

Contrast as a Means of Expression in David Hare's *The Secret Rapture*

Omed Bapir Saber¹, Saffeen Numan Arif²

¹Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Koya University, Erbil, Iraq

²Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Koya University, Erbil, Iraq

Email: omed.bapir@koyauniversity.org¹, saffeen.numan@koyauniversity.org²

Abstract:

This article is to expose how David Hare's drama evolves within the social and political contexts of the 1980s, in addition to showing the different trends the writer follows to deal with British contemporary politics. This is mainly done through the depiction of the characteristics of the Leftist Party only within the boundaries of the characters' private lives as illustrated in *The Secret Rapture* (1988). By dwelling on the characters, Hare shows how families suffer from collapse, and people have abandoned such good characteristics as goodness, virtue, and decency in favor of greediness, selfishness, and ingratitude. *The Secret Rapture* deals with the playwright's disillusionment of governmental policies and the moral decline characterizing this decade. In this article, the main approach is to analyze the main contrasting characters through what they say and do to reveal how their action and attitudes are shaped under the effect of the turbulent decade of the nineteen-eighties. The author thus seems to have intentionally created contrasting figures so as to comment on the evils that come out of following one own whims and selfish ends.

Keywords: contrast, function, theatre, characters, polices

المخلص:

ان الهدف من هذا المقال هو كشف كبقبة بروز مسرح الكاتب المسرحي البريطاني (ديفيد هير) ضمن السياقات السياسية والاجتماعية للعقد الثمانيني من القرن الماضي، فضلاً عن تبيان مختلف التيارات التي يتبناها الكاتب بغية تناول القضايا السياسية البريطانية المعاصرة. يتم ذلك بالدرجة الأساس عبر وصف خصائص التيار اليساري في حدود الحياة الخاصة للشخصيات في مسرحية *النشوة السرية* (1988). يبين الكاتب (هير)، من خلال تركيزه على الشخصيات، كيف تعاني العوائل من الإنهيار، وكيف أن الناس تخلوا عن ثمة خصائص كالطيبة والفضيلة واللباقة مؤثرين ثمة رذائل كالجشع والأنانية ونكران الجميل. تتناول المسرحية خيبة أمل الكاتب من السياسات الحكومية والانحطاط الخلقي الذي يميز ذلك العقد الزمني. في هذا المقال، النهج الرئيسي هو تحليل الشخصيات الرئيسية المتضادة عبر ما يقولونه ويفعلونه للكشف عن كيفية تجسيد مواقفهم وأفعالهم بتأثير المرحلة الزمنية التي يعيشون فيها. وهكذا يبدو بأن المؤلف قد عمد إلى تكوين شخصيات متضادة الغرض منها التعليق على الشرور المنبثقة عن إتباع المرء لنزواته وأهدافه الأنانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تضاد، وظيفة، مسرح، شخصيات، خطط سياسية

پوخته:

نهم توئیزینهومیه دهریدمخات که چون شانۆنوسی بهریتانی (دهیڤد هیز) له ناو کەشیکێ سیاسیی و کۆمەلایەتی بهریتانیای سالانی (١٩٨٠) یەکان گەشەیی کردووە. نوسەر بەردەوام شتواری نوێی بەکارهێناوە لە باسکردنی سیاسەتی هاوچەرخیی بهریتانیایە شتووبەیکێ سەرمەکی باسی کاریگەری تایبەتمەندیەکانی چەپەکان لەسەر تاکەکانی کۆمەلگای دەکات، لەم شانۆیدا بەتیشخستنه سەر کارمەتەرەکان ئەو نیشاندەدات کە چون خێزانەکان دەنالێن بەدەست دارمانەوه، وە چون خەڵک هەلسوکەوتە باشەکانی وەک: چاکە خوازی، پاکێ و ڕێزێان وەلاناوہ بۆ چاوچنۆکی، خۆپەرستی و بێئەمەکی. ئەم شانۆیە بێ ئومێدی نوسەر دەرەمخات لەبەرەمبەر سیاسەتی حوکمەت و بەها ئەخلاقیەکانی ئەو دەییە. لەم توئیزینهومییدا بنەمای سەرمەکی شیکردنەوهی کارمەتەرە سەرمەکیە دژبەیهکەکانە، بە هۆی ئەوهی کە دەیلێن و دەیکەن ئەمەش نیشاندەدات کە چون بارودۆخی سالانی (١٩٨٠) کان کاریگەریبۆه لە سەریان. شانۆنوس لەرێگەیی کارمەتەرە جیهانە دژبەیهکەکانەوه باس لە تاکە خراب و خۆپەرەسەکان دەکات.

کلێله وشە: دژبەیهک، کار، شانۆ، ئەمەتەر، پلانی سیاسی.

1-Introduction

The Secret Rapture depicts the politics of the day and shows moral failure of the age. Therefore, despite its universal themes like death and righteousness, the play is a typical product of the political and social climate of 1980s Britain. Many Britons become businessmen as a result of the government's promotion of the free market and of individual effort of the politicians of the era. The primary focus of the business community of the 1980s was on winning at all costs. *The Secret Rapture* compares the virtues of the preceding generation's moral values, such as goodness, honesty, and decency, with the corrupt values of current society, which have largely been influenced by Conservative politics. Although Hare appreciates the values that Isobel and her father represent in the play, he grimly recognizes that they are no longer alive due to the passage of time and to their actual deaths. However, never completely dismantles the current society that has been molded by Conservative ideology; he provides people with a chance to redeem themselves. For the next decade, Hare continues this stance, eventually coming to advocate the view that the institutions, controlled as they were by Conservative values, should be kept only after being modified.

The Secret Rapture is usually considered Hare's theatrical complement to an earlier film that exposes the destructiveness of a greedy desire of individual and political power (*Paris by Night*, shot in 1987). In fact, this is what makes *The Secret Rapture* so remarkable (Nothof, 1994, p. 187). What binds both plays together is the representation of the 1980s Conservative administration by two female protagonists, Marion in *The Secret Rapture* and Clara in *Paris by Night*, both of whom exhibit total willingness to damage the lives of others for their own personal gain. *The Secret Rapture* is also one of the plays Hare wrote for his girlfriend Blair Brown to perform the role of the protagonist; Hare believed that "*Blair had a quality as an actress that would change the tone of his work*" (Olivia, 1990, p. 176).

As for the characteristics of *The Secret Rapture* itself, Hare describes his play, in his interview with Judy Lee Oliva, as being about "*a man who shoots his girlfriend*" (Olivia, 1990, p. 181). By stating this, Hare simplifies his play, presenting it as a love story and concealing the political drama elements that are clearly predominant in the text. In the same interview, he explains that he developed this play with tragedy in mind rather than politics: *politically is not how I wrote it. It's a tragedy in my eyes. And in my mind it's a tragic story*" (Olivia, 1990, pp. 168-169). Hare claims that it is not the

job of a playwright, nor is it his intention in his plays to encourage social change: “*to put forward a sort of program of political change*” (Olivia,1990, p. 181).

Structurally, eight scenes make up the two acts of *The Secret Rapture*. Each of these scenes is arranged in a cinematic progression, with the narrative controlled by Hare, much like the camera shots in his Films, Stage directions and music are used to move between scenes. Hare employs scene overlap to add emphasis to his themes by providing hints about the next scene's setting at the end of each. Using this method, such antitheses as of dark and light, life and death, asceticism and materialism could be visualized. Scene transitions effectively hint at the similarities and differences in the sisters' lives. Hare juxtaposes scenes so that the difference between a scene and the subsequent one can help to develop the meaning (Olivia,1990, p. 139).

Hare uses a tragic structure in *The Secret Rapture*. Hare, a playwright with a classical background from Cambridge University, argues that the fundamental principle of tragedy is that the protagonist must be doomed to die or to fall, and that this must be obvious from the very first minute the reader or audience sees her / him. The second principle is called the *hamartia*, and it refers to the Heroine's fatal tragic flaw, which ultimately leads to her downfall and ultimate demise (Olivia,1990, p. 169).

As for the title of the play, the term “secret rapture” occurs in the context of Catholic theology to allude to “*the moment when the nuns meet Christ*” (Tynan,2015, P.1). To a Catholic nun, it is a kind of a “*spiritual union or marriage with Christ*” (Donesky,1996, p.112). In order to experience this rapture, one is not required to be a nun since it is a moment of utter secrecy and transport through which one can get into communion with God. The only way to make contact with Christ is through death, making this a form of martyrdom (Oliva, 1990, p.138). Based on this interpretation, Isobel makes the decision to put an end to her pain: “*I've done a great deal of suffering. However, that is no longer an issue. I'm all set to proceed*” (Hare, 1997, p. 399).

2-The Political Undertones in Hare's Drama

Despite his fame as a political playwright, Hare has never written a political play “*in a pedagogical or programmatic manner*” and he has never been “*a didactic dramatist*” (Wade,2007, p.65). Nevertheless, *The Secret Rapture* remains one of the most significant political plays of the 1980s, as Hare is always reflecting the flaws of politics of his period. In fact, as L. Taylor puts it, “*it is Hare's most direct theatrical response to Thatcherism to date*” (57).

Hare found it really challenging to foresee a revolutionary political transformation because Thatcherism had penetrated every aspect of life in Britain. He, in fact, never indicates a revolution in his political plays of the 1980s. Even so, certain attitudes of the eighties are present in the background of his plays, especially in *The Secret Rapture*. The play is political, as Hare notes, for it takes place in the present day and, possibly conveys what it is like to be a British citizen in this day. One of the results of Thatcherism has been to incorporate politics into every element of people's life. Furthermore, he never understands how one can write authentically about what it is like to be living in Britain at the moment without some sense of what the national mood is and how ethical attitudes, moral attitudes, and even, emotional responses have been transformed by a very” polarizing government” (Gaston,1993, p. 224).

According to Dean (1990), "*the personal is the political*" (p.111), that is to say, *The Secret Rapture* depicts and exposes the political through the personal. Hare's play can be regarded as illustrating "*the prevailing zeitgeist of Britain in the late 1980s*" (Dean,1990, p. 114). At the same time, it effectively explores the effects of British politics on human lives (Oliva,1990, p.138). As Dean (1990) goes on to explain, the play is topical because of its social context, but also due to universal undertones it raises concerning the human condition that is affected by politics (p.111).

3- Character Contrast as Hare's Main Means of Expression

Hare's *The Secret Rapture* is a portrait of British society under the influence of Thatcherite politics, exposing the social tensions that exist not only between the individuals (sisters, lovers, and friends), but also between ideas, social, political, and religious. The society of Thatcher's Britain, as seen through the protagonists' personal lives, vacillates between good and evil, history and the present, and the Conservative Party and the Labor Party. In effect, the play tries to define the new decade (Oliva,1990, p. 138).

From a different perspective, Anne Nothof (1994,gw2 p.190) argues that Hare's *The Secret Rapture* is a contemporary "*morality play*" due to the many conflicts it presents. Nevertheless, there are two layers of complexity, which set *The Secret Rapture* apart from the typical morality drama. Firstly, the play illuminates the apparent discrepancies in the 1980s British public (Oliva,1990, p.145). Second, the play's portrayal of goodness presents a significant challenge, as that quality is widely open to different views in Thatcher's Britain (Nothof,1994, p.190). Hare admits his anger at the Thatcher government's support of unscrupulous business practices. Additionally, it was a personal encounter with Tory backers that served as inspiration for this play. In his own words:

At dinner I was laughed at because I didn't have any stocks and shares. I said when I had money I put It in the bank. In addition, everyone roared with laughter. Ten years ago In England, nobody had Investments. That is all changed. The assumption that everyone will make as much money as they can and spend a lot of time doing it is new In England. The feelings of total Inadequacy I had for not being part of this interested me. Moreover, I gave them to Isobel. And I'm proud to say. Even having written the play. I still have no Investments. (Bloom,1989, p. 33).

The play's story revolves around the career and personal life of the protagonist, Isobel Glass, showing how she eventually dies partly as a result of the economic climate and self-centered people of Thatcherite Britain (Donesky,1996, p.114). In light of this interpretation, Isobel exemplifies goodness and decency, which are Hare's core values (Homden,1995, p.173). She is the only character in the play who is capable of feeling guilty or of assuming responsibility. Moreover, she looks to be from a different era than the Thatcherite Britain of the 1980s. her sister, Marion French; Tom, Marion's husband; Katherine, Robert Glass's wife; and Irwin, Isobel's business partner has been tainted by this very era ruled, as it were, by Thatcherism; Isobel's principles seem to find no place in such a society (Dean,1990, p.108).

Due to the effect of the late father, Robert, nostalgia is shown to be an interpretive matrix in *The Secret Rapture*. This implies that the past is portrayed in such a way as to shed some light on the present as well as mark a clear contrast between the two (Su,1997, p.27). While one of Robert's daughters, Isobel, shares his unfitness for the culture in which she was raised, Marion and Katherine are very different. Marion, is the perfect embodiment of modern morals based on how drastically she contrasts with him. Isobel "*can't ... live, like other people,*" therefore she has to perish by the play's conclusion since she does not fit in with the modern materialistic world (Hare, 1997, p.416).

Even after Robert's death, his loved ones, especially his daughters, feel his presence. Five of the play's eight scenes take place in Robert's home, which his two daughters and wife remain unable to leave. When Robert passes away, his two young daughters are left with the task of supporting Katherine, his alcoholic and financially dependent wife. The sisters' contrasting personalities are highlighted by the trials posed by their father's inheritance, which Isobel and Marion must overcome (Homden,1995, p.172).

While Isobel is loyal to her father's memory and does her best to let him rest in peace by taking good care of her mother, Katherine, Marion is torn between her own business life and her conscience that is constantly troubled by her contempt for her mother. Indeed, Marion resembles Victorian women in not having natural maternal instincts. In this, she clearly identifies with the dominant Conservative Party. In this world of profitable accomplishment, there is no room for people like Katherine, with a passive role in society (Gindin,1993, p.170).

Marion and Isobel are different in many ways, one of which being their relationship to their father and stepmother. This is shown by how the stage directions describe Marion as a "*woman in her late thirties, brisk, dark-haired, wearing a business suit*" (Hare,1997, p.332). Katherine, too, demonstrates that she is "*Junior Minister at the Department of the Environment,*" and that she was intensely inspired by Thatcher (Hare 348). A politician's uniform is smartly dressed and crisply efficient, and she must maintain this standard even on the day Marion's father dies (Homden,1995, p.172). For her, making money is the primary focus, this is why she works tirelessly to achieve this goal. Around her career, she has planned every aspect of her existence to such an extent that she has ruthlessly eradicated the soul, transformed her charity into cupidity, and reduced her politics to the mechanical form of daily attendance at her workplace (Gindin,1993, p.172).

In comparison to Marion, Isobel is described by the stage direction as "*younger than Marion and blonder She is in her early thirties, and casually dressed in a shirt and blue jeans*" while Marion "wears a business suit" (Hare,1997, p.332). Unlike Marion who wears a business suit to the office and black to a funeral, Isobel prefers not to follow social standards. On the day of her father's death, she chooses to wear her trusty blue trousers and a red shirt. Both in her professional and personal life, Isobel is guided by her own set of principles. Apparently, Marion, like Isobel, looks distressed at missing her father's final moments, yet this is probably a contributing factor to her mood, but what truly motivates her is the prospect of retrieving the gift ring she gave him before he passed away:

MARION: Did he ...

ISOBEL: What?

MARION: I was wondering ...

ISOBEL: What?

MARION: No, it's just ... no, it's nothing. It's silly. I gave him a little thing. Six months ago. When I ... when you first told me he was ill. I was shocked. I bought him a present. (Hare,1997, p.334) .

Marion does not hide her desire to preserve the ring as "a type of keepsake," which is one of the two justifications she gives (Hare 335). She bought the ring for her dad as an expression of her love, which is why she does not wish Robert's wife, Katherine, to get the money and waste it on alcohol. Marion's activities become problematic as they are driven only by a desire to satisfy her material ends. (Oliva,1990, p.139).

MARION: . . . I wouldn't have managed it. I know myself too well. The times I came down to see him ... I'll say this to you ... it made me uncomfortable. ... I mean if someone's, you know, as he was ... I find it hard to strike the right attitude. Don't you find that? ISOBEL: I don't know. (Hare,1997, p.334).

Marion's precious ring is meant to show her father how much she cared about him in an attempt to conceal her own guilt. That she would equate and show affection by means of an expensive object are nothing more than being evidence of her materialism (Golomb,1990, p.564). Therefore, her excuses for keeping the ring are not enough to relieve her stings of conscience; she is still troubled by missing her father's death moments and taking a dead man's ring. To rid herself of that unbearable stress, she finds a good technique. in challenging Katherine's sobriety while Robert is dying, on which Isobel comments "hardly matters... to Dad".

Marion appears to be a person devoid of any emotions, a woman whose goals are always associated with material considerations. She believes that a successful businessperson must ignore time for family in favor of their busy schedule: "Family things actually belong at weekend. A drink on Sunday is lovely. Or lunch. Or walking after lunch. That's the right time for the family. It's crazy when it starts infecting your weekend" (Hare,1997, p.403). Marion's unemotional response reflects the social and economic climate of the 1980s more than any personal flaws in her personality. She becomes an example of Hare's argument that a separation between certain emotional patterns and the ideology that promotes the growth of personal wealth can never exist (Donesky,1996, p.115).

As the story develops, the two women develop further contrast in personality. Marion tends to believe that her father was a foolish old man who was "taken for a ride" by the younger, reckless Katherine. Isobel is more forgiving; she understands the situations, therefore she demonstrates, "Dad loved her. You must allow him that. He would not have married unless he genuinely loved her...The great thing is to love. If you're loved back then it's a bonus" (Hare,1997, p.337). Contrasting characteristic personality features becomes the means by which Hare criticizes the age in which he lives and the conditions under which people endlessly suffer.

The family are not tied to each other by any values except for those of profit and making money. Thus, the family reunion that is said to have been called for to find out what plans Katherine has for the future after her husband's death turns to be held for the sake of discussing financial matters. Despite Marion's persistence that Katherine has a drinking problem and comes out as rude, she the latter declares shockingly *"All right. Look, I know you all think I'm hopeless. I'm not hopeless...I decided. I'm going to work with Isobel"* (Hare,1997, p.345). Such a decision receives no reaction from Isobel, who has not been consulted. Katherine is confident she will not be rejected. *"I never had a chance,"* as she explains. *"I left school so suddenly. I wasn't ready. I had this ridiculous relationship with drugs...I know I'm ready now"* (Hare,1997, p.346). She is so confident that Isobel will never say no to her: *"I didn't ask Isobel...She Isn't going to say no"* (Hare,1997, p.354). She claims that she has *"no money Isobel. The bill has come in... And I knew you wouldn't want me to starve"* (Hare,1997, p.367). To make her point even stronger, she refers to her late husband and the story of how he rescued her from a life of disillusionment and pointless relationships: *"People say I took advantage of his decency."* she says. *"But what are good people for? They're to help the trashy people like me"* (Hare,1997, p.354).

Katherine's position in investing and stock trading is surprising in her speech. She by no means is ready to resist something that helps her rise at the cost of others. Isobel's protective instincts towards Katherine are triggered by her memories of her father despite Katherine's negative impact on the family altogether. To add to Isobel's surprise, Tom will invest in the company's growth. Even without all these facts, Katherine has been quietly maneuvering. Evidently, she begins to profiteer more than her late husband did with the aim of getting *"a bigger place...If we expand now, get some capital investment we could be making money like hay everyone else is"* (Hare,1997, p.370).

The dramatist claims that the government is far more aware of potential environmental dangers than his characters are. Marion's sneering indicates that Hare is more motivated to find out why the administration is acting so arrogantly: *"They were expecting an Idiot... It's a new age. Fight to the death"* (Hare,1997, p.375). Irwin's casual pacifism in response to the noises of hunters on the hunting ground stands in sharp contrast with Marion's aggressive approach to the conflict: *"It's like the trenches out there. Bang Bang Bang, What Is It about country people? They want to kill everything that moves...Outside the cities England seems to be one big rifle range"* (Hare,1997, p.376). Irwin himself is in contrast with Tom who, apparently, looks to be a man of honesty. Marion believes that her husband is a trustworthy religious businessman:

Tom is President of Christians in Business. I think that makes It pretty clear he's a man you can trust", to which the executive adds, *We try to do business the way Jesus would have done It.* (Hare,1997, p.378) .

Since the story begins and ends with death, the plot has a severe, tragic tone. Isobel, the protagonist, fits the archetype of a decent person defeated by a fatal tragic flaw, a blunder, or hubris; in this case, her excessive kindness to others or her obsessive devotion to her father. However, neither does the reader realize that the characters are predetermined to act out their roles in a particular way, nor is he/she likely to experience catharsis as a result of releasing their sympathy and anxiety for Isobel. The political considerations driving Hare's actions makes it difficult to sympathize with her. For Hare, she is unique, representing one of the last aspects of goodness in a culture dominated by greed and

egotism. The contrast between the sisters is natural, given that Marion lacks emotions while Isobel is the embodiment of these. Furthermore, the two sisters' contrasting personalities stand for supporters of the Thatcher regime and its opponents. (Donesky,1996, p.114).

4- Contrasting Attitudes Leading to a Tragic Conclusion

Marion's and Isobel's behaviors put them at odds with society. As Hare is concerned by the everlasting conflict between good and evil, the self and the other, Isobel's kindness is formulated in a way that represents the revolting social element that makes Marion uneasy about everything. Throughout the play, Marion seems to blame Isobel for not conforming to 1980s British conventions. Marion believes that Isobel deserves to be mistreated because she stands by her ideals professionally and personally. After Irwin's duplicity, Isobel has resolved to never see him again. Irwin assumes that she "*made a vow*" not to see him (Hare,1997, p.408). However, making vows is unacceptable for Marion particularly in the business world: "*I don't believe this... Nobody made vows since the nineteenth century*" (Hare,1997, p.409). Marion is troubled by the fact that Isobel is too independent and does not fit in with the British business scene of the decade. Based on the aforementioned incidents, Marion lives in a world where people constantly pursue their own profit, whether in business or in interpersonal relationships. However, Isobel, unlike Marion, is consistently shown to adhere to her own set of values, which are distinct from those of her mother but most closely resemble those of her father. In her relationships, Isobel is patient and quiet, yet her silence is often misunderstood and her reluctance to criticize others receives Marion's disapproval (Homden,1995, p.172).

Katherine selfishly believes that decent people exist so that they can rescue and make sacrifices for the "trashy individuals." She takes advantage and exploits the hardships of her past to get others to feel sorry for her. Irwin, Isobel's partner, is aware that Katherine is extremely reliant on the kindness of others. She, for instance, seeks to take advantage of Isobel. In addition, she is the one who later accuses her of hypocrisy. (Oliva,1990, p.141). Both Marion's and Katherine's selfishness, in addition to Isobel's incredible goodness, is to blame for their attack on Isobel. Hare believes that the cruelty to which she is subjected is the direct result of being good.

According to Carol Homden (1995), Katherine abuses Isobel by exploiting her own shortcomings; Homden calls this "*the tyranny of weakness*" (p.175). Isobel prefers not send Katherine out of the firm while knowing for sure that this is a mistake, believing that Katherine can do something in life and business and that she is by no means incompetent (Homden,1995, p.175). The faith Isobel has in Katherine is only one of two factors that lead to her downfall. In fact, Isobel does not want to leave Katherine to her plight because of her kindness of heart and because of her good intentions for Katherine (Homden,1995, p.175). She elaborates her feelings toward Katherine as follows: "*I just know that if I tried to get rid of her now, it would be disastrous for her self-confidence. If I hurt her now, it'll put her right back on the drink*" (Hare,1997, p.362).

The other reason for Isobel's tolerance with Katherine, according to Irwin, is her "*some misplaced sense of duty to her father*" (Hare 368). Theirs is the kind of traditional nuclear family that was advocated by Thatcher's Britain, with its emphasis on Victorian and capitalist ideals. Marrying and having children are important to Marion and Tom, and so are making money and being religious. Not

only do very huge enterprises in Thatcherite Britain pose a threat to small businesses and the human values connected with them, but they also threaten a certain way of life. In the play, Isobel's way of life symbolizes the humanistic and liberal characteristics of a bygone Britain (Oliva, 1990, p.143).

However, it is debatable whether Isobel typically represents the principles of a particular political movement or is merely a representative of her own personal values. Despite her distaste of capitalism, Isobel is not associated with the Greens, the Left, or nuclear disarmament, as Carol Homden (1995 p.173) emphasizes. Goodness and morality in Isobel are not tied to any particular faith or political ideology, and this is something that Lib Taylor acknowledges (2007, p.59). Like Homden and Taylor, Finlay Donesky argues that Isobel symbolizes kindness, and her goodness is not predicative of any ideology (1996, p.114). Isobel feels disillusioned by Irwin's contradiction to what they had already agreed upon. Irwin's acceptance of Marion's and Tom's business plan is Isobel's second disappointment. Isobel realizes Irwin's disenchantment and she finds out she has no one (including the man she loves and trusts most) to depend on in the capitalist society that she does not belong to,:

MARION: . . . we are proposing to double Irwin's salary. ISOBEL: Double it?

MARION: Yes. We did tell Irwin that.

ISOBEL: Irwin, is it true?

IRWIN: They said it (Hare,1997, p.384).

Obviously, after the death of Isobel's father's, the idea of family is gone, as Irwin thinks, and there is no family though Isobel is "*the only person who's still hung up on it*" (Hare,1997, p.368). Though everyone else has turned against her, Isobel thought she could always rely on, find solace in Irwin, and start a family with Irwin. Irwin appears unwilling to face financial ruin, preferring instead to risk losing Isobel's affection. Following the revelation of Irwin's corrupt dealings with Tom and Marion, Isobel's respect disappears and her love for him dies out. With Irwin's abandonment of her, she is socially and emotionally alone for the second time in her life. (Homden,1995, p.174).

In contrast with Isobel, Rhonda is the one who largely opens up about her casual relationships, most notably the one she had with a powerful Tory politician. Actually, Hare comments on the male world more than on the Conservative politics through Rhonda's portrayal of a Tory politician. Instead of a Labor Party stance, he embraces a feminist approach. In fact, Rhonda is a Conservative Party representative, very similar to Marion in many ways. Yet, in this case, Rhonda's femininity and her experiences as a woman, especially on an emotional level, become central. While Marion is more submissive to her male partners, Rhonda views her sex as a weapon to be employed against men, as Dean puts it (1990, p.111). It is not surprising, then, that Irwin would accuse Isobel of being a working woman, making money, and controlling males in the workplace. He likewise believes that Isobel "*has this crazy idea of integrity*," meaning that she is too loyal to the standards of the previous generation, particularly those of her father (Hare,1997, p.400). Consequently, Isobel has decided to end her relationship with Irwin, stop working at her newly expanded business, and take care of her late father's the legacy including his home and his wife. In brief, she has made up her mind to stop any emotional adventures and embrace, instead, a monastic style of life with Katherine (Nothof,1994, p.190).

Isobel's decisions after her vacation trip to Lanzarote are bold and are in contrast with her earlier character. She has arrived at a sort of self-realization by which she refuses to bow to others' expectations and reveal her silent kindness. Her loyalty to her deceased father and her responsibility to an alcoholic stepmother leave her no choice other than to quit her obsessive lover. The trip, as a matter of fact, overshadows her sudden death. Her risky decisions not only reverse her fortune but also hasten her death. She totally rejects Irwin's entreaties to "*Come back to me*" and "*Make love to me.*" Hoping to cut all her relations to the past, she in a fatal scene towards the end of the play, tries to dissuade Irwin not to sexually approach her because he will not get any emotional response to him:

Force me. You can force me if you like. Why not? You can take me here. On the bed.....The bit that you want I'm not giving you. You can make me say or do anything you like. Sure, I'll do it. Sure, I'll say it. But you'll never have the bit that you need. It isn't yours. (Hare,1997, p.424)

In Judy Lee Oliva's opinion, Irwin's love is unrequited and aggressive, and as a result, he plans to destroy the relationship by taking his own life or that of his partner (1990, p.138). Finlay Donesky, on the other hand, believes that Irwin murders Isobel not because of unrequited love, but because he has already proved his incapacity of sincerer love. In Donesky's viewpoint, the reason of his crime is due to her representation or personification of his lost soulmate (1996, p.113). On his part, Irwin does not adore Isobel compulsively but often asks for her approval and love. When he loses her affection, he loses his soul, his capacity to love, or his job. Consequently, he becomes a completely different person. After being apart from Isobel and enduring suffering from all these losses, he decides to terminate his life by taking Isobel's life. Therefore, he, after his crime, cries: "*It's over. Thank God*" (Hare,1997, p.428). The lessons that Isobel has given throughout her life and after her death are what alter Marion and Tom's outlook of the world. It is not from Isobel's religious or political affiliations that goodness springs, but from her kind personality (Homden,1995, p.173).

After Isobel's death, Marion understands that she, too, is human and can experience the sad feelings that result from the loss of a loved one. For this reason, Isobel, even in her death, saves Marion and gives the audience a good model of hope for the future (Nothof,1994, p.192). In the end, Marion, the play's prototypical Tory politician, is portrayed to be capable of atonement (Billington,2001, p.1).

The play comes full circle as it concludes with Isobel's death, just as it begins with that of her father (Oliva,1990, p.144). What the playwright shows, through the deaths of both the father daughter, is "*not nostalgia for a class-ridden and bigoted England of Pravda, nor for an idyllic England of cricket and cream teas*" (Taylor,2007, p.57); Hare has no desire to return to the England of the earlier decades, however he misses a kinder, more caring society that existed there. He exhibits his consideration for a decent civilization that existed a generation before but has ever since died out through Isobel and her father (Gaston,1993, p.224).

In conclusion, Hare, throughout his drama, illustrates, by means of his characterization, how people abandon their moral and human values in pursuit of those that have to do with material gain. Hare's tone, through employing contrasting characters, seems to glorify the soul that is no longer considered and appreciated in an age in which nothing matters except achieving financial success.

Conclusion

Among literary critics and scholars, it is agreed that *David Hare's The Secret Rupture* is a direct theatrical response to Margaret Thatcher's political ideologies during the nineteen-eighties since the political drama of the period was heavily influenced by Thatcher's new rights policies that penetrated into every day's life. Hence, Hare's aim is to explore the human conditions within the context of politics and, at the same time, express his moral concerns and arguments on the relationship between public and private. Moreover, Hare is concerned about man's position against social, economic and political matters. Additionally, the play reveals the 1980s' atmosphere through the protagonist's personal life. On this basis, presenting his characters as pairs show Hare's capacity to reveal both sides of the society. *The secret Rupture* is based on different clashes: social, political and economic clash. The play can be read as a document that mirrors the issues of the time, politically, socially, and personally. The conflicts among individuals, classes, and political parties are skillfully dramatized

Hare, however, seems to have no intention to criticize politics directly; instead, he investigates how politics interferes into the private lives and ruins them by shaping selfish attitudes, self-centered. In the play, such institutions as marriage, politics and religion concern, according to Hare, seem to have failed to act their roles in society. which are represented by small companies and individuals. Through such characters as Irwin and Marion, the dramatist expresses his concern about the radical changes that have happened to the British moral codes, he believes these dramatical changes failed the public and the private. Therefore, through a play with a classical tragic design, Hare displays how social, political, and cultural matters shape the private and public lives of his characters. Obviously, supports his argument by argument by creating contrasting figures to be his main means of expressing his ideas and notions.

Works Cited

- Billington. M. 2001. Welcome Hare Revival on the Thatcherite psyche, the guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2001/jan/29/theatre.artsfeatures1> (Accessed: November 21, 2022).
- Bloom, M., 1989. "A Kinder, Gentler David Hare". American Theatre Nov, pp. 30-34.
- Dean, J.F. 1990. David Hare. Boston: Twayne Publishers.
- Donesky, F., 1996. *David Hare: Moral and Historical Perspectives*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press
- Gaston, G., 1993. "Interview: David Hare". Theatre Journal, 45 (2), pp. 213-225.
- Gindin, J., 1993. "Freedom and Form in David Hare's Drama". In *British and Irish Drama Since 1960* (pp. 162-175). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Golomb, L.A., 1990. "Saint Isobel: David Hare's The Secret Rapture as Christian Allegory". *Modern Drama*, 33 (4), pp. 563-574.
- Hare, D. 1997. David Hare: Plays Two. 2nd. Faber & Faber.
- Homden, C., 1995. The Plays of David Hare. Cambridge University Press. London.
- Kathleen, T, 2015. "New Again: David Hare", Interview Magazine. Available at: <https://www.interviewmagazine.com/culture/new-again-david-hare> (Accessed: November 1, 2022).
- Nothof, A. 1994. "Virtuous Women: Portraits of Goodness in The Secret Rapture, Racing Demon, and Strapless," in Hersh Zeifman (ed). David Hare: a Casebook. 1st Edition. New York: Garland Pub., pp. 169–185.
- Oliva, J.L. (1990) "David Hare: Theatricalizing Politics.," Ann Arbor: UMI.
- Su, J., 1997. "Nostalgic Rapture: Interpreting Moral Commitments in David Hare's Drama." *Modern Drama*, 40 (1), pp. 23-37.
- Taylor, L. 2007. "In Opposition: Hare's Response to Thatcherism," in Richard Boon (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to David Hare*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 49–64.
- Wade, L. 2007. "I Hare's trilogy at the National: Private Moralities and the Common Good," in Richard Boon (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to David Hare*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 64-79