

**T.C.**  
**ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN MARTIN CRIMP'S MAJOR  
STAGED PLAYS**

**DOCTORAL THESIS**  
**Belgin ŞAKİROĞLU**

**Department of English Language and Literature**  
**Programme:English Language and Literature**

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**DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

**Belgin ŞAKİROĞLU**

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İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ



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Belgin ŞAKİROĞLU  
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**To my family,,**



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## SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN MARTIN CRIMP'S MAJOR STAGED PLAYS

### ABSTRACT

Theatre started to transform from the political aesthetics of the 1970s and the 1980s to the avant-garde aesthetic of the 1990s. After a long break, since the British theatre of the 1990s witnessed a new theatre movement, called In-Yer-Face by Alex Sierz, which critiques traditional British Theatre with its cruel language and challenging plots. Martin Crimp has produced his most well-known plays in this aesthetic. To show Crimp's contribution to the British theatre from a wider perspective, this thesis explores Crimp's eight staged plays, *Definitely The Bahamas* (1987), *Dealing with Clair* (1988), *The Treatment* (1993), *Attempts on Her Life* (1997), *The Country* (2000), *Cruel and Tender* (2004), *Fewer Emergencies* (2005), and *The City* (2008), basing its discussion on different critical theories, Cultural Materialism, Socialist Feminism, and Artaud's theory. For that reason, different criticisms are applied to his plays in the light of these three theories.

In the Introduction, Crimp's life and the In-Yer-Face movement will be scrutinized. In the first chapter, the theories, Cultural Materialism, Socialist Feminism, and Artaudian Theatre, are explained in a detailed way to correlate between the plays and the theories. The aim of the second chapter is to find the analogy between Artaud's theatre, Crimp's theatre, and Crimp's usage of Artaudian cruelty in his contemporary plays. This is why his three plays, *Fewer Emergencies*, *Definitely the Bahamas*, and *The Country* were chosen according to their main theme, cruelty. Drawing on Cultural Materialism, the third chapter reveals how Crimp reflects the political and cultural factors of his period into his plays, *The City* and *Dealing with Clair*, and how he approaches these factors in his plays. In the fourth chapter, women characters in his plays, *The Treatment*, *Attempts on Her Life*, and *Cruel and Tender*, are analyzed to illustrate how Crimp integrates the perception of women body in the contemporary world into his plays. In the conclusion part, it is pointed out how Crimp reflects the cruelty in this world dramatically using stage devices to reach the audiences' unconscious like Artaud. Secondly, Crimp's pessimistic attitude towards the power of ideology and its negative effect on individuals are clarified. The disappearance of the characters in his plays indicates how individuals are victimized in a system. Lastly, after examining female characters in his plays, it is found out that his female characters are imprisoned in the domestic sphere and they fail to struggle with both capitalism and patriarchy.

**Key Words:** Martin Crimp, Contemporary British Drama, Cultural Materialism, Socialist Feminism, Artaudian Theatre.





## SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN MARTIN CRIMP'S MAJOR STAGED PLAYS

### ÖZET

Tiyatro 1970 lerin ve 1980 lerin politik estetiğinden, 1990 larda yenilikçi estetiğe doğru değişmeye başladı. Uzun bir aradan sonra, 1990dan beri İngiliz Tiyatrosu, Alex Sierz tarafından Yüzüne Tiyatro olarak adlandırılan, geleneksel İngiliz Tiyatrosunu zalim dili ve konularıyla reddeden, yeni bir tiyatro akımına tanık oldu. Martin Crimp' te bu akım içerisinde yer alan oyun yazarlarından biridir. Martin Crimp' in İngiliz Tiyatrosu'na olan katkısını geniş bir perspektiften göstermek için, bu tez Crimp' in sahnelenmiş sekiz oyununu, *Definitely The Bahamas* (1987), *Dealing with Clair* (1988), *The Treatment* (1993), *Attempts on Her Life* (1997), *The Country* (2000), *Cruel and Tender* (2004), *Fewer Emergencies* (2005) ve *The City* (2008), Kültürel Materyalizm, Sosyalist Feminizm, Artaud'un tiyatro teorisi gibi teorilere dayandırarak inceler. Bu sebepten dolayı, bu teorilerin ışığında incelenen oyunlardan farklı bulgular elde edilmiştir.

Giriş bölümünde, Crimp'in hayatı ve içinde yer aldığı Yüzüne Tiyatro akımı detaylı olarak incelenmiştir. Birinci bölümde, Kültürel Materyalizm, Sosyalist feminizm ve Artaud'un tiyatrosu, oyunlar ve teorieler arasında ki bağlantıyı kurmak için, ayrıntılı bir şekilde anlatılmıştır. İkinci bölümün amacı Crimp'in, Artaud'un vahşetini çağdaş eserlerinde nasıl kullandığı ve Artaud'un tiyatrosu ile Crimp'in tiyatrosu arasında ki benzerlikleri bulmaktır. Bu yüzden Crimp'in üç eseri, *Fewer Emergencies*, *Definitely the Bahamas*, ve *The Country* vahşet ana temasına göre seçilmiştir. Üçüncü bölüm, Kültürel Materyalizm den yararlanarak, Crimp'in *The City* ve *Dealing with Clair* eserlerinde, döneminin politik ve kültürel unsurlarını nasıl yansıttığını ve bu unsurlara olan yaklaşımını ortaya koyar. Dördüncü bölümde, *The Treatment*, *Attempts on Her Life*, ve *Cruel and Tender* oyunlarındaki kadın karakterlerin analiziyle, Crimp'in Çağdaş dünyada ki kadın vücudu algısını oyunlarına nasıl aktardığı incelenir. Sonuç bölümünde, Crimp'in Artaud gibi seyircilerin bilinçaltına ulaşmak için sahne aygıtlarını kullanarak, dünyada ki zalimliği eserlerine nasıl yansıttığı anlatılır. İkinci olarak, Crimp'in ideolojiye karşı olan karamsar tutumu ve ideolojinin bireyler üzerinde ki olumsuz etkisi belirtilir. Oyunlarında ki karakterlerin yok oluşu, bireylerin sistem içinde ki kurban oluşlarını anlatır. Son olarak, oyunlarında ki kadın karakterlerini inceledikten sonra, kadın karakterlerinin ev alanına hapis edildiği ve hem kapitalizm hem de ataerkil düzenle savaşmada başarısız oldukları görülür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Martin Crimp, Çağdaş İngiliz Tiyatrosu, Kültürel Materyalizm, Sosyalist Feminizm, Artaud'un Tiyatrosu.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to critically analyze Crimp's chosen staged plays, *Definitely The Bahamas* (1987), *Dealing with Clair* (1988), *The Treatment* (1993), *Attempts on Her Life* (1997), *The Country* (2000), *Cruel and Tender* (2004), *Fewer Emergencies* (2005), and *The City* (2008) basing this discussion on the theories of Cultural Materialism, Socialist Feminism, and Artaudian Theatre. It attempts to draw out how Crimp criticized base-superstructure relationships, the negative effect of power relations on society, and alienation of society in the late twentieth and the beginning of the twenty first century via Cultural Materialist analysis. Drawing on the main critics of Cultural Materialism such as Raymond Williams, Alan Sinfield and Jonathan Dollimore, the impact of power ideologies on society in *The City*, and the influence of capitalism on society in *Dealing with Clair*, will be analyzed. This study also discusses how women's bodies are perceived in contemporary society and how Crimp uses women bodies in his works as part of his social critique. Socialist Feminism, which advocates both capitalism and patriarchy are the sources of woman's oppression, is the central theory used to examine women bodies in his works. It also aims to investigate how Crimp's plays are connected to Artaud's Theatre, how Crimp uses cruelty concept in his plays, and what kind of stage devices Crimp and Artaud use to grasp audience's unconscious and make them conscious of what is going on. Lastly, for the reader, this thesis will provide a new way of comprehending Crimp's plays; a new way of using socialist feminism, Cultural Materialism, and Artaudian theatre theories to examine drama. In the early twentieth century the intellectual, cultural, and critical reasons for writing a play shifted drastically in Europe After the First World War, art gained a new dimension in the twentieth century with the improvements in psychology, anthropology, and technology. These rapid and fast changes such as expanding capitalism and increasing improvements in industry in the world create challenges for humanity and society starts to face conflict while trying to comply with changes.

Rejecting the old traditional forms, new comprehension and movements such as Futurism, Expressionism, Dadaism, and Surrealism come out in theatre. Vsevolod Meyerhold, who was a Russian actor and director, created a revolution for the stage under the effect of Futurism. He rejected the distinction between an audience and a stage, instead choosing to craft plays where the actors moved mechanically on the stage in concordance with music. In the early twentieth century, Expressionism becomes popular in German under the leadership of Oscar Kokoschka, Ernst Toller, and Georg Kaiser. Uncovering feelings and inner conflicts were more meaningful than physical experience for them. Dadaism, which lasts for a short period after the First World War, opposed the war with its disquieting images and influences drawn from Surrealism, which affected visual and theatrical arts in France in the early 1920s. After Andre Breton published “Surrealist Manifesto” in 1924, Antonin Artaud is one of the most influential playwrights who believes that the aim of the theatre is to reveal inner feelings and hidden conflicts in an individual’s subconscious. He claims that natural sensations and instincts of people are limited in society and people are alienated to themselves. For that reason, he uses theater to uncover the subconscious of individuals using the theme of cruelty. Furthermore, cruelty does not mean only murder, blood, or rape for him. He uses the physical stimuli of theatre such as dance, costumes, mimic, and light to involve audiences into his theatre, so his way of staging a play also constitutes *Theatre of Cruelty*. His most impressive product, *Theatre and Its Double*, makes an overwhelming impression on the theater world. Although he is criticized by many critics such as Christopher Innes (1993) and Martin Esslin (1976) in terms of his insufficient theatre theory, his influence on many playwrights and directors is undeniable.

Meanwhile, at the beginning of the twentieth century, theatrical improvements were different in German than in France. The devastating effects of war, the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the German Revolution of 1918 caused theatre to intermingle with politics in Germany. In the light of Marxism, to delineate the social and politic troubles of the lower-class, Erwin Piscator created “Politic Theatre”. He desires to inform and make the lower class understand their conditions, so he used simple plots and supported the play with real documentaries. After Erwin Piscator’s considerable contribution to “Politic Theatre”, Brecht left its mark in the twentieth century with his text “Epic Theatre”. While Brecht displays the conflicts in society; especially

amongst the bourgeoisie, he uses a simple language to make his theatre more comprehensible for working class like Piscator. However, unlike Piscator, he demands his audiences deem about social troubles and criticize their conditions. He deems that Politic Theatre is full of physical stimulants to distract audiences and audiences identify themselves with actors. To prevent his audience to identify with the actors utilizing imitation, he fulfills alienation concept (Verfremdungseffek); one of the major characteristics of Epic Theatre. Peter Brook comments on the concept of "Alienation" concept and says "Alienation can work through antithesis; parody, imitation, criticism, the whole range of rhetoric is open to it" (1996:73). For instance, in *The Good Person of Szechwan* (1943), to block audiences' identification with actors, Brecht utilizes Chinese names and setting to reveal the power of economic system on morality.

After the Second World War, the deteriorated European society with its increasing unrest, lack of confidence, and religious belief is reflected by "Absurd Theatre" in the 1950s. What does "Absurd" mean? According to Ionesco the term "is that which is devoid of purpose... Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless" (Esslin, 2001:23). Absurd Theatre playwrights choose alienated individuals who lost their hope for the future as their plot focusing on the meaningless of modern life. Amadov, Beckett, Ionesco, Genet and Pinter are known as the most influential contributors to the "Theatre of the Absurd". According to them, language has lost its value, so lack of communication is the main reason behind fragmented relationships.

People are not only alienated from each other, but also themselves. Hatred and disrespect replace love and hopefulness. This is why individual relationships are the subject matter of Absurd Theatre. To illustrate; in *Waiting for Godot* (1953) characters do not listen to each other, so replies are meaningless. In Ionesco's *The Chairs* (1952), lack of communication between a husband and a wife is emphasized many times.

At the same time, Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus; pioneer dramatists of Existentialist Theatre, shared similar views with Absurd Theatre dramatists. They also believe that the world is absurd and individuals are responsible for their own choices in their meaningless lives. However, Martin Esslin clarifies that Absurd

Theatre shows some discrepancies in terms of form with Existentialist Theatre. While Existentialist dramatists “express the new content in the old convention, the Theatre of the Absurd goes a step further in trying to achieve a unity between its basic assumptions and the form” (2001:25).

Although the beginning of Absurd Theatre is seen in traces as early as the end of the nineteenth century, it becomes more dominant in the twentieth century. In terms of form; the improvement of Alfred Jerry’s *Ubu Roi* (1896) in Absurd Theatre is incontrovertible. *Ubu Roi* is a kind of puppet play which is enriched with music, masks, and dance. For instance; in Becket’s *Happy Days* (1961), heavy light is used on Winnie during the play to destroy the distinction between the stage and spectators. Ionesco also utilizes material elements, décor and mimic in his plays, and he confesses that he is influenced by Antonin Artaud who also focuses on metaphysical theatre. Furthermore, he also uses violence concept in his plays. For example, in *The Lesson* (1950), a professor kills students brutally. After John Osborne’s *Look Back Anger* (1956), the period of stagnation begins in British theatre.

However, the 1990s was a magnificent decade for the development of British theatre. Due to its cruel content, Sierz referred to it as ‘In-Yer-Face Theatre’ while feminists called it ‘New Laddism’. It was also coined ‘Cool Britannia’ as a result of the marketing ploy by Gottlieb. ‘In-Yer-Face’ Theatre, which has been criticized from various aspects, comprises the style of the majority of Crimp’s plays. Colin Dolley asserts that “Martin Crimp has influenced many of the new generation of ‘In-Yer-Face’ playwrights, yet his work appears to be more appreciated overseas than in his own

country” (Dolley, 2015, p. 58). Since this period was seen as different from the previous decades by critics and because Martin Crimp was at his most productive during this period, this study will address different theories while analyzing his play from a wider perspective. The study will start with outlining the theories of Cultural Materialism, Socialist Feminism, and Artaudian Theatre and the reason why these theories were chosen will be explained. The conceptual information about the theories and the critics’ views in the light of these theories will be emphasized while studying literary texts.

Martin Crimp is one of the most impressive and sensational British playwrights to emerge since the 1980s. He was born in 1956 in Dartford, Kent. When he was four years old, with his parents, Jennie and John, he moved to Streatham in the South of London. After he won a scholarship, he went to Dulwich College which is an independent school founded in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Because of his father's job as a British Rail signaling engineer, they moved to York and Crimp enrolled in Packlington Grammar School. Owing to his great interest in Greek, French, and Latin, and English literature and theatre, he continued his education at St. Catharine's College, Cambridge (1975-8). His education at St. Catherine's College was a place where he had a chance to gain a deeper knowledge of theatre. He initially started to read Beckett and Ionesco and then he discovered "Bond-type plays. Angry plays. Political plays" (Sierz, 2006, p. 88) which influenced his writings. He started to write plays and act at the university, and one of his friends, Roger Michell, staged his first play *Clang*. During his education life, Crimp states that "I was definitely the kind of pupil who loved acting, directing, adjusting the focus of the lamps, creating sound cues on an old tape recorder at home" (Gallagher, 2004, p. 12). Thus, he noticed his theatre interest and skill in his early age. After graduating, he decided to be a writer and moved to London. Even though to make a living he had to work in a factory and as a clerk in an office, he did not give up writing and completed *Still Early Days*, a novel, and *An Anatomy* which includes short stories. In 1981 he joined the writers group at the Orange Tree Theater and wrote his first six plays and many radio plays there. *Three Attempted Acts* (1984) and *Definitely the Bahamas* (1987) were award winning plays written in this period. Alex Sierz claims that "Gradually, Crimp became a central figure on the new-writing scene an important influence on young playwrights such as Sarah Kane and Mark Ravenhill" (Sierz, 2006, p. 4). In 1988, he became the Thames TV Writer-in-Residence at the Orange Tree. In 1990, one of his famous plays, *No one Sees the Video*, was staged at the Court's Theatre Upstairs. In 1993, his play, *The Treatment*, won John Whiting Award and after this award his fame began to spread. After he adapted Moliere's *Misanthrope* in 1996, he reached pinnacle of his career with the production of his play, *Attempts on her Life*, which was staged at the Royal Court in 1997. The play is very different from his other plays in terms of form and plot. He manages to tell the story of a woman, an unseen protagonist, from different aspects. In 2000, he wrote *The Country* and in 2002, *Face*

*to the Wall* was restaged with the addition of two new short plays; *Whole Blue Sky* and *Fewer Emergencies*. After the Iraq War, by request of Royal Court, he wrote a short play, *An Advice to Iraqi Women* (2003) which was staged at the Royal Court. In 2012, he returned to the Orange Tree Theatre and completed *In The Republic of Happiness*, which also included a small play, *Play House*.

His success is also apparent through his adaptations; in 2004, he adapted Sophocles' *The Women of Trachis*, renaming it *Cruel and Tender*. The National staged his version of Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* in 2006, and in 2012 his adapted project, *Gross and Klein (Big and Small)*, based on the play *Botho Strauss*, was staged at the Barbican. When his musical interest is also considered, his translation of the *Merry Widow* for a production at the New York Metropolitan Opera is not surprising. Sierz emphasizes that, "Crimp also performed as a professional musician, playing piano and harpsichord, and earned money teaching music and as an accompanist to the Canonbury Chamber Choir" (Sierz 2006, p. 3). This might be the reason behind the effective use of music in his plays; *Four Attempted Acts*, *Play with Repeats*, *Dealing with Clair*, *The Country*, and *Cruel and Tender*.

According to Sierz, Crimp's work is not easy to interpret. "Part of the reason for his enigmatic image stems from Crimp's reluctance to make his plays easy for journalists by making facile connections between his life and his work" (Sierz, 2006, p. 4). Like many writers' plays, Crimp's plays also reveal his life experience. When it is considered that he comes from a middle class family, it might be an indicator of why Crimp situates his plays in ordinary situations with middle-class characters. His characters are portrayed with Crimp's psychology and philosophy. While some of his characters suffer from mental stress like Anne in *The Treatment*, the mother and the postman in *Fewer Emergencies*, the General in *Cruel and Tender*, some of them are shown with their consumption patterns like James, Liz and Mike in *Dealing with Clair*, and Jennifer and Andrew in *The Treatment*. Avoiding using similar events repeatedly in his plays, he used objects from his own experiences and his reading of Ionesco, Brecht, Pinter, and Bond has further affected his writing. He characterized contemporary society with its alienated characters in a corrupted society, and multidimensional violence, as a place of social decay, suppressed violence, and immorality.



Sierz expresses that “[a]t the time [Crimp] was interested in psychological disorders’ and a clang disorder is when people pick up words by rhyming association, which figured in the play’s language” (Sierz, 2006, p. 3). This might be the reason behind Crimp’s different usage of language. Crimp uses a natural and ironic language which is full of hesitations, overlapping lines, and repetitions. In *Dealing with Clair*, Clair states “who knows what I’ll do? Maybe make a king and just- ... - disappear” (Crimp, 2000, p. 9). Ironically she disappears at the end of the play. In many of his plays such as *Attempts on Her Life*, *The Fewer Emergencies*, and *The Country*, he uses pauses and hesitations to make his audience think, or to stress the rising anger of his characters. He uses the same names over again in his plays. For instance, in *Dealing with Clair* and *No one Sees The Video*, Liz is used for several different characters. In *Attempts on her Life*, Anne is as an absent protagonist and in *Dealing with Clair*, Anna is a babysitter, and in *The Treatment*, Anne is a woman who wants to sell her life story. In *Fewer Emergencies*, which involves three short plays, the repetition of the same name is seen. In the first play, *Whole Blue Sky*, and the last play, *Fewer Emergencies*, the child character’s name is Bobby and in both plays he is called ‘Jimmy’ by mistake (pp.18, 45-46). Moreover, in both plays the couple’s voyage ‘on boat’ (pp. 12-42) and the concept of family in the contemporary world are repeated. Crimp’s innovative style led to him being labelled a ‘European Artist’ by Heiner Zimmermann (2003, p. 70), Adam Ledger (2010, p. 122), Mary Luckhurst (2003, p. 51), amongst others. Edward Kemp, a dramaturg, advocates that “Martin is perfectly aware of ... developments in playwriting in Continental Europe, especially France and Germany, and his work bridges the gap between the English and Continental traditions” (Sierz, 2006, p. 205).

This illustrates the reason behind the lack of secondary sources and references on Martin Crimp. Both John Whitley and Alex Sierz assert that Crimp deserves much more value especially through his many works. Sierz writes;

Richard Eyre and Nicholas Wright’s *Changing Stages*, to take but one example, mentions him only in passing, as one of the new writers who are cracking the old theatrical templates (p. 17)...Dominic Dromgoole’s recent book on contemporary new writing, *The Full Room*, includes three pages on Crimp... Not one production of a Crimp play is recorded his translation of Ionesco’s *The Chairs* is included. And when in 2006 the National Portrait

Gallery mounted an exhibition, Royal Court Theatre; A Celebration of Fifty Years, Crimp was excluded...The Cambridge History of British Theatre only mentions him once in passing...Apart from a handful of articles buried deep in academic journals, that's about it. Little wonder that he's seen as an enigma (Sierz, 2006, pp. 6-7).

Although Crimp has been writing since the late 1980s, the period in which he became popular and wrote most of his major plays was in the 1990s. Moreover, many critics such as Sierz, Angelaki, and Agusti address him and his work as a phenomenon of the 1990s. The effects of both Thatcherism and Postmodernism on British theatre during the 1980s and 1990s can be seen in Crimp's works. After Margaret Thatcher became Britain's Prime Minister in 1979, she cut funding for the arts due to the economy. This caused great enmity between dramatists, practitioners, and the British government. During Thatcher's period of rule, two crucial conferences were held; the expanding impact of political theatre, which occurred at Cambridge University in 1978 and left-wing actors, academics, and directors gathered at London University ten years later in 1988. The conferences were "organized to unite theatre workers who shared a common detestation of Thatcherism and all its works with the aim of responding actively to what was perceived to be a theatre in crisis" (Peacock, 1999, p. 2). As a result of these discussions and in an attempt to raise funding, "British Theatre in Crisis" was held in December 1988 at Goldsmiths' College.

After the Second World War, in the 1950s, many people in Europe could not escape from the desperate consequences of war. In the postwar period, The Cold War, The Vietnam War, and the construction of Berlin Wall increased unrest in society. Playwrights started to reflect the suffering of society in their plays. In 1956, John Osborne left its mark on the new theatre, which was called the 'Angry Young Men' movement. The Royal Court supported the playwrights; Arnold Wesker, John Arden, Harold Pinter, and John Whiting, who were all opposed to the established political system.

Against a background of consensual politics in Britain, in which Conservatives maintained the welfare and the Labour Party gave its blessing to a mixed economy, there were at first the disillusioned mutterings of the so

called 'angry young men', to be closely followed by the much more agitational views of revolutionary young socialists (Patterson, 2003, p. 12).

With their antagonistic attitudes, the playwrights went on to criticize the class system entrenched in British society using the middle-class characters in their plays. As British political dramatists, while Howard Barker preferred realistic situations, Edward Bond integrated violence in his plays with the sole purpose of provoking the system.

The fall of Berlin wall in 1989, which had separated the capitalist West from the communist East, and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 are the key global events of the 1990s. After the defeat of the Conservative party, Tony Blair came into power leading the Labour party. At the start of the decade, for many critics, British Theatre was in trouble. After John Osborn's *Look Back Anger* (1956), there was a long gap in British theatre. There were several reasons to explain this rough period in theatre history. Michael Billington, the theatre reviewer for The Guardian, called the London stage "a dusty museum rather than a turbulent forum" (1994, p. 5), because of the certain drop in productions. Economics was the other significant consideration of this gap. The financial support for the arts could not continue to support new plays due to the limited budget. According to Howard Barker, the cause of the problem is the conservative attitudes of:

Theatres like the Royal Court have become oppressive in their taste. It's inevitable that a theatre that has produced a revolutionary environment in a few decades develops reactionary tendencies. There is a governing aesthetic in these places which I believe is hostile to the development of new styles in the theatre (Shank, 1996, p. 203).

However, in the mid-1990s theatre became the most crucial and popular aspect of Britain. Many young writers who were criticized society for the government from different positions started to produce their plays. Initially, Sarah Kane's *Blasted* (1995) made an overwhelming impression on spectators and many critics. Despite this, "traditional British society and critics who got into the habit of maintaining a negative attitude against the new one, made lots of negative comments about Kane's overwhelming play" (Biçer, 1977, p. 3). Meanwhile, The Royal Court Theatre supported many playwrights: Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill, Joe Penhall, Judy Upton,

Martin McDonagh, David Greig, Jez Butterworth, Patrick Marber, Samuel Adamson, Sebastian Barry, Simon Bent, Simon Block, Lucinda Coxon, David Eldridge, and Martin Crimp are just a few of them.

This new mood of theatre was called 'Cool Britannia' by Vera Gottlieb or 'In-yer-face' by Alex Sierz. On the other side, In *Feminist Views on the English Stage 1990-2000*, Elaine Aston evaluates the British stage in the 1990s adversely in terms of a feminist viewpoint, claiming that the period was "associated with a wave of writers, that, like the Osborne generation before them, were (mostly) angry young men" (Aston, 2003, p. 2). For that reason, she names the period "New Laddism" which refers to a misogynistic "masculine culture that derided women in attempts to bolster a vulnerable male ego" (Aston, 2003, pp. 3-4). "New Laddism" is also associated to sex industry with enormous impact of capitalism. Vera Gottlieb, criticizing Tony Blair and the New Labour government, associates the period to 'marketing ploy' as a policy strategy and names the period 'Cool Britannia' (Saunders, 2002, p. 5). She suggests that "All these writers are very much in touch with malaise amongst their generation, all too aware of consumerism, drug culture and sexuality paralyze the plays" (Gottlieb, 1999, p. 212). In this respect, the period was not as revolutionary for her as many others had advocated. The critic, Alex Sierz left his mark on this new mood with his articles and his book *'In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama Today'* (2001) in which he coins the name of the movement. In the view of Alex Sierz, 'In-Yer-Face' drama is:

Any drama that takes the audience by the scruff of the neck and shakes it until it gets the message. It is a theatre of sensation: it jolts both actors and spectators out of conventional responses, touching nerves and provoking alarm. Often such drama employs shock tactics, or is shocking because it is new in tone or structure, or because it is bolder or more experimental than what audiences are used to. Questioning moral norms, it affronts the ruling ideas of what can or what should be shown onstage (Sierz, 2001, p. 4).

As Sierz describes, the authors confront audiences to reality by shocking them, bringing forward the hidden and untold things, so they break the traditional British theatre forms. Sierz's also points out that the 'Collins English Dictionary' adds the word "confrontational" to the definition (Sierz, 2001, p. 4). Moreover, Graham

Saunders inserts the term 'New Brutalism' to the list of descriptors for the meaning of 'In-yer-face,' that is taken from "American sports journalism during the mid-seventies" (Sierz, 2001, p. 4) to emphasize the period in theatrical history. Saunders, like Sierz, finds the core of the movement provocative. Because "the language is usually filthy, characters talk about unmentionable subjects, take their clothes off, have sex, humiliate each other, experience unpleasant emotions, become suddenly violent" (Sierz, 2001, p. 5). In this sense, the language is no longer traditional. They display the reality of the society without considering its taboos. Although Edward Bond's *Saved* (1965) and Howard Brenton's *The Romans in Britain* (1980) created huge tension because of the rape scenes, in the 1990s 'In-Yer-Face' theatre went beyond the scope of this tension. Sierz argues that this new kind of theatre has torn across the world or at least Europe with lightning speed. "Kane, Ravenhill, Prichard, Mc Donagh, and Crimp are the playwrights whose plays were staged over Europe" (Sierz, 2001, p. 246). Although these playwrights have distinct techniques and styles, the two most common characteristics of 'In-Yer-Face' theatre are its explicit depictions of sex and violence, which reminds 'New Laddism' culture in 1990s and its tendency to break taboos.

Being labelled one of the original playwrights of 'In-Yer-Face' theatre, Crimp has preferred to use the concept of cruelty in his plays. *Attempts on Her Life* begins with the depiction of sexual interaction, continuing with a conversation about a prostitute's thoughts about pornography. In *The Treatment*, Simon takes his wife's, Anne's, revenge, carving out the eyes of Clifford, who recorded her sexual interaction with a man. At the end of the play, Anne, a pregnant woman, is shot and no one feels sorry for her. According to Sierz, "Martin Crimp's *The Treatment* dealt savagely with the rat-eat-rat world of showbiz in New York. Although the play showed fellatio onstage, most reviewers mentioned only the scene in which a man's eyes are gouged out with a fork" (Sierz, 2001, p. 32). In *The Country*, violence continues when Rebecca cuts Richard's hand with scissors. Sierz also remarks on the experimental nature of 'In-Yer-Face' theatre.

In-yer-face theatre is experiential theatre, and it works because it exploits two of the special characteristics of the medium: first, because it's a live experience, anything can happen. The paradox is that while the audience is

watching in perfect safety, it feels as if it is in danger. Second, theatre in Britain is technically uncensored, so everything is allowed. (Sierz, 2001, p. 19).

This suggests that the unordered plot structure, imponderable content, and illogical events of 'In-Yer-Face' plays are not only what made them disturbing, but also what made them distinct. The young writers were also interested in Zola, Ibsen, and Chekhov. Further, Ahmet Gökhan Biçer asserts that "Antonin Artaud's 'violent', Edward Bond's 'rationalist', Howard Barker's 'catastrophic', Harold Pinter's 'absurd' and 'political' plays are the main sources that have affected In-Yer-Face theatre playwrights who have written about the political plays of postmodern world" (Biçer, 2010, p. 13). Actually, there are clear analogies between the Theatre of Absurd and In-Yer-Face theatre. Initially, both movements reject traditional drama. Secondly, they take into consideration both lack of communication and fragmented relationships. However, In-Yer-Face drama also confronts its audience forcing it to accept the increasing violence in society and within themselves using provocative language which uncovers the hidden events in society such as drug addiction, rape, racism, and murder.

Moreover, utilizing violence, rejecting traditional theatre, and being intertwined with the real events to establish a bond between the audience and the stage reveal the impact of Antonin Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty* on this movement. Kevin Hetherington claims that "Artaud was to have a profound and lasting impact on twentieth-century theatre" (Hetherington, 1998, p. 151). Sierz states that "In-Yer-face theatre always forces us to look at the ideas and feelings we would normally avoid because they are too painful, too frightening, too unpleasant or too acute" (Sierz, 2014, p.6). Similar to 'In-Yer-Face' theatre, Artaud also managed to shock the audiences while putting forth his message; for instance, in *Jet of Blood* (1925), a whore's body is seen naked and claiming that God left her, she bites her wrist and the blood bath ensues. In *Les Cenci* (1935), he reveals a cruel father who rapes his own daughter and describes cruelty in the family without censorship. Thus, it might be mentioned that there is a clear link between In-Yer-Face theatre and Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty*. Since Crimp belongs to In-Yer-Face theatre, the impact of Artaud's *Theatre and Its Double* is seen in his plays. In *Fewer Emergencies* (2005),

the massacre of children and a father's murder of his child reveal domestic violence in the family. In *Definitely the Bahamas* (1987), Crimp criticizes cruelty in people who ignore the sexual abuse of an immigrant female child. In *The Country* (2000), both sexual abuse and physical violence are staged to make audiences confront with the things that they avoid.

In ancient times, although violent acts were just described instead of being acted in theatre; Seneca's plays were not staged because of its brutal themes, the effect of wars, the increase in violent acts, and terror in the world, caused a change in human being's point of view. Like the floating society, theatre has also changed throughout the twentieth-century. To reflect this changing perspective of mankind with its whole unsightliness in order to strengthen the bond between the audience and the play, Artaud, Brecht, and Stanislavsky revealed their distinct styles.

In the second chapter of this thesis, the concept of cruelty in Martin Crimp's plays *Definitely the Bahamas*, *Fewer Emergencies*, and *The Country* (2000) are examined with regards to Artaudian Theatre to find out what connects Crimp's plays to Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty*. Ros Murray asserts that "Artaud's work has been read in a variety of contexts, the most significant Surrealism, critical theory, anti-psychiatry and theatre and performance studies." (Murray, 2014, p. 5). Undoubtedly, his theatre theory on violence makes a huge contribution to theatre studies. He puts emphasis on cruelty concept in his major work, *Theatre and Its Double*. In Crimp's plays, cruelty is a concept which is encountered constantly. Crimp believes like Artaud, that "[i]t is a cruel world" (Sierz, 2006, p. 89). In the 1990s, theatre gained a new dimension in terms of staging, departing from the dramatic form of theatre. Hans-Thies Lehmann named this difference in strategies 'Postdramatic Theatre' and published his book in 1999 which was translated into many languages. "Postdramatic Theatre has already become a key reference point in international discussions of contemporary theatre" (Munby, 2006, p. 1). Similar to Artaud's theatre theory, Lehmann indicates the significance of theatre aesthetics. Artaud is seen as "the obvious precursor" of Postdramatic Theatre and he "reiterates the common ground between the postdramatic mode and certain strands of European modernism" (Carroll, 2013, p. 12). Martin Crimp also wrote two postdramatic plays, *Fewer Emergencies* and *Attempts on Her Life*. Both Heiner Zimmermann (2003), and Mary

Luckhurst (2003) define the plays as Postdramatic plays. In both plays, there are no specific settings, times, and certain characters, like a traditional drama, and no protagonists. While in *Fewer Emergencies* the speakers are numbered 1, 2, 3, and, 4 to indicate when they should speak, in *Attempts on her Life*, dashes are used to indicate the speakers. Both of the plays involve both the effects of Artaud and postdramatic theatre aesthetics. This is why this study attempts to reveal the analogy between Crimp's concept of violence and Artaud's concept of violence drawing on Artaud's *Theatre and Its Double*. In addition, the aim of this chapter is to make clear how Crimp struggles to make audiences confront their real nature and subconscious.

In the 1980s, both the United Kingdom and United States witnessed vast changes in economy and industry. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of Communism, capitalism started to expand. In accordance with expanding capitalism, racism, social hierarchy, and sexism also started to increase rapidly. As a result of this, free market economies and the privatization of national institutions increased. On the one hand, unemployment became a bigger problem, on the other hand the significance of self-belief and personal interest began to be emphasized. For that reason, according to Neema Parvini there must be a change:

And the anti-humanist way of seeing individuals as products of their time and place gave academics – and women, and black people, and homosexuals – a powerful weapon with which to expose and attack the status quo. Let there be no doubt that in the 1980s Cultural Materialism and New Historicism needed to happen (Parvini, 2012, p. 175).

Crimp's plays include the context of late capitalism and socio-economic systems at the end of twentieth and the beginning of twenty first centuries. In his plays, corruption, lack of confidence, increasing violence, and individualism are the main traits of his current society. Society is one of the main concerns of Cultural Materialism and this is why Crimp's *Dealing with Clair* and *The City* plays are examined in the light of Cultural Materialism in the third chapter. How the political system shapes its citizens' lives and the relationship among the citizens are investigated critically. A text is a way of reflecting ideologies for the cultural materialists. In *Dealing with Clair*, Crimp utilizes the real event of a murdered woman. In *The City*, he achieves the reflection of the unrest of the society within its



plot. To comprehend the deeper meaning of the text, political, social, economic structures, and historical events of the period that the texts were produced, are especially depicted.

Throughout history, woman has taken her place in literary texts and theatre. A mother figure who looks after her children ideally and a wife who dedicates herself to her husband are spoken of highly and associated with angels. On the other side, a woman who deceives her husband or who does not sacrifice herself to her family or who does not make her family contend is both punished and is likened to a devil in literature. Technology has improved, architecture and social orders have changed, and human kind has stepped into a new age; however; women have been obliged to continue to live under the patriarchal system. From the twentieth-century to the present, women have struggled to destroy rigid depictions of gender to gain equality with men. Crimp attaches significance to the relationship between man and woman and reflects how women bodies are perceived by capitalist society. One of Crimp's main characteristics of his plays is his use of female dialogues in his plays; *Definitely the Bahamas, Attempts on Her Life, Cruel and Tender*. His female characters also suffer from domestic violence. In *Feminist Political Theory*, Valeric Bryson mentions that "high levels of domestic violence and the sexual abuse of both women and children within the home meant that the family was seen as the cutting edge of patriarchal oppression where many women faced male power in its crudest and most aggressive form" (2003: 177-178). Crimp uses the family structure in his plays, so domestic violence is one of the themes which can be seen obviously in his plays. However, while examining his plays, it will be focused on domestic violence against women rather than children. He explicitly displays how men satisfy their ego when they manage to control women. His male characters declare their strength when they see women in despair and pain. On the other side, Crimp does not give his female characters a chance to escape from domestic violence or they do not oppose to physical violence. During his interview with Alex Sierz, Crimp admits that "the female monologue is one of the great male literary forms, of which the most famous example maybe Molly Bloom's .... So the fact that a man chooses to write a female monologue certainly isn't an assurance of good intentions" (Sierz, 2006, p. 90). Examining male literary texts is one of the feminists' ways to discover female stereotypes. This is the reason behind examining female bodies and how they are

perceived in capitalist society in Crimp's plays; *Attempts on Her Life*, *Cruel and Tender*, and *The Treatment*, in the light of Socialist Feminism in the fourth chapter. His reflection of female body in his plays will give us clue about the perception of women in the contemporary society and how she is used as an object and is still exposed to domestic violence.

Crimp' work is difficult. He does not write crowd-pleasing social comedies, gritty council-estate dramas or easy plays about 'me and my mates'. He doesn't do West End hits soap operas or lyrics for pop musicals. His plays are hard work. Typically, they are experimental in form and unsettling in content. (Sierz, 2006, pp.1-2).

Crimp's plays are multidimensional which makes his writing unique. The period that he began writing comprises both the characteristics of Thatcher period and postmodern period theatre. Using different theories will try to make his 'hard and enigmatic' plays more obvious and help us to comprehend them better. In the first part of this thesis, references to Socialist Feminism, Cultural Materialism and Artaudian Theory will cover the explanation of these theories to establish the relationships between the plays and their plots. The texts are brought together according to the relationships in the issues they investigate.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. Cultural Materialism

After the Second World War and into the 1950s, political theatre entered a new period which was comprised of mainstays Pinter, Wesker, and Osborne. These playwrights reflected the situation of the working class in their plays, revealing the injustice in the British class system. This genre was called the beginning of 'New Writing' by David Greig (Blandford, 2007, p.151). Sierz asserts that, "[a] central political concern of contemporary British drama has obviously been Thatcherite politics" (Middeke, 2011, p. xv). The rapid spreading of capitalism all over Europe and the strict economic politics of Thatcher system were criticized by the second generation of political playwrights by Edward Bond, David Edgar, Tom Stoppard, Carly Churchill, Howard Brenton, Sarah Kane, and Martin Crimp. Vicky Angelaki advocates that:

Crimp is not outspokenly political. His name does not come to mind when considering contemporary playwrights who produce work with a clear message, or readily discuss their personal beliefs in the media. But this does not mean that Crimp's theatre is not strongly characterized by political sensibility, or that Crimp himself is socially detached – far from it (Angelaki, 2012, p. 121).

As Angelaki depicts Crimp, he does not give direct political messages in his plays. Instead, he uses a real event such as in *Dealing with Clair* to corroborate his message about capitalist society although he does not give his message obviously. In *The City*, through the fake and rigid behaviour of characters and their irremediable reactions to war, Crimp creates a decayed society. For that reason, to find Crimp's hidden political messages and to comprehend his approach to the political system of the period, Crimp's plays; *Dealing with Clair* and *The City*, will be examined through the theory of Cultural Materialism, because Cultural Materialists believe that literature is an important reflection of the culture and society of its period.

In Britain in the post-war period as a political approach, Cultural Materialism came into its own as a theory in the 1980s when embraced by many important scholars. It was initially used by Raymond Williams and effectively influenced by Alan Sinfield and Jonathan Dollimore. W. H. Auden, an Anglo-American poet, declared that “A work of art is not one that we read, but one that reads us” (Manser, 2001, p. 308). Undoubtedly, texts are the real documentaries that tell the story of our culture, society, policy, and power relations. Accepting texts as a reflection of culture, Raymond Williams explained that, “[a]ll literature is history” (*Border Country*, 1960, p. 169). Since it tells us the history of its time, it is necessary to search for history while examining a text. That is, when Eliot’s *Wasteland* or Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway* are examined, the culture, changes in the society, and politics of the period are noticeable. Cultural Materialism discards the severance between history and literature to investigate not only the impact of political, cultural and social ideologies, but also how they affect individuals at that time. On the grounds that, according to Cultural Materialists, literature is “a constitutive and inseparable part of history in the making disruptions and contradictions of history” (Brannigan, 1988, pp. 4-5). This is why it does not make common cause with formalist approaches, which take no notice of historical context while interpreting a text. West asserts that Cultural Materialists do not only study history or literature, but they examine “literature in history” (West, 2013, p. 37).

Sinfield and Dollimore, both cultural materialists, were interested in utilizing Renaissance literature in order to interpret the power relations which were so dominant and obvious in the Renaissance period. Furthermore, they assert that theatre in the Renaissance period was “a prime location for the representation and legitimation of power” (Dollimore, 1994, p. 3). Sinfield and Dollimore studied Shakespeare not only to unfold ideological constructs in his works, but also to render today’s material circumstances according to their verity. They indicate that the reason behind literary criticism was the conflict in British policy in the 1970s (Dollimore, 1994, p. vii).

Literary texts were related to the new and challenging discourses of Marxism, feminism, structuralism, psycho-analysis and post structuralism. It is widely admitted that all this has brought a new rigour and excitement to literary discussions. At the same time, it has raised profound questions about the

status of literary texts, both as linguistic entities and as ideological forces in our society (Sinfield, 1985, p. vii).

As she mentions, Cultural Materialism is an interdisciplinary approach which harbors other discourses such as Marxism, feminism, and post structuralism; its goal is to discover “dissident politics of class, race, gender, and sexual orientation, both within texts and in their roles in culture” (Sinfield,1992, pp. 9-10). In addition, while examining a literary text which gives its reader further clues about its period, nothing should be ignored and a detailed analysis should be carried out from different points. In this manner, what the author desires to express can be discovered and the problems of oppressed groups can be analyzed sensitively.

Raymond Williams, who is one of the most outstanding social philosophers and critics of the twentieth century, made great contributions to Cultural Materialism. He firstly used the term ‘Cultural Materialism’ in his essay, ‘Notes on Marxism in Britain Since 1945’. According to Williams, culture is a huge concept that involves “industry, democracy, art, and class” (Williams, 1958: xvi) and adapts to the changes in “industry, democracy, art, and class” (Ibid, xvi). Culture reflects the mental and moral changes. “It is a whole way of life” (Ibid, xviii). To discern these changes and reactions in history and to get real meaning of writing, documentary culture is crucial to explain the meaning of life directly “when the living witnesses are silent” (Williams, 2001: 65). Thus, not only material, but also social order is necessary to comprehend culture. Mentioning the discrepancy between Marxist theory and Cultural Materialism, Raymond Williams depicts Cultural Materialism as:

A theory of the specificities of material cultural and literary production within historical materialism. Its details belong to the argument as a whole, but I must say, at this point, that it is, in my view, a Marxist theory, and indeed that in its specific fields it is, in spite of and even because of the relative unfamiliarity of some of its elements, part of what I at least see as the central thinking of Marxism ( Williams,1977, pp. 5-6).

According to Williams, the connection between Cultural Materialism and Marxism is indisputable; it is not possible to distinguish culture from social material process. In ‘Critique of Political Economy’ (1959), Marx depicts historical materialism as “the mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general” (Howard, 1988: 5). Opposing the idealism of Hegel who

believes that human consciousness has both the ability to comprehend the whole world and their being, Marx claims that “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness” (Ibid 5). In addition, for Marx in this world:

...we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process, which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises. ( Appelrouth, 2008, p. 40).

In this respect, we are not free creatures as we think. Individual’s mind is affected from the ideology which is shaped by economic conditions and people survive according to these ideologies. What is more, these ideologies are determined by the ruling class and upper class regarding their needs. The rest of the society goes on living under the predetermined conditions. Their way of living, thoughts and attitudes are the production of ideology.

Cultural Materialism involves not only cultural practices which are material productions, but it also comprises the association of text with history. Furthermore, the values that create society such as social, cultural, political, and economical values, designate individuals’ way of life and the structure of the society. While Marxism investigates the class conflict and its results, it also places emphasis on the base and super structure. For Williams “social being determines consciousness” (Williams,2005: 31). When we are born, we do not know anything about culture, politics, traditions, and economy, nevertheless, we learn it through the other social beings as they learn so our consciousness has not been constituted freely. Base and super structure play a significant role in forming our consciousness. The super structure and ideological forms such as religion, science, and, policy represent the determination center for the production of the base’s culture. This kind of relationship between the structures develops “the material powers of production” (Williams,1958: 266) and also forms the society’s economic structure. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engel advocate that a person, who takes part in superstructure, also has power and control on the base in terms of imposing their interests to the rest of society. (Marx, 1970:61). For instance, a pianist needs a piano. Whereas the person who makes up the piano represents the base, a pianist who does

not appear in the producing period represents the super structure. Thus, base fulfills the interests of the superstructure.

According to Williams 'culture' is a common thing and can be shared by everybody. For that reason, he opposes 'high culture'. For him, culture is constituted consciously. This reminds us Althusser who has splendid contributions for the improvement of Cultural materialism. Althusser, a French Marxist and a structuralist thinker, advocates that the dominant classes do not only impose a particular ideology on the ruled class but they also follow a certain policy in order to make the ruled class accept a form of ideology which encompasses ideas, beliefs, and values. Thus, the ruled classes do not recognize the fact that they are subjects, but they accept this subjection freely and willingly. Althusser's 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus' (1971) essay, which is accepted as an ongoing project of Cultural Materialism, is essential reading in order to sufficiently examine the plays of Martin Crimp. According to Althusser, the capitalist state does not only provide the ongoing process of reproducing, but it also ensures the reproducing of labor power. The state is made up of an infrastructure, an economic base, and a superstructure which includes two different apparatus such as "Ideological State Apparatus" (ISA) and "Repressive State Apparatus" (RSA). During its working process, ideology is more dominant in ISA than power and politics. By contrast with ISA, RSA is more target-driven, controlled, and unified. In view of Althusser, ISA is composed of some institutions such as "the religious ISA, the educational ISA, the family ISA, the legal ISA" (Althusser, 1971, p. 96) and so on. As Sinfield mentions these are not just ideas but "material practices, woven into the fabric of everyday life" (Sinfield, 1992, p.113). For that reason, it is impossible to escape from the system. For Althusser, schools are one of the most crucial parts of the system and they teach children "know-how" (Sinfield, 1992, p. 95), namely how to keep up with the system. Moreover, families raise their children to gain necessary social skills that they have to accord with. RSA focuses on violence and repression, so power and politics are situated in this apparatus. RSA includes "the Government, the Administrative, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc." (Althusser, 1971, p. 96). According to Althusser RSA "secures by repression (from the most brutal force, via mere administrative commands and interdictions, to open and tacit censorship) the political conditions for the action of the ideological State apparatuses" (Althusser, 1971, p.

101). He defines schools and families, where children gain necessary social skills, as the basic instances for 'Ideological State Apparatuses'. Sinfield also shares the same idea of ideology with Althusser who claims that people need many things such as food, places to live, entertainment so they have to produce ideology to provide security and continuity. For the continuity of this ideology, industry, technology, language, and politics are the main effective elements. To this respect, Sinfield asserts that with the aid of this ideology "we learn who we are, who the others are, how the world works" (Sinfield, 1992: 32). As a result, for Cultural Materialists, not only social practices, but also literary texts are the part of ideology, because they reflect the values and beliefs of its period. In addition, this may explain why cultural materialists oppose idealism. Although some philosophers have different idealist views, in essence idealism advocates that the initial element of essence is idea. According to idealism, everything depends on the human mind and there is no world with free objects which are not dependent on the human mind. Thus, the only way to achieve reality is through mental effort. Karl Marx's dialectical materialism, which does not cover abstract thoughts is the opposite of this. He says,

To Hegel, ... the process of thinking which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos (creator) of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of 'the Idea.' With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought. (Bratton, 2014, p. 95).

According to Marx, material world is the one that shapes individuals' mind. The world can be perceived by five senses, so nature cannot be thought undependable from the things around it. It has an inseparable bound with the conditions, system, and social movement around it. For that reason, Marx insists that material world has the big portion on our minds and culture. However, idealists believe that "high culture represents the free and independent play of the talented individual mind" (Barry, 2002, p. 183). When these two distinct methods are adapted to literature, the discrepancy between them is obvious; whereas idealism defends art as the product of an individual mind rather than reflecting society and time (material reality), materialists deem that the cause of the random production of literary texts, is that they are written not only to externalize the author's view, but also to mirror the



culture of a society. What is more, for Cultural Materialists, since a text is a vehicle of reflecting the culture of a society, it makes us recognize language, tradition, policy, ideologies, subverting and resisting power relations which culture is composed of.

This is why Cultural Materialists decisively oppose the essentialist humanist approach, which was common in the Renaissance period. Humanism is based on the notion that the individual is the essential source of truth and meaning. Graham Bradshaw argues that for Cultural Materialists “there is always a humanist Enemy” (Bradshaw, 1993, p. 17). With respect to Catherine Belsey, one of the prolific British literary critics, “the goal of liberal humanism is simply self-perpetuation, the conversation and protection of existing systems of order, knowledge and control” (Brannigan, 1998, p. 107). For Belsey and the Cultural Materialists, none of us are free today or were free in the past because of the systems that power structures create. For that reason, rather than providing equality between individuals, humanism was an ideology enforced by the system to ensure its control over individuals. However, the system influences our way of life, thoughts, and even our consumption style. For instance, many of us deem that we need cell phones to communicate, however, before cell phones, people were able to communicate using less advanced technologies such as fax or landline. On the other hand, all of us have to acquiesce with some rules of the society. When we fail to obey these rules, for example, having a baby outside of marriage, we are excluded by many people. Thus, does not this prove that there is a system that we have to comply with?

Dollimore and Sinfield examine the main traits of Cultural Materialism, dividing it into four categories: “historical context, theoretical method, political commitment and textual analysis” (Dollimore, 1994, p. vii). For Cultural Materialists, both history and literature interpenetrate each other so they cannot be thought of as distinct concept. Dollimore and Sinfield clarify that “historical context undermines the transcendent significance traditionally accorded to the literary text and allows us to recover its histories” (Dollimore, 1994, p. vii). According to them, texts are ‘transcendent’, because when a text is examined in accordance with its political interests of its day, it aids to discover the resisting power in it and it also gives an opportunity to express present power relations. Furthermore, “if we are today still studying and reading Shakespeare then his plays have indeed proved themselves

'timeless' in the simple sense that they are clearly not limited by the historical circumstances in which they were produced" (Barry, 2002, pp.182-183). Secondly, theoretical method "signifies the break with liberal humanism and the absorbing of the lessons of structuralism, post-structuralism, and other approaches which have become prominent since the 1970s" (Barry, 2002, p. 183). Whereas Cultural Materialism does not approve of Humanism, which believes that individuals are the only ones who have all of the value and power in them to lead their lives. Further, it regards Structuralism, which advocates that human culture can be comprehended by investigating one's relationship to the system, as a revelation of the structures that lie behind everything that individuals do, feel, and deem. The third trait, political commitment focuses on Feminist and Marxist approaches to examine power to notice the conflicts within the power, how individuals are affected from these, alienation in the society, and subcultures which "constitute consciousness in the same way that dominant ideologies do" (Sinfield, 1992, p. 38). Moreover, their goal is to reveal "a social order which exploits on grounds of race, gender, and class" (Dollimore, 1994, p. viii). Thus, they tend to pay attention to the minority groups in the society to reveal the hidden and insignificant one; they not only criticize culture, but they also make the reader more aware of society. The last trait, textual analysis, stresses the importance of a text that cannot be separated from the context; a text is the reflection of the society, and history of its time, thus for the purpose of this study, analysis of this matter is important. Wilson points out that "since Cultural Materialism has now little institutional need or desire to court the attention of close readers, the commitment to 'textual analysis' has waned" (Knowles,2004, p.14). As a result, Cultural Materialism enables the examination of a text from different angles. Inasmuch as, for them a text intertwines with history and an author reflects the society that she/he lives in. Graham Holderness asserts that the main goal of Cultural Materialists is not to study "the text, but the birth and life of the text in culture and history" (Hawthorn, 2000, p. 239). Thus, history is an inseparable part of culture. Richard Dutton and Richard Wilson assert that Cultural Materialism is the British wing of New Historicism. (Dutton&Wilson, 1992, p.xi). New Historicism was initially developed in 1980s in the United States and became widespread in 1990s. Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Montrose and Foucault are fundamental in the development of the theory. While Howard Felperin also depicts Cultural Materialism

as the “counterpart in Britain of the new historicism” (Felperin, 1990, p. 1), Peter Barry writes that:

Cultural materialists tend to concentrate on the interventions whereby men and women make their own history, whereas new historicists tend to focus on the less than ideal circumstances in which restraint do so, that is, on the ‘power of social and ideological structures’ which restrain them. The result is a contrast between political optimism and political pessimism (Barry, 1995, p. 185).

Thus unlike New Historicists, Cultural Materialists are more optimistic about changing the dominant order, like Marxists. For New Historicism, the dissension in the texts is pressured by the dominant ideology. As a result of the pressure, dominant ideology isn’t only composed of positive views, but also negative views. These subversive views make the ideology more powerful while intertwining with it and getting lost. On the other side, for Cultural Materialists, dissention is perceived as a positive challenge. Inasmuch as, there is the possibility of influencing or even changing ideas in a society with a written text. An author does not only reflect the culture that he lives in, but also his/her own ideas about the power system and society; the text can affect the reader and make him/her comprehend the culture more fully. Despite the differences between New criticism and Cultural materialism, Sinfield and Dollimore point out that “there was sufficient convergence between UK cultural materialism and then just named new historicism in the US to bring the two together in a collection of essays” (Dollimore, 1994, p. 129). Both theorists accept the affinity between both types of movements and suggest that Cultural Materialism is as a theory came before New Historicism.

Crimp examines the negative influence of capitalism on society and the social decay using middle-class characters. *Dealing with Clair* (1988) “unmasks the social changes brought about by Thatcherite politics” (Middeke, 2012, p. xv), and *The City* (2008) depicts “the impact of modern capitalism” (Angelaki, 2012, p. 26). Even though Crimp is not referred as a political writer directly, he cannot escape to reflect his own perspective and the realities of his society in his works. Crimp integrates real events in society to his plays using a different perspective. This is why Cultural Materialist theory is used to find out his hidden messages and point of view about society that he depicts in his plays.

## 2.2 Socialist Feminism

The word "feminism" is a plural term that comprises schools of thought ranging from early seventeenth-century liberal feminism, to radical feminism, which first appeared in the 1960s, social feminism, which emerged in the 1970s and contemporary feminism which is still present. The definition of feminism, as a political and philosophical discipline, indicates discrepancy because of its improvement in time. One of the most accessible depictions of feminism belongs to Nancy Cott:

Feminism is opposed to a sex hierarchy; it includes a presupposition that women's condition is socially constructed . . . rather than . . . predestined by God or nature . . . [and it] posits that women perceive themselves not only as a biological sex but . . . as a social grouping. Related to that understanding is some level of identification with 'the group called women,' some awareness that one's experience reflects and affects the whole (Cott, 1987, p. 4-5).

Cott comments on the basic characteristics of feminism declining the hierarchy between sexes and emphasizes the significant effect of society on women. Similar to her definition, for Neeru Tandon "feminism has always meant independence of mind and spirit and body... its theory is that men and women should be equal politically, economically and socially" (Tandon, 2003, p. 24). Even if there are various definitions of feminism, it may be said that the desire for equality constitutes its foundation.

Women, who have historically, in patriarchal societies, tended to occupy positions less linked to discourse and politics than to reproduction and the body, have often been made to represent the body and the emotions relegated to it. In fact, Crimp's theatre does not entirely escape this history of representation (Agusti, 2013, p. 41).

None of Crimp's female characters have high positions or better positions than his male characters. Although some of his female characters try to escape from the oppression of patriarchy, they never achieve it. In *Attempts on her Life*, *Dealing with Clair*, *Cruel and Tender*, and *The Treatment*, female characters are depicted as victims of the capitalist society. Sierz advocates that "the social construction of images of female body" is one of Crimp's characteristic themes (Sierz, 2006, p. 53). For that reason, Socialist Feminist theory is significant while making a close reading

in Crimp's plays; *Attempts on her Life*, *Cruel and Tender*, and *The Treatment*, to find out his reflection of female body in the contemporary society.

According to Juliet Mitchell, the history of feminism lies in the improvement of capitalism, which began after the collapse of feudalism in England in the seventeenth century. With propagation of capitalism, human rights movement grew in popularity. Women began to struggle for their rights after "*The American Declaration of Independence*" (1776) and "*The French Declaration of the Rights of Man*" (1789), which did not contain any reform for women. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Vindication of The Rights of Women*. Wollstonecraft demands that women should have the same rights as men and they should no longer be referred as "weak and luxurious by the relaxing pleasures" (Wollstonecraft, 1796, p. 330). Moreover, she stipulates that they should be permitted to take part in the political sphere instead of being "reduced to a mere cipher" (Wollstonecraft, 1796, p. 331). In 1793 Olympe de Gouges produced a pamphlet, 'Les Droits de la femme' (The Rights of Women), in Paris. In 1848, under the guidance of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, a meeting was held regarding the oppression of men on women in Seneca Falls, New York (Donnovan, 2012, p. 1-5). After a half century of struggle, in 1918, English women gained the right to vote. In 1947, Simon de Beauvoir wrote *The Second Sex* which left its mark on feminists. She argued that "women are not born, but made" (de Beauvoir, 2012, p. 267); construction of gender by society has been the norm for many years. In 1929, Virginia Woolf left her mark on the period, affirming Wollstonecraft's manifesto, by writing her own masterpiece, *A Room of One's Own*. She emphasized the trouble of being a woman in society through the creation of a fictional character, Shakespeare's sister, who could not be a writer because of her gender, and who as a result of this, committed suicide. Furthermore, just like Wollstonecraft, Woolf asserts that women should cast off their patriarchy-constructed femaleness. Feminist theory began to stir again in the 1960s and this period is called Second Wave Feminism. In 1963, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, which was accepted as a manifesto for change by The National Organization for Women, expresses the troubles of women from different points of view such as being a housewife and a mother. However, she did not attribute a general name to these difficulties and states it was "the problem that has no name" because "they all shared the same problem" (Friedan, 1983, p. 63). In 1969, Kate

Millett advocates that gender is constituted by patriarchy in her masterpiece, *Sexual Politics*. She delineates that the political power under the hegemony of men does not leave any room for the contribution of women. Supporting Simon De Beauvoir who states “one is not born but rather becomes a woman” (De Beauvoir, 2012, p. xv), Millett also admits to the subordinated power of patriarchy on women (Millett, 1972, p. 20). In 1980s, with the increasing development of Women Research Institutions run for women- raising participation of women and gaining recognition by many people- feminism has taken its place in literature, politics, and universities.

In *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Feminist Criticism*, Maggie Humm continues to emphasize the theories of feminist literary criticism. Since literature can reflect culture and society, studying texts by male authors indicates how women have been characterized in the patriarchal society. “The invisibility of women writers” is the second significant theme mentioned in her book. Raising awareness of the reader about the oppression on women and encouraging them to oppose this inequality are important points that feminist criticism has dealt with. (Humm, 1994, p. 8-9).

Feminist theory covers different approaches. According to Rosemarie Tong it is “a partial and provisional answer to the woman questions” (Tong, 2013, p. 1). For Judith Grant, it is “multicentered and undefinable” (Grant, 1993, p. 1). She points out that while Jean Bethke Elshtain admits four different theories such as radical, liberal, Marxist and psychoanalytic, Josephine Donovan divides it into four categories such as cultural, Freudian, existentialist, Marxist, and radical (Grant, 1993, pp. 1-2). However, articulating women’s situation utilizing a definite theory is difficult because of the sisterhood between the approaches, In *Feminist Frameworks* (1978), Alison Jaggar and Paula Rothernberg divide feminist theory into four distinct categories such as Liberal, Radical, Marxist, and Socialist Feminism.

Liberal feminism is accepted as the most dominant feminist theory in the Western world. According to Tapper, it emerged in the late eighteenth century and “has been based on two principles: that the liberal conception of the individual ought to be extended to include women, and that women ought to be accepted on equal terms with men in the public realm” (Tapper, 1986, p. 37). This is why liberal feminists have struggled for social change and to have equal rights. They affirm that men and women are different, however, this cannot be the reason why they do not have equal rights. Because of this consideration, liberal feminists have been

criticized. Michelene Wandor refers to liberal feminism as “bourgeois feminism” and asserts “Bourgeois feminism accepts the world as it is, and sees the main challenge for women as simply a matter of equaling up with men” (Wandor, 1986, p. 135).

Unlike Liberal Feminism, Radical Feminism strictly rejects gender hierarchy. The origin of inequality according to radical feminists is not only the superiority of patriarchy, but also the division of society into two sexes. Case claims that “sexism is the root of all other antagonism in society, envisages same kind of revolution of women against the oppressor to change things” (Case, 1988, p. 15). According to Radical feminists, there are two distinct classes in society: men and women. In order to protect their superiority, men have subordinated women for centuries. In *Sexual Politics* (1972), Kate Millet asserts that family is the main basic structure where domination of men begins and where daughters learn to be submissive. For that reason, radical feminists focus on family more than the other theorists.

Like the other feminist theories, Socialist feminism, which emerged in the 1970s focuses on the oppression of women and struggles to end it. Lise Vogel claims that “socialist-feminist theory starts from an insistence that beneath the serious social, psychological and ideological phenomena of women’s oppression lies a material root” (Vogel, 1995, p. 63). They examine the reason behind women’s oppression from a wider perspective, in terms of class, production, industry and political relations, and blame not only patriarchy, but also capitalism. Catharine A. Mackinnon highlights this when she claims “Capitalist countries value women in terms of their merit by male standards; in socialist countries women seem invisible except in their capacity as workers” (Mackinnon, 1989, p. 10). In this respect, socialist feminists oppose this dual relationship. According to Alison Jaggar all feminist theories are affected by each other because of their sisterhood relationship and she asserts that Socialist feminism theory combines both Radical and Marxist feminist ideologies (Jaggar, 1983, p. 123). In this respect, Socialist feminism has both analogies and discrepancies with Radical and Marxist feminism. While Marxist feminism focuses on class struggle, Radical feminists prioritize women’s liberation rather than the other forms of liberation. On the other side, declining both political priorities of men, Socialist feminism advocates putting up a fight for capitalism, patriarchy, racism and imperialism which are not separable from each other. Heidi Hartmann defines the limits of Marxist feminism and likens the relationship between

“Marxism” and “Feminism” to the relationship of husband and a wife. She states “Marxism and feminism are the one, and that one is Marxism” instead “Husband and wife are the one and that one is husband” (Harraway, 2000, p. 291). On the other side, she opposes to the other feminists who advocate that “Marxism and Feminism are unsatisfactory” (Harraway, 2000, p. 291). Harraway claims that Marxism does not only contribute to a significant criticism and analysis of capitalism, but it also contributes to feminism since “the categories of Marxism are sex-blind” (Harraway, 2000, p. 292). Even though there is an argument - even between Socialist feminists - whether Socialist feminism is a variety of Marxism, to a certain extent it is acceptable that there is a kind of bond between them because of utilizing the method of historical materialism of Karl Marx and Engles. Similarly, Alison Jaggar and Susan Bordo, Josephine Donovan also depict Socialist Feminism as “Contemporary Marxist Feminism” which is “more appropriately called socialist feminism to point up that it no longer presents an undiluted Marxism but a Marxism modified by radical feminism” (Donnovan, 2006, p. 63). The basic discrepancy between Marxist Feminism and Socialist Feminism is the ‘dual systems’ theory, which is accepted by Socialist Feminists. Dual Systems theory is associated with Sylvia Walby who claims that the reason behind gender inequalities stands up to both capitalism and patriarchy. Thus, these two different kinds of oppression intertwine into each other and must be considered together. (Kirby, 2000, p. 528).

Socialist feminists utilize certain concepts of Marxism and adapt them to express the oppression of women. They have used ‘production’ and ‘reproduction’ terms to express their struggle and they have questioned domestic labor, ideology, women and class. In this regard, it may be beneficial to mention some significant concepts of Marxism. According to Karl Marx, none of us is free; our ways of life as well as our way of thinking are predetermined with regard to the material conditions and these material relationships are defined by the ruling class. Moreover, while the ruling class identifies the material relationships, it also considers the needs of the upper class. The relationship between the bourgeoisie and the ruled class and definition of them are important for Socialist Feminists in order to adapt these terms to the feminist theory. According to Donovan, a Socialist feminist, “The bourgeoisie are defined as the owners of the means of production and the employers of wage-labour, the proletariat as those who own no means of production and live by



selling their wage-labour” (Donnovan, 2006, p. 81). While Marxism defines the proletariat as a ruled class, Socialist feminists define women as an oppressed class. Socialist feminists believe that capitalism is one of the biggest reasons behind women’s oppression however, on the other side; they also focus on class and racial distinction between women. According to Michelene Wandor, sisterhood cannot be established among women (Wandor, 2004, p. 136). The reason behind this is explained by Eisenstein. She advocates that “recognizing differences, particularly the racial and economic differences between women, can assist in uncovering of the way power is distributed among and between women” (Eisenstein, 1994, pp. 207-208). For that reason, since upper-class women oppress lower-class woman, it may be counterproductive to mention sisterhood with regard to Socialist feminists.

Class-consciousness is another significant concept that Marx placed emphasis on. He expresses, “In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class” (Lukacs, 1971, p. 60). Thus, different classes have their own way of life and, opinions and they observe the world from their own window, not from the perspective of others in different classes. This is what Marx calls “false consciousness” which means the acceptance of one’s own rules without criticism. Even though they believe that they are free to act and speak, this is merely a trick of the bourgeoisie in order to make them believe in the concept of their own freedom. Socialist feminists adapt a sense of false consciousness and assert that women have to realize their own conditions- being a good house wife or a daughter, working long hours with low salary- and discard “false consciousness” and relinquish the serving of “male identified” (Donnovan, 2006, p. 82) ideologies.

Karl Marx places considerable emphasis on the concept of alienation; although Hegel is the first philosopher to utilize the alienation concept, Marx defines the reasons behind alienation more comprehensively. Initially, he remarks upon labor alienation, which is created by capitalism. For instance; workers in a factory cannot use the products that they manufacture; they only briefly observe the output of their effort before continuing their work. As a result, both the products that belong to the capitalist owner, and the workers, are alienated from each other; thus they become “a commodity”. Marx posits that this process has an enormous impact on life of the

worker: “Man (becomes) alienated from other men...what is true of man’s relationship to his work, to the product of his work and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, to their labor, and to the objects of their labor” (Johnson, 2012, p. 266). Blaming both capitalism and the bourgeoisie for this process, Marx delineates that the worker’s family life, relationships and work become the integral parts of the ideology and in turn the worker becomes a commodity.

Socialist feminists have based alienation of women’s experiences on sexuality, motherhood, and education. Ann Foreman asserts that the increasing egoism makes men perceive women worthless. She advocates that men have many opportunities to state themselves in every sphere such as work, industry and home, but:

For the woman, however, her place is within the home. Men’s objectification within industry, through the expropriation of the product of their labour, takes the form of alienation. But the effect of alienation on the lives and consciousness of women takes an even more oppressive form. (Foreman, *Femininity as Alienation*, 1977, p. 111-112).

According to her, the alienation of women is worse than men’s alienation from themselves and their products. “Men seek relief from their alienation through their relations with women; for women there is no relief. For these intimate relations are the very ones that are essential structures of her oppression” (Foreman, 1977, p. 102). Although a working woman or a housewife is alienated from her work and herself, there is no one for her sigh of relief. On the contrary, men take the biggest responsibility of their alienation, even their own bodies.

Sexuality which is indicated as one of the biggest reason of women’s alienation is done “through sexual objectification and being treated as sexual commodities” (Encyclopedia of Women and Gender, 2002, p. 473). According to MacKinnon, women have no choice rather than being sexually objectified. For her, “sexually objectified means having a social meaning imposed on your being that defines you as to be sexually used, according to your desired uses, and then using you that way. Doing this is sex in the male system” (MacKinnon, 1991, p. 40). It is known that throughout the centuries women have dieted, spent money on new clothing, and beauty treatments, in order to become thinner and more beautiful and

thus gain approval from society. Although many women claim that the pursuit of fulfillment is their sole motivation for these actions, Alison Jaggar suggests that “in reality they most likely shape and adorn their flesh primarily for the pleasure of men” (Jaggar, 1983, p. 309). In addition, Peter Gay asserts that “until into the nineteenth century, women were viewed as a vessel of lust” (Eisenstein, 1988, p. 83), they have not been able to reject sexual objectification by men. Both MacKinnon (1991, p. 131) and Alan Soble (1986, p. 61) advocate that patriarchy is not the only system that has to be blamed for it. Capitalism has also crucial contribution for the objectification of women, especially for pornography industry. Because pornography is another thing that men show their dominance on women. Andrea Dworkin claims “Pornography reveals that male pleasure is inextricably tied to victimizing, hurting, and exploiting” (Dworkin, 1981, p. 70). Thus cruel male power is displayed on the subordinated women. Although it seems that objectification and sexuality make women alienated from their commodified bodies at first sight, they are also alienated from each other. Inasmuch as capitalism creates a world where women compete with each other in terms of being more attractive and seeming younger for men’s desire. Thus, they turn into meta-bodies, namely commodities. In this sense, capitalism does not only create class division between women but also makes them rivals.

The division of labour is another interesting concept that causes alienation. Marx examines the division of labour from two different spheres; first in the industrial world and then in a family unit. According to Marx, a family unit is the initial form of private property belonging to man; while a worker is viewed as somebody ruled by the bourgeoisie, a mother and a child are seen as ruled and oppressed by a husband in the domestic sphere. For Marx, there are three different kinds of economic values which are also adapted by Socialist feminists: “use value” covers the production for consumption such as housework, “exchange value” refers to the exchange of products and “surplus value”, the last one, is related to the extra hours and power that a proletariat provide for the profit of capitalists. However, in return for excess power and hours the proletariat is paid nothing (Scott, 1996, pp. 291-93). In relation to the previous point, Socialist feminists also consider the domestic labour of women.

In *The Origin of The Family* (1884) Frederick Engels made contributions to both Marxist and Socialist feminism. In his book, he examines the role of women in

the family: he begins his argument from the point of history where matriarchal families lived. He advocates that “The communist household, in which most of the women or even all the women belong to one and the same genres, while the men come from various other genres” (Engles, 2010, p. 61). Like Marx, he also touches upon the labour division within the household, women were the masters of their houses and they manage their houses while men were outside gathering food. Men were responsible for hunting and in time they left hunting and to get for other things they started to exchange cattle, which became a commodity for them. The development of technology caused an increasing in production of human needs and this resulted in the rise of cheap labour power, which in turn provoked the growth of slavery. Women’s contribution to industry became inconsequential due to their lack of contribution to fund. They were imprisoned in houses and continued to do housework. As men became more powerful than women, they “seized control over the households, women became degraded and slaves to men’s lust and were the instruments for reproducing more children” (Brever, 2004, p. 11). Thus, the structure of the family changed and it transformed from a matriarchal type into a patriarchal type. Due to the change in the equilibrium, men began to represent the bourgeoisie while women symbolized the proletariat. Housework lost its worth. According to Engels this change represented the “world historical defeat of the female sex” (Brever, 2004, p. 11). The solution of this problem was to make women take part in industry. Although it seemed a good idea at first, Marx claimed that stepping into the industrialized world alienate women. In this respect, it was not a good solution to gain equality between men and women.

With regard to socialist feminists, Lise Vogel (1995) and Susan Sontag (1973) advocate that housework and staying in the domestic sphere save women from becoming alienated. Other socialist feminists like Eli Zaretsky (1986), Mariarosa Dalla Costa (1972), and Zillah Eisenstein (1979) associate division of labour with the unproductive woman who is imprisoned in the domestic sphere while men are playing their heroic roles outside. In *Women and the Subversion of Community* (1972), Dolla Costa posits that not only housework but a woman’s dependency on her husband also makes her alienated. She writes “Participating with others in the production of a train, a car, or an airplane is not the same thing as using in isolation the broom in the same few square feet of kitchen for centuries” (quoted

in Donovan, 2012, p. 92). Carrying out repetitive actions in the private sphere prevents women from being productive and contributes to their false-consciousness. Instead of accepting their position, they should struggle for equality. Declining the notion of Engels, Michele Barrett points out that the creation of sexual division of labor existed before capitalism, but capitalism used it masterfully and “built a more rigidly segregated division” (Barrett, 1980, p. 137-38). In this regard, this is the main reason why this hierarchy exists today. This kind of hierarchy is seen in the position of the work. Many women work in lower positions than men although they are highly-qualified like men. On the other side, even both men and women work in the same position, women get lower payment than men.

Owing to the creation of class distinctions and inequality between the classes, Socialist Feminists such as Juliet Mitchell and Lise Vogel are wary of capitalism. According to them, while the bourgeoisie represent men who are able to work outside of the house and attain higher positions and salary, the proletarian class is the symbol of women who earn less money despite working long hours. However, the source of women’s domination is not the only concern for Mitchell and Vogel. For Juliet Mitchell women do not have control of their sexuality; they are the vessels for the production of offspring. She claims that “woman’s status and function are multiply determined by their role in not only production but also reproduction, the socialization of children and sexuality” (Tong, 2013, p. 112). Like Mitchell, Vogel also advocates that the role of women in the family is determined by reproduction, childcare, and sexuality; family is a cultural unity, which is built on the role and character of a woman. (Mitchell, 1966, pp. 15-17). Moreover, making a child socialized is the duty of women in the home, which is a significant problem for socialist feminists.

The...repressions, denials of affect and attachment , rejection of the world of women, and things feminine, appropriation of the world of men, identification with the idealized absent father – all a product of women’s mothering – create masculinity and male dominance in the sex-gender system and also create men as participants in the capitalist work world (Chodorow, 1978, p. 102).

Women do not only bring their children into the patriarchal capitalist world, but also they have to grow them up according to their rules. Even today, we are

taught how to raise children via technology, magazines, and seminars. As a result, even though they cannot decide how many children they will have or not, their bodies have been used as productive machines throughout the history. This is why socialist feminists are different from radical feminists. Because they do not only oppose to patriarchy, but capitalism is as important as patriarchy for the subordination of women.

In Crimp's plays, women do not only struggle with patriarchy and capitalism, they are also exposed to domestic violence in different ways. Although women have encountered domestic violence for ages, feminists have started to concentrate on this crucial problem recently. Domestic violence against women, which is a multifaceted problem, encompasses various types of violence such as physical, sexual, and emotional. While kicking, punching, slapping, assaulting with a gun or a knife, and throwing something at somebody are acts of physical violence, sexual violence involves rape and sexual harassment. Moreover, it can include violent acts such as prohibiting a woman going out with her friends, preventing her from working, and humiliation are also crucial parts of domestic violence. Susan Schechter who wrote *Women and Male Violence*, asserts that "Brutality is not necessarily confined to hitting, pushing, and pulling out hair. Its extreme, yet not infrequent, forms often leave women severely scarred, physically and emotionally" (14). Thus, physical violence against women does not only mean physical harm, but this kind of brutal act that also damages the psychology of women causing fear or even hysteria.

In his essay 'Subjection of Women' (1869), John Stuart Mill draws attention on male violence in domestic sphere. He points out;

however brutal a tyrant she may be unfortunately chained to - though she may know that he hates her, though it may be his daily pleasure to torture her, and though she may feel it impossible not to loathe him - he can claim from her and enforce the lowest degradation of a human being, that of lowest made the instrument of an animal function contrary to her inclinations (1989; 57).

As it is understood from Mill's essay, the root of violence against women has a long history. In his essay, Mill blames lower-class men for domestic violence, however many feminists; Millet, Walby, and Friedan, claim that gender is the real reason of violence and family structure and is the initial place where violence is both learned and begins. Frederick Engels (1884) likens a slave to a woman who is imprisoned in

the domestic sphere and seen as a commodity. They are the commodities of their fathers and husbands and this is the reason why they are exposed to violence. What is more, economic dependency on men is one of the reasons of emotional violence for Chodorow (1978) and Dinnerstein (1976). A woman deserves to be humiliated and she has to tolerate verbal violence because man is the economic source of her life.

Physical violence against women has been ignored for centuries not only by society, but also by the government in most of the countries. Donald G. Dutton points out that “By 1899, in the United States and United Kingdom there were hundreds of societies to protect children but only one to protect women” (2006: 10). That is to say, women did not have any support or legal rights to oppose physical violence and she was left to her own faith. Moreover, in the nineteenth century in Britain, it was legal to attack wives physically according to “rule of the thumb which stated that the instrument a man used for beating his wife could be a rod not thicker than his thumb” (Wiehe, 1998:86). Although later in time wife assault became illegal under British Common Law, it was ignored most of the time. Sernan and Firestone claim that women have no reason to expect protection from or to trust the justice system (Dutton, 2006:96).

Sexual violence which is a broad plot that covers policy, capitalism, and patriarchal oppression has been discussed by especially radical feminists who believe that sexism is the real reason for the oppression of woman. Andrea Dworkin (1989), MacKinnon (1983) point out that the desire to control a woman’s life, to feel their power, in patriarchal societies the use of sexual violence to achieve this is indispensable. Anne Llewellyn Barstow wrote *War's Dirty Secret* (2000) to expose the hidden aspects of sexual violence at war. She advocates that sexual violence against women during war has been kept secret for ages and no matter where you live, because the effect of rape, fear of women, and brutal dimension of sexual violence are the same everywhere. Violence against women is also utilized as a protest in contemporary feminist playwrights. In *Vinegar Tom* (1976), Caryl Churchill starts her play from the seventeenth century to reflect the history of violence from different aspects. She prefers to use the witch hunt phenomena to display how women’s sexuality and rebellion are perceived as a threat in patriarchy even today. In 1985, Marie Irene Fornes wrote *Conduct of Life*, to indicate how a wife and a child- mistress are cruelly abused and are engaged in violence by a husband.

Domestic violence against women is another remarkable aspect in Crimp's plays. To prove their strength and to subordinate women, his male characters use physical violence and sometimes they torture women physically and emotionally. On the other side, his female characters silently accept the patriarchal authority and its power.

Crimp who criticizes the impact of capitalism on society, creates alienated female bodies. None of his female bodies work outside and are dependent on their husbands in terms of finance. Namely, as Socialist Feminists advocate his productive female bodies cannot leave their domestic sphere. In addition, their sexuality and bodies cannot escape from being objectified and if they try to oppose to the social norms, their resistance is concluded with death and failure. To sum up, Socialist Feminist theory is significant while examining Crimp's female bodies. Crimp is one of the important playwrights who criticize contemporary capitalist society and Socialist Feminism bases on Marxism. Violence against women is one of the other troubles that his female characters are exposed. Even if physical violence and rape are illegal activities, Crimp implicitly indicates inadequacy to stop brutal attitudes against women. This is why studying his female characters is crucial to understand how women are viewed within modern capitalist society.

### **2.3 Artaudian Theatre**

Cruelty is in every case a mark of distinction but only when we understand cruelty not as pleasure taken in cultivating suffering but as a refusal of complacency toward any object (Rosset, 1993, p. 11).

Since the twentieth century, violence concept in theatre has been identified with Antonin Artaud. Laurene Kitchen advocates that "Beckett, Adamov, Ionesco, Genet and other neo-surrealist writers, are indebted in some cases to Artaud" (1966, p. 29). Like these playwrights, Artaud also rejected the traditional theatre and believed in the necessity of real theatre, which refers to audiences' feelings and consciousness. It is also possible to see the effect of Artaud in In-Yer-Face theatre playwrights such as Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill, and Martin Crimp. Both Artaud and Crimp emphasizes the concept of cruelty and used cruelty to integrate audiences to the play. Crimp states that "The cruelty is instinctive. There is something inherently cruel about people ... and I do not know what that is. My parents' constant arguments as a child



possibly have something to do with it” (Sierz, 2006, p. 88). Artaud claims that “I have said cruelty as I might have said life or necessity” (Artaud, 1958, p. 114). For that reason, this part will give an overview of the Artaudian theory to establish the relationships between Artaud’s *Theatre and Its Double* and Crimp’s plays.

Antonin Artaud, 1896-1948, is one of the most prolific French theatre theoreticians to have influenced playwrights, directors, and critics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Not only did his unsteady and miserable life, drug addiction, and mental illness provide frequent topics for conversation, he was well known for his singular theatrical output and influential theories. Between the 1920s and 1930s, he wrote many scenarios and played 23 roles “in French, German, and Italian avant-garde and commercial films” (Kimberly, 2012, p. 5). Between 1931 and 1935 he published “*The Theatre and Its Double*”, his most notorious work, which includes “*Theatre of Cruelty*” (Theatre de la Cruaute). In 1923, he wrote numerous letters about the inadequacy of language and named an early collection of his work *Fragments of a Diary from Hell*, which reflected his consciousness rather than advocating the letters’ literary value.

In the early twentieth century, theatre strived to reject traditionalism; Aristotle who “puts the emotions at the heart of its theory” (Kelleher, 2009, p. 49), namely more theoretical rather than emotional, used before.

The theme of theatre’s slowness or obsolescence is one that keeps coming round...when a host of radical practitioners in Europe particularly, from Richard Wagner and August Strindberg to Vsevolod Meyerhold and Bertolt Brecht and Antonin Artaud, sought to overturn theatre practices that no longer seemed appropriate for the modern world. (Kelleher, 2009, p. 55).

According to Kimberly Jannanore, until the late nineteenth century taming of audiences was the goal of politicians. “The domestication of the audience served as the essential condition for what widely came to be known among early twentieth-century theater makers, theorists, and politicians from widely different constituencies as the crisis of bourgeoisie theater” (Kimberly, 2012, p. 76). For that reason, new technologies such as bigger seats and effective decoration were used to make the audience feel more comfortable. As a consequence of this, theatre was arranged according to the needs of the bourgeoisie and it became a place to feel comfortable and passive. On the other side, lower classes were following puppet shows in the

music halls. This kind of consuming perceptiveness not only increased the distinction between the classes, but also the correlation between the bourgeoisie and theatre. This is exactly what Artaud desired to destroy in his approach to theatre. Artaud endeavored to establish a mutual relationship between the audience and the stage. He expresses that the reason why we do not give “an idea of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare that is worthy of them, it is probably because we have lost the sense of their theater's physics” (Artaud, 1958, p. 108). Furthermore, he did not want spectators to sit in a manner which prevented their movement; instead of a stage or an auditorium, he desired for a place which had “a single site, without partition or barrier of any kind” (Artaud, 1958, p. 96) so the audience could act freely.

Modernism, which adopts new forms and methods as do “The Symbolists”, “The Futurists”, “The Expressionists”, “The Surrealists”, and many others, can be categorized as avant-garde because it challenges and opposes conventions. Robert Leach, Artaud, Brecht, Meyerhold, and Stanislavsky can be classified as writing Modernist theatre. By virtue of the fragmented society and the effects of wars, these artists responded differently and contradictorily:

Stanislavsky wanted to heal it, that Meyerhold wanted to make it cohere beyond the stage in the spectator (in Roland Barthes’ sense, he wanted the death of the theatre artist), that Brecht wanted to use it for political purposes, and that Artaud wanted it to cauterize. (Leach, 2004, p. 2).

Thus, while Stanislavsky who was credited as the creator of the method style of acting in theatre, gave importance to the actor’s communion, Artaud tried to create equal distance between the actor and the audience. At the same time while Meyerhold was plunged in thoughts of vulnerability of being, Brecht was quarrelling for importance of displaying reality. Artaud drew attention to physical theatre and the aim of his theater was to remove the barrier between the audience and the actors. According to him, his theatre had to “wake audiences’ heart and nerves up” (Artaud, 1958, p. 64) and he called his approach the *Theatre of Cruelty*. Unlike traditional drama, visual and aural objects became more crucial than the text in his theatre. Moreover, as Murray suggests, Artaud’s experiences are the inseparable parts of his works (Murray, 2014, p. 3). In *The Field of Drama*, Martin Esslin explains why Artaud chose the title of the *Theatre and Cruelty* to describe his work, “The theatre is a simulacrum...at its highest level, ordered and elevated to the status of art...of the

real world and real life” (Esslin, 1987, p. 176). Jerzy Grotowski suggests that “the paradox of Artaud lies in the fact that it is impossible to carry out his proposals” (Grotowski, 2012, p. 60). Actually, Artaud’s theatre is seen paradoxical for many critics and theatre artists. For instance, Derrida considered Artaud’s writings while improving his concept of deconstruction. He asserted that the purpose of Artaud was “to erase repetition in general. For him, repetition was evil ... Repetition separates force, presence, and life from themselves ... This power of repetition governed everything that Artaud wished to destroy ...” (Bass, 1978, p. 310). Julia Kristeva discusses the language of Artaud in her essay and mentioned that “Artaud’s splintered and fractured writings show multiplicity, and his texts are expressive, elusive and compressed” (McRobbie, 1994, p. 13). Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari used Artaud’s image “a body without organs” to depict the deeper reality of capitalism in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Deleuze, 1987, p. 161).

There are many different interpretations of Artaud’s *Theatre of Cruelty*. Before referring to these interpretations, it is necessary to clarify what cruelty meant for Artaud. Certain that when cruelty is mentioned, everyone will comprehend it as ‘blood’, Artaud states:

But "theater of cruelty" means a theater difficult and cruel for myself first of all. And, on the level of performance, it is not the cruelty we can exercise upon each other by hacking at each other's bodies, carving up our personal anatomies, or, like Assyrian emperors, sending parcels of human ears, noses, or neatly detached nostrils through the mail, but the much more terrible and necessary cruelty which things can exercise against us. (Artaud, 1958, p. 79).

Here, Artaud does not refer to physical cruelty, conversely, it is the power of objects that evokes our senses and compels us to face our real consciousness. Robert Leach supports Artaud and advocates that Artaud’s concept of cruelty was often reduced to merely “physical cruelty, blood, and gore” (Leach, 2004, p. 170). Artaud sees it as the smallest problem for his theatre. For him, without consciousness there is no violence: “It is consciousness that gives to the exercise of every act of life its blood-red color, its cruel nuance” (Artaud, 1958, p. 102). For that reason, staging erotic obsessions and murder are the possible ways in which violence can unfold in one’s consciousness. This concept is also what Artaud also did in his plays, *Les Cenci* and *The Fountain of Blood*.

Artaud differs from his contemporaries in his comprehension of theatre. He believes that theatre is a magical place where creative abilities have to be utilized. In this respect, he deems that thinking of our actions instead of fulfilling them destroys our acts. To him, “the theater has been created as an outlet for our repressions” (Artaud, 1958, p. 9). This is why theatre is not formed by oral language and theatre “assembles the true spectacle of life” (Artaud, 1958, p. 12). He formulates a connection between *The Plague* and theatre. *The Plague* deforms the entire body, but it is the brain and lungs are affected first. When the victim of *The Plague* grasps that he will die soon, it is the best time for him to reveal all evilness inside him and he starts to murder and rape. Artaud likens *The Plague* victim to an actor, who becomes integrated with his role and has more courage than a murderer in act of homicide. On the other side, to him both theatre and *The Plague* have similar traits such having a profound effective on many people, provoking analogical feelings like revenge and defeat, and unfolding the evilness in human. According to Artaud, he believes contemporary theatre to be trouble. He claims:

The contemporary theater is decadent because it has lost the feeling on the one hand for seriousness and on the other for laughter; because it has broken away from gravity, from effects that are immediate and painful-in a word, from Danger. (Artaud, 1958, p. 42).

The reason for this predicament is not only the lack of plot, but also its comprehension of jest, mimic, music and dance as ‘art’, which is separate from theatre (Artaud, 1958, p. 42). These are crucial for both theatre and cinema. Due to this reason Oriental theatre, which is full of oral language, is different from Occidental theatre which manages to protect its mimic, music, and dance (Artaud, 1958, p. 68). For instance; in Balinese theatre, physical stimulants such as dancing women, their costumes, music, fireworks, and mimics provoke hidden feelings of audiences in the viewer. *Mise en scene* is one of the crucial traits of Artaud’s theatre that is different from traditional drama:

All true feeling is in reality untranslatable. To express it is to betray it. But to translate it is to dissimulate it. True expression hides what it makes manifest. It sets the mind in opposition to the real void of nature by creating in reaction a kind of fullness in thought. Or, in other terms, in relation to the manifestation-illusion of nature it creates a void in thought. All powerful

feeling produces in us the idea of the void. And the lucid language which obstructs the appearance of this void also obstructs the appearance of poetry in thought (Artaud, 1958, p. 71).

To reveal the hidden thoughts and senses, oral language is not enough for Artaud. He believes that simple language does not have the ability to transfer our senses. In the Louvre museum, he sees a painting which was drawn by an anonymous artist, Lucas Van Leyden. However, the painting, which is about sexuality, has an enchanting effect on him and he claims that “this painting is what the theater should be” (Artaud, 1958, p. 37). Inasmuch as, stage is a physical place and oral communication does not belong in it. To create a physical language which addresses our feelings, “music, dance, plastic art, pantomime, mimicry, gesticulation, intonation, architecture, lighting, and scenery” (Artaud, 1958, p. 39) must be incorporated into theatre. For example, Artaud deems that technology is insufficient to create the necessary private lighting tones. Nevertheless, “In order to produce the qualities of particular musical tones, light must recover an element of thinness, density, and opaqueness, with a view to producing the sensations of heat, cold, anger, fear, etc.” (Artaud, 1958, p. 95). This is the language of Artaud’s *Theatre of Cruelty*, which differs from traditional theatre.

Artaud plays a crucial role in the basement of postdramatic theatre. After the first half of the 20th century, theatre had been thought of as old-fashioned because of its traditional forms. As Artaud mentions before in *Theatre of Cruelty*, Hans-Thies Lehmann points out that drama is in danger of extinction. For him, “the reality of the new theatre begins precisely with the fading away of this trinity of drama, imitation and action” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 37). Thus, in contemporary society, dramatic forms were not enough to fulfill the demands of the audiences.

Hans-Thies Lehmann’s *Postdramatic Theatre* (1999), which comprises ideologies from the Futurists, Dadaists, and Artaud, brought a new conception to the theatre. In *Violence in Sarah Kane’s Postdramatic Theatre*, Ahmet Gökhan Biçer advocates that postdramatic theatre is one of the biggest dashes to traditional drama (Biçer, 2010, p. 29). According to Lehmann, postdramatic theatre which is closer to performing arts such as dance and performance art, can compensate for the contemporary audiences’ perception of reality. He believed that theatre has to stimulate spectators, addressing their senses instead of presenting a picture of society with only dialogue. This is in

opposition to what dramatic theatre offers its audiences. Like Artaud, Lehmann claims that for postdramatic artists, “the text ... is considered only as an element, one layer, or as a material of the scenic creation, not as its master” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 17). In this sense, both Lehmann and Artaud affirm each other in terms of the meaning of theatre.

As Sierz mentions, Crimp can be viewed as ‘an enigma’ because of the formal diversity in his plays. It is possible to divide his works in to two different groups as Vicky Angelaki claims in *The Plays of Martin Crimp*:

There is a group of plays which involve actual enactment in the more straightforward kind of theatrical performance; then there is another cluster, which is built on the dramatization of narration, locating the theatrical happening not in the visually experience, but in the mentally constructed ( Angelaki, 2012, p. 4).

In this sense, Crimp uses different forms such as the dramatic and postdramatic in his plays. In this regard, it is essential to mention the traits of postdramatic theatre associating Martin Crimp’s postdramatic plays, *Attempts on Her Life* (1997) and *Fewer Emergencies* (2005). When the plays were staged, the characters, the stage and all stimulants were presented at the same time. Unlike dramatic theatre, postdramatic theatre does not accept the hierarchy of indicators and this is referred as, “parataxis” (Lehmann, 2006:87), one of the most significant traits of postdramatic theatre. This is why some of the critics commented on *Fewer Emergencies*’s difficulty whilst some critics commented on the play positively:

One reviewer called it a “conceptual piece” (Independent); another, “theatre for the iPod generation” (Telegraph). They also asked the questions many people ask about experimental drama: “[c]an you have a play without identities?” (Sunday Times) or “[w]ho are these storytellers?” (Sierz, 2007, p. 376).

In Crimp’s postdramatic plays, not only undefined characters, but also music, which means, “musicalization of voices and sounds in theatre” (Sierz, 2007, p. 90), has an important role. “Playing with the density of signs” (Sierz, 2007, p. 89) is what Crimp attempts to achieve in his postdramatic plays. On the stage, “little action, long pauses, minimalistic reduction, and finally...muteness and silence” (Sierz, 2007, p.

90) are utilized in order to increase the perception of images. “Plethora” (Sierz, 2007, p. 90), the deformation of form, is the other common trait that both Lehman and Crimp display. In *Attempts on Her Life*, the absent protagonist, Anne is seen in many different shapes. In *Fewer Emergencies*, events do not follow any logical sequence. Thus Crimp achieves to create “a sense of chaos, in sufficiency, disorientation, sadness and horror vacui” (Sierz, 2007, p. 90).

Although Alex Sierz does not refer to *Attempts on her Life* (1997) and *Fewer Emergencies* (2005) as postdramatic texts, Heiner Zimmermann advocates that both of them are postdramatic texts. He clarifies this when he states “the prototypical postdramatic text has no ‘dramatis personae’ and no characters impersonating human beings who define themselves by speech and action” (Rubik, 2002, p. 106). In *Fewer Emergencies*, like *Attempts on Her Life*, the names of the characters are not mentioned. Indeed this is what Macdonald, a director of *Fewer Emergencies*, uses this as an advantage. Clara E. Agusti remarks that “Macdonald decided to place light at the same level as the other sign systems composing the theatrical event” (Agusti, 2013, p. 143). She also contends “Thus, what Lehmann calls the postdramatic ‘performance text’ emerged out of the combined interaction of the spectator not only with the linguistic material of the performance, but also necessarily and simultaneously with the mise-en-scène” (Agusti, 2013, p. 143).

Furthermore, in the introduction of Karen Jürs Munby’s translation of Lehmann’s *Postdramatic Theatre* (2006) she addresses both Sarah Kane’s and Crimp’s plays as postdramatic works. “British and American authors whose texts could be described as postdramatic include, for example, Sarah Kane (especially *4:48 Psychosis* and *Crave*), Martin Crimp (e.g., *Attempts on her life*, *Face to the Wall*, *Fewer Emergencies*) ...” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 6). Crimp’s characters in both plays do not depict themselves, but instead their speeches are about their suddenly changing psychology which does not follow any coherence.

It can be stated that, both *Attempts on her Life* (1997) and *Fewer Emergencies* (2005) share postdramatic theatre’s characteristics. Although Lehmann does not make a direct reference to Crimp’s plays in his book, he advocates that some contemporary playwrights’ works shows a “profoundly changed mode of theatrical sign usage” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 17), which suggests that “it makes sense to describe a significant sector of the new theatre as postdramatic” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 17).

In his plays, Crimp makes audiences notice the reality in them via violence. He believes that “It is a cruel world” (Sierz, 2006, p. 89) just like Artaud claims. In the next chapter, it will be explained how Crimp pays attention to music, lighting, and dance on the stage to affect their audiences’ conscious deeply and used cruelty as the main subject of their plays like Artaud. As a result, both physical and psychological sufferings of Crimp’s characters are seen throughout his plays; *Fewer Emergencies*, *The Country*, and *Definitely the Bahamas*.



### 3. THE LANGUAGE OF CRUELTY: ARTAUD'S EFFECT ON CRIMPLAND

If the theatre has been created as an outlet for our repressions, the agonized poetry expressed in its bizarre corruptions of the facts of life demonstrates that life's intensity is still intact and asks only to be better directed (Artaud, 1958, p. 11).

In the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, there was an explosion in new works with new style of writing in drama. As a result of this explosion, in Britain distinct changes in the climate of theatre occurred. Theatre began to gain popularity addressing cruelty and violence. After the terrorist attack in New York in September 2001 and the beginning of the 'War on Terror', intellectuals and artists began to debate about the relationship between violence and media, fiction and reality. According to Baudrillard, these attacks were not carried out by certain radial individuals, but actually "it was WE who wished" to destroy "the super power" which "is the secret cause of all the violence percolating all over the world, and consequently of the terrorist imagination, which unbeknownst to us, inhabits our psyche" (Baudrillard, 2012, p. 404). Just like Baudrillard, Antonin Artaud and Crimp believe in violence in humans and in theatre is a kind of vehicle for them to make audiences recognize the reality via violence.

Indeed, violence has its origins not only in social and political science, but it has an interdisciplinary approach. While sociological studies define violence as the use of physical force, philosophical studies focus on political issues in terms of the relationship between power and violence. Although the definition of violence is difficult, in his book *Keywords*, the Welsh critic Raymond Williams, makes an important contribution to the Marxist critique of culture, when he states that "violence is often now a difficult word, because its primary sense is of physical assault ... yet it is also used more widely in ways that are not easy to define" (Williams, 1985, p. 329). Since violence has many dimensions such as psychological violence, physical violence, and language of violence, it is not easy to confer an exact definition of it.

Influential critics Zygmunt Bauman and Slavoj Žižek discuss the display of violent structures inherent in institutional and discursive practices. Žižek divides violence into two different categories. The first one is the “subjective violence” which is “directly visible ... violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent” (Žižek, 2008, p. 1) such as crime and terror. The other is “objective violence,” which includes two forms: the “symbolic,” the violence of language, and “systematic” violence which is intrinsic violence (Žižek, 2008, p. 10). Bauman advocates that improvements in technology are one of the reasons behind the increasing violence. He points out the Holocaust, which “bears on the self-awareness and practice of the institutions and the members of contemporary society” (Zygmunt, 1989, p. xii), is a problem of modern civilization and culture. He rejects that it is “something that happened to the Jews” (Zygmunt, 1989, p. 1). Conversely he vehemently advocates that the Holocaust “was a legitimate resident in the house of modernity” (Zygmunt, 1989, p. 17), so that although technology and bureaucracy try to make people forget, the seeds of violence continue to survive.

Sierz claims “Crimp’s narratives end up often revolving around violence to women” (Sierz, 2006, 150). In fact, gender also comprises another dimension of violence, playing a significant role in aggressive and violent behavior. Women are the ones who are exposed to male violence both physically and emotionally. In *Women and Male Violence*, Susan Schechter explains that, “[b]rutality is not necessarily confined to hitting, pushing, and pulling out hair. Its extreme, yet not infrequent, forms often leave women severely scarred, physically and emotionally” (Schechter, 1983, p. 14). As a consequence of increasing violence toward women, since the late 1980s, there have been some significant changes in the United Kingdom and the world, with governments and institutions starting to combat domestic violence and promote women’s rights.

Crimp argues that “[l]iterature and violence have had a long, perverse and extremely fruitful relationship” (Sierz, 2006, p. 149). Indeed, stories of horror and cruelty have been a central part of drama from the beginning of the history of theatre itself. However, in ancient Greek drama, violent acts were not performed in front of the spectators. They preferred to stage violence in an imagined backstage arena. However, today with the improvement of technology, the depictions and display of

violence, as well as, destruction seem more ordinary than ever. Drawing on Antonin Artaud, in this part of the thesis, will be engaged with the analysis of Martin Crimp's plays; *Fewer Emergencies*, *The Country*, and *Definitely the Bahamas*, showing both his perception of violence and how he reflects this in his plays. The similarities in Artaud's theatre and Crimp's theatre in terms of their goals and techniques will also be explored. Crimp uses cruelty to reflect the increasing dimension of capitalism and domestic violence in British society. Since he wants to make audience face reality, he draws on an Artaudian style of theatre.

Antonin Artaud, a French playwright, poet, and director, reflected how aspects of pain and violence have been used throughout theatre. For him theater 'causes thinking, not defining thoughts' (Artaud, 1958, p. 69), so spectators have a chance not only to better comprehend their own attitudes and, behavior, but also to pass judgment on themselves. In 1932, *Le Théâtre de la Cruauté, Premier Manifeste (First Manifesto of the Theatre of Cruelty)* was published by the National Research Foundation. However, in 1933, Artaud declared that he changed the name of the first production of the *Theater of Cruelty* into *La Conquête du Mexique (The Conquest of Mexico)* and *Le Théâtre de la Cruauté, Second Manifeste (Second Manifesto of the Theatre of Cruelty)* was published. Artaud's great influence on famous stage - directors like William Gaskill and Peter Brook, who staged violence impressively in their works, cannot be denied. He complains about the collapse of contemporary theatre because it does not reflect reality and blames playwrights for not using ordinary language to help people comprehend the play (Artaud, 1958, pp. 79-80).

And we insist on the fact that the first spectacle of the Theatre of Cruelty will turn upon the preoccupations of the great mass of men, preoccupations much more pressing and disquieting than those of any individual whatsoever (Artaud, 1958, p. 87).

According to Artaud, the absolute duty of theatre is to reflect real human nature with all of its inner conflicts, instincts and aggression tendencies. After he watched the Bali theatre, which affected him deeply, he asserted that reflection is only achievable by using non-verbal techniques such as music, dance, and lightings. "This is why true beauty never strikes us directly. The setting sun is beautiful because of all it makes us lose" (Artaud, 1958, p. 71). Thus, for Artaud the power of theatre comes

from its performance, which evokes the senses to make the audience feel connected to the theater, and thereby more connected to the brutality of the world. He compares the violent theatre to an illness, a 'plague' and asserts that; "the theatre is a formidable call to the forces that impel the mind by example to the source of its conflicts" (Artaud, 1958, p. 30).

Alvis Hermanis, a director of the New Riga Theatre, questions the reason "why theatre makers are still convinced that the best way to communicate with the audience is by using aggression and violence" (Hermanis, 2008, p. 8). He suggests, "Artaud's idea of the theatre has been fully exhausted by now and is simply boring" (Hermanis, 2008, p. 8). In addition to this, according to him, Sarah Kane's theatre is the example of the Artaudian movement in British theatre. However, Alex Sierz advocates that Crimp is interested in cruelty from the beginning of his writing (2006, p. 88), associating his use of cruelty to an early reading of Artaud's *Theatre and Its Double* (2013, p. 6). Moreover, in *Musicality in Theatre*, David Roesner gives a list of playwrights whose texts convey musicality, which is one of the aspects of Artaudian Theatre. In the given list, both Artaud and Crimp were named in the same category (2013, p. 96). Although Hermanis claims that the theatre of Artaud has lost its effectiveness, the cruelty concept, which he mentions, is not in the sense that it is generally understood. However, it is a kind of rejection of traditional moral obligations. Artaud comprehends the cruelty concept as a kind of treatment of humankind rather than text or act. Artaud delineates,

And we insist on the fact that the first spectacle of the Theater of Cruelty will turn upon the preoccupations of the great mass of men, preoccupations much more pressing and disquieting than those of any individual whatsoever (Artaud, 1958, p. 87).

In this way, as he explained, his theatre liberates the world from society's conventions and is much less entertaining. It only reflects what kind of people we are in this world rather than giving any moral advice or suggestions.

Martin Crimp indicates the themes of political and social violence in his plays. His view about the modern world portrays the dark side of human nature. While cruelty of policy deteriorates society day by day, the violence in people has started to increase. Just like Artaud claims in '*To Have Done With The Judgment of God*', a

radio play from 1947, “we, the born capitalists” (12), Crimp also indicates the cruelty of capitalism in his plays. In *The Treatment* (1993), the late capitalist society reveals the instinct of cruelty in Anne. She feels shame, which makes her aggressive, after she comprehends that her secret life will be consumed by the others, thus as a result she carves out Clifford’s eyes. In *Cruel and Tender* (2004), Crimp indicates the hypocrisy of the policy under the name of protection and destroying terror in the world. The General massacres many people in a village just for his own selfish demand of love. In *Attempts on Her Life* (1997), the violent consumption of a female body is shown from different dimensions. In *The Republic of Happiness* (2013), the concept of family and family bonds in contemporary society is depicted with cruelty. Greed and ambition turn into physical violence and, murder, in *Dealing with Clair* (1988). Whether Crimp uses violence as an aesthetic method consciously or not, he generally undermines the double-sided nature of cruel capitalism and globalization in his plays.

The influence of Antonin Artaud’s manifesto, *The Theater of Cruelty* on the images and violence in Martin Crimp’s plays, is indisputable. Crimp uses not only violence to shock the audience, but also compels them to watch it, considering these acts of violence in their own way. He chooses to follow the manifesto of Artaud in order to display the dark side of consuming culture, and degenerated relations in the society and thus to create awareness in the audience.

The effect of the Artaudian theatre is seen in *Fewer Emergencies* (2005), *Definitely the Bahamas* (1987) as well as *The Country* (2000). Artaud says, “it is certain that we need above all a theater that wakes us up: nerves and heart” (Artaud, 1958, p. 84); both Crimp and Artaud share the same views in terms of the staging a play. Indeed physical language is one of the most important characteristics of the Artaudian Theatre. Artaud states;

I say that the stage is a concrete physical place which asks to be filled, and to be given its own concrete language to speak. I say that this concrete language, intended for the senses and independent of speech, has first to satisfy the senses, that there is a poetry of the senses as there is a poetry of language, and that this concrete physical language to which I refer is truly theatrical only to

the degree that the thoughts it expresses are beyond the reach of the spoken language (Artaud, 1958, p. 37).

The language of theatre for Artaud means addressing the senses rather than the written text. Arousing the senses of the audiences and integrating them into the play by using the light, costumes, and music, composes the language of the play. He also advocates that even though there is verbal language; the physical language means much more rather than being called 'craft' (Artaud, 1958, p. 40). Crimp's plays also utilize this strategy of language effectively.

*Fewer Emergencies*, which was published in 2005, consists of three short plays under the same title. Firstly, *Face to The Wall* and *Fewer Emergencies* were published in 2002 and they were staged by Kate Mitchell in Germany and in France and then Crimp added *Whole Blue Sky* in 2005. At the beginning of the play, it is stated that both *Face to the Wall* and *Fewer Emergencies* were written on 10 September 2001, the day before the terrorist attacks on New York. In the play, a group of people sits and tells stories about their inner conflicts and the horror within them. The gloomy lighting affects the spectators and forces them to perceive profoundly the reality of acting. *Whole Blue Sky* starts with the depiction of a woman who has a miserable life with her husband and son, Bobby. The woman married at a young age, gave up her education, and now feels depressed. She has guests outside, who seem to be enjoying themselves with a fake smile on their faces. The play finishes when the cruelty in the mother and her son increases. The speakers depict the scene of massacre in *Face to the Wall*. A man comes into a classroom and begins to shoot everyone: a teacher and the children. The audience is surprised when they learn that he has four children, a good job, and a house. His only problem is with the postman who is occasionally late. More detail is given about the postman who is depressed. He has a son who is exposed to his dad's violence. In *Fewer Emergencies*, Bobby, a boy, is locked at home when his parents go on holiday. Bobby has a symbolic house which includes all goods in the world. However, there is a strike outside and he is shot in his hip. He crawls towards the door for help. The play ends when he is about to open the door.

In *The Country* (2000), which was directed by Liz Humphrey in 2010, it is difficult to understand the distant and cold behaviour of Richard as well as the angry and

questioning tone of Corinne from the text. In *The Country*, the family trauma of Corinne and Richard, a married couple, is staged. Richard, a doctor, brings a woman called Rebecca to their house at night, claiming that he found the young woman near the roadside after she had fainted. However, Rebecca, who is actually Richard's mistress, tells the truth and it is discovered that she has become a drug addict because of Richard who is also addicted to drugs. As soon as Corinne learns the truth, she leaves the house with her children. Rebecca takes her revenge cutting Richard's hand violently and also leaves him. While Rebecca is dominated cruelly by Richard, Corinne is dominated by both Richard and Morris, Richard's friend, who makes Corinne feel illiterate. After two months, Corinne forgives her husband, but when she learns that Richard gave more money than Sophie, a nanny, deserves, she finally comprehends that he will not change.

Like Artaud, Crimp also presents the reflection of reality. Cruelty is a kind of unusual instrument for both Crimp and Artaud in order to make the audiences familiar with the inequalities of the world in which they live. He reveals the cruelty of human nature and unmasks the hypocrisy of a man, who deceives his wife with a young girl. In *Definitely the Bahamas* (1987), cruelty is shown not only as a physical action, but also as a political action. While children's drug addiction, which refers to the loss of control, uncovers their cruel instincts, the sexual cruelty inflicted on women and children causes silence in society. *Definitely the Bahamas* starts with the conversation of an old married couple, Milly and Frank. While they are looking at their family photos, they talk about their over skilled son, Michael who visited them with his wife, Irene, last year. As soon as they see a photo of their son and Marijke, a young Dutch server in the house, the cruelty that they hide or ignore begins to be comprehended. Crimp uses both the Marijke and Irene characters as victims of society's rising cruelty in terms of sexual abuse. On the other side, Marijke is also the target of racist behaviours, thus Crimp reveals violence in society from various points. In addition to this, although it is claimed that Marijke's weak language is the problem, Vicky Angelaki states that during the play, Marijke speaks English fluently (Angelaki, 2012, p. 98). Thus the power of the theater is in the performance of the play as Artaud advocates, not the written text.

In the following parts, three of Crimp's plays will be considered in terms of congruity with the work of Antonin Artaud. Crimp's way of utilizing techniques which engage Artaudian principles in order to create interaction between the audience and the action on the stage, will be discussed.

### **3.1. FEWER EMERGENCIES**

#### **3.1.1. FACE TO THE WALL**

The theatre will never find itself again—i.e., constitute a means of true illusion—except by furnishing the spectator with the truthful precipitates of dreams, in which his taste for crime, his erotic obsessions, his savagery, his chimeras, his utopian sense of life and matter, even his cannibalism, pour out, on a level not counterfeit and illusory, but interior (Artaud, 1958, p. 92).

Artaud delineates that cruelty of individuals derives from within, thus Crimp deliberately displays the savage, barbaric feelings of people in his theatre. He attacks the audiences' senses to create the effect which he demands to create on them.

In *Face to the Wall*, there is no protagonist, so the events are described from the four different nameless speaker's point of view. One of the speakers is male, but the other genders are not disclosed. Whilst in *The Guardian*, Lyn Gardner expressed that "the distinction between performance and story, actor and reality are entirely blurred. The song curls through the auditorium and into your brain like a whiff of smoke" (Gardner, 2002, p. 330). In *The Times* Ian Johns explained that "In Crimp's typically absurdist style, he summed up a media-saturated, pop psychologizing age that tries to warp up complex horror in neat packages" (Johns, 2002, p. 330).

*Face to the Wall* was directed by Kate Mitchell in 2002 in the Royal Court Theatre. Although it lasted only fifteen minutes, many critics and members of the audience found it fascinating. The madness of man in the contemporary era, is displayed in an uncommon way and Crimp managed to affect the audience emotionally: he does not give them a chance to calm down.

At first you think that the three people are probably colleagues developing a screenplay, perhaps one of those trashy made-for-TV movies that feed on real-life horror stories. After a short while, it becomes apparent that this is



some kind of performance. The man telling the story keeps needing, much to his annoyance, to be prompted by a woman who is sitting in the audience with a copy of the script ... There is no doubt that this is both a performance and yet it is also real. (<http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/face-to-the-wall/?tab=4>).

After Mitchell, James Macdonald staged the three plays in 2005 at the Royal Court Theatre. According to Macdonald, Crimp's play "is both self-critical and a clever sleight of hand which turns the tables on a liberal audience... There are more emergencies in the world because we have the goods and other people don't" (Sierz, 2006, p. 220). In Macdonald's production, four actors are seen while sitting around a white table and extemporizing the stories between the three walls around the stage. The wide set lighting around the actors is very important not only to deliver the meaning of the play efficiently, but also to make the spectators feel intertwined with the play. In his interview with Alex Sierz, Macdonald points out that he demands the actors keep "relatively still so that the audience could listen carefully and not be distracted by any action. No visible theatre lights, just an atmosphere that acts as a germ or mood for each story" (Sierz, 2006, p. 219). In the *New Statesman* magazine, with regard to *Fewer Emergencies* (2005), Crimp states that *Fewer Emergencies* is "three fables united by threats to the culture of contentment. They explore different kinds of anxiety about the fault line between the haves and the have-nots." (Sierz, 2005, p. 26).

"The Wall" in the title represents undeniable alienation, and isolation of people in the contemporary world. During the play, the children's escape towards the wall because of the violence, confronts them with their own loneliness: no one will help them. The postman's mental breakdown gains momentum when he turns towards the wall that reminds him of his solitude.

The cruelty in *Face to the Wall* begins with the physical violence of a man who kills the receptionist, the teacher, and several children in a class. However, it is not definite whether the children in the class have seen this event on the television or have witnessed it. Artaud delineates,

All our ideas about life must be revised in a period when nothing any longer adheres to life; it is this painful cleavage which is responsible for the revenge

of things; ...consider the unprecedented number of crimes whose perverse gratuitousness is explained only by our powerlessness to take complete possession of life (Artaud, 1958, p. 12).

Although all of us strongly desire to live, it is easy to lose control of our lives. The increasing demand of possessions destroys our bond with life, which has become meaningless, and this is the main reason for the crime in the play. In Crimp's play, as Artaud claims, the worthlessness of life is explicitly demonstrated and Crimp associates the massacre with the fecklessness of surviving. While the actors are discussing the murderer's life to discover the reasons behind his action, they cannot find any problems. He seems to be an ordinary man with a happy family, but owning all beautiful things cannot stop the violence in him or cannot change his ideas about the worthlessness of life.

The depiction of the massacre is so expressive and reveals the various dimensions of violence. While the receptionist is shot 'through her mouth', the teacher is shot "through her heart" (25), and the children, A, B, C, and D, are shot "in the head" (27). Although the children do not comprehend the extent of the violence, in fact "3...they've seen this on TV – they've stayed up late as a special treat and they've seen this on TV – they know exactly what's going on and this is why they back away – instinctively back away" (25). It is a known fact that today many societies are dependent upon mass media. Lauren Langman, a sociologist, suggests that the form of an electronic medium informs its content and can shape its audience. She claims "[v]iewing television requires no extended training; most children can operate a television set before they can walk or talk" (Brown, 2003, p. 184). In this manner, media, which reflects the realities of society, has a great influence on children and their awareness of crime. In *Violence in Film and Television*, Comstock and Scharrer claim, there is "too much violence on television" (Comstock, G. & Scharrer, E, 2003, p. 34). Thus, Crimp indicates both the violence of society as a reality and the action of the media in spreading violence in contemporary society.

1 '...They back away against the wall' (26) since there is no exit, no way for escaping. When the children try to go back towards the wall, as if there is a way to go out, the pictures on the wall are noticed that symbolize their happy moments.

2 Against their pictures on the wall – ‘My house’

3 ‘My cat’.

2 ‘Me and my cat’.

3 ‘My house’, ‘Me and my cat’, ‘Me in a tree’, and it’s interesting to see the way that some of them / hold hands. (26)

The pictures which are taken at the moment of happiness are associated with objects such as “house, cat, tree”, thus as Artaud remarks, Crimp supports “the utopian sense of life” (92), utilizing pictures which refer to the artificiality of their happiness. The wall might also represent the children’s loneliness, which is one of the cruel results of capitalist society; so Crimp uses both the wall and the pictures ironically.

Some of the children ‘instinctively hold hands’ because of love and trust; as “an adult” one cannot do this “unless it’s someone who loves you” (26). Crimp criticizes the society which is lost and corrupted, because of being loveless and distrustful. Society has already lost its purity. Bauman delineates that “everyone is full of risks, which need to be confronted and fought alone” (Bauman, 2001, p. 48). Whilst child A runs away from the “warm metal” of the gun, the man as an adult grasps it firmly to reflect his insensitive, cold, and violent instincts on children, pure ones, who have not yet learned about the cruelty and violence of the consuming society. The only thing that they know instinctively is how to protect themselves from physical violence by “holding hands, backing away the wall, and ducking away”. (26-27).

According to Fred Furedi, after the September 11 attacks, Western society has become more fearful than ever and “children are the first to suffer” (Furedi, 2006, p. xix). Protective behaviours of adults, who are more anxious than ever, have started to increase and ‘the safety of children becomes an obsession’. (Furedi, 2006, p.121). That’s why Crimp used violence on children both in *Face to the Wall* and *Fewer Emergencies*, in order to provoke spectators to engage with the horrifying effects of the material world on human beings.

The unnamed speakers in the play begin to talk about his life to find the base of his violence. However, he has a “charming / tolerant wife” (28) and four children who have happy moments with their father in ‘their beautiful house’ (28). Moreover, he lives in a “well-constructed and well located” neighborhood, so he has everything to

make his life easier and it appears he feels no pain. “He’s never suffered, experienced war, experienced poverty, and been tortured for his beliefs” (32). But he lives in a modern world where everything has changed. Instead of small shops, there are big shops with their big names. In addition to this devolution, craftsmen who “make shoes, grind knives, mend rugs” (33) are not seen, so their labor is also destroyed. Thus, the society that he lives in has nothing in terms of sensation. Everything is not only mechanical, but also ordinary, vulgar, and artificial. According to Bauman, today contemporary society is full of uncertainties and “hesitation, lack of control – all result in anxiety” (Bauman, 2001, p. 87-88).

Speaker 1, whose gender is mentioned at the beginning as ‘male’, has a nervous breakdown when he tries to tell the events from the killer’s perspective. From the beginning his speech is fragmented and short. Many times he wants the other speakers not to help him while he is speaking.

1... - that’s good – you saw what happened to child A, you saw what happened to child B, you saw what happened to child C – you saw what happened to child C – you saw what happened to child C – no – yes – no – don’t help me –

Pause

Don’t help me – (31)

Then he starts to swear violently and this time pause is longer than the other speaker breaks in dialogue. Crimp uses the pause to strengthen the dimension of the violence and to make the spectators understand as well as react to it deeply. Furthermore, this kind of breakdown is also seen in *Porno* scenario, in *Attempts on Her Life*. When a woman tells the story of a porno star from her point of view, she loses her control and leaves the stage. Dominic Infante claims, “violent people often do not have the verbal skills for dealing with normal frustrations and feel that violence is their only alternative” (Infante, 1986, p. 62). For that reason, Crimp uses speaker 1 to imagine the violence of the postman again.

In this respect, Crimp suggests that violence is the only true instinct in this artificial world. To reinforce his discourse, Crimp gives another example; a postman. As the speakers say, the postman is sometimes late unwittingly because “sometimes there

are problems sorting the letters” (33). Nevertheless this is not the postman’s real problem: his son comes in to awaken his dad carrying a cup of tea, “the postman just pushes himself harder against the wall” (34) and he does not want to wake up to go to work. He is in a state of depression and the wall represents his subconscious, in which he is lost. In *Theatre and Its Double*, Artaud points out:

Before the onset of any very marked physical or psychological discomfort, the body is covered with red spots, which the victim suddenly notices only when they turn blackish. The victim scarcely hesitates to become alarmed before his head begins to boil and to grow overpoweringly heavy, and he collapses (Artaud, 1958, p. 19).

The illness of contemporary society develops insidiously and fast. By the time it is noticed, there is nothing that anyone can do. Destruction and collapse are the only ways to get rid of the illness. Crimp applies Arthudian techniques, using the postman who notices his illness too late. The postman claims that “there’s another person come to live in my head”. (35). As he dives into his subconscious more deeply, his violent instincts surface and we begin to see the world he lives in through his cruel feelings. His son states:

Daddy daddy, you’re not sick at all  
Daddy daddy, turn a-WAY FROM THE WALL.  
Hey daddy,  
You’re a liar – and a fake  
Take off those pyjamas  
There’s deliveries to make.  
I lifted my head from my white pillow case  
Threw my hot tea RIGHT IN HIS FACE (35).

His son claims that in order to be saved and to continue living his artificial life, his father must place himself far from the wall. The wall is the symbol of his loneliness and if he changes his direction and stops listening to the voices inside his head, he can continue to live in this unreal contemporary society. Inasmuch as the postman, a part of the spurious society, is without doubt “a liar and a fake” (35). At last, the

postman cannot stand the increasing anxiety in him and violently attacks his son revealing the barbaric terror in himself with his cry, “Doo ba ba-doo b aba – Doo ba ba doo ba ba” (36). According to Artaud, “dance, song, pantomime” are the crucial elements of theatre which “restores the theater to its original destiny and presents as a combination of all these elements fused together in a perspective of hallucination and fear” (1958, p. 54). Thus, both for Crimp and Artaud, song is used to increase not only the impact of reality, but also awareness in the audience; the song of the postman explicitly reveals the terror in his conscious. One of the spectators reveals his feelings,

The song curls through the auditorium and into your brain like a whiff of smoke from a still-warm gun. It reeks of the exhaustion of someone who has carried anger around for longer than they can bear. (<http://www.royalcourttheatre.com/whats-on/face-to-the-wall/?tab=4>).

As Clara Escoda Agusti explains, “in this play, violence comes from the very midst of late capitalist society – small wonder it is metaphorically positioned as the triptych’s middle play”(Agusti, 2013, p. 142). Crimp explicitly indicates that the time for communication and understanding is gone, and all that is left is violence and incurable human suffering and loneliness.

### **3.1.2. FEWER EMERGENCIES**

Initially, the play was performed by Kate Mitchell in 2002 and then by James Macdonald in 2005. Crimp explains the writing process of the play,

*Fewer Emergencies* was written on one of those very rare days when writing seems effortless. I was renting a room, and in the distance I had a glimpse between the buildings opposite of the river, where boats were gliding by... The following day the twin towers in New York were destroyed (Sierz, 2006, p. 68).

*Fewer Emergencies* opens with stress an emphasis placed on “improving things” and “everything is getting much brighter” (41). Technology is improving and the consuming society is getting bigger and bigger. The happiness of the family on the boat while going on holiday, and even the smiles on their faces, become artificial. A crowd attacks everything outside. “Rocks are being thrown, shots are fired, cars are

being overturned” (46). In *Liquid Fear*, Bauman explains the condition of the poor and says, “While the elite pursue their voyages to their imaginary destination, some place at the top of the world, the poor have been caught into a spiral of crime and chaos” (Bauman, 2006, p. 97). While the poor are expressing their misery violently on the streets, Bobby is locked at home with his all minimized belongings.

1 Ah yes- but you have to know what’s going on in Bobby’s mind. In Bobby’s mind, if he opens the door, if he lets people in, if he takes them up the stairs, shows them the cupboards of precious wood, the fresh figs, the knives and the uranium – if he lifts a corner of the cloth and gives them a glimpse of Paris – if he shows them the swollen cock going into the swollen cunt and lets them pick a restaurant or a string quartet – if, after a swim in the mountain lake, he lets them take home a human egg – then what? – they’ll what? – they’ll... Yes? (47)

Bobby’s world in the cupboard is the reflection of his capitalist world. Crimp miniaturizes the belongings of the capitalist world ironically as Jonathan Swift did in *Gulliver’s Travels*. According to Zizek, because of the strict class distinction in the capitalist world, cruelty exposed. He asserts that “the arbitrariness of the social hierarchy is not a mistake ... violence threatens to explode not when there is too much contingency in the social sphere, but when one tries to eliminate this contingency” (Zizek, 2012:11). On account of the revolt of the people, Bobby, the symbol of capitalism, is afraid of being destroyed. The time for the expected result comes and Bobby is shot in “his hip” (49) and crawls towards the door to take the key and opens the door. Meanwhile, his family calls him, but they are not concerned whether Bobby answers the phone. On their faces there is still an artificial smiling, frozen happiness and they sing as the postman sang in *Face to The Wall*:

Doo doo – ba – dee doo doo doo ba – doo ... (49).

The capitalist world changed them into artificial creatures with frozen feelings and the only feeling that they cannot resist is the violence inside them, which gets bigger and bigger as they dive into the deepness of capitalism.

Crimp manifests another reality as a result of the others’ rebellion. When Bobby gives permission to the crowd to discover his capitalist world, “they’ll always love him” (47). The capitalist world offers them what they do not have such as comfort

with improved technology, artificial happiness, lost values, and hunger of consumption.

Bobby opens the door with a key in his hand symbolically, although speakers 2 and 3 state that “he must be completely mad” (47); if the house is considered as a symbol of Western late capitalist economy with the minimized properties in the cupboard, Crimp indicates the destruction of this system.

Crimp chooses this play symbolically as the last play of the triptych and his choice of titles for the plays was done according to the message he wished to convey. At the end of the play Bobby’s attempt to open the door, which means inviting the poor into the capitalist world to share possessions, might be interpreted to mean less trouble and fewer clashes between the social groups as a result of equality. As a consequence there will be fewer emergencies in the world.

### **3.1.3 WHOLE BLUE SKY**

Macdonald uses light so creatively in order to reflect the essence of the play and to make the spectators feel involved with the events on the stage from the beginning of the play. During the play, the light never dims. Agusti states that:

The ultraviolet light had the uncanny effect of preventing spectators from seeing each other’s true colour and difference, filtering all faces through a homogenizing colour that intensified the whiteness of their clothes and their teeth. It evoked the dazzling, shiny smoothness of glossy magazines and consumer ‘utopias’, which create a society of surfaces where one can read but the most external signs (Agusti, 2013, p. 146).

The title of the play, which is ironic, refers to the consumerist utopia that is demonstrated in the play by means of the ‘extended’ table meal where people seem really happy. Nevertheless this happiness is artificial and temporary and is built on material self-interests and egocentricity, thus everything seems like the ‘whole blue sky’ which gives happiness. However, lightning as well as storm are invisible behind it.

The play begins with the unhappiness of a married woman who does not love her husband. She cannot leave her husband in view of their son whom she loves: “Loving the baby cements the marriage” (9). However, for her marriage and her son,



she left behind studying and the books “that made her feel alive” (11) and now she is depressed. The violence of the patriarchal society does not let her gain her freedom and be herself. She left her wishes, demands, dreams behind her and the things that are the sources of her happiness are not only her artificial family picture, but also ‘money’ and ‘property’ (14). She does not work, so she is completely dependent on her husband for economic support and this inequality is one of the results of rising capitalism. Marxist and socialist feminists, who claim that women should be paid to do housework, criticize the oppression of women in the family unit. In *Marxism and Oppression of Women*, Lise Vogel declares that,

In the capitalist societies, the burden of the domestic component of necessary labor rests disproportionately on women, while the provision of commodities tends to be disproportionately the responsibility of men, fulfillable through participation in wage labor. (Vogel, 2012, p. 153).

Thus this kind of injustice and oppression causes the married woman’s depression. Moreover, during the play, she is only depicted as fulfilling the roles of ‘a woman’ and ‘Mummy’, thus she is a female who is defined solely by her gender roles. She does not even have a name although her son’s name is given.

Furthermore, the woman knows that her husband’s eyes often “slide away” wherever they go, “even in the toy shop selecting a toy” (11). Although she is aware of her husband’s infidelity, she has reasons not to leave the house such as “money, property, and family” (14). In *The Plays of Martin Crimp*, Vicky Angelaki asserts “*Whole Blue Sky* centers on the turmoil of ostensibly successful individuals, who consistently define happiness on material terms” (Angelaki, 2012, p. 140). Thus, Crimp effectively reflects the contemporary troubles of marriage, just like Artaud suggested.

In the summer nights, they have dinner with their friends who laugh insincerely as a sign of their fake lives.

1 ... Haven’t they worked? Haven’t they struggled to extend this table? Haven’t they screamed at each other in private? Punched each other? Haven’t they broken each other’s skin to open this, for example, bottle of wine? (14).

In *Pan's Labyrinth*, a dark fantasy film from 2006, Ofelia is warned not to eat anything. However, she cannot resist the desire of eating the delicious foods laid out in front of her. As soon as she eats a grape, a strange creature, awakens and places his eyeballs into the palm of his hands instead of into his face. Eating, which is a symbol of a capitalist society, not only makes people content as it is seen in the play, but the pleasure of consuming also increases the cruelty in them. For that reason, even for 'a bottle of wine', the violent acts of people are depicted frankly by Martin Crimp. Zygmunt Bauman also summarizes the relationships based on interest: "Unlike 'real relationships', 'virtual relationships' are easy to enter and to exit. They look smart and clean, feel easy to use, when compared with the heavy, slow-moving, messy real stuff" (Bauman, 2006, p. xii).

Her son, Jimmy has grown up in a capitalist society where he is able to consume with ease: in a pet shop, on the street, and at home.

1 Everybody likes him. Everybody has always liked him. Mummy – Daddy – people in shops – people in the street – people on the market stalls have always offered Jimmy for example a banana – bent down, hooked cherries /over his ears. (18)

It appears that Jimmy has no problems in his life, just like the man in *Face to the Wall* who has a perfect life as well as a family and no reason to massacre children. However, the society in which he lives and his life is a consumerist 'utopia' where people possess everything that they want with fake smiles on their faces. In *Simulations*, Baudrillard claims that this kind of consumerism is the murderer of reality. (1983, p. 25).

Like the postman in *Face to the Wall*, the son in *Whole Blue Sky* is also in trouble with the voice in his head that comes out at night, the time people question their lives and themselves. The little child questions the world and the family he lives in:

1 ... Why when I smile does it always feel like I'm smiling in spite of myself? Why have I stopped feeling alive, Mummy, the way I used to feel alive at the beginning? (17).

He is aware of the presence of domestic violence in his home and has problems sleeping because he cannot stop the voice in his head. In *The Cryptogram*, David

Mamet argues “the child is not only witness to the adults’ pain but also the site of their accumulated anxieties” (Mamet, 1995, p. 201). The violence towards children and the importance of protecting children are ongoing plots in Crimp’s play. Crimp explains:

The plays are united in fact by images of childhood: in each, children are witnesses of events they can’t understand, and are viewed with hostility and suspicion by the adult protagonists. The child’s gaze is something that the adults find unbearable (Sierz, 2006, p. 139).

Actually, the unknown voice tells “Mummy and Daddy’s private song” (20), which is cruel. The mother warns Bobby not to sing the song “in front of guests, in front of anyone” (20). Thus, cruelty in their house will be hidden from the rest of the society, but not from Bobby who has been brought up in a hypocritical society; he begins to mirror the other characters with a big, fake smile on his face.

### **3.2. DEFINITELY THE BAHAMAS**

In 1986, *Definitely The Bahamas* was initially performed as a radio play, and which won the *Radio Times* Drama Award that year. The play was then staged and directed by Alec McCowen, an actor, in 1987 at the Orange Tree Theatre. “It was revived there with Play House, a new play, in March 2012” (Crimp, 1987, p. 74).

In *Spectator at the Theatre*, Sheridan Morley points out that “Sam Walter’s Orange in Richmond has long been among the best and bravest of London’s fringe theatres, and with *Definitely the Bahamas* he establishes Martin Crimp as a dramatist of considerable promise” (Morley, 2002, p. 53). Alex Sierz sums up the comments about the play:

The major critics welcomed what The Sunday Times called ‘a writer who is so good both at the comedy of crass nouveau riche smugness and at the black terror of recent history’. Under the headline ‘A New Pinter?’ , the Telegraph’s Charles Spencer said that McCowen ‘captures both the subtlety and the richness of this original and beautifully written play. (Sierz, 2006, p. 20).

Unlike *Fewer Emergencies*, *Definitely the Bahamas* displays various dimensions of cruelty such as sexual harassment, racist behaviour of Western society, and violence

towards children. Artaud, who believes violence is the main source material for theatre, claims that “[w]ithout an element of cruelty at the root of every spectacle, the theatre is not possible. In our present state of degeneration it is through the skin that metaphysics must be made” (Artaud, 1958, p. 99).

As well as inherited cruelty, Crimp also reveals the deteriorated society that ignores child sexual abuse. In fact, violence against children is a theme that Crimp retold in his later play, *Getting Attention* (1991). Sharon in *Getting Attention*, four years old, is cruelly tortured by her mother and step-father. Again ironically, every character turns a blind eye to her pain, as is done to Marijke in *Definitely the Bahamas*.

In the play there are three main characters: Milly “late fifties”, Frank “early sixties”, and Marijke “late teens”. The play begins with a conversation between Milly and Frank, husband and wife. Milly and Frank have moved house mainly to another place to get away from the noise pollution of the city but also so they could have a garden and flowers. Marijke is a student who helps with housework. The core topic of their conversation is their lovely son, Michael, and daughter-in-law Irene. Michael and Irene have a better social status than Milly and Frank: they have “an enormous place” (38), enough money to travel and an ideal marriage.

Whatever Michael does, he always makes an explanation. Although Michael “had a passion for” (42) his Doberman, he leaves it at home while on holiday. When they returned, the dog’s “head had been hacked off” (42). Ironically this time the criminals were not adults like in *Fewer Emergencies* and *The Country*, but children who were only “eight years old” (42). After the children had used drugs, they violently killed the animal in order to drink its blood:

Frank: It wasn’t an isolated incident because drugs were involved and when the police finally cracked down on them –. (42).

According to Zizek, violent instincts are part of human nature and “to prevent the explosion of violent passions, we need strict law enforcement and ethical pressure” (Zizek, 2008, p. 81) as the police applied its force on children in the play. In the past, while chocolate addiction was mentioned a lot, now children’s drug addiction is wide spread all over the world, thus the violence of human beings is associated with consuming of drug to feel happier. Moreover, revealing the sub-conscious is crucial both for Crimp and Artaud who states “[l]ike the plague the theater is the time of

evil, the triumph of dark powers that are nourished by a power even more profound until extinction” (Artaud, 1958, p. 30). Artaud likens the theatre to the plague: its effect is cruel, deep and shocking. The plays of Crimp also disillusion all cruelty in the society to enforce the audience to identify with reality. Crimp does not only draw attention to the children, who are full of terror, but also highlights the hypocrisy of Milly and Frank who ignore the abhorrent events and behave as if the events were ordinary and acceptable because of the consuming drug.

The society they live in is full of crime. Zizek argues that “[a]t the forefront of our minds, the obvious signals of violence are acts of crime and terror, civil unrest, international conflict” (2008, p. 1). Indeed, Crimp delineates three different kinds of violence on the women, Irene, Joan, and Marijke. De Lauretis explains the relationship between violence and gender in representation. She states that “the representation of violence is inseparable from the notion of gender, even when the latter is explicitly ‘deconstructed’ or, more exactly, indicted as ‘ideology.’ I contend, in short, that violence is engendered in representation” (Lauretis, 1987, p. 33).

In *Definitely The Bahamas*, after the break-in, Irene has an alarm installed in her house for her safety. When Michael and Irene went to Cape Town in, South Africa, Irene was raped. According to Artaud, sexuality is the only thing that human beings use to satisfy their hunger. He says, “The human body is an electric battery whose discharges have been castrated and repressed, whose capacities and emphases have been oriented toward sexual life” (Alexander, 2012, p. 168). He compares the body to an ‘electric battery’ that ‘discharges’ when it comprehends its own hunger, and this ‘discharge’ continues with intervals. It is also suggested that sexuality is another kind of male superiority over women; the punishment for sexual harassment and rape are not enough of a deterrent. Andrea Dworkin, a radical feminist theorist, delineates that the equality between genders is only possible if something is done to stop rape. She points out:

It is astonishing that in all our worlds of feminism and antisexism we never talk seriously about ending rape. Ending it. Stopping it. No more. No more rape. In the back of our minds, are we holding on to its inevitability as the last preserve of the biological? Do we think that it is always going to exist no matter what we do? All of our political actions are lies if we don't make a

commitment to ending the practice of rape. This commitment has to be political. It has to be serious. It has to be systematic. It has to be public. It can't be self-indulgent (Dworkin, 1993, p.16).

Dworkin explains that both Frank and Milly disallow the sexual violence and interpret it as “a robbery” (48).

Milly: Well if that's not nearly a rape I'd like to know what is. Because it's certainly violence of the lowest kind (48). ...

Milly: ... the only thing a black man wants to do over there is sleep with a white woman, which is why of course there used to be laws against it before all these reforms (49).

Instead of questioning society's violent tendencies, and the effects of this kind of violence on Irene, they only display a propensity towards racism; just an intercourse between a black man and a white woman, and blame laws. Indeed, Crimp indirectly criticizes why laws are applied. Milly belittles people who belong to a lower class and demands laws to stop their violence. Thus, Crimp reveals the system of laws which are applied to increase the difference between classes and to control the lower classes. In fact, this is exactly what both Althusser and Raymond Willims defend. Furthermore, instead of focusing on Irene's suffering and feelings, Crimp ironically prefers to reveal Michael in the act of assaulting Marijke, thus showing Michael's indirect aggressiveness towards the attack on Irene. On the other side, Milly ignores his son's sexual abuse since his son belongs to an upper class, unlike Marijke. Michael asks Marijke, from Holland, whether she knows who raped his wife in South Africa. Then, Marijke tells him honestly that he is not the one who has to carry a gun to feel safer, but Irene is. Crimp illustrates violence on females who are considered as 'others' by the patriarchal society and violence on the outsider who is perceived as 'the other' by racist people.

The character Joan is the second instance where the violence on women in the contemporary society is examined. Frank and Milly are not sure where they will go for their next holiday. Whereas Frank demands to go to Spain, Milly definitely does not want to go there on the grounds that Joan, a friend of her son, went there and her trip turned out to be a disaster. Joan was attacked by a man with a gun on the street and people just stood around watching and did nothing. She went to the police station

to complain but, no one took any notice. Crimp illustrates with frankness his own ideas about the violence towards women all over the world in the character of Milly, who states:

Milly: Well I know there's violence over here but it's not the same violence because their attitude to women is completely different ... (63).

As Milly mentions, violence in their home is distinctive, because it is not only sexual violence, in the strictest sense it is both child sexual abuse and sexual harassment of the other. As in *Individualized Society*, Bauman claims that "parental tenderness lost its innocence" (2001, p. 234), Crimp also highlights one of the increasing problems of child sexual abuse in Great Britain. Michael's, Milly's, Frank's, and Irene's racist and cruel behaviour towards Marijke are seen during the play. Marijke is 'the other' for them. When Frank and Milly find the pictures which were taken at Easter, it is seen how much they know about Marijke:

Milly [I know Marijke's Dutch. Of course Marijke's Dutch. But she's been to Germany and she understands German, that's my point.] they all do, the Germans I mean the Dutch, they all have a wonderful gift for languages. Marijke's Dutch for example is quite remarkable.

Frank [you mean her English].

Milly I said her English. (45).

Indeed, the photograph is crucial in view of Frank and Milly's son. In order to be 'the Other' Marijke is portrayed as bizarre with her language, behaviours, and style of dress. She cannot find friends easily because she is different from the others with her "sulky" (46) face. Not only Marijke's gender, but also her race and class are the crucial factors that instigate her abuse. Much of the physical and oral violence Marijke endures is represented in the play based on this concept of racial inferiority. Marijke insistently corrects Michael who claims that she is "speaking Afrikaansch" (67).

In his book *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said discusses the effect of the past which shapes our present and the authority of the present in formulating our view of the past: "past and present inform each other, each implies the other and [...] each co-exists with the other" (Said, 1993, p. 4). As Said describes, the political ideology of

colonialism and its violence still exist. Although it seems like there is not a physical war, the violence of political war in terms of ideas and imaginings still continue.

Initially, Crimp uses Marijke's physical appearance as a sign that triggers her abuse:

Milly: ... she's such a pretty girl really, or at least she could be if she didn't wear those dreadful skirts with a slit all the way up the side, couldn't she Frank. (46)

Bauman points out that "children are now perceived mainly as sexual objects and potential victims of their parents as sexual subjects" (2001:234). In Crimp's play, Marijke, a child, is also seen as a sexual object who does not know how to handle housework as Milly claims. She says, "...I think Marijke inhabits an entirely different world to the rest of us ..." (59). Because of their bilateral characteristics, they disregard the fact that she is only a child.

Milly states that "She has probably gone to the public bath where is full of dirty, ordinary people like her" (48). Actually Marijke is not the only one who is violently insulted because of her lack of cleanliness. When Milly compares Marijke's boyfriend, Alec, who is from Israel, to her son, she says "Michael was always clean. I'm not saying Alec isn't clean, but Michael always looked it" (60). In *Violence*, Zizek claims that "[t]he Other is just fine, but only insofar as his presence is not intrusive" (2008, p. 35). Thus, Alec might be clean, since he is not an annoying person.

Marijke is a child who is exposed to insulting behaviours and rude verbal attacks. In one of his interviews, Crimps states that "the reason why these things happen is because they remain private" (Angelaki, 2012, p. 96). The lovely son, Michael raped Marijke although the family obviously does not want to talk about it. Instead of preventing this violent sexual intercourse, they choose to ignore their son's sexual violence on a child claiming that they were just "hitting off" (50). Frank states,

Frank: ... Because of course that was the year Marijke. Why did I say Marijke? I mean Irene. That was the year Irene lost her child... (58)

While Milly and Marijke go to the kitchen to find out if there is meat in the fridge, Frank is alone. While he is thinking by himself, he ironically begins to feel confused about the names. The time that he wants to remember, that he had forgotten



consciously, might be both Irene's losing her child and Marijke's losing her innocence violently. Then, he continues:

Frank: ... we used to ask ourselves: where on earth did he find so much charm. And then to see him with Irene. Why did I say Irene. I mean Marijke. To see him with Marijke. Who must be what half his age at least. I mean at most, don't I. half his age at the most. To see the two of them you'd think he was still a boy himself the way they were carrying on. (Faint laugh). (58)

It is obvious that they have just overlooked the act of sexual violence committed on a young girl. While her age does not create any irritation, because of his appeal his son's violent act deserves admiration. Crimp frankly reveals the corruption of the society.

By the time they remember that Michael had brought a bunch of "tulips" for her, they just laughed cruelly and likened their son's behavior to "a real comedian's" (46) act. While Marijke was reading on the sofa, Michael came closer to Marijke silently and "they were both in fits" (65).

Frank: I really didn't think that old sofa would be able to take it... (He begins to laugh)

Milly: I don't even think they realized we were all watching, the state they were in, but of course someone had left the dining-room hatch open...

Frank: Mill said to me, where's the camera... (65)

All of them had witnessed the sexual abuse perpetrated by their beloved son. Moreover, they recorded the violence unblushingly claiming that it was just a game, a kind of enjoyment; Marijke is just a product in their consumer culture of enjoyment. In *The End of Dissatisfaction*, McGowan advocates, "All enjoyment involves seeing the Other as nothing more than a tool and not showing 'consideration' for the Other" (McGowan, 2012, p. 14). The spectator comprehends the dimension of the violence when Marijke starts to disclose the events of those days.

Initially Michael brought some tulips, and threw them on Marijke while she was lying on the sofa. Although Marijke threw them back, Michael put them back onto the same place laughingly. The next day, Marijke was about to leave when Michael

invited her to his car. During the trip, Michael asked her what she thought about the “Walletjes” (67) where prostitutes display their skills in the city of Amsterdam. However, the answer of Marijke’s was not important for her.

Leghorn and Parker write about one of the basic reasons behind male violence towards women. They claim that “when women individually or collectively refuse to comply with their subordination, they are frequently forced to deal with male violence in response” (Leghorn, 1981, p. 298). Notwithstanding being refused many times by Marijke, firstly, Michael verbally insults her calling her one of these women in “Walletjes” (67) when he stopped the car. He accuses her of being ‘the other’ whose “country is too flat” (68), so it is impossible to see such a splendid natural view for her. The the first time Marijke becomes aware of Michael’s violent tendencies is when he begins to touch her belongings without permission:

Marijke: ... And when I tell him I don’t want to smoke with him he pushes the things back and throws the bag in my face. He says don’t think I don’t know your game. My wife was raped. I know that game. I’m not a fool. I’ve known girls like you, he says, plenty of girls like you. (69)

After Milly and Frank heard the real story from Marijke, which is both unethical and immoral, they behave as if they have heard a tale; Milly asks an irrelevant question to Marijke who notices their indifference and walks away. Thus, the colonial white system is shown to not only colonize the body, but it also causes to disturb their own sense of their bodies’ value.

As soon as Marijke leaves Milly and Frank, they start to laugh slyly and despise her because of her heavily accented English; one more time they stress her otherness. What’s more, in order to reveal a sense of reality, they blame her for being too free. They look for the reason of the guilt not in their son’s behaviours, but in Marijke. Their characters represent all the hypocrisies and prejudices of the twentieth-century.

Both Frank and Milly insistently talk about their son’s car, a BMW, and his high position at work, in order to strengthen the class differences between Marijke and Michael. Over and above, Milly tries to alienate Marijke completely, referring to her bizarre sexuality:

Milly: ... But now look it's nearly the end of August and it hasn't been what I'd call a summer at all. I'm sure Marijke's legs must be terribly cold. It gives me the shivers just to look at them. [Doesn't it you, Frank]. (71)

Marijke's physical appearance is also a sign of her ethnicity. Her body shape connects her femaleness to her race, making it impossible to think of Marijke as a child only or as a female only. She can only be thought of as a female who is different.

During the play, Marijke talks to her boyfriends on the phone whenever it rang although it is not certain to whom she talks. After the first call,

Frank: (in response to Marijke's laughter.) Sounds like one of her men-friends.

Milly: (I beg your pardon, Frank?)

Frank: Alec or one of those.

Milly: Alec's just a boy, Frank. He's a boy, not a man. (54)

Just like Marijke, Alec whom they have never met, is also cruelly humiliated because of his race. Furthermore, Milly points out that "I can't say I like his stud" (59). Like Marijke, his sexuality is also emphasized and defined negatively. On the other side, both Milly and Frank prefer to protect the distance between themselves and 'the Others'. Zizek expresses the reason behind this kind of distance when he says, "My duty to be tolerant towards the Other effectively means that should not get too close to him, intrude on his space" (2008, p. 35).

Artaud indicates that theatre only becomes real as long as it reflects reality. He says:

The theater will never find itself again—i.e., constitute a means of true illusion—except by furnishing the spectator with the truthful precipitates of dreams, in which his taste for crime, his erotic obsessions, his savagery, his chimeras, his utopian sense of life and matter, even his cannibalism, pour out, on a level not counterfeit and illusory, but interior. (1958, p. 93).

As Artaud states, Crimp reflects not only the cruelty of the society but also the cruelty of individuals to increase the affection of the audience. Artaud points out that "Man, when he is not restrained, is an erotic animal" (1988, p. 44). In Crimp's play,

Michael is the one who cannot stop his erotic greed and his parents also pay no attention to their son's abusive behaviour. Even though Milly and Frank move their new house outside of the city to find peace, it does not change their hypocrisy. The depiction of both Marijke and Alec are so violent that it reveals Milly's and Frank's racist side. They connive at sexual abuse, so violence is not only in their house, but also inside them. Vicky Angelaki asserts that "the home is unsafe territory, far from sheltered from the outside world and hiding its own violent exploits" (Angelaki, 2012, p. 92). More importantly, their verbal and physical violence towards Marijke mirrors a battlefield that they want to dominate, just like Artaud's claim about the desire to possess lives. Thus, *Definitely the Bahamas* is a play that tries to elucidate the different sides of violence in both political and sexual terms.

### 3.3. THE COUNTRY

The theatre must give us everything that is in crime, love, war, or madness, if it wants to recover its necessity (Artaud, 1958, p. 85).

*The Country*, which is one of Crimp's most well-known plays was initially presented on the radio in 1997, it was staged in 2000 at the Royal Court by Kate Mitchell and then was staged in many parts of Europe.

After the staging of the play, many critics evaluated Crimp's play in an affirmative way. During an interview with Alex Sierz about Crimp, Paul Taylor said, "[l]ike Crimp's compelling, microscopically calculated script, the production transmits a powerfully (sic) sense of the abyss gaping under this precarious middle-class marriage" (Sierz, 2006, p. 58). In the *Guardian*, Michael Billington claimed that the play is "an assault on the pastoral myth: the Virgilian idea of the country as a place of order, harmony, continuity and deeply disturbing" (Sierz, 2013, p. 58).

*The Country* consists of five scenes, which take place in Richard and Corinne's house in the countryside. Apart from the last scene, all events take place at night. The play begins and ends with a conversation between Richard and Corinne. In order to set the play in just five scenes, Alex Sierz asserts that "*The Country* ostensibly (takes) a more traditional form" (2006, p. 60). Crimp explains that "*Attempts on Her Life* was a play that pulled plays apart, so this is a play where I attempt to put a play back together again" (quoted in John Whitley). During the play, in spite of the long

phone conversations, neither Morris, a friend of Richard, nor Sophie, a nanny, are seen on the stage.

Artaud defines the plot of the play and says, “the Theater of Cruelty will turn upon the preoccupations of the great mass of men, preoccupations much more pressing and disquieting than those of any individual whatsoever” (89). To create an opposite effect, Artaud, like Crimp, advocates drawing on troubles of contemporary society. Like *Definitely The Bahamas*, Crimp also exhibits cruelty in terms of both political and gender spheres in *The Country*. Clara Escoda Agusti delineates:

Through a poetics of female violence and testimony, Crimp’s *Country* articulates a dramaturgy of resistance that is arguably aimed at engaging spectators ethically in a reflection on the continuing presence within the current late capitalist world order of the seeds of totalitarianism and barbarism” (Agusti, 2013, p. 170).

Thus Crimp depicts the problem of contemporary individuals using the concept of cruelty of the Artaudian Theater. Richard and Corinne, a doctor and a housewife, and their children, live outside of the city to avoid of the corruption of the city. One night Richard brings a woman called Rebecca to his house. Corinne questions Richard to determine what sort of relationship exists between him and Rebecca. Although Richard lies about his infidelity claiming that he had found her on the road, put her in his car, and brought her home, it does not take long for his hypocrisy to be revealed to Corinne.

Richard brings a glass of water to Corinne who claims that the taste of water is pure. However, Richard says, “I can’t taste anything. It has no taste. It tastes of nothing. But perhaps that taste of nothing is what you can taste” (295). While Corinne can taste the purity of water, ironically Richard whose life is full of corruption and artificial demands, cannot taste it. Moreover, Corinne’s demand that Richard should taste the water represents her disbelief as well as suspicion about Richard and his story.

As Corinne tries to discover the truth with her verbal attacks, she asks whether the girl has a bag or a purse. Richard replies:

Why do you say that: purse?

Why do I say it?

Yes. Why do you say it when it's not English?

What is not English?

Purse is not English (297).

Richard compares Corinne with Rebecca who is an American history student and who feels uneasy. Crimp also indicates Rebecca's otherness, specifically mentioning both her origin and different language.

Corinne wonders whether it was a man instead of a woman lying in the street, if Richard would help him. When Richard claims that helping people is his job despite their gender, Corinne's tension rises and she violently cuts her finger. She realizes something is wrong because of Richard's language games.

The second scene culminates with, bitter verbal attacks occurring between Corinne and Richard. Corinne finds Rebecca's bag and her gold wristwatch even though Richard asserted that the girl did not have a bag. Moreover, the urgent phone call of Morris uncovers the real personalities of both Richard and Morris. Richard does not try to help to old man as he claimed before, and he comes up with some reasons, which indicate his violence:

... Because the fact is, (a) I fully intended to make that visit, and (b) regardless of any visit the man was always going to die. This was a sick old man, Morris. You've been there. You've seen that house. You've seen him trying to breathe. You know his history. And please don't let's forget that the man was a bastard, Morris, as you well know (309).

Morris also participates in his obvious lies although Richard refuses his participation. When Corinne empties the things inside the bag and sees the needles, she depicts what she feels with these words:

...It's just that I suddenly feel, I suddenly feel – help me – I suddenly feel lost. I don't know who you are. I don't know what you want. Because I thought you'd stopped. I thought you were clean. But if you've stopped why are there needles in her bag? Whose needles are they? Are they yours? Did she pay you for these things? How did she pay you...? (311).

The moment she comprehends her husband's deceit, his lasting drug addiction, and the fact that he is abusing his position as a doctor, she begins to make connections between the cruel oppression of Morris and Richard more clearly and comprehends why Morris spent time with her while her husband was with somebody else. As Richard is trying to defend himself, Corinne finds out more details about the girl that he is hiding, so she rebels against him. While Corinne appears to be the corruption in the country, Richard who has a sexual relationship with a girl called Rebecca, shows his hypocritical character both at home and work. Alex Sierz quotes Michael Billington's opinion about the play: Billington advocates that the play is about "a sickness at the heart of modern man which cannot expect the countryside alone to cure" (Sierz, 2013, p. 58). Meanwhile the telephone rings again and Morris informs Richard about an emergency. Richard picks up his equipment and confidently claims that Rebecca will wake up in the morning, leave the house and everything will be right again. However, this time things do not go as well he supposes.

During the play the domination and power of men, Richard and Morris, is illustrated many times. Richard is the one who has economic independence as a doctor and he knows how to use his capitalistic oppression on women. He even tells Corinne how to behave generously to Sophie, the nanny of their children, although Corinne does not believe that she is poor. He declares his domination when Corinne asks him, "Do you know?" (305). Richard replies, "Well, yes, it's my job, isn't it, as a matter of fact, to know" (305). On the other side, Rebecca is the one who accepts his domination as well as oppression. While Rebecca is spending her time alone under the trees, Morris arrives;

- He just asked how we were settling in. Did we miss the city?
- And did we?
- What? Miss the city? Well, I didn't. I told him I couldn't speak for you.
- Did he expect you to speak for me? (302).

Corinne cannot talk about her husband's views, because she does not exactly know what her superior feels. Furthermore, she is not only oppressed by her husband, but also feels the superiority of Morris over her when he speaks Latin in the first scene.

After learning of her husband's deceit, she links up between Morris and her husband more strongly in terms of their domination and violence.

Rebecca wakes up and the two women begin a conversation with great apprehension at first. While Corinne is concealing her husband's cruelty, Rebecca attempts to make Corinne comprehend Richard's cruelty on her. While Corinne has a house, children and a better life, Rebecca has a deceiving life and a body that is mistreated. Over and above, the domination of Corinne at home and her insulting speech in order to protect her husband irritates Rebecca, so she begins to cruelly attack Corinne and she says:

... But what d'you mean, 'just for an afternoon? What d'you mean, 'a man she's never met'? Have you no inkling? ... You patronize me. With your house, your land, your children ...

He came to the country to be with me.

Yes.

Because of his longing to be with me.

Because of his greed to be with me... (329).

When Corinne clearly understands the reality of the situation, she wants Rebecca to leave the house, but this time Rebecca opposes her wish. To increase Corinne's pain more, Rebecca cruelly emphasizes Corinne's ignorance and threatens Corinne to visit Morris, whom Corinne hates, to talk about history and speak Latin. On the other side, Rebecca unconsciously aids Corinne, forcing her to comprehend the unequal capitalist system.

The fourth scene begins with a conversation between Rebecca and Richard. Rebecca demands that she take a shower, but Richard does not let her. Since she has to pass through the children's room to go to the bathroom, Richard worries about awakening his children. Meanwhile, Richard admits that the house was "a granary" (335) before, not a simple house, so unlike Rebecca, from the beginning he has never felt as if it is their real house, full of happiness and without any trace of the corruption of the city. Rebecca who has decided to rebel both verbally and physically, comprehends her real worth and low-status in this capitalist world, so asks him cruelly why he has brought her into his house.



To offer me a position? To help your wife? To be the maid. Was it to be the maid?

She doesn't need help. She's very capable

Get a maid. Fuck the maid.

I don't want to fuck the maid.

Everyone wants to fuck the maid.

Well not me. In fact the opposite. (336).

As Richard behaved Rebecca in the same way before, Rebecca starts to force him asking questions and she behaves, ironically, as if it is their house. However, he does not accept either her presence at his home or her oppression. Rebecca violently squeezes his hand until Richard shouts in pain. While he is struggling to save his hand, Rebecca "makes a hole" in his hand (339), and she violently rebels against Richard stating "it's only flesh" (339).

In his play, *To Have Done With the Judgment of God*, Artaud asserts, "consciousness in us is linked to sexual desire and to hunger" (Artaud, 1988, p. 32). To reveal the close relationship between our conscious, sexual desires and hunger, Crimp highlights Rebecca's physical violence towards Richard. Rebecca ironically despises Richard's body and behaves towards it cruelly: just as he used her body violently. Clara Agusti delineates that "[h]er violent reaction turns the spectators' attention to their own intersubjective spaces and relations" (2013:188). Richard does not let her see his children, but also declines to tell her his children's names as though they do not exist. Rebecca starts to speak about the beginning of their sexual relationship with spite:

...Well once upon a time, children, there was a girl, there was a bright young girl, and she was sick, and she needed some medicine ... doctor, I need some medicine. But the doctor wouldn't give her any ... So she went back again ... And this time the doctor went to the door. He locked the door ... He asked her to undress ... The treatment was wild, children. It could take place at any time of day or night. In any part of the city. In any part of her body. Her body ... became the city. The doctor learned how to unfold her – like a map ... (341-342).

Rebecca's long speech serves to cast a sense of disillusionment on Richard's violent behaviour. She likens her body to a map, an object which is ready to be discovered and a city which is corrupted, illegal and full of passion while Rebecca represents the country that is clean and domestic. When Rebecca wants to leave him, he selfishly rejects her wish, gives her drugs, calls her "bitch" cruelly because of his unfulfilled expectations, and brings her into his house. Rebecca also explains the reason for this; "... Since the thing the bright young girl bitch called treatment, the doctor – who of course was sick himself – who craved medicine himself – imagined to be – what? – something personal ... " (343). However, after her violent confession, Richard cruelly wishes "I should've left you on the fucking track" (344). Rebecca cannot stand his violence and continues with her rebellious act more strongly. To cause Richard more pain, she admits that she had talked to his wife and that Corinne had left the house with the children. After her conversation with Richard, she is not seen any more on stage, thus Rebecca becomes a more decided and powerful character than Corinne.

In the last scene, after two months, Corinne is busy opening the birthday cards that were written by Richard. The water scene is repeated, but this time it is little different. Richard brings a glass of water and asks Corinne "How is the water?" (347). Corinne says that she does not taste anything or worry about the taste as she did before, so like her husband at the beginning of the play, she also refuses honesty and chooses to be corrupted.

As she reads the cards, Corinne shows off her corporeal characteristics when she wishes:

D'you know what I was thinking - because I was opening these and I was thinking I'd like someone to've died and there to be a big cheque... Anyone I know could die...My parents are a perfect example of people who/ could die...I would like my parents to have collided with the side of a mountain in South America and there to be no survivors... (350 – 351).

Corinne has now become a part of the consuming society and this is why she has returned to her house, just like the woman in *Face to the Wall* who cannot leave her house because of issues of money and property. The subordination of Richard in terms of money is so obvious when he asserts that "you have money. You don't need

money. You live in a big house” (351). However, Corinne wants her freedom and says, “Not real money. Not the kind of money some people have” (351). Thus, Crimp reveals how violent capitalism affects her demands and dreams to become superior. With a pair of shoes that are “expensive” (353), Richard proves her material subordination one more time. He tries to repair their relationship using money and her material interest as a part of consumer driven society, however Corinne notices something “unsettling about them” (352). On the other side, in the capitalist society, shoes represent male subordination over women that causes increasing of consuming habit. Thus, women are put in shape as men demand.

Although Richard gives promises to “keep himself clean” (347), Crimp suggests that his violent characteristics remain unchanged when he tells Corinne to change the “layout upstairs” (358) in order to avoid waking up the children if his wife or one of his lovers wants to take a shower.

Sophie, the nanny, declares her discomfort because of the amount of money that Richard put in the cup. While Richard considers that Sophie is in need of money, Corinne declines his idea asserting that she has “a cottage” (357). According to his own mentality, Richard is the one who selfishly divides people into categories based on their social status. Sophie has enough money to live, and a job as a nanny, but not a respectful job like Richard’s, a doctor. Although Corinne considers that Sophie might be another threat to their marriage, Sophie directly refuses Richard’s material subordination and complains about it.

While Sophie and Corinne are talking on the phone, Corinne tells her about the “lovely” (335) shoes that Richard bought. As soon as she hears about Sophie’s discomfort, she “slips off the shoes” (355) which is a sign of her rebellion against him and rejection of his cruel subordination.

After the conversation, Corinne comprehends her real situation at home more clearly: She is a kind of vehicle for Richard whom he can perpetrate his domestic violence on. He has kept her away from the city with the promise of staying “clean” (311), but he has not given up abusing his job or deceiving his wife, so he cannot fulfill any of his responsibilities, which are crucial characteristics of the postmodern relationship for Bauman.

Partnerships are increasingly seen through the prism of promises and expectations, and as a kind of product for consumers: satisfaction on the spot, and if not fully satisfied, return the product to the shop or replace it with a new and improved one! You don't, after all, stick to your car, or computer, or iPod, when better ones appear. (Bauman, *Life in a Liquid World*, <http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/week-s-end/life-in-a-liquid-world-1.233346>).

In this manner, not only Corinne, but also Rebecca are the bodies that Richard uses for his cruel satisfaction. Even if Rebecca has left him and Corinne has rebelled against him, there will be others like Sophie for his infinite, violent consuming demand for the bodies of others. His actions are completely egocentric and impulsive, and this is why he is insecure, wild, and violent.

When Richard suggests to Corinne that they go out walking, Corinne declines his offer telling him she drove yesterday night through the hills where she was able to run until she reached the stone which may have been used as a symbol of both capitalism and Richard. Both Rebecca and Corinne reached the stone which had “arms, like a chair” (316), “there was nothing human” (364), and “cold” (317). While the stone is offering material comfort, it violently “seeps into” (316) Rebecca and “devours” (365) Corinne’s heart, so the stone, namely capitalism, insidiously captures them as Richard has done. Initially, referring to it as a medical treatment, he gave drugs to Rebecca to make her feel comfortable and then he used her body and violently oppressed her as long as he could. On the other side, he supplied enough money to Corinne so she could live in comfort and tried to convince her with a pair of expensive shoes, since he wanted to sustain his cruel repressive dominance on her.

Before going on a trip, Corinne looks in the mirror of the car. Richard asks:

- How did you look?
- Complicit (361).

Not only is Corinne “complicit”, but Rebecca is also a perpetrator. Both of them connive, at Richard’s domination on them and they sacrifice too much until they realize the violence of both Richard and capitalism.

Then Corinne met Morris who followed her to give her the golden wristwatch which does not belong to her. Corinne explicitly feels his oppression while he is trying to help her to get rid of the pain in her heart and tells her the truth:

... I'm sure you stimulate love very well. I'm sure the two of you will stimulate love immaculately ... (366).

The cruel words of Morris do not only depict Richard's and Corinne's loveless, insensitive relationship, but also their cute and full of love "stimulated" play in the house, so the last scene finishes with the self-discovery of Corinne.

The last page of each scene finishes with one of these words: "paper, scissors, and stone". Martin Middeke says "the children's hand game of rock-paper-scissors determines the succession of the scenes" (Martin Crimp 93).

During the play, Rebecca and Corinne try to free themselves from the cruel oppression of Richard and Morris, even if their war for independence leads them to violence. Crimp indicates the hypocrisy of capitalism, how it affects the values of people and its indispensable result on people. For Richard, partners are interchangeable and the extreme physicality of such relationships is juxtaposed with the absence of emotional depth, understanding, and commitment. While Rebecca gets rid of the domestic violence, Corinne seems at home with Richard. In fact, the play has an open ending: so Crimp leaves the spectator to ponder about whether Corinne lives under the domestic violence of Richard or not.

In the first and last scenes, Corinne wants Richard to kiss her, but declining her demand, Richard repeats the same response, "I *have* kissed you" (299 and 366). Although Corinne offers her services willingly, Richard refuses to adopt the role of the customer, since he knows that he has also other choices to consume and thus shows his superior position in the relationship. Corinne is the one who has already accepted his superiority, so her service is the thing that he can obtain whenever he desires.

In 'Theatre Record', Nicholas de Jong advocates, "At a time when doctors have lost their old aura of sanctity and too many are being dramatically exposed as incompetent, delinquent and heartless, *The Country* hits raw nerves" (Vol. XX, p. 617). Thus, when the play is examined from the moral perspective of a doctor, the

violence on patients, the old man and Rebecca, is very obvious. Crimp points out not only cruel differentiation between people, but also the increasing evilness as well as violence in their relationships as a consequence of unequal world order.

In his five plays, Crimp creates a violent world where man cannot control his cruel instincts. In *Face to the Wall*, we witness a massacre, in *Fewer Emergencies*, the fear of a child and terror on the street are shown, in *Whole Blue Sky* rising violence in a child, and lastly *The Country* and *Definitely the Bahamas* display the hypocrisy of people, increasing violence in society, and different dimensions of cruelty. Crimp utilizes all the capabilities of live theatre and cruelty to expose who we are and to influence our consciousness, arousing our senses. Furthermore, similar to Artaud's discourse, rather than being a place of entertainment, Crimp's theatre intertwine both spectators and the play. He makes them interrogate not only the society, but also themselves. Crimp also proves Artaud claim, "Life is double" (Murray, 2014, p. 66), not by giving advice, but by forcing us to see our cruelty obviously without being subjected to the physical consequences.

"In the anguished, catastrophic period we live in, we feel an urgent need for a theater which events do not exceed, whose resonance is deep within us, dominating the instability of the times" (Artaud, 1958, p. 84). As Artaud states, Crimp also successfully manages to reflect the troubles of the times. The three plays of Martin Crimp, *Fewer Emergencies*, *The Country*, and *Definitely the Bahamas*, show the inherited cruelty of people, the darker side of consumer based culture, and degenerated relationships, which are arenas wherein people are sought, fought over, used, and then discarded. While reflecting the violence inherent in human beings, Crimp successfully manages to influence the audience using not only the text, but the special language of Artaudian Theatre: impressive light games, music, and dance. Music is a significant element in both Crimp's and Artaud's theatre. To emphasize the importance of music, Artaud expresses how snakes are influenced by music and that the sounds cause the recognizable movements of their bodies. He suggests, "treat the spectators like the snake charmer's subjects and conduct them by means of their organisms to an apprehension of the subtlest notions" (Artaud, 1958, p. 81).

#### **4. A CULTURAL MATERIALIST READING OF CRIMPLAND**

If our purpose of art, education, the giving of information or opinion, our interpretation will be in terms of the rational and interested being. If, on the other hand, our purpose is manipulation – the persuasion of a large number of people to act, feel, think, know, in certain ways – the convenient formula will be that of the masses (Williams, 1958, p. 292).

Throughout history and even today, all societies have been generally controlled by force. If we behave differently from the rest of society or go against the rules, we face many difficulties and are isolated. Is this not proof that all of us live under the rule of authority? On the grounds that literature reflects the chronological period, society and culture, what is produced, and is a part of contemporary ideology. Actually through Shakespeare's plays to James Bond novels, changes in society, culture, policy, and ideology are obvious. Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair managed to change the soul of Britain through the economy. They supported private ownership, lower taxes, balanced budgets, and patriotism. With these enormous changes in society, Stephen Shapiro argues that, Cultural Materialism is seen as something necessary because of the great expansion of "neoliberalism and its cannibalization of the West's middle-class congeries" (Harvey, 2005, p. 82).

In view of cultural materialists, "texts of all kinds are the vehicles of politics insofar as texts mediate the fabric of social, political and cultural formations" (Brannigan, 1998, p. 3). For that reason, literary texts are crucial for cultural materialists. According to Raymond Williams, people need to produce materially to survive and they have to produce culture which is actively and rapidly made to understand it (Williams, 1981, p. 201). Alan Sinfield, a cultural materialist, defines a literary text as 'an intervention': "an attempt to render certain stories convincing" (Sinfield, 2007, p. 35). He opposes Orwell who claims that "literature is an attempt to influence the viewpoint of one's contemporaries by recording experience" (Sinfield, 2007, p. 35). Sinfield insistently refuses the notion that a literary text is a kind of tool used to interpret how authors perceive reality: it is not "a recording" (Sinfield, 2007, p. 35).

Actually there is a double-sided interaction between society which is the basic source of a literary text, and a literary text which is also “one of the constructing agencies in the society” (Sinfield, 2007, p. 36).

Although some critics claim that the term Cultural Materialism is initially used by the anthropologist Martin Harris, in the 1970s Raymond Williams, a Welsh critic, was the first one who used it as an approach in *Marxism and Literature*. After Williams, Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield applied the approach to Renaissance Drama in the 1980s, when Sinfield claimed that, “Shakespearean plays are powerful cultural tokens, places where meaning is established and where it may be contested” (Sinfield, 1992, p. 21). Dollimore’s and Sinfield’s essays were collected to form a book, *Politics of Shakespeare*. There are some arguments about the relationship between cultural materialism and Marxism. Tony Bennett, a sociologist, advocates that there is no relevance between them (Bennett, 1990, p. 14). However, in the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory*, Irene Rima Makaryk claims that cultural materialism, which is based on Marxism includes, “cultural creations such as literature and their historical context, including social, political, and economic elements” (Mayark, 1993, p. 21). This is true inasmuch as, just like cultural materialism, Marxism also challenges power and ideology. For Williams and Althusser, power is the only hegemonic logic which forms culture and society; none of us have free will or choice even though Sartre claims that “[m]an is nothing else but that which he makes of himself” (Dollimore, 1993, p. 717). For Satre, people can have freedom while they are fulfilling their choices. Nevertheless, for Williams and Althusser, ideology is the only thing that leads us to make different choices. In *The Beginning Theory*, Barry asserts that “Cultural Materialism is much more optimistic about the possibility of change and is willing at times to see literature as a source of oppositional values” (2002, p. 184): It tries to reveal the hidden meaning of the text using the past to resist power and displays the power relations to its readers.

According to Williams, literature is a way of clarifying social experience, namely it is a part of a rapidly changing cultural system. Since literature is not the production of a genius, and for that reason reflects culture and society, it has to be examined with regards to the period’s cultural conditions. The aim of this chapter is to explore Martin Crimp’s reflections of the politics and social life of his period in his plays,



*The City* (2008) and *Dealing with Clair* (1988) from the viewpoint of Cultural Materialism. Literature is a part of contemporary ideology on the grounds that it reflects the society and culture of its period. For that reason, the historical events of the period when *The City* (2008) and *Dealing with Clair* (1988) were written are highlighted to examine how Crimp deals with these issues in his works.

In the view of Sinfield “literary culture has been produced and consumed mainly within the middle class” (2007, p. 35); this is the reason why Crimp uses middle-class characters in his works. Angela McRobbie, a British cultural sociologist, advocates that in the 1980’s the possibility of resistance to neo-liberal individualism was more possible than in the twenty first century. (Harvie, 2013, p. 84). In the 1980s artists were given an unemployment allowance, but after the 1990s “the members of the new creative class of workers are a Metropolitan elite, highly educated and with sufficient cultural capital to take risks” (Leger, 2011, p. 89). In one respect, McRobbie is right, however; writers like Martin Crimp did not stop criticizing society or the changing cultural values as is made clear in his plays *Dealing with Clair* and *The City*.

For Sinfield, literary works are not the products of individual consciousness and this is the basic difference between ‘the essentialist humanist approach’ and ‘Cultural Materialist approach’. Furthermore, “it is not individuals but power structures that produce the system within which we live and think, and focusing upon the individual makes it hard to discern those structures” (1992, p. 37). Like the other cultural materialists, Sinfield also repudiates the distinction between text and context, or literature and politics. For that reason, history and text intermingle and a text must be examined from the viewpoint of power to make individuals notice the conflicts and contradictions within the power. Crimp depicts the characters of an Italian nanny, Anna, who is suppressed by ‘the others’ in *Dealing with Clair*, and Mohammed, who captures our attention with his cruelty in *The City*, a famous Arabian writer from Abu Dhabi. If we believe that a literary work can reflect the structure of its period, it is not possible to blame Crimp for being a racist; he is in fact the only one who manages to reflect the ideology of his time. Sinfield advocates, “The principle strategy of ideology is to legitimate inequality and exploitation by representing the

social order that perpetuates these things as immutable and unalterable...as decreed by God or simply natural” (1992, p. 114).

In Crimp’s plays, there are many instances that highlight how people admit to their conditions and perceive it as if it is natural. In *Dealing with Clair* (1988), when Liz and Mike belittle Anna because she is walking naked through the house, though neither Toby nor Clair react, accepting the condition as natural. In *The City* (2008), when Chris comes across Sam in the market, Crimp highlights how Sam accepts his poverty without protest. Thus Crimp sometimes implicitly and explicitly challenges power systems with his plays.

#### **4.1. DEALING WITH CLAIR**

*Dealing with Clair*, Crimp’s fifth play, was initially staged at the Orange Tree Theatre in 1988. The impressive reviews about the play were related to Crimp’s success.

The *Daily Mail*’s Jack Tinker and *The Independent*’s Spicer appreciated Crimp’s picture of “avarice that wears away finger scruples, isolates individuals and allows such shadowy figures as Mr Courtenay’s bogus buyer to operate’...Spencer was impressed by the arrival of ‘a new writer of real stature’, although he also expressed doubts about morality of creating an entertainment which evoked the Suzy Lamplugh case. (Sierz, 2006, p. 24).

The play, which has five acts, depicts Crimp’s view of contemporary society. In the play, Liz and Mike, who have a baby, try to sell their house for a high price. The negotiator of the vendors, Clair, finds two different clients: the Harraps, who they wish to exchange houses with Liz and Mike, and James, who may buy the house with cash. At the end of the play it is understood that James is a liar who settles at Clair’s home. Clair vanishes as she states at the beginning of the play. The Walsum family finds another negotiator, Toby, who manages to sell their house for a good price. In his play, Crimp creates a character, Clair, who belongs to the working-class due to her social traits, and lifestyle. Liz and Mike are the instances of showing the greed and immorality of the middle class. Being aware of increasing violence and, alienation in society, Crimp tries to subvert the power of the dominant ideology; in the same manner as the cultural materialists, he attempts to present a different

reading of history. According to Alan Sinfield, a cultural materialist has to comprehend “a system of social relations” because “ideology produces, makes plausible concepts and systems to explain who we are, how the world works” (Sinfield, 1992, p. 32). In the play, Crimp delineates two classes, the lower and upper classes. While Clair, James, Toby, and Ashley, have to work to provide for the needs of the upper-class, represent the lower-class, Liz, Mike, and the Harraps belong to upper-class.

When the play was written, Margaret Thatcher was the leader of the Conservative Party between 1979 and 1990. Alex Sierz emphasizes the effect of ideology on Crimp’s play in that period; “So pervasive were the effects of Thatcherism that they seeped right into the texture of his late 1980s work” (Sierz, 2006, p. 22).

After the Second World War, to reduce the brutal effects of capitalism and to regain power for Western countries, the government in Britain performed a version of planned capitalism. However, the decisions made by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries about the production of oil caused unemployment and inflation: the results of the oil crisis in 1973 were very problematic for Western countries. For example, “The higher costs of domestic goods reduced returns to investment, and a new economic phenomenon entered the world: ‘stagflation’” (Prasad, 2006, p. 2). The crisis compelled states to change their policies: “In the United States and Britain the economic crisis led to a sustained and committed effort to cut taxes, spending levels, and the role of the state in overseeing industry – neoliberalism” (Prasad, 2006, p. 2).

Actually, neoliberalism is not something new for Britain. It is just a reproduction of capitalism. It supports the separation between the government and the economy. It advocates a free market, which means, in other words, privatization. Initially, neoliberalism is viewed as if intended solely for human’s well-being and provides wealth giving freedom to individuals so they can own their own properties. On the other side, to protect the rights of the owners, the state sets up forces such as the military, police, and legal structures. Gerard Dumenil and Dominique Levy depict neoliberalism as “The expression of the desire of a class of capitalist owners and the institutions in which their power is concentrated, which we collectively call ‘finance’ to restore – in the context – of a general decline in popular struggles...” (Dumenil,

2011, p. 1-2). Namely, neoliberalism, which is the extension of capitalism, is a political tactic for the benefits of the upper class. Margaret Thatcher was the most influential leader in the development of neoliberalism in Britain. When Thatcher became a Prime Minister, she explained her vision:

Let me give you my vision: a man's right to work as he will, to spend what he earns, to own property, to have the state as servant and not as master – these are the British inheritance... we must get private enterprise back on the road to recovery – not merely to give people more of their own money to spend as they choose, but to have more money to help the old and the sick and the handicapped... I believe that, just as each of us has the obligation to make the best of his talents, so governments have an obligation to create the framework within which we can do so... we can go on as we have been doing, we can continue down. Or we can stop and with a decisive act say 'Enough'. (Thatcher, 1995, p. 308).

Her privatization policy has been associated with 'Thatcherism' which has spread and been imitated all over the world. For instance, while South Africa and China have embraced neoliberalism voluntarily, New Zealand and Sweden have embraced it because of the pressures of the West. In short, evaluating neoliberalism as the best solution to reduce inflation and create wealth, Thatcher managed to reduce the state's role in industry. On the other hand, the destruction that neoliberalism caused, cannot be ignored for David Harvey. Harvey claims that "the process of neoliberalization has entailed much creative destruction of... divisions of labour, social relations, welfare provisions, technological mixes, ways of life and thought, reproductive activities, attachments to the land and habits of the heart" (2005, p. 3). People live under the pressure of the market, which stimulates them to consume and evoke desire in them to get what they want. Thus, society struggles to fulfill the wishes of its people and the more society's desire expands, the more solidarity increases.

This is exactly what Crimp depicts in his play, the essence of contemporary English identity. The play begins with a scene of a high-speed train with lights which represents the developed society in terms of mechanics. The sound of the train impedes the conversation of Clair with her mum, just as the improved technology prevents us from being social: Crimp begins his play with an image of alienation.

Moreover, living near the railway is symbolic of class distinction created by global capitalism. Clair also ironically highlights the mood of people who feel aggressive and violent in the capitalist world. Although Clair declines to accept that there is “violence”, she accepts that “dealing with people” is something hard that makes her feel ‘aggressive’ (7). It is revealed that Clair had a boyfriend called Toby, whom she left because he treated her selfishly while paying the bill at the restaurant that they went with other clients to celebrate the opening of new offices. Clair reminds the spectator of the changes in society when she talks about the ‘sacrifices’ that her parents made. Having a family, making contact with them, and even making sacrifices to preserve their relationships are extraordinary things that contemporary people have to do in Clair’s world. She prefers to be alone to feel more relaxed and for that reason, she does not know the meaning of happiness. Even though she tells her mother that she is happy, her mother comprehends there is something wrong with her. Clair says, “...[w]ell I’m sorry. I’m sorry if I don’t sound happy. Just tell me what ‘happy’ sounds like ...” (9). In the consumer driven society, Crimp depicts not only the alienation of people, but also how they become mechanized, retaining little common sense. She buys a small house to sell. With her little enterprise and her stressful job she represents the ideologies of a working class woman. The uncertainty in her mind related to her condition is depicted clearly by Crimp when Clair says to her mother, “... Selling houses. It’s not forever. Who knows what I’ll do? Maybe make a killing and just ... disappear. (Laughs.) That’s right. Vanish” (9). In fact, her unconscious thoughts about herself become real at the end of the play.

The second scene opens at Wandum’s house, which is on sale. Crimp, as a British playwright, criticizes the housing market, which boomed in the late 1980s. In the 1980s, with the support of the Bank of England, there was a great boost in the housing market. However, “the supply of existing stock is quite elastic while the supply of new stock is relatively inelastic in the short term” (Stern, 1992, p. 1327). Thus, while the upper class and middle class benefited from this support to become wealthier, the working class were given no opportunities to own their own property. This is exactly what Crimp criticizes in the characterizations of James, who behaves as if he is rich, Toby, who has nothing, and Clair, who has a small house to sell. Wandum’s house has a neglected garden and five rooms, but one of the rooms where Anna, a nanny, stays, has no windows. Mike shows the house to Clair who is a

negotiator. After they make an agreement about the price, Liz, Mike's wife, comes in to meet Clair and to control what is happening.

In *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism*, Alan Sinfield asserts that “[r]elations between the strong and the weak - in the household, at school, at work, in the local community and the state – were characterized by personal cruelty and the exercise of autocratic power” (1992, p. 167). Crimp displays Anna as the weakest member of the house, who has to live under the domination of Liz and Mike. After Clair and Liz leave, Anna prefers to stay at home, even on her days off. She wants permission to phone her homeland, Italy, from Mike:

Anna: Is alright if I telephone, Mr. Walsum?

Mike: Provided it's not Australia. (faint laugh)

Anna: Sorry?

Mike: I say: as long as it's not Australia.

Anna: No no. Italy.

Mike: Fine. That's fine. (18).

In 1984, it was decided to privatize British Telecom. Crimp implicitly displays the rift between the low and middle classes. While for Anna using the telephone is a kind of luxury, Mike makes fun of her request.

Racism is another concept that Crimp criticizes implicitly. For Margaret Thatcher, migration was a problem that could not be ignored. In 1978, on a television program, she explained her fear about the problems associated with rising migration.

We are a British nation with British characteristics. Every nation can take some minorities, and in many ways they add to the richness and variety of this country. But the moment a minority threatens to become a big one, people get frightened. (Witte, 2014, p. 54).

For that reason, she insisted that all immigration into Britain be limited, however, after her explanation, increasing racial violence became a central problem in the United Kingdom. Alan Sinfield argues that “there is a system that positions subordinate groups as effects of the dominant” (Sinfield, 1992, p. 35). This is the sentiment that Crimp attempts to highlight in his work. In *Dealing with Clair*, Anna's

actions reflect the immigrants' social position in British society. From the beginning of the play, her alienation is obvious; she lives in a room which has no windows, she has good relationships with neither the family nor other people outside and she has little English and no intention to learn the language. Ania Loomba states, "English was not thought just as a foreign language but was the means of imposing a culture, a cluster of ideologies, a way of being and seeing..." (Sinfield, 1992, p. 35). Not making an effort to learn English and stating that she does not accept English culture, is a way of rebelling for Anna. Furthermore, she walks around the house without wearing any clothes. Her strange mannerisms are mentioned a few times by both Liz and Mike; they feel much better when they blame Anna because of her strangeness. Moreover, her bad habit of smoking is stressed many times in the play to signify both her different class and nationality. As a result, Anna does not make an effort to be accepted and assimilated. She does not obey the rules of the house. Instead of learning to speak Standard English, she prefers to speak less. Thus, while Crimp shows how British society assimilates 'the other', he also responds to this negatively.

After the Harraps, who live in a rural area because of their love of nature, James is the second potential buyer who wants to pay for the house with cash, owing to wanting to live in a stable place with his family. In the play, James appears to be a devious and greedy character and Crimp uses these characteristics to portray the negative effect of neoliberalism on contemporary society. Evoking the desire of consuming, one of the policies of neoliberalism fuels violence in society to satisfy this desire. James pretends to be a rich man and uses this to his advantage. During a conversation with Clair, James surreptitiously questions her as to whether she lives alone or not. Crimp also highlights how the subjectivity of morality changes under different conditions. Clair arranges an appointment for James to meet the Walsums, who are aware of the immorality of selling the house to James instead of the Harraps, whom they promised the house to. However they cannot resist the allure of cash and they accept to sell the house to James. James visits Liz and Mike alone even though it was expected he would bring his wife with him. The reason why he did not bring his wife with him is soon revealed. All of them seem happy with the agreement of selling the house for one hundred and ninety thousand pounds.

Before selling the house, Ashley, a plumber, comes to repair the ceiling. Ironically, Anna is seen while she is looking for a light. Ashley tells her that he lives near the railway with his two children and shows his children's photographs to Anna, who halfheartedly looks at the photos; this scene highlights their similarities in terms of their class. Insouciance and nescience about children are emphasized by the conversation between Anna and Ashley. Although Liz does not work, she is not interested in her child. She states:

Anna: She's very busy though. Always.

Ashley: Right. Anna, my wife, she'd like to, you know, she'd like to go back to work. (46).

Crimp highlights the difficult conditions of the lower classes. Both a mother and a father have to work to survive. Not only class difference, but also marriage concept is explicit. While Ashley and his family have more sensitive bonds to each other, he carries his children's photos and talks about them to strangers, Liz and Mike do not show any interest in their child, even when it cries. Furthermore, their corrupted relationship is emphasized on a few occasions during the play. Meanwhile Liz, who warns Anna to get dressed, writes a cheque for Ashley in return for his work. Liz explains that she does not make payments with cash, which is important for her as a sign of her wealth. However Ashley receives the cheque without glancing at the amount. Crimp emphasizes the apathy of Liz towards Ashley while talking to him.

In the seventh scene, James invites Clair to have lunch, but Clair shows her insouciance explicitly. The distrust is obvious between them. However, James stealthily questions Clair about her views on life and learns that she lives alone. According to her answer, James changes his view about going out with strangers, which is a sign of his bilateral character that no one understands. At the same time, he is smart enough to make assumptions about the difficulties of Clair's life, based upon her use of the sofa both for sitting and sleeping. Interestingly, James mentions his passion about train journey and associates the plot to homeless people who survive in trains illegally in a detailed way. He says, "I think the truth of it is, deep in their hearts, they are in love with trains ...." (56). Thus James claims that his real evil intentions and greed are kept secret inside his heart. As soon as Clair reminds him that he has to inform his lawyer about the selling of their house, he points out that he



will go to Italy for business and after his return, he will immediately complete the necessary procedures for buying the house.

In act two, Liz accuses Mike of raping Clair. Mike reacts excessively, denying the “violence” (59) that Liz refers to. However, he goes on discommoding Anna, who is belittled because of her different nationality. In fact, “the crack” (62) on Mike’s neck that Liz sees refers to his real devious character and the dimension of their marriage.

Act two, scene two is the last scene where Clair is seen on stage. When she and James meet in the Walsum’s house, to be sure James asks whether she has a family. He says, “... since we’ve never seen into each other’s hearts, then we respect each other” (69). By using word games, James reveals the truth about people who regard appearance and class over personality. In the last scene, James is seen talking to Clair’s mother on the phone, who insists that she will not ring off until she speaks to Clair. To divert Clair’s mother, James alleges that she is having a bath. James ingeniously acts as if he can see Clair and the scene ends with the sound of train which is used to cover violence. James is characterized as a two-faced liar who is alienated even from himself. He has lost his real human nature because of his consuming greed. This is the irony that Crimp portrays with his negative reaction to the policies of the contemporary world. Like Seneca’s plays, in *Dealing with Clair* the winner is a villain not a hero. Furthermore, the disappearance of Clair refers to a real event that happened in 1986. Suzy Lamplugh, an agent, suddenly disappeared after meeting a client. The case was not solved and “Suzy Lamplugh was formally declared dead in 1994” ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/30/newsid\\_2492000/2492647.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/30/newsid_2492000/2492647.stm)). By drawing on real events for the plot of the play, Crimp is aware of the need to be objective. He has not interpreted Clair’s disappearance, instead focusing on consuming desire and greed in people, showing the deterioration of the society.

While both Liz and Mike are waiting for the payment, they do not hear from either Clair or James. They have neither a phone number nor an address, thus Mike accuses Clair and swears. They try to think logically to find out what might have happened to Clair:

Mike:...Let’s be realistic about this. What are we supposed to imagine he took her by the throat and dragged her off ...

Liz: No obviously not.

Mike: Dragged her off in broad daylight – this was what, lunchtime – to his... whatever it was.

Liz: BMW.

Mike: BMW.

Both faint laugh. They relax a little. (2000:79).

Although their guess is most likely true, they ironically do not believe what they have imagined. The real cause of their annoyance is not the absence of Clair, but the uncompleted sale of their house. After Clair disappears, they meet Toby, a negotiator, who helps them to sell the house to the Baldwins.

Toby was Clair's boyfriend. The reason behind their separation was Toby's inappropriate behavior while paying the bill in a restaurant. Instead of sharing the bill with the others, he only wanted to pay what he and Clair ate. Just like Clair, Toby embodies the ideologies of the working class with his stressful and busy job and alienated life style. Like the Harrabs, the Baldwins were also disappointed in investing in housing. Indeed, like Clair, Toby does not mean anything to them. Namely, he is nothing more than a person who is paid by them to do what they want. His name is not recollected by Toby and Clair although he repeated his name two times. They do not want to be in the same condition as their 'poor' (95) friends, Poppy and Max, whose house is splendid, but beside the railway. Crimp utilizes certain geographical places, such as the railway, to provide clues about the economic conditions of people in Britain. He also delineates the economic and political divisions that still exist between British people. The play ends with Toby's exit from the stage.

In *Dealing with Clair* (1998), women are the losers. Liz represents a conventional woman and does what she is supposed to do. She has a child and seems very busy although she is not free economically. William Perkins asserts "A couple is that whereby two persons standing in mutual relation to each other are combined together, as it were, into one. And of these two the one is always higher and beareth rule: the other is lower and yieldeth subjection" (Sinfield, 1992, p. 44). Liz behaves appropriately according to her class ideology. She ignores her husbands' deceit.

During the conversation between Liz and Mike, Liz blames Mike for raping Clair. Although Mike refuses this at first, it is understood that Liz has reasons to accuse him. Anna is a woman who is oppressed by her employers because of her different nationality. She also acquiesces to domination. Both Liz and Anna submit to the hierarchal, namely patriarchal system and family ideology. Clair is the one who has to work in order to survive. However, Crimp highlights the difficult working conditions for a woman who has to tolerate abuse. Even though she does not care the abuse of Mike and James, she is portrayed as a threat towards the continuation of family ideology. Furthermore, unlike the other married women she has not been searching for a husband, so she dissents both patriarchy and family ideology. As a result, she has to be destroyed. Moreover, using the real story of a negotiator, Crimp also highlights how a working woman's life can end tragically.

Fredrich Engels posits that "The new facts made imperative a new examination of all past history. Then it was seen that all past history, with tehe exception of its primitive stages, was the history of class struggles..." (quoted in Berger, 1995, p. 42). In *Dealing with Clair* (1988), class struggle is indicated from two different perspectives. Initially, Liz and Mike's desire to sell their house for a good price to buy a better house, which will bettter represent their social class. Moreover, without questioning the matter, they immediately accept the offer of James, who proposes to pay a better price than the Harraps, whom Liz and Mike had a previous agreement with. The unquenchable thirst to own materials and property to climb a social ladder, destroys their morality. Raymond Williams expresses that "Inequality in the various aspects of man is inevitable ... The inequality that is evil... Such inequality, in any of its forms, in practice rejects, depersonalizes, degrades in grading, other human beings" (Williams, 1958, p. 317). Inequality, which Williams points out, is the cause of James's evilness. Wishing to have better standards, James kills Clair and settles down in her house. Actually, not only James, but also the house-marketing ideology causes the death of Clair. Her disappearance indicates the pressure of ideology and its destructive power on her life. However, her disappearance seems natural to the rest of the characters in the play. In conclusion, Crimp not only reflectz a capitalist world in which citizens show their increasing anxiety, desire for consuming, and alienation, but he also points out the increasing cruelty in individuals as a result of inequality, and pressures of ideology. This is what Crimp observed in his own

society; if the theatre is one of the super structural elements, it is possible to use it to advocate a change in the material conditions of a society.

#### 4.2. THE CITY

*The City* was staged at the Royal Court in 2008 and directed by Katie Mitchell. The fame of the play is expressed by Sierz, “The play had previously received a world premiere in a German translation (Die Stadt by Marius Von Moyenburg) at the Schaubühne in Berlin, directed by Thomas Ostermeier” (Sierz, 2013, p. 227). The play also attracted attention after it was staged in Melbourne and Sydney. Audiences and critics found the play difficult to watch in order to create tension. Crimp confronts the increasing tension in society to audiences.

This is not an easy play to watch, raising as it does disturbing thoughts about the difficulty adults experience in communicating honestly - and the risk that children face in almost any situation. But its bleak humour, terrific writing and sheer theatrical flair combine to make it one of the most profound plays of the year. (Alex Sierz, <http://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/review.php/20563/the-city>).

In 1973, Raymond Williams wrote a book of cultural analysis called *The Country and The City*. He vindicates that both the city and the country are shown as opposite poles in the novels of many authors such as Thomas Hardy and Charles Dickens. For Williams, this is nothing rather than reproducing the difference between rural and urban. While the city is shown as an unknown and corrupted place with many lonely and evil people, the country is represented with simple and natural images. For that reason, according to Williams, these writers not only fulfill the reproduction of these images, but they also contribute to the endorsement of the existing social order. Martin Crimp’s play, *The City*, also reveals this distinction and justifies the existing social order. *The City*, comprising five scenes, has some similarities with *The Country* (2000) as Alex Sierz and Vicky Angelaki claim. Both plays have an analogous marriage concept, which is degenerated, corrupted, and bloodless. Crimp uses the same name, Clair, for his protagonists in both plays. When the play was staged by Mitchell, the actors achieved to reflect the gloomy and dark side of the play. However, the dark side of the play also caused trouble;

In Mitchell's *The City*, thirty something actors Benedict Cumberbatch and Hattie Morahan played more to each other than to the audience and this created the effect of an enclosed world. They were both luminous, yet also managed to suggest emotional darkness (Alex Sierz, 2013, p. 229).

In the play, Crimp consciously chooses music which plays a crucial role in emphasizing the hidden reality of individuals. He used Schubert's "Moments Musicaux No: 3 in F minor" (39) in the play as a recurring motif. It is "perhaps Schubert's best-known composition" and "the mood of the music defies verbal description; a paradoxical expression such as smiling through tears" (Todd, 2004, p. 140). The music symbolizes the feelings of a writer who creates a dark city where alienated and lost characters live with violence in them.

In *The Plays of Martin Crimp*, Vicky Angelaki frankly posits that *The City* shows a society which is deteriorated from different aspects. The pessimism of Crimp is felt from the beginning of the play.

Knowing that 2008 proved to be a devastating year for financial institutions, leading to recession and mass redundancies that have had direct and lasting impact on the lives of the middle classes, we can appreciate that *The City* was not only a resonant play, but also an intuitive, prescient one. (2013, p. 24).

He uses ironic language with word games and provocative images such as a knife. Chris asks Jenny "how the war is" and Jenny responds in an absurd way stating that "the war is fine". (58). The play begins with the depiction of both Clair and Christopher with objects: "Clair holds a flat object in a plain paper bag ... He's wearing a suit, carries a case, has a security pass hanging from his neck" (7). When Clair and Chris return to their house, they ask each other about their ordinary day. While Clair by chance met a famous writer, Mohammed, Chris bemoans his bad luck and his tardiness to work. Mohammed makes friends with Clair, after she claims that she saw his daughter, wearing pink jeans while getting into a taxi with a woman who resembled a nurse. Then, Mohammed and Clair talk about the writer's sorrowful days and torture in prison and he gives a diary to Clair, which was originally bought for his lost daughter. On the other side, Chris has some trouble with his pass card while entering his office. Nobody aids him and even the cleaners who saw that his card did not work, behave recklessly. After lunch, Bobby Williams stops by his

office mentioning that because of the restructuring of the company, Chris might be dismissed. For Chris, the reason of his sacking is not to have lunch with Jeanette, a woman who is very successful and versatile at work, and not to have a sexual relationship with her like Bobby, a coworker. In fact, unemployment was a great problem after the Second World War. Many people were living in poverty and Hewitt expresses:

The main challenge in 1997 in terms of social policy was a growing number of claimants such as disabled people, unemployed people, pensioners and families on income support; over 13% of the GDP were spent on social security in 1997. Spending on social security almost had tripled since 1950, but with the increase in spending the number of people living in poverty has grown as well, with one in four people living on less than half of the average income (after housing cost) in 1996 compared to one in ten in 1979. (Hewitt, 1999, p. 152).

Thatcher did make some reforms to reduce unemployment, however, the big changes were made during Tony Blair's period of leadership. Like Thatcher, he also increased taxes, although he was supposed to do the opposite, which made lower paid jobs more challenging.

After Chris talks about his disturbance at work, he notices Clair's face but makes nothing of her smile. Indeed, the reason behind her smile is not the felicity of her husband's condition, but the ongoing effect of her meeting with a famous writer and her insouciance. Likewise, Chris does not pay attention to what Clair has done during the day. Thus, Crimp implicitly points out the collapse of patriarchy. He wants to make a joke about his trouble at work. Crimp distinctly puts forth the alienated, disregarding, and self-centered individuals for consideration. Throughout history, marriage has been viewed as a divine institution, which is composed of security and personal relationships. Sacrificing yourself to your family and unrequited love are the main rules of marriage. Sinfield claims that if things go wrong, it is an insecure moment for the patriarch of the family. (1992, p. 44). Thus, Crimp implicitly points out the collapse of patriarchy. The communication between the partners, Chris and Clair, is not only strange, but also fragmented and meaningless for each other. Whilst Clair is working at home, Chris asks her why she has never considered

writing for herself (16). Although Clair eagerly demands to talk about his question, which is directly about herself, Chris does not show interest in her response and heads towards the door claiming someone is knocking on the door. Jeanette, a neighbor, visits them to complain about their children who make loud noises while running in the garden.

Jeanette is another crucial character that displays other dimensions of society. In spite of stating that she has a smaller house, which indicates the class difference between them, she lays emphasis on similar concerns that they share (20). The neighborhood relationship is also crucial. Even though they meet many times at the supermarket or on the street, they pass by and do not greet each other. Crimp does not ignore the real alienation of individuals. To feel relaxed, Jenny tells that she loves watching old love films which draws attention to her emotions, but she complains about not playing the piano although she knows how to play. She says “there’s no life to my playing. Emotionally it’s dead. Because you know what it’s like when the sun shines on the TV screen so the picture disappears and all you see is the glass surface of it?” (21). Ironically, Crimp firstly shows technology as if it is something good but then he reveals the negative effect of the technology on individuals who feel nothing, like robots. So everything is meaningless, fake and artificial without any sensation.

Between 1997 and 2007, Tony Blair who left a great impression on British politics, was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Alan Sinfield points out that “Queen Elizabeth feared foreign war because it was risky and expensive and threatened to disturb the fragile balance on which her power was founded” (Sinfield, 1992:117). However, Blair was reluctant to show his power. He was still remembered for his cruel actions that caused a long war with Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo. After the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001, he sent British troops to Afghanistan, and then he joined with George Bush to invade Iraq, claiming that weapons for mass destruction were being produced. Yaroslaw Trafina mentions that “Most Afghans do not know about 9/11 attacks. Indeed, a survey of 1000 men in Helmand and Kandahar province found out that 92 percent did not know about 9/11 attacks” (Trofimov, 2011:19). Political and economic reasons for wars are not negligible, so it is still argued as to whether Blair had lied or not. In 2011, the war in Afghanistan

began in order to vanish terror and to secure safety for the country. Both the United States and the United Kingdom decided to capture Osama Bin Laden, the leader of al-Qaeda and put an end to the Taliban. To strengthen their position in the world, they also utilized NATO. During the war, countless soldiers and civilians were killed.

The real dimension of the war is clearly highlighted by Crimp in *The City*. Jenny is a nurse who has to work long hours, whereas her husband is a doctor who is in a 'secret war'(22). To protect her husband, to overlap the violence of the war, and to increase its acceptability, Jenny claims that her husband has only a small gun to defend himself against vicious attacks:

Jenny: ... But I can tell you that what they're doing now, in the secret war, is they're attacking a city – pulverizing it, in fact – yes – turning this city – the squares, the shops, the parks, the leisure centers and the schools – turning the whole thing into a fine grey dust. Because - and I have my husband's word for this – everybody in that city has to be killed. Not by him. Of course not. He's a doctor. But all the same the city has to be pulverised so that the boys – our boys – can safely go in and kill the people who are left – the people, I mean, still clinging on to life...(22).

As Jeanette asserts, people who have higher social status do not have to fulfill the violent actions. There are boys with 'blue cards' (23), which orders them what to do. On the other side, people who are terrorized and "clinging on to life" (23) are the most threatening creatures by virtue of their desire to live. The things that make them terrorists, such as hiding in the drains to save their lives and living in poverty, are their 'rags, blood, coffee cups, and stink' (23). The scene that Jeanette depicts, exhibits how primitive they are:

Jenny: ... And there they are!... a bright green woman with a bright grey baby at her breast – right there at the end of the drain – sucking – that was the sound you heard – a woman giving suck. (slight pause.) So the boy thinks: (without characterizing) 'Hmm, fuck this, fuck this you bitch. I can't kill a woman with a baby at her breast you cunt, you fucking bitch ...

When the soldier sees a woman with a baby, his conscience does not let him kill them. However, he is accustomed to taking orders and wants to check what his



superiors tell him to do instead of making his own decisions. Crimp displays that not only our outer world, but also our inner world is affected negatively in by war. While vacillating between his conscience and his orders, his skull is crushed with a brick and his heart is cut out with ‘a stainless serrated blade’ (24); the soldier who has all the technological war machines such as ‘gun’ (22) and ‘googles’ (23) cannot kill the terrorists who have only a brick and a blade to defend themselves. According to Sinfield:

The contradictions inscribed in ideology produce very many confused or dissident subjects, and control of them depends upon convincing enough of the rest that such control is desirable and proper. Soldiers have to believe that they are different from terrorists,...and most of us have to be persuaded to agree. (1992:245).

As Sinfield claims, Crimp indicates that individuals are controlled by the power and they fulfill what the power needs. Soldiers fight and kill in wars, and the rest of society believes that war is necessary. Crimp explicitly reveals this power game in his play, *The City*. When the soldier meets to an unexpected thing, such as killing a defenseless woman with a baby, he is confused and he checks what it is ordered with ‘a blue card’. In addition, Crimp emphasizes the silly reason why Jenny believes that they are dangerous enemies. Even if Jenny reveals the violence of war, Clair is not interested in either her story or her feelings. This is the other side of senseless society. The only thing Clair tells is to decline Jenny’s request about children’s playing in the garden stating a reason that her husband is responsible for looking after children after he got the sack, this is the only thing that he idles around.

In *The City*, violence towards children and the changing behavior of children who have experienced violence, are the other crucial plots that Crimp criticize. It is a known fact that all over the world, violence on children is a widespread problem. Much research has been conducted to highlight the increasingly serious problem of violence towards children. According to Caroline Mc Gee:

\*Dobash and Dobash (1980) reported that domestic violence forms the second most common type of violent crime reported to the police in Britain. Specifically these researchers found that it comprises more than 25 percent of all reported violent crime.

\*Stanko et al. (1998) estimated that one in nine woman and over 5000 children a year experience domestic violence.

\*Women's Aid Federation of England (WAPE 1997) reported that approximately 32,017 children were accommodated in Women's Aid refuges during the year 1996-1997.

\*In an international context, studies that focused only on physical abuse yielded a prevalence rate of between 25 percent and 60 percent (Mc Gee, 2000:17-18).

Thus, according to the results, day-by-day the increasing rates have become a significant problem in Britain. Although, Clair asserts that it is not possible to lock children in their room to keep them silent, the conversation between Jenny and Clair brings up doubt: "Jenny: Would you lock them indoors? Clair: Of course not. Of course we wouldn't lock our children indoors. Would we?" (25). Later Chris goes upstairs and finds the house is quieter than ever. As soon as he comes back, he asserts the children have locked themselves into their room and hidden the key under the carpet (28). Interestingly, both Clair and Jenny ask Chris to confirm whether the children are upstairs, and this makes him angry.

Crimp uses a knife as a metaphor to signify violence against children. Jenny tells a story about how a mother uses a knife to cut the baby's mouth. However, it is not a simple knife, it is, "a small knife with a stainless serrated blade being used to cut the soldier's heart out – d'you see?" (24), so the baby is exposed to traumatizing violence which may lead to the cultivation of negative attitudes later on in its life. The knife image is used for the second time when Jenny presents, "a small serrated kitchen knife" (55), to Clair as a Christmas gift:

Jenny: ... I hope you like it. I thought it would be useful with small children.

Clair: Oh?

Jenny: To cut up their food. (55).

Actually, Crimp does not only criticize violence against children, but he also estimates the possible presence of abnormalities in the upcoming generation, by virtue of being subjected to violence. Carolina Overlien and Margareta Hyden advocate that "... being exposed to domestic violence has great potential for strong

adverse outcomes in children, resulting among other things, in high levels of aggression, depression, anger and anxiety” (2009 2). Crimp also reveals what he deems about the upcoming generation with the character of Girl who does not care about her brother’s blood on her coat, and who responds abnormally. The poems that she reads at the beginning of the fourth act, indicate how she has learnt to be cruel from adults.

Girl: There once was a child in a drain

Who longed for the sound of the rain.

But when the storm broke

The poor child awoke

In a stream of unbearable pain. (42).

Furthermore, she demands that her father hits and punishes her brother, Charlie, on account of him opening doors and finding their mother’s diary. The cruelty in the little girl and her stubborn behavior are the reflections of her parents’ violence on her and her brother. Children have the ability to comprehend and attribute meaning to their social circumstances, even when they are little. On the other side, Mohamed, a famous writer, is another character who does not want his daughter at home because of her naughtiness. He blames his daughter for preventing him from writing, and sends his little girl to her aunt.

According to Caroline Mc Gee, physical violence is not the only reason behind traumatic attitudes of children. For her, “it is important that the impact of other forms of domestic violence such as psychological or emotional abuse are not overlooked or minimized” (Childhood Experiences of Domestic Violence 18). This is exactly what Crimp highlights in his play in act four when the girl is trying to put on her coat:

Girl: I can’t get my arm into the sleeve. It’s the way you’re /holding it.

Chris: Alright, alright, just do it yourself. **JUST DO FUCKING THING YOURSELF...**

Girl: Daddy?

Chris: What? (46).

Chris cannot endure his daughter's unsuccessful tries or cannot control his nervous, so he impulsively shouts at her instead of being patient and waiting for her try without complaining, as all the other parents have to do. Bringing up a child in such a violent atmosphere affects the child who will one day be an adult and live his/her life according to the lessons learned in childhood; children can also be viewed as a kind of threat for the upcoming generation. Crimp implicitly focuses on the gradual deterioration of society from different dimensions.

After a long phone conversation, Clair expresses that she will join a conference which is going to be arranged by Mohammed, whom Chris cannot remember immediately. Then, Chris expresses his desire to kiss Clair but she does not let him: She tells him that she has to be compelled to be kissed by him, and when Chris attempts to kiss her, she cruelly turns her head away from him. Thus, she proves that he is a powerless man who deals with only unnecessary things such as housework and children. When Chris declares his love, Clair cruelly resists stating that the only reason why he declares his love is to make feel himself better. One more time, Crimp draws attention to egocentric individuals and perished family boundaries. The reality of Clair's claim about Chris's fake love is clearly expressed when Chris states that he has found a job. Instead of kissing his wife, he suddenly starts to tell her how he has found a job.

Chris meets one of his school friends, Sam, while looking for frozen meat at the supermarket (33). While Sam recognizes Chris immediately, Chris does not recognize him. Sam blames his hat for not being recognized by the others. He is wearing clothing such as a hat, a badge, and a uniform, which specify that he is a worker. Raymond Williams deems that "the idea of service is the reduction of man to a function. Further, the servant, if he is to be a good servant, can never really question the order of things; his sense of authority is too strong" (Culture and Society 330). Although Chris deems that because of Sam's hat, dress, and badge, he is not in a good condition. Sam advocates the opposite saying, "-the pay and the conditions were well above average – there was a friendly atmosphere and generous discounts for staff – job security – good prospects ..." (34). That is to say, Crimp displays how low-paid jobs are embraced by people and how they internalize ideology without question. While Chris and Sam are drinking at the pub, Sam apologizes for his

French. Like Sam, his girlfriend, Indy, from Abu Dhabi, is also an immigrant who has to work in low-paid jobs. Thus, Crimp again emphasizes immigrant problems as he did in *Dealing with Clair*.

As soon as Chris finishes his speech, Clair tells him she has to go to “Lisbon for a few days” (35). Chris does not show any reaction or ask any more questions in order to satisfy his curiosity. Clair demands that he kisses her, but Chris does not do anything and leaves her alone. Crimp draws attention to a brewing family crisis. In *the Uses of Literacy*, Hoggart acknowledges the changes in culture. For him, in the past, the roles of the mother who was the center of the house, and the father, who was ‘the master of the house’ (Hoggart; 1969:36) were certain. A good house wife had to prepare not only good food which was associated with only meat, but also had to light fire instead of being interested in buying. She was always busy with mending, sewing, washing, looking after her children and making her husband relax when he came home. Moreover, if there was no father figure present, she was responsible for earning money. On the other hand, a good father had to work to earn money; he could not do housework if his wife did not work. In the past, even though life was difficult, they were happy with their life and had strict boundaries. However, Crimp draws a picture of a family completely opposite to this picture. Parents do not only lose interest in each other, but also in their children. The relationship between them is superficial and insensible. They merely act out their roles as if this is what they are supposed to do.

Clair, who is woken up by an alarm, tells Chris about the conversation between her and Mohamed, whose daughter died in a traffic accident. She says that he ashamedly depicted how he treated his daughter, Laela, like an unwanted toy, making Clair listen to him intently. He confessed that he sent his daughter to her aunt because she prevents him from writing. Clair could not bear to hear his brutal confession, but she could not dare to send him away.

In the last act, Jenny visits Clair with a small Christmas gift, a knife. She asks Clair where the children are. Even though Clair says that they are running in the garden or in the street, Jenny claims that she has seen no one or heard anything. Jenny indicates her discomfort with the things around her as if everything is so artificial. Meanwhile, Chris returns from work and wants his Christmas present. Clair brings out a diary

and asks Chris to read it. While reading, Chris learns that they are just invented characters by a writer who has created an imaginary city inside his/her head.

Chris: ... And I did reach my city ... But when I reached it found it had been destroyed. The houses had been destroyed ... There were no children in the playgrounds, only colored lines. I looked for inhabitants to write about, but there were no inhabitants, just dust ... there was nothing – nobody – just dust. And this grey dust, like the ash from a cigarette, was so fine it got into my pen and stopped the ink reaching the page. Could this really be all that was inside of me? ... (62).

Although everything seems as the author's random invention, it both mirrors the real deep feelings of a creator and the society that he/she lives in. Actually, it is not bizarre when it is learnt that all characters and events are invented by a writer. According to Pierre Bourdieu;

Ideologies are always doubly determined, that they owe their most specific characteristics not only to the classes or class fractions which they express... but also to the specific interests of those who produce them and to the specific logic of the field of production. (qtd. Faultiness Cultural Materialism 186).

For that reason, the play does not only serve to the power ideologies, but also it gives us clues about the writer. In *The City*, Clair goes to a conference where all writers and translators gather and this indicates the power of intellectuals as a cultural institution. Although the conference and workshops by the intellectuals are defined as awe-inspiring by Clair, Crimp manages to reflect the real violence behind the shining curtains. One of the most famous writers, Mohammed, is the one who hides his alienated, dirty, and violent feelings until he visits Clair's room at night. Morris Steven Leigh expresses:

Ultimately, the play is her invention, because Crimp is examining the solipsism that keeps us at a subtly brutal remove from each other. It's the solipsism that allows presidents to order drone strikes on civilians: more abstract than real, the victims, too might as well be fictitious characters. (<http://www.laweekly.com/2012-08-23/stage/the-city-son-of-semele-how-obama-got-his-groove-back/>).

Whether it is solipsism or not that makes us cruel can be disputed, but violent children, alienated people, war, artificial lives and unhappiness constitute her world; inventor of the micro world in the play. Although she seems the inventor of the play, Crimp is the real creator of the whole play and he undirectly reveals his negative attitude to power ideologies; capitalism which might be shown as one of the basic reasons of alienated people, wars, and violence. Like Shakespeare did in *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Hamlet*, Crimp did not uncover the name of the war in order not to attract attention to the Prime Minister; the world that she creates fails with the power of ideologies. Furthermore, even if it is an imaginative world, the class distinction cannot be ignored, as it is in *Dealing with Clair*. Whereas Sam, and his friends are the symbol of the low class, Chris, Liz, and Jenny represent the middle-class. Ironically, at the end of the play, individuals are destroyed by their creators. Although in *Dealing with Clair*, Crimp obliquely displays the violent and destructive effects of the ideology on individuals, in *The City*, it is obvious how the system has the power of annihilation. To conclude, in *The City*, instead of criticizing the existing power and structure in Britain, Crimp designs a universal plot and expostulates the power games and their effect on people in the universe. In both *Dealing with Clair* and *The City*, he successfully depicts conflict and change in the developed society.





## 5. FEMINIZING THE BODY: A SOCIALIST FEMINIST READING OF CRIMPLAND

In Western theory, as in law, the female body is most often assumed to be like the male body when the equality of women and men is being asserted; by the same token, the female body is most often explicitly said to be ‘different’ from the male when the equality of women and men is being denied (Zillah R. Eisenstein).

From the past to the present, even in mythological tales, which are the foundations of Western literature, the female body has tirelessly carried the weight of a negatively burdened meaning attributed by society, to indicate its inequality and worthlessness. For a long time, women have been trained to fulfill the changing needs of the patriarchy such as mothers, daughters, and wives. This discrepancy in the definition of women has existed since Christianity. She is both defined as Virgin Mary and as a temptress woman, Eve, who is the reason for the fall of Man. While good women who can satisfy patriarchy’s needs, are appreciated, bad women who fail to keep up with patriarchy’s rules, are belittled. After many centuries, even if they have the right to vote and legal equity, women cannot rid themselves of their historical definitions. Moreover, changing society and culture and, the improvement of technology have not only exposed them to carry their sexual and domestic meanings, but also made them adopt these changes.

Being aware of this legacy of women’s history, Crimp uses women as majority of the central characters in his plays. In *Attempts on Her life*, a woman is shown as a mother, terrorist, porn star, and an artist in different scenarios. In *Cruel and Tender*, a woman is seen as a prisoner in the domestic sphere and in *The Treatment*, the resistance of a woman results in death. In “Political Point-scoring”, Mary Luckhurst advocates that in Crimp’s many plays, “his fascination with the sexual objectification of women and women as victims and perpetrators of violence is evident” (Luckhurst, 2003, p. 52). This is why this chapter attempts to explore how Crimp represents and

reflects female bodies in his plays in the light of Socialist Feminists who do not only criticize patriarchy, but also the hierarchy that capitalism has constituted.

To unravel and overthrow patriarchy, women have struggled against the oppression of women for many years, despite the variety of opinions. Reinelt and Roach posit that “There is no universal woman but only women, there is not one feminism but feminisms” (1992, p. 226). In this sense, while feminism opposes the dominant patriarchal culture depicting woman’s experiences, it also divides into different directions. Liberal feminists insist on equal education rights, because they believe that this is the only path for the self-actualizing of women. On the other side, Marxist feminists advocate that the reason behind woman’s inequality arises from class difference depending on their unpaid production, even at home. While Radical feminists claim that inequality is derived from gender differences, Socialist feminists blame the patriarchal capitalist system for the inequality. Even if their view points are different from each other, all of these groups come together under one purpose; equality for women.

For many years, women did not have a right to take part in the political sphere because of the domination of men. They did not even have the chance to produce their own art unlike men who were free to produce cultural works. Aphra Behn was the first female playwright to stage a play in the Restoration Theatre with *The Rover* (1670) which was about forced marriages. In 1700, Mary Astell also put down the patriarchal marriage system in her work, *Some Reflections Upon Marriage*. Susan Carlson defines the value of women by saying, “John Barton’s Royal Shakespeare Company production in 1986 reduced the individuality of the female characters and rendered them in part as sexual objects” (Fortier, 2002, p. 113). In this sense, it is obvious that women have been reduced to stereotypes such as a whore, virgin, and evil creature. In Crimp’s plays, there is not a woman who is a politician or an artist. On the contrary, in *Cruel and Tender*, Amelia gives up her education to be a housewife, and a female artist, who cannot resist male domination, commits suicide in *Attempts on Her Life*. Moreover, the distinction of body/mind, and soul/ body are crucial plots that philosophers have addressed. While the mind and the soul were associated with men, the body was associated with women. For that reason, the body has been used as a focal symbol to show women’s struggle for independence and has

been a crucial issue in feminist literature since the 1960s. According to the feminist critics, the main reason patriarchy exists today as an ideology, is because of the gender problems which have been constructed in the Western world since the beginning of time. Kathy Davis posits, “[t]he body has always been – and continues to be – of central importance for understanding experiences and practices and cultural and historical constructions of the female body in the various contexts of social life” (Davis, 1997, p. 7).

Indisputably, with changing social constructions, for a long time, woman’s body has been attributed many different meanings. In *The Second Sex*, Simon De Beauvoir says “One is not born, but rather becomes a woman” (2011, p. 301) to indicate that women are shaped by the choices of our society. According to De Beauvoir, the only expectations for women that society has to overcome successfully, are being an ideal mother and a perfect wife who satisfies all the needs of her husband and children. De Beauvoir advocates that woman’s ‘otherness’ is constituted through myths which are presented from a male perspective. Furthermore, woman’s body is defined and objectified by man. She claims:

For him [man] she [woman] is the sex- absolute sex, no less. She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her, she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute- she is the Other. (2011, p. 6).

She explicitly delineates that “mythologies represent females in relation to males either as the sinful Eve or the Virgin” (2011, p. 175). As De Beauvoir claims that the unworthiness of the female body was mentioned many times in mythologies. For instance, in *The Oresteia*, at the beginning of the Trojan War, Agamemnon sacrifices Iphigenia, his daughter. When his wife, Clytemnestra, murders her husband to take revenge, in turn her son, Orestes murders her to avenge the death of his father. Unfortunately he is not punished for the destruction of a female body. In *The Odyssey*, a mother is cut by her son, Telemachus. In Seneca’s *Phaedra’s Love*, all evilness is imprisoned in Phaedra’s body and then she is violently destroyed.

Theatre provides various ways of expression, by using the body. Gayle Austin points out that “Drama combine[s] verbal and non-verbal elements simultaneously, so that questions of language and visual representation can be addressed at the same time,

through the medium of an actual body” (Austin, 1990, pp. 2-3). Thus, the author finds a space to reflect her/his ideas more creatively and explicitly using the body as one of the most crucial characteristics of theater. Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins claim that “often it is the body itself, rather than the words, which works to maintain the attention of the audience. The active or decorative body in particular (that moving, dancing, and/or costumed body) generates immediate interest and engagement” (1996, p. 249). In this manner, theatre is one of the best literary mediums available to facilitate an examination of the female body.

In this chapter, the representation of the female body in Crimp’s plays, *Attempts on her Life*, *The Treatment*, and *Cruel and Tender*, will be examined in the light of Socialist feminists; Alison Jaggar, Susan Bordo, Juliet Mitchell, and Nancy Chodorow, who not only criticize patriarchy, but also the hierarchy that capitalism constitutes. For them, the destruction of capitalism is not the only solution, as Marxist feminists assert. For that reason, not only capitalism, but also patriarchy, which both intertwine with each other, are important factors for both oppression and reproduction of the female body. Making the body independent is only possible by reconstructing the gender roles which have been adopted by women throughout history. Because of capitalism and patriarchy, females do not have any value, and to disrupt this, deconstruction of the sexist society is necessary for socialist feminists. In order to reveal this socially and culturally repressed femininity and determined feminine roles, Jaggar, Bordo, Eisenstein, and Mackinnon argue about the commodification of the female body, her reproduction and alienation.

Alison Jaggar takes the alienation of women into account in her book, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature Philosophy*. She borrows the alienation concept from Marxism and adapts it to women who cannot express themselves in society. The female body plays a significant role in women’s alienation, which is divided into three categories: sexual, motherhood, and cultural production. Since their sexuality is brought into the forefront, women have to conceal their feelings, interests, and thoughts. They do not only have to live under the gaze of men, but also they have to face their sexualized bodies everywhere. Motherhood is another kind of burden, which imprisons them into the domestic sphere and cuts off their relationship to the outside. Discarding their desires, they live only for their children. Lastly, since they

are identified with the emotional world, their lack of contribution to science and political activities causes them further alienation. For Sandra Bartky, “the form taken by women’s sexual alienation results in an alienation from their intellectual capacities that may be even more damaging than the alienation of their sexuality” (Bartky, 1990, p. 35).

In the view of Catharine A. Mackinnon, objectification is one of the biggest problems that affect women’s lives in terms of their psychological state. She says, “Like the value of a commodity, women’s sexual desirability is fetishized” (1989, p. 123). Although women are objectified in many distinct ways such as good or bad girls, she asserts that the only way to be a subject for women is to be objectified sexually, which contributes to their alienation. Initially they are alienated from themselves while acting upon the desire of men, and then they are alienated from each other. Their wish to be the best ‘object’ creates competitiveness between them and this is exactly what capitalism wants to create.

Martin Crimp also indicates his own views in his female characters. In *The Theatre of Martin Crimp*, Alex Sierz states “Crimpland is pro-feminist in its politics. Time and time again, Crimp’s protagonists are women, and – when they are victims – our sympathies are clearly being enlisted on their side. But this is feminism under an ironic male gaze” (2006, p. 150). In *Dealing with Clair*, Crimp highlights the irony about the women’s movement, using the female character of Clair who is shown as, “coolly detached instead of conscious feminist” (Sierz, 2006, p. 150). Furthermore, she is the victim of James and her victimization remains a mystery, Crimp refuses to grant closure.

In ‘*Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence*’, Adrianna Rich advocates that “the issue feminists have to address is not simple ‘gender inequality’ nor the domination of culture by males nor mere ‘taboos against homosexuality: but the enforcement of heterosexuality for women as a means of assuring male right of physical, economic, and emotional access’”. (Jackson, 1996, p. 131) For Rich, ‘compulsory sexuality’ is one of the main reasons why there is inequality between men and women. In Martin Crimp’s plays, all of the female characters are heterosexual, which means that his female sexual identities are created regarding of

inequality between sexes. That is to say, they are heterosexual as not only Crimp, but also society demand.

In their book *Woman's Worth*, Lisa Leghorn and Katherine Parker explain patriarchy, claiming that:

In every patriarchal culture (by 'patriarchal' we mean a male- dominated culture in which traditional male values are institutionalized in the family, the economy, and social and religious life), the institutions and ideologies which govern the society also serve to define women's place and to keep women in that place (1981, p. 3).

The ideological institution of patriarchy does not only control and limit the "place" of women, but it also assimilates their bodies, as Sue-Ellen Case states, "by the patriarchal system of desire and representation" (1988, p. 128). When these bodies go astray, they are subjected to another system of patriarchal violence. In *The Full Room*, Dominic Droomgole explains that Crimp's narratives finish "often revolving around violence to women" (2012, p. 62). For instance, in *Play with Repeats*, the resistance of Heather cannot stop Tony and he attacks her sexually. Moreover, Crimp himself admits that "There is a certain objectification of women in those plays; the woman is the victim and I don't really escape from that" (Sierz, 2006:150).

We seek to avoid by fusing ourselves with others, by becoming part of an authoritarian system... There are two ways to approach this. One is to submit to the power of others, becoming passive and compliant. The other is to become an authority figure yourself, a person who applies structure to others. Either way, you escape your separate identity. (Jung, 1997, p. 1-2)

If Fromm's two fundamental ways are considered, most of the characters in Crimp's plays are not free bodies; while some of them keep their silence, some of them are eager to use their oppression on men. Indeed, he indicates the cruel oppression of capitalism on women in many of his plays. In *Definitely the Bahamas*, Marijke, does housework to earn money and, is abused by the son of the house. Internalizing being the other, and being ignored might be the reasons why she keeps her silence. On the other side, ironically Milly keeps her silence and pretends not to see the sexual violence on Marijke's body. Women in *The Country*, who do not have anything special to do for themselves, are alienated. Corinne stays at home as a commodity;

Sophie who is poor, works at home as a nanny for a low wage and Rebecca pays the cost of her addiction with her sexuality. However, Rebecca is the one who declines to be a sexual commodity and violently struggles for her freedom by suppressing both Richard and Corinne. In *Cruel and Tender*, all women are seen living in the domestic sphere, and they also take advantage of the General's high position and income. In the *Whole Blue Sky*, the desperate mother image is also used to highlight the mandatory choice, money and property, of a woman in a capitalist society who is economically dependent on her husband.

In *Martin Crimp's Theatre*, Clara Escada contends that 'Crimp's characters 'embody' aspects of social problems; they are selective representations of specific social tendencies' (2013, p. 47). For that reason, in this chapter I will engage in studying the representation of the female body, which has been a crucial part of feminist theories and how Crimp reflects the dominant patriarchal culture on the female bodies of his characters. By taking into account Alison Jaggar, Kathrine Mackinnon and being aware of the previous literature on the body by Susan Bordo, Kate Millet, Zillah Eisenstein, Mary Luckhurst, Margrit Shildrick and Janet Price in this chapter, Martin Crimp's plays, *Attempts on her Life*, *The Treatment*, and *Cruel and Tender*, will be examined in terms of his constitution of the female body in the twenty-first century and feminists' assumptions on man's writing will be highlighted.

### **5.1. ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE**

By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism (Donna J. Harraway, 1991, p. 150).

In 1997, one of Martin Crimp's popular postdramatic plays was staged at the Royal Court. The play was translated into twenty languages and staged in many countries. In *Contemporary British Playwrights*, Alex Sierz comments on the play, and asserted that "the play was thrilling in its originality and aptness to the theme of the construction of individual identity." (Middeke, 2011, p. 61).

After *Attempts on Her Life* was staged at the Royal Court, many critics announced their views about the play. While Nicholas de Jongh praises the play, "what the brave new theatre of the 21st century will look like – both on stage and page" (Sierz, 2013,

p. 51), Alastair Macaulay defines the play as “a terrible play” that included “manipulative games with art, family and terrorism” (Ibid 52). John Peter defines the play as “a private drama whose heroine is defined by her absence” (Sierz, 2013, p. 52). Furthermore, Michael Billington describes Ann as, “basically a vehicle for the writer’s moral rejection of a selfish, materialist civilization based on consumer fetishism” and claims that Crimp has “proved that the act of theatre can still survive if propelled by moral fervor” (Billington, 1997, pp. 311-12).

David Edgar evaluates the play as an experiment in form.

Crimp’s purpose is not only to question whether we can truly know another human being, but whether we can regard other people as existing at all independent of the models we construct of them. And he does this not by a bald statement, but by playing an elaborate and sophisticated game with the audience’s expectations of how scenes connect within narrative. (Edgar, 1999, p. 31).

Although there is a debate as to Crimp’s *Attempts on Her Life* is a postdramatic play, because it contains postdramatic features such as unnamed characters, an absent protagonist, Karen Jürs- Munby, the translator of Lehmann’s *Postdramatic Theatre*, advocates that the, “performance in texts by Martin Crimp and Sarah Kane, among others, necessitates that such texts are to be considered postdramatic, in the sense that they require the spectators to become active co-writers of the performance text” (Lehmann, 2006, p. 6). As Heiner Müller, Sarah Kane, and Mark Ravenhill did before, Crimp rejects the use of character names. In addition, to indicate a change of speaker, the paragraphs begin with a dash.

During his interview with Alex Sierz, Crimp uncovers that, when he began to work on *Attempts on Her Life*, he became “bored” with psychological drama and “so – called cutting edge theatre” as well as with “the normal way of writing; namely, ‘he said’ and ‘she said’ dialogues” (Sierz, 2006, p. 101).

On the other side David Barnett claims that “the early drafts of *Attempts* had character names” (17), and accuses Crimp who “has sought to problematize the status of the speaking subject in the published versions by replacing nomination with dashes.” (17) Crimp presents uncertain and different places in *Attempts on Her Life*. It is not possible to comprehend the geography and the location even from the speech



of the characters. He also uses seventeen different scenarios instead of scenes, as we are not used to follow. The names of the scenarios are:

1- All Messages Deleted, 2- Tragedy of Love and Ideology, 3- Faith in Ourselves, 4- The Occupier, 5- The Camera Loves You, 6- Mum and Dad, 7- The New Anny, 8- Particle Physics, 9- The Threat of International Terrorism, 10- Kinda Funny, 11- Untitled (100 Words), 12- Strangely!, 13- Communicating with Aliens, 14- The Girl Next Door, 15- The Statement, 16- Porno, 17- Previously Frozen (Crimp, 2005, p. 199).

During the staging, pauses are used instead of mentioning the names of the scenarios. Although the scenarios are named differently and appear unrelated to each other at first glance, they are closely interconnected with each other. Zimmermann depicts the close relationship between the scenes:

The messages on the answering machine in the first scene introduce many of the play's central themes and motifs. Message 9 for instance, is reiterated verbatim in scenario 11, where it becomes part of a critique of Anne's installation. Her decision as a young girl to become a terrorist is taken up in scenario 9, which describes her as a full-blown professional. In scenarios, 1, 6, 11, and 17 her suicide attempts are discussed in the light of psychology and assessed as art. Scenarios 5 and 14 are chorus-like insets of rap songs commenting on the play's protagonist (Zimmermann, 2003, p. 77).

Thus each scenario gives clue about the other scenario in terms of plot or characters. Actually not only the titles of scenarios are repeated as Zimmermann mentions (2003, p. 77), but the same practices of objectification of the female body are also repeated. Crimp's seventeen scenarios are about the lifetime and personality of a woman called Anne; she is also named Annie, Anya, Annushka, Ann and Anny in different scenarios and her stories are told by the speakers, not by herself. The absent character's age is also uncertain. Sometimes she is 19, or 18, sometimes she is 40 years old. Like her changing age range, she is described using a variety of terms such as a lover, a terrorist, a victim, an artist, and a girl next door. According to Zimmermann, "this becomes an emblem of the postmodern condition of the self" (2003, p. 80).

Mary Luckhurst sees Crimp's play as "the most radically interrogative work in western mainstream theatre since Beckett" (2003, p. 59), and she comments on how Crimp identifies women as sexual and victimized objects. She advocates, "Ann can be a fantasy-repository for extreme kinds of wish-fulfilment." (60) Although the protagonist of the play is absent, Crimp shows how women's bodies are used in a male playwright's context. Ken Urban claims:

The play is after the big question: how is it that we come to know the other? Crimp suggests that the process of knowing is never a neutral one, and in fact, that the subject perpetuates a violence on the object that it seeks to know. It is no coincidence that the object of investigation in this play is a woman, since the female other has been the object of the male gaze since time immemorial (Sierz, 2013, p. 51).

For a long time, as Urban claims, women have been objectified. Although he says "knowing someone is not a neutral process" (Sierz, 2013, p. 51) it is debatable why women have been defined with negative images when they protest the rules of the society. In *The Second Sex*, Simon De Beauvoir claims that women do not belong to the patriarchal society are perceived as 'the others' (2011, p. 6). For that reason, they are suppressed and defined by men in various negative ways, even in literature. Throughout history, men and women have been depicted in art, music, literature, and so on, in opposing ways. While women are defined as sensuous, domestic, and loyal, men are depicted as social, powerful, and logical. This is how Crimp depicts the woman in his first scenario of *Attempts on Her Life*.

In the first of scenario, *Tragedy of Love*, using the unnamed characters, Crimp noticeably highlights the contradictory nature of men and women. While the woman in the first scenario is described as "beautiful, young with golden hair", the man is defined as "a man of power and authority" (208). In her article, 'Family Structure and Feminine Personality' Nancy Chodorow asserts that "the reproduction within each generation of certain general and nearly universal differences characterize masculine and feminine personality types" (Rosaldo, 1974, p. 43). Thus, via reproduction, specific masculine and feminine characteristics transcend cultures. If theater is a part of culture, Crimp indicates that the certain definitions of women and

men have still unchanged superiority in British society. Moreover, the absent character, Anne is shown as a powerless commodity:

- She begins to shout
- She begins to beat him with her fists
- She begins to bite him with her teeth
- She begins to kick him with her bare white feet
- She beats and beats / and beats (212-213).

“Shouting, beating, biting, kicking”, and tears on her face are the rebellious reactions of a woman’s body that cannot stand an oppressed life, but cannot change anything. Because of her reactions, the older man shows his compassion and he only “ - Bows his head ... Looks up at her ... And takes her tear stained/ face between his hands ...” (213).

Crimp does not only stress the ideological differences between the young woman and the older man: “For all their ideological differences ... he still loves her ...” (214), but also he reveals the sexual oppression on Anne’s body;

He kisses her and presses her back down onto the bed. Or she him. Better still: she presses him back down onto the bed such is her emotional confusion, such is her sexual appetite, such is her inability to distinguish between right and wrong in this great consuming passion... (214).

The woman is in confusion as to whether her act is what she desires or not. According to socialist feminists, sexual needs are transformed into products of human activity, so they are not natural but socially constructed activities. For that reason, Anne is in doubt about what she wants and thus feels depressed. In the past, even talking about sexuality was thought of as something shameful and disgraceful; today speaking about sexuality freely does not mean something positive for socialist feminists, since it is done “within the context of power relations, which is partially constructed through sexuality itself” (Eisenstein, 1988, p. 158). As Zillah Eisenstein asserts, it is not surprising that Crimp starts his play with a traditional definition of sexuality. At the beginning of the scenario, while the body of Anne is identified as powerless, Crimp ironically shows that her power is only hidden in her sexual body

and desire; exaggerated sexuality is the most common way to define a woman's body, so one more time women cannot escape classification as sexual objects.

In *The New Anny* scenario, Crimp justifies Susan Bordo's argument about using females as an object, not as a subject in the patriarchal literature. He explicitly uses the description of a woman for a new car, namely for another passive object ironically. Actually, even today, in our consuming society, identification of a woman with a lifeless objects such as shampoo, ice-cream or car advertisements is a common way to highlight their commodity, so Crimp visibly delineates the view of contemporary society. Although the language of the play is English, "each speech is first spoken in an African or Eastern European language" (234). In *Martin Crimp's Theatre*, Clara Escoda Agusti claims, "Crimp thus demonstrates that female identities are reified to the point that the words used to describe a woman may work just as well for a car, and vice versa" (130).

*The New Anny* is defined with the sexual features of a woman's body.

- The car twists along the Mediterranean road...
- The sun gleams on the aerodynamic body.
- Fast, - Sleek, - Free (234).

Zimmermann claims, "The personification of a commodity as a woman in order to eroticize it for the gaze of the male customer reifies woman and reduces her to commodity status" (Dolan, 2012, p. 49). Thus, Crimp's way of describing a car using feminine properties, does not only show how women are seen as worthless and indifferent but also how they are seen as an object in contemporary society. *The New Anny* is a car where children and adults will be safe, relaxed and confident. To make men feel comfortable and calm and to be an ideal mother who devotes her life to her family and is bound to her child both emotionally and physically as a new authority of her life, are the main historical duties of a woman. In addition, Crimp depicts that Anny is a special car and it is not allowed to get in it if you are not perfect. He says:

There is no room in the Anny for the degenerate races...

... for the mentally deficient...

... or the physically imperfect.

No room for gypsies, Arabs, Jews, Turks, Kurds, Blacks or nay of that human scum (237).

If we consider Anny as an objectified flawless woman, Crimp shows off the inequality not only between the different sexes, but also between the same sexes as Socialist Feminists advocate. If racism is a world problem and if feminism is a worldwide equality struggle, feminists are not only interested in white bodies. Aida Hurtado argues that “white male culture oppresses women of color through ‘rejection’ or negatively valenced social evaluations. The point here is that women of color, poor women, and lesbians face the additional negatively valenced oppressions of racism, classism, and homophobia” (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 178). It is well known that women, and women’s bodies, from different nations are judged and oppressed more cruelly by the dominant culture. In the play, women who belong to the lower class like Blacks, Arabs, Jews, Turks, and Kurds, and women who have defects, physical as well as mental do not appear in the perfect image of Anny. Anny consists all the classified perfect standards of beauty. In 2005, at Sala Beckett, Barcelona, Juan Carlos Martel Bayod staged the play. However unlike in Crimp’s text, as Clara Escoda points out:

...the female actor who was delivering the lines in ‘The New Anny’ experience a nervous breakdown. She was uttering the lines as though it was a commercial, when suddenly, as though mimicking the pressures and imperatives of the discourses she was made to reproduce, she began to speak the lines increasingly fast, until her body collapsed like a machine refusing to work (2013, p. 131).

Thus, the dimensions of oppression on the body and the body’s attempt at rebellion are shown one more time. Actually this is not the only time that Crimp likens an object to a woman or objectifies a woman. In the short scenario, *Particle Physics*, the ashtray that the woman has, another object, is united to the woman and her sexuality by negative descriptions: both of them are perceived negatively. The unworthiness of woman is not only compared to an ashtray, but also to “a cheap hotel”:

...Like something you’d find in the lobby of a cheap hotel, the kind of hotel you visit for a few hours on a weekday afternoon in a strange city with a man you’ve / only just met. (240)

Susan Bordo advocates that ‘It’s our nature to be imperfect, after all, and anyone who tries to overcome that limitation on earth is guilty of hubris’ (1999, p. 175). This

is similar to the religious story of Adam and Eve who were thrown out of heaven because of Eve's sexual sedition. Christine Overall defines 'sex work' as, "an inherently unequal practice defined by the intersection of capitalism and patriarchy" (1992, p. 721). To fulfill the sexual needs of men, women are left no choice but to play their roles in the capitalist society with increasing desire of being the best; buying the sexiest clothes, make up, perfumes; however, they cannot escape to be blamed because of their sexuality. In the play, although making love in a 'cheap hotel' is identified with an ashtray ironically as if it is something dirty, the whole dirtiness belong to a woman, not a man. Thus, Crimp depicts the inequality in the capitalist patriarchy.

In *The Threat of International Terrorism*, for females, unnamed speakers fairly explain how the historical, traditional, and specified games are supposed to be played. From childhood, a female's body goes through many different experiences, more so than boys. While he is stimulated to play with cars and harsh games, she is supposed to play house and play with a doll: "a passive object ... an inert given object" (2011, p. 293). Crimp clearly discloses the prespecified rules for females. In the play, although Anne is grown up according to these predetermined rules, she cannot adapt them. It is said:

Not one spark – that's right – of human feeling or any sense of shame. Is this the same child, is this the same child who once wore a pink gingham dress and a straw hat and went with the daughters of doctors, dentists, TV presenters and property developers to the school on the hill with the polished brass plate and the teachers in strict tartan skirts? Is this the same child who had Fantasy Barbie, Fantasy Ken and all the outfits: the tiny tiny knickers and the tiny tiny shoes? The house, the horse, and Barbie's / very own car? (241)

Anne is an absent woman character who played with Barbie toys when she was a child. She wore a pink cloth, defined as a womanish color, was brought up aware of the traditional sexy model of a woman such as the teachers in 'a strict tartan skirts', and lastly had her religious education which was used as a method to produce fear and establish power within a patriarchal context. As a result, she is the one who learned her gender roles socially to secure the continuation of patriarchy. Nevertheless, although she has been brought up according to patriarchal society's

rules, she refuses to ‘recognize their authority’ (242). In the scenario, the unnamed characters not only show Anne’s rebellion which is surprising, but her rebellious body’s also tells the story.

Is this really the same little Anne who now has witness breaking down in tears? Who now has long-serving officers of both sexes receiving counselling for the night-sweats, impotence, amenorrhoea, trembling hands and flashbacks of human heads popping open as if in slow motion and the long long terrible wail of a buried unreachable child recurring as a kind of what’s the word? (244)

As Simon De Beauvoir points out in *The Second Sex*, “to be feminine is to show oneself weak, futile, docile” (2011, p. 348), so being rewarded or punished depends on how successfully females are attuned to their determined roles. Anne cannot accommodate herself with the capitalist patriarchy and thus, she is alienated from herself as well as the others.

In *Untitled (100 Words)* scenario, there is a woman artist who ‘attempts to commit suicide’ (249) a few times. During the scenario, the unnamed speakers depict the objects that they see to describe the death scene. The woman artist is not allowed to produce works of art. In this sense, she resembles to Judith, Shakespeare’s sister, in Virginia Woolf’s ‘A Room of One’s Own’ (1981), who also commits suicide. Both Judith and the artist in Crimp’s play cannot be productive in art because of the limited opportunities in the labor market and because they are imprisoned in the domestic sphere. The result of this subordination ends their life in the same way; suicide. However, unlike Woolf, Crimp considers that Anna’s body’s reaction, suicide, is meaningless, “Such flabby reasoning” (253).

In the twelfth scenario, *Strangely*, the soldiers are seen around a nameless woman who is called ‘bitch.’ On the grounds that she is “a nameless” woman “with the long grey hair streaked with blood and nastily so pock marked face” (259), she deserves to be humiliated. Owing to her appearance, the soldiers shout at her, call her ‘bitch’, and humiliate her. Alison Jaggar asserts, “In contemporary society, women are not regarded as whole persons with a multitude of desires, interests and capacities. Instead, they are seen sexual objects.” (Jaggar, 1983, p. 309). The old woman is rejected because of lack of her sexual attractiveness. However, she claims:

...I'm an educated woman – not some peasant out of a field who came to the city to clean rich people's toilets. I have a passport and a bank account in US dollars and....

- STRANGELY! (259).

Her skills and experience are not interesting enough to attract the soldiers. Crimp also manages to indicate the difference between a female body that belongs to an upper class and a female body from the lower class. Margrit Shildrick and Janet Price comment:

What is required, and what has emerged over subsequent years, is a theory of embodiment that could take account not simply of sexual difference but of racial difference, class difference and differences due to disability; in short the specific contextual materiality of the body (1999, p. 5).

Thus class distinction between the same sexes is another barrier which is manipulated by both patriarchy and capitalism. Luce Irigaray advocates that the definition of the female body and sexuality has not changed for a long time and women have to get rid of it initially (Irigaray, 1991, pp. 86-87). Crimp also delineates how the shaped and ordinary physical appearance of female body must be.

...why can't she be more attractive? Why can't she be more sympathetic? Why can't she have a few more teeth? Why can't she bend over and let us see her ass? Why can't she break down in tears and make us long to comfort her instead of staring like that and spitting. (259)

Crimp insistently stresses on the physical features of the female body that has to be charming, beautiful, sexy, and belong to a higher class, in order to deserve respect. Without her sexual beauty, the body of a woman is a useless and meaningless object.

In *The Girl Next Door* scenario, it is possible to see various examples of the objectification of the female body.

She is the girl next door

She is the fatal flaw

She's the reason for

The Trojan War (263).



Even in the twenty-first century, it is impossible to get rid of the male gaze in literature. Zimmerman supports it saying:

It becomes clear that like Helen of Troy Anne is the plane of projection for the multi-faceted myth of woman in contemporary society. She is mother, femme fatale, lesbian, artist, revolutionary, scholar, lover, victim, star, consumer, object of male desire and commodity. She literally becomes a vehicle (2003, pp.80-81).

Crimp exposes how a woman can be objectified from various dimensions as Zimmerman posits. Furthermore, she is a victim who is silenced as Crimp claims,

...She has a big mouth

But she never speaks. (264)

Because she has a commodified body, it is impossible for Anne to be heard in a deaf patriarchal society. Andrea Dworkin, an American socialist feminist, posits “In our culture not one part of a women's body is left untouched, unaltered ...From head to toe, every feature of a woman's face, every section of her body, is subject to modification” (1974, pp. 113–4). Again Crimp uses the same images in his earlier scenarios:

She's a terrorist threat

She's a mother of three

She's a cheap cigarette

She is Ecstasy (263).

Although Anne is a kind of threat for men, her fertility, reproductive body, is emphasized by the example of her three children. On the other side, her reproductive body cannot escape being objectified with a negative image of, “a cheap cigarette” (263). As Dworkin advocates, in *The Girl Next Door* scenario, the absent protagonist is defined as an object with many images. Indeed, with these lines, Crimp explains the whole view of society about the female body and how it is cruelly thrown towards its end:

- She' given a spade
- At the edge of a wood
- To dig her own grave

- By a man in a hood (264).

Her body deserves not only to be 'at the edge' of somewhere because of its worthlessness, but also she is alone, even while digging her own 'grave' with compulsion of 'a man'. She is the symbol of an alienated body.

In the sixteenth scenario, *Porno*, there is a 'young woman' artist who acts as a porno star. As the young woman speaks, "her words are translated dispassionately into an Africa, South America, or Eastern European language" (Crimp 269). According to Clara Escoda Agusti the play:

...which is being translated into a Third World or an Eastern European language and which, through cameras and television sets, can reach every corner of the world, is a means to lure Third World or Eastern European women into working for the porn business in developed countries (2013, p. 106).

In Katie Mitchell's 2007 production, it is revealed that the young woman in *Porno* is a poor, blonde immigrant woman who speaks with a Rumanian accent. During the play, there is a man near her who gives her cues when she has forgotten what to say. After few more times, the young woman says '- I can't, - I can't' (273). Even as the first young speaker leaves the stage because of her breakdown, the other speaker continues to act which is a sign of continuing, endless sexual oppression on women's bodies in this world. On the other hand, when Mitchell stages the play, the first speaker does not join the stage again and willingly leaves the stage as a symbol of female resistance.

While Pro-sex feminists think that pornography is necessary to challenge the patriarchy and is 'a celebration of the body and of sexuality' (Halley, 2007, p. 142), Mary Luckhurst states that *Porno* tries to denounce, "market economies which represent woman's sexuality as a commodity ... the exploitation of women, both institutionally in which corporate mentalities are implicated before anyone else." (2003, pp. 54-55). Unlike the thought of Pro-sex feminists, Crimp draws attention to the psychological damage to woman because of her displayed sexuality for the pleasure of men and market economies.

The female character in *Previously Frozen* scenario, the last scenario of the play, is named as an unsuccessful, unskilled body according to Crimp. She is labeled clumsy, because her children and her husband left her:

Oh yes, she has skills but whatever skills she has seem inappropriate to the world she's living in. Whatever work she's done seems inappropriate to the world she's living in. All she can do is pace round the ashtray or pull down books at random from the bookshelves. (282)

She could not become a good house wife, who makes her family happy and fulfills their wishes, in order to deserve success and happiness. However, she has skills which are not 'appropriate' in this patriarchal world and perhaps one day they will be explained as Simon De Beauvoir claims, "Capabilities are clearly manifested only when they have been realized." (Simons, 2010, p. 232). The books that she attempts to read, but ultimately fails to finish, are "Classic texts" that she started to read "twenty or thirty years ago" (282-283) when she was a student. In other words, she has never been able to complete her education. She has neither had a room to finish the book nor to improve her other skills just as Virginia Woolf claimed in 'A Room of One's Own' that "women must have money and privacy in order to write" (1981, p. viii). She is completely financially dependent on her husband financially which is one of the terrible facts of this contemporary society. Mariarosa Dalla Costa claims in her article "Women and the Subversion of Community" both housework and economical dependency make a woman alienated (1972, p. 26). She lacks the opportunity to be productive, so she does not feel that she belongs to this world.

During the play, Crimp changes the plot in the same scenario and he reveals the violence against the female body one more time. In this scene, a husband stabs his wife and he makes his son witnesses this horrible example of domestic violence. As women learn from each other how to be inferior and domestic, men also learn from other men how to behave violently towards women. Furthermore, both male and female children derive their identities from both their parents.

## 5.2. THE TREATMENT

Violence bespeaks the failure of revolutionary politics. Flip your vision. Look for a revolution where you see people loving justice and making justice with and through love. Look, see and name it (Zillah Eisenstein, 2014:2).

*The Treatment*, which is an outstanding play, was firstly performed at the Royal Court in 1993 and Crimp also won the John Whiting Award. In 1991, Crimp went to New York for three weeks to join the Royal Court writers exchange program. Vicky Angelaki claims that “The experience was conducive to *The Treatment*, his only play to clearly indicate that action takes place in a non-UK setting, and specifically, in various parts of New York” (Angelaki, 2012, p. 54). While the play is appreciated by critics and playwrights, some of the critics were in doubt about the play. In *The Theatre of Martin Crimp*, Alex Sierz points out;

John Peter said that ‘the writing is harsh, elegant and sardonic: a tapestry of ruthless social comedy, harrowing violence and cold and repugnant sexuality’, while Benedict Nightingale said that ‘Crimp’s play is most alive when he gives eccentricity and outrageousness its head (2006, p. 40).

Sierz also mentions the unconvinced critics such as Nicholas de Jongh who argued that “Crimp finally steers the play towards melodrama’s gulf, exalting sensationalism at the expense of explaining and justifying behavior, while Ian Herbert enjoyed it ‘but hated myself for doing so’ (Sierz, 2006, p. 40).

Crimp’s play, *The Treatment*, touches upon a variety of plots. It is possible to discuss the play in terms of feminist, Marxist, and political criticism. Sierz says that “And Crimp’s by now characteristic themes – the way language creates reality, media manipulation, exploitation of women – are all here” (Sierz, 2006, p. 41). Actually, in both plays, *The Treatment* and *Attempts on her Life*, Crimp uses the same character called Anne. Although in *Attempts on her Life*, Anne is an absent protagonist whose identity has been constituted by different views and objects, in *The Treatment*, Anne is a young woman who is oppressed by her husband. Even though Crimp draws attention to the objectification of a woman from many various angles, Vicky Angelaki asserts that two plays are different from each other. She advocates:

No two plays can exemplify both the heterogeneity and homogeneity of Martin Crimp's theatre than *The Treatment* and *Attempts on Her Life*, especially when we examine them together. The texts showcase the different tendencies in Crimp's playwriting, of structuring narratives around characters' relationships or having unnamed personae narrate rather than enact episodes...Both these major plays are structured around, as one scenario points out, 'all the things that Anne can be' (Angelaki, 2012, p. 56).

Unlike *Attempts on Her Life*, the setting of *The Treatment* is fixed. The play has four acts and is located in New York City. Although it is claimed that the play is a magnificent symbol of late capitalism, it can be deemed that Anne, the oppressed female body, is the biggest proof of the lasting pressure on women, even in the late capitalist society. In *Martin Crimp's Theatre*, Clara Escoda Augisti argues that Crimp was affected by the fall of the Berlin Wall and for that reason he uses the transition of two different worlds:

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and at the time he wrote the play, from capitalism to late capitalism, or from the traditional disciplinary societies of industrial capitalism towards the newly emergent societies of control...Crimp places Anne at the crossroads between both societies, which allows him to uncover the different type of oppression each implies for women (2013, p. 57).

In the play, Crimp signifies three different female bodies: the first is Anne who represents the sensuous female body; the second one is Jennifer who is a symbol of the logical body, and the last is Nicky who has an exploited body like Anne.

*The Treatment* is about a young, oppressed woman, Anne, who wants to sell her own life story to the film makers, Jennifer and Andrew. Anne runs away from her house and husband, Simon. Jennifer and Andrew deem that filming a real story will make them famous. With their secretary, Nicky, both Jennifer and Andrew try to make Anne tell them her whole interesting story. Meanwhile, Clifford, a writer, visits them to show his own script which attracts Jennifer and Andrew's attention. Clifford's story is about a couple who let a man watch and record their sexual interaction. Andrew plans to fulfill Clifford's script and wants Clifford to record Anne and Andrew while having sex. Anne, who is depressed, cannot stand living in this brutal

world and she returns to her home. Whilst Simon and Anne are on the way, they see Clifford. Both Anne and Simon make use of this opportunity and they carve out Clifford's eyes. After Andrew realizes that he loves Anne, he goes to her house to declare his love. However, he notices the change in Anne. She does not want her freedom and she is pregnant. While Andrew and Simon are fighting, Anne attempts to escape, but she is shot by Jennifer by accident. From the beginning of the play, Crimp reveals the violence against the female body, and how it is treated like a commodity:

Anne: And he sticks tape over my mouth.

Jennifer: OK. Why?

Anne: Yes. (279)

To prevent her freedom and to make her silent, Simon, Anne's husband, treats her violently both physically and verbally. Her husband is 'an electrical engineer' and he is an educated man reflected in the way he behaves, however, the way he values women, and the way he uses force on her to change her into a docile body do not change. Namely, Crimp shows that education does not prevent men from seeing women as inferiors. Moreover the only thing that Anne can do is to 'struggle inwardly' (280). She cannot resist her husband physically or verbally as he did. She is not educated like her husband, and she has to live under his protection because of not being productive. Her commodified body cannot meet the necessities of the capitalist society such as giving birth, so her body is exposed to violence.

In her story, Anne refers to some objects such as a knife, which is visible, and a dog which 'sounds distressed as if the dog's locked in' (284) to strengthen the dimension of the violence on her body. Anne likens her sorrow to a dog's sadness; her husband Simon manages to make her feel like a dog whose best known characteristic is to be loyal. When Jennifer blames Simon for being bizarre, Anne asserts he is just 'an ordinary man' (286). Moreover, the time that Andrew and Anne meet at Andrew's apartment is crucial in order to highlight Anne's docile body. Anne explains why she has run away:

Anne: I've escaped from the man who silenced and humiliated me. So why does it feel like I'm betraying him? ...

Anne: He wants to protect me, yes. (332-333)

She questions herself because she does not feel loyal, like a dog. Indeed, Crimp not only indicate the signals of her changing mind after her rebellion, but he also shows Anne as a silent, obedient, and sensuous female body that has grown up according to the rules of a patriarchal society. She has internalized her powerless body unconsciously like Churchill's character, Lady Nijo, in *Top Girls*, who does not accept she was raped by the Emperor claiming that she belongs to him from the beginning. In *The Little Republic*, Karen Harvey mentions how women and men internalize the cultural norms. She says "a secular ideology based less on law, religion, and education through which men and women internalized the values that ensured their fulfillment of appropriate rules" (Harvey, 2012, p. 6). This is the reason why Anne feels guilty by virtue of her rebellious body and tries to find a logical reason for her imprisonment. Even though her escape is seen as reproduction of freedom, she cannot run away from the tricks of capitalism. Jennifer and Andrew want to go to a Chinese restaurant for lunch. Although Anne demands to go to 'clearings in a forest', she does not oppose. This is another indication that Anne's commodified body is shaped according to the others' demands, not hers. The more she gives permission for other people to attack her life, the more she is oppressed.

Her muzzled body always shows the same actions during the play. While Jennifer, Andrew and Anne are going to the restaurant, Anne is seen by Simon, but instead reacting to Simon or blaming him for his violent behavior, she prefers to behave as if she does not know him. Even at the restaurant when the waitress asks whose meal it is, she keeps her silence. She obviously displays the reactions of a docile body that has to ignore her own thoughts and wishes.

In the restaurant, Simon confesses he loves her. However, Jennifer and Andrew notice Anne's sensuous identity, so this confession was a trick that was planned before to increase Anne's motivation. Kate Millett advocates that "romantic love is another patriarchal tool for the manipulation of women" (37). Inasmuch as "it strengthens woman's dependency on men and pressure on their body" (37). This is the reason behind Andrew's intention. He declares that he loves Anna and tries to make her believe his love, saying:

Anne: I'm sorry? You love me?

Andrew: Yes, Anne. Yes, I do.....

What is the level of discourse here?

To 'make out'. To go down on a man's penis. To lick a woman's anus. That is the level of discourse here. But I'm talking about loving a person's soul as revealed through their eyes. You have the eyes of the city. (*He runs his fingertips over her eyes and down her cheek.*) Please don't mention this to my wife (296-297).

Crimp deliberately points out how a female body is seen as a sexual object from a male gaze. Moreover, as Andrew says "no one's story is theirs alone" (298), Anne's life story as well as her body are about to be consumed, so she cannot succeed in reproducing her freedom. Luce Irigaray declares that although having a dowry is not expected from females by society, selling female bodies in art, media, and advertising markets still continues (Irigaray, 2013, p. 101). At first Anne disallows Andrew's love, but her resistance lasts for a short time like her first rebellious act of running away from Simon. During the conversation, Andrew tries to feed her, yet surprisingly Anne declines his help and resists eating which is her own way of revolting. Over and above, many times during the play Crimp emphasizes her eating and sleeping problems. Though she cannot fulfill her real act of rebellion, her body deeply revolts against society's norms. According to Bordo, the most crucial thing is rebellion of the body and she claims that "it is the power itself and there are many ways to resist such as hysteria, anorexia, agoraphobia" (Bordo, 1993, p. 140). Eating disorders are the most unconscious powerful rebellious act by her body since "the action of food refusal and dramatic transformation of body size expresses with the body what is unable to tell us with words" (1993, p. 316). Even though Crimp shows Anne as if she has a docile body, her body represents an unconscious rebellion.

To share her true story with Jennifer and Andrew whom she counts as friends, Anne takes a cab to go to the park to consider the matter calmly. Searching for a quiet place to think may be the symbol of a place within herself that she needs. Ironically like Anne, the taxi driver is blind. The taxi driver is the second character Crimp uses to highlight the myth of a sinned woman:



Driver: it was a medical condition. Because I was born out of wedlock and my mother was just a child they thought this blindness was a judgment from God. They thought.

Anne: Let me out.

Driver: it was a moral issue not a health issue. Today it would take just a simple operation at birth but she was a poor woman and / she had sinned (306).

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir explains how Christianity oppresses women:

Men are superior to women on account of qualities in which God has given to them pre-eminence and also because they furnish dowry for women. Christian Ideology has contributed no small effect on the oppression of women. They could take only a secondary place as participants in worship, in marriage; woman should be totally subordinated to her husband. According to Christianity women were found as the devils. (Beauvoir, 2012, p. 92)

Women were depicted as devils because they used their sexuality to deceive men, just as Eve betrayed Adam. Crimp uses this myth, recognizing female desires as sins that have to be suppressed, so even today, in the twenty-first century, the myth of woman does not lose its value or change. Society does not accept the independent, sexual female body. On the other hand, while sexual pleasure is something ordinary for a man, a woman is condemned for the same act.

Meanwhile Nicky, Jennifer's secretary, introduces Andrew and Jennifer to Clifford who is a playwright. After his play is read, it is described as a "mind fuck" (316). Inasmuch as his play is about the unique beauty of heterosexuality and voyeurism. Nevertheless, the play ironically ends with the destruction of "the beauty of human form" (316). A woman tenant finds the paintings disgusting and cuts the pictures with a knife.

At the park, Simon sees Anne while watching two movie stars playing from Act five of Othello which is the last scene between Emilia, Desdemona's maid, and Othello. Emilia finds out that Othello killed Desdemona undeservedly and before she declares the real perpetrator to be, Iago, she is killed by Iago. The violent scene refers to the

cruelty between Simon and Anne. Simon comes towards Anne and the conversation begins with Simon's calm questions:

Simon: (softly) Anne?

You look different.

Have you changed your hair?

What have you changed? (320)

Although Anne's body does not appear to have changed, even her blue eyes seem different to Simon. Because she has been able to live alone without any support from Simon, she did something special only for herself. During the play her physical change is mentioned three times. When Anne meets Clifford, Nicky, John, Jennifer, and Andrew, Jennifer recognizes her physical change; her body explicitly rebels even if Anne does not comprehend it and she just feels upset and betrayed because she had to leave her home and because of Clifford's voyeurism. According to Bordo, the body is observed by both men and women as an effect of culture. She delineates:

We judge each other...sometimes much more than men...But if we are sometimes our own worst enemies, it's usually because we see in each other not so much competition as a reflection of our fears and anxieties about ourselves... (1999, p. 170).

Both Jennifer and Nicky belittle Anne because of her passive attitudes and her unsuitable physical body according to the norms of culture. She is expected to be attractive and have a commodified body to be consumed by patriarchy. They cannot comprehend her bodily rebellion or support her, owing to her depression. Inasmuch as, women are identified with their bodies, Anne's bodily rebellion is pretty meaningful. Unlike Jennifer and Nicky who like to be the vessels of men's lust, Anne is alienated and rejects to have a commodified body to reproduce others' expectations. Lastly, her physical change is noticed by Simon who claims that her body seems better when she is at home, a slave in his house. Even though Simon insists on her returning and warns her about being corrupted, she does not accept his offer and says, "Well perhaps I want to be corrupted. Perhaps I need to be corrupted. I've spent my life with you behind a steel door" (323). As she said, Anne deliberately declares her freedom and refuses to be a bird in a cage. However, declining to live in

the domestic sphere is not enough for her to gain her freedom, since, even if she rejects the traditional roles of patriarchy, she is trapped by capitalism.

Leghorn and Parker, feminist authors, mention that “women individually or collectively refuse to comply with their subordination; they are frequently forced to deal with male violence in response” (1981, p. 298). Indeed violence is the symbol of a power struggle to maintain patriarchal order: when Anne, the power of the female body, threatens the patriarchal hegemony, Simon’s hegemony, physical violence, is the means by which men regain control. As a result of Anne’s outbreak, Simon hurts her. Crimp again uses a rebellious body as he did in *Attempts on her Life*, in *The Threat of International Terrorism* scenario, nevertheless they compensate for their rebellion.

When Andrew and Anne are at Andrew’s apartment, they make love in front of Clifford, who is called to the house by Andrew. As soon as Anne notices they are being watched, she goes crazy and ‘spits in Clifford’s face’ (336). Clara Escoda Agusti advocates:

Clifford’s voyeuristic act symbolically dramatizes how, through technological means – various types of cameras, the internet – media ridden societies turn (particularly female) individuals into no more than blank registering surfaces for the inscription of docile identities, submissive to the demands of late capitalism (2013, p. 79).

This event affects her deeply; she goes to the meeting for her movie where she is criticized by Nicky cruelly due to her ‘inward struggle’. Nicky likens her to “a victim, woman as dead meat” (346). Anne refuses to believe that she is “a victim” or like “dead meat” and advocates that struggling inwardly is the only way for her, but Nicky disaffirms Anne’s reason and says:

Nicky: you’ve ‘lived’ it. OK. But what does that mean? What if what you’ve lived is in fact banal? Must we accept that? No. we have a duty not to accept that, Anne, a duty to ourselves, a duty / to you. (347)

Nicky tries to wake Anne up from her sleep. Nevertheless, this does not work, and the only thing that Anne continues to do is to express her misery with her body, crying and moaning on the floor.

Crimp overrides her defense when Jennifer, who knows her powerlessness, 'strikes Anne's face with such force that she falls to the floor' (350). She hits Anne for 'offending John' and having a sexual relationship with her husband. Anne cries and moans on the floor; her body is likened to an animal, perhaps the dog that she mentions before. She states that she cannot struggle against her husband because she is not as strong as him. In addition, she does not show any reaction or resistance to Jennifer either. Thence it is revealed that not only her husband, but also Nicky and the others see her as having a docile body, because she still allows them to occupy her life and her body. She does not have her own life. Crimp uses her as a passive body that runs away from the suppression and violence of her husband, but lets other people meddle in her life.

Richard B. Felson states that "Women are slightly more likely than men to engage in physical violence against their spouses and lovers and ... engage in violence with greater frequency" (2002, p. 41). In this manner, Jennifer undertakes the role of a violent as well as a suppressive body by hitting Anne who is weaker than her.

At the end of the story, Anne is seen back at her own house, in her cage. However, this time she has an aim. By using her sexual body, she tries to attract Simon's attention and wants him to kill Clifford who injures her emotionally, not physically, like Jennifer and Simon. Ironically Simon carves out Clifford's voyeuristic eye with a fork, which he bought from him before. Then, Anne carves his other eye. Clara Escoda Agustí asserts:

Anne's violent collapse symbolically represents Crimp's conviction that women need to regain full control of their own body and of the circulation of their own image in a society which uses the female body as a lure to entice the male gaze, challenging it in ways which thoroughly objectify women (Agusti, 2013, p. 57).

To some extent, Crimp states that women should protect themselves from being sexual objects. Yet, Crimp not only give this opportunity to Ann, Andrew aids her. Even though Anne manages to injure somebody physically for the first time as an act of rebellion, she did it with the aid of a man.

After leaving the stage, Andrew goes to Anne's house and finds her tied up to a chair, as she told them before. Although Andrew unties her, she does not demand her

freedom, just like Amelia who is mistaken for a parrot in *Cruel and Tender*. Bordo claims that this is the typical reaction of the sufferer. She posits “the sufferer becomes wedded to an obsessive practice, unable to make effective change in her life” (1993, p. 180). Even if Anne, who represents a reproductive body because of her pregnancy, does not remember Andrew at first after she returns home, both her physical and mental health deteriorates, so her body continues to rebel strongly. While Simon and Andrew are talking about what she wants, Anne runs out and is shot by Jennifer in the dark. When Simon learns that she is killed, the only words that he murmurs are, “My child” (386). He feels sorry for his son, not for Anne, as if she was never born. Thus, even while she transfers from a sensuous body to a productive body, her value never changes; her somatic presence does not mean anything. She is still an object who never achieves to be a subject. On the other hand, neither Jennifer nor Andrew feels pity for her. Jennifer just defends herself more than Anne did and blames Anne for her mistake. She claims that “She ran at me. I just reacted. Why did she run? I reacted to that. It’s so threatening here, Andrew...” (385). Indeed, the manner of Jennifer’s defense also reflects how the female violence has traditionally been characterized differently than male violence. Crimp portrays the aggression of female violence reaction with Jennifer and the emotional one with Anne, carving out Clifford’s eye.

Unlike a useful body, which is represented by Anne, Crimp highlights an oppressor female body in, Jennifer. From the beginning of the play, Jennifer puts pressure on Andrew, Anne, and Nicky. She forces Anne many times to tell her whole life story. When she comprehends the sexual relationship between her husband and Anne, she slaps Anne violently as a reaction. She even carries a gun to defend herself. She is aware of the danger outside and how women are considered powerless in society. On the other side, unlike Anne, she does not need a man to defend herself.

In the restaurant, she changes her order three times and behaves rudely towards the waitress. She explains:

Jennifer: remembers don’t you Andy when I used to work in a place called Corner Café and the girls (I was a girl then) we all had to wear these aprons that said ‘Meet me at the Corner’.

Andrew: ‘Meet me at the Corner.’ That was a real humiliation.

Jennifer: It's totally humiliating but the terrible thing Anne is that we accept these roles. 'Waitress', 'Customer', 'Victim', 'Oppressor'. Is this G? (301).

As she expressed, she was also a victim, an oppressed body who had to accept being humiliated while working. Nevertheless she refuses to stay as an oppressed body and prefers to be an oppressor, unlike Anne. Instead of being more empathetic, she becomes the one who causes suffering for her sisters. She expresses:

Jennifer: And who was it said? Because didn't somebody say that the ex-waitress is the shittiest customer and the ex-customer makes the most servile waitress. (Laughs) (301).

*In Top Girls*, Caryl Churchill, writes about the difficulties and obstacles that feminist playwrights face from various dimensions. She also uses a character called Marlene, who prefers to become an oppressor like Jennifer to gain power over her own life. Jennifer impresses Nicky who answers the phones in her office as well. When Nicky reads Clifford's story, which seems astonishing for them, Jennifer blames Nicky for not showing her play before, although Nicky claims that she put the file on her desk two weeks ago. From the patriarchal society, Jennifer does not only learn how to be an oppressor, she also follows the rules of the patriarchal society which are crucial for her. Before her marriage to Andrew, she flirts with John, a black actor. John talks about their past relationship to Clifford:

John: ... I can remember her lying down in the street to protest... Since I'm sure you realize, it's one thing to hang out with a black man, but something else again to marry him, to have his children.

Jennifer looks away. John is amused by her embarrassment, but not bitter (325).

Thence, Jennifer also represents a useful body that internalizes society's rules and behaves according to them. She even seems more powerful than the other women in the play; she cannot resist the cultural norms. To defend herself and to be part of society instead of being a victim, she becomes an oppressor body. On the other side, instead of having a sensuous body like Anne, Jennifer represents an ambitious body that focuses on her business more than her husband. The moment that she shows her

oppressive body is when Andrew tells her he wants to go and live with Anne. She reminds Andrew that it is impossible to leave her, putting forward some crucial reasons such as their economic relationship and, Anne's lies about her life.

Nicky is seen as an oppressed body at the beginning of the play. She submits to Jennifer's rudeness and, repressive attitudes for being an employee. Nevertheless, she does not refrain from condemning Anne in front of everyone's eyes. Although she exclaims not to be a servant of Jennifer, she chooses to be a servant of a man, John. Actually this is what socialist feminists advocate. In view of Sue Ellen Case "there are crucial differences between upper-middle class women – not only are all women not sisters, but women in the privileged class actually oppress women in the working class" (Case, 1988, p. 83). Thus, for socialist feminists, sisterhood is not possible because of the class distinction between women. Anne's true story is staged by John, Jennifer, and Nicky who takes the place of Anne. In front of the spectators, John introduces Nicky mentioning that she was only a girl who "answered phones" (372) before:

John: ...- which would result in her – untrained – inexperienced as she then was – in her being chosen to play Anne. But – as you have all seen tonight – she does not 'play' Anne, she is Anne. She inhabits Anne. At certain moments she is more Anne than Anne herself (372-373).

Nicky lets John massage her body to feel comfortable, so like all the other men, John is also ready to relieve her docile body. Ultimately, even she condemns Anne; just like her, Nicky also fails in the patriarchal society.

Lastly, Crimp reveals a woman's body that is tortured by her husband and a group of people who want to profit from her own life story as well as body. In "The World According to Crimp", Paul Taylor points out, "control, rather than truth, was the name of the game" (2000, p. 1). Interestingly, the ideas behind the play that Clifford wrote about the sexual female body and voyeurism, is used by Andrew to enhance the creativity of Clifford. So Anne is suppressed both emotionally and physically. Crimp obviously reflects how society treats the female body as if it is a product. Nonetheless none of the female characters can escape from the suppression of patriarchal society and capitalism nor can they defy the rules in real terms. In addition to this, while Anne represents the alienated and useful female body, at the

end of the play her pregnancy is mentioned to draw attention to her reproductive body. Jennifer is shown as a commodified body ostensibly, who is successful outside of the house, but she is also the one who has internalized society's rules and behaves according to them.

### 5.3. CRUEL AND TENDER

“If women were the equals of men, men would no longer equal themselves. Why they should women resemble what men would have ceased to be?”  
Christine Delphy (Jackson, 2002, p. 57).

*Cruel and Tender* which is one of Crimp's great adaptations, was directed by Luc Bondy, who wanted Crimp to write a new play, at Young Vic in 2004. The War on Terror soon provoked 'a significant body of theatre work in London'. (Ginman, 2004, p. 113). Thus the play is seen as a critical response to the War on Terror. After the play is staged, critics started to mention their positive views.

Spencer was enthusiastic: Nothing I have seen in the theatre to date so resonantly and provocatively captures our bewildering post-9/11 world, with its alarming amorphous war against terrorism and the ghastly aftershocks coming out of Iraq. And Billington located the play in a century-long tradition that includes Jean-Paul Sartre and Jean Cocteau, of reworking Greek Myths: 'Crimp shows that global terrorism is a reality: his point is that it is a hydra-headed monster that cannot be defeated by conventional means.' Although skeptical of the play's politics, John Gross pointed out how 'it's a forceful, carefully worked-out play, and it has been given a brilliant, tightly focused staging... your nerves are so wound up that every detail counts, down to the smallest gesture or grimace'. Director David Farr sums up: I loved the strangeness of Bondy's vision – I thought it described our world in a curious way really extremely well (Sierz, 2006, pp. 65-66).

Alex Sierz explains in his book, *The Theatre of Martin Crimp* that before beginning to write, Crimp collected photographs of child soldiers from current wars (Sierz, 2006, p. 63). Crimp says, "I couldn't imagine writing a play that wasn't cut, linguistically, culturally, from the material of contemporary life...As for the



background of terror, political hypocrisy, and a city destroyed for a lie” (Sierz, 2006, p. 63).

While Martin Crimp adapts Sophocles’s *The Trachiniae*, also known as *The Women of Trachis*, about love and marriage, he makes it postmodern by using contemporary details such as cell phones, airplanes, and a television. He also changes the names of the characters in Sophocles’s play; Dieaneira to Amelia, the chorus to the Beautician and, the housekeeper, the Physiotherapist and Heracles becomes today’s General who fights in a War on Terror. Sophocles’s Hullo fulfills his duty of killing his father to save him to form humiliation. However, James did not have the time and opportunity to fulfill his father’s first wish. In Sophocles’s play, Deianeira uses a poisonous cloth as a love charm. Crimp adapts it and Amelia uses a pillow, which includes a poisonous chemical, for the love charm. During the conversation with Alex Sierz, Crimp expresses where he got the idea of the chemical weapon from:

Water was really important in the gestation of this project. My meetings with Luc always seemed to be in swimming pools, or lakes – the Limmat in Zurich. Then I was on holiday in France, in the sea, and I was thinking about how to find a modern equivalent of the poisoned shirt, and my daughter had this brilliant idea of psychotropic drugs. It was only after I’d finished writing that I found this web page about recent Pentagon research into using psychotropic drugs to induce happy states to mentally disable your opponents. The dreadful thing is that you just have to dream up some kind of awful imaginary weapon – and someone is already developing it (Sierz, 2006, p. 108.)

The play develops in three major parts: the first and second acts focus on Amelia, and the last act is about the General and his son. Amelia marries the General when she is too young. They have a son, James. The General goes to war and Amelia stays at home with his son, the Housekeeper, the Beautician, and the Physiotherapist. Richard, a journalist, informs Amelia about the General’s arriving. Before the General’s returning, Jonathan, a government minister, brings two children from Africa; Laela and her son, claiming that they were rescued by the General. After Amelia discovers that Laela is the General’s lover, she prepares poison for the General and commits suicide. The General is arrested for his brutal actions during

the war by Jonathan and the play ends with the appearance of James at home. It features many monologues, which conjure up a wealth of images. Vicky Angelaki delineates that “Cruel and Tender maintains the balance between classical and contemporary as its timely critique and engagement with current affairs take advantage of the enduring relevance of Greek Tragedy” (Angelaki, 2012, p. 123).

Crimp uses three different females instead of the chorus because he utilizes females as main characters. Furthermore, like the other In-Yer-Face theatre playwrights he objects traditional theatre. He thinks that the chorus is a kind of challenge for the contemporary theatre and the society. He says:

I do not think there is an issue about choruses. And I think it is to do with the society we live in, because I think we live in a society of individual units. And I think that we find it harder to accept the chorus. And if you look at the great operas at the beginning of the twentieth century like *Pelleas et Melisande* or *Woyzeck: in Pelleas* there is one bit of chorus but most of it is very intimate, and *Woyzeck* only has the scenes within the club when characters come together to represent a sort of bar scene. But they don't have the nineteenth or even the eighteenth century sense of chorus. And I do think that is because of the psychological, cultural change that is taking place. I am just saying that a chorus is quite hard to energise now. (Laera, 2011, p. 218).

Crimp explains that the chorus is the form of a collective voice or a body, so it is meaningless to use the chorus element in “a society of individual units” (Laera, 2011, p. 218). Moreover, the beautician, physiotherapist, and the housekeeper, are the people whom women cannot abandon in our consumer society. Escoda Augisti expresses that:

The late capitalist system, indeed, expects Amelia to condone her husband's infidelities, and to satisfy her needs for connection and love by focusing on her body and on consumerism, and by profiting from the wealth her husband offers her through fighting a War on Terror abroad. (2013, p. 236).

As it is known myths are patriarchal narratives so gender stereotypes are constructed in myths regardless of patriarchal assumption. Throughout history, the objectification of the female body in a male-oriented system has continued to be produced in media and literature; while men believe that violently maintaining and oppressing women

are their rights, women have internalized this humiliation. In *Cruel and Tender*, Crimp tries to recall many viewpoints of social oppression, not only on the white female body, but also non-white female bodies who suffered during the ages of colonial reign. Moreover, his female bodies are generally seen at home to emphasize their domestic side. In her article “The Mother” Simon de Beauvoir delineates that “Being a mother was fraudulent to maintain that through maternity woman becomes concretely man’s equal” (Oliver; 2000, p. 25). While being a mother is a kind of trap that creates inequality between females and males for de Beauvoir, for the contemporary feminists, being a mother is certainly related to the biology of women rather than being a trouble. Crimp’s characters, Amelia and Laela, have children, which refer to their reproductive bodies, but Crimp does not create any ideal mother characters.

While marriage is one of the definite concepts that socialist feminists discuss, it is one of the most common concepts that is shown as a holy institution, especially by male writers throughout the history. Like Dieaneira in Sophocles’s play, Amelia starts to talk about the negative side of her marriage. While Dieaneira points out that she is afraid of marriage, Amelia indicates that marriage does not stand for being a volunteer victim. Indeed, Crimp criticizes minority feminist women who hate men or some critics such as Andrea Dworkin, Adrianna Rich and Helen Cixous who believe that all heterosexual intercourse in our patriarchal society is part of men’s subordination of women. Andrea Dworkin claims that “rape, originally defined as abduction, became marriage by capture. Marriage meant the taking was to extend in time, to be not only use of but possession of, or ownership.” (Dworkin, 1981, p. 202). For the continuum of heterosexuality, capitalism, and patriarchy, marriage is still a crucial institution even today. However, Amelia, a commodified body, does not accept the reasons behind her misery and her blindness gives her courage to refuse being a victim. She says:

Amelia: There are women who believe

All men are rapists.

I don’t believe that

Because If I did believe that

How – as a woman – could I go on living

With the label Victim? (1)

Crimp points out the emotional terrorism of Amelia drawing attention to the ignorance of Amelia who refuses to be a volunteer victim instead of all her pain, loneliness, and desperate marriage. Amelia met the marriage concept when she was 15. She posits that “... while I listened outside the door in the very short skirt and the very high- heeled agonizing shoes ...” (1).

In *The Beauty Myth*, Naomi Wolf advocates that it is not possible for women to feel independent even if they have equal rights with men, because of the beauty myth which takes them under control in terms of dressing up sexually and having a perfect desirable body (Wolf, 2013, p. 10). Even in the contemporary world, as Wolf claims, Crimp shows Amelia as a sample of a postmodern sexual object which becomes integrated with a short skirt and high- heeled shoes, as being suitable according to men’s desires. Amelia, who married when she was 18, abandons her education owing to have a family life and a child. Not completing her education, marrying at a young age, having a child, and being alone despite of her all sacrifices make her unhappy. She complains about her marriage:

Amelia: ..... the soldier who is by now of course the great general –

Only sees this child at distant intervals

Like a farmer inspecting a crop

In a remote field. (2)

As it was in the ancient world, marriage is still a burden that falls on women’s shoulders. Amelia is completely dependent on her husband economically. Crimp clearly emphasizes the commodified body in its domestic sphere and how Amelia sacrifices her life for her marriage and son. Moreover, her unhappiness and her miserable life are the awards of her sacrifice, thus she appears to be just a desperate female body. Even today, in many cultures to be born as a female is to be born with a social deficiency, limited in social options and freedoms. Many women carry their femaleness as a burden, a handicap that distracts from their humanity and reduces their dreams.

On the other side, Martin Crimp explicitly displays the various bodies of women in the character of Amelia; the oppressed body, the sexual body, the reproductive, mother, body and Laela who is also embodied as a colonized, oppressed, reproductive, and sexual female.

Like in *The Attempts on Her Life*, Crimp uses binary oppositions while depicting the bodies. While Amelia represents a desperate, oppressed female body, her husband is a General but not only an ordinary General, he is ‘a GREAT GENERAL’ (2) whose duty is to destroy terror; however, ironically ‘the more he fights terror, the more he creates terror’ (2).

The Beautician and the Physiotherapist give detailed information about Amelia’s sleeping problem and explain that she feels old and tense. Again Crimp emphasizes on the tough conditions of Amelia’s marriage by means of the Beautician and the Physiotherapist. Even though the Physiotherapist demands Amelia do exercise, Amelia refuses and she states that she does not even want to go jogging. Due to her unhappy marriage, the responsibility of looking after a child and being alone, Amelia sinks into a depression. Moreover, during the play Amelia laughs without any reason. The first laugh is when she wants her son to find her husband and the second one is when she expresses her own feelings and her experiences, so laughing may be the sign of her physiological disorder or depression. Unconsciously, Amelia rebels against the dominant society, which makes her ‘a docile body’ as Bordo and Jaggar claim in *Gender, Body and Knowledge* (1989, p. 25). However, after laughing, she blames herself because of her crazy, accusing thoughts and cruelty. A few seconds later, she completely accepts her role, her diverting and empty activities and says, “I’m very very pleased- yes- with my toenails: Thank you...” (7). Thus she becomes “a useful body” (ibid 25) that accepts to be shaped by society unquestionably. The comment of the Beautician and the Physiotherapist about Amelia is also crucial to examine how her body is objectified like a bird and a parrot by the others: “Beautician: She waits for the light” (6).

Here light may represent the arrival her husband or getting rid of everything. While the Beautician accepts her misery and likens her to “a bird in a box”, the Physiotherapist misunderstands her and she compares Amelia to a parrot. Actually this image epitomizes the general condition of Amelia: Amelia is a parrot that always

repeats everything at home. She is also a copycat who learns from her mother or her other sisters, and like them she plays all the roles of a good housewife. Namely, she is not only a parrot that always does what she is supposed to do but also a bird at home who is desperate and miserable. She fulfills her social duties as she is trained by her mother, but she cannot fulfill her own dreams; education and work. Thus, Crimp is aware of the history of woman and Amelia is a perfect instance to show his awareness. On the other side, Amelia does not want Beautician and Physiotherapist to have pity on her.

Amelia: Please. Stop now. Don't try and sympathise.

You're not married

and you don't have children.

When you do have children

They'll break into your life

You'll see

Like tiny tiny terrorists

Who refuse to negotiate... (7)

Amelia likens children, in need of caring, to 'tiny tiny terrorists' and they awake their mothers at night. Yet, 'men' are different, on the grounds that they do not only want this kind of service, but they are:

Amelia: ...

men whose minds are blank

who fuck you the way they fuck the enemy-

I mean with the same tenderness- (7)

Amelia does not only know but also she has learned the difference between men and women: women are worthless in the eyes of men, like the weakest enemy who deserves to be defeated or who has to be dominated all the time. For that reason, Amelia tells the beautician and the physiotherapist:

Amelia: ....

When you understand that

Then I will accept your sympathy. (Laughs) (7)

Indeed, she internalized both the oppression of patriarchy and to be perceived as worthless. To indicate her worthless body more obviously, Crimp displays her thoughts about her husband's testament which was found in a drawer:

Amelia: ....

Only these papers...

These papers are worrying me:

...

and in case of his quote death

or mental incapacity unquote

gives power of attorney over his estate

'and over all things leased or assigned thereunto'

to James ... (8).

She cannot comprehend why her husband bequeaths everything to James as if she never existed. Crimp obviously and ironically shows the two different worlds. While the General is someone who has a cautious and serious view of life, Amelia cannot understand why he takes account of life and even death so seriously. It is absurd for her to read the testament properly, to understand the reason why James inherits everything, why her husband behaves as if she is nothing, and why he thinks of death so seriously; she is just a productive female body who gave birth to a son, and nothing more. During her conversation, the fragmented structure is challenging. It highlights both Amelia's scattered thoughts, her corrupted state of mind and her unknown future.

After Richard informs her about the return of the General, Jonathan, a politician, comes in with two children, "from Sub-Saharan Africa; a girl of about eighteen and a boy of about six" (11). Jonathan reveals that the children were found in the drain while they were, "slipping on the pulverized bone of their house" (13) and to remind people of humanity, they were brought to her house, since it was the order of the

General. Because of sharing her husband's high status, Amelia wants the children to be washed and James's old toys to be given to the little boy. Actually as a docile body, she behaves as if this is what is wanted from her by society and behaves as though she has no other choice.

Then Richard comes in and he explains how the General destroyed a town in order to own Laela, the girl in their house. Thence it is concluded that Laela is not someone who lived in a drain. She was the daughter of a king, Seretawa, and lived in a palace. Nevertheless the General fell in love with Laela and destroyed the town and its people to have Laela. Crimp reveals that under the name of love, the General violently destroyed a village to have a sexual productive female body who cannot even speak his language.

After she learns of the truth, she resists Jonathan and wants him not to behave towards her as if she is a child. She resists him with her violent language and shows how she is a perfect docile body who understands man's self-interestedness, both sexually and military:

Amelia:...

You think it's a secret

That my husband has other women?

You think he doesn't tell me about them?

Oh yes – oh yes – he tells me about them –

their names

the colour of their hair –

because he knows I'd rather be told

even if being told is

and it is

I can promise you that it is

Like having my face sprayed with acid.

When I slept with you



Jonathan

I told him the same evening

And after he'd punched his fist through the bathroom

Wall

He made me put on my red dress

And took me dancing ... (22).

Amelia puts emphasis on her misery by explaining the acceptance of her husband's betrayal and how she took her revenge violently from the body of her oppressor. Amelia explains that after her marriage, the General left her to go to the desert and Amelia met one of her friends from university, Robert who was a chemist developing weapons. When they met, Robert gave her a kind of strong chemical which was called 'baby'. While Amelia is emptying the glass into the pillow, Jonathan comes in. Using her sexual body, she persuades Jonathan to give the pillow to the General. Although to withstand Jonathan, she displays her sensuous, oppressed body; to render her husband's body dependent on her like a baby she poisons him.

Before the General returns, the beautician and physiotherapist make preparations for his arrival. They arrange the flowers and a dinner table for Amelia and the General. To be in tune with the concept, Amelia is seen with an attractive, red dress, which will please her husband. Thus like Susan Bordo, Allison Jaggar also claims that "women may insist that they diet, exercise, and dress only to please themselves, but in reality they must likely shape and adorn their flesh primarily for the pleasure of men." (Tong, 2009, p. 114). Bordo calls this kind of body a "practical body", which is constituted culturally rather than being biological (1993, p. 181). Thus Crimp explicitly indicates not only how a woman's body is shaped by men's demands and passions, but also how women internalize the demands of culture.

Instead of the General, James returns to state that the General is about to die, owing to the chemical poison in the pillow. Amelia intends to go to the airport to meet the General. However neither Amelia nor Laela knows how to drive. Once Amelia realizes the power inside her, she demands to lie down under a truck or to be x-rayed, on the grounds that she knows that the security women will not give permission for

them go through. However, it is impossible to live with the power inside her from now on. She explains what she deems:

Amelia: ...

Laela

Some sharp object

Some spike

Something inside of us

a prohibited object we did not know about

but that will show up on the screen close

because I think it must be very close to our hearts

Don't you think? – that spike?....

Because otherwise

I could be mistaken for a victim

And that's not a part

Laela

That I'm prepared to play (45 – 46).

Amelia notices that the power inside her like a 'sharp object' is already there, but it was just prohibited, so she does not know whether it exists. She is reduced to being a commodity of her husband and society. Cixous advocates that "We must kill the false woman who is preventing the live one from breathing" (Leitch, 2001, p. 2044). Although Cixous does not mean physical death, Amelia takes the steps to evolve from a docile body to become a rebellious body in society, in order to attempt to kill first her husband and then herself. In *Sexual Politics*, Millet asserts that "the streetwise woman realizes that if she wants to survive in patriarchy, she had better act feminine, or else she may be subjected to a variety of cruelties and barbarities" (Tong, 2009, p. 103). Like the other female characters in Crimp's plays, Amelia also dies. However, this time she commits suicide and achieves to be a deviant in society. She is also aware of the impossibility to live as a deviant in this patriarchal order. Amelia who knows her power and declines to be a 'victim' again, squeezes the

broken glass in her hands violently, and without considering the blood, “she smiles” (46). Instead of feeling pain, she is contended. Inasmuch as she is the only one who tortures her own body and she notices the power inside her for rebellion, so she fulfills her desire for death.

Butler states, “The body is understood to be an active process of embodying certain cultural and historical possibilities.” (1988, p. 521). Martin Crimp also delineates the historical oppression of African females’ suffer. Thus Laela is shown as a non-white female body, as a victim of the colonial oppressive regime and a victim of a patriarchal history of all time.

At the beginning of part two, Crimp obviously indicates the changed behaviour of Laela who did not talk to anyone, just like Sophocles’s Iole, or speak any English. Thus Crimp shows that the general characteristics of colonial women, silence and subordination, have been shared experiences.

Indeed, Laela is not a completely passive body in the making of her own fate. Nevertheless she takes aid from the beautician and the physiotherapist to read an English magazine, which is about sexuality, so she has already taken on a woman’s task. Despite being a child, she has started to play her role as a woman in the colonizers world, as it was taught to her. Moreover, Crimp indicates the colonial white system, which captivates the mindset of the colonized by changing their behaviour and nature.

When the Beautician asks Laela whether she learned English at school, we learn the facts about Laela, a wild, colonized child woman, and her society. In the society where Laela lives, while men can only go to school, women attend a HIV and AIDS Learning Club. Inasmuch as the basic duty of women is to notice their sexual power and how they can be great successful sex machines.

Martin Crimp uses Laela not only as a non-white female body, but also as a victim of the colonial oppressive regime of the time and a victim of a patriarchal history of all time. As Bordo suggests, she is an extremely ‘useful body’ that is adapted socially. Laela asks if the General can buy the dress in the magazine or not. The response of the Physiotherapist is very simple:

Physiotherapist: Only if you’re nice to him (26).

Susan Bordo perceives the oppressive power between female bodies in a different way;

We must first abandon the idea of power as something possessed by one group and leveled against another; we must instead think of the network of practices, institutions and Technologies that sustain positions of dominance and subordination in a particular domain. (Bordo, 1993, p. 167)

It does not matter whether society is primitive or modern. The things we are taught do not change in time, conversely the only changed thing is the way people impose on us, so Laela learns to be a sexual, attractive body from the magazines. Susan Bordo advocates that “The body – what we eat, how we dress, the daily rituals through which we attend to the body – is a medium of culture” (Bordo, 1993, p. 165). Laela meets a new culture and she has been learning how to form her body.

Amelia wants to learn what Laela feels about the slaughter of her family; that’s why she asks Laela if she misses her family or not. For the first time, Crimp reveals the real feelings of Laela and the reason why she had accepted to be the second wife. Laela expresses that her father, who “takes the rice out of people’s mouths” (26), is a very bad man. For that reason, the General is the civilized man who takes care of her and saves her from her savage life. On the other side, even if she wants to escape from the violence of suppression, she cannot. Because the society that she wants to live in is just another version of oppression and violence.

In the society where Laela lived, men fight, hunt, kill, and learn, thus Laela has not learned anything without male dominance. Actually, Crimp establishes a connection between the female body and the land relating the worthless and inferior female body to Laela’s land. Furthermore, Crimp does not destroy Laela’s useful body even if her land does not exist. Laela does not miss her own country because she is conscious of being a worthless body in her own land. Ironically, the new country that she has started to live in is not release for her, but another kind of prison where she has learned to be an obedient body via technological items such as radio, television and magazines as Susan Bordo claims in *The Unbearable Weight*. Andrea Dworkin also asserts that “Women’s fashion is a euphemism for fashion created by men for women” (Weekes, 2007, p. 151). Laela desires to display her body’s attractiveness to the General:

Laela: ...Oh, look at this dress! I want this dress! ...you think he'll buy me this dress?

Physiotherapist: Only if you're nice to him.

Laela: Oh, I'm always nice to him. (26).

She is ready to do anything for the sake of obtaining what she demands; she does not only wish to be the desirable body, she is also ready to be a consuming commodity.

When Amelia hits her, Laela accepts her violent act like Anne accepts Jennifer's violence in *The Treatment*. It is clear that Laela is the only person who accepts Amelia's power and authority, so Laela takes the place of Amelia. She repeats what Amelia says like a parrot and does what she wants:

Laela: I turned off the TV.

Amelia: Mmm?

Laela: I turned off / the TV.

Amelia: Thank you, Laela.

Laela: I'm sorry about the drawer.

Amelia: The drawer doesn't matter.

Laela: I will punish the boy. (44)

In part three, it is obviously understood that the General does not admit to either his own situation or Amelia's death. He is in both mental and physical trouble. He is perplexed, nervous, and lose his focus easily. While he is talking, he asks a question to the Beautician, who is changing his urine bag at that time, and grasps her by the hair:

General: I've hurt you.

Beautician: I'm used to it.

General: Pain?

Beautician: Yes. (52)

Like Laela and most of the women, the Beautician also confesses she is accustomed to being in pain. As soon as the General hears that she suffers, he smiles. He feels a

kind of satisfaction and feels more powerful by virtue of a woman's obedience and suffering. In fact, Crimp portrays the archetypal construction of the male body with his fantasy of self-glorification by means of another's defeat and pain. The General plans to break Amelia's feet to take his revenge. Although James reminds Amelia's death to his father, he does not accept it and blames the government for killing her. Nevertheless when the General learns that Amelia committed suicide because of him, he states:

General: (smiles, flattered) Me? Oh? Because of me (56)

James cannot stand for his father's behaviours and with great irritation; he reveals:

James: ...

There is something you need to understand: you are a criminal. You are accused of crimes. You have wiped people off this earth like a teacher rubbing out equations. You've stacked up bodies like bags of cement (57).

The General really feels satisfied with his destructive power and smiles arrogantly because of his proved strength. On the contrary the General asserts he has destroyed terror for his son and everyone. He accepts his duty is full of violence, but he is proud of his power and what he has done. The General's wish is so bizarre for James; the General wants James to 'take Laela and be the General's child's father' (61). James instantly refuses his father's nonsensical demands. Yet the General expresses how Laela is an open hearted, serving and oppressed woman that men wish to own, unlike Amelia, she is the domestic one that men demand and the useful body that can easily attune to different cultures.

General: (puzzled) You don't want Laela? Because Laela can make a man feel like a god ... (62).

For the General, she is a sexual object and eagerly does what a man wants, as all women are supposed to do. For that reason, firstly she is taken from her father and then sold from the General to his son, James. On the contrary, although Laela is seen as a sexual object, she does not want the General, who cannot fulfill his duty. Because of his physical deformity, he does not own a body which is expected to be strong and gritty.

General: ... Cockroach. She thinks I'm a cockroach. (62)

When the General is taken out of the house, the scene belongs to men. All female bodies silently observe what has happened. The neutral bodies do not comment or intervene while everyone is going out and they continue to clean the house as if nothing has happened. Then Laela tries to read a book:

Laela: (reads) I wish I was not of this people. I wish I was dead or still un ... un ... (shows the word).

Physiotherapist: Unborn – not born yet.

Laela: Or still ...unborn. We are the people. We are the people of iron. We work by day and in the night we grow sick and die. Our babies will be ...born, will be born with grey hair and god will destroy us.

Housekeeper: (under breath) That will do, Laela.

Laela: Father will not respect son and the son will ... despise?

Physiotherapist: Despise – that's right – his/ father.

Laela: Will despise his father and hurt his father with cruel words. The children of the people of iron will cheat their parents of what is owed to them, condemn them, and disobey their wishes.

Housekeeper: (as before) I said that's enough.

Laela: Men will turn the cities of other men to dust without reason. Shame and truth will put on white dresses and hiding their ... beauty from the people will abandon the earth. (69-70).

In her testimony, Laela talks about the oppressive social constructions of masculinity. In the phrase, "We are the people", here 'we' refers to all women in the house; the housekeeper, the psychotherapist, and herself. Actually, Laela's testimony refers to Adrianna Rich. In *Of Woman Born*, Adrienne Rich noted "men realize patriarchy cannot survive unless men are able to control women's power to bring or not bring life into the world" (Rich, 1979, p. 100). She described how men took the birthing process into their own hands. "Male obstetricians replaced female midwives, substituting their "hands of iron" (obstetrical forceps) for midwives' hands of flesh (female hands sensitive to the female anatomy)." (Rich, 1979:101). Like Rich, Laela

also advocates that patriarchy will deteriorate. For instance, James is not masculine like his father and James cannot reach out to him and does not have a strong relationship with his father after his coming back. Housekeeper wants Laela to stop reading and aid her for cleaning. Laela responds:

Laela: Clear up the mess? (smiles). That is your job.

Then finally James appears with the little boy and the sound of a plane is heard... (2004:70).

Although Laela takes the place of Amelia, she chooses to become a resistant body. From Amelia, Laela learns how to order to the Beautician, Housekeeper, and Physiotherapist.

In his play, Crimp successfully challenges traditional values that do not give any value to women. He reveals two resistant female bodies in different ways. While Amelia declines to live as a deviant and commits suicide, the colonized female body, Laela, firstly learns English and then challenges the people in the house as she learned from Amelia. Thus, Crimp indicates there is always a chance to rebel even in a patriarchal colonialist world. However, the resistant bodies are not always successful in his plays. In *The Treatment*, even though Anne seems to manage to run away from the suppression of her husband, she is trapped by the capitalist cruelty and ironically her body is destroyed by another female, Jennifer who manages to survive by oppressing another female. In the view of isolation, the mental breakdown of the females in *The Attempts on Her Life*, is distinctly shown. In the 'Laugh of The Medusa', Cixous posits "I do not deny that the effects of the past are still with us. But I refuse to strengthen them by repeating them" (Cixous, 1980, p. 875). Although Crimp is not completely anti-feminist, he cannot resist exploring traditional definitions of the female body. Furthermore, after his resistant female characters face to death or mental breakdown, they are never mentioned again during the rest of the play.



## 6. CONCLUSION

In the 1990s, British theatre displayed an enormous improvement. According to many critics and Gutscher, the theatre of this period has some special characteristics. Gutscher posits that “[o]ne trademark of the theatre of the nineties which features in many of the plays that were written and produced at that time, is the tackling of peculiar combination of political and social issues with surreal and dreamlike settings and images” (Gutscher, 2014, p. 11). Destroying taboos, that is to say using untraditional language, emphasizing untold truths of society, and making the audience shocked are some of the characteristics of the theatre of the 1990’s. However, using filthy language does not only mean swearing in In-Yer-Face theatre. Playwrights reflect the deteriorated society with its hidden cruelty. For instance, In *Blasted* (1995), Sarah Kane reveals what people can do when they feel that they are in trouble and uncovers the violence of war with its all cruelty; rape, murder, hunger. In 1996, at the beginning of Mark Ravenhill’s play, *Shopping and Fucking*, the audience shocked because of vomiting scene. Ravenhill displays all cruelty in consumerist society focusing on drug addiction, sexual violence, and stealing. Crimp also discloses increasing violent instincts in individuals, their racist and brutal attitudes, sexual and physical violence against children and women in his many plays. To sum up, cruelty does not only mean vulgar language in In-Yer-Face theatre, it also refers to the increasing violent instincts and hidden desires in society. This movement is distinctly named by critics, with terms such as ‘Cruel Britannia’ by Vera Gottlieb who was aware of the changing policy, ‘New laddism’ by Elaine Aston who complains about the lack of feminist writers, and ‘In-Yer-Face’ theatre by Alex Sierz who alludes to the cruel and provocative language of the playwrights. In this dissertation, Martin Crimp’s eight plays were thoroughly examined within the frameworks of socialist feminism, cultural materialism and Artaudian theory. The plays, namely *The City*, *Dealing with Clair*, *The Country*, *Fewer Emergencies*, *The Treatment*, *Attempts on Her Life*, *Cruel and Tender*, *Definitely the Bahamas*, were classified according to their similar themes rather than their dates.

Through an in-depth analysis of *The City* and *Dealing with Clair* within the framework of Cultural Materialism, one of the aims of this dissertation is to specify how Crimp depicts the power of ideology on individual's lives. Crimp explicitly delineates how individuals are affected by social facts, how ideologies affect individuals' lives, and how they are alienated. At the end of the plays, Clair in *Dealing with Clair*, and James, his wife, and the other characters in *The City* disappear in different ways. However, the reason is the same. His characters cannot avoid of being victimized in a system which does not care about them. Crimp's plays show parallelism with the conditions and situations of its time rather than being a figment of his imagination. Finally, in his plays, he distinguishes the base and super structures prominently and emphasizes on their existence, which have survived for generations; his negative attitude towards neo-liberalism is revealed.

Elaine Aston calls the theatre movement in the 1990s "New Laddism" (Aston, 2003:3) because of the lack of feminist playwrights and increasing patriarchal oppression on women. This is why one of the aims of this study is to examine female characters, on the basis of socialist feminism, in Crimp's plays, *Attempts on her Life*, *Cruel and Tender*, and *The Treatment* reveal how females were perceived at that time in the social sphere. Clara E. Agusti claims that "The female characters ... in Crimp's plays are reformulating hegemonic views and re-thinking ethics on the basis of their discovery of the importance of body" (Agusti, 2013, p. 33). In Crimp's plays, the female characters are crushed between patriarchy and capitalism. They know how to use their sexuality as a weapon. However, when they discover their unworthiness of their bodies, they cannot resist to be victims.

Initially, they are imprisoned in the domestic sphere as reproductive bodies and lose their real identities. Although they are unhappy with their marriages, they cannot jettison this social obligation. Female sexuality is emphasized preponderantly in his three plays. In *Cruel and Tender*, Amelia uses her sexuality to get Jonathan's aid. Laela is the one who is taken home because of her successful sexual manners. In *The Treatment*, Anne is another victim of patriarchy whose sexuality is exploited by her husband and Andrew. In *Attempts on her Life*, Crimp indicates how the sexuality of the absent character with various names, such as Anne, Anny, and Annushka, is associated with objects to be sold in the capitalist world. Thus, patriarchy is not the

only difficulty that women have to struggle against. Capitalism shares the other oppressive side on women with patriarchy. While Amelia in *Cruel and Tender* and Anny in *Attempts on her Life* rebel against patriarchy, Anne in *The Treatment* opposes both patriarchy and capitalism. Nevertheless, Amelia commits suicide, Anny goes mad and is taken to in a mental hospital, and Anne is killed. As a result, none of Crimp's female characters are powerful enough to struggle with both capitalism and patriarchy.

Moreover, they are exposed to domestic violence, especially physical violence. Andrea Dworkin advocates that "Male domination of the female body is the basic material reality of women's lives; and all struggles for dignity and self-determination is rooted in the struggle for actual control of one's body" (1981: 205). Consciously or not, Crimp indicates how women bodies are taken into control cruelly by patriarchy in contemporary society. In *The Treatment*, when Anne starts to tell her life story, she mentions Simon's violent acts and at the end of the play, Andrew witnesses how Simon tied her to the chair to control her rebellious acts. In *Attempts on Her Life*, the play finishes after a husband stabs Anne, his wife, cruelly. Crimp also draws attention how a man feels satisfied when a woman pleads in pain in *Cruel and Tender*. The General smiles proudly when he thinks that Amelia commits suicide because of him. Furthermore, he satisfies his ego when he pulls the Beautician's hair violently. To conclude, Crimp displays the continuum of violence against women in contemporary society and none of his female characters can find the the power to stand against it.

In the twentieth century, to reflect the changes in society, violence as a concept has been integrated into theatre and has been distinctly demonstrated. As it was in the past, theatre does not have a play which approved goodness and punished evil any more. Artaud, who created his theory which was published in *Theatre and Its Double* in 1938, believed in the violence inside humans. He says, "Men to see themselves as they are, it causes the mask to fall, reveals the lie, the slackness, baseness, and hypocrisy of our world" (Artaud, 1958, p. 31). That is to say, to prompt our conscious and to recognize our real feelings and thoughts, Artaud uses theatre. For both Crimp and Artaud, the theatre is a place where individuals face reality and this is only possible with the conception of cruelty. Artaud believes that "Cruelty means

eradicating by means of blood and until blood flows, god, the bestial accident of unconscious human animality, wherever one can find it” ( Artaud, 1988, p. 569). During his conversation with Alex Sierz, Crimp also admits that “It is a cruel world” (Sierz, 2006, p. 89). In his plays, Crimp reveals cruelty in family environment and emphasizes child abuse and violence towards children in *The Country* and *Definitely the Bahamas*. When it is considered the date of the plays, in *Fewer Emergencies* is the last play among these plays where Crimp reflects children’s both physical and psychological violence in them this time. In addition, the three plays in *Fewer Emergencies* are about the inequality and violence of the contemporary world. Violence, in the late capitalist world, is shown as a general theme of the three plays in distinct ways: *Whole Blue Sky* consists of domestic cruelty between genders; *Fewer Emergencies* incorporates the rising violence on the streets as a result of increasing gap between the poor and the rich in terms of economy; whereas *Face to the Wall* embraces the inner violence in consequence of the artificial consuming world. Another aim of this study was to examine Crimp’s plays, *The Country*, *Fewer Emergencies*, and *Definitely the Bahamas* via the framework of Artaudian theory to scrutinize the analogies between Artaud’s and Crimp’ theatre. Like Artaud, Crimp prefers not to give any advice at the end of his plays. However, parallel to Artaud, he shows all aspects of life without apology and expects his audiences to take something from his plays. He achieves this both orally, and by evoking the senses and being conscious of the audience, with the aid of music, intonation, and violence. Finally, both of them use similar stage devices to reach the audience’s unconscious.

As a result, he delineates the loneliness of characters, their recklessness, displeasure, and desire for consumption in his plays. He does not only reflect society with its troubles, but he also masterfully draws attention to violence in society from different points. Although he uses females as the central characters and he is aware of the troubles of women, his female characters cannot be successful or cannot get rid of either patriarchy or capitalism.

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### PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS ON THE THESIS

Şakirođlu, Belgin & Marshall, Gordon John Ross 2015, “A *Cultural Material Reading of Martin Crimp’s Cruel and Tender: Crimp’s Approach to Ideology*”, International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Vol.5, No:5; May 2015.