of the new young traders represented by Scilla, Jake, and Grimes to be wealthy and have a power within short time.
2. Their target to the wealth can be achieved regardless the values or ethics. They are ready to get a risk for having their aim.
3. Scilla highlights the cultural barrier between their new business generation and old one. The barrier refers to the way of the thinking embedded the power of old class represented by her father, Greville Todd. He is greed, hard-hearted and does not like to change the lifestyle and business standards he already dealt with for many years. So, Scilla regards this old powerful class is still an obstacle which they should release of it in their new lifestyle and business.

At the end, Grimes confirms that the old class has no feel and that sight that they are not dealing friendly with new generation. Spencer mentions that *Serious Money* reflects the capitalistic greed of the city London at that time (2010).

The dialogue also mentions that Scilla, Grimes, and Jake discuss the power dynamics at play in the world of high finance. They reflect on the fact that while some people in the city are making excessive amounts of money, most are struggling to get ahead, and that eventually the real power still rests in the hands of a small group of wealthy individuals. Some hints could get from the dialogue:

1. Scilla notes that there are many people in the city who are making millions of pounds each year, and that these individuals are the ones who have the power to hire others to make them even more money. She suggests that this is a fundamental part of the dynamic at play in the financial world, and that those who are not able to tap into this power dynamic are unlikely to succeed.

2. Jake interrupts Scilla to point out that he is already on the board of a company, implying that he has already achieved a certain level of success within the industry.
3. Scilla acknowledges that Jake is on the board, but suggests that this does not guarantee his continued success. She argues that while some people may be able to buy expensive cars and drink champagne, the real power still rests with those who come from wealthy, privileged backgrounds.
4. Grimes notes that while many of the people in power may not have the same drive or passion for the work that others do, they still hold a significant amount of influence and control.

The dialogue highlights the complex power dynamics at play in the financial world, as well as the ways in which wealth, privilege, and social status can influence an individual's success. The scene also underscores the tension between those who have achieved success within the industry and those who are struggling to make their mark, as well as the sometimes cutthroat competition and lack of empathy that can be present in this world.

Moreover, when the discussion continues, Scilla mentions the cultural and Materialism adopted by the society especially by the old class for having their interest regardless the ethics.

Scilla:they regard us as the SAS. They send us in to smash the place up and get them out of a mess. They'll have us on the scrap heap at thirty-five (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 205).

In this conversation, Scilla is expressing her frustration with the way the top executives of the financial world treat the traders and other employees. She compares them to the SAS, which is a special forces unit of the British Army known for their aggressive and dangerous missions.

Scilla believes that the executives use traders like herself to take big risks and make large profits for the company, but when things go wrong, they are quick to throw the traders under the bus and get rid of them. She sees this as a betrayal of trust and loyalty, and fears that she and her colleagues will be discarded when they are no longer useful.

Scilla's statement that "they'll have us on the scrap heap at thirty-five" refers to the fact that many traders in the financial industry are considered past their prime and less valuable to the company once they reach this age. She is expressing her fear that she and her colleagues will be discarded and left to *Fend* for themselves once they are no longer of use to the company.

The dialogue reflects that the old and powerful businessmen use the new brokers like Scilla, Jake and Grimes to achieve their profit goals by giving them commissions to complete tasks only. This type of deal does not make them satisfied. Therefore, Jake expresses his rejection and he makes it clear that he wants to be a wealthy when he becomes thirty years old. Then, Scilla reacts with him:

Scilla: Unless we're really determined to survive (which I am). Jake: It probably means you have to fight dirty (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 206).

The conversation shows the dishonestly way of getting money is governed the dialogue and thoughts. 'Fight dirty' refers to the corruption and violation processes to gain money. The Cultural Materialism reveals the greediness and selfishness are implanted in the environments of markets and business. Therefore, the brokers and jobbers can do anything for having interests.

The conversation of Scilla and Jake are discussing the cut-throat nature of the financial industry and what it takes to succeed in it. Scilla expresses her determination to survive, and Jake acknowledges that this will likely require her to engage in unethical or even illegal behavior.

Jake's statement that "it probably means you have to fight dirty" is an acknowledgment of the fact that many successful traders in the financial industry engage in behaviors that are morally questionable or outright illegal in order to gain an edge over their competitors. He is essentially saying that Scilla will need to be willing to compromise her own moral code in order to succeed in this highly competitive environment.

This conversation highlights the moral ambiguity of the financial industry, where success often depends on a willingness to engage in behavior that would be considered unethical or illegal in other contexts. Scilla's determination to survive at any cost and

Jake's suggestion that she may need to fight dirty underscore the harsh reality of this world, where only the most ruthless and cunning individuals are able to thrive.

Then, Scilla clarifies that she is exhausted due to such job which makes money for others and she wants to make it for her own then. Therefore, each one has to work alone seriously to reach his target.

Scilla: But it's time to go it alone and be a local. I'm tired of making money for other people.
Grimes: (Going to make a million a year? Scilla: I might do.) (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 206).

The argument confirms the feeling and the way of thinking for Scilla. She wants to have her own business which makes her wealthy quickly. Scilla is expressing her desire to strike out on her own and become a local trader, rather than continuing to work for other people. Grimes responds with skepticism, asking if Scilla thinks she can make a million a year on her own.

Scilla's response, "I might do," highlights her confidence and ambition. She believes that she has the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed as a local trader and make a significant amount of money in the process.

This conversation illustrates the allure of independence and autonomy in the financial industry, where traders are constantly seeking to gain an edge and maximize their profits. Scilla's desire to go it alone and Grimes' recognition of the potential rewards associated with this decision underscore the competitive and cut-throat nature of the financial industry, where individuals are constantly looking for ways to gain an advantage over their competitors.

On the other hand, the argument gives a clear impression that the material culture becomes control the lifestyle which has been re-designing by the governmental policies of the PM Thatcher. The Thatcher era in British society brought about a significant change. Instead of focusing on socialism and the government taking care of people, the emphasis shifted towards individualism and a new way of life. This change in strategy reflected the adoption of new societal norms and standards.

The movement of United Kingdom society has been influenced by the Thatcherism which reflected in their lifestyle as a whole. This fact of interaction between the Thatcherism and UK society considers as a best example of the outputs of the Cultural Materialism.

Moreover, the 'Enterprise Culture' adopted as one of the most significant Thatcher's policies has encouraged the UK citizen to think separately and have his/her own business regardless the dependency on the state's financial policies. (Monforte, 2000). As a result, these Thatcher's politics have been reflected on the thoughts of the UK citizens.

Scilla, Jake and the rest of actors were clear samples of that interaction and reflection when they show a tendency to work alone or have their own business or behave immorally if it is required to get interest.

The Churchill's impression was not encouraging to adopt Thatcherism policies. She thought that such policies were not combatable with the feminist role within the society. Also, the social factors created by Thatcherism had effective impact in the society which follow and applied them. On the third hand, the *Serious Money* text and context are reflected the Thatcherism ideologies. *Serious Money* implied and embedded what mentioned that the society tendency was with the privatization and the enterprise culture.

Due to the personality of Scilla, she is a central character with complex orientations and tendencies that drive her actions and relationships within the world of finance. Her orientations and tendencies can be briefed as following:

Ambition: Scilla is ambitious and determined to succeed in the male-dominated world of finance. She is highly skilled and intelligent, and uses her talents to advance her career and position within the company. She is willing to take risks and make difficult decisions to achieve her goals.

Competitiveness: Scilla is highly competitive and driven to outperform her colleagues. She is constantly pushing herself to excel and is willing to go to great lengths to gain an advantage over her rivals. She is also highly critical of those who fail to meet her high standards, including her own family members.

Materialism: Scilla is motivated by a desire for material success and the trappings of wealth. She is often seen flaunting her designer clothes and expensive possessions, and is highly attuned to the latest trends and fashions.

Morality: Despite her competitive and materialistic tendencies, Scilla is not entirely amoral. She has a strong sense of justice and fairness, and is deeply troubled by the corruption and unethical behavior she sees around her. She is also protective of her family and friends, and is willing to take risks to help those she cares about.

Sexuality: Scilla's sexuality is also an important aspect of her character. She is portrayed as a powerful and confident woman who is unafraid to use her sexuality to get what she wants. She is involved in a number of sexual relationships throughout the play, including a passionate affair with a younger man who works in the same company.

In summary, Scilla's orientations and tendencies in *Serious Money* are characterized by ambition, competitiveness, materialism, morality, and sexuality. These traits make her a complex and multifaceted character, and contribute to the play's exploration of themes such as gender, power, and morality within the world of high finance.

2.5. MERRISON'S, DURKFELD'S, AND MARYLOU'S ORIENTATIONS AND TENDENCIES

In *Serious Money*, some personalities and events reflecting the environments of the society and they are apparent samples of Cultural Materialism's applications. Two of them are Merrison and Durkfeld. They are American bankers and co-chief executives of Klein Merrick which is owned by Zac Zackerman. The play appears them as selfish, greedy and they fight each other for getting more interests. At the beginning of the play, severe argument happens between of them. The low slang language reflects the shallow of culture and material lifestyle they live far away from the ethics. The following argument explains this fact:

Merrison: Let me understand what you're saying here. Durkfeld: I want to go solo running Klein. I'm saying I'm suggesting you resign. Merrison: I just promoted you. Durkfeld: Should I be grateful? Merrison: I made you my equal Durkfeld: Jack. I hate you. Did not you know that? You're not so smart You're too important to smell your own fart Merrison: Eddie. I need to understand your problem (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 209)

The conversation takes place between Merrison and Durkfeld, two characters who work for an investment bank called Klein. Durkfeld is proposing that he should run Klein alone and that Merrison should resign. Merrison is confused by the suggestion and points out that he just promoted Durkfeld to be his equal. Durkfeld responds by saying

that he hates Merrison and thinks he is not as smart as he thinks he is. Merrison tries to understand what Durkfeld's problem is and asks him to explain. The conversation highlights the cutthroat nature of the financial industry and the intense competition between colleagues. Durkfeld seemed selfish and did not care of the favor's Merrison. Furthermore, he insist to hurt his colleague who assisted to be his equal.

Durkfeld: There's guys do not want me in their club. I do not give a rat's ass. Those guys would have looked the other way and let the cattle trucks pass. I'm good at my job. (You like lunch, you have lunch.) I run the best trading floor in New York City, and traders Make two dollars profit for this company for every dollar made by you bankers. And you treat us like a load of shit. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 209)

When reviewing the dialogue mentioned, the rudeness, disrespect, and greediness during their tough argument are noticeable. Also, it reflects how those businessmen work based on their material profits only regardless the sentimental dimensions towards others. When the dialogue goes further, it notes that Merrison was a co-chief of the Klein Merrick and he assisted Durkfeld to get promoted and became equal to him as co-chief of the Klein because Durkfeld is a productive banker. But it was a shock when Durkfeld forces Merrison to resign and leave the bank! Merrison reminded Durkfeld that Durkfeld got promoted because of him and he owes him. So, who did he forget the friend's favor?! Durkfeld does not care much about Merrison's favor because he thought he is smart enough, hard worker, and he made the company get huge profits. That is why he wants to remove his colleague to get much power, dominance, and wealth. It is crucial to follow the rest of argument to confirm the analysis mentioned:

Durkfeld: I make this company eighty million dollars and the bankers pocket most of that profit. Bankers get on the cover of Time. Merrison: Brother, can you spare a dime? Durkfeld: I do OK, sure, I'm not talking greed. I'm talking how I mean to succeed... Which of us does this company need? I'm talking indispensable. Merrison:..... I need to understand what you're saying here so let's set a time we can have a further talk. Durkfeld: You do not seem to get. You're sitting in my chair. Walk (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 210)

In this conversation, Durkfeld expresses his frustration at the fact that despite his contributions to the company's profits, the bankers are the ones who receive the recognition and rewards. He believes he is indispensable and that the company needs him. On the other hand, Merrison seems to be more focused on the practicalities of the situation and wants to understand Durkfeld's problem better before taking any action. Durkfeld, however, is impatient and wants immediate action, as evidenced by his final line, "You're sitting in my chair. Walk." This suggests that he may be considering leaving the company to pursue his own goals.

Durkfeld also represents an advance version of the business generation that does not consider of the human and social values. His colleague, Merrison, tried to convince him the company need them both and they can work achieve better results together and the company team appreciates his efforts; therefore, there is no need to fight each other but the Merrison's justifications were useless. Then, Merrison was forced to resign and leave the company. That pushes Merrison to revenge from Durkfeld to break him.

During the events of the play, Marylou Baines, who is an American businesswoman and has a vast powerful and wealthy network of businessmen, meets Merrison for having business issue in New York. Their talk goes to the revenge's feeling of Merrison against Durkfeld. She finds that she can use his feelings to make a deal and have profit. She provokes him to revenge and guides him to a plan to do so. He responds to her and follow what she recommends meeting his revenging desire. The following dialogue made it clear:

Marrison: I can't forgive Durkfeld for the shambles He's made of Klein Merrick. A great nation need great enterprise, not black plastic and grey lino and guys in polyester. Marylou: I guess the old wound's beginning to fester. It's about time you did something drastic. Go for it, Jack. Why do not you sabotage Durkfeld deals?.....Should enable you to give him a few knocks. Merrison: He's got his fingers in a lot of pies. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 276)

Marrison expresses his dissatisfaction with Durkfeld and the mess he has made of Klein Merrick. Marrison believes that a great nation needs great enterprise, not black plastic and grey lino and guys in polyester. He seems frustrated with Durkfeld's lack of vision and investment in quality, which is causing damage to Klein Merrick.

Marylou observes that Marrison is still harboring feelings of resentment towards Durkfeld and suggests that he take action against him. She encourages him to sabotage Durkfeld deals, which would enable him to give Durkfeld a few knocks. Marylou is urging Marrison to take a drastic step against Durkfeld, possibly as a form of revenge for the harm he has caused.

However, Marrison seems hesitant to take action against Durkfeld. He points out that Durkfeld has his fingers in a lot of pies, meaning that he has investments and interests in many different areas. This suggests that Marrison is aware of the potential consequences of going against Durkfeld, and that he is concerned about the risks involved in such a plan. The conversation highlights the tension and conflict between different characters in the play. It also reflects some of the larger themes and concerns

of the play, including the relationship between money, power, and ethics in the world of high finance.

In the completing of the dialogue, Marylou could control Merrison's thinking who was receivable any idea leading him to revenge from Durkfeld. He directly responded to the suggestion of Marylou to buy the stocks of Durkfeld even if he hurt the partners of Durkfeld like Corman who was not involved between them.

Marylou: In the UK there's Corman Enterprise. Merrison: You think I should step as a white knight? Marylou: No, that's already happening all right. Merrison: I'll buy a stake in Corman straight away. I'll get some little No good company run by a real punk to take it over with a lot of Junk. I'd really like to see Drukfeld in the hospital. Do you happen to have any Corman stock available? Marylou: Yes, I kind of thought it might be saleable. How much do you want? (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 276-277).

The dialogue clarifies that Merrison's revenging feelings have been stimulated by Marylou and she could move him as a blind dull to get benefit of him via selling the stocks of Merrison's stocks which are bidding within his partner's Corman enterprise. She could convince to revenge even if someone else could hurt like his partner Corman. She went away in his provocation for getting his own profit. It seems that Marylou could get what she wants. Also, Merrison could take over all stocks of the company and becomes much more powerful in the economic and political fields. He could meet his revenge. As a result, Durkfeld has lost the fight against Merrison and he got heart attack and stayed home (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 307). This tragic scene was not considerable by the actors because each of them was looking forward to have a power and to meet his greediness and selfishness.

The conversation mentioned between Marylou and Merrison is also about a potential plan of action. Marylou suggests that there is a company in the UK called Corman Enterprise that Merrison should consider investing in. She does not specifically suggest that Merrison should act as a white knight, which refers to a person or company that rescues another company from financial trouble. However, she implies that something is already happening in that regard.

Merrison, however, has a different plan in mind. He decides that he will buy a stake in Corman and then find a small, no-good company run by a punk to take it over with a lot of junk. Merrison's plan is to use this company to sabotage Corman Enterprise, possibly to get revenge on Durkfeld.

Merrison expresses his desire to see Durkfeld in the hospital, which suggests that he is willing to take drastic measures to get what he wants. Marylou seems willing to help Merrison with his plan and offers to sell him some Corman stock. This conversation highlights the themes of revenge and betrayal that run throughout the play. It also underscores the cutthroat nature of the financial world and the lengths to which some people are willing to go in order to get ahead.

The analyses based on the Cultural Materialism indicates that Churchill's directions are not fitting with the Thatcherism paths which may lead to many social consequences despite they achieved economic growth. This direction seems clearly through mixing the greediness of Durkfeld, the revenging feeling of Merrison and seeking benefits of Marylou. They all produced unsettled society that assess the living and spiritual needs based on the material benefits. That is related to the first factor of theory. It the author. The second factor is related to the social circumstances which are represented by greediness, power and deception. Those misbehaving environments become governing the movements of actors. The last factor is the text of play which carries and applies other two factors. The text is filled with political and economic influences.

For having more clarifications, Merrison, Durkfeld, and Marylou are characters with distinctive orientations and tendencies that shape their actions and relationships in the world of high finance. Merrison is a wealthy businessman and the owner of a large corporation. He is portrayed as a pragmatic and ruthless character, whose primary goal is to maximize his profits. He is willing to take advantage of the volatility of the stock market and engage in risky ventures to achieve his objectives. Merrison's orientation is focused on money and power, and he is willing to use any means necessary to maintain his status and influence.

Durkfeld is a seasoned trader who has been in the business for many years. He is depicted as a highly skilled and intelligent character, but also as someone who is deeply cynical about the nature of the financial world. Durkfeld is disillusioned with the greed and corruption he sees around him and has a strong sense of moral outrage. However, he is also aware of the realities of the business and is willing to engage in questionable practices to maintain his position. Durkfeld's orientation is focused on survival and pragmatism, tempered by a sense of disillusionment and moral conflict.

For Marylou, she is a young trader who becomes romantically involved with Jake Todd, a colleague who dies under mysterious circumstances. Marylou is portrayed as a naive and idealistic character, who is drawn to the excitement and promise of the financial world. However, as the play progresses, Marylou becomes increasingly disillusioned with the corruption and amorality of the business. Her orientation is focused on the pursuit of truth and justice, and she becomes a key player in uncovering the web of corruption that surrounds Todd's death.

In summary, Merrison's orientation is focused on money and power, Durkfeld's orientation is focused on survival and pragmatism, tempered by a sense of disillusionment and moral conflict, and Marylou's orientation is focused on the pursuit of truth and justice. These orientations and tendencies shape the characters' actions and relationships, and contribute to the themes of greed, corruption, and morality that are explored in Churchill's play.

2.6. BILLY CORMAN'S ORIENTATION AND TENDENCIES

Corman is rich, greedy and powerful. He is a banker with Klein Merrick. He has wide relationships with many UK politicians, and he is eager to keep such relations ongoing to have both possible political and economic benefits. He is looking to take over Albion, the old fashion company headed by Duckett. Albion becomes as a pillar of political and economic competition. Through interesting the playwright Churchill on Albion, she makes it clear that Albion has an important public presence, and its takeover is related to the political situations of the City of London. Therefore, some politician interfered to stop the takeover in a specific time, but he changes mind in other time based on the political benefit regardless the societal values. The power becomes a player in dominating Albion. For Corman, he thoughts Albion is an investing opportunity he must be get it. Corman uses all his capabilities and relationship to accomplish the aim of the takeover. Therefore, he asks his team, Nigel Ajinbala and Jacinta Condor and he requests a financial assistance from a US wealthy banker to takeover Albion called "Zac Zackerman". In addition, Corman asks his assistants like Nigel Ajibbala, Jacinta Condor and the broker Marylou to work hardly for getting more stocks of Albion for having it.

Serious Money shows that Albion becomes a center of conflicts in terms of Corman's determination of the takeover, the public position which refuse the takeover

and the politician's changeable attitudes. Each side has own viewpoint but it noticeable that the positions of Corman's intention and citizens' refusal have not changed but the Politicians did. How? The political interference represented by the personality of Gleason. He is a parliament member and politicians' representative in the Albion's issue. Gleason represents the power and how its interference changes impacts the economic movement of the country.

The changeable position of Gleason is depending on the changes of political benefits of Gleason's party and its future stay in the government. That is identified by the elections which is happening in conjunction with Corman's takeover deal to Albion Company. Because of the public dissatisfaction of the takeover deal, that will affect the reputation of the political party in the upcoming elections. The people ask the politicians to stand beside them to drop the project's deal. Otherwise, the party will lose the votes of people in the elections. At the meantime, the political party wants to keep the financial support of the businessmen like Corman. As a result, the Gleason as a representative of political power suggests a deceptive deal with Corman to keep their votes of people and keep their interest with Corman. The following dialogue between Corman and Gleason confirmed it.

Gleason: Corman, please, do not make my patience snap. I wouldn't want to miss the second half. You drop your bid. We stop the DTI. Corman: You would stop the scandal breaking anyway. Are you telling me you cannot control the press?. Gleason: Yes, but we would break you. Do you want to try? You drop your bid. We stop the DTI . Corman: Why pick on me?.....I'm just good at playing a rough game. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 299).

It seems it is a tense conversation between Gleason and Corman. Gleason is pressuring Corman to drop his bid for a company, and he warns him not to test his patience. Gleason tells Corman that if he drops his bid, they will stop the DTI, which could refer to an investigation by the Department of Trade and Industry. Corman, however, seems skeptical of Gleason's threat. He asks if Gleason is telling him that he cannot control the press. Corman is suggesting that the scandal would break anyway, regardless of whether he drops his bid. Corman's comment is an indication that he is aware of the power of the media in shaping public opinion. Gleason responds by saying that they would break Corman if he did not drop his bid. This is a veiled threat, and it highlights the cutthroat nature of the financial world depicted in the play. Gleason is willing to use any means necessary to achieve his objectives, including intimidation and coercion.

This conversation underscores the idea that power in the financial world is not only about money, but also about influence and control. The characters in the play are willing to go to great lengths to protect their interests and maintain their positions of power. It also highlights the corrupt and unethical practices that are often associated with the world of high finance.

Then, Gleason suggests responding to the desire of the voters and stop the takeover deal of Albion until they get their votes in the upcoming elections. After the elections is done, Corman can continue in his takeover process.

Gleason: Exactly, and the game must be protected. You can go on playing after we are elected. Five more glorious years free enterprise, and your services to industry will be recognized. Then, Gleason goes. Corman: Cunt. Right. Good. At least a knighthood. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 299).

That duality of the politicians reflect the abundance of the values, ethics, and the people's benefits which become a device to have an interest of the policy.

In this conversation between Gleason and Corman in Caryl Churchill's play *Serious Money*, Gleason emphasizes the importance of protecting the game, which likely refers to the game of high finance and the interests of those in power. Gleason suggests that if Corman drops his bid and stops the DTI, he can continue playing the game after Gleason is elected. He promises Corman five more glorious years of free enterprise and suggests that his services to industry will be recognized. This exchange reveals the corrupt nature of politics and the collusion between politicians and big business. After Gleason leaves, Corman mutters 'Cunt' under his breath, revealing his contempt for the man and the system. However, he also recognizes that playing the game has its rewards, and he acknowledges that he may be in line for a knighthood.

The conversation highlights the cynical and opportunistic nature of the characters in the play, who are willing to engage in corruption and unethical practices to advance their own interests. It also emphasizes the corrupt relationship between business and politics and the way in which power is consolidated among a small elite.

On the other hand, Caryl Churchill clarified that functions of the economic system refers to the use of the power and money to get higher positions made by greed and corruption as Marandi and Anushiravani mentioned (2015). Churchill wants to mirror how the situations of policy become regretful during the Thatcher's government.

The government is interested in consolidating the Enterprise Culture and the individualism related to the privatization. The governmental positions are supportive for Cultural Materialism and power's use for getting much more interests.

Cultural Materialism's adoptions reflect what mentioned regarding how the author reflected the Thatcher's policies contributed in creating a new different lifestyle. In addition, how the social circumstances also contributed in having this new lifestyle. Lastly, how Churchill's *Serious Money* presented all these events through the text of the play.

For further clarifications about the applications of the Cultural Materialism on the *Serious Money*, Churchill's perspectives are reflective on the *Serious Money*'s scenario. She used the conflicts between the wealthy powerful greed businessman represented by Corman, the people of the UK in London who are looking for their benefits and services, and the politicians who want to utilize their power for have benefits from the people through getting their votes during elections and getting the support of businessmen at the same time.

Moreover, it is important to say that Billy Corman is a character with complex orientations and tendencies. He is a trader at the London Stock Exchange who is portrayed as ambitious, cunning, and willing to do whatever it takes to succeed in the cutthroat world of finance. Billy Corman revolves around his pursuit of wealth and power. He is focused on making money, often at the expense of others, and engages in various unethical practices to achieve his financial goals. Through Billy Corman, Churchill portrays the excesses and moral corruption that can be found in the financial sector. He embodies individualistic nature of the 1980s financial world, where financial traders and brokers sought to maximize their gains without regard for the broader societal consequences of their actions. Billy Corman's main role provides a critical commentary on the prevailing financial culture of the time, highlighting the negative impact of unregulated capitalism and the dangers of prioritizing profit over social responsibility. His character serves as a lens through which the audience can reflect on the implications of such a system and its effect on society as a whole. Billy Corman's orientation and tendencies can be briefed as following:

Ambition: Billy Corman is extremely ambitious and is always looking for ways to climb the ranks at the Stock Exchange. He is willing to take risks and engage in unethical behavior to achieve his goals. For example, he is involved in insider trading and is implicated in the death of his colleague Jake Todd.

Materialism: Corman is also driven by a desire for wealth and material possessions. He is often shown his expensive suits and flashy cars, and he is constantly chasing after the latest financial trends and fads in order to make a profit.

Lack of Loyalty: Despite his friendly character, He is not a loyal colleague or friend. He is quick to turn on others if it serves his own interests and is known to betray his colleagues and allies.

Ruthlessness: His actions throughout the play demonstrate his ruthless nature. He is willing to destroy the lives of others, including Jake Todd, in order to achieve his own goals. He is also immune to feelings of guilt or remorse, making him a formidable opponent for anyone who stands in his way.

In summary, Billy Corman's orientations and tendencies are characterized by ambition, materialism, lack of loyalty, Machiavellianism, and ruthlessness. These traits make him a compelling and complex character in Churchill's play and contribute to the themes of greed and corruption that run throughout *Money* based on the Cultural Materialism method.

2.7. THE CONSEQUENCES OF JAKE TODD'S DEATH

The sudden death of Jake Todd has revealed the depth of ties of the different levels of wealthy businessmen with the powerful politicians in the corruption and illegal deals. Jake is an active commercial dealer. He is corrupt because his main business is how to get the information and data about the companies in illegal ways to use it for his own benefits through selling it to agents who look for. That is illegal business called Insider Trading. Jake's father, Greville Todd, is wealthy and greedy. he represents the old businessmen category. Therefore, he does not like the transition and development of the market's standards because he is used to deal with old version techniques. His greediness and looking for the powerfulness has been reflected on his son's personality as Scilla, his daughter does. Jake's insider trading created wide network for him he

become well-known and makes deals with many traders and stockjobbers, who are looking for information in advance about the competitive companies, to have better interests and that is what Jake provide via illegal insider trading he works on. His sister, Scilla Todd, works with him and she has interests due to the insider trading of her brother. Scilla is also looking for her own interest and wants to be wealthy and powerful with short time. Such desire pushes her to use the death of her brother to get money. Through quick overview on the Todd family, it shows they all have same perspectives and desires to use all possible capabilities for gathering money:

You were Jake's main employer so tell me please. How did pay him his enormous fees?
Scilla: If you do not help me, I will go to the authorities to tell them. Marylou: Is this blackmail? Scilla: Yes, of course. I can put you in jail. You'll find me quite a dangerous enemy. I'm greedy and completely amoral. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 304-305).

Scilla is questioning Marylou about how Jake, a corrupt financier who has recently died, was paid his enormous fees. Marylou is reluctant to provide any information and tries to deflect Scilla's questions. When Scilla threatens to go to the authorities, Marylou accuses her of blackmail. Scilla admits that it is blackmail and warns Marylou that she is a dangerous enemy. She describes herself as greedy and completely amoral, suggesting that she will do whatever it takes to get what she wants.

This conversation highlights the corrupt nature of the financial world and the willingness of individuals to engage in unethical and illegal practices to maintain their power and wealth. Scilla's threats reveal the desperation of journalists to uncover the truth and expose corruption, even if it means resorting to blackmail.

Marylou's reluctance to provide any information suggests that she is aware of the illegal practices that were occurring and is afraid of the consequences of being exposed. This conversation reveals the complex web of relationships and interests that exist in the world of high finance and the lengths that some will go to protect their secrets.

On the other hand, Jake's death represents a horrible shock and fears for those who are dealing with him like powerful wealth traders, Zac Zackerman, Marylou and Corman, because Jake has information of deals they already made but they do not know whether they have been leaked or controlled by someone after his death. Their fears increased when they knew that he was killed by shot. No one knows whether it was

suicide or killing. Moreover, their fears increased too much when they knew that the Department of the Trade and Industry has interfered looking for information for any possible corruption or insider trading. The accident creates vast distraction among all those he dealt with Jake. It reveals the corruption inside the world of business and how the societal environments have been affected due to the privatization and individualism adopted by the government of PM Margaret Thatcher.

It is noticeable in dialogues traders and brokers as following.

“Zac phones Marylou: Jake is dead. They think it is a suicide. Marylou: Jake was a nice guy but I have not heard from him since some time back. She hangs up and speaks to TK, her assistant. Marylou: Put anything from Jake in the Shredder.” (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 216)

In her order to TK, Marylou wants to hide any evidence showing any business between her and Jake because of the corrupt deals they did.

Zac, a colleague of Marylou's, calls to inform her that Jake, a corrupt financier, has died and they suspect it was suicide. Marylou responds by saying that she has not heard from Jake in some time and suggests that she has little interest in his death.

After hanging up the phone, Marylou instructs her assistant, TK, to put anything related to Jake in the shredder. This conversation highlights Marylou's complicity in Jake's corrupt financial practices and her desire to cover up any evidence that might implicate her or her company.

Marylou's lack of remorse or concern for Jake's death suggests that she views him as expendable and that his death has little impact on her or her business. The fact that she immediately orders the destruction of any documents related to Jake suggests that she is aware of the illegal practices that they were engaged in and is taking steps to protect herself and her company from any potential fallout.

The conversation reveals the dark underbelly of the financial world and the lengths that some individuals will go to maintain their power and wealth, even if it means covering up illegal and unethical practices and disregarding the human cost.

Also, the next call between Zac and his partner Corman and how they are panic:

Corman to Zac: Have you seen the fucking Times this morning? Why did not Todd give us any warning? Why did not he tell us about DTI? Do you think he is talked? Zac: Deny. Deny. Deny. (Let them see what they can prove.) (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 217).

The dialogue revealed their involvement with Jake in the Insider Trading and their afraid of any leaks that Jake may release to the DTI.

The conversation between Corman and Zac revolves around a shocking news story in the Times newspaper. Corman starts the conversation by asking Zac if he has seen the Times that morning. The tone of his voice suggests that the news in the newspaper is alarming and unexpected.

Corman then questions why Todd did not give them any warning about the news. It is clear that Todd is someone they both know, and Corman is disappointed that Todd did not inform them about the news beforehand. He asks why Todd did not tell them about DTI, which is likely an abbreviation for a government agency.

Zac responds to Corman's questions by advising him to 'deny, deny, deny'. He suggests that they should not admit to anything unless they are presented with undeniable evidence. His statement 'let them see what they can prove' indicates that they should wait and see what evidence the authorities have before they make any admissions.

The conversation between Corman and Zac is tense and hints at some sort of wrongdoing. The fact that they are discussing whether Todd is 'talked' suggests that Todd might have informed the authorities about something. Zac's advice to deny everything implies that Corman and Zac are involved in something that they do not want to be discovered.

Overall, this conversation sets the tone for the rest of the play, as it introduces the idea that there are shady dealings going on and that the characters will do whatever it takes to avoid getting caught.

Moreover, in the next dialogue between Nigel, Corman's broker, and Corman, she made is clear that the Jake's murder will cause a scandal for them due to the Corman's involvement with Jake who is watched by the DTI.

Nigel, Corman's broker, phones Corman: Mr. Corman, I am deeply shocked that anyone associated with your company should be touched by the slightest breath of scandal. (p. 217)

The scene between Nigel and Corman takes place over the phone. Nigel is Corman's broker, and his tone suggests that he is upset and disappointed about something that has happened within Corman's company.

Nigel starts the conversation by addressing Corman with the honorific 'Mr'. This shows that he is speaking to Corman in a professional context and that he values their business relationship. However, he quickly follows this up by saying that he is 'deeply shocked' that anyone associated with Corman's company has been touched by scandal.

Nigel's use of the word 'scandal' suggests that something significant has occurred that could damage the reputation of Corman's company. His tone is serious and implies that he is concerned about the impact that this news could have on their business relationship.

The phrase 'the slightest breath of scandal' indicates that Nigel is not just upset about the scandal itself, but also about the fact that it is associated with Corman's company. He seems to be suggesting that even a hint of scandal is unacceptable and could cause significant damage.

Overall, this conversation between Nigel and Corman is brief but significant. It highlights the seriousness of the situation and the potential damage that the scandal could cause to Corman's company. Nigel's tone suggests that he expects Corman to take immediate action to address the issue and to ensure that their business relationship remains intact.

Moreover, as mentioned, the death of Jake Todd has significant consequences against several characters and the plot as a whole. Jake Todd was a high-profile trader at the London Stock Exchange who dies under mysterious circumstances. The following outcomes and repercussions can be briefed as follows:

1. Scramble for Power: After Jake Todd's death, several characters in the play, including his boss Zackerman and his colleague Billy Corman, scramble for power and try to take over Todd's portfolio. This creates a tense atmosphere at the Stock Exchange, and the characters are willing to resort to any means necessary to gain control.

2. Investigations: Jake Todd's death is investigated by several characters, including the police, the press, and the exchange's regulatory body. The investigation reveals a web of corruption and illegal trading activities at the Stock Exchange, which leads to several characters being implicated and arrested.
3. Personal Consequences: Todd's death has personal consequences for some of the characters in the play. For example, Marylou Baines, who was romantically involved with Todd, is devastated by his death and becomes disillusioned with the world of finance. Her brother, Zac, is also affected by Todd's death, as he feels responsible for his friend's downfall.
4. Symbolic Meaning: Todd's death serves as a symbolic representation of the excesses and corruption of the financial world. It exposes the greed and amorality of the characters in the play, and serves as a warning about the dangers of unregulated capitalism.

Overall, Jake Todd's death has far-reaching consequences in *Serious Money*, both for the characters in the play and for the broader themes and ideas explored by Churchill.

The significance of the *Serious Money* is resulting from the well-embodiment of the Western especially the United Kingdom after the premiership of Margaret Thatcher. Her policies and perspectives have impacted on the path of society and the lifestyle. The emergence of new life has generated different ideologies and viewpoints for the people who started dealing based on the interest and Materialism far from ethical or human values. Churchill have embedded the desires of the greediness, the deception, and the power through several personalities and she wanted to reflect how these three immoral perspectives were spread among the societal classes. The policies of the prime minister Thatcher like the transformation to the privatization and individualism and adopting enterprise culture contributed in rooting the irresponsibility towards the society. It made the people think about themselves as individual. The application of Cultural Materialism helps to clarify the events of *Serious Money* better to have sort of objectivity in its understanding.

The chapter highlights specific prominent events of *Serious Money* like Scilla's Tendencies and how she wanted to invest and use the murder of her brother to get

interests by looking for his wealth regardless the consequences of the murder. In addition, the study discusses Billy Corman's orientation and tendencies and how the conflict on Albion showed the interest conflict between the political figures and the wealthy traders. Furthermore, the study discussed the repercussions of Jake's murder, Merrison's, Durkfeld's, and Marylou's orientations and tendencies which reflected the outcomes and appearances of the Thatcherism on the society such as selfishness, greediness, dominance of power for self-benefit, and using deception for getting benefits.

In other words, Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money* explores the greed and corruption of the financial world in London during the 1980s, specifically the impact of the deregulation of the financial industry under Margaret Thatcher's government. The play is a critique of the culture of excess and the pursuit of wealth at any cost that emerged during this era.

In terms of its findings regarding the lifestyles of British citizens, the play highlights the growing divide between the wealthy elite and the rest of society. It portrays the financial industry as a ruthless and amoral world, where individuals are willing to engage in illegal and unethical behavior to make money. This is contrasted with the struggles of ordinary people, who are portrayed as being caught up the financial industry's excesses.

The play also touches on issues of gender and power, particularly in relation to the male-dominated world of finance. It features a number of female characters who are fighting to succeed in a world that is hostile to their gender. For example, Scilla Todd faces significant obstacles in her pursuit of success due to both her gender and her relative lack of experience. Despite her talent and determination, she encounters resistance and discrimination from her male colleagues who underestimate her abilities. Scilla's character represents the struggles faced by women attempting to break through the glass ceiling and be taken seriously in a male-dominated industry. another female character is Marylou Baines. She is depicted as a strong-willed and assertive woman who strives to assert herself in a hostile environment. However, she faces numerous challenges, including sexual harassment and being dismissed or belittled by her male counterparts. Marylou's character sheds light on the pervasive issue of gender-based discrimination and the power dynamics that exist within the workplace.

Serious Money exemplify the uphill battle faced by women in the finance sector, dealing with systemic sexism, gender bias, and the need to prove themselves in a male-centric environment. Through their experiences, the play examines the power dynamics and social inequalities present in the financial industry, raising important questions about gender roles and societal expectations. Moreover, *Serious Money* is a scathing critique of the culture of greed and excess that emerged in the 1980s, and its impact on British society and the lives of ordinary citizens. It portrays a world where the pursuit of wealth has become a destructive and all-consuming force, at the expense of social justice and equality.

The reality of the *Serious Money* reflected the directions and ideologies of the UK society due to the transformational movement of PM Margaret Thatcher. Caryl Churchill revealed the Thatcherism policies successfully.

3. CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING OF THATCHERISM IN *FEN*

3.1. CARYL CHURCHILL'S *FEN*

Fen is a play that highlights the societal and economic limitations of a British woman in rural areas. Via *Fen* Churchill reflected on the Victorianism of society towards the woman and how that ideology impacted her rebellion due to what she suffered from. The play contained different female characters, but they all presented the struggle and suffering from their lifestyles which were supposed to be better. Some female protagonists showed an objection to the living situations, and they tried to change it. The play highlights a group of women suffering due to the dominance of arrogance of manhood in all life's aspects. Each one of them showed a different style of dissatisfaction towards her life. They are villagers working for farmers and landlords who do not care about the weakness and depression of their laborers. One of those women is called Val, who decided to leave her children and spouse to live with her lover, Frank. Another woman named Angela misbehaves with her stepdaughter called, Becky. In addition, Nell fights to get her rights within oppressing society, and Shirley, who is old, convinces herself to keep up with the ongoing situation, whatever it is.

Through *Fen*, Caryl Churchill explores the lives of women in a agricultural region in Eastern England. The play consists of a series of interconnected scenes that depict the struggles and dreams of the women who live and work in this area.

One of the central characters in the play is Val, a young woman who works as a potato picker. Val is struggling to make ends meet and dreams of a better life for herself and her young daughter. She is also haunted by the memory of her mother, who sank in the marshes when Val was a child.

In another scene, there is a group of women who work in a factory that produces insulation materials. They are all struggling with the severe conditions of their work, including long hours and exposure to dangerous chemicals. One of the women, Nell, is pregnant and worried about the effects of the chemicals on her unborn child.

The play also explores the complex relationships between the women in the *Fen*. In one scene, there is a group of women gossip and tease each other, but beneath the surface, there is a deep sense of jealousy and resentment.

Throughout the play, there is a sense of the power and challenge of the landscape of the *Fen*. The marshes are a place of both beauty and danger, and the women who live and work there are constantly reminded of their weakness.

In the final scene, Val returns to the *Fen* where her mother drowned. She is looking for closure and a sense of connection to her past. As she stands on the edge of the water, she sees a vision of her mother rising from the depths. Val finally finds the peace she has been searching for.

Therefore, *Fen* is a powerful and poetic exploration of the lives of women in a particular time and place. Churchill's writing is both beautiful and steady, and the play offers a rich and complex portrait of a community that is often overlooked.

The setting of the play shows how the community is attached to the traditions, but they live in the present based on the economic mentality. The author Churchill tries to make rapprochements between the old and modern lifestyles.

Caryl Churchill showed her ability to infuse new life into traditional theater forms, despite working in a theater that has a humanist tradition. Luckhurst suggests that Churchill's plays allow audiences to understand the connection between the surviving aspects of the middle-class lifestyle and the far-reaching impacts of global capitalism, which can be difficult to imagine. In other words, Churchill's plays explore the relationship between the everyday experiences of people living in the middle-class and the broader, systemic forces that shape their lives. By doing so, she sheds light on the ways in which the individual and the global are interconnected (Luckhurst, 2008).

Churchill had creative works through which the readers or critics could feel how the lifestyle was transformed to have unique outcomes.

The analysis of the play *Fen* aims, first, to find a new potential through exploring the impacts of Thatcherism adopting the individualism and free markets and, second, the analysis would be through having the Cultural Materialism for understanding that era and its outcomes on the literary works of Caryl Churchill.

As mentioned before, those two points are the subject matters and problems of the dissertation and the gap targeted to be filled by analyzing the *Fen*.

The model taken of Cultural Materialism is for William Raymond (1988). Therefore, Cultural Materialism seeks to understand how social, cultural, and political

factors shaped an author's writing, as well as the broader context in which the text was produced. In addition, this method is interested in economic issues, such as how the circulation, negotiation, profit, and exchange of goods and services are influenced by the market. This includes examining how seemingly non-economic activities, like literary work, can be driven and influenced by market forces. Essentially, this approach to literary analysis emphasizes the ways in which literary texts are both shaped by and reflective of the broader historical and cultural contexts in which they were created.

For more clarifications of the Cultural Materialism, Raymond Williams (1980) suggests that there are material, political, social and economic conditions that must be considered when analyzing a literary text. By examining these factors together, a literary critic can gain a deeper understanding of the larger historical and cultural context in which the text was produced. The approach of Cultural Materialism emphasizes the need to consider all these factors in order to fully understand and interpret a literary work.

The play *Fen* shows audience the dominance and arrogance of the capitalist owners and how they are looking for their benefits and interests regardless of the feelings and respect of the oppressed workers who do not have the power to change the way of owners misbehave. In addition, *Fen* shows how the simplicity of life in *Fen* and how the economy plays a significant role in the thinking pattern of the people. As a result, the female workers rejected their lifestyle and decided to change it. Each of them worked separately to have a way to get rid of the arrogance in her life.

3.2. IMPACTS OF THATCHERISM IN *FEN*

The play '*Fen*' has been widely interpreted as a critique of Thatcherism, which was the political and economic ideology of the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher during the 1980s. As mentioned, Thatcherism was characterized by a commitment to free-market economics, privatization, deregulation, and individualism, which had a significant impact on working-class communities in the UK.

As mentioned first two chapters related to the research, Thatcher's policies encouraged UK citizens to think separately and have their businesses regardless of their dependency on the state's financial policies. (Monforte, 2000). As a result, those Thatcher's politics have been reflected in the thoughts of the UK citizens.

In *Fen*, Thatcherism impacts were present and influential in the scene's events via different women, especially Val and Nell. They showed a recognized character to the woman who wanted to get rid of the authoritarian manhood society and had her independence despite the obstacles and challenges putting by society. Thatcherism applications can be concluded by the refusal of Val and Nell to the manhood arrogance, oppression, and inequity.

Churchill was interested in highlighting the effectiveness of the growth economy, and interest in Materialism would lead to terrible consequences which cannot be controlled. The consequences would be on the spiritual, religious, and moral dimensions. That matter would generate societal complications and troubles due to the unsettlement of the personality of humankind.

On the other hand, through *Fen's* play, Churchill criticized the UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's ideologies which contributed in accelerate those societal transformations via the policies adopted by its government. Thatcher's ideologies and policies consolidate individualism, leading to thinking about self-reliance and not caring about society as a collective. PM Thatcher's policies pushed society to believe as individuals should think about himself/herself and their small families, and that is all. Thatcher's policies cared much about the economic reforms in the United Kingdom because there were many financial and economic crises during the eighties of the last century. Thatcher's trials succeeded in stopping the running of the state's economy and created better environments for investment and job opportunities.

Furthermore, Thatcher's tendencies changed people's lifestyles, not only wealthy families but also disadvantaged ones. Their lifestyles make them think differently to keep up with the economic changes, which urges them to build independence in their jobs and think individually of their lives away from society's perspectives. In her interviews, Churchill explained that she inspired her ideas by meeting people:

I was left, after the workshop, with a lot of notes and quotes and things different people had said. But never a whole speech, just lines here and there. The old great grandmother's speech on her birthday, practically every line is something that somebody actually said to us, but it's a composite of many different people (Betsko & Koenig, 1987).

Churchill's thoughts about *Fen's* play have been concluded and designed based on her readings within society. So, it was connected to the daily thinking of people

towards their situations. Therefore, *Fen*'s play touched on the reality of life with the changes in the lifestyle of British people.

In one of the interviews, Churchill highlighted the political context and intention behind her work. In the interview conducted by The Guardian in 2002, Churchill acknowledges that the play *Fen* was created during a period when the social and economic policies implemented by the Thatcher government were resulting in significant harm and suffering for many individuals in the country (Dickson, 2002).

Churchill explicitly states that the play reflects this tumultuous time and aims to capture the impact of Thatcherism on society. By making this statement, Churchill confirms that *Fen* is indeed a response to the political climate of the era and serves as a reflection of the harmful consequences caused by the policies pursued by the Thatcher government.

Thus, Churchill's affirms that *Fen* was written as a direct response to the social and economic hardships caused by the Thatcher government's policies, emphasizing the play's political dimension and its aim to shed light on the suffering experienced by people during that time (Dickson, 2002).

Moreover, in her essay *Caryl Churchill and the Politics of Style*, theatre scholar Elaine Aston argues that *Fen* is a political play that 'exposes the social and economic injustices of Thatcherism' by depicting the lives of working-class women in the *Fens* who are struggling to make ends meet in a harsh economic climate (Aston, 1997).

While Thatcherism measures were intended to promote economic growth and efficiency, critics argue that they also led to increased inequality, particularly impacting working-class communities.

According to Aston, *Fen* exposes the negative consequences of Thatcherism by focusing on the lives of working-class women. The play depicts the struggles these women face as they try to make ends meet in an economic climate characterized by limited job opportunities, low wages, and economic instability. By portraying these difficulties, Churchill highlights the social and economic injustices experienced by this marginalized group. Furthermore, Aston argues that the style of *Fen* is essential to its political message. Churchill employs a non-linear and fragmented structure, multiple storylines, and a blend of realism and poetic language to create a vivid portrayal of the

characters' lives. This stylistic approach reflects the fragmented nature of their experiences and serves to emphasize the complexity and challenges they face (Aston, 1997).

By exploring the lives of working-class women in the *Fens* and exposing the social and economic injustices of Thatcherism, *Fen* contributes to the larger political discourse and raises awareness about the struggles faced by marginalized communities. The play serves as a critique of the policies and ideologies of Thatcherism and invites the audience to consider the impact of such policies on individuals and communities.

Similarly, in her book *Postmodern Drama: Contemporary Playwrights in Britain and Ireland*, theatre scholar Maggie Gale argues that *Fen* is a critique of the 'ravages of capitalism and the Thatcherite legacy' that have led to the erosion of community and social bonds in working-class communities (Gale, 1994).

In analyzing *Fen* as a critique of the "ravages of capitalism and the Thatcherite legacy," Gale emphasizes the play's portrayal of the damaging effects of these ideologies on working-class communities. By examining the erosion of community and social bonds, Churchill prompts the audience to reflect on the negative consequences of unchecked capitalism and the lasting impact of Thatcherism on society (Gale, 1994).

In addition, in her article titled *The Aesthetic of Dispossession in Caryl Churchill's Fen*, Pamela McCallum examines how the play serves as a critique of Thatcherism's impact on working-class women in the *Fens*. McCallum introduces the concept of a 'dispossession aesthetic,' which refers to the artistic approach used in *Fen* to convey the idea of loss and deprivation (McCallum, 2003).

McCallum added that the play portrays the consequences of Thatcherite policies such as deregulation, privatization, and individualism on the lives of women in the working class. These policies, which were prominent during Margaret Thatcher's tenure as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, have had profound effects on various aspects of women's lives (McCallum, 2003).

Therefore, she explores and analyzes the play's portrayal of the negative effects of Thatcherism on working-class women living in the *Fens*. McCallum introduces the concept of a 'dispossession aesthetic' to describe the artistic technique employed in the play to effectively convey the themes of loss and deprivation.

Aston declares, as McCallum, that *Fen* is a political play that sheds light on the social and economic injustices prevalent during the era of Thatcherism. She argues that *Fen* achieves this by presenting the lives of working-class women who reside in the *Fens* and face significant challenges in trying to cope with the harsh economic conditions of their time (Aston, 1997).

The term ‘dispossession’ refers to the act of being deprived or dispossessed of something, often in a forceful or unjust manner. In the context of the play, it signifies the loss and deprivation experienced by the working-class women in the *Fens* as a result of Thatcherism which was characterized by conservative policies such as privatization, deregulation, and reduced government intervention in the economy (McCallum, 2003).

The ‘dispossession aesthetic’ in the play refers to the artistic approach employed by Churchill to effectively depict and critique the impact of Thatcherism on the lives of working-class women. This aesthetic involves various techniques, such as the use of language, dialogue, symbolism, and characterization, to convey a sense of loss, deprivation, and marginalization experienced by these women (McCallum, 2003).

Gale’s perspective matches with McCallum that *Fen* presents a critical perspective on capitalism by portraying the consequences of its unchecked pursuit of profit. The play depicts characters who struggle with economic hardships and are caught in unfair working conditions. It highlights the damaging effects of economic inequality, which leads to a sense of disconnection and fragmentation within the community (Gale, 1994).

Through the use of language and dialogue, Churchill captures the struggles and hardships faced by the characters, highlighting their economic and social vulnerability. The symbolism employed in the play helps to underscore the themes of dispossession, representing the loss of land, resources, and traditional ways of life for the working-class women in the *Fens*. Additionally, the characterization of the women reflects their marginalization and powerlessness in the face of economic and political forces (McCallum, 2003).

Furthermore, Gale argues that *Fen* addresses the erosion of social bonds in working-class communities. The play explores how the pursuit of individual success and economic survival can result in a breakdown of communal ties. Characters in *Fen* are

often isolated and disconnected from each other, which represents the larger societal impact of capitalist values on community solidarity.

Therefore, McCallum's idea about the 'dispossession aesthetic' in Churchill's play serves as a critique of Thatcherism and its consequences on working-class women. It aims to bring attention to the experiences of loss and deprivation suffered by these women and shed light on the broader social and economic issues associated with Thatcherism's policies. By employing various artistic techniques, the play effectively conveys the themes of dispossession and provides a platform for exploring and understanding the challenges faced by marginalized communities (McCallum, 2003).

One of the main themes of the play is the exploitation of working class women in the *Fens*, who are struggling to make ends meet in a harsh economic climate. The play highlights the difficult and dangerous working conditions of women in various occupations, such as potato pickers, factory workers, and cleaners. These women are subjected to long hours, low pay, and exposure to dangerous chemicals, which have negative effects on their health and well-being.

The play also critiques the erosion of community and social bonds in the *Fens* due to the rise of individualism and competition under Thatcherism. The women in the play are shown to be in competition with each other for scarce resources, such as men, jobs, and housing. This competition leads to a breakdown of solidarity and support among the women, which leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

According to Gale, *Fen* explores the erosion of community and social bonds within these communities, highlighting the harmful effects of capitalist ideologies. Capitalism is an economic system based on private ownership and the pursuit of profit. Thatcherism embraced capitalist principles and aimed to promote free markets and individualism. Gale argues that the 'ravages of capitalism' and the legacy of Thatcherism have resulted in detrimental effects on working-class communities (Gale, 1994).

Furthermore, the play suggests that the natural context of the *Fens* is being destroyed by the forces of capitalism and modernization. The marshes, which are a symbol of the unique and fragile ecosystem of the *Fens*, are threatened by pollution, drainage, and industrialization. The play implies that the destruction of the natural

circumstances is not only detrimental to the well-being of the local community, but also has wider implications for the planet as a whole.

In summary, *Fen* can be seen as a powerful critique of Thatcherism and its impact on working-class communities in the *Fens*. The play highlights the negative effects of individualism, competition, and the erosion of community and social bonds, as well as the destructive impact of capitalism on the natural environment.

3.3. ORIENTATIONS AND TENDENCIES IN *FEN*

Fen looks like a wealthy city that gathered the survived local workers and the greedy capitalist investors. This duality created a conflict between the two classes. One of the reflections is the rebellion of the group of women workers and their thinking to release from the hardness of living to have a better life. In the next lines, *Fen* would be analyzed based on the orientations and tendencies of its characters.

3.3.1. Orientation and Tendencies of *Fen*'s Elite

The play starts presenting a Japanese businessman, Mr. Takai, who describes *Fen* as the most expensive city in England, and its local people are not educated and do not think like businessmen. The expression of Takai was clear about that when he said: "wild people, *Fen* tigers... *Fen* people wanted to keep fishes and eels to live on, no vision" (p. 184). These expressions explicitly refer to the superiority of the businessmen towards the local farmers.

In the meantime, Takai praised the investors who could revive *Fen* city when they challenged the local farmers and started draining the city, which was under water. Still, the investor could drain and use its inappropriate land methods. Takai explained his respect and admiration for the old investors who reformed the earth to be productive, unlike the unsmart farmers who were only thinking about fishing and simple jobs. He says, "Lang time ago, under water... In 1630, rich lords planned to drain *Fen*, change swamp into crazing land, far thinking men, brave investors" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 184).

In Takai's statement, 'wild people' and '*Fen* tigers' are used metaphorically to describe the inhabitants of the *Fens*. These descriptions suggest a sense of wild or unconventional nature associated with the people living in this region.

When Takai says, ‘*Fen* people wanted to keep fishes and eels to live on, no vision,’ it implies that the inhabitants of the *Fen* were focused primarily on sustaining themselves through traditional means of subsistence, such as fishing. The mention of fishes and eels highlights the reliance on natural resources for survival. However, Takai’s statement also suggests that the people lacked a broader vision or ambition beyond their immediate needs. This line can be interpreted in several ways. On one hand, it can be seen as a criticism of the *Fen*’s inhabitants for their perceived lack of ambition or forward-thinking. Takai is implying that the people of the *Fen* were content with a simple and self-sufficient way of life, without aspiring for progress or change. This statement can be viewed as a critique of a society or system that fails to recognize and value the unique perspectives and needs of marginalized communities like the *Fen*. Takai’s words may reflect a frustration with a broader societal disregard for the value and importance of the traditional ways of life practiced by the *Fen* people.

Overall, this line in *Fen* suggests a tension between different perspectives and ways of life. It highlights the clash between the desire for progress and a more conventional, self-sustaining existence. It also raises questions about societal attitudes towards marginalized communities and their cultural practices.

In the context of Thatcherism, the connection between the statement made by Takai in *Fen* and Thatcherism lies in the critique of economic and political ideologies that prioritize progress, individualism, and market forces while potentially neglecting the needs and values of marginalized communities.

Regarding *Fen*’s situations, Thatcherism policies had a significant impact on various aspects of society, including working-class communities. When Takai refers to the focus of *Fen*’s people on sustaining themselves through traditional means like fishing, it can be seen as a contrast to the capitalist and individualistic values promoted by Thatcherism. The statement suggests that the *Fen* people’s way of life, rooted in communal and subsistence practices, did not align with the vision of progress and market-driven growth emphasized by Thatcherism.

Moreover, Takai’s mention of the *Fen* people lacking ‘vision’ can be interpreted as a critique of the Thatcherite ideology, which prioritized economic growth and disregarded alternative ways of life and the unique needs of marginalized communities. The play *Fen* may be seen as offering a counter-narrative to Thatcherism by highlighting

the experiences and perspectives of working-class women in the *Fens* and questioning the social and economic consequences of the Thatcherite policies.

In summary, the connection between Takai's statement in '*Fen*' and Thatcherism lies in the critique of the prioritization of progress, individualism, and market forces over the needs and values of marginalized communities. The play serves as a platform to explore and question the impact of Thatcherism on working-class women and their communities, presenting an alternative perspective to the dominant ideology of the time.

3.3.2. Orientations And Tendencies of Val

The scene of women farmers implies that they have the same job: picking and packing potatoes. They are from the same class and dissatisfied due to their situations, but each has a different style of expression towards the living situation.

Based on the Cultural Materialism, it is clear the economic factor has an essential role in women's movement toward their release. In addition, they do not have the independence to decide the lifestyle they want. That is why some insist on changing their lifestyle by taking decisive steps.

It is explicit in scene two when the argument becomes stiff between Val, the thirty-year-old worker, and her authoritarian supervisor, Mrs. Hassett, who meets the desires of the investors and businessmen. Val decides to leave her job without giving any previous notification to Mrs. Hassett, who becomes angry, but Val does not care:

Val: I've got to leave now. Mrs. Hassett: Who is going to do your work then?...Val: Sorry, I can't help it. Mrs. Hassett: You think twice before you ask me for work again because I'll think twice an' all. So, where you off to so fast? Val: Just back home. Mrs. Hassett: What's waiting there then?Val: I've got to. I've gone. Never mind. (Caryl Churchill, 1996. p. 148-9)

In the dialogue between Val and Mrs. Hassett in the play *Fen*, the conversation sheds light on the challenges and limitations faced by working-class individuals within the context of Thatcherism.

Val expresses her need to leave, and Mrs. Hassett immediately questions who will do Val's work in her absence. This exchange highlights the demanding nature of work in the lives of working-class individuals, where there is little room for personal needs or emergencies. It suggests a lack of support systems or flexibility within the working-class community (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 148-9).

When Val apologizes, saying, “Sorry, I can’t help it,” it implies that her decision to leave is driven by circumstances beyond her control. This could reflect the economic pressures and precariousness experienced by the working class during the Thatcher era. Thatcherism’s emphasis on individualism and free-market capitalism often resulted in limited social safety nets, job insecurity, and reduced support for vulnerable populations.

Mrs. Hassett’s response, “You think twice before you ask me for work again because I’ll think twice an’ all,” (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 148-9) underscores the shortage of employment opportunities and the competition among working-class individuals to secure and maintain work. This response implies that Val’s absence burdens Mrs. Hassett, and she warns Val against further requests for work due to the strain it causes.

Val’s explanation that she is going “just back home” and her subsequent remark, “What’s waiting there then? I’ve got to. I’ve gone. Never mind,” suggests a sense of resignation and lack of fulfillment in her circumstances. The dialogue hints at a feeling of trapped and unfulfilled lives experienced by individuals within the working class under Thatcherism.

The connection with Thatcherism lies in the portrayal of the limited opportunities, economic pressures, and lack of social support experienced by working class individuals during that time. Thatcher’s policies, such as the privatization of industries, deregulation, and reduced government intervention, aimed to stimulate economic growth but also resulted in job losses, income inequality, and diminished social welfare programs. The dialogue in ‘*Fen*’ reflects the struggles individuals face within this socio-economic context and provides a glimpse into the impact of Thatcherism on the lives of working-class people, highlighting the hardships and limitations they face daily.

The conversation reveals Val’s challenge and Hassett’s authoritarianism. Val’s challenge reflects the dissatisfaction and the desire for change her lifestyle. In the meantime, Hassett’s expression reflects the dominance of the capitalist investors who do not care about the labor class as much as they care about their profits.

In the third scene, Val decides to leave her spouse and children and go to London with her love Frank. She looks forward to changing her disadvantaged lifestyle. She looks forward to a better job and business regardless of the repercussions of her step on

others, even if they were her two daughters. Such transformation is because of the reactions to the hard life she faces.

Frank to Val: What's wrong? Val: I'm leaving him. I'm going to London on the train. I'm taking the girls. I've left him a note and that's it. You follow us soon as you can. It's the only thing. *New life* (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 151).

Her expression 'new life' refers to the desire to leave the surviving life, disrespect, arrogance, and disobedience of the farms' owners and their dictatorship. Then, Val's dialogue with Frank reveals her deep love for him, although she is married and has two children.

The dialogue between Val and Frank revolves around Val's decision to leave her current situation and start a new life in London with her children. The dialogue can be connected to Thatcherism in terms of the personal agency, aspirations for change, and the challenges faced by working class individuals during that era.

Val's declaration, that she is leaving her partner and taking the girls with her, indicates a desire for personal freedom and a break from her current circumstances. The decision to go to London on the train represents a symbolic departure from their current environment, seeking new opportunities and a fresh start.

Val's statement, that she has left her partner a note and that is it, implies a sense of finality and determination in her decision. This determination may reflect the aspirations for change and autonomy that were prevalent among individuals affected by Thatcherism.

When Val tells Frank to follow them as soon as he can, it implies a sense of intimacy and shared experiences within the working-class community. The desire to support one another and seek better opportunities together could be seen as a response to the economic and social challenges faced under Thatcherism. Working class individuals often relied on community networks and solidarity to navigate the hardships brought about by Thatcher's policies.

The connection with Thatcherism lies in the exploration of personal agency and aspirations for a better life amidst the socio-economic climate of the time. Thatcherism was characterized by an emphasis on individualism and self-reliance, often leading individuals to pursue new opportunities and take charge of their own lives. Val's decision to leave her partner, seek a new life, and encourage Frank to follow reflects this

sense of agency and the pursuit of a more fulfilling existence outside the limitations imposed by their current circumstances.

Furthermore, the dialogue suggests the challenges faced by working-class individuals in their pursuit of upward mobility and the desire to escape economic and social constraints. Thatcherism's policies, while aimed at stimulating economic growth, also resulted in income inequality and reduced social welfare support. Val's decision to leave and seek a 'new life' could be interpreted as a response to these challenges and a search for improved prospects.

Therefore, the dialogue between Val and Frank in *Fen* reflects the aspirations, agency, and challenges faced by working-class individuals during the Thatcher era. It highlights the desire for personal freedom, the pursuit of new opportunities, and the reliance on community support to navigate the socio-economic landscape of the time.

This fact also impacts Val's move because she wants some supporter who can assist her in finding a new life outside *Fen* and its pains. The following dialogue refers to that matter:

Val: I just want to be with you. Frank: I want to be with you, Val. Val: All right then.
(Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 151)

The conversation centers around their desire to be together, highlighting personal connection, emotional fulfillment, and the pursuit of happiness. While this specific dialogue does not explicitly connect to Thatcherism, the potential connections based on broader themes within the play and the socio-economic context of Thatcherism can be noticed.

Val's desire to be with Frank reflects a longing for companionship and emotional intimacy. It suggests that Val finds support and fulfillment in their relationship. This longing for connection and support can be seen as a response to the individualistic nature of Thatcherism, which emphasized self-reliance and personal success. The play may explore the importance of human relationships and solidarity as a balance to the competitive and individualistic attitude promoted by Thatcherism.

Frank responding Val's desire to be with him indicates a mutual longing for companionship and emotional connection. It suggests that Frank also finds fulfillment and meaning in their relationship. This mutual desire can be seen as a form of resistance to the isolating effects of Thatcherism, where the pursuit of personal success and

economic advancement sometimes undermined interpersonal connections and community bonds.

The simple affirmation of ‘All right then’ can be seen as a hopeful affirmation of their commitment to each other. In the context of Thatcherism, where individual aspirations and materialistic values were often prioritized, this dialogue underscores the importance of personal relationships and emotional well-being. It suggests that Val and Frank find value in their connection, contrasting a society that may prioritize material wealth and individual success over human connection.

In connection with Thatcherism, this dialogue indirectly critiques the focus on individualism and market-driven values promoted by Thatcher’s policies. It emphasizes the significance of emotional and interpersonal fulfillment and suggests the importance of personal relationships and human connection as a form of resistance to the isolating effects of the socio-economic climate under Thatcherism.

On the other hand, Frank appears to his fears about the travel to London. He was afraid of not finding a job and may be in trouble. The economic factor was present firmly in his argument with Val. He prefers to be survived instead of being unemployed. Therefore, Val gave him a choice; she agreed to live with him in any area he chose:

Frank: What am I supposed to do in London? Val: Where do you want to go? You say. I do not mind. You do not like it here. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 152)

Frank seems confused regarding the alternative job he may think about if he went to London, but in the end, he agrees to follow his love, Val. Here, Frank’s personality shows the conflicts he faces between his feelings towards love for Val and the guarantee of his job survival when he leaves his current job. Such internal conflict carries the thoughts of those who must choose one way to continue. Cultural Materialism is explicit in such internal thinking conflict. Frank’s question, ‘What am I supposed to do in London?’ reflects uncertainty and perhaps a sense of anxiety about the city’s potential opportunities or lack thereof. This question highlights the economic challenges faced by working-class individuals during the Thatcher era. Thatcherism’s policies aimed to stimulate economic growth through privatization and deregulation. However, these policies also led to job losses, income inequality, and reduced social welfare support, particularly impacting working-class communities.

Val's response, 'Where do you want to go? You say. I do not mind. You do not like it here,' suggests a willingness to support Frank's decision and a recognition of his dissatisfaction with their current situation. This exchange reflects a desire for change and a search for a better life, which can be seen as a response to the socio-economic climate of Thatcherism. Many working-class individuals wanted opportunities in larger cities like London in search of better employment prospects and improved living conditions.

The connection with Thatcherism lies in exploring economic mobility, the pursuit of opportunities, and the impact of Thatcher's policies on the working class. The dialogue suggests that Frank and Val are considering a move to London as a means to escape their current circumstances and find a more fulfilling life. It reflects the aspirations for upward mobility and the desire to improve one's economic and social standing, which were often prominent under Thatcherism.

Furthermore, the dialogue touches upon the challenges working-class individuals face in making such a move. Frank's question indicates uncertainty about the opportunities and challenges awaiting him in London. It alludes to the struggles of finding suitable employment, affordable housing, and navigating a new and unfamiliar environment. These challenges were common for individuals seeking better prospects during Thatcherism.

Moreover, in Scene Four, the conversation between Val and her daughters carries sad feelings when she decides to leave her daughters and travel with her love Frank. Both daughters, Deb, nine, and Shona, six, need the care of their mom because they are still young and cannot take care of themselves. The sorrowful conversation refers to the force of the parental attachment towards the children and the personal motives to release from a tragic living situation. That duality can result from a severe emotional attitude. Val speaks frankly to her kids,

Val to Deb: You are to be a good girl Deb, and look after Shona. Mummy will come and see you all the time.... Mummy loves you very much. Deb: I want to go on the train (means with you) Val: ... We can't go now. Mummy's got to go and live with Frank because I love him. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 152).

The conversation was with broken hearts for both. It revealed the deep love attachment between the mother and her daughters. The dependency of the daughters on their mother is reflected in the request for Deb to get colors, and she cannot realize that

her mother will leave her and Shona. That conversation presents the dimensions of Cultural Materialism and the personal economy dominating thinking of Val. The conversation captures the emotional pain and challenges of Val's decision to leave her children and live with Frank. While this specific dialogue does not explicitly mention Thatcherism, it can draw connections based on broader themes within the play and the socio-economic context of Thatcherism.

Val's initial statement, 'You are to be a good girl, Deb, and look after Shona. Mummy will come and see you all the time. Mummy loves you very much,' reflects a mother's attempt to reassure her daughters and maintain a sense of connection and love amidst the difficult circumstances. It portrays the emotional struggle Val faces, torn between her desire to pursue personal happiness and her love for her children. This struggle can be seen as a response to the socio-economic pressures and constraints experienced by working-class individuals during Thatcherism.

Deb's response, 'I want to go on the train (means with you),' reveals the pain and longing a child who wants to be with her mother feels. It reflects the emotional impact of Val's decision on her daughters, who may feel abandoned or left behind. This portrayal of familial separation can be connected to the socio-economic changes brought about by Thatcherism, which often resulted in fractured families due to factors such as job instability, relocation, and economic hardships.

Val's response, 'We can't go now. Mummies got to go and live with Frank because I love him,' highlights the personal and emotional choices that Val feels compelled to make. It suggests that Val's decision to leave her children is driven by her desire for personal happiness and fulfillment in her relationship with Frank. This decision reflects the tension between individual aspirations and familial responsibilities often experienced within the context of Thatcherism. The emphasis on individualism and self-reliance promoted by Thatcher's policies could sometimes result in difficult choices and sacrifices for working-class individuals, including the separation from loved ones.

In connection with Thatcherism, this dialogue indirectly critiques the challenges faced by working-class individuals in balancing personal desires and familial obligations. It highlights the emotional ring of such choices and the impact on family dynamics within the socio-economic context of Thatcherism. The play *Fen* explores the

experiences and struggles of working-class women, shedding light on the human costs and emotional hardships faced by individuals trying to navigate their lives amidst the socio-economic changes that Thatcherism brings.

The dialogue captures the painful consequences of personal choices within the socio-economic context of the era. It portrays the emotional challenges faced by working-class individuals and the complexities of balancing personal happiness and familial responsibilities in a climate that often prioritizes individualism and self-interest.

Deb: I want new colors. Val: I'll get you some new colors. Mummy's sorry. Love you very much. Look after Shona. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 153)

Deb's statement, 'I want new colors,' reflects her desire for something new and perhaps a sense of longing for a different life or environment. This longing for change can be seen as a response to the limitations and challenges faced by individuals within the working-class community, including limited opportunities and economic hardships under Thatcherism.

Val's response, 'I'll get you some new colors. Mummies sorry. Love you very much. Look after Shona,' demonstrates her attempt to console Deb and show her continued love and care. Val attempts to provide a sense of hope and positivity amidst their difficult situation by promising to fulfill Deb's request for new colors. Val's apology indicates her recognition of the pain and disruption caused by her decision to leave, while her expression of love underscores her enduring affection for her daughters.

Val's promise to get new colors for Deb can be seen as an attempt to provide a small form of comfort and joy in the face of the challenges they are experiencing.

In the fifth scene, the expression of freedom and release from the arrogance of *Fen*'s investors is presented when Val and Frank leave *Fen* and have exciting and loving times when they dance together and have fun, happiness, and romantic moments.

3.3.3. Orientations and Tendencies of Angela and Becky

The sixth scene shows two other women, Angela, twenty-eight, and her stepdaughter Becky fifteen. Angela practices bullying and abusing Becky. The oppressed girl tries to get rid of Angela's misbehaving but with no vein. Angela represents a woman who has no target or something to do. Also, she lacks motherhood feeling because she does not have kids. These events surrounding Angela in *Fen* made

her abuse the little girl, Becky. Becky gives up on Angela because she needs to be survived. She tries to threaten Angela by telling her dad, but Angela severely abuses her.

Becky: I'll tell someone. You'll be put in prison, you'll be burnt. Angela: You can't tell because I'll kill you. You know that. Do you know that? Becky: Yes / Angela: Do you? / Becky: Yes. Angela:You can say 'Sorry, Angela, I'm bad all through'..Becky: Sorry Angela, bad all through. Angela: strokes Becky's hair then yanks it. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 154).

The brutal way Angela misbehaved with Becky made the scene savage and not human. It reveals the psycho troubles that Angela suffers from. She tried to find herself by abusing little girl Becky. The dialogue refers to a tense exchange between both characters, Angela and Becky. It begins with Becky expressing her intention to reveal Angela's misbehaving against her. In response to Becky's threat, Angela counters by asserting her own power and control. She states that Becky cannot tell on her because Angela would kill her. This reveals a potentially violent aspect of Angela's character and a sense of fear that Becky has toward her. Angela emphasizes the seriousness of her threat by asking Becky if she understands, to which Becky replies affirmatively.

The dialogue takes a somewhat unexpected turn when Angela presents Becky with a seemingly submissive option. Angela tells Becky that she can apologize and admit to being inherently bad. This suggests that Angela desires some form of acknowledgment or submission from Becky to assert her dominance and maintain control over the situation.

Becky, perhaps feeling forced or fearful, obeys Angela's demand and says, "Sorry Angela, bad all through." This compliance is punctuated by Angela's physical action of stroking Becky's hair and then rudely yanking it, which can be interpreted as a further display of Angela's dominance and aggression. Angela's use of power and control over Becky, her threat of violence, and the submission demanded can be seen as symbolic of the power imbalances and authoritarian tendencies associated with Thatcherism. The fear and compliance displayed by Becky could represent the marginalized and vulnerable individuals within society who felt the impact of Thatcher's policies.

Moreover, Angela's demand for an admission of inherent badness may reflect a prevailing narrative during the Thatcher era that emphasized personal responsibility and individual fault for one's circumstances. This narrative often deflected attention from systemic issues and justified policies that favored the wealthy and privileged.

In the seventh scene, the argument between the girls Becky, Deb, and Shona with Nell witnessed hard times. There was an unfriendly conversation among them. The scene shows that Becky has a friendship with Deb and Shona. Nell was serious and did not deal with girls friendly. On the other hand, the girls' song at the end of the scene implied clear pictures of the dreams and ideas of the women in *Fen*. They are convinced to be hairdressers, nurses, or housewives and get married without leaving *Fen* city. The song carries the feeling of women from the beginning of their lives.

The eighth scene presents the unsettled relationships between Val and her mother, May, who expressed dissatisfaction regarding Val's attitude when she left her husband and had love with Frank. May wants her daughter to correct the wrong she did because she has two daughters, and she should take care of them and not only take care of their desires with her love. The scene shows that Val leaves her daughters in her mother's house. Deb and Shona were not comfortable with their nan, who could not collaborate well with them.

The scene presents Val's first challenges due to her decision to change her lifestyle. The challenges are not easy, and her mother's pressure confuses her.

May: I'm ashamed of you. Val: Not in front (of kids) May: What you after? Happiness? Got it have you? Bluebird of happiness? Got it have you? Bluebird? (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 159)

May's blame profoundly influenced Val, who wants to focus on organizing her new life after leaving her husband. May did not give her a choice to think rationally. May was a classic woman and did not want to change her lifestyle because she was 60 years old and used to think in a limited way.

In response, Val requests that May not voice her disapproval in front of the children. This indicates that Val is concerned about shielding the children from the negative emotions and tension between herself and May. Val's request highlights her desire to prioritize her children's well-being and emotional stability during this transitional period.

May's following question, "What you after? Happiness? Got it, have you? Bluebird of happiness? Got it, have you? Bluebird?" can be interpreted as a ironic response to Val's pursuit of happiness. May seems to challenge Val's expectations of finding true happiness or contentment in her new life, implying that it may be an elusive or unrealistic goal.

May's words may reflect a skepticism or lack of belief in the possibility of finding happiness outside of societal norms or conventional paths. This skepticism aligns with a sentiment prevalent during the Thatcher era, which often emphasized the pursuit of material wealth and success as the ultimate measure of happiness and fulfillment.

Furthermore, May's expression of shame toward Val can be connected to Thatcherism's emphasis on individual responsibility. The ideology of Thatcherism often placed the blame on individuality in having personal choices away from emotions related to siblings should be incubated. May's judgment and disapproval of Val's decisions may reflect this underlying belief system.

As a result, the dialogue between Val and May in *Fen* captures the tension between personal desires and societal expectations, which can be connected to the socio-political climate of Thatcherism. May's disapproval, cynicism, and emphasis on individual responsibility reflect some of the attitudes prevalent during that era, where personal success and conformity to societal norms were often prioritized over individual happiness and well-being.

3.3.4. Orientations and Tendencies of Val Verses Her Daughters & Frank

In the eleventh scene, one of the conversations between Shirley and Val reflects Val's pain because of leaving her daughters. Shirley could make Val rethink what she does. Shirley seems objective and realistic in her thoughts. Therefore, she could convince Val that caring for children is a priority and she should sacrifice her desire for the sake of her daughters:

Shirley: We have to have something to talk about, Val, you mustn't mind if it's you. We'll soon stop... we are terrible here you are the latest that's all.... Frank left his wife two years ago and everyone is got used to that (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 169)

Shirley further explains that Val is "the latest," implying that Val's recent separation from her husband is the most recent development in the community's ongoing talk. This indicates that the community is quick to latch onto and discuss personal affairs, particularly those involving relationships and marital issues. The mention of Frank, who left his wife two years ago, suggests that the community has already moved on from Frank's situation and is now focusing on Val's separation.

The dialogue in *Fen* reflects a social circumstance that aligns with some aspects of Thatcherism. The emphasis on personal affairs can be connected to Thatcherism's individualism and a focus on personal success and aspirations. In Thatcher's era, there was often increased attention placed on personal achievements and the pursuit of wealth, sometimes at the expense of communal bonds and social cohesion.

In the meantime, Shirley was brilliant when she made Val carry her baby. This step made Val remember her daughters and the lovely times with them. Shirley could shake Val's motherhood before she started talking to Val. She could convince Val that the job opportunities would be stopped, whether in *Fen* or other areas. So, there is no privilege to other cities in comparison with *Fen*. Also, she mentioned to Val that her love Frank left his wife two years ago, and they do not have any trouble. At the end of the conversation, Val listened to Shirley's advice:

Val: I can't hold the baby, it make me cry. I will do the ironing. Shirley: if you can't stop away form them, go back to them. Val: I can't leave Frank. Shirley: nothing's perfect is it, my poppets. There is a good girl. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 169).

Val expresses her inability to hold the baby, which brings her to tears. This statement suggests that Val is emotionally overwhelmed, possibly due to her recent separation from her daughter. Shirley responds to Val's statement by suggesting that if Val cannot distance herself from her emotions, she should consider returning to her family. Shirley's comment implies that Val should either find a way to reconcile with her emotions or return to her previous situation, as it may be easier for her to handle.

Val, however, expresses her inability to leave Frank and the consequences of her return. This statement suggests that Val is torn between her emotional connection to Frank and her own well-being. Shirley's response, "nothing's perfect is it, my poppets. There is a good girl," can be seen as a somewhat unrealized to limitations and difficulties of the life. By using the term 'poppets' as a compliment, Shirley conveys a sense of intimacy or rationalism, suggesting that she recognizes the complexities of life and the challenges that individuals like Val face.

The dialogue reflects some of the emotional and personal struggles that individuals faced during the Thatcher era. Shirley's response could reflect the narrative promoted during the Thatcher era that individuals must accept and navigate their own struggles, even if there are no ideal solutions or outcomes.

At the end, the dialogue captures the emotional struggles and personal dilemmas that individuals faced within the socio-political climate of Thatcherism. It reflects the emphasis on personal responsibility and the notion that individuals must navigate their own challenges while facing limited support from the larger societal structure.

The rest scene's conversation moved to Geoffrey, Shirley's husband, who seems a critic of the transformations of society and brings history to make a sort of comparison with the current situations. He utilized Val's attendance at his home to share his thoughts about the societal changes "Everything's changing, everything's going down." Then, he mentioned that the job vacancies were available and refused lazy people like Frank, who had nothing to do but drive his tractor. He criticizes Shirley's comment on Frank when Val listens to them about the job finding. He said:

Do not talk to me about unemployment. They've four jobs. Doing other people out of jobs. Being a horseman was proper work, but all your Frank does is sit on a tractor. Sitting down's does not work. Common market takes all the work. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 170)

Then, Geoffrey highlight the societal changes even in the worship and spiritual dimensions. He said:

Only twenty in church on Sunday. Declining moral all round. Not like in the war. Those French sending rockets to the Argies, forgotten what we did for them I should think. / Common market's good thing for stopping wars. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 170)

Geoffrey's comment was explicit that the spiritual and moral dimensions of the people have also been changed, and they started not caring about such measurements, which are essential in the nature of human beings, especially the moral dimension.

Through Geoffrey's comments, Churchill highlighted significant bilateralism between spiritual and economic dimensions. The economic growth factor of people generated a lack of religious and moral aspects. Therefore, the societal changes were not easy or simple, but they were dramatic and influenced the sustainability of human coexistence.

Churchill wants to send an alarm message about the impact of the economic changes on the behaviors of the people and the also impact on the religious beliefs when Geoffrey mentioned the lack of prayers in the church.

In the scene thirteen presents a disengagement between Val and Frank. Val seemed serious about getting back her children. That means she has to leave Frank.

Val to Frank: I wanted to see you. Frank: Why? (Silence) Coming back to me? Val: No Frank: then what? What? (Silence). I do not want to see you, Val. Val: No Frank: Stay with me tonight. (Silence) Val: No. Frank: please, go away. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 173).

Val's seriousness could restrain her internal desire, and she decided to take care of her kids. Val's position has been generated due to the motherhood motive, her mother's disagreement, and Shirley's argument. The changeable attitude of Val is a reflection of her self-conflicts with how she should take her life. It may need to leave a part to keep another one. So, Val has to decide whether to continue leaving her children and surviving life in *Fen* city or stay with Frank and the new dream life she looks forward. It is not easy to have one and leave another, but she had to. As a result, she chooses to be more realistic and caretaking of her children despite the fact that she may lose her love, Frank.

In Scene fourteen, Alice appears, and she shows as a helpful and lovely friend who tries to assist Val to be more comfortable. So, Val appreciated Alice's efforts and concerns to make her feel better.

Val to Alice: It was kind of you to bring me. I loved the singing. And everyone was so loving. Alice: Well then? That's it, is not it? Better than we get every day. Alice hugs Val. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 176).

Alice and Val meet with Margaret, a woman who wants to be religious and released from her sins. Margaret's story refers to many challenges in her life, and she decided to leave everything and be part of the church to purify herself from sins. Margaret's style seems that she wants to keep away the society and has her own life due to the unsettled situations she lived in before.

Val expressed her rejection of the lifestyle that Margaret wants to be within. She justified that Margaret liked the drink and she was rubbish. Then, he wants to escape from reality by joining the church.

Scene seventeen carries a love feeling of Val towards her daughters. In her speech with Frank, she expressed deep and sharp motherhood emotions and the need to take care of and live with her children. She feels that she is missing herself when she is missing them. Her fondness and warm-heartedness toward her daughter made her vigilant

and cannot sleep even with her love for Frank. The following dialogue between Frank and Val when Val is outdoors at night.

Frank: What you doing? Val: can't sleep. Frank: Come back to bed. I can't sleep without you up. Val: I'm not too bad in the day, Am I? Frank: Go back to them then. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 178)

Frank knows that Val cannot stop thinking about her kids. Therefore, he asked her to get back and leave him despite he loves her. On the other hand, he tried to change her mind and keep her living with him, but he failed

Frank: if I went away, it might be easier. We'd know it was for definite. Val: You could always come back. I'd come after you. Frank: I'd better to kill myself hadn't I. Be out of your way then. Val: Do not be stupid. Frank: the girls are all right, you know. Val: I just want them. I can't help it. I just want them. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 179)

The last sentence of the dialogue is an emotional and makes it clear that Val's passion is controlled. Therefore, the scene is a final dialogue indicating Val's return to her daughters. She could not resist her motherhood emotions over her love for Frank. As a result, Frank could not stop her thinking as he tried.

The dialogue revolves around their strained relationship and the complexities of their feelings for each other. When Frank asks Val what she's doing, Val responds by saying she cannot sleep, implying that she is experiencing restlessness or emotional turmoil. Frank then urges Val to come back to bed, but Val responds by saying she's not too bad during the day. It implies that her struggles are more prominent at night. This statement refers to Val's trail to find stability in daylight but still grappling with emotional difficulties. Then, Frank understands her emotions towards her daughters. So, he replies, "o back to them then." it also implies that he is frustrated or tired of their situation. He suggests that if Val finds it easier to handle without him, she should go back to the daughters she left behind. This statement highlights the complexities and tensions within their relationship.

Frank expresses his thoughts by saying that it might be easier for both of them if he should leave, as they would have a definite resolution to their situation. This statement reveals a sense of uncertainty, the ambiguity in their relationship, struggle to navigate their emotions and find a clear path forward. Then, Val suggests that Frank could always come back, indicating her desire to reconcile and reunite with him if he made an effort. However, Frank states that he might kill himself to be out of Val's way. Val dismisses this statement, urging Frank not to be foolish. Then, Frank mentions that the girls are

alright, but Val expresses her longing for the children, stating that she cannot help but want them.

The dialogue reflects the complexities of personal relationships and the emotional struggles that individuals faced within the socio-political climate of Thatcherism. The emphasis on Frank and Val's individual desires and struggles can be connected to the individual nature of Thatcherism ideology. The dialogue captures the challenges that individuals faced in reconciling their own emotions and desires with societal expectations and pressures.

Frank and Val's conversation reveals their conflicting emotions and the difficulties they encounter in finding a resolution. The care of the children highlights the importance of familial bonds and responsibilities, which may have been impacted by the societal changes and individualistic values promoted during the Thatcher era.

As a result, the dialogue between Frank and Val reflects the complexities of personal relationships and the struggles individuals faced within the individual socio-political climate of Thatcherism. It highlights the tensions between personal desires and societal expectations and the challenges of maintaining relationships within a society that prioritizes individual success and self-reliance.

Churchill implied the importance of the woman's nature as a mother who regards a part of her creation mixed with love and passion as a biological mother. Moreover, Churchill wanted to consolidate such a principle among the society, which started missing due to the economic and political changes affecting lifestyles and desires regardless of class or color.

3.3.5. Orientation and Tendencies of Nell and *Fen*'s Situation

The conversation in the eighteenth scene between Nell and Frank presents Nell's way of thinking toward herself and others. Nell seems defiant and refuses the traditional lifestyle of the *Fen* people, who are subject to the desires of the investors and follow their ambitions which differ from their simple aspirations. Nell wonders about the misbehaves and carelessness of the landlords towards the farmers and workers. In the meantime, she does not accept the response of the *Fen*'s people to the dictations of those landlords who think about how to get money and invest it in better ways. Cultural Materialism is present in the thinking pattern of both landlords and farmers when each

side behaves based on his thoughts and feelings. Economic status, whether high or low, imposes itself on the treatment among the classes of society. It creates a sort of inequity among the social classes if it is misused. During her dialogue with Frank, Nell explains her personality, which differs from others.

Also, Frank highlights the toughness of his landlord.

Nell: How is Mr. Tewson then?.Frank: Bloody trouble maker. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 179)

Frank's anger reveals the severe misbehaving of his employer, Tewson, towards him. Frank regards Tewson's attitude as part of investors' behavior towards the lower class.

Nell comments on her viewpoint toward society's treatment.

I just can't think like they do. I do not know why. I was brought up here like everyone else. My family thinks like everyone else. Why can't I? I've tried to. I've given up now

Frank: Made trouble there.

Nell: I wanted what they owed me. Ten years I'd topped their effing carrots. You all thought I was off the road. You'll never think I'm normal. Thank God, eh? (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p.180).

The conversation generates an impression regarding Nell's perspective towards the society of *Fen*. She confesses that she cannot understand how her society is thinking and does not have collaboration between both sides. As a result, she mentioned she gave up due to not dealing well with her community. Moreover, Nell expressed how her community ignored her despite the fact that she spent ten years working on their farms, but nobody rewarded her, or she was paid their attention. She explained how society ignoring someone would severely influence the personality.

Moreover, Nell expresses her frustration and confusion about her inability to think like the people around her. She mentions that she was raised in the same place as everyone else, and her family shares the same mindset as the community. However, Nell feels disconnected from their way of thinking and does not understand why. She acknowledges her efforts to conform but has now given up on trying.

Frank responds with the statement, 'Made trouble there,' indicating that Nell's deviation from the expected way of thinking has caused problems or conflicts within the community. This suggests that Nell's opposition challenges the prevailing norms. Nell then explains her motivation for her actions, stating that she wanted what was owed to

her. She mentions working for ten years in the community in agricultural labor ‘topped their effing carrots.’ However, despite her contributions, she felt that she was being marginalized or overlooked. Nell’s resentment arises from the perception that others thought she had strayed from the accepted path, and she emphasizes her desire for recognition and fair treatment.

The dialogue concludes that she will never be considered “normal” by others. This statement can be interpreted as Nell finding her disagreement from societal expectations. By asserting that others will never think she is normal, she implies that she refuses to conform to their narrow definitions of acceptability. The dialogue reflects the tensions and challenges that individuals faced within a society shaped by Thatcherism. Nell’s sense of alienation and her frustration with the community’s way of thinking can be connected to the individual mentality fostered by Thatcherism. Nell’s inability to think like the rest of the community and her desire for recognition challenge the expectations of conformity and reflect resistance to the pressures of Thatcherism ideology. Nell’s demand for fair treatment and recognition of her contributions represents a desire for a more equitable and inclusive society, challenging the narratives of individualism and self-reliance associated with Thatcherism.

Nell’s disobedience and refusal to conform align with a spirit of resistance against the pressures of individual success and the marginalization of certain voices within Thatcherite society.

In summary, through reviewing the scenes of the play *Fen*, each female character was fighting to get her freedom in the way she was thinking about. Val, Nell, Becky, and Shirley tried to get rid of their survived and abused living situations. The dominance and arrogance of the material thinking for the wealthy investors and businessmen pushed those women to think how to release from their savage environments. *Fen*’s city was the theater of all events. It was controlled by those tough investors who are looking for their benefits regardless of the suffering of their workers. Moreover, the transformation of thinking of economic and material life stimulates those survived and oppressed women to think about themselves and trying to find better lifestyle even if it leads to sort of repercussion against their society and social attachments. That was clear in Val’s personality who want to get a risk and leave their children to release from *Fen*’s wild situations.

The play highlighted the savage misbehaves of some people against others. Oppressed Becky was a clear example of misbehaving when Angela treated her brutally. It was just to meet Angela's desire to punish who is not under control. Nell also tried to have better life, but she could not meet what she wants because of the social restrictions.

Through all scenes mentioned, Caryl Churchill was interested in reflecting an accurate picture of the UK's citizen's conditions within procedures taken by the government of PM Margaret Thatcher. One of the outputs of the government's policies was motivating people to think individually and not take care of the collectivism or society. The individualism and privatization created sort of thinking among the citizens for not being collaborative or supportive, but they should think how to build their self-life separately. The economic directions dominated the thinking of the society and started to have its privacy. That direction made sort of dramatic changes in British society, which was suffering from economic crises before, especially during Thatcher's premiership. PM Thatcher tried to treat the financial and economic dilemmas of citizens via adopting different economic steps which led to create the individuality among the people.

The Cultural Materialism adopted in the research could reveal how the objective analyses of political, cultural, and economic dimensions are giving a realistic reading to the scenes of the play within the time and place of its events. The theory could assist to clarify the dimensions of the play based on their series of the events and scenes. It could reveal how the movements of the *Fen's* women interact and interchanged due to the economic and material life.

Hence, the dissertation highlights about the interchange of society on term of Thatcherism and how Caryl Churchill designed though her play *Fen* to reflect obvious image regarding the situations and living affairs of British people. Churchill could achieve brilliant scenes reflecting the trace of the economy, discrimination of social classes and lifestyles which generated different social consequences as mentioned.

The attempts of having the freedom of expression, looking for the rights, enabling women within manhood dominance, confronting injustice and inequity towards woman, reducing the arrogance of economy on the fate of people, and redesigning the thoughts regarding woman's presence on the social life are all factors that are highlighted within the research analyses of *Fen*.

Cultural Materialism focuses on the interplay between literature and history, considering how a work of art reflects and is shaped by its historical moment. *Fen* delves into the lives of working-class women in the Fen during the 1980s, a time when the region was experiencing significant economic and social changes. The play engages with the consequences of deindustrialization, the decline of traditional agricultural practices, and the encroachment of capitalist interests.

In terms of Cultural Materialist perspective, *Fen* can be examined by exploring the historical context and power dynamics that inform the characters' lives. The play sheds light on the struggles of working-class women within a capitalist system that exploits their labor and perpetuates economic inequalities. By examining the economic and political shifts taking place in the *Fen*, the play critiques the forces that perpetuate social injustice and class divisions.

Cultural Materialism also emphasizes the material conditions of society and how they shape individuals and their relationships. *Fen* focuses on the experiences of women who work in the agricultural industry, exploring the physical labor they endure and the impact it has on their bodies and identities. The play highlights the connection between the characters and the land they work on, emphasizing the physicality and materiality of their existence.

Furthermore, Cultural Materialism also encourages an analysis of the power dynamics and social structures at play in a literary work. In *Fen*, Churchill depicts the ways in which patriarchal norms and gender inequalities intersect with class divisions. The play explores the ways in which women are marginalized and their labor is undervalued within a system that privileges men and reinforces traditional gender roles.

In analyzing *Fen* through the lenses of Cultural Materialism, one can gain insights into the historical context, power dynamics, and material conditions that shape the lives of the characters. The play highlights the impact of economic changes, critiques social injustices, and challenges traditional gender roles. By examining the relationships between literature, history, and society, these theoretical frameworks provide a deeper understanding of the themes and concerns explored in *Fen*.

4. CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING OF THATCHERISM IN *TOP GIRLS*

4.1. CARYL CHURCHILL'S *TOP GIRLS*

Top Girls is a play written by Caryl Churchill, first performed in 1982. The play explores themes of feminism, gender roles, and the price women pay for success in a male-dominated society. It is divided into two acts, with the first act containing a surrealistic dinner party scene and the second act presenting more realistic scenes.

The play's title, *Top Girls*, refers to the name of main protagonist Marlene's employment agency, which is a symbol of her success and power. The name itself is infantilizing, implying that even if women make it to the 'top' of the social or financial ladder, they are still just 'girls'. The title can also be seen as a critique of Thatcherism's emphasis on individualism and self-reliance, as Marlene's pursuit of success has come at the expense of her personal relationships. Additionally, the title can be interpreted as a commentary on the dangers of worldly success, as Marlene's triumphs have come at a great cost, including the deprivation of love and motherhood (D'Monte, 2009).

The first act of *Top Girls* features a surrealistic dinner party scene hosted by Marlene, the newly appointed managing director of the *Top Girls* employment agency. The guests at the party are women from different historical periods and backgrounds. Some of the notable guests are Isabella Bird, a 19th century English explorer and writer who defied societal expectations and traveled extensively. Lady Nijo, a 13th century Japanese concubine turned Buddhist nun, who shares her experiences of serving different rulers and reflects on the challenges faced by women in the hierarchical society of her time. Dull Gret, a character from a 16th century painting by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, who leads a group of women into Hell to challenge the demons and assert their strength. Pope Joan, a legendary female pope from the Middle Ages who disguised herself as a man to rise through the ranks of the Catholic Church. Patient Griselda, a character from Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Clerk's Tale*, who endures extreme hardships and defeat to prove her loyalty and obedience to her husband.

During the dinner, each woman shares her story of sacrifice, struggle, and determination in a male dominated world. The scene challenges traditional notions of

history and explores the tension between personal ambition and the price paid for success.

The second act of *Top Girls* shifts to a more realistic setting, focusing on the life of Marlene's sister, Joyce, and her daughter, Angie. Joyce is a working-class woman, who struggles to make ends meet and takes care of Angie as a single mother. Angie, dissatisfied with her limited prospects, idolizes her aunt Marlene and dreams of escaping her current circumstances (Caryl Churchill, 1996).

The act also presents scenes set in the *Top Girls* employment agency, where Marlene and her colleagues navigate the challenges faced by women in the workplace. The interactions among the characters highlight the competition, gender dynamics, and power struggles within the corporate world. The play explores the conflicts between personal fulfillment and societal expectations, as well as the sacrifices made by women in pursuit of success.

The act concludes with a powerful confrontation between Marlene and Joyce, where their differing perspectives on success, feminism, and personal fulfillment clash. The scene raises questions about the nature of achievement, the impact on family relationships, and the complex realities faced by women in a society influenced by Thatcherism.

Throughout both acts, *Top Girls* explores the themes of gender, power, class, and the challenges women face in their quest for success and fulfillment in a male dominated world.

The play has been widely studied in the context of Thatcherism, as it reflects and critiques the social and political climate of the time. It highlights the tensions and contradictions faced by women who sought to break through traditional gender roles and succeed in a competitive, capitalist society.

4.2. TOP GIRLS AND THATCHERISM

Top Girls by Caryl Churchill is often seen as a critique of Thatcherism, the political ideology and policies associated with the occupancy of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher from 1979 to 1990. The play explores the impact of Thatcherism on women and the broader societal changes that occurred during that era. Here are some connections between *Top Girls* and Thatcherism:

Individualism and Meritocracy: Thatcherism promoted the idea of individualism and meritocracy, emphasizing personal responsibility and the notion that one's success is based on their own abilities and efforts. Similarly, the character of Marlene in *Top Girls* embodies this ethos as she achieves career success through hard work and ambition. However, the play also questions the sacrifices Marlene has made and the impact of this individualistic ideology on relationships and social cohesion (D'Monte, 2009).

Economic Policies and Social Inequality: Thatcher's economic policies aimed to deregulate industries, reduce the influence of trade unions, and promote free market capitalism. This resulted in economic growth and prosperity for some, but also led to increased social inequality. In *Top Girls*, the contrasting experiences of Marlene and her sister Joyce highlight the disparities caused by such policies. Marlene's success comes at the expense of her family and personal relationships, while Joyce struggles with limited opportunities as a working-class woman (Booker, 2001).

Feminism and Class Divide: Thatcherism claimed to support gender equality, but its focus on individual success often disregarded the experiences of working-class women. *Top Girls* challenges the notion of feminism under Thatcherism by portraying the difficulties faced by women from different social classes. The dinner party scene brings together historical women who have fought against societal restrictions, illustrating the complexities of gender and class struggles (D'Monte, 2009).

Impact on the Workplace: Thatcherism aimed to promote a competitive and entrepreneurial spirit, encouraging a more business-oriented approach in the workplace. *Top Girls* explores the challenges faced by women in the corporate world. The characters at the *Top Girls*' employment agency navigate the expectations and pressures of a male-dominated work environment, highlighting the tension between personal fulfillment and the demands of the professional sphere (Fowler, 2014).

In general, *Top Girls* offers a critical examination of the effects of Thatcherism on women and society, questioning the consequences of prioritizing individual success over collective well-being and raising concerns about the impact of economic policies on gender and class inequalities (Aston, 1999).

4.3. ORIENTATION AND TENDENCIES OF WOMEN IN *TOP GIRLS*

Via Cultural Materialist perspective, *Top Girls* can be analyzed by examining the historical and cultural contexts in which the play is set. Churchill incorporates various historical references and characters to highlight the struggles and achievements of women throughout history. By interweaving these women's stories, the play brings attention to the social and political structures that have shaped women's lives.

Cultural Materialism emphasizes the interplay between literature and power structures. In *Top Girls*, Churchill examines the impact of Margaret Thatcher's conservative government and the rise of neoliberalism in 1980s Britain. Through the character of Marlene, Churchill critiques the Thatcherite ideology that prioritizes individualism, ambition, and capitalism at the expense of social welfare and community.

Top Girls highlights the tensions and conflicts within feminism itself, as different generations and ideologies collide. The dinner scene in the first part of the play showcases women from different time periods and backgrounds, presenting a complex picture of feminism's historical development. These women represent diverse perspectives, from Chaucer's Patient Griselda to Pope Joan and contemporary figures like Isabella Bird and Lady Nijo. Their interactions reflect the struggle between individual success and the collective struggle for women's rights.

Furthermore, Cultural Materialism encourages to analyze the language and rhetoric of a text. In *Top Girls*, Churchill employs fragmented dialogue, overlapping conversations, and non-linear narratives to reflect the fragmented experiences of women in a patriarchal society. The play disrupts traditional linear storytelling, reflecting the complexities of women's lives and challenging established historical narratives.

Overall, the dissertation aims to analyze *Top Girls* based on Cultural Materialism to explore how the play engages with historical events, power structures, and feminist ideologies. It would examine the connections between literature and history, emphasizing the social and political contexts that shape women's experiences and choices. By focusing on the interplay between the personal and the historical, Cultural Materialism sheds light on the complexities and contradictions of gender roles and societal expectations in *Top Girls*.

Choices and consequences happening in *Top Girls* have significant impacts and led to life altering outcomes. The dinner party in act one serves as a prime example of that. Each historical figure faced difficult choices and experienced important consequences as a result. For instance, Pope Joan decided to live publicly as a boy and later as a man. However, when she became pregnant by her secret lover, the punishment of stoning her and her baby to death became the outcome of her chosen lifestyle. Joyce, on the other hand, made the choice to adopt Angie, which set her on a specific life path. Joyce believes that she suffered a miscarriage of her own child due to the challenges of raising Angie.

Marlene demonstrates a harsh and demeaning attitude towards the women she interviews, purposely diminishing and even intimidating them in order to assert her own power. For example, when Jennine expresses her desire to earn more money for her wedding, Marlene looks down on her. While Marlene appears to show concern for Jeanine by advising her not to mention her plans to get married to a potential employer who may discriminate against her, there is suspicion that Marlene herself falls into the same category of discriminatory employers. However, it is important to consider the broader social context. As the central female figure, Marlene appears to surpass men in terms of her success. She operates within a patriarchal system, working in a field traditionally dominated by men and assuming the role of her male colleague, Howard. During the interviews, she manipulates power dynamics and employs critical tactics against the women seeking employment. Nonetheless, her success does not challenge the overall social status of women but rather reinforces traditional social feminism, which can be interpreted as a strategic move to deconstruct feminism within the framework of postmodernism.

Marlene has also faced numerous difficult decisions. She chose to pursue a career and spent some time working in the United States. As a result, she has become estranged from her family and appears to lack close friendships, whether with women or men. During her promotion celebration dinner party, the attendees are either deceased or fictitious characters, indicating her lack of connections with friends or family. Marlene doesn't have a romantic relationship either, further emphasizing her loneliness resulting from her life choices. On the other hand, Angie has already made two life choices: dropping out of school at sixteen without any qualifications and running away to London

to live with her aunt. However, the outcomes of these choices in Angie's life remain uncertain.

In addition, Marlene's success plays a significant role in her life in the play *Top Girls* as it shapes her identity and influences the company she prefers. The dinner party serves as a celebration not only for Marlene's promotion to managing director but also for the achievements of her guests. Joan's rise to becoming the pope, Isabella's worldly travels, Gret's battles against devils in hell, and Griselda's endurance of her husband's demanding tests of loyalty are all seen by Marlene as examples of success, even though these women are not part of her real, everyday life. However, Marlene's personal life is a failure due to her focus on business success. She lacks genuine friendships within the play and has not seen her sister or biological daughter for seven years. At one point during the dinner party, she expresses her despair by exclaiming, "*Oh God, why are we all so miserable?*" (Caryl Churchill, 1996).

Nevertheless, Marlene holds the belief that Joyce's life is mostly unsuccessful because she did not surpass the boundaries of their neighborhood. Instead, Joyce got married and focused on raising her child. Joyce works as a house cleaner and is not impressed by Marlene's accomplishments. Joyce views her world through different lenses, not categorizing it in terms of success or failure. She simply does what is necessary to survive and provide for Angie. However, both sisters share the opinion that Angie has little chance of achieving success in life. Angie lacks education, ambition, and is perceived as unintelligent. The most she can get is low skilled work. While this description applies to Joyce's life, both Joyce and Marlene acknowledge the possibility that Angie might struggle to take care of herself, which they consider the ultimate failure. They agree that one should be able to support themselves.

Top Girls also portrays class conflict through the contrasting views of success held by Marlene and Joyce, which are influenced by their different social classes. Marlene has managed to rise above her working-class background through education and determination, leading to a middle-class lifestyle. She holds a managerial position in a challenging industry, working for an employment agency which is called *Top Girls*. Additionally, she has spent a significant amount of time living and working in the United States. Despite being seen as someone who may not prioritize the interests of the

working class, Marlene aligns herself with the political agenda of Margaret Thatcher, the Iron lady of Great Britain.

Joyce firmly remains within the working class, living a life only slightly better than her parents. She works as a cleaner to support Angie. In contrast to their mother, who endured a difficult life with an alcoholic husband and had very little, Joyce made the decision to ask her husband to leave when she could no longer tolerate his controlling behavior and multiple affairs. Joyce holds the belief that Margaret Thatcher, due to her attitudes towards working class individuals, is wicked. Joyce perceives that Marlene considers herself superior to her because of their differing social classes. Although Marlene claims not to like working class people, she does not include her sister as one of them. The two sisters never manage to understand each other in terms of their class backgrounds.

Top Girls also explores gender roles and implicitly discusses societal expectations placed on women. Each guest at the dinner party represents a specific era's definition of womanhood, either by conforming to those expectations or by defying them. For instance, Isabella could not meet the femininity standards set by her sister, Hennie. Isabella, being a traveler, experienced more of the world than many men did. Similarly, Marlene challenges traditional gender roles through her career, breaking freedom from the expected roles for women.

Although Marlene has experienced economic benefits from her career, her rejection of traditional gender roles presents challenges in her personal life. She is not married, and it does not appear that she is involved in a long-term relationship. Joyce, her sister, does not have a favorable opinion of her. Mrs. Kidd, the wife of the man who was passed over for the promotion that Marlene received, pleads with her not to accept it. Mrs. Kidd believes that it is unfair for Howard to work under a woman and hopes that Marlene will relinquish the promotion so that Howard can support his family. Mrs. Kidd goes so far as to label Marlene as 'miserable and lonely' and accuses her of not being 'natural' due to her unwavering stance on the promotion and her dedication to her job. Despite facing such sexist attitudes, Marlene remains resolute and does not give in. However, the presence of such sexism complicates her life and choices, making things more challenging for her. The conversation reveals what mentioned,

Marlene: I'm sorry but I do have some work to do. Mrs. Kidd: It's not that easy, a man of Howard's age. You don't care. I thought he was going too far but he's right. You're one of

these ballbreakers / that's what you are. You'll end up ... Marlene: I'm sorry but I do have some work to do. Mrs. Kidd: miserable and lonely. You're not natural. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 113)

In Act One, Marlene hosts a dinner party with historical and fictional women who have achieved success in their respective fields. They discuss their experiences and the sacrifices they made to get where they are. For example, Lady Nijo talks about being a concubine and having to abandon her child to become a Buddhist nun. The women interrupt each other and talk over each other, showing how difficult it is for women to be heard in a male dominated society. The scene ends with Marlene giving a toast to herself and her guests, saying, "*We've all come a long way. To our courage and the way, we changed our lives and our extraordinary achievements.*" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 67).

The scene brings attention to the challenges women encounter while striving for success within a patriarchal society. The women gathered at the dinner party have all made sacrifices in their pursuit of their goals, whether it involves leaving their children behind or conforming to societal expectations of femininity.

The scene also illustrates the difficulties women face in being heard and respected in spaces dominated by men, as they interrupt and talk over each other. Marlene's concluding toast in the scene encapsulates the play's central message, emphasizing the significance of women's empowerment and self-determination despite societal obstacles. Furthermore, within the same scene, another conversation emerges, highlighting the complexities and tensions between individual success and the collective struggle for women's rights, particularly in relation to Thatcherism.

In another scene, Isabella Bird's shows her independency and her desire to break the traditions that society imposing women in. She declared, "*such adventures. We were crossing a mountain pass at seven thousand feet, the cook was all to pieces, the muleteers suffered fever and snow blindness. But even though my spine was agony I managed very well*" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 67). She highlights the struggle and perseverance required for women to achieve success. This sentiment resonates with the feminist movement and the fight for gender equality that emerged during the Thatcher era.

However, this approach could downplay the systemic barriers faced by women in male dominated societies, as exemplified by Isabella Bird's remark. Isabella's

statement reflects the impact of Thatcherism by emphasizing the idea of personal responsibility and the necessity of making choices that align with one's own ambitions, even if it requires leaving behind familiar or comfortable environments.

Lady Nijo's comment about the faithfulness of her father and the conservative circumstances she lived with underscores the patriarchal nature of historical societies, where women were often marginalized and lacked agency. During Thatcher's time, discussions on women's rights and the role of women in society were prominent. While Thatcher herself achieved significant political power, her conservative policies did not necessarily prioritize feminist concerns or address the structural inequalities faced by women.

The conversation in Act one in *Top Girls* shed light on the experiences and challenges of women throughout history. While Thatcherism emphasized personal success and individualism, it often failed to address the broader issues of gender inequality and the systemic barriers faced by women. The play invites reflection on the complexities of women's experiences in a society influenced by Thatcherism and highlights the ongoing struggles for gender equality.

Lady Nijo, a 13th century Japanese courtesan who later became a Buddhist, highlights her lack of agency and limited choices. Thatcherism promoted a neoliberal economic model that aimed to deregulate industries, reduce state intervention, and prioritize free-market forces. These policies often led to economic inequality and affected marginalized groups disproportionately. Women in precarious socioeconomic positions, such as Lady Nijo, may have faced limited opportunities for advancement or self-determination due to the socioeconomic structures perpetuated by Thatcherism (Philips, 2011).

Philips added that Lady Nijo's statement reflects the impact of Thatcherism by illustrating the dilemma of individuals who lacked agency and opportunities for self-determination, especially those from marginalized backgrounds. It highlights the unequal distribution of resources and power that can be exacerbated under neoliberal policies (2011).

Thatcherism concentrates those individuals can achieve success based on their own abilities, may have created circumstances where women compel to adopt traditionally male roles or characteristics to advance in their careers or overcome gender-

based biases as Pope Joan's speech implied. Despite of consequences related to the scenes; Joan revealed the challenge of woman toward the imposed circumstances.

Pope Joan's, who disguised herself as a man to get an education, speaks to the limited opportunities available to women in history, particularly in male-dominated fields like education. Thatcherism promoted the idea of self-improvement and advancement through education and hard work. However, the conversation in the play highlights the historical restrictions that women faced, forcing them to resort to unconventional means to access education and pursue their ambitions.

Pope Joan's conversation also reflects the impact of Thatcherism by highlighting the pressures faced by women to conform to masculine norms or expectations in order to succeed in male dominated fields. It suggests the existence of gender inequalities and challenges in breaking through societal barriers, even in a meritocratic system. The conversations in *Top Girls* provide glimpses into the impacts of Thatcherism on the lives and choices of women throughout history. It emphasizes the themes of individualism, independence, limited choices, economic inequality, and gender biases that were prevalent during the Thatcher era. By juxtaposing these historical perspectives, the play prompts reflection on the broader social and political implications of Thatcherism and its effects on women's lives.

In Act Two, it starts to show how Marlene's vision of success at her employment agency is not necessarily shared by all women, and how it can be limiting to define success in narrow terms. Marlene conducts a job interview with an applicant named Jeanine. This conversation between Marlene and Jeanine explores the impact of Thatcherism on individual aspirations and the tension between societal expectations and personal desires.

Marlene: So you want a job with better prospects? Jeanine: I want a change. Marlene: So you'll take anything comparable? Jeanine: No, I do want prospects. I want more money (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 84)

Jeanine's context reveals her hesitation and uncertainty about pursuing a high powered, successful career like the one Marlene embodies. The term *Top Girl* represents a metaphorical representation of women who have achieved professional success and prominence, often in male-dominated industries. Jeanine's response implies that she questions whether this path aligns with her own aspirations and values. Marlene stimulates Jeanine, "*Now Jeanine, I want you to get one of these jobs, all right? If I send*

you that means I'm putting myself on the line for you" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 87). Marlene is trying to convince Jeanine to take a job at a company that makes lampshades by telling her that there is a better chance for advancement there.

Marlene's immediate follow up question to reflects her curiosity and interest in understanding Jeanine's perspective. It demonstrates Marlene's belief in the appeal and desirability of being a Top Girl based on her own success and the values promoted by Thatcherism '*I'm putting myself on the line for you*'. Marlene likely views this career path as one that offers financial security, social status, and personal fulfillment.

Jeanine's response indicates her divergence from the societal expectations and the influence of Thatcherism's individualistic ethos. Jeanine expresses a desire for a different path, suggesting that she seeks fulfillment in areas beyond career success or traditional measures of achievement. Her statement challenges the prevailing notion that professional advancement and material prosperity should be the primary goals for women.

Furthermore, the conversation between Marlene and Jeanine highlights the theme of female empowerment and solidarity in the workplace. While there is no explicit mention of Thatcherism in this specific conversation, the dialogue can be examined through the lens of the social and political context influenced by Thatcher's policies. Jeanine agreed with Marlene who encouraged her for not having kids if she wants to get promoted. She recommends Jeanine for not telling the employer about her future plan if she gets married and get baby then:

Marlene: Because where do the prospects come in? No kids for a bit? Jeanine: Oh no, not kids, not yet. Marlene: So, you won't tell them you are getting married? Jeanine: Had I better not? Marlene: It would probably help. Jeanine: I'm not wearing a ring (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 85).

Marlene's interview implied encouraging Jeanine to take a job at a company where she will be working with women, emphasizing the importance of this aspect. Marlene implies that there is value in women working together and supporting one another. This notion aligns with the feminist movements that emerged during and after the Thatcher era, which advocated for women's empowerment and promoted the idea of solidarity among women in various spheres, including the workplace.

This perspective reflects the belief that women can uplift one another by creating a supportive and nurturing environment. It can be seen as a response to the

individualistic and competitive values promoted by Thatcherism, where the focus on personal success sometimes overlooked collective progress and support. The impacts of Thatcherism on this conversation lie in the emphasis on the value of women working together and supporting each other. Thatcherism, with its focus on individualism and free-market capitalism, often faced criticism for its potential impact on social cohesion and the erosion of collective values. The conversation suggests a counter-narrative, asserting the importance of unity and collaboration among women in the face of societal and workplace challenges.

The dialogue also reflects the broader societal changes and debates that occurred during the Thatcher era. The empowerment of women, the rise of feminist movements, and the recognition of gender equality as important social issues influenced the conversation's themes. The dialogue encourages solidarity among women, highlighting the potential impact of collective action and support in advancing women's rights and opportunities.

Thus, the conversation between Marlene and Jeanine illustrates the importance of women working together and supporting each other. While not explicitly tied to Thatcherism, the conversation aligns with the feminist movements and challenges to individualistic values that emerged during the Thatcher era. It reflects the broader social and political context influenced by Thatcherism, where discussions of gender equality and the empowerment of women gained prominence.

Marlene, possibly drawing from her own experiences, cautions Jeanine against waiting too long, implying regret for delaying her own decision to not have children. This could be seen as a critique of the individualistic values of Thatcherism that sometimes resulted in sacrificing personal relationships or delaying important life choices for the sake of career advancement or personal success. The conversation highlights the tension between personal aspirations and the desire for a fulfilling personal life, specifically regarding the timing of having children. It indirectly reflects on some of the social and personal consequences associated with the individualistic values of Thatcherism, which prioritized personal advancement and success over traditional family structures or communal obligations.

Moreover, this dialogue of Marlene with Jeanine in *Top Girls* demonstrates the impact of Thatcherism on the characters' perspectives and choices. Thatcherism, with

its emphasis on free-market capitalism and the promotion of individual success, created a climate that celebrated achievement in the corporate world. However, Jeanine's reluctance and desire for something else demonstrate a resistance to conforming to these expectations. It highlights the complexities and tensions that arise when societal ideals clash with individual aspirations and the quest for personal fulfillment. (Whitelaw, 2002).

In Act 3, Marlene visited her sister Joyce. Joyce lives with her daughter Angie in small village far from London. They didn't meet each other for couple of years. Their relationship was not friendly or lovely. There is kind of stress and tension when they meet due to the differences in their way of thinking and perspectives toward the life's challenges. Angie loves her Aunt Marlene. So, she cheated on her for coming to their home. Marlene did it. Joyce didn't welcome her sister well and she didn't care of her feelings. Joyce was blaming her sister for leaving them and didn't care about her weak. So, the conversation was not going smoothly.

Marlene: I came up this morning and spent the day in Ipswich. I went to see mother. Joyce: Did she recognize you? Marlene: Are you trying to be funny? Joyce: No, she does wander. Marlene: She wasn't wandering at all, she was very lucid thank you. Joyce: You are very lucky then. (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 132)

The conversation reveal the disconnection and unfriendly attitude due to the Marlene's leave to her family for long years seeking for her privacy and financial independency which regards one of Thatcherism characteristics.

Marlene is talking to her sister Joyce about their mother, but Joyce used the angry and ironic tone to hurt Marlene for not visiting or remembering their mother and childhood. The disconnection was because of Marlene's business and not available to Marlene and Here are some lines from their conversation:

Joyce: "She is not clever like you" (talking about her daughter Angie) Marlene: "I'm not clever, just pushy." Joyce: True enough (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 126).

Marlene engages in a conversation with her sister Joyce about their childhood and their mother. Joyce's remark that Marlene always wanted to be different, and Marlene had a desire to stand out from the norm, to break away from the expectations that surrounded during their upbringing. This observation can be seen as reflecting the changing values and attitudes in society influenced by Thatcherism, where individualism and striving for personal distinction were increasingly valued.

Marlene's response, she should work harder, indicates her ambition and drive to achieve success in life. This sentiment aligns with the ethos of Thatcherism, which emphasized self-improvement, entrepreneurship, and the pursuit of personal goals. It reflects a mindset shaped by the socio-economic changes under Thatcherism, where the emphasis on individual success and upward mobility was prominent.

The conversation between Marlene and Joyce encapsulates the impact of Thatcherism on individual aspirations and the desire for success. It highlights the shift in societal values towards personal achievement and the pursuit of one's ambitions, influenced by the neoliberal ideology that permeated the Thatcher era (Philips, 2011).

In Act 3, Marlene visits her sister, Joyce, in their hometown. They argue about the meaning of success and whether it is worth sacrificing personal relationships for professional achievements. The conversation revolves around personal responsibilities, choices, and the impact of Thatcherism. The scene shows how different women have different priorities and aspirations, and how societal expectations can create conflicts between personal and familial goals.

Joyce expresses her frustration and resentment towards Marlene for leaving her to take care of certain responsibilities, likely referring to their family or shared obligations. Joyce feels abandoned and burdened by the tasks she was left to handle.

Marlene defends her decision to leave, stating that she had to 'get out' for her own personal reasons. This suggests a desire for individual freedom and the pursuit of personal success, which aligns with the principles of Thatcherism. Thatcherism emphasized individualism, self-reliance, and the belief in a free-market economy.

Joyce questions Marlene's achievements, asking what she has made and what she possesses. This can be interpreted as a critique of Thatcherism's focus on material wealth and success as the primary indicators of accomplishment.

In response, Marlene highlights her achievements in terms of career, financial stability, material possessions, and a reflection of the individualistic values promoted by Thatcherism. She believes that these accomplishments are sufficient and questions why she would need anything else.

Joyce, however, challenges Marlene's perspective by suggesting that she needs more than just material success. Joyce emphasizes the importance of family and love,

implying that Marlene's pursuit of personal success may have come at the expense of deeper human connections. This critique can be seen as a response to Thatcherism's tendency to prioritize individual aspirations over collective well-being and social ties.

The conversation between Joyce and Marlene touches on themes of personal sacrifice, individualism, and the potential consequences of prioritizing personal success over familial or interpersonal relationships that resonate with the socio-political context of Thatcherism.

Therefore, *Top Girls* is a play that engages directly with Thatcherism and explores the compromises that women have had to make to achieve success in a male-dominated society. The script portrays women who have achieved success but also face challenges and *Top Girls* highlights the tension between individual success and collective struggle for women's rights, as well as the importance of self-determination and enjoyment in the face of societal barriers (D'Monte, 2009).

Joyce's statement implies that Marlene was considered more intelligent or academically successful compared to herself. This line reflects the societal emphasis on individual achievement and competition fostered by Thatcherism. Thatcherism promoted a meritocratic ideology that placed a strong emphasis on personal responsibility and rewarded those who excelled through hard work and ambition.

Marlene's response challenges the notion of inherent intelligence and attributes her success to her work ethic and perseverance. This line reflects the Thatcherite belief in personal agency and self-determination. Thatcherism promoted the idea that hard work and individual effort were key factors in achieving success, regardless of one's background or innate abilities. Marlene engages in a conversation with her sister Joyce about their family history. This exchange between Marlene and Joyce reveals the impact of Thatcherism on their relationship, their differing values, and the challenges faced by women in the changing socio-political landscape.

Joyce's accusation, Marlene does not care about anything but herself, highlights the tension and resentment she feels towards Marlene. It suggests that Joyce perceives Marlene as self-centered and prioritizing her own success and ambitions over the needs and well-being of their family. This accusation can be seen as a critique of the individualistic and competitive ethos fostered by Thatcherism, where personal gain often took precedence over collective concerns.

Marlene's response, that's not true, reflects her defense against Joyce's accusation. It indicates that Marlene disagrees with Joyce's assessment of her priorities and suggests that she may feel misunderstood or unfairly judged. Marlene may perceive her individual success as a reflection of her determination and ambition rather than a disregard for her family.

Joyce's subsequent claim, Marlene does not care about her, Angie, or Mom, further emphasizes the strained family dynamics influenced by Thatcherism. It reveals the extent of the emotional distance that has developed between the sisters and implies that Marlene's pursuit of personal success has created a divide between them. The impact of Thatcherism's emphasis on individualism and self-interest is apparent in the strain placed on familial relationships and the prioritization of personal ambitions over familial connections.

This conversation between Marlene and Joyce in *Top Girls* showcases the effects of Thatcherism on family dynamics and the differing values held by the characters. It delves into the challenges faced by women as they navigate their individual aspirations within a societal framework that promotes self-interest and personal achievement.

Marlene's simple response, she got a new job, indicates her achievement and success. It demonstrates her ambition and determination to climb the corporate ladder, possibly influenced by the individualistic and competitive ethos prevalent during the Thatcher era. Marlene's success symbolizes the possibility for upward mobility and advancement within the socio-political landscape shaped by Thatcherism.

Joyce's subsequent question 'how does Marlene manage?' reflects a sense of curiosity and perhaps even skepticism about Marlene's promotion. It suggests that Joyce is questioning the fairness or legitimacy of Marlene's rise to a high-level position. This could be attributed to the societal changes brought about by Thatcherism, which often emphasized self-interest and a focus on individual success at the expense of collective well-being. The competitive nature of Thatcherite policies and their impact on the workplace may have engendered a sense of competition and skepticism among colleagues.

This brief conversation between Marlene and Joyce in *Top Girls* sheds light on the impact of Thatcherism on the characters' experiences and attitudes towards

professional success. It underscores themes of individualism, ambition, and the challenges faced by women in male-dominated environments during this era.

In Act 2, Scene 3, Win, Marlene's assistant, is interviewing a woman named Louise for a job at *Top Girls* employment agency. The conversation between Win and Louise explores the theme of ambition and personal aspirations in the context of job interviews and employment. Louise expresses doubt about her level of ambition, stating that she is unsure if she is ambitious enough. This suggests that she may be questioning her suitability for the job or her drive to succeed. Win responds by stating that ambition is not the sole requirement. She emphasizes that it is enough to simply have a desire or aspiration for something. This perspective reflects a more inclusive approach to success and personal goals, focusing on the importance of having motivation and a sense of purpose.

The impacts of Thatcherism on this conversation lie in the broader context of the era's emphasis on individualism, self-determination, and personal responsibility. Thatcherism promoted the idea that individuals should be empowered to pursue their own goals and aspirations, often tied to economic success and upward mobility. The conversation reflects this ideology by suggesting that one does not necessarily need grand ambitions, but rather a sense of wanting or striving for something.

Louise's statement, "I always had my doubts. I think I pass as a man at work" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 106) highlights the individualistic values associated with Thatcherism. She expressed that she behaves as a man. That reflects how the society leaves the feminist phenomena due to Thatcherism. It suggests that personal desires and motivations, regardless of their scale or scope, are valid and can drive individuals towards achievement and fulfillment. The conversation also implies a departure from traditional notions of ambition, which often imply striving for power or prestige. Instead, it embraces a more inclusive perspective that acknowledges the diversity of personal aspirations and values.

Therefore, the conversation between Win and Louise reflects the impacts of Thatcherism by emphasizing individual motivation, personal aspirations, and the importance of having a sense of purpose or desire. It aligns with the broader societal context influenced by Thatcherism, where personal ambition and individual goals were valued and encouraged. The conversation reflects a shift in thinking about success and

ambition, emphasizing personal fulfillment and self-determined goals rather than adhering to traditional notions of ambition tied solely to career advancement or material success.

In another scene of *Top Girls*, Marlene and her assistant Win are engaged in a conversation about their work at the *Top Girls* employment agency. The lines provided are Win's statement, indicate that she does not like because It's too competitive, while Marlene's response was that it makes her exciting.

Win's remark, she does not like it here. It's too competitive, reflects a sense of discomfort and dissatisfaction with the competitive nature of their work environment. This sentiment can be seen as a response to the changing economic landscape under Thatcherism, where market forces and competition were given greater prominence. Marlene's response suggests her embrace of the competitive nature of their work. It reflects a mindset that aligns with the values promoted by Thatcherism, emphasizing individual success, ambition, and personal achievement. The idea of finding excitement and motivation in a competitive circumstance can be seen as a manifestation of the neoliberal ethos that Thatcherism fostered (Philips, 2011).

In Act 3, Marlene has a dream sequence where she imagines herself as Pope Joan, a legendary female pope who disguised herself as a man to gain power in the Catholic Church. The conversation in Marlene's dream sequence explores themes of gender, power, and identity. While it is not explicitly stated in the dialogue, there are potential connections to Thatcherism.

In her monologue, Marlene envisions herself as Pope Joan, a mythical figure who, according to legend, disguised herself as a man to become the Pope. This imagery can be interpreted as a reflection of Marlene's aspirations for power and success in a male-dominated society, a theme that aligns with the ideals of Thatcherism.

The repeated line she is not a woman, she is not a man, but she is Pope Joan challenges traditional gender roles and binaries. It suggests that Marlene, as Pope Joan, transcends societal expectations and constraints related to gender. This can be seen as a commentary on the barriers faced by women in patriarchal societies and the desire to overcome those obstacles, echoing the struggles and ambitions of women during the Thatcher era (Elam, 1999).

The statement highlights the uniqueness and exceptional nature of Marlene's imagined identity as Pope Joan. This line may be interpreted as a critique of the limited opportunities available to women historically and the need for more female representation in positions of power, a sentiment that aligns with the feminist movements that emerged during and after Thatcher's time as Prime Minister (Elam, 1999).

The impacts of Thatcherism on this conversation lie in the exploration of gender roles, power dynamics, and the desire for women to challenge traditional societal expectations. Thatcherism, with its emphasis on individualism and equal opportunity, provided a backdrop for the advancement of women in various fields, including politics and business. However, it also sparked debates about the impact of the ideology on social equality and the potential tensions between personal success and the advancement of collective rights (Elam, 1999).

Marlene's dream sequence reflects the complex interplay between personal aspirations, gender identity, and societal norms, suggesting that the influence of Thatcherism on the conversation is one of exploring the possibilities and challenges faced by women in pursuit of power and recognition (Elam, 1999).

In Act 3, Marlene is talking to her colleagues Win and Nell about the sacrifices she has made for her career. The scene shows how Marlene's individual success has come at the expense of traditional feminine roles such as motherhood and marriage. It also can be seen as a critique of Thatcherism's emphasis on self-reliance, and as a call for women to have more choices in their lives beyond traditional gender roles.

Furthermore, Marlene is talking to her assistant Nell about the challenges of being a woman in a male-dominated workplace. Nell's statement, that it is hard being a woman in this business, reflects the difficulties and obstacles that women encounter in male-dominated professional environments. Nell's acknowledgment of the gender-based challenges implies that women face systemic biases, discrimination, and limited opportunities for advancement within their chosen careers. This observation is indicative of the broader societal context influenced by Thatcherism, which brought attention to issues of gender equality and workplace discrimination.

Marlene's response, that it is hard being a woman anywhere, is a poignant statement that goes beyond the workplace and suggests that gender-based challenges

persist in multiple aspects of life. Marlene's remark encompasses the broader societal context shaped by Thatcherism, where women faced societal expectations, unequal opportunities, and limited representation in various realms, including politics, education, and social structures.

Marlene's comment underscores the universality of gender-based struggles and the pervasive nature of sexism and inequality. It speaks to the systemic barriers and prejudices faced by women regardless of their professional field or social environment. By highlighting the challenges of being a woman in any context, Marlene brings attention to the deep-rooted structural issues that women faced during the Thatcher era. These lines show how Marlene recognizes the systemic oppression that women face in all areas of life, not just in the workplace (Whitelaw, 2002).

In Act 3, Scene 1, Marlene is talking to her colleague Nell about their clients at *Top Girls* employment agency. Nell's remark, that they are all so desperate, suggests a sense of despair or hopelessness among the clients they serve at the employment agency. This observation can be seen as a response to the socio-economic consequences of Thatcherism, which included increased unemployment rates, the decline of traditional industries, and the dismantling of certain social welfare programs.

The conversation highlights the impact of Thatcherism on the perception and understanding of social issues such as desperation and the role of assistance. It underscores the tension between the notion of self-reliance and the need for support in a society grappling with economic challenges and shifting social dynamics (Whitelaw, 2002).

The conversation between Marlene, Win, and Nell portrays their interactions and highlights the impacts of Thatcherism. The dialogue begins with Win expressing her frustration and resentment towards Marlene's ambition by stating, that she is not going to be happy until she is running the whole show. This line suggests that Marlene's aspirations for success and power are seen as excessive by her colleagues. It reflects the individualistic values promoted by Thatcherism, which encouraged personal ambition and the pursuit of success in various fields.

Nell follows Win's comment by saying, she is got no sense of proportion. This statement implies that Marlene's ambition exceeds what is considered reasonable or socially acceptable. It reflects a critique of the potentially negative consequences of

Thatcherism, such as the prioritization of personal success over other values, such as empathy or social cohesion.

Gottlieb mentioned that Win adds to the criticism by asserting that Marlene lacks loyalty, indicating that her ambition may come at the cost of personal relationships or loyalty to her colleagues or workplace. This criticism raises concerns about the impact of Thatcherism's emphasis on individual success and competition on interpersonal relationships and communal values. (Gottlieb, 2007).

Nell concludes the conversation by stating that she is got no sense of anything except herself. This remark suggests that Marlene's ambition is perceived as self-centered and selfish. It reflects the perception that Thatcherism, with its focus on individualism and self-interest, may lead to a disregard for collective well-being or empathy.

The impacts of Thatcherism on this conversation can be seen in the characters' critiques of Marlene's ambition and the tensions between personal success and other values, such as loyalty and proportion. Thatcherism's emphasis on individual ambition and competition influenced the characters' perceptions and their evaluation of Marlene's behavior. The conversation raises questions about the potential costs of prioritizing personal success within a framework that emphasizes individualism and self-interest.

Thus, the scene highlights the tension between individual success and collective struggle for women's rights, as Marlene's colleagues criticize her for prioritizing her own career over the well-being of other women in the office. It can be seen as a commentary on Thatcherism, which emphasized individualism and self-reliance over collective action and solidarity. Thatcher (1987) famously declared, "there is no such thing as society," and her policies were criticized for exacerbating social inequality and undermining the welfare state. The scene shows how women have had to navigate these conflicting values in order to achieve success in a male-dominated world, and how individual ambition can sometimes come at the expense of collective progress (Thatcher & Thatcher, 1987).

This conversation encapsulates the impact of Thatcherism on the characters' aspirations and the broader socio-political climate. Thatcherism, characterized by neoliberal policies and a focus on free-market capitalism, promoted the idea that

individuals were responsible for their own success and that one's social standing and material well-being were indicators of personal achievement (Philips, 2011).

Marlene's declaration of wanting 'everything' reflects the influence of this ideology, suggesting that her aspirations are boundless and driven by a desire for material wealth, professional recognition, and personal fulfillment. It also illustrates the potential conflicts and tensions that arise when individual ambitions clash with collective values and societal norms (Philips, 2011).

Top Girls also reveals how the personality of Marlene is attractive and inspiring for the young generation who wants to imitate and follow the new lifestyle within Thatcherism. The young Angie, with 16 years old and Marlene's aunt, shows that she like the lifestyle of her aunt Marlene who could build herself away from her family and has own business and life regardless the limitations imposed by traditional lifestyle. Angie expressed to her friend Kit that she loves her aunt, and she wants to visits regardless the satisfaction of her mother, Joyce. This tendency reveals the way of thinking which seeks the liberation of restrictions of the society.

Kit: Tell me where are you going. Angie: Sit down. Kit sits in the but again. Kit: Go on then. Angie: Swear? Kit: Swear. Angie: I'm going to London. To see my aunt. Angie: It is special. She's a special (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 94)

Later, Angie justified her admiration to Marlene, "*She gets people jobs.*" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 95). This motivation can be read that young women look for job and think to change their lifestyle based on the privatization and individualism. In another dialogue between Angie and Marlene assistant Win, Angie reveals of his desire of girl to work. Despite Angie didn't finish any school and has any experience by she asked Win for job, "*Do you think I could work here?*" (Caryl Churchill, 1996, p. 95). The transformative thinking pushed the girl with 16 years left her home, didn't inform her mother about her leave, and ask for job, highlights the new lifestyle within Thatcherism with brings pros and cons due to its policies which stand on economy and privatization.

Via analyzing the impacts of Thatcherism on *Top Girls* through the lenses of the Cultural Materialism, several key aspects come to the lights.

Firstly, these theoretical approaches help to understand how the play engages with and responds to the gender dynamics of Thatcher's era. Through the character of Marlene, the play explores the tensions between individual ambition and collective solidarity, highlighting the challenges faced by women in a male-dominated society. The

Cultural Materialism allow us to contextualize this exploration within the broader gender politics of Thatcherism and the feminist movements of the time.

Secondly, the application of these theories helps to unravel the class divisions and economic struggles depicted in *Top Girls*. Cultural Materialism allows to examine how Thatcherism's emphasis on free-market principles and deregulation impacted working-class communities, leading to job losses, factory closures, and widening income disparities. The play reflects the economic precarity faced by many during this period and underscores the importance of community and solidarity in navigating these challenges.

Furthermore, Cultural Materialism enable one to explore how *Top Girls* engages with the cultural and ideological shifts brought about by Thatcherism. The play critiques the individualistic ethos promoted by Thatcher's government and questions the notion of progress and empowerment within a new lifestyle framework. It examines the tensions between personal ambition and collective well-being, challenging the dominant narratives of success and achievement propagated by Thatcherism.

In conclusion, the application of Cultural Materialism to *Top Girls* helps to understand the play's engagement with the impacts of Thatcherism on gender dynamics, class divisions, and societal values. These theoretical frameworks shed light on the interplay between literature, history, and society, helping us unravel the complex layers of meaning embedded within the text. By examining the material conditions, historical context, and ideological shifts of Thatcher's era, the study gives a deeper understanding of how *Top Girls* reflects and responds to the social and political climate of its time.

CONCLUSION

The plays *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill provide insightful portrayals of the social, economic, and political transformations that took place during the Thatcher era in Britain. By employing the theoretical lenses of the Cultural Materialism, the research tried to find out the impacts of Thatcherism on these plays in a comprehensive manner. In addition, this dissertation aimed to explore the themes, characters, and narrative strategies employed by Churchill to critically engage with the socio-political climate during Thatcher's premiership. Through a detailed examination of these plays within the frameworks of Cultural Materialism, the study could find a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between literature, history, and society during this transformative period.

The dissertation highlighted the Thatcher's policies taken that changed the social lifestyle of the British citizens. Thatcher's policies encompassed privatization and deregulation, as she believed private companies could efficiently manage industries more effectively than the government. This led to the sale of state-owned companies, fostering competition, and lowering prices for consumers. However, it also resulted in job losses and diminished government control over crucial sectors. Another aspect of Thatcher's agenda was trade union reform, as she perceived unions as detrimental to the economy. Legal changes were implemented to make it more difficult for unions to go on strike and reduced protections for striking workers, ultimately weakening the influence of trade unions. The introduction of the 'Right to Buy' scheme under Thatcher's government allowed residents of council houses to purchase their homes at discounted rates, which appealed to many. However, it created a shortage of affordable housing and exacerbated the wealth disparity between the rich and the poor. Thatcher also adopted a policy known as monetarism to control inflation by managing the circulation of money in the economy. In the short term, this approach led to high interest rates and unemployment, but it ultimately helped reduce inflation in the long run. In the realm of education, Thatcher's government implemented the National Curriculum and standardized testing to enhance educational standards. However, these changes faced controversy and received criticism from educators and experts. Additionally, Thatcher made alterations to the tax system, reducing the highest income tax rate and introducing the poll tax. These modifications affected wealth distribution in the country, and some

argue that they contributed to increased inequality. Thatcher's policies had both positive and negative effects on the lives of British citizens.

The dissertation applied the Cultural Materialism as a literary approach to analyze and examine the three plays *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls* written by Churchill in the same period of the premiership of Thatcher. The approach applied is designed by Williams. It mentions that literature functions in socio-political interconnected ways within a system, it reflects the specific behaviors of the author, it expresses the societal codes that shape the context, and reflects those codes within the text. Via analyzing these factors, a better understanding of the bigger picture can be achieved. It concentrates in analyzing the literary work not isolated, but within circumstances of the author, text and context to understand the objective dimensions of it. Therefore, literature is influenced by the author, the social context, and the text itself. Cultural Materialists' study how these factors interact and shape the meaning of a literary work. They are particularly interested in understanding how social practices are formed and represented in literature, and how they differ from other forms of expression. In other words, understanding the cultural dimensions, such as the historical period, social influences, and the author's background, is crucial for a comprehensive analysis of a text. The interconnection between the text and its circumstances, highlighting that they cannot be separated when trying to fully grasp its meaning and significance.

The dissertation examines how the political and economic strategies of Thatcherism influenced the literary works of Caryl Churchill. In other words, it explores how Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's policies affected Churchill's plays during that time. This shows that the relationship between politics and literature is interactive and communicative. The research also looks at the historical and cultural outcomes of Thatcher's policies on society and how they are reflected in Churchill's plays, *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls*. To analyze these ideas, the research uses the Cultural Materialism theory, which have not been previously applied to all three of Churchill's plays during the Thatcherism era. By examining these plays, the study aims to uncover the positive and negative effects of the policies on people's lives.

In terms of the research, previous studies have mostly focused on Churchill's play *Top Girls* during the Thatcherism era. Moreover, these studies mainly concentrated on feminist transformations based on feminist theories. In addition, other plays *Fen* and

Serious Money were studied separately based on feminist theories or other ones. Instead, the current research takes a different approach by analyzing all three plays and obtaining results based on the Cultural Materialism which provided a unique perspective on the Thatcher era.

The plays *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill offered many-sided explorations of the impacts of Thatcherism on various aspects of British society. Through the theoretical frameworks of Cultural Materialism, the research examined how these plays critically engaged with the socio-political climate of the Thatcher era. By analyzing the themes, characters, and narrative strategies employed by Churchill, it gained insights into the gender dynamics, class divisions, and economic struggles that characterized this transformative period. These plays do not only provide a historical record of the Thatcher years, but also offer valuable critiques of the neoliberal ideologies and societal changes brought forth by her government. By delving into the complexities of these plays through the lenses of Cultural Materialism, it could have a deeper understanding of the interplay between literature, history, and society, and how they shape and are shaped by one another.

The impacts of Thatcherism on the plays *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls* are significant and wide-ranging. These plays, written and set during the period of Margaret Thatcher's conservative government in Britain, engage with the social, political, and economic changes brought about by Thatcherism. Through their intricate narratives, complex characters, and thought-provoking themes, these plays explore the consequences of Thatcherism on various aspects of society, including gender dynamics, class divisions, individualism, and the erosion of traditional values. This detailed analysis will examine the impacts of Thatcherism on each of these plays, their critical responses to Thatcherite policies, and the lasting relevance of their messages.

Serious Money is a scathing critique of the financial world and the excesses of capitalism, capturing the ruthless and ruthless nature of Thatcherite economics. The play presents a world where money and profit dominate all aspects of life, reflecting the neoliberal values of Thatcherism. One of the impacts of Thatcherism in *Serious Money* is the exploration of the moral bankruptcy and destruction of social values that accompanied the era's relentless pursuit of wealth. The play highlights the consequences of deregulation, privatization, and the glorification of individualism, exposing the

exploitative nature of the financial sector. Through its portrayal of characters engaged in insider trading, manipulation, and unethical practices, *Serious Money* challenges the notion that unregulated capitalism benefits society as a whole. The play offers a severe indictment of the consequences of Thatcherism, exposing the negative impacts on social cohesion, moral integrity, and the well-being of ordinary individuals. *Serious Money* addresses is the dehumanization of individuals within the capitalist framework.

The play exposes the dehumanizing effects of the financial industry, where people are reduced to commodities and human relationships are replaced by transactions. It explores the alienation and loss of humanity that can result from a society driven by profit maximization. Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money* provides a multifaceted exploration of the pros and cons related to Thatcherism. The play recognizes the potential for economic growth, innovation, and individual success under free-market capitalism that reflect some of the positive aspects of Thatcherism.

However, it also highlights the negative consequences, such as growing wealth inequality, the erosion of collective values, and the dehumanization of individuals within a profit-driven system. Churchill's work serves as a critical commentary on the complex and nuanced effects of Thatcherism, urging audiences to reflect on the costs and benefits of a society guided by its principles.

Fen is a play that examines the lives of women in the rural community, exploring the effects of Thatcherism on class divisions, economic struggles, and the destruction of traditional values. The play portrays the stark contrast between the rural, working-class community and the urban centers of power. One of the impacts of Thatcherism on *Fen* is the exploration of the economic challenges faced by marginalized communities during the era of deindustrialization and economic restructuring. The play highlights the devastating consequences of factory closures, job losses, and the erosion of social support systems, which aggravated existing inequalities and extended the gap between the rich and the poor. Through its portrayal of strong, hardy female characters, *Fen* offers a nuanced understanding of the impact of Thatcherism on working-class women, exploring their struggles, aspirations, and flexibility in the face of hardship. The play underscores the importance of community, solidarity, and collective action in resisting the harmful effects of Thatcherite policies. *Fen* explores the impacts of Thatcherism on mental health and well-being within the community. The play depicts characters who

struggle with feelings of isolation, hopelessness, and despair as a result of economic instability and social fragmentation. Churchill captures the emotional charge of Thatcherism on individuals, highlighting the psychological impacts of societal changes and economic uncertainty.

Fen reflects the profound impacts of Thatcherism on various aspects of society, including social inequality, deindustrialization, community dynamics, gender roles, and environmental degradation. The play critiques Thatcherism's economic policies and ideologies, highlighting their detrimental effects on marginalized communities and individuals. Through its exploration of these themes, *Fen* invites the audience to critically reflect on the consequences of Thatcherism and the human cost of economic and social transformation.

Top Girls is a groundbreaking play that delves into the experiences of women in a male-dominated society, examining the impact of Thatcherism in gender roles and expectations. The play explores themes of female ambition, success, and sacrifice, as well as the tension between individual achievement and collective solidarity. One of the central impacts of Thatcherism in *Top Girls* is the exploration of the challenges faced by women in Thatcher's era, as they navigate a world that encourages and restricts their aspirations.

Top Girls critiques the notion that women can achieve equality through individual success alone, highlighting the importance of sisterhood, empathy, and collective action. By presenting a diverse range of female characters from different historical periods, Churchill challenges the idea that Thatcher's rise to power automatically translated into progress for all women. *Top Girls* reflects on the complex interplay between gender, power, and social expectations in Thatcherite Britain, raising questions about the true extent of women's liberation in a society marked by individualism and competition. *Top Girls* raises questions about the impact of Thatcherism on women's personal lives and the choices they make. The play portrays the tensions and conflicts faced by women who pursue their careers at the expense of traditional gender roles and familial responsibilities. It challenges the notion that women can 'have it all' and prompts the audience to critically examine the sacrifices and trade-offs women were forced to make in a society that prioritized individual success over collective well-being. *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill reflects the complex and severe

impacts of Thatcherism on various aspects of society, gender dynamics, and personal lives. The play explores both the positive aspects of female empowerment and individual success under Thatcherism, as well as the negative consequences and challenges faced by women in their pursuit of success. It addresses social inequality, gender dynamics, individualism, and the removal of marginalized voices. Through its thought-provoking examination of these issues, *Top Girls* invites the audience to critically reflect on the legacy of Thatcherism and its lasting impacts on women and society as a whole.

Overall, *Serious Money*, *Fen*, and *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill engage with the impacts of Thatcherism in distinct interconnected ways. These plays offer nuanced critiques of the social, political, and economic changes brought about by Thatcher's government, shedding light on the consequences of neoliberal capitalism, individualism, and the erosion of traditional values. They challenge the prevailing narratives of progress and highlight the human costs of Thatcherite policies, particularly for women, marginalized communities, and those left behind by the relentless pursuit of profit. The lasting relevance of these plays lies in their ability to provoke critical reflection on the long-lasting legacies of Thatcherism and the ongoing struggles for social justice and equality in contemporary society.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

His name is Hameed Abdulameer Hameed ALKHAFAJI. He studied the elementary and high schools in Iraq. Then, he graduated with Bachelor Degree from English Department in the Arts College of Kufa University. In 2017, he successfully finished the master's degree of English from Wayne State University in the USA. in 2019, he proudly started his PhD study in the fabulous department of English Language and Literature in Karabuk University, and it was a great honor to be part of such esteemed department team.