

The Mechanism behind Thatcher's Reconfiguration of Class Relations in the UK

The paper aims to examine how Thatcherism reconfigured British class relations. To that end it considers Thatcher's flagship policy of crushing the trade unions. We test empirically which is the main factor that allowed this policy to come in place: shifting cultural attitudes, institutional-political agency, or socio-economic deprivation. The aim is to map out the shifting class relations in the 1970- 1995 period. We expect that the effect could also be mixed, namely: that when the institutions (organised bodies with power over the people) are more extractive, they can dominate the cultural impact (people's attitudes) and that when the institutions are less extractive, the cultural impact will be more prevalent. To conduct the analysis, we use data from Google Ngrams, Thatcher's speeches and aggregate data from ONS GDP. We use timeseries analysis, vector error correction models and Granger causality tests to disentangle the causal links. In developing this analysis, we use insights from multidisciplinary literature, including Todd, Acemoglu, Putnam, Reich, and Tubadji.