

SHAKESPEARE RE-POSITIONED: INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE
DEMYSTIFICATION OF THE CANON IN CONTEMPORARY DRAMA

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Thesis Abstract

Shakespeare Re-positioned: Intertextuality and the Demystification of the Canon in Contemporary Drama

With the emergence of many theories such as post-colonialism and feminism intertextual rewriting and the subversion of the canon in literature have been widely used in the twentieth century. This study analyzes how intertextuality and the demystification process work in contemporary drama -especially in contemporary Shakespeare adaptations since it is impossible to exclude Shakespeare as the father of drama. The primary sources used in this paper are “Harlem Duet” by Djanet Sears, *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)* by Ann-Marie MacDonald, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” by Derek Walcott, “This Island’s Mine” by Philip Osment and “Dogg’s Hamlet, Cahoot’s Macbeth” by Tom Stoppard. The bulk of this rewriting process and the theory of intertextuality are nourished through the idea of resistance. Therefore, this paper analyzes the idea of “resistance” -whether it defies patriarchy, colonialism, heterosexuality or the hegemony of language. It also discusses how rewriting appears as a form of resistance and how resistance functions in this rewriting process. Moreover, this study looks at how these “defiant” theories avoid becoming essentialist with the help of postmodernist elements. With the use of multiplicity of time, space, resistances, subjectivities and acting, the plays discussed in this study shun the mainstream. This study points out that these plays stand in a third position, which is situated between the canonical and the non-canonical, resistance and admiration, the center and the periphery, Shakespeare and non-Shakespeare.

Tez Özeti

Shakespeare'in Yeniden Konumlandırılması: Çağdaş Tiyatroda Metinlerarasılık ve Kanonun Değiştirilmesi

Yirminci yüzyılın ikinci yarısında edebiyatta ortaya çıkan pek çok teori sayesinde metinlerarası yeniden yazım ve kanonun değiştirilmesi kavramları sıkça kullanılır oldu. Bu çalışma, çağdaş tiyatrodaki – tiyatronun babası sayılan Shakespeare'i dışarıda bırakmak mümkün olmadığından özellikle çağdaş Shakespeare uyarlamalarında- metinlerarasılığın ve kanonun değişmesinin nasıl ele alındığını inceler. Bu çalışmada kullanılan oyunlar, Djanet Sears'ın “Harlem Dueti”, Ann-Marie MacDonald'ın *İyi Geceler Desdemona (Günaydın Jülyet)*, Derek Walcott'un “Mavi Nil'in Bir Kolu”, Philip Osment'in “Bu Ada Benim” ve Tom Stoppard'ın “Dogg'un Hamlet'i, Cahoot'un Macbeth'i” adlı eserleridir. Yeniden yazma sürecinin büyük bir kısmı ve metinlerarasılık teorisi karşı duruş fikrinden beslenmektedir. Bundan dolayı, bu çalışma karşı duruş kavramını – ister ataerkil düzene, ister sömürgeciliğe, heteroseksüelliğe ya da dilin egemenliğine karşı dursun- inceler. Yeniden yazımın nasıl bir karşı duruş biçimi olarak ortaya çıktığını ve bu karşı duruşun yeniden yazım sürecinde nasıl işlediğini tartışır. Ayrıca, oyunlardaki postmodern öğeler sayesinde bu eserler yeni bir kanon kurulmasını engellerler. Oyunlarda kullanılan çoğul zaman-mekan, çoğul karşı duruş, çoğul öznellik ve üstkurmaca teknikleri sayesinde oyunlar ana akım olmaktan kurtulurlar. Bu çalışma, bu oyunların kanonik ve kanonik olmayan arasında, karşı durma ve hayranlık arasında, hem Shakespeare yanlısı hem de Shakespeare karşıtı bir yerde, hepsinden bağımsız üçüncü bir noktada bulduklarının altını çizer.

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INTRODUCTION

Intertextuality, a word coined by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s, has become a pivotal term in contemporary literature and postmodern theory. It refers to an *interrelation* between two or more texts that quote from another and/or one text alluding to other texts. A dictionary definition of the term “intertextuality” reads as “the complex relationship between a text and other texts taken as basic to the creation or the interpretation of the text”, clearly emphasizing “creation” of a new text as well (Meriam Webster Dictionary). Thus, along with the interrelatedness of texts, the term suggests that an intertextual work is a new creation as well. The term is derived from the Latin word *intertexto*, which means “intermingle while weaving”. It also comes from the French word “*intertextualité*” [*inter-*, *textuel* (textual) and –*ité* (ity)]. Among all these definitions, there is also the idea that in intertextuality no text is original or unique, but a text is “rather a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent unwitting, references to and quotations from other texts” (Allen, *The Literary Encyclopedia* 1).

Shattering the self-sufficiency and the totality of the texts, the term suggests that each text is bound to be in close connection with other texts and that no text can be read or interpreted in isolation. While blurring this totality and the dominance of the monolithic texts, intertextuality casts doubts on the value systems, enabling the reader to think critically on the previous literary texts (Thody 87). In that respect, in intertextuality “[l]iterature becomes a force for demystification and liberation, an instrument for enabling people to see, perhaps not reality itself, but at least a different, a less flattering as well as a less impressive and less imprisoning version of it” (Thody 87).

Before the *Tel Quel*¹ group in Paris theorized intertextuality in the 1960s, concepts of literary allusion and imitation had been much in use ever since the classical times. Either reverence to the ancestors or the urge to parody the previous examples has motivated authors to make allusions to the works of their predecessors even though those allusions are not labeled as “intertextuality”. Before the 1960s, intertextuality had existed in numerous forms: parody, imitation, allusion, rewriting, influence and even plagiarism. In their introduction to *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, Judith Still and Michael Worton give a list of the history of imitation with allusions from literary critics. Their discussion starts with the Greek examples, who, except for Plato, revere imitation and accept it to a certain extent. For Still and Worton, Plato’s understanding of imitation is different from that of Aristotle’s. For Plato, poetry is deceptive since the poet imitates an earlier act of creation, which is itself a copy (Still and Worton 3). However, Aristotle proposes that texts and universal truths can be grasped only when they are read in reference to the previous examples (Still and Worton 4). Emphasizing Aristotle’s “organic and harmonic wholeness”, Still and Worton associate this quest for unity with the monologic perspective of a text while, at the same time, praising Aristotle’s stress of interrelations of texts and knowledge (4). Moreover, in *On the Sublime*, Longinus discusses that one route to the sublime is achieved through the imitation of great poets and historians (Still and Worton 5).

In their analysis of Roman literary critics, Still and Worton appreciate Cicero and Quintilian since they regard imitation not only as a repetition but also as a creative act of writing. Of the two forms of imitation, namely paraphrase (translation from Latin into Latin) and translation (translation from Greek into Latin), Cicero defends translation since, unlike paraphrase, it will enable the translator to create a new language (Still and Worton 6). On the

¹ *Tel Quel* is the name of a journal published in Paris during 1960s. It has become the epitome of the French post-structuralism and its theorists namely Kristeva, Barthes, Derrida and Foucault and has later given its name to the group. The *Tel Quel* group resists against any kind of stable signification and highlights the existence of dominant power relations in language. *Tel Quel* attacks against the bourgeois ideology of autonomy (Allen *Intertextuality* 30-1).

other hand, Quintilian appreciates paraphrase since writing in the same language will “engender a creative struggle between emulation and agonistic rivalry” (qtd. in Still and Worton 6). Basing their arguments on Cicero’s and Quintilian’s emphasis on creativity in imitation, Still and Worton conclude: “Imitation is thus not repetition, but the completion of an act of interpretation [...] Imitation as theory and practice presupposes a virtual simultaneity and identification of reading and writing, but it also implies and depends upon a process of transformation” (6). They regard the Roman critics’ view of imitation as a source for liberation and as creative criticism, which is closer to our contemporary understanding of intertextuality.

Among all the Renaissance writers, who deliberately quote from and imitate their precursors, Still and Worton venerate Montaigne, who attempts to write from different sources in the manner of conversations with the previous texts (8-10). With his frequent use of allusions and quotations and his simultaneous suspicion of them on the other hand, Montaigne, according to Still and Worton, stands out as the precursor of post-structuralist thought. Being conscious of the supremacy of the predecessors and thus regarding imitation as a means of multiplying perspectives and disrupting the monopoly of the early writers, Montaigne is located in a very contemporary context and is praised for his unique position among the Renaissance writers in Still and Worton’s *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*.

Until the twentieth century, literature witnessed different forms of intertextuality either as a means for gratitude to the ancestors or for dismantling their tyranny on literature. This abundance of imitation, parody, allusions, influences and rewriting also accentuates the idea that there is no such thing as originality and that everything is consciously or unconsciously a different version of a pre-text.

As it is impossible to have “uncontaminated texts”, rewriting emerges as another form of intertextuality, a subversive strategy in contemporary literature. Being aware of this non-

existence of “pure writing without any allusions”, Edward Said underscores this contemporary inclination for “the release of something from a book in writing” rather than “confining of something to a book” (Said 135). Later on, he suggests that: “[t]he writer thinks less of writing originally, and more of rewriting. The image for writing changes from *original inscription* to parallel script, from tumbled-out confidence to deliberate fathering-forth [...], from melody to fugue” (135). Therefore, rewriting inevitably replaces writing in the twentieth century. In addition to this, basing her arguments on Said’s distinction between “creative-original” works and “critical-interpretive” works, Chantal Zabus underlines the significance of rewritings and critical-interpretive works since they ensure the continuity of literature and its development. She furthers: “[t]he rewriting of literature through criticism, i.e. critical-interpretive writing, is at least as important as creative-original writing, for the critic is ultimately ‘a writer who seeks writing in writing’” (4). It is this critical-interpretive writing, the writing in which multiple writings necessarily mingle and writing and meaning are regularly rejuvenated. According to Zabus, it is this interweaving and unstable meaning that guarantees the future of literature and provides an unbiased perspective to canonicity.

In the same manner, being conscious of non-existence of original writing, David Cowart introduces the terms “literary symbiosis” and “stolentelling” so as to reveal the interaction of the texts and their irresistible influence on one another. Starting from the idea that every text embodies a re-telling of a previous one, he declares that every storytelling is actually a “stolentelling”. Furthermore, founding his arguments on biological symbiosis and building an analogy between biology and literature, Cowart presents three different forms of literary symbiosis, namely commensalism, mutualism and parasitism (4). Among these three different sorts, he approves mutualism in which both the host text (pre-text) and the guest text (post-text/rewriting) gain from each other. He even respects parody since it invites the host text to a comparison and thus leads it to be discussed in a new light (5). Putting aside

commensalisms and parasitism, he concludes that due to their capacity for enabling the review of the host texts, almost all literary symbiosis, literary influence and rewriting are mutual, rewarding for both sides.

Providing a basis for re-looking at the canon and the mythologized figures and works of literature, rewriting could also be regarded as deconstructing the myths and their ideological functions. As Roland Barthes points out:

For the very end of myths is to immobilize the world: they must suggest and mimic a universal order which has fixated once and for all the hierarchy of possessions. Thus, every day and everywhere, man is stopped by myths, referred by them to this motionless prototype which lives in his place, stifles him in the manner of a huge internal parasite and assigns to his activity the narrow limits within which he is allowed to suffer without upsetting the world.

(“Myth Today” 145)

Therefore, in order to avoid myths becoming a hindrance for the reader, an obstacle which obscures the vision and immobilizes the reader, it is necessary to dismantle the established hierarchies and the structured significations in myths and literature. This dismantling process could be achieved through reviewing the myths and host texts and through sanctioning a mutual interaction between the mythologized text and its “guest text” as Cowart suggests.

Before looking at the myths and structures in literature, it is necessary to pay attention to the concept of canon, which is another hindrance paralyzing the reader. Lizbeth Goodman defines canon as referring to “the set of authors and literary texts that has been passed down from age to age, generation to generation, with a stamp of approval – with a reputation for being ‘great’” (6). It is this canonicity that impedes the “less” great works from being acknowledged widely. In the rest of the article, she furthers that the canon is mostly made up of many criteria. Some of these are Englishness (using the cultural elements that pertain to the

British Empire), the English language (writing in English) and Bardolatry (recognizing Shakespeare as the great writer of England). In her article, she discusses how Shakespeare has dominated and molded the English culture:

Shakespeare, the Bard, enshrines the ultimate figure of the great writer; his image and symbolic identities are associated with the English countryside, theatre, social customs and entertainments, as well as with more literary ideas about his contributions to the development of poetic and dramatic form. The Shakespeare phenomenon is often referred to as ‘Bardolatry’ –cultural worship of a writer who is said to embody the genius and values of a nation (9).

Her view manifests how Shakespeare has become a symbol for Englishness and how the whole English canon has been modeled on a single writer and his impact. She finds it impossible to exclude Shakespeare when she tries to give the definitions of the canon. The association between Shakespeare and English culture is solidly established.

However, despite the fact that Shakespeare has stood as an emblem for Englishness, for the English-speaking world and for the imperial rule, his reputation did not lessen as the British Empire started to diminish (Hawkes 578). Although the twentieth century witnessed the decline of the British colonial rule, Shakespeare’s imprint on the English culture has not waned yet. The cultural agency of Shakespeare and his influence have motivated many writers and film makers to produce different versions of the Bard. His characters and stories triggered the writers to compose poems or to present a different version of his plays through re-modelling.

According to Fischlin and Fortier, there have been two periods in history when Shakespeare adaptations are prolific. These are the Restoration period and the second half of twentieth century (“General Introduction” 2). In the Restoration period when Charles II granted the right to re-open the theatres in 1660 to Charles Killigrew and Sir William

Davenant, he paved the way for the proliferation of playwrights and adaptations of Shakespeare's plays (Tatspaugh 526). While staging the Bard in his theatre "Duke's Company", Davenant reshaped Shakespeare's plays by adding characters, organizing the plot and making language inoffensive (Tatspaugh 526). Due to Davenant's interest in Shakespeare, Davenant's theatre later became more popular than that of Killigrew's "King's Men". Among all these adaptations performed at "Duke's Company", John Dryden's *All For Love* and Dryden and Davenant's *Tempest* adaptation were distinguished. Davenant was renowned for his political adaptations of the Bard. However, the second half of the period witnessed a completely reverse approach towards Shakespeare. As the manager of Drury Lane from 1747 to 1776, David Garrick, unlike Davenant, restored Shakespeare's bawdy language, eliminated the psychological sides of the characters and used the minor characters in their roles (Tatspaugh 528, Spencer 5). He put emphasis on ensemble acting system (Potter 188). During the Restoration and the Augustan Age, there were two approaches that the critics of the age were engaged in: On the one hand, they tended to regard these adaptations as the products of the age and analyzed them according to the literary rules of the period. On the other hand, some other critics constantly compared the adaptations with the excellence of the Bard and concluded that they were merely imperfect imitations of Shakespeare (Spencer 7).

In the Romantic period, John Philip Kemble continued the tradition of Garrick at Drury Lane. Being the actor manager at Drury Lane and Covent Garden from 1788 to 1817, Kemble became popular with his sound, music and lighting effects, crowd management and his use of changeable scenery (Potter 189, Tatspaugh 529). It was also in the Romantic period during Kemble's management at Drury Lane when Edmund Kean with his energy and reputation as a romantic rebel first appeared as a Shakespeare actor (Tatspaugh 530). Becoming very popular in some specific Shakespeare characters such as Shylock, Iago and Richard III and playing them in an unconventional manner, Kean contributed to

Shakespearean characters and acting to a great extent (Tatspaugh 530). The last important name from the period was the actor-manager William Charles Macready, who emphasized unity and accuracy of both historically accurate dress and correct wearing of costumes (Tatspaugh 530).

After Macready's death, the Act for Regulating the Theatres in 1843 led to the disintegration of the monopoly of the theatres. The Victorian Age, thus, witnessed the emergence of new theatre groups and directors such as Samuel Phelps's "Sadler Wells Theatre", Charles Kean's "Princess Theatre" and Henry Irving's "Lyceum" (Potter 191). Phelps and Kean insisted "on the organic unity of [Shakespeare's] works and on the significance of every line" (Potter 192). Moreover, Phelps challenged the traditional star system and traditional readings of the plays (Tatspaugh 531). However, Irving's Shakespeare performances were different, more radical than those of Phelps and Kean. He established a more illusionist theatre using a three-dimensional stage with platforms and stairs (Tatspaugh 531-2).

By 1900, the influence of Shakespeare was not merely on language, but also on dramaturgy and theatrical space (Potter 196). The director, who was previously impressed by poetic language and realism, would, in the twentieth century, be inspired by a "non-mimetic theatre, Brechtian political drama, fluid staging, and a post-modern treatment of character" (Potter 196). In twentieth century, it is not possible to focus on a single name, which will characterize the era. The period had a number of directors who were keen on Shakespeare. Some of them were Harley Granville Barker, Barry Jackson, Ben Greet, Peter Brook and Anthony Quayle (Tatspaugh 533-4). Shakespeare's plays have been frequently adapted to different genres (novel and poetry) or to a different medium (cinema, music and visual arts). It is almost as if that term "adaptation" has been associated with him. These adaptations have

become so much in use that their attempt to be out-of-the-canon almost fails since they sometimes themselves make up a new canon with their stereotypes.

In his article “Shakespeare’s Influence”, John Gross underlines the fact that there is a tendency to use other genres such as the novel and poetry or other media such as film to create re-writings of Shakespeare’s works. Furthermore, he continues that even if there are playwrights who rewrite his plays, there are fewer British dramatists who rewrite him than the European and post-colonial playwrights (636). Bearing in the mind Lizbeth Goodman’s remark on the exclusion of the playwrights other than Shakespeare from the English canon, it is not a surprising fact that there are not many plays rewritten as there are rewritings in the novel and poetry (12). Goodman also stresses that not even in critical works such as Harold Bloom’s *The Western Canon*, is drama included as a genre (14). Therefore, dramatic rewritings, both in the official canon and in the later attempts to deconstruct the canon, have always been repudiated as a genre.

When we think of Shakespeare and intertextuality, we encounter two different paths. Apart from the fact that his works become pre-texts for the rewritings, Shakespeare himself has consciously been influenced by his predecessors. It is almost as if the words “Shakespeare” and “intertextuality” are closely linked since almost all of Shakespeare’s plays are themselves not original in content, but only in form. In most of his plays, Shakespeare borrows the material for his tragedies and comedies from many different sources: Greek, Latin and Italian. For his Roman plays, he generally uses Sir Thomas North’s translation of Plutarch’s *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* and for his English history plays, he is influenced by the chronicles of Edward Hall and Holinshed.² Regarding these interrelations and influences, Shakespeare can never be acknowledged as an “original” writer, as the Father, whose works influence others.

² Brown, John Russell. “Shakespeare and his sources”. *Britannica Online*. <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-232445>

It is a fact that there are many adaptations, or as Ruby Cohn suggests, many offshoots of Shakespeare. In her *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, Cohn differentiates between “adaptations” and “transformations” of Shakespeare. She explains that while adaptation is a term that is more linked to the stage directing and reductions and changes during the staging; transformation, on the other hand, creates a new story by locating the Shakespeare characters into non-Shakespearean stories, in a pre-Shakespearean past or a post-Shakespearean future (Cohn 44). In her division of adaptations and transformations, the main focus is on the idea of creation. These attempts to create a new story in a non-Shakespearean setting become significant since these new stories could pave the way for re-looking at the mythologized Shakespeare and the canon.

In this M.A. thesis, these new stories about Shakespeare become more important since they permit a re-visioning of the canon and of the Bard as an icon. Choosing contemporary *transformations* of Shakespeare as examples of rewriting, this study aims to discuss how he has become an inseparable part of the canon. Moreover, focusing on the concept of rewriting as a form of intertextuality, this thesis uses Shakespeare as its main source since there has always been a tendency to rewrite his plays and since it is impossible to exclude rewritings of Shakespeare.

At the root of this tendency to rewrite the Bard there are two possible contrasting reasons: the first and foremost reason for the transformations of Shakespeare is the resistance towards the canon and the ideologies that Shakespeare and the English culture epitomize. As Philip Thody suggests, writing and rewriting forces the reader to think critically on the subjects that s/he has accepted as truth (87). It is this beneficial aspect of rewriting that supplements the concepts of resistance and subversion. Through situating the Shakespeare characters in a non-Shakespearean environment, these transformations endeavor to provide an

antithetical angle to the canonical Shakespeare. This resistance goes hand in hand with many contemporary literary theories since these examples challenge a one-to-one signification system as well.

The second reason for rewriting or choosing to rewrite a writer from the canon could be to form a bond with the past and the tradition (Cowart 11). As Still and Worton state, these writers, by locating themselves within the tradition, announce their “loving gratitude to ancestors” (13). Likewise, the fact that Shakespeare is the most quoted writer in all ages reinforces his being an exemplary and an admirable writer whose authorship is seen as a path to be followed. The contemporary rewritings of Shakespeare bear two contradictory ambitions. Rewriting Shakespeare is both resisting the Bard’s dominance of the Western stage and the canon and also acknowledging his greatness as an author and trying to find a place closer to him.

However, in the act of resisting the canon, there is a danger of creating another canon that replaces the former. In this respect, Goodman argues that replacing Shakespeare with non-canonical works would be meaningless since this attempt will still exclude some other “minor literature”. She proposes the idea of expanding the canon as much as possible so that woman writers and all the formerly excluded writer groups could be classified in the canon (13). It is this idea of expansion of the canon that paves the way for the proliferation of many other rewritings.

Starting out with the concepts of intertextuality and subversion of the canon, this thesis focuses on contemporary rewritings of Shakespeare and analyses the mythologized figures and works of literature trying to detach literature from its canonicity and myths. It examines how Shakespeare is mystified as a canon in Western literature through looking at Shakespeare rewritings in drama written in English by contemporary playwrights. Moreover, this study

deliberately chooses dramatic works since they are not warmly welcomed into the canon and since “subverting the canon” is one of the key words of this thesis project. In these contemporary plays, the main question that “this out-of-the-canon genre” asks is whether choosing to write a play is a way of continuing Shakespeare’s tradition, of showing reverence to him by using the same genre or a way of showing double resistance towards the canon, towards the tyranny of Shakespeare and towards the semi-exclusion of plays and playwrights from the canon.

The primary texts that are used in this thesis are “Harlem Duet” by Djanet Sears, *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)* by Ann-Marie MacDonald, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” by Derek Walcott, “This Island’s Mine” by Philip Osment and two one-act complimentary plays “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth” by Tom Stoppard. Of all these plays, the plays of Sears, MacDonald, Walcott and Osment can be classified as “post-colonial and/or gender-oriented”, dealing with race and gender issues. “Harlem Duet” re-locates *Othello* in a feminist and anti-racial perspective focusing on Othello’s ex-wife Billie whom he abandons so as to marry white Desdemona. MacDonald’s play *Goodnight Desdemona* deals with the similar themes looking at a junior Shakespeare scholar Constance, who tries to prove the multi-generic aspect of the Bard’s plays and suddenly finds herself in the fictional world of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Displaying the victimization of Shakespeare’s two women characters by patriarchy, the play focuses on Constance’s victimization by the male-dominant academia as well. Likewise, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” reveals the struggles of a Black actress who is rehearsing *Anthony and Cleopatra* and who tries to find a respectable space within the white, male-oriented theatre group despite her different accent. British playwright Philip Osment’s “This Island’s Mine”, a rewriting of *The Tempest*, displays the problems of gays and lesbians in contemporary London; however, the play does underline race and feminist issues as well.

Apart from these post-colonial, feminist and queer rewritings, this study discusses how Tom Stoppard -the British playwright who has frequently written Shakespeare adaptations- relocates his cultural and linguistic predecessor in his two plays, “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth”. In these two complimentary plays, Stoppard deals with the issue of creating a new language called Dogg, which is as alien as that of Shakespeare’s and thus engenders many problems during staging. Therefore, his invention of language could be regarded as being in the same line with the other three plays since it delineates a resistance – but of a different kind- towards the Bard’s language and a resistance towards making Shakespeare obscure and incomprehensible.

This study aims to display as many different playwrights/plays as possible by choosing various playwrights including post-colonial, feminist and gay. Despite the abundance of post-colonial and feminist adaptations/rewritings of Shakespeare, this study analyzes the plays written by two British playwrights as well. However, the fact that Osment’s and Stoppard’s re-positioning of Shakespeare is completely different from each other –Osment has a queer perspective whereas Stoppard focuses on language- makes it impossible to categorize/to form a canon with the rewritings.

Chapter 1 gives a theoretical framework to the thesis focusing on the theorists who work on intertextuality and harmonizing their perspectives. It analyzes intertextuality as a triangular model with the subject, the text and the previous texts. In the first part, it focuses upon the subject/subjectivity –subject as a combination of reader and writer- and on the post-structuralist theorists namely Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Jonathan Culler. The second part concentrates on the reader response critics and structuralists Gerard Genette and Michael Riffaterre and how they regard the reader as guided by the text itself, thus they underline the text. Finally, the third part discusses how some critics namely T.S. Eliot and Harold Bloom acknowledge historicity and literary filiation as necessary means for

intertextuality. Their understanding of intertextuality and rewriting underscores the cultural heritage.

Chapter 2 discusses how rewriting is regarded as a form of resistance, as a reflection of political resistance towards patriarchy, colonialism, heterosexuality and the English language. It looks at the idea of counter-discourse as a subversive strategy. Though they may seem to be divergent, all of these forms of resistance culminate in this rewriting process that aims to dismantle the binary oppositions. This chapter is divided into four parts in which the plays are analyzed. The first section dwells upon two plays, namely “Harlem Duet” and *Goodnight Desdemona*, which bring forth the silenced women in Shakespeare. The second part discusses the post-colonial perspective in Derek Walcott’s “A Branch of the Blue Nile”. The third section analyzes the queer tendencies and the problem of gays and lesbians in Osment’s “This Island’s Mine”. Finally, the last part refocuses on Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* by Stoppard’s creating a new language. All these four forms of resistance can be regarded as reclaiming identity and thus displaying the political aspect of intertextuality.

Chapter 3, on the other hand, analyzes the postmodernist tendencies of the rewritten examples. In contrast to the previous chapter, which focuses on the political aspect of rewriting, of answering back, Chapter 3 presents the postmodern tendency for apolitization, for rejecting all *-isms*. In this chapter, multiplicity as a postmodern term is a key word and it is discussed in four sections with relevance to the plays. The first part focuses on the multiplicity of time and space in the plays. The second section looks at the other political resistances apparent in the plays. The third part analyzes the multiple subjectivities such as the inclusion of the reader, proliferation of potential “writers” and multiple characterization in the rewritings. Finally, the fourth part reveals the metatheatrical elements, which are actually manifestations of multiple acting. Chapter 3 discloses how the plays resist closure and avoid essentialism with the help of the multiplicity of voices, acting, subjects and resistances.

CHAPTER 1

INTERTEXTUALITY: THE TRIANGULAR SPATIALIZATION OR THE THIRD SPACE

Despite the fact that intertextuality in the twentieth century signals a non-referentiality or an intermingling of untraceable sources, it is –to a certain extent- possible to trace its theory and disclose relevant theorists studying intertextuality. Before starting with the history of intertextuality –although it is not fair to make out a genealogy of historical background for such a theoretical concept- it would be apt to start with the definitions of influence and inspiration, which are the two corresponding concepts of intertextuality.

In “The Space of Intertextuality”, Thais Morgan starts by differentiating between influence and inspiration. According to Morgan, when a pretext influences a post-text, the burden is put on the posterior text since the anterior text becomes the source of the post-text. In case of inspiration, however, the individual author and concept of innovation are valorized and the posterior text becomes more valuable (240). In other words, “[w]hereas the metaphor of influence is conservative and sees literary history as the continuity of fixed set of norms over time, the metaphor of inspiration is progressive and regards later texts as positive advances over literature of the past” (Morgan 241). In her introduction, Morgan sees influence as a rather negative form of intertextuality and inspiration as a positive concept. However, intertextuality posits a gray area, a third space, an inbetween space that embodies both inspiration and influence. By substituting “the evolutionary model of literary history with a structural and synchronic model of literature as sign system, [...] [intertextuality liberates] the literary text from psychological, sociological, and historical determinisms, opening it up to an apparently infinite play of relationships with other texts, or semiosis” (Morgan 239).

As Morgan suggests, intertextuality achieved a critical turn in the history of criticism in the twentieth century. It has not only emerged as a new theoretical concept but also cooperated with the poststructuralist movement of the period. This change from influence/inspiration to intertextuality marks the break with the structuralist system of signification. This radical change emerged in the turmoil during the 1968 revolts in Paris since this separation with structuralism coincided with the revolutionary and liberal movements of the student revolts of Paris and of the French intelligentsia.

The mother of the term, Julia Kristeva, joined the so-called *Tel Quel* group in the late sixties and added some concepts such as “intertextuality”, “significance” and “genotext” to the group’s vocabulary. The general aim of the *Tel Quel* group was overtly political; they were politically committed and their enthusiasm in politics and literature could be associated with the May revolts of 1968. *Tel Quel* was a center for a younger generation of structuralists and poststructuralists. Their main objective was “to produce a *plural history* of different kinds of writing situated in relation to their specific time and space and, finally, to articulate a *politics* which would constitute the logical consequence of a non-representational understanding of writing” (Moi “Introduction” 4). They stressed textual productivity and they carried “the desire to rewrite history as an open-ended text” (Moi “Introduction” 6). They supported the student revolts and the strikes with the help of French Communist Party (PCF), which later chose to be closer to the parliamentary politics aligning itself with the liberal democracy of the bourgeois state (Moi “Introduction” 5). Many committed leftists of France were disappointed by the change in PCF and this break with the dialogue between the French Left and the Communist Party. Disillusioned by this “treason”, the French Left including the *Tel Quel* group turned its face to China and to the Cultural Revolution of Mao Zedung (Moi “Introduction” 6). The *Tel Quel* theorists –particularly Kristeva- were deeply impressed by the significance given to the intellectuals in the Cultural Revolution; however, they were unaware

of what actually lay behind the Chinese Revolution. The group's visit to China in 1974 precipitated the dissolution of their enthusiasm for revolution since they witnessed the sufferings of the intellectuals and the common people in China. This remarkable visit to China led Kristeva to detach herself from poststructuralism and move closer to feminism and psychoanalysis.

This chapter gives a framework of the theory of intertextuality by making references to the theorists who have studied intertextuality. As the theory itself is quite diversified, the theorists who have worked in this field are disparate themselves. There are poststructuralists such as Kristeva and Culler, structuralists such as Riffaterre and Genette and the psychoanalysts such as Bloom. Although the views of the theorists differ from one another, it seems as if their handling of the term is somewhat similar.

When discussing intertextuality, the theorists usually tend to situate intertextuality upon a triangle and illustrate and elaborate their ideas on that triangle. One of the salient reasons for choosing this triangular model could be the tendency to find a space which is detached from binarisms. When something is more than two, then it immediately becomes plural and the triangle as a geometrical shape enables this dissolution of binarism and leads to the emergence of plurality and space. As two points make up a linear line in geometry, they need a third non-linear point in order to make a plane which will save those two points from becoming a linear line. It is this non-linear and spatial features of the triangle that attracts the theorists studying intertextuality. For instance, in "The Space of Intertextuality", Thais Morgan draws our attention to the shift of focus from the triangle of author/work/tradition to the text/discourse/culture triad (239). Therefore, even a theorist who works on these theorists working on intertextuality makes use of this triangular model.

In the same manner, in order to be “faithful” to the theorists, I am also structuring my own triangle in framing the theory of intertextuality. No matter how dissimilar the theorists are, this chapter then will use this very model and locate all the theorists within a triangle whose legs are the subject, the text and the anterior texts. This triangle will take the presence of the legs for granted since the theory of intertextuality encompasses the subject as both the writer and the reader, the text itself and Bakhtin’s “exterior literary corpus”, the cultural heritage or the literary history that makes the intertext a possibility.

A) The Death of the Author and the Enunciation of the Speaking Subject

Bakhtin and Kristeva

When we talk about this triangle that intertextuality is based upon upon, we see that Julia Kristeva does not point out a remarkable difference among those three legs. Her view of intertextuality is rather that of the amalgamation of text, subject and the context (the previous texts). Since she is very much influenced by Bakhtinian dialogism and heteroglossia and she is the one who has introduced Bakhtin to the Western audience, her approach to intertextuality would be awkward without referring to her great master and guide Bakhtin.

In his “Discourse in the Novel” (written between 1930 and 1936), Bakhtin appreciates the novel as a genre since it is different from the homogenic, unitary language of poetry and epic form. The novel embodies different languages operating in various aspects and thus forming a heteroglossia of voices and polyphony. It is this multiplicity in language that coincides with the poststructuralist theory, which later emerged in Europe in 1960s. In other words, Bakhtin, consciously or unconsciously, is a precursor for the post-structuralist trend in Europe.

Unlike Saussure, Bakhtin draws attention to the social aspect of language since he believes that language is “a ceaseless flow of becoming” (qtd. in Allen 18). In relation to this social side, language cannot be separated from its ideological basis; ideology is thus intrinsic to it. Moreover, Bakhtin differentiates between the centripetal (unifying) and the centrifugal (diversifying) forces in language. Coining the term “heteroglossia” to refer to the coexistence of different voices and discourses in language and accentuating the ideological aspect of language, Bakhtin writes: “Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance” (1199). Being aware of the existence of ideological forces intrinsic in language and in literature, he admits the intersection of both centripetal and centrifugal forces:

There are no ‘neutral’ words and forms –words and forms that can belong to ‘no one’; language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents. [...] Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker’s intentions; it’s populated –overpopulated- with the intentions of others. (Bakhtin 1214-5)

It is this very overpopulation that attracts the poststructuralists and that causes them to look closely at this ideological and dialogical aspect of language.

Underlining this constant reciprocal movement between the centripetal and centrifugal forces, Graham Allen summarizes Bakhtinian dialogism and connects it to intertextuality:

An utterance, such as a scholarly work, may present itself as an independent entity, as monologic (possessing singular meaning and logic), yet it emerges from a complex history of previous works, [...] All utterances are dialogic, their meaning and logic dependent upon what has previously been said and on how they will be received by others. (Allen 19)

It is this “complex history of previous works”, as Allen puts it, that paves the way for intertextuality.

After disclosing the intersection of languages and dialogism inherent in language, Bakhtin turns to the novelist, namely the subject, and praises his competence. According to Bakhtin, the novelist embraces language diversity including both the literary and the extra-literary languages. He does not eliminate this heteroglossic aspect of language but rather strives to be nourished from this richness. He would never weaken that extra-literary language but rather underscore it (1218). Furthermore, he accentuates the existence of the writer and adds that it is also significant to have the writer’s voice in the midst of this heteroglossia: “For the prose writer, the object is a focal point for heteroglot voices among which *his own voice must also sound*; these voices create the background necessary for his own voice, outside of which his artistic prose nuances cannot be perceived, and without which they ‘do not sound’” (1204) (the italics are mine). In Bakhtin, the author is not dead; he declares the existence of a writer whose voice must also be heard. Yet, this writer should never adopt an authoritarian voice and disguise himself behind the hierarchical presuppositions (Allen 24). Therefore, it could be said that though Bakhtin has not written particularly on intertextuality, the enunciation of the subject in the intertextuality does start with him.

In his analysis of Bakhtin, Allen suggests that for Bakhtin the word does not wholly belong to the speaker but rather penetrates through previous utterances (Allen 28). It is this feature of language that Kristeva adopts from Bakhtin and incorporates into intertextuality since no utterance emerges in the void without the speaker or the past. Each utterance for Bakhtin encompasses a combination of the speaker, the listener, the ideological and social aspects, and the text’s relationship to previous utterances. Therefore, such inclusion of numerous features makes Bakhtin a precursor of intertextuality.

Julia Kristeva, Bulgarian semiotician and a poststructuralist, has conceptualized Bakhtin's ideas and brought them together under the term "intertextuality". She has translated Bakhtin and introduced him to the Western audience. Kristeva's "Word, Dialogue and the Novel" is a summary of Bakhtin's thoughts. In her interview with Margaret Waller, Kristeva sums up Bakhtin's influence upon her thought as follows:

Personally I had found Bakhtin's work very exciting, particularly his studies of Rabelais and Dostoevsky. He was moving toward a dynamic understanding of the literary text that considered every utterance as the result of the intersection within it of a number of voices. [...] I think my interpretation remains, on the one hand, faithful to his ideas, and demonstrates, on the other, my attempts to elaborate and enlarge upon them. *Whence the concept of intertextuality, which does not figure as such in the work of Bakhtin, but which, it seemed to me, one could deduce from his work.* (Waller 280-1) (the italics are mine)

In this interview, she elucidates how she theorizes Bakhtin's work and she adds that, unlike Bakhtin, language or a textual segment is not made up of two different voices, but that it is "the result of the intersection of a number of voices, of a number of textual interventions, which are combined in the semantic field, but also in the syntactic and phonic fields of the explicit utterance" (Waller 281).

In addition to Bakhtin's influence upon her, Kristeva's noteworthy break with structuralism paves the way for her conceptualization of the term. Her detachment from structuralism emerges in her essay entitled "From Symbol to Sign" in which she argues that the Western tradition and culture have witnessed a groundbreaking change with the replacement of the symbol with the sign in other words, with the emergence of semiotics. In this essay, Kristeva starts by accentuating the difference between the symbol and the sign and states that the supremacy of the symbol has been challenged by the sign since the 15th century

(65). While the symbol presents an arbitrary and a horizontal relationship between the symbolizer and the symbolized, “the sign signifies an infinitization of discourse through its embodiment of both horizontal and vertical dimensions” (Kristeva “From Symbol” 71). In contrast to the symbol’s binary or two-dimensional existence, the sign “*evokes* a collection of associated images and ideas”, [...] its meaning is the result of an interaction with other signs, [and] it harbours a principle of *transformation*” (72). According to Kristeva, it is this displacement that heralds the birth of poststructuralism and the replacement of structuralism with semiotics. Her emphasis of this distinction generally moulds her views as well since with this differentiation she starts to grasp polyphony and multiple correlational significations.

Furthermore, this transformation from the symbol to the sign forms the basis of Kristeva’s arguments. Kristeva believes that there has been a revolution in the West with this displacement. In that dyad of structuralism and semiotics, she favors semiotics since it reveals to us the systematization of sign systems within language; since it “conceives meaning not as a sign-system but as a *signifying process* (Kristeva “The System” 28). Unlike structuralism, semiotics avoids imprisonment and makes it possible to re-construct a new history by renewing the meaning and the system (Kristeva “The System” 32). This realization also influences her later division of *the semiotic* and *the symbolic* and her emphasis of the semiotic as a means to disrupt this systematization and language.

Taking on Bakhtin’s definition of the “literary word as an intersection of textual surfaces rather than a point”, Julia Kristeva constructs her arguments on intertextuality and defines it according to a horizontal (subject-addressee) and a vertical (text-exterior texts) axis (Kristeva “Word” 36-7). Even the word itself is spatialized rather than it is being structured diachronically.

In “Word, Dialogue and Novel”, a summary of Bakhtin’s dialogism, she elucidates that the Russian Formalists accept the existence of monologic and dialogic discourses;

however, as she writes further, she appreciates Bakhtin since he includes both the monologic and the dialogic discourses just as he advocates the fusion of the centripetal and the centrifugal (Kristeva “Word” 38-9). For Bakhtin, writing discloses both subjectivity and communication, which creates the ambivalence. Aiming to present a wider explanation of Bakhtin’s ambivalence, Kristeva continues as follows:

The term ‘ambivalence’ implies the insertion of history (society) into a text and of this text into history; for the writer, they are one and the same. When he speaks of ‘two paths merging within the narrative’, Bakhtin considers writing as a reading of the anterior literary corpus and the text as an absorption of and a reply to another text. [...] In this perspective, a text cannot be grasped through linguistics alone. Bakhtin postulates the necessity for what he calls a *translinguistic* science, which, developed on the basis of language’s dialogism, would enable us to understand intertextual *relationships*. (Kristeva “Word” 39-40)

This ambivalence discussed by Bakhtin and Kristeva is located in the Menippean discourse³, which embodies the tragic and the comic, the monologic and the dialogic and which stands against Aristotelian logic and reveals the text as a social activity (Kristeva “Word” 52), an all-inclusive genre, it displays multiple aspects.

This ambivalence can also be traced in Kristeva’s division of the semiotic and the symbolic. Although the semiotic represents the drives, impulses and the rhythm, “before language” and the symbolic is emblematic of language and the thetic, she states that no text is purely semiotic or symbolic but rather a combination of both (Allen 50). Likewise, to convey this division between the symbolic and the semiotic in a text, Kristeva generates two new terms; namely the *phenotext* and the *genotext*. The former represents a structure and the voice

³ Menippean discourse derives its name from Menippus of Gadara, a philosopher of third century B.C. His style influenced much of the Western literature. In Kristeva’s text, it is presented as antithetical to Socratic dialogue and Aristotelian logic. It is associated with the carnivalesque and the polyphonic novel (Kristeva “Word” 52).

of the univocal subject; it corresponds to the symbolic as it is connected to language. It attempts to create a fixed meaning. On the other hand, the genotext is a process rather than a fixed point traveling through different paths and refusing to land on any of them. It corresponds to the semiotic and it resists closure in meaning (Allen 50; Kristeva “Revolution” 121). Thus, the fusion of the symbolic and the semiotic and the phenotext and the genotext is her integration of Bakhtin’s ambivalence into her concept of intertextuality.

Furthermore, being a poststructuralist and rejecting the ideological apparatuses, she is against displacement of one sign by another. For the theory of intertextuality, she repudiates the replacement of the author of the previous text with his follower, or the replacement of the past text with its intertextual rewriting. Instead, she uses the term *transposition*, which signals the transposition of one sign-system into another (Allen 221; Kristeva “Revolution” 111). With this definition, she breaks free from the conventional understanding of influence and inspiration. Moreover, it is this *transposition* that enables the plurality and heteroglossia: “If one grants that every signifying practice is a field of transpositions of various signifying systems (an intertextuality), one then understands that its ‘place’ of enunciation and its denoted ‘object’ are never single, complete and identical to themselves, but always plural, shattered, capable of tabulated (Kristeva “Revolution” 111)”.

It is this transposition that resists any closure and that paves the way for Kristeva’s dealing with the text as productivity. The text, therefore, is in a constant movement in which it is deconstructed and restructured:

[T]he *text* is defined as a trans-linguistic apparatus that redistributes the order of language by relating communicative speech, which aims to inform directly, to different kinds of anterior or synchronic utterances. The text is therefore a *productivity*, and this means: first, that its relationship to the language in which it is situated is redistributive (destructive-constructive), hence can be better

approached through logical categories rather than linguistic ones; and second, that it is permutation of texts, an intertextuality: in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another.

(Kristeva "The Bounded" 36)

After presenting an analysis of what she has conceptualized, now it would be apt to turn to how Kristeva manages to harmonize all these elements that make up intertextuality. Although she seems to be arranging those elements by not underscoring any of them, she still presents "the subject", using the term "the enunciation of the speaking subject", as a necessary means for intertextuality.

In her analysis of the subject, Kristeva presents two main components as the subject (S) and the addressee (A). (S) corresponds to the subject of narration or the writer whereas the (A) corresponds to the reader ("Word" 45). She states that in order to arrive at polyphony and heteroglossia, dialogism should start with the dialogic relationship between (S) and (A), which would help to challenge the dominant discourse ("Word" 56). In this perpetual transformation between (S) and (A), "[t]he writer's interlocutor, then, is the writer himself, but as reader of another text. The one who writes is the same as the one who reads. Since his interlocutor is a text, he himself is no more than a text re-reading itself as it rewrites itself (Kristeva "Word" 56). It is this reciprocity between (S) and (A) that paves the way for dialogism.

As she moves on, Kristeva divides (S) into two categories. First, (S) is reduced to an anonymity, which could be referred to as the subject of enunciation (Sr). Then, this anonymous subject (Sr) is narrated through a third person –the he/she character-, namely the subject of utterance (Sd) (Kristeva "Word" 45). Thus, the subject is transformed into the addressee and split into (Sr) and (Sd). Regarding this multiple splittedness of (S), (A), (Sr) and (Sd), Kristeva proposes a category –her fourth category- in relation to the dialogism. In

order to achieve a dialogical text that even questions writing, a text that becomes a reading of its anterior literary corpus, the subject of utterance (Sd) should coincide both with the subject of enunciation (Sr) and the addressee (A) (Kristeva "Word" 57). Thus, the writer, the reader and the subject of utterance intermingle and neutralize each other just as the different discourses clash in a text.

In addition to that, just as she names the text *productivity*, she names the author, the reader or the subject of utterance "subject in process" (*sujet en procés*) since the subject, itself, is in a constant transformation. According to Kristeva, this *subject in process* needs to reduce himself to zero degree, to a *negativity*, to a state of crisis. He has to nullify himself so that he can re-create a new, plural identity (Waller 281). Therefore, this negativity that Kristeva emphasizes is actually *an affirmative negativity* in which the *subject in process* is enabled to reconstruct the plurality with the help of the plurality of characters, of discourses, of representation and ideology (Waller 281).

Barthes

In the same manner, Roland Barthes emphasizes the subject as the reader and in this respect his ideas are analogous to Kristeva's enunciation of the subject. It is due to his emphasis on the subject that causes Barthes to be categorized in this group. However, in order to make a good introduction to Barthes's intertextuality and his emphasis on the subject as the reader, we should look at Derrida's play of signifiers and Barthes's division of the work and the text.

Declaring the lack of a center and of a fixed, stable meaning, Jacques Derrida opens up a new possibility for the play of significations (Derrida 109). Within this absence of a presence, multiple signifiers cannot find their presupposed signifieds and thus there is a

constant deferral of meaning. Regarding this play of signification, he writes: “[T]here is also the tension between play and presence. Play is the disruption of presence. The presence of an element is always a signifying and substitutive reference inscribed in a system of differences and the movement of a chain” (121). It is this play that enables the deconstruction of stability. According to Barthes, in Western philosophy primacy is given to speech and to the work. However, in line with Derrida’s emphasis on writing and *différance*, Barthes gives precedence to the text and to writing. Disrupting this hierarchical relation between the work and the text, Barthes argues that the text resists any kind of stability and is involved in a play of signification. The text engaging in this play of signification negates the presence of the work in a Derridian sense. Moreover, “the term ‘text’ now stands for the play of the signifier within the work, its unleashing of the disruptive and yet playful force of writing” (Allen 66). According to Barthes, the text, unlike the work, paves the way for numerous meanings with its play of signifiers, which constantly defers meaning, and thus displays a possibility of countless meanings and discourses. Therefore, in the text, there is a potential for a way to intertextuality for Barthes. Each text is then inherently intertextual. In his *Image-Music-Text*, he describes the text as follows:

[The text is] woven entirely with citations, references, echoes, cultural languages (what language is not?) antecedent or contemporary, which cut across it through and through in a vast stereophony. The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the ‘sources’, the ‘influences’ of a work is to fall in with the myth of filiation; the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable, and yet *already read*. (qtd. in Allen 69)

It is this inherently intertextual aspect of a text that causes Barthes to declare the death of the author. In his essay “The Death of the Author”, he states that the author in the traditional sense is dead and he is replaced by the *scriptor*: “The Author is thought to *nourish* the book, which is to say that he exists before it, thinks, suffers, lives for it, is in the same relation of antecedence to his work as a father to child. In complete contrast, the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing” (Barthes 1468). Within this potential intertextuality in a text, the author is regarded almost as redundant since all writings are unoriginal. The urge to label the author of a text closes the text and its multiple meanings (Barthes “The Death” 1469).

When we think of Barthes’s enunciation of the subject as a necessary means for intertextuality, we notice that he makes a distinction between the writer and the reader unlike Kristeva. However, in line with Kristeva, he makes us aware of a subject who arranges intertextuality although he replaces the author with the reader. His definition of the text as intertextual and his declaration of the mission of the reader is as follows: “[A] text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not [...] the author” (Barthes 1469). For Barthes, “the reader is therefore no passive vehicle, or echo chamber, but the reagent of the text” (Orr 35). In same manner as Kristeva, he situates intertextuality within the text and bases it on diversity and heteroglossia. For intertextuality, Barthes coins the term “*dérive*”, lack of fixity and direction. “If Barthes’s intertextuality is then everywhere divergence and diversion, reader satisfaction with the text’s seduction and siren call is of paramount importance” (Orr 35).

So as to highlight the importance of the reader as the subject in a text, Barthes further makes a differentiation between a readerly (*lisible*) text and a writerly (*scriptible*) text (Allen 77). The readerly texts channel the reader to a single path, to a single meaning which should

be inescapably derived from the text. The reader is thus positioned as a passive recipient rather than a reagent. In a readerly text, “the reader’s task is to follow the linear development of the story until the truth, presumed to lie *behind* the narrated events, is finally unfolded before him or her. Readerly texts thus reinforce cultural myths and ideologies which Barthes symbolizes through the term *doxa*⁴” (Allen 79). According to Barthes, writerly texts, on the other hand, abandon the sentential and linear order in a text and instead embody *paradoxa*. The reader of Barthes should participate in the writerly text and help it to be rewritten in the light of *paradoxa* and with the help of the reader: The text becomes a paradoxical text in a positive sense. Just as Barthes’s paradoxical text reminds us of Bakhtin’s ambivalence, his division of *writerly* and *readerly* texts and *doxa* and *paradoxa* can be associated with Bakhtin’s monologic and dialogic texts. As a result, although Bakhtin seems to have no tangible connection with intertextuality, his main concepts and ideas motivate the poststructuralists to conceptualize intertextuality.

Foucault and Culler

Apart from Kristeva and Barthes, two members of the *Tel Quel* group, namely Michel Foucault and Jonathan Culler need to be included here. The first reason why they are included together in the first part is that they contribute to the discussion of the subject and that their views on subjectivity are somewhat closer to Kristeva and Barthes, to the poststructuralists. The second reason is that they highlight the discursive, socio-cultural and the ideological aspect of intertextuality.

⁴ *Doxa* and *paradoxa* are two concepts coined by Barthes. *Doxa* suggests that there is a possibility of stable meaning and that there is a certain truth and a possibility of one-to-one correlation between the signified and the signifier whereas *paradoxa* is contrary to what is accepted as natural. *Paradoxa* signals the non-linear aspect of a text. Barthes values *paradoxa* over *doxa* (Allen 212, 216).

Within a discussion about the emergence of the subject instead of the monolithic author, it would be relevant to take a look at Michel Foucault's seminal essay "What is an Author?". In his essay, Foucault questions the meaning of author and the criteria for deciding who an author is actually. He claims that we can not talk about a monolithic author but rather "author-functions" since the author refers to "the existence of certain groups of discourse and refers to the status of this discourse within a society and culture" (Foucault 1628). These author-functions have become "objects of appropriation"; they are no longer great names (1628). Moreover, Foucault states that these author-functions present a plurality of subjectivity; the author-function "does not refer, purely and simply, to an actual individual insofar as it simultaneously gives rise to a variety of egos and to a series of subjective positions that individuals of any class may come to occupy" (Foucault 1631). It is this heteroglossia, the discursive practices and cultural bonds that bring Foucault closer to Kristeva and Barthes.

In addition to this plurality of author-functions that almost overlap with Barthes's death of the author and Kristeva's combination of subject, addressee and subject of utterance, Foucault introduces the concept of *fundamental authors*, "initiators of discursive practices", who influence and inspire their followers (1632). His two noteworthy examples for fundamental authors are Marx and Freud, whose theories manipulated many writers and compelled them to write. With his definition of "initiators of discursive practices" and thus his proposition of a kind of influence, he engages himself –whether consciously or unconsciously- with the theory of intertextuality.

In close connection with Foucault, the poststructuralist critic Johathan Culler comments on the idea of subjectivity. According to Culler, the author is simultaneously the reader, at least a reader of a previous text (Culler "Literary" 104). Therefore, he places the significance on the reader; yet Culler's reader should encompass what-he-calls "literary

competence” in which the reader can find his way through the text (Culler “Literary” 102). However, unlike the reader response critics, he opens up a possibility of meaning for the reader and liberates him. The reader should be able to convert linguistic signs into literary meanings and he should have a full understanding of discourses (Culler “Literary” 102). In other words, Culler’s reader should be well-equipped in order to reveal the cultural and discursive perspectives of the text.

In addition to the ambiguous division between the writer and the reader, like Foucault, Culler emphasizes the ideological aspect of a text and regards intertextuality as a means to dismantle the possible discourses embedded within a text:

‘Intertextuality’ thus has a double focus. On the one hand, it calls our attention to the importance of prior texts, insisting that the autonomy of texts is a misleading notion and that a work has the meaning it does only because certain things have previously been written. [...] Intertextuality thus becomes less a name for a work's relation to particular prior texts than a designation of its participation in the discursive space of a culture: the relationship between a text and the various languages or signifying practices of a culture and its relation to those texts which articulate for it the possibilities of that culture. The study of intertextuality is thus not the investigation of sources and influences as traditionally conceived; it casts its net wider to include anonymous discursive practices, codes whose origins are lost, that make possible the signifying practices of later texts. (Culler *The Pursuit* 114)

It is thus this “signifying practices of a culture” that makes intertextuality a more helpful tool to overthrow and display the ideological codes residing within a text.

Common to all the five theorists discussed above (Bakhtin-Kristeva-Barthes-Foucault-Culler) is their having moved towards a more post-structuralist approach. They have at least

dissociated themselves from the structuralist route since they emphasize plurality of meaning, subjectivity and authors and migrate from monolithic and unitary concepts. Within the theory of intertextuality, their views can be located in the subject category since they all accentuate the emergence or the domination of a subject, either as a reader or a writer. Even in Kristeva's divergent theory, which shuns from essentialism, there is the enunciation of the subject as a plurality. It is also possible to place those theorists in the context part, which will be briefly discussed in the part "From Historicity to Spatialization". From the analysis of the significance of the subject in the intertext, we could now move onto the reader response critics, who are inclined to see the subject from a structuralist perspective.

B) The Reader or the Text itself?

We have already differentiated between the subject as the reader and as the writer. However, the previous theorists, Bakhtin, Kristeva and Barthes, do not underline a clear-cut distinction between a reader and a writer and they treat "subjectivity" as a combination of both. Gérard Genette and Michael Riffaterre, on the other hand, are two reader response critics who underline the difference between the reader and the writer in their treatment of intertextuality. Since their approach towards the reader as a subject is quite different from that of the previous critics, there is an ambiguity about their categorization: they might either be placed under the heading "subjectivity" –but the subject as the reader- or under the second leg of my intertextual triangle, namely the text.

Genette

Taking on Levi-Strauss's definition of *bricoleur* for author and critic, Gérard Genette envisions a closed system in which the bricoleur creates a structure out of previous structures through rearrangement (Allen 96). According to Genette, literary works "are not original, unique, unitary wholes, but particular articulations (selections and combinations) of an enclosed system" (Allen 96). Like the former critics, Genette underlines the subjectivity and the precedence of the author and the critic; however his respect for the author and the critic is embedded in that closed system. According to Genette, during this rearrangement process, the author obscures the work's relation to the system and to the tradition since he takes some elements from pre-existent texts. However, it is the critic's duty to eradicate this obscurity that the author has engendered. The critic, then, is supposed to elucidate this ambiguity and restate the work into the tradition (Allen 96-7). In that way, the connection between the work and the system/the tradition is constantly being stabilized. This stabilization inevitably locates Genette within a structuralist framework.

On the other hand, when we look at Genette's definition of intertextuality, it is possible to realize his plurality of definitions. First of all, instead of intertextuality, Genette uses a broader term *transtextuality* or textual transcendence. Transtextuality involves "issues of imitation, transformation, the classification of types of discourse, along with the thematic, modal, generic and formal categories and categorizations of traditional poetics" and it has five sub-categories; namely intertextuality, metatextuality, architextuality, paratextuality and hypertextuality (Allen 100). Transtextuality is a broad term, which signals a single text that has any kind of relationship with other texts (Allen 101).

Adhering to the structuralist approach in *Palimpsests: literature in the second degree*, Genette defines intertextuality as "a relationship of copresence between two texts or among

several texts” and as “the actual presence of one text within another” (qtd. in Allen 101). Intertextuality can be divided into three more categories: citation, allusion and plagiarism (Morgan 266-7). Since this definition eliminates the cultural significations residing within a text and confines the text to the text itself, it negates the poststructuralist concept of intertextuality.

Among the other four sub-categories of Genette’s transtextuality, *metatextuality* represents the relation of one text to another through commentary. “It unites a given text to another, of which it speaks without necessarily citing it (without summoning it), in fact sometimes even without naming it” (qtd. in Allen 102). It involves literary criticism. *Architextuality* embodies the formal and structural aspects of a textual relationship; it is the study of literature in terms of formal categories such as genre and discourse (Allen 102). *Paratextuality* is made up of elements that direct the receptions of the reader. It is composed of the peritext (titles, chapter titles, preface) and the epitext (reviews, bibliography, interviews) (Allen 103). According to Genette, the paratext is the sum of the *peritext* (the inside of the text) and the *epitext* (the outside of the text). Therefore, he likens his paratext to Derrida’s ideas since the paratext indicates a place between the text and the non-text (Allen 103-4). However, in my opinion, his paratext also includes the editorial and the authorial intrusion, which contrasts with the post-structuralism’s notion of the play of the signifiers. Finally, the fifth sub-category that Genette uses is *hypertextuality*, which discloses “any relationship uniting a text B (*the hypertext*) to an earlier text A (*the hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not of commentary” (qtd. in Allen 107-8). Genette’s hypertext corresponds to the intertext of the other critics. Genette’s hypertextuality is closer to what the theorists of intertextuality have in mind. The reader’s main mission is revealed with hypertextuality since, according to Genette, the relationship between the hypotext and the hypertext would be meaningless if the reader does not have a full grasp of the hypotext; then

the intention of the hypertext will remain unnoticed (Allen 111). With the final stage, the hypertext, the reader bears a remarkable importance; he becomes the decisive trademark of the hypertext. According to Morgan, in Genette “the reader’s relationship to the text should be viewed not as an overdetermined hunt for the ghost intertext, but as a reasoning process of elimination and identification based on generic and discursive rules” (267). Moreover, Morgan states that although Genette’s theory seems to be structuralist, his division of sub-categories enables the text to embody a multiplicity of transtextuality. As an example, she posits Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* as embodying intertextuality –since it directly quotes from Hamlet-, metatextuality –since it criticizes hypotext at least from one perspective- and hypertextuality –since it uses the same generic structure of the hypotext (Morgan 269).

Riffaterre

What differentiates Michael Riffaterre from other theorists is his emphasis on the reader. As a reader response critic, he pays homage to the reader and it is not surprising that his definition of intertextuality stems from the reader: “An intertext is one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its overall significance” (Riffaterre 56). He marks a difference between intertextuality and an intertext: intertextuality is “the web of functions that constitutes and regulates the relationships between the text and the intertext” (Riffaterre 57). However, for Riffaterre, this paramount relation/interaction between the text (T1) and the intertext (T2) is achieved with the help of the interpretant (T3), whom he presents as his third and most important element of his triangle (Morgan 264).

Moreover, the intertext should be designed in such a way as to compel the reader to fill out the gaps to make the text understandable (Riffaterre 57). Therefore, for Riffaterre, the intertext is only a means to activate the reader, a tool which would pave the way for compulsory reader response criticism. He continues: “intertextuality enables the text to represent, at one and the same time, the following pairs of opposites [...]: convention and departures from it, tradition and novelty, sociolect and idiolect, the already said and its negation or transformation. [...] [I]t takes a whole text to compensate for the disappearance of the repressed intertext, and at the same time to transfer to that text [...] a significance issuing from the intertext” (76). It is almost as if the reader is the most crucial element so as to dismantle the presuppositions in a text for Riffaterre. In “Interpretation and Undecidability”, he states the significance of the reader as follows: “All that is needed for the text to function is the presupposition of the intertext. Certainly, presupposition itself cannot exist unless the reader is familiar with the structures organizing a representation of reality; but these are the very stuff of our linguistic competence” (qtd. in Allen 125-6). Naturally, Riffaterre’s reader must be equipped with literary competence just like Culler’s reader. However, the reader in Riffaterre is constantly guided by the text under strict control; while he fills in the gaps and solves the puzzle (Culler “Literary” 104). This lack of complete freedom and existence of a closed system solidifies Riffaterre’s structuralism as well.

Both Genette and Riffaterre illustrate the inclusion of the reader with the example of a triangle. For Riffaterre, the three points of the triangle are text, intertext and interpretant. With the help of this triangular model, he stresses the fact all those three aspects have close contact with each other. Since a triangle is a closed schema, every point has access to the other two points. Moreover, the interpretant enables this connection between the other two points, namely the text and intertext. For Genette, on the other hand, the triangle is composed

of a hypertext, hypotext and an interpretant. Though they use different names for the concepts, both Genette and Riffaterre reach the same point from different paths.

Despite the fact that both Genette and Riffaterre seem to be dealing with intertextuality from different aspects, there are two main points that they dwell upon. One of them is the reader, who is regarded as a necessary means of the intertext. However, their reader is different from that of Barthes since he/she is directed and guided by the text. This directed reader takes us to their second emphasis, to the text itself. The text, in the end, becomes the predominant structure in intertextuality as the reader would be meaningless without its guidance. Therefore, in spite of their emphasis on the reader, both Genette and Riffaterre base their ideas of intertextuality on the text itself and this separates them from the post-structuralists.

C) “Outside the Text”, Context or Bakhtin’s Exterior/Anterior Literary Corpus

In relation to intertextuality, the third aspect of this triangle is the cultural and the literary heritage that enables this intertextuality and rewriting. In the analysis of the exterior literary corpus, there are two possibilities of interpreting and classifying the cultural heritage. On the one hand, there is a more traditional and structuralist approach which regards the already-written as a positive concept as cultural heritage that helps the advancement of the future literature, that activates intertextual writing. On the other hand, there is a more poststructuralist and theoretical approach which sees this heritage as an ideological presupposition. This latter group of theorists coincides with the French post-structuralists, who regard intertextuality as inherently existing in the text.

Historicity and Filiation: Eliot and Bloom

This group of theorists usually tends to regard intertextuality as a sort of “historicity”, see the cultural heritage in a linear scope which contradicts the triangular aspect of intertextuality. Accentuating the father-son relationship in writing, these theorists, namely T.S. Eliot and Harold Bloom, drag intertextuality into a linear scope cutting its ties with spatialization.

In “Tradition and the Individual Talent”, T.S. Eliot proposes that there is an established literary history and tradition which must be acknowledged by future poets since “[n]o poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead” (Eliot 1093). Every new work of art should add something to the tradition and that every writer, in order to belong to the tradition, should adopt a more temporal and a historical approach that will make him aware of his place in the past and the present (Eliot 1093). This can be achieved through the depersonalization of the writer who will surrender himself to the tradition (Eliot 1094).

Regarding Eliot’s treatment of “filiation”, Morgan brings a more liberal aspect to the subject. According to Thais Morgan, Eliot favors the son in this relationship since he internalizes his ancestors: “Instead of using filiation to support the linear schema of literary history according to which the father is more worthy because closer to the origin than the son, Eliot reverses the implicit negativity of influence in favor of the son who acknowledges but also manipulates to his own ends the texts of his ‘ancestors’” (Morgan 242). It is Eliot’s example of the poet as a catalyst who dissolves in the midst of his own text and his emphasis of the existence of tradition that make us believe in the non-existence of the subject in the

sense that Kristeva and Barthes discuss. For Eliot, the anterior literary corpus and the literary tradition rather than the subject are foregrounded.

The second theorist who deals with filiation unlike Barthes, who sought to break apart from father-son relationship, is Harold Bloom. His two books *The Anxiety of Influence* and *A Map of Misreading*⁵ will make my point clear. In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom states that poetry and poets have always been influenced by their preceding examples and there is always a horror of contamination or “anxiety of influence”, as Bloom puts it, among them (Bloom *The Anxiety* xxiv). He believes that poets make history by what-he-calls “misreading” each other and the stronger poets (Bloom *The Anxiety* 5) and this misreading or “misprision” resembles a father-son relationship (*The Anxiety* 30). As soon as the new poets adopt this relationship and they acknowledge the stronger poets, they inevitably become “weaker” poets and slave to other poets (*The Anxiety* 29). In his discussion, he states:

Poetic Influence –when it involves two strong, authentic poets,- always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation. The history of fruitful poetic influence, which is to say the main tradition of Western poetry since the Renaissance, is a history of anxiety and self-saving caricature, of distortion, of perverse, willful revisionism without which modern poetry as such could not exist. (The Anxiety 30)

In other words, Bloom tends to regard this influence and “misinterpretation” as a more affirmative notion since it engenders a prolific literary future that depends upon a long history of tradition. In the interchapter, he extends this positive quality of influence:

Every poem is a misinterpretation of a parent poem. A poem is not an overcoming of anxiety, but is that anxiety. [...] Poetry is the anxiety of

⁵ Harold Bloom’s two books deal with poetry and poetic influence; yet they will provide a framework for my discussion of filiation and influence.

influence, is misprision, is a disciplined perverseness. Poetry is misunderstanding, misinterpretation, misalliance. [...] Influence is *Influenza* – an astral disease. If influence were health, who could write a poem? (*The Anxiety* 94-5)

In *The Anxiety of Influence*, he categorizes this process into six phases attributing them with definitions and concepts from ancient Greek. The first phase is called *clinamen*, poetic misreading in which the poet starts to move away from his precursor. The second phase is *tessera*, completion and antithesis. In *tessera*, the poet antithetically completes his precursor; he reads the parent poem; yet, he tries to make it mean something other than what is intended. In *kenosis*, the third phase, the poet strives to create a discontinuity with the parent by emptying out the precursor. *Daemonization* refers to a movement towards creating a more personal Counter-Sublime in opposition to the parent's Sublime. It is an urge to move beyond the precursor. In *askesis*, the poet abandons his creative and imaginative self and moves towards a self-purgation in order to detach himself from his ancestor. In the last phase, namely *apophrades*, which means return of the dead, a full circle is completed since the poem again is compared with the precursor. Thus, although the later poet has proved his capability, he is still an apprentice, a son in contrast to his master (*The Anxiety* 14-16).

In his later book on influence, *A Map of Misreading*, Bloom discusses poetic influence more generally and then moves onto specific examples from Anglo-American poetry. In close connection to the *apophrades* phase of influence and its making a full circle, he points out: [t]o live, the poet must *misinterpret* the father, by the crucial act of misprision, which is the re-writing of the father" (*A Map* 19). Thus, this necessity of rewriting can be associated with the final phase in poetic influence, which inevitably drags the poet to the father from whom the former sought to dissociate himself.

Apart from diminishing the identity of the new poet, Bloom highlights the significance of the earlier texts, which give meaning to the later examples as well. In relation to the cross-references among texts discussed by the earlier theorists, Bloom takes a similar stance:

All interpretation depends upon the antithetical relation between meanings, and not on the supposed relation between a text and its meaning. If no 'meaning' of a 'reading' intervenes between a text and yourself, then you start (even involuntarily) by making the text read itself. You are compelled to treat it as an interpretation of itself, but pragmatically this makes you expose the relation between its meaning and the meaning of other texts. (A Map 76)

Therefore, according to Bloom, even the reader himself is conditioned to establish a relation between a text and its anterior examples.

The reason why Bloom is included in this part is his emphasis on tradition. In the same manner as T.S. Eliot, he believes that the literary tradition and the heritage become crucial elements for the self-assertion of the new poet or the writer. Tradition is the vital thing for creation for Eliot and Bloom although their standpoints differ slightly from each other in terms of the new poet's handling of tradition. Bloom's comments on tradition seem to summarize what Eliot and Bloom share in common:

You cannot write or teach or think or even read without imitation, and what you imitate is what another person has done, that person's writing or teaching or thinking or reading. Your relation to what informs that person *is* tradition, for tradition is influence that extends past one generation, a carrying-over of influence. Tradition, the Latin *traditio*, is etymologically a handing-over or a giving-over, a delivery, a giving-up and so even a surrender or a betrayal. (A Map 32)

According to Culler, Bloom diverts our attention from the texts to the persons and the anterior texts. Unlike the French post-structuralists, intertextuality is no more a space where differing texts clash and encounter but a space of “heroic struggles between a sublime poet and his dominant predecessor” (Culler *The Pursuit* 119). As intertextuality is not any more a combination of texts and ideologies, Bloom detaches the term from the poststructuralist path. In addition to this, by announcing the possibility of tracing the origin and the existence of a single great precursor, Bloom directs intertextuality to a more psychoanalytic path, limits it to an oedipal relationship as he revitalizes and underscores filiation (Culler *The Pursuit* 122).

From Historicity to Spatialization

T.S. Eliot and Harold Bloom advocate historicity and tradition since they aspire to form/establish a more historical approach towards influence and intertextuality by revering tradition and the anterior literary corpus. However, the theory of intertextuality generated by the French poststructuralists involves a relinquishing of historicity and attempts to spread the term to a wider area, which will at least form a triangle breaking the linearity. Therefore, instead of stressing temporality, French post-structuralists are inclined to underline spatialization of texts, which heralds the amalgamation of previous and present texts.

In this last section, which focuses on the context, the other texts that create the intertext; the main focus is put on the traditional approach since it foregrounds the preceding texts as a necessary means for intertextuality. The second group, on the other hand, is inescapably connected to Kristeva and Bakhtin, who accept that intertextuality does inherently exist within a text. With the help of post-structuralists, Kristeva, Barthes and Culler, it is possible to move from historicity to a spatialization which liberates the text from a dyad. Even if not all the theorists use the triangle as a model, they at least seek to establish

their ideas on a plane rather than a dyad, anything that does not have two parts, but at least three.

In relation to Riffaterre and Genette's triangles, Kristeva's (S), (A) and (Sd) and Graham Allen's division of poststructuralists-structuralists-psychoanalytics, this paper has adopted a similar way of discussing the theory of intertextuality. It is this triangular model that marks Genette and Riffaterre as proposing closed systems and thus being structuralists. However, it is this same model, the triad that signals an endless play of signifiers and renounces linearity and binarism by creating the third space as intertextuality.

CHAPTER II

CHANGING AND CHALLENGING SHAKESPEARE: IDENTITY FORMATION AND THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF INTERTEXTUALITY

The previous chapter, having placed intertextuality on a triangular space, discussed that the post-structuralist critics particularly Kristeva and Culler foregrounded the ideological codes residing within a text and revealed intertextuality as a tool to dismantle/unravel those hierarchical positions. In addition to this, Kristeva announced the change from symbol to sign and the transposition of one subject to another. Thus, intertextuality provides a basis to eradicate the symbolization system and leaves the floor to an ongoing signification process. Likewise, in Shakespeare adaptations, it is not possible to have a single interpretation of Shakespeare. The adaptations and rewritings pave the way for a signification process in which different meanings and intermingled significations are revealed. As Jonathan Culler underscored the ideological codes residing within a text, it is possible to review these adaptations as unraveling the ideological codes and subverting them through “the enunciation of the speaking subject”. In many cases, “this speaking subject” comes forth as the victimized other.

In all the plays used in the thesis project, there is an overt emphasis on the speaking subject –on the enunciation of the “once-othered” subject- and on reclaiming identity. All plays use Shakespeare as a space where the playwrights can reveal their resistance and (re)construct their identity. Acknowledging the fact that all plays deal with the “enunciation of the subject”, we could gather the plays under the key term “identity formation”. Therefore, right from the beginning, the plays bear a political perspective since they resist the one-sided and biased perspective in Shakespeare’s plays.

In “Shakespeare as Minor Theatre”, Mark Fortier suggests that these adaptations make up a minor theatre as opposed to Shakespeare as a major playwright and paraphrasing from Deleuze, he states that “whereas major theatre represents and thereby helps to reproduce the relations of power in the dominant state apparatuses, minor theater operates by amputating, varying and subverting the structures of this theatre/state; minor theatre not only stops representing and reproducing dominant relations of power but also contributes to the becoming of a generalized ‘minor’ consciousness” (4). Therefore, this minor theatre created with the adaptations helps us to dismantle power relations within a state. Moreover, in their introduction Fischlin and Fortier suggest that all adaptation is inevitably a social and a political creation as it is related to the political dynamics of a culture (5-6).

In line with Fischlin and Fortier, Loomba and Orkin suggest that re-writing becomes a force on the demystification of the political agenda and serves the purpose of reconstructing the neglected identity/voice. In *Post-Colonial Shakespeares*, they write:

All of them [the re-workings] challenged the ‘meta-narratives’ (or dominant writings on philosophy, language, history, culture and aesthetics) that had excluded and marginalized the experience and cultures of the underprivileged—the lower classes and castes, women, colonized people, homosexuals and others. [...] The decentring of the human subject was important to all of them because such a subject had been theorized by European imperialist discourses as male and white. [...] They also paid new attention to language as a tool of domination and as a means of constructing identity. (2-3)

Therefore, the rewriting process encompasses a wide range of groups and these rewritings have so far sought to write the histories from the perspective of the silenced other. These plays can be considered as changing and challenging Shakespeare since they not only make

alterations in the Bard's text but challenge the ideology behind his mastery as well by revealing the angle of the silenced and victimized.

This chapter focuses upon the political aspect of intertextuality and rewriting as a form of resistance and reaction towards the dominant ideology. Moreover, it puts forth rewriting as becoming a tool for identity construction. It is made up of four parts in which six plays, namely "Harlem Duet", *Goodnight Desdemona*, "A Branch of the Blue Nile", "This Island's Mine", "Dogg's Hamlet" and "Cahoot's Macbeth", are discussed. Although all these plays bear multiple resistances, in each of them there is a single opposition which is foregrounded. In this chapter, there are four sections that include four excluded and marginalized groups that Loomba and Orkin discuss. These are the perspectives of women, of colonized people, of homosexuals. The fourth section analyzes how Shakespeare's language is subverted in order to draw our attention to the supremacy of his language. The first section discusses the feminist perspective in "Harlem Duet" and *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)*. The second part looks at the post-colonial tendency and the anti-racial perspective in Derek Walcott's play "A Branch of the Blue Nile". The third section analyzes the queer voice in Osment's "This Island's Mine". Finally, the last part focuses on the subversion of language in Stoppard's two complimentary plays, "Dogg's Hamlet" and "Cahoot's Macbeth".

A) Giving Voice to Shakespeare's Silenced Women in "Harlem Duet" and *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)*

In rewriting Shakespeare, two feminist Canadian playwrights, Djanet Sears and Ann-Marie MacDonald, re-vision the Bard's famous tragedies *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*. As Linda Burnett suggests, these two Canadian plays "Harlem Duet" and *Goodnight Desdemona*

offer a social and a political commentary and posit a space between “deconstructive postmodernism” and “constructive postcolonialism” (6). Djanet Sears’ play “Harlem Duet” (1997) is an Othello adaptation refocusing the race and gender issue in the contemporary world. Thus, it stands out as a post-colonial, anti-racial and feminist rewriting. Set in three different places in Harlem, in three different time spans and with three different couples, “Harlem Duet” recounts the story of Othello's former black wife, Billie, whom he abandons to marry Mona. The play opens with a prologue set in a house in Harlem in 1928 portraying a couple, Billie and Othello - referred to as “SHE” and “HE” throughout the play. They improvise a scene from Shakespeare's *Othello* with some changes in the text. Therefore, right from the beginning, “Harlem Duet” heralds its deconstructive and metatheatrical nature, which bolsters its defiant position as well. Apart from this acting couple, there is another black couple, ex-slaves, referred to as “HER” and “HIM”, who just gained their freedom in 1860 and are planning to flee to Canada. But, they cannot escape because “HIM” confesses that he cannot leave his white mistress. However, the main plot revolves around the third couple, Billie and Othello, who play the previous two couples as well, in an apartment at the corner of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X avenues in the 1990s. Their story takes place in their apartment from where Othello has already moved so as to start a new life with his fiancé, Mona.

In addition to this maze of multiple characters and plots, the play also reveals a multiplicity of resistances. In this complicated and intermingling plots, “Harlem Duet” elucidates that we cannot withstand the established canon with a monologic perspective. Therefore, in line with its multifariousness in plot and character, there is an entanglement of numerous resistances towards the canon, Shakespeare, dominant ideology, racism, patriarchy and Westernization. One of the main resistances of “Harlem Duet” deals with the racial issues of *Othello*. Trying to pass as a white and to be acknowledged by the white academy at

Columbia University, Sears' Othello is constantly reproached by his ex-wife Billie, who regards his engagement with Mona as a stepping stone to be admitted into the white community. Remembering a day when she sees Othello and Mona together, she says in a disillusioned tone: "Here, before me -his woman- all blonde hair and blonde legs. Her weight against his chest. His arm around her shoulders, his thumb resting on the gold of her hair. He's proud. You can see he's proud. He isn't just any Negro. He's special" (296). On the other hand, Othello substantiates his position as a passing by saying that his culture is Wordsworth and Shaw. Repudiating his African background and cultural heritage, Othello states: "I am not minor. I am not a minority. [...] I mean my culture is not my mother's culture –the culture of my ancestors. My culture is Wordsworth, Shaw, *Leave it to Beaver*, *Dirty Harry*" (305). A few lines later he continues: "I am an American. The slaves were freed over 130 years ago. In 1967 it was illegal for a Black to marry a White in sixteen states. [...] Things can change, Billie. I am not my skin. My skin is not me" (305). On the verge of their divorce, Billie and Othello constantly argue about racial issues. Fed up with the negligence of his colleagues at the faculty meetings, Othello wants to prove his "sameness" and his search for respect from the White community becomes more reasonable. Billie, on the other hand, fervently disagrees with the idea of seeing the Whites as the border to be crossed as well as with the idea of defining everything according to the perspective of White people.

Apart from the resistance to the racial issue, which prevails the first Act, the second Act of the play is mainly devoted to Billie's victimization by the patriarchy. Being abandoned by her father at the age of nine and now by Othello, Billie is presented as going through a nervous breakdown in the play. Moreover, when she learns that Othello cannot finance her studies -although she has financed him till he finished his Ph.D.-, her disappointment reaches a peak. At the times when she talks about her nightmares to her friends Amah and Magi, she claims to have two different memories of being left alone: being abandoned by the husband

and by the father (Sears 296). However, being a black woman, Billie has to undergo a double oppression and she will, thus, be further objectified. Making a clear-cut difference between White feminism and Black feminism, she fervently addresses Othello: “Your mother worked all her life. My mother worked, her mother worked... Most Black women have been working like mules since we arrived on this continent. Like mules. When White women were burning their bras, we were hired to hold their tits up. We looked after their homes, their children” (304). She stresses the fact that values and concepts are different for the white and the black women. Likewise, in the article “Relating to Privilege: Seduction and Rejection in the Subordination of White Woman and Women of Color”, Aida Hurtado marks the distinction made between the two groups of women who have unequal stances in a patriarchal society:

The definition of woman is constructed differently for white women and for women of Color. [...] White women are persuaded to become the partners of white men and are seduced into accepting a subservient role that meets the material needs of white men. As Audre Lorde describes it: ‘White women face the pitfall of being seduced into joining the oppressor under the pretense of sharing power. [...] For white women there is a wider range of pretended choices and rewards for identifying with patriarchal power and its tools. (Hurtado 142)

In “Harlem Duet”, the discrepancy between Billie and Mona as black and white women has been widened as Othello decides to divorce Billie for Mona. However, Mona in “Harlem Duet” is represented only as an off-stage voice and she has to wait outside the house while Othello and Billie suddenly start making love. Unaware of her victimization, Mona never appears as a flesh-and-blood character and just like Billie she fails to vindicate her subjectivity as well. At this point, it is apt to look at Hurtado’s quotation from an old Black woman to illustrate an example of the relationship between white man (Othello passing as a

white), white woman (Mona) and woman of color (Billie). In the quotation that Hurtado uses, woman of color is likened to white man's mule whereas white woman is his dog. In this relationship, woman of color does the heavy work whereas "the white woman is closer to the master and he pats them on the head and lets them sleep in the house, but he ain't gon't treat neither one like he was dealing with a person" (Hurtado 148). On the surface level, Mona can be regarded as the victorious woman, who has been loved and patted by the male master; yet by being objectified by Othello in "Harlem Duet" and victimized in Shakespeare's *Othello*, she is no less oppressed than Sears' Billie.

Furthermore, the fact that Billie's landlady, Magi, and her sister-in-law, Amah, provide a sisterly solidarity during her depression and that due to her depression she is labeled as "a mad woman in the attic" by the men around her strengthen the feminist aspect of the play. Using stereotypical images of patriarchal society, Sears draws attention to the feminist resistance residing within the play. In the end, finding no way out, Billie, finally, leaves her books and turns to alchemy to prepare a poison for Othello and Mona; however she ends up in a psychiatric hospital. Likewise, if we tend to read "Harlem Duet" as a prelude to *Othello*, then Desdemona's tragic end due to patriarchal oppression will not be that different from that of Billie.

Moreover, the fact that Billie actually represents two different characters reinforces the reader's confusion. In Sears' play, she is both Othello's first wife and the Egyptian sorceress mentioned in Shakespeare's play since Billie prepares a poisonous handkerchief for Mona. When referring to the handkerchief, which represents marital fidelity, Shakespeare's Othello says:

That handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give.

She was a charmer, and could almost read

The thoughts of people. (Act III. Scene iv 55-58)

A few lines further he continues:

'Tis true. There's magic in the web of it.

A sibyl that had numb'ered in the world

The sun to course two hundred compasses,

In her prophetic fury sewed the work;

The worms were hallowed that did breed the silk;

And it was dyed in mummy which the skillful

Conserved of maiden's hearts. (Act III Scene iv 69-75)

The fact that Billie gives up psychology and devotes her time to sorcery and to the preparation of the handkerchief enhances her shifting role in the play. Moreover, towards the end, it is revealed that her first name is "Sibyl", which bolsters her supernatural and occult power as a woman. As a result, she stands out as a character with two contrasting standpoints. She is both a woman victimized by her ex-husband and by her skin color and a sinister woman, who wants to take revenge from her husband⁶. With these double aspects, Billie embodies both virtue and vice and makes it impossible for her to be categorized by conventions and stereotypes. Her presence and her handkerchief foreshadow the tragic end of Shakespeare's Othello and Desdemona, which provides the link between Shakespeare and Sears; and her occultism and use of alchemy serve as a foil to dismantle the harsh reality of life and the academy.

Therefore, "Harlem Duet" does not solely stand out as embodiment of postmodern intertextuality but the post-colonial and feminist readings of the play and the quest for identity make it a political play as well. It heralds the death of Shakespeare as an icon and as the epitome of authority in Western literary tradition and beckons the reader to a more interactive

⁶ With her being both the first wife and the sorceress, Billie can also be likened to Lilith, Adam's first wife. In line with allusion to the Lilith myth, it is possible to talk about another intertextual reference in "Harlem Duet".

reading; as Barthes suggests it becomes a *writerly text* turning the reader into a *reagent of the text*. Thus, this rewriting of *Othello* is constantly produced; it is in “a process of being produced” -as Kristeva defines it- with the help of its many allusions to Shakespeare and other popular figures like O.J. Simpson.

MacDonald’s play *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)* (1988) deals with the tragic stories of three different women; however, the main plot revolves around Constance Ledbelly, an assistant professor at Queens University, who wants to prove that Shakespeare’s two tragedies *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet* are actually comedies. While pondering about these texts, Constance suddenly finds herself in the scenes of these plays, in Cyprus and Verona respectively. The play starts with a dumbshow in which the ends of three women, Constance, Desdemona and Juliet, are revealed (13). Thus, right from the beginning, the play hints that this is not going to be the story of Constance, but of three victimized women. In the rest of the play, Constance struggles to change the fates of Shakespeare’s women Desdemona and Juliet, who, however, accuse Constance of interfering with their lives. The play, then, turns into a comedy in which Desdemona is jealous of Constance since she thinks that Constance plans to seduce Othello and in which Juliet falls in love with Constance, who is disguised as a man, Constantine.

Being aware of the tragic stories of Desdemona and Juliet, Constance tries to change the course of the tragedies and her entrance into the Shakespeare world turns the tragedies into comedies. While she is reading her unfinished Ph.D. thesis aloud, two male characters from *Othello*, Othello and Iago, interrupt her and start reciting their lines (17). As she comes to the part about *Romeo and Juliet*, this time she is intruded by Tybalt and Mercutio (19). With this intrusion, MacDonald underscores the hegemony of patriarchy and its impact on Constance. Furthermore, when she goes to Cyprus and introduces herself, Desdemona,

Othello and Iago are surprised at the fact that she is such a learned lady and yet unmarried and they cannot grasp how a woman can stand alone without a husband (33). The fact that Constance writes articles for her lover Professor Night -who decides to go to Oxford for a position leaving Constance behind with her unfinished thesis- makes her another victim in the academic world. Learning that Professor Night will abandon her and go to Oxford with his undergraduate student Ramona -his new girl friend -, Constance is further disillusioned since she starts to believe in her academic incapability. Abandoned with an obscure thesis and no academic position, she laments the fact that she has written articles for Professor Night.

In the play, there are three women who are the victims of patriarchy. Having literary competence, MacDonald's reader obviously pinpoints Desdemona and Juliet as victims. Moreover, Constance's disillusionment both as a woman and as an academic is highlighted in the play. However, just like Sears' mute Mona, MacDonald has a fourth silent woman character who will supposedly be disappointed by the academy. Accepting the position provided by her professor and lover, the undergraduate student Ramona is unaware of the fact that she, like Constance, will probably be abandoned by Claude Night in the future. Though she appears only in a short scene where she looks for Professor Night, Ramona is also embedded in this victimization process to a considerable extent.

The women's victimization in *Goodnight Desdemona* is reinforced when, unlike the sisterly solidarity in "Harlem Duet", the women in MacDonald's play become antagonists for each other and jealous of each other. When Constance strives to change *Othello's* end telling Othello that Iago has actually hidden the handkerchief, Desdemona, supported by Iago, supposes that Constance wants to seduce her husband. Furious with envy, she plans to kill Constance with the help of Iago. When Constance wants to prove that Desdemona is enslaved by her husband, Desdemona answers: "Ay! Thou wast in thrall; ten years an inky slave in paper chains!" (40). Nevertheless, Constance's position does not change much when she

suddenly jumps into Verona trying to escape from Cyprus.

In the second part of the play, this time, Juliet accuses her of seducing her Romeo as she realizes that Constance is actually a woman, not Constantine. The fact that these four women do not support each other consolidates their unhappiness. Realizing that she is unable to change the fates of Desdemona and Juliet and changing Shakespeare's text into a comedy, Constance loses her self-confidence: "I've wrecked a masterpiece. I've ruined the play, I've turned Shakespeare's 'Othello' to a farce" (30). Thus, the reader encounters four submissive and dependent women throughout the play.

In addition to this, Constance's search for identity is another feature that would correspond to the feminist aspect of the play. During a conversation with Desdemona, Constance points out that she cannot leave Cyprus since she is assigned to find the real author of this play and her true identity by the academy (35). She ends her talk by grieving for being called "The Mouse" by her colleagues and her students. Being labeled as an "inky slave in chains" and "the mouse", Constance explains her stance in the male-dominated academy as follows:

It is quite dog eat dog. And scary too.
I've slaved for years to get my doctorate,
but in a field like mine that's so well trod,
you run the risk of contradicting men,
who've risen to the rank of sacred cow. (41)

Therefore, just like Sears' Othello, who is neglected in the white academy because he is a black man, Constance endeavors to find a place in the academy, yet becomes a plaything in the hands of Professor Night.

In line with the feminist perspective in the play, there is an emphasis on the volatility

of gender roles and cross dressing as well⁷. As she goes to Verona, Constance, disguised as a man, takes the pseudonym Constantine and appears attractive for both Romeo and Juliet. Tired with Romeo's fickle love, Juliet falls in love with Constantine without being aware of her husband's infatuation for the same man/woman. The fact that the couple falls in love with the same man triggers the disintegration of strict gender roles and heterosexuality, which is mostly associated with patriarchy. Juxtaposing "performativity" with constructed gender roles, Judith Butler states that gender is not a stable identity but it is rather constructed through performativity ("Performative" 415)⁸. In the play, by revealing other possibilities for gender, Romeo, Juliet and Constance break free from their clear-cut gender roles, "perform" their genders interchangeably and are liberated from the patriarchy.

However, at the end of the play, the three women speak up and assert their identity. For Constance, this is achieved through realizing her importance as the author of these plays and as an academician who proves and finally consummates her incomplete thesis project (85-6). Participating in the plays and turning them into comedies, she fulfils her mission and becomes a model of Kristeva's writer, who is the reader of another text. She is transformed from "the mouse" into "the author". Moreover, by including and merging different texts and characters such as *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Yorrick in *Hamlet*, Constance states that the text is under the influence of various texts and is constantly re-produced.

Moreover, as the writer of the new texts, Constance has an impact on Desdemona and Juliet making them recognize their subjectivity. According to Scott Trudell, "Constance's main reinterpretive role is to avoid the expected outcome of tragedies [...] and empower these women with some important nuggets of late-twentieth century wisdom. [...] She inspires a philosophical shift in Desdemona and Juliet opening their minds to theories of relativism and

⁷ The inclusion of the cross-dressing and volatility of gender roles reminds us of another allusion to Shakespeare. Since there is cross-dressing and cross-gendering in *The Twelfth Night*, there is also another intertextual reference to Shakespeare's another play.

⁸ Butler's theory of performativity and gender will be further discussed in accordance with Philip Osment's "This Island's Mine" in the third section of this chapter.

feminism and unlocking them for what they previously considered unavoidable destinies” (3). Thus, by helping these women vindicate themselves, Constance reinforces her subjectivity. Furthermore, according to Trudell, this transformation from tragedy to comedy has a function in the play. As comedy is the opposite of tragedy, the play becomes the opposite of patriarchy and this change serves the purpose of presenting a world different from the patriarchal system (2).

In addition to Constance’s power as a writer, it is also clear that both plays demonstrate examples of Elaine Showalter’s gynocriticism since they are written by women playwrights, namely Sears and MacDonald, and they are further re-written by the characters of the plays namely Billie and Constance. Drawing upon gynocriticism –literature written by women-, Toril Moi states that gynocriticism is very crucial in identity construction (“Sexual/Textual” 259). As she posits two positions for women –women as readers and women as writers, Moi claims that by becoming “writers” women have the advantages of vindicating their subjectivity. Likewise, in both plays, not the writers but also the main characters struggle to re-write their histories and prove their existence as a woman instead of being passive readers of a text.

Goodnight Desdemona thus reveals multiple transformations and using alchemy as a metaphor it turns texts into gold. With those transformations, the three women gain their emancipation and assert their subjectivity. Likewise, as Laurin Porter suggests, MacDonald also announces her independence from Shakespeare through resisting his patriarchal values:

MacDonald creates the fictitious Constance Ledbelly, and this story of a timid scholar reclaiming the authorship of her own life, appropriates the plots, characters, and very lines of Shakespeare, making them her own. She becomes, if you will, the “Judith” Shakespeare that never was. As she declares her independence from the Bard, she places her faith in sisterhood: the sisterhood

of Constance, Desdemona, and Juliet and that of contemporary women everywhere. (Porter 375)

In line with this idea of liberation in *Goodnight Desdemona*, Djanet Sears displays the sisterhood of all women –in terms of their victimization by patriarchy- in “Harlem Duet”. As Sears sets out to present the “backstage” of *Othello* with the abandoned black woman Billie, MacDonald has a bolder attitude to change the fates of Shakespeare’s women and her protagonist. While Constance proves her thesis and therefore gains a promising future in the academy, Billie, unfortunately, has to quit her academic career and no longer wishes to be a mother. Even the change in the genre –from tragedy to comedy- heralds this positive and optimistic end in *Goodnight Desdemona*. However, it is this dream world and world of illusions that slightly rescues both women from harsh reality and eases their burden. As Billie is engaged with the preparation of a poisonous potion, Constance takes refuge in that fictional dream world of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

Though both plays seem to have a single protagonist, Billie and Constance respectively, they beckon to other women characters who are striving to exist within the male-dominated system. Therefore, both plays display multiplicity of voices, which were once silenced, without suppressing none. By changing Shakespeare’s texts and giving voice to the silent women, Djanet Sears and Ann-Marie MacDonald challenge the established norms in Shakespeare’s plays and as women playwrights, they not only attempt to write their own texts but also allow their characters to re-write their stories and about their victimization.

B) Problematizing Race in “A Branch of the Blue Nile”

Apart from Shakespeare’s silenced women rewritten from different perspectives, there is also the racial issue that has been problematized in the reworkings of Shakespeare. Post-

colonial plays represent the othered perspective that was neglected during the colonial period and foregrounds the racial issue (Gilbert and Tompkins 108). Thus, one of the main aims of postcolonial (re)writing is the construction of identity since “[h]istorical reworkings of the European master historical narrative are not always concerned with construction of history *per se* but with constructing the self *in* history” (Gilbert and Tompkins 109). In her “Post-colonial Literatures and Counter-discourse”, Helen Tiffin states that all post-colonial cultures are hybridized⁹. Because they cannot completely disassemble the European discourses and form an indigenous culture, all post-colonial literature, inescapably, puts emphasis on re-reading and re-writing (95). Moreover, another reason why there is a popular emphasis on the racial problems in Shakespeare adaptations is that Shakespeare is an emblem for whiteness; he is “socially and even politically invested with a certain kind of white-skin privilege” (MacDonald, Joyce 194). Therefore, for the postcolonial writers who endeavor to rewrite their own perspective, it becomes inevitable to write about the racism.

The Caribbean poet and playwright Derek Walcott in his famous manifesto-like essay “What the Twilight Says” states that the West Indian writers are familiar with Western culture and literature; however he highlights the significance and necessity of establishing a West Indian theatre that has its own distinctive voice (4). Using twilight as a metaphor for the decolonization period –since the British Empire was the Empire in which “the sun never set”-, he points out that they should not only create a new form of theatre but its social environment as well (6).

Being acquainted with Shakespeare and with the consciousness of attaining an authentic voice, Walcott reworked on Shakespeare’s *Anthony and Cleopatra* underlining the racial issue and the problems of indigenous theatre. Focusing on 5 main characters -4 actors and a white director-, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” (1986) narrates the story of a theatre

⁹ The term hybridity is first used by Homi Bhabha.

company having difficulties and disadvantages in staging *Anthony and Cleopatra* in Trinidad. Tired with his monotonous life in England, the white director Harvey comes to Trinidad to try something new: to adapt Shakespeare to the Caribbean culture and to stage the play with Trinidadian actors. The play opens with Harvey's critical remarks on Sheila –the black actress who plays Cleopatra- and her Caribbean accent. When she complains that she cannot act the way he wants, Harvey asks her to act as though in real life, indicating her affair with Chris, the black actor playing Anthony (213). Throughout the play, being black and West Indian, Sheila and Chris experience all the drawbacks of playing Shakespeare. As Walcott states:

All revolutions begin amateurishly, with forged or stolen weapons, but the West Indian artist knew the need for revolt without knowing what weapons to use, and [...] there was in the sullen ambition of the West Indian actor a fear that he lacked the proper weapons, that his voice, colour and body were no match for the civilised concept of theatre. (Walcott "What" 18)

Therefore, in the play, as they lacked the proper weapons, both Sheila and Chris are consistently othered and mocked by the director and two other players. In the middle of rehearsals, Sheila bursts out: "I'm not a fucking queen, I'm not a celebrity; when you turn my name into mud it stays mud, and no magic in any theatre in the world can turn that mud into gold" (218).

The marginalization of Chris and Sheila can be likened to that of Anthony and Cleopatra. As Sheila is constantly left out due to her skin color and its disadvantages, Chris has a more respectable place in society since he has a white English wife and he appears as a passing. At the end of the play, just like Shakespeare's Anthony who returns to Octavia, he goes back to his white wife abandoning Sheila. He moves to England, opens a business and starts writing plays. On the other hand, abandoned by Chris and realizing that she has "too big lips to act Cleopatra", Sheila goes through a nervous breakdown and takes refuge in a

Catholic church. In this respect, the relationship between Sheila and Chris is analogous to Sears' Billie and Othello who confront similar problems. Just as Sheila retreats to a church, Billie finds solace in alchemy. Realizing that Chris will leave her and the theatre, she feels her desolation reach a peak: "I'm weak. Go pick up your wife. You go. Harvey go. I can't go, I have no money. I'm black. I'm a West Indian. Who needs a broke, black, West Indian actress over thirty?" (238). Besides its salient resistance to how the colonial perspective regarded race and body, the play also embodies multiple other resistances –towards patriarchy and capitalism- in Sheila's stance. When compared to Sears' "Harlem Duet", Sheila's victimization both by the patriarchy and the racist outlook is revealed. Therefore, Walcott's play –though it may seem to reflect a single perspective- stands out as an overtly political drama resisting the patriarchal and racist dogmas.

Making an analogy between Brecht's epic theatre and Walcott's distinctive post-colonial voice in theatre, Paula Burnett claims that his drama is an epic drama in that it is non-mimetic and it displays the vices of materialism (151-2). In addition to this, she underlines Walcott's challenging of history:

Proceeding from a lively awareness of the role of the grand narratives, which ignored the existence of communities like his own and portrayed the past in order to maintain the hegemonic center, he began from his earliest days as a dramatist to write alternative histories for his own people, reflecting different starting points, choices, and assumptions. This takes place within a developing critique challenging the value of history as discourse; he deconstructs the dominant account, replacing the grand narrative with a socially aware local alternative. (153)

In a similar manner, "A Branch of the Blue Nile" turns out to be a political play which replaces the grand narrative with a local perspective and which carries out a political

consciousness. In Kristeva's terms, it is a redistributive text both deconstructing Shakespeare and constructing a new and authentic West Indian theatre.

The second act of the play focuses on the new staging of the play after Sheila and Chris withdraw from the company. Since Sheila has retreated to the church, Marylin –the mulatta actress who is acclaimed by the director- takes Sheila's role. Although her acting is known to be mediocre as opposed to Sheila, she is appreciated by the newspaper critic, who criticizes Harvey for contaminating the Bard and for inserting local elements such as bananas into the text (268-269). The reviewer's only praise goes for Marylin. After receiving such harsh criticism, Harvey decides to dissolve the theatre and goes back to England offering a job at the theatre for Marylin. Losing her self-confidence, Sheila concludes that she has made the right choice by giving up her career as she will be more "suitable" in a church in Trinidad (284) and that Marylin, being a mulatta and thus having a superior stance in contrast to Sheila, will be more appropriate for Manhattan (288). Accentuating her feeling of easiness as a black woman in Trinidad, she says: " 'cause the Caroni isn't a branch of the river Nile, and Trinidad isn't Egypt, except at Carnival, so the world sniggers when I speak her lines, but not in a concrete church in Barataria" (285). Due to her fear of finding the right weapon, she withdraws from this battle and retreats to a safer place.

In relation to the post-colonial split subject, Walcott refuses this split identity and the inbetweenness of Caribbean people. Rather than taking this split subjectivity as a hindrance, he regards his acknowledgement of Western culture and the Caribbean culture as an affirmative position; therefore, he names the post-colonial subject a double identity rather than a split subject (MacDonald, Joyce 191). In line with this celebration of having access to both cultures, Stephen Breslow makes a comparison between Bakhtin's heteroglossia and "A Branch of the Blue Nile". He appreciates the polyphony and the heteroglossia of voices and discourses in the play. What he fervently praises is the blending of Shakespeare's language

with the local accent (390). This combination of two different languages and thus cultures celebrates multifariousness and becomes a living example of how to stage Shakespeare in the Caribbean.

Furthermore, this embracing of two cultures and seeing this idea of being double in a positive sense corresponds to the final scene of the play. Sheila visits the theatre after all the actors and the director have left it. The fact that she starts to exercise on the bare stage –even without the director or the actors- leaves us with an open-ended but an optimistic final. Dismantling her fear for acting, Sheila starts anew with “the stolen weapons”. This hopeful ending is as if Walcott is responding to the biased critic in the play who claims that one cannot adapt Shakespeare into the local culture. Impersonated as Harvey, Walcott resists the idea of Shakespeare as a symbol of whiteness and challenges Shakespeare’s theatre so as to create his own social, political and “double” theatre nourished by Shakespeare and the Caribbean culture. Therefore, his search for identity is reflected onto the Sheila character who strives to make her voice heard in a male-dominated, white theatre community and onto the other characters who attempt to “write” their identities.

C) The Queer Perspective in “This Island’s Mine”

In analyzing the queer perspective in “This Island’s Mine”, it is unavoidable not to mention the Gay Sweatshop theatre group and one of its chief founders, Philip Osment. The English gay playwright Philip Osment helped to found the Gay Sweatshop theatre group in London in 1975. The company first set out to encourage gay playwrights and actors to have their voices heard within a heterosexual society. Moreover, the company’s aim was to stage the gay and the lesbian perspective in theater and to show how suffocating it is to live in a

repressive society as a gay man¹⁰. However, bearing in the mind that Britain is a multicultural society, the company later attempted to address a larger community suffering in the conservative England (Fischlin “Introduction to ‘This Island’s Mine’” 255). Realizing their insistence on male homosexuality, the theatre group, in the later years, put more emphasis on women’s problems and the problems of other minority groups. With its emphasis on women’s emancipation and racial prejudice in England, Philip Osment’s play “This Island’s Mine” is designed to serve that purpose. The play was written for the Gay Festival in 1987¹¹. This date is significant both for the company’s turning its face to other minority groups and for the play’s becoming an emblem for resistance the oppressive Thatcher regime in England. The play is written right after Thatcher’s Local Government Act (section 28), which prevents “local councils from funding gay and lesbian organizations” as well as “any presentation of positive images of homosexuality in schools and any discussion of alternative living” (Fischlin “Introduction to ‘This Island’s Mine’” 255). Therefore, right from the beginning, Osment’s play is overtly political; written for a political purpose not only to challenge Shakespeare but also to react to the conservative Acts of the Thatcher government.

Set in London, “This Island’s Mine” revolves around many different characters. The play recounts the lives of different couples in snapshots and short scenes. Although the play displays four queer couples and a homophobic couple whose adolescent son is also queer, it also problematizes the race issue. The play starts with an adolescent called Luke, who –upon discovering his queerness- decides to escape from home to his gay uncle Martin. Later on, we learn that Martin is married to Marianne, who is a lesbian and has a relationship with Debbie. While Martin, Marianne and Debbie struggle to assert their queer identity, Debbie and Marianne also have to contest the patriarchal values. There is another gay couple, Mark and Selwyn, whose relationship starts to shatter when Mark is made redundant because of his

¹⁰ This is taken from http://www.aim25.ac.uk/cgi-bin/search2?coll_id=7091&inst_id=11

¹¹ *ibid*

queerness and when Selwyn is beaten on the street. At the end of the play, Selwyn breaks up with Mark when he learns that he has been having an affair with Martin's nephew Luke. Apart from Luke's parents, there is another straight couple, Marianne's father Stephen and Martin's landlady Miss Rosenblum, who has had an ex-marital affair during World War II. Unaware of Stephen's relationship with Miss Rosenblum, Marianne is shocked upon discovering his father's relationship with their black servant and his illegitimate black child Jody, whom Marianne grew up in the same house.

The play's link with Shakespeare's text is provided through the rehearsals of *The Tempest* in which Mark's black lover Selwyn plays the role of Caliban. While the company is rehearsing, the director interrupts the scene and disapproves of Selwyn's performance and expects him to display a coarse Caliban:

Director: Selwyn, darling,

 Caliban is a primitive

 He tried to rape Miranda,

 So don't try and give us the noble savage,

 It just won't work,

 It's an oversimplification

 It will destroy the balance of the play.

 Prospero is the hero,

 Not Caliban. (91)

Disillusioned by the director's remark and having an inferiority complex just like Walcott's Sheila, Selwyn sarcastically asks a rhetorical question: "Who is Selwyn to argue with England's greatest playwright?" (91). Selwyn questions his capability as a black actor and just like Walcott's Sheila, he has the fear that he lacks the proper weapons to perform on a Western stage.

By depicting a gay and a black Caliban, Osment reverses the ready-made roles and challenges Shakespeare's text. Although Selwyn corresponds to Caliban, there is a problem of no one-to-one correlation between other characters of *The Tempest* and "This Island's Mine". First of all, it is possible to correspond Selwyn's lover Mark to Prospero since in their relationship Mark is white and he has the upper-hand and at the end of the play he betrays Selwyn with Luke. However, the Prospero of "This Island's Mine" can also be Stephen, Marianne's father, who is a capitalist businessman selling AIDS-infected blood to Third World countries. When we think of Shakespeare's Prospero as a colonizer, then his association with Stephen would be apt. If we take Stephen as the Prospero of the play, then Marianne can be associated with Miranda as well. However, keeping in mind that Mark can also be the merciless Prospero will challenge Shakespeare's heterosexuality with its implications on the homosexuality/homoeroticism between Prospero and Caliban. Likewise, Shakespeare's Miranda has two different reflections in the play. Miranda of "This Island's Mine" can either be Marianne since she is Stephen's daughter or Martin's landlady Miss Rosenblum, who likes Miranda and quotes her lines during the play.

Despite the fact that the play is written as a medium for people to speak up, there is an apparent underscoring of the queer aspect in the play. Accentuating the difference between queer theory and gay/lesbian theories, Jagose defines queer theory as "a zone of possibilities" that problematizes strict gender divisions (2-3). Disrupting these strict gender divisions, Osment attempts to highlight the contingent and provisional nature of gender that is independent of social pressure. With the help of variety of straight people, gay and lesbians and bisexuals, his play becomes a battleground where established gender roles are challenged. In line with Osment, Monique Wittig says that if we believe in gender as a biologically determined subject rather than a historical and political category, then we imprison man and woman into strict categories making change impossible (250). Thus, blurring gender

distinctions and emphasizing the provisionality of gender gives us the volatility/possibility to challenge and subvert the status-quo.

Elaborating on Wittig's essay "One Is Not Born a Woman", Judith Butler theorizes that gender is a political and a historical category; it is a repetitive act ("Performative" 415). We actually are not born as women but we become one by repeating the normal acts. She infers that all gender acts are actually performative acts, which are punished when people deviate from their assigned roles ("Performative" 417). Butler's idea of associating gender with performative acts can be detected in the metatheatrical aspect of the play and in the self-referentiality of the characters.¹² Besides Selwyn's acting career, the characters in the play speak about themselves as a third person, narrate their actions and introduce themselves as strangers:

Mark: Mark Leigh, the assistant chef, proud of his work, glad of the job, passes the man, says goodnight. (87)

[...]

Luke: [...] [Luke] passes over the make-up and the necklaces and reaches right to the back where his mother hides her brother's letters. (88)

It is as though they further their alienation from the play. Although characters seem to assert their identity in their own particular ways, they use the pronoun "I" very rarely.

Furthering her discussion about performativity of gender, Butler claims that this recognition of social construction of gender has made us verbalize that "the personal is political". Since gender represents a personal category and it is linked with socio-cultural norms and therefore politics, any gender act may be considered as a political act (Butler "Performative" 418). Likewise, in "This Island's Mine" re-claiming identity –the feminist

¹² This is also prevalent in MacDonald's *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* in which Constance makes us question the socially constructed gender roles with her cross-dressing. This idea of gender as performativity provides a link between both plays.

struggle of Marianne, Selwyn's victimization as a black man in a white society and Luke's emancipation from heterosexual bonds- is related to a political resistance.

Quoting from Wittig, Butler suggests that realization of difference drives people into compulsory heterosexuality; heterosexuality is put forth as an "ontological necessity" (Butler "Variations" 151). Likewise, Mark and Selwyn's relationship disintegrates when they are alienated from heterosexual society and when Mark starts to realize Selwyn's blackness:

Mark: Mark can see it now -the first time they made love, the shock he'd felt when their bodies first made contact; fair skin against dark skin, their legs intertwined looking down at their bellies touching. The stark contrast. [...] Catching a glimpse of the two of them in the mirror – not just man with man but black with white as well. (100-101)

Butler concludes that resistance to distinct sexual categories and differentiations urges us to reread texts and rewrite history, "to offer alternative descriptions and prescriptions; indeed, to establish philosophy as a cultural practice, and to criticize its tenets from marginalized cultural locations" ("Performative" 425). Later on, she suggests that we should also get rid of "the dyadic understanding of gender", which corresponds to Kristeva's notion of abandoning dyads and her sketch of a triangular model of intertextuality and rewriting which I have discussed in the previous chapter ("Variations" 156).

"This Island's Mine" ends with Selwyn's decision to go to his hometown and live with his mother as he thinks that he will be less oppressed in a black community than in London. His return to his homeland can be interpreted as his assertion of black identity. As the title of the play suggests, by going back home to his mother, Selwyn/Caliban points out Caliban's famous tirade: "This island's mine by Sycorax my mother". On the other hand, according to Fischlin and Fortier, the title of the play might underline Osment's reclaiming his own island, England, rather than a post-colonial or a Caribbean island. In the 1980s the US had already

become an imperial oppressor in the world and England had become its tool (Fischlin “Introduction to ‘This Island’s Mine’” 255). Therefore, Osment might be both reacting to his island’s becoming colonized by the US and resisting the conservative government of his island. His emphasis on the possession of the island accentuates his stance as a gay man and his being a part of this island just like Caliban’s possessing the island as the colonized. Therefore, in addition to Selwyn, Osment also becomes the second Caliban of “This Island’s Mine” with his challenge of Shakespeare and of gender roles during the Thatcher regime.

D) Subversion of Language in Stoppard’s “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth”

In contrast to the resistances of Sears, MacDonald, Walcott and Osment, the British playwright Tom Stoppard’s resistance to Shakespeare is not a post-colonial or a feminist resistance. One of the realms that Stoppard might oppose will definitely be the language of Shakespeare as the Bard is Stoppard’s fellow countryman and linguistic predecessor. Known for his familiarity with Shakespeare and with his enthusiasm for Shakespeare adaptations, Stoppard could, under no circumstances, be excluded from this thesis project. Starting with his first Shakespeare adaptation *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* in 1960s, Stoppard reveals his enthusiasm and admiration for Shakespeare. In the 1990s, however, with his film adaptation of the play and with *Shakespeare in Love*, he carried the adaptations and re-visions of the Bard to a different medium.

His two short complimentary plays “Dogg’s Hamlet, Cahoot’s Macbeth” are written as manifestations of both a resistance to Shakespeare and an admiration for his linguistic capacity. The two plays can be read either as two separate plays with distinctive plots (*Dogg’s Hamlet* and *Cahoot’s Macbeth*) or as two acts of a single play and entitled as *Dogg’s Hamlet, Cahoot’s Macbeth*. In the introduction to the plays, Stoppard writes: “the comma that divides

Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth also serves to unite two plays which have common elements: the first is hardly a play at all without the second, which cannot be performed without the first" (141).

The first play, or the first act of "Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth" recounts the story of a high school production of *Hamlet*. "Dogg's Hamlet" opens with the two students Abel and Baker who prepare the stage for their play. Influenced by German philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, Stoppard writes "Dogg's Hamlet" in 1971 for the opening ceremony for Almost Free Theatre. He later incorporated his play *15-Minute Hamlet* into "Dogg's Hamlet" and revised the text during the end of the 1970s (Levenson 163).

In *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein explores the ways we attribute meaning to words. In terms of meaning and language, he uses the slogan "the Meaning is the Use" (White 228). He believes that meaning changes when we use it within a context. Moreover, in line with this contingent nature of meaning, he points out that language is a living organism and we, as the users of that language, should discover the life in that organism (Peursen 77). Our ordinary language pervades our life and creates "a mental cramp" (Peursen 78). If meaning is a means to immobilize our mental capacity, then we should enlarge our understanding of meaning; or in Wittgenstein's words "we [should] extend our concept of number as in spinning a thread we twist fibre on fibre. And the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres" (Wittgenstein qtd. in White 231). Taking fibre and thread as metaphor for building up meaning, Wittgenstein stresses that there is no single meaning but meaning is revitalized and re-positioned with the help of social usage and interweaving. In addition to that, he introduces the term "language game", which means that the speakers of language understand the context behind the word uttered and grasp the purpose of using that word. For

instance, he uses the word “hammer” as an example of language game. If a person utters “hammer”, his addressee clearly understands his purpose of saying hammer (e.g. whether s/he asks the addressee to give him/her the hammer or whether the person asks a question about what happened to the hammer) in relation to the social context they are sharing (Hartnack 66). In each case, there is a certain agreement or a shared past experiences between the speaker and the addressee. In connection with his “language game”, Wittgenstein states that there are so many similarities and overlappings between words and meanings, which stem from the “family resemblances” between words (White 231). According to Wittgenstein, just like family members, who are all distinctive individuals but share common properties and features, the words share similar characteristics and we attribute the same name to two related things. For instance, the word “red” refers to different but related things when we refer to “red apples” and “a red couch”. Therefore, between a red apple and a red couch, there is a “family resemblance” which the speakers/participants of “the language game” can grasp.

In his introduction to the play, Stoppard writes that he has been influenced by Wittgenstein’s example of two men constructing a platform with planks, slabs, blocks and cubes. As the first man says these four words successively, the second man throws him these four objects one by one. Stoppard explains that we immediately assume that these four words mean plank, slab, block and cube. However, he puts a forth another possible interpretation for this construction scene. He presumes the existence of another language in which these four words may have the meanings “Ready”, “Okay”, “Next” and “Thank you” respectively. Moreover, both men might previously know the order in which the objects should be thrown and placed. Thus, he further hypothesizes that two workers might share a common knowledge and might be building the platform according to this order regardless of these words uttered (141-2).

Therefore, fascinated by this contingent nature of language and the possibility of using language games, Stoppard deconstructs our established notion of language and creates a new language called Dogg in “Dogg’s Hamlet”. The play opens with Abel and Baker who design the scene for their play and the play takes place in a school where the headmaster is a man called Dogg and all people speak the Dogg language. At the beginning of the play, since all characters speak an unfamiliar language, the words uttered seem completely meaningless though they are all English words¹³. For instance, at the beginning, Abel checks the microphone and says: “Breakfast, breakfast... sun-dock-trog...”, which means “testing, testing... one-two-three...” (143). Although all the words uttered by Abel are familiar to the audience, the reader cannot attribute new meanings to those words and make up a language game since s/he is not engaged in the Dogg language and s/he does not share the same past experiences with the speakers of Dogg. After having defamiliarized the audience with Dogg and distancing the reader, the play relieves the reader when the students start rehearsing *Hamlet*. As the rehearsal begins, the actors start to speak Shakespeare’s language in English but as the stage directions inform us: “They are not acting these lines at all, merely uttering them, tonelessly” (150). Furthermore, throughout their rehearsals, we realize that the students have difficulty in pronouncing Shakespeare, using his accent and constructing the sentences as Shakespeare is foreign to them. The fact that they are almost apathetic to Shakespeare and English reiterates the audience’s alienation from the play. However, the reader’s discomfort is lessened to a certain extent as the lorry driver Easy arrives with his blocks to build a platform on the stage. As Easy cannot grasp Dogg, he has a predicament: how to communicate with the students. He experiences the same detachment that the reader is going through. The disagreement between the students and Easy is resolved when the headmaster Dogg gives each party a list of the order of materials to be thrown. Therefore, looking at his list, Easy

¹³ For the reader’s convenience the meanings of the words are in brackets. However, for the audience present in the theatre there is more difficulty in getting used to the Dogg language.

utters “plank, slab, block and cube” and the Dogg-speaking students throw him the necessary objects according to their lists (153-154). As they continue, we realize that Easy starts getting used to Dogg; in Wittgenstein’s terms Easy is liberated from a mental cramp and tries to enlarge his capacity of meaning. In this particular scene, the construction of the platform is symbolic as it alludes to the construction of new meanings in language and it shows that two groups of people with different languages can still communicate with each other. In relation to constructing a platform and a language, Saussure also draws our attention to the arbitrariness of language and of the bond between the signifier and the signified and to the naturalness of constructing a language (267). This is only achieved when people are enthusiastic to break free from the constructions of language and accept it as a play of signifiers in a Derridian sense. In attributing meaning to words, we should get rid of a one-to-one correspondence between the signifier and the signified and regard “the fibres as continuously overlapping and interweaving with each other”.

As the construction of the platform ends, the students start playing “15-minute *Hamlet*” uttering only the most famous quotes from Shakespeare’s play. Using the familiar quotes and leaving out all the other lines might suggest that Shakespeare’s language can still be understandable for the reader when shortened. With his abbreviated form of *Hamlet* and making Shakespeare obscure, Stoppard reveals another possibility in staging Shakespeare, who is familiar for a great majority of people. He then devises a plan in which Shakespeare is indecipherable for a group of people whose language cannot be grasped by the others. This time, there is a role reversal since it is the audience, who is othered, when Dogg language sounds incomprehensible.

Finally, as the students perform their “15-minute Hamlet”, Easy closes the curtain and thanks the audience for their applause. The fact that Easy says “Cube”, which means “Thank you” in Dogg, in the final scene highlights the fact that even Easy is accustomed to Dogg

language and now shares the same linguistic background with the Dogg-speakers. Just like Easy, Stoppard too has the advantage of accessing different languages. Sharing the same linguistic background with the Bard and having migrated from Czechoslovakia, Stoppard builds up his own platform to bridge the gap between sixteenth century and contemporary readers.

The second play “Cahoot’s *Macbeth*” (1977) is dedicated to the Czechoslovakian communist playwright Pavel Kohout, who was later forbidden by the communist regime and expelled to Austria in 1970s. After that, he wrote a letter to Stoppard complaining about his banishment and sharing his plans to stage *Macbeth* in a living room with five actors and with almost no props at all (Jenkins 155-6). Receiving Kohout’s letter and wishing to share his isolation, Stoppard ventures to write Cahoot’s version of *Macbeth* staged in a living room with five actors. Just as “Dogg’s *Hamlet*”, “Cahoot’s *Macbeth*” is also a 15-Minute *Macbeth* including famous and remarkable lines from Shakespeare’s play. Although the play opens with three witches as in *Macbeth*, the reader realizes that it is not Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* but actually a production of *Macbeth* when the play is interrupted by the Inspector, who hears that Cahoot is secretly staging a play (185). As the Inspector intervenes, the fictionality of the stage, which is in fact a living room, and the characters are revealed. Obstructing the flow of the play, the Inspector prohibits the group from performing since they are “acting without authority” (188) and threatens to imprison them for “acting out of hostility to the state” (193).

As the Inspector partially agrees that the players could continue their rehearsals, the lorry driver Easy from “Dogg’s *Hamlet*” arrives with his blocks in order to build a platform on the stage (197). As Easy is the single character who appears in both plays, he provides the link between the two plays and for the audience who watches “Cahoot’s *Macbeth*” as a second act. He provides a familiarity and relief for the spectator -just as he does in the “Dogg’s *Hamlet*”. However, as Easy starts to speak, the reader is further alienated since Easy

speaks in Dogg. Together with the players, the reader, for the second time, attempts to acknowledge and grasp Dogg language. Although all the actors and Cahoot have difficulty in understanding Easy, gradually Easy and the actors start to communicate with the help of gestures and sign language. Firstly, it is the hostess who begins understanding Dogg and translates what Easy says. However, even she confuses the two languages and uses Dogg words: “He’s got a two-ton artichoke¹⁴ out there. I mean a lorry” (205). As all the actors and Cahoot start speaking Dogg, the Inspector suspects that there is a secret code that he has to decipher in this language. However, refusing to accommodate himself to Dogg and widening his distance from Cahoot and the players, he fails to learn Dogg and goes mad. In a mood of madness, he desperately asks Cahoot where he can learn Dogg and Cahoot responds: “You don’t learn it, you catch it” (206).

However, the subversion in those two plays reaches a peak as the actors start reciting *Macbeth* in Dogg language. Through the end of the play, Lady Macbeth suddenly says: “Ash-loving pell-mell on. Fairly buses gone Arabia nettle-rash old icicles nun. Oh oh oh... [Here’s the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand]” (207). Thus, this 15-Minute *Macbeth* continues with the famous lines translated into Dogg and ends with the Inspector, who desperately tries to report these secret codes to his officers on the phone. However, since he fails to discover “the family resemblances”, he cannot get rid of his “mental cramp”. As the Inspector serves as a foil to disclose the hegemonic aspect of language, all the characters in the play stand out as being emancipated from the strains of language.

Therefore, by incorporating Dogg language into the Bard’s language, Stoppard ventures to resist Shakespeare’s language and beckons the reader to liberate himself from his/her mental cramp. He underlines the fact that there are other possibilities of thinking and

¹⁴ Artichoke means lorry in Dogg language.

giving meaning to words. Thus, in Stoppard's "Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth", subversion of language and the resistance to Shakespeare are provided by attributing different meanings and creating a new language called Dogg.

When the plays are generally taken into account, we see that all playwrights seek to reflect their marginalization in their re-workings of Shakespeare from different perspectives. In rewriting Shakespeare, they provide a basis for themselves to construct their identities and to rewrite their own stories and became individual writers. As Kristeva suggests, the enunciation of the speaking subject becomes a crucial element in intertextuality and rewriting. In line with Kristeva's speaking subject, all five dramatists not only challenged Shakespeare's authority as an author but also attempt to gain a space/make their voices heard with the help of their victimized characters or other tools they used. Therefore, rewriting Shakespeare in these six plays connotes a political stance, the political aspect of intertextuality in which identity construction is foregrounded.

CHAPTER III

POSTMODERNIST TENDENCIES: MULTIPLICITY AND THE DIFFUSION OF ESSENTIALISM AND CANONIZATION

The previous chapter underlines the significance of giving voice to the silenced other, to the marginalized groups. All the theories about rewriting and even the idea of rewriting itself are all counter-discursive, stating the exact reversal of the rewritten work. However, all those counter-discourses have one shortcoming: the possibility of becoming essentialist while defying the essentialist notions and supporting the exact opposite. For those adaptations, there is a danger of becoming canonical while rejecting Shakespeare as the canon. In order to avoid the margin to become the center and the mainstream, postmodernist theory helps us to avoid building up new constructions. One of the theorists of postmodernism, Linda Hutcheon, explains this contribution of postmodernism as follows:

The single concept of “otherness” has associations of binarity, hierarchy, and supplementarity that postmodern theory and practice seem to want to reject in favor of a more plural and deprivileging concept of difference and the ex-centric. Postmodernist discourses –either those by women, Afro-Americans, natives, ethnics, gays, and so on, or those provoked by their stands – try to avoid the trap of reversing and valorizing the other, of making the margin into a center, a move that many have seen as a danger for deconstruction’s privileging of writing and absence over speech and presence or for some feminisms’ gynocentralizing of a monolithic concept of Woman as other than Man. Postmodern difference is always plural and provisional. (65)

Thus, Hutcheon regards postmodernism almost as a savior for any totalizing and universalizing thought.

In line with Hutcheon, the father of postmodernism Jean François Lyotard defines postmodernism as “an incredulity towards metanarratives”, as “denial of any totalizing thought” (Best 165). Rejecting the Grand Narratives of history and literature, postmodernism beckons intertextuality, plurality, de-centered self and fragmentation. Decentering the theories of history, it challenges unity, continuity and authority (Hutcheon 57). Postmodernism then denies the solace of good forms (Gregson 11). While all the theories that emerged in the twentieth century give voice to the silenced other such as women, homosexuals and the colonized, postmodernism stands out as a movement that shuns the construction of new essential models. It is a life-saving device that diffuses the homogenizing of the reversal voice.

Juxtaposing those reverse voices with that of postmodernism, Linda Hutcheon suggests that if we accept the existence of one possible world -a different version from the well-known one, then we should also acknowledge the endless possibility of other alternative worlds because “historical plurality replaces atemporal eternal essence” (Hutcheon 58). Therefore, starting from this plurality of postmodernism, we could conclude that all those rewritings discussed in the previous chapter posit another alternative world to us. By acknowledging them as alternative, we could be aware of the endless possibility of other alternatives. With the help of postmodern devices, those six plays shun from being new essentials or “canon-to-be” models. Rejecting as the canon, they avoid becoming the mainstream.

In her discussion about postmodern theatre, Patricia Pavis agrees with Roland Barthes’s division of the work and the text (48-50). In the classical understanding of the work, the work is ideological and it is a linear text. However, she believes that the text is a modern

and a postmodern concept. In addition to that, Barthes's text is a writerly text paving the way for multiple readings and interpretations (51). She furthers that the text in the modern sense "open up the dramatic text up to theatretical experimentation without separating the reading of the text, the discovery of its meaning, and the stage translation that would explain the pre-existent textual meaning. The text is maintained as an object of questioning, the workings of codes, rather than a series of situations and allusions to a subtext which the spectator ought to feel" (59-60). Likewise, the plays discussed in the previous chapter are all postmodern plays or have postmodernist tendencies, which paves the way for their questioning of the canon as Pavis suggests. Finally, this third chapter focuses upon the postmodern devices such as multiplicity of both time and space and of resistances and subjectivities, as well as metatheatrical devices operating within the plays. Those postmodern devices contribute to the emancipation of the adaptations from becoming new canons. If Chapter 2 can be summarized with the key word "CHALLENGE", then the key word for this chapter would be "MULTIPLICITY". In this chapter, there will be four parts. In the first part, there is a discussion of the multiple time and space in the plays. The next part focuses on the multiple resistances that the plays display. The third part dwells upon multiple subjectivities; including the writer and the reader as Kristeva points out. Finally, the last part discusses metatheatre as a form of multiple acting.

A) Multiplicity of Time and Space

Since postmodernism emphasizes spatiality and synchronicity rather than temporality and diachronicism, we could definitely acknowledge disruptions in single space and diachronic time span as postmodern tools. As plurality of different time spans and spaces reverse our established conception of unitary time and space, they contribute to the subversive

strategy of the rewritings as well. With the help of flashbacks and the disintegration of time and space, the plays break free from the continuous and paralyzed narrative and pave the way for postmodernism. Although Shakespeare did not strictly apply the Aristotelian rule of single space and time in his tragedies –which means that he also subverts the concept of classical tragedy, the notion of plurality of time and space in the contemporary adaptations takes us to a very modern/postmodern area since -unlike Shakespeare’s defiance of unitary time and space- the contemporary playwrights play with the time variations among different ages.

The disruption of time and space in “Harlem Duet”, *Goodnight Desdemona*, “A Branch of the Blue Nile”, “This Island’s Mine” and “Dogg’s Hamlet, Cahoot’s Macbeth” start with the idea of rewriting. Since all the plays are contemporary adaptations of Shakespeare, they have to deal with two different time spans, namely that of Shakespeare and our age. Therefore, right from the beginning they bring forth two different periods and spaces shattering the singularity of time and space. The plays put forth this concept and open it to questioning especially in the mind of the reader who has to form a link between Shakespeare’s time and the contemporary world. The reader then should be endowed with literary competence to be acquainted the intertextual plays as Jonathan Culler suggests.

Sears’ “Harlem Duet” takes place in three different time spans –in 1860, in 1928 and present- and in three different places in Harlem. In those three different periods, we are presented with three different couples –played by the same actor (Othello) and the actress (Billie). In each household, the audience faces the black problem in America. According to Peter Dickinson, each period is significant in America’s black history. According to him, 1860 signals the eve of American Civil War and the couple (HER and HIM) plan to flee to Canada in order to escape from the slavery problem. Likewise, 1928 underlines the peak of Harlem Renaissance and the couple (SHE and HE) rehearsing *Othello* cannot shun from

discussing the racial debate though they are enclosed within a room in Harlem (Dickinson 3). As long as they rehearse *Othello*, they are inevitably involved in the discussions about race. In the contemporary scenes, Billie and Othello argue about race as well.

In addition to that, in MacDonald's *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)* there are three different time spans and places as well. Although the play starts at the Queens University in Canada in 1990s, the protagonist Constance Ledbelly jumps into the scenes of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*; into 1603 in Cyprus and into 1623¹⁵ in Verona. Moreover, the play opens with a dumbshow in which the tragic ends of three women are displayed simultaneously. On a stage divided into three parts, Desdemona is murdered by Othello; Juliet stabs herself on seeing Romeo dead and Constance takes her thesis and leaves her office. Therefore, from the opening, *Goodnight Desdemona* underlines the fact that there is the possibility of juxtaposing three women belonging to different time spans. Therefore, we can conclude that there is also a postmodern emphasis on spatiality rather than temporality as it is space -rather than time- that brings three women together. Furthermore, in the prologue and epilogue parts, the chorus gives a speech on the advantages of alchemy, on bringing together. It ends its speech in the epilogue as such: "where mingling and unmingling opposites performs a wondrous feat of alchemy, and spins grey matter, into precious gold" (87).

Philip Osment's "This Island's Mine" also takes place in 1990s; however with the help of flashback technique, it gives references to World War II and the gay movement in 1960s. As Miss Rosenblum remembers her ex-marital relationship with Stephen, we are presented with Stephen's visits to Miss Rosenblum in London. Likewise, as Martin remembers his disagreement with his sister and her husband, we are taken to the gay movement in 1960s in

¹⁵ These dates signify the years that Shakespeare wrote those two tragedies.

London where Martin realizes his sexual inclination and remembers the time when he sees the sister and the husband at the park. Those three different time spans have significance in the queer perspective of the play just like in “Harlem Duet”. As the homophobic and capitalist Stephen starts a lucrative business after World War II, the park scenes in 1960s highlight the emergence of gay movement in 1960s. In line with multiple time spans, the play occurs in different places. Although the events mainly take place in London, with Marianne’s childhood memories we are placed in America; we move to Germany and St. Petersburg with Miss Rosenblum’s childhood memories and her escape from Germany as a Jewish girl. Moreover, since Marianne’s half-sister Jody works in an unnamed third-world country, we are also narrated about her struggle with disease-infected people in that country.

Unlike the three plays discussed above, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” and Stoppard’s “Dogg’s Hamlet, Cahoot’s Macbeth” plays do not have references to other places and times as explicitly as the former three plays do. However, since the idea of metatheatre and role-playing in Walcott’s and Stoppard’s plays are foregrounded, they are also engaged in dealing with more-than-one time and space as they keep alluding to Shakespeare’s plays. Moreover, in “Cahoot’s Macbeth” the references to Czechoslovakian director Pavel Kohout carry the play to a third space. Therefore, all the plays discussed refer to multiple time spans and places with their rewriting processes and their quality of alluding to more than one space and time liberates them from being monolithic narratives and contributes to their way of resistance.

B) Multiple Resistances

The previous chapter has focused upon the points of resistance in each one of the plays. In four different subtitles and theories, namely feminism, post-colonial theory, queer

theory and the subversion of language, six plays “Harlem Duet”, *Goodnight Desdemona*, “A Branch of the Blue Nile”, “This Island’s Mine”, “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth” are analyzed. However, since all the plays avoid constructing new counter-myths while subverting the Shakespeare myth, they also hold back from stressing a single point of resistance. Despite their explicit point of resistances discussed in Chapter 2, each play problematizes other issues as well.

In the part about feminist theory, this paper analyzes “Harlem Duet” and *Goodnight Desdemona*. However, “Harlem Duet” does not solely resist upon Billie’s victimization as a woman but, as Peter Dickinson suggests, by occurring in three significant dates in the history of black movement in America, it also resists against the racial debate. The race issue is foregrounded when Othello appears as a man who makes a choice between his black wife and the white Desdemona. The play is almost a pre-*Othello* which elucidates black Othello’s life before marrying white Desdemona and this link with Shakespeare further consolidates the anti-racial resistance. Moreover, the play also defies the race problem in academia. Emphasizing that black/minority groups are marginalized in the white academic world, “Harlem Duet” wants us to recognize Othello’s situation as a black man in a white world. As Billie accuses Othello of passing as a white, he declares the difficulty he has to go through at the university:

It’s implied... No-one at school tells me I don’t know how to do my job... it’s implied. I’ll be at a faculty meeting, I’ll make a suggestion and it’ll be ignored. Not five minutes later, someone else will make the exact same suggestion and everyone will agree to it. Mona noticed it too. They think I’m only there because I’m Black. I’ve tested it. [...] Every day I have to prove to them that I can do my job. I feel that an error I make only goes to prove them right. (299)

Therefore, resistance against the white academy stands out as another point of resistance apart from the feminist and black resistances.

In line with “Harlem Duet”, in MacDonald’s play *Goodnight Desdemona (Good morning Juliet)* there is an emphasis on Constance’s victimization in the male-dominated academy. Being a woman, she is not acknowledged as a professor and she has to struggle to have her thesis approved. Only when she realizes that she has proved her thesis at the end of the play, she gains her self-confidence as an academician. Furthermore, in connection with the feminist aspect of the play, *Goodnight Desdemona* also draws our attention to the volatility of gender roles and to gender-crossing. As Constance is disguised as Constantine in Verona, the gender roles blur and the play reveals the strict division of gender roles and the suffocating aspect of heterosexuality.

Walcott’s “A Branch of the Blue Nile” is analyzed within a postcolonial perspective in the previous chapter. However, just like the former two examples, Walcott’s play, also invalidates a single point of resistance. With Sheila’s remarks on being both a black Trinidadian and a woman, the play is situated within a feminist perspective as well. Upon learning that Chris is returning back to his wife, her victimization as a woman is furthered. She utters to Chris with fury:

Fuck Cleopatra! My name is Sheila Harris and I came here like a shy little mamapoule because you said that I had it, and now I’ve found it. And you’re going back to your wife before it gets too dark, back to your big house and your mad, white, English wife. What am I going back to? Why leave? Sheila Harris is a typist. To leave her here to go for a drive with a responsible married man for a surreptitious fuck in the Chagacabana Motel? (236)

It is then through her victimization as a woman we become aware of the feminist aspect of the play. She experiences a double oppression as a Trinidadian black woman trying to play Shakespeare with her big lips not good enough to articulate the British accent. In line with the postcolonial and feminist resistances of the play, Walcott's play also frequently mentions the language barrier. Being born as Trinidadian actors and actresses, the players of the theatre company have the most difficulty in neutralizing their accents and adapting Shakespeare's language. The end of the play is rather optimistic as Sheila finally decides to return to theatre despite her inferiority complex as a Trinidadian actress. It is also Walcott's theory that he devises a new theatre that is deprived of the Western acting methods. Therefore, in addition to its resistances to colonialism in the Caribbean and to the oppression of women, "A Branch of the Blue Nile" also brings forth the problem of language and a new West Indian acting method diminishing Shakespeare's supremacy in the Western theatre.

"This Island's Mine" also displays a multiplicity of resistances besides its queer perspective. As Mark and Martin are othered in London since they are gays, Selwyn, Marianne and Debbie are further marginalized because of their race and gender. Being a black gay, Selwyn is beaten to death in the street and his depression cannot be grasped by his lover Mark. Likewise, as a lesbian couple, Debbie and Marianne experience harsher social criticism. Therefore, juxtaposing the othered perspectives in the play, Osment does not see queer problem as a monolithic, self-standing concept but links this resistance to other oppressed groups. According to him, all the counter-discourses are somehow related to each other in terms of going through victimization. His resistance to Shakespeare is mainly based on heterosexuality; however he connects this opposition to other realms. Criticizing the director in the play, Osment advocates that Shakespeare can be staged as liberated from binary oppositions. As Selwyn tries to perform a different Caliban, the director warns him to

display a black and a crude Caliban in order to be loyal to Shakespeare. Therefore, Osment also resists the white Shakespeare and his white theatre in the Western stage. Moreover, Osment also struggles against capitalism. Depicting Stephen as a mercenary, capitalist businessman, namely the Prospero of “This Island’s Mine”, he locates Stephen against the oppressed minority groups such as Selwyn and Marianne; the victims of compulsory heterosexuality and patriarchy.

Although Stoppard’s resistance to Shakespeare is manifold, his resistance is mainly based on subversion of language in “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth”. First of all, through the insertion of the political exile Pavel Kohout as the director in “Cahoot’s Macbeth”, Stoppard attempts to write a deliberately political play. Secondly, his desire to stage Shakespeare with minimum actors, minimum props and only with the remarkable quotations in both plays strengthens his urge to stage an experimental Shakespeare. It is his resistance to have school boys act Shakespeare only with a platform in “Dogg’s Hamlet” and to stage *Macbeth* in a living-room theatre. Finally, Stoppard also defies the authority of Shakespeare as an author. Incorporating different writers and directors and translating his language into Dogg, Stoppard alienates the Bard from contemporary audience underlining that his authority is not the only access to his plays any more. He accentuates the fact that Shakespeare can also be staged in different variations.

C) Multiple Subjectivities

When discussing the postmodern theory, we should be aware of the fact that unlike structuralist theories postmodern theory shatters all the essentialist and monolithic concepts. In the discussion of intertextuality, the first chapter focuses upon the three legs of a triangle in

which one leg corresponds to the reader. As discussed in the first chapter, according to Riffaterre, the reader is the most crucial element since the intertext activates the reader and forces him/her to compulsory reader response. Agreeing with Culler on the necessity of literary competence, Riffaterre believes that the reader should be well-equipped so that they could be guided by the text and establish a link between the pre-text and the intertext. Likewise, Gerard Genette, another Reader Response theorist, underlines the fact that the author obscures the work's bond with the system whereas the critic/the reader restores the work/the intertext back into the tradition. Therefore, the reader response theorists discussed in the first chapter incorporate the reader as a significant tool in intertextuality and rewriting since they function as establishing a connection with the previous works.

In line with Riffaterre and Genette, Roland Barthes does announce the birth of the reader in contemporary theory. Heralding the death of author as a monolithic concept, Barthes foregrounds the reader as an active participant of a text. Moreover, as Foucault furthers Barthes's argument of the death of the author, he states that the author is not made up of a single theological name but of multiple author functions. He furthers argues that those author functions give rise to a series of subject positions.

Therefore, almost all theorists of intertextuality acknowledge the writer as sharing his fictional authority with the reader and the critic and as paving the way for multiple subjectivities. Despite the fact that the reader response theorists regard the reader as having a function within the intertext or as guided by the text itself, they even accept another subjectivity/point of view other than the author within the text. Even if their theory is a closed system, is structuralist in the sense that everything is determined by the text, the fact that they recognize the reader is revolutionary as they include a second subjectivity into the text.

In close connection with Barthes and Reader Response theorists, the poststructuralists Kristeva and Culler acknowledge multiple subjectivities in intertexts as well. Blurring the

distinction between the reader and the writer, Jonathan Culler regards the writer as the reader of a previous text; thus highlighting the simultaneity of the reader and the writer. Likewise, for Kristeva, there is no clear-cut division between the multiple subjectivities of a text. The speaking subject in the text is the combination of the addressee (A), the subject of enunciation (Sr) and the subject of utterance (Sd). Therefore, the subject in intertextuality is inevitably a multiple entity.

Furthermore, theatre as a genre necessitates multiple interpreters/readers as well. Apart from the playwright and the audience of a dramatic text, there are two possible readers, namely the actor who interprets the character and the director who gives a new shape to the text. As each interpreter designs the text differently, the dramatic text ends up with having multiple perspectives and thus various texts are re-created. Thus, unlike fiction or poetry, drama inherently involves multiple subjectivities, which coincides with Kristeva's notion of text as productivity since the text is constantly re-produced. In addition to that, in a dramatic text, there are other elements such as props, costumes and lighting effects which reinforce its dependence upon multiple factors. Therefore, drama is inherently a postmodern and an intertextual genre in which different factors and multiple subjectivities are juxtaposed.

Therefore, Shakespeare rewritings in drama embody different subjectivities both because -as intertextual reworkings- they include the reader/the critic and because -as dramatic rewritings- they are inevitably re-created as each "writer" rewrites his/her own text. Likewise, in "Harlem Duet", *Goodnight Desdemona*, "A Branch of the Blue Nile", "This Island's Mine" and "Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth" discussed there is an overt emphasis on multiple subjectivities. In addition to the stress on multiple subjectivities and on the different writers of the text, the plays also deny a one-to-one correspondence between the characters of the earlier text and its contemporary version. Thus, there is also an emphasis on the multiplicity of characters/characterization as well. For instance, although different writers

and subjectivities are not dominating factors in “Harlem Duet”; the fact that Billie attains subjectivity as a black woman –in addition to Djanet Sears who asserts her subjectivity as a black woman writer in a male-dominated environment- is a crucial point of the play. Moreover, when compared to *Othello*, she corresponds to two different characters of Shakespeare’s play. She can be either Othello’s first wife or the Egyptian sorceress who prepares the handkerchief for Othello’s family. Therefore, she is either a victimized woman whom her husband abandoned for a white woman or a vicious woman longing for revenge. She is trapped in an angel or evil woman figure, embracing and defying both.

In MacDonald’s *Goodnight Desdemona*, however, the multiplicity of writers reaches a peak point. First of all, on the first page there is an announcement for the reader: “This book is dedicated to you, gentle reader”. By including the reader, MacDonald shows her due respect to her reader right from the beginning and gives us the hint that this book will actually be a product of the reader as well. Therefore, she accepts the fact that this text will be guided by the reader who will be incorporated as the sixth writer of this play. Moreover, in the introduction to the play, the director Banuta Rubess accentuates the lack of a single omnipotent writer or character: “There is no one actor who plays merely the spectator or the stooge. Neither is there a star; even though Constance is definitely the lead character, all other parts are equally balanced and work together throughout every scene” (8-9).

In *Goodnight Desdemona*, there are six “writers” who want to underline their subject positions within the play. As MacDonald tries to posit her authority distancing herself from Shakespeare, she unavoidably foregrounds Shakespeare as another writer since she gives quotations from his plays. Apart from Shakespeare and MacDonald, Constance Ledbelly appears as the third writer of the play. Looking for the unnamed Author and the Gustav manuscript, which will help her prove her thesis, Constance seems to efface her competence

as a writer. However, as her dependence on outside sources and writers enlarges, we become aware that those outside sources and writers will be instrumental in proving her thesis and her subjectivity as a writer in the academia. Therefore, despite her implicit meekness and vulnerability, she appears as one of the writers of the text rewriting the ends of Shakespeare's two tragedies. In addition to that, Desdemona and Juliet stand out as competent writers of the play since they also contribute to the rewriting of *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Finally, the sixth writer of *Goodnight Desdemona* appears as the reader who, as Riffaterre suggests, forms that necessary link with the past texts and draws out the meaning with his literary competence. Therefore, by including six different "writers", MacDonald's play exemplifies a combination of different subjectivities and Foucault's author-functions. Those writers are both dispersed and interwoven. On finding out that she is real author, Constance closes the play with the following quatrain:

For those who have eyes to see:
Take care- for what you see, just might be thee.
Where two plus one adds up to one, not three.
Goodnight Desdemona. Good morning Juliet. (86)

Just as she sums it up, all those six different subjectivities can be gathered under the group "writer" as they are rewriting the text. Moreover, as the characters of three plays, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Goodnight Desdemona*, meet in Act 3 Scene 8, they make a unity. It is the reason why Constance calculates that two plus one adds up to one.

Likewise, in "A Branch of the Blue Nile", Derek Walcott shares his fictional authority with Harvey and Chris and thus shatters the monolithic idea of an Author-God. In Walcott's play, there are four different texts and writers; thus in Kristeva's terms the text is a productivity and the subject is in a process. Apart from Shakespeare and Walcott, there are

two other writers of the play. Localizing Shakespeare and staging his version of *Anthony and Cleopatra*, the British director Harvey rewrites the text and becomes another writer. Furthermore, as we later learn that Chris writes a play called “A Branch of the Blue Nile” makes us doubt about the real writer of the play. Therefore, rewriting a Trinidadian version of Shakespeare’s play and naming it as “A Branch of the Blue Nile”, Derek Walcott appears as both Harvey and Chris impersonated as two of the characters of his own play. With the help of Harvey and Chris, Walcott hands in his authority and is willing to share his text with other writers. Moreover, Walcott further opens his play and subjectivity to criticism. By inserting a critic who criticizes Harvey for degenerating the Bard and ruining his play, Walcott reveals his self-critical aspect. As Harvey is harshly castigated for using bananas and other local elements in the play, Walcott’s association with Harvey is highlighted and Walcott writes a self-critical play about his rewriting of Shakespeare as well. In Kristeva’s terms, this is *an affirmative negativity*. Walcott nullifies himself to a zero degree so as to create a new plural identity. However, it should also be noted that in order to reveal such intricate interweaving of writers and characters, the reader turns out to be a competent writer who finds out the relationships as well.

Besides the multiple writers of the play, the characters/actors experience different characterizations. For instance, when we think of the actress playing Sheila, we realize that she has to display different subjectivities. She is the actress playing Sheila, who is an actress playing Cleopatra. Thus, she has to re-write the text and adjust it according to Sheila who re-writes the text and presents a local version of Cleopatra. Therefore, there is a double rewriting in each character, which further underlines the proliferation of writers.

In the same manner, the disintegration of a single author is also manifest in “This Island’s Mine”. Distinguished by short scenes and lack of a central character, Osment’s play

is distinctively postmodern diffusing all the characters and subject positions. As discussed in the previous chapter, there is no protagonist in the play; but a multiplicity of many characters, none of whom stand out as a centralizing figure. Even Miss Rosenblum's cat Vladimir has his own subjectivity and narrates the events from his point of view: "So Vladimir sleeps at the top of the house, till he hears below the sound of Miss Rosenblum opening a tin. The dream forgotten, wide awake, he scampers almost skittishly down the stairs to his food dish, leaving the ghost alone in her chair" (93).

In line with the multiple perspectives in the play, there is a plurality of writers as well. In the play, there are again four writers, namely Shakespeare, Osment, the director who stages *The Tempest* and Selwyn who performs his version of Caliban and displays a good native. During the rehearsals, the clash between different "texts" and "writers" is revealed as the director asks Selwyn to perform a cruder and a savage Caliban. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 2, there is no one-to-one correlation between Shakespeare's characters and Osment's. Repudiating any fixated characterization, Philip Osment reveals that Prospero might correspond to Mark and Stephen whereas Miranda to Marianne or Miss Rosenblum. Likewise, Caliban can be associated either with Selwyn or with Osment, who reclaims his island and wants to have it cleansed from neo-imperial powers.

The multiplicity of writers is the second most important element in Tom Stoppard's "Dogg's Hamlet" and "Cahoot's Macbeth" as well. Despite their resistance to Shakespeare's language, the plays also deny the Bard as the ultimate authorial figure with their heterogeneity of writers. In "Dogg's Hamlet", Shakespeare¹⁶ and Stoppard are the two apparent writer figures. Apart from Shakespeare and Stoppard, the headmaster Dogg is the writer and the director of "15- Minute Hamlet". Moreover, his stance as a writer is reinforced as he plays the

¹⁶ As Dogg's "15-Minute Hamlet" gives us a shortened version of *Hamlet* with direct quotations from the play, Shakespeare is definitely acknowledged as a writer in "Dogg's Hamlet". Without his *Hamlet*, there will not be a play called "15-Minute Hamlet".

main role Hamlet and re-interprets the text as another reader/writer. In addition to that, the lorry driver Easy is a symbolic reader and writer as well. Unable to communicate in Dogg, Easy has difficulty in understanding the Dogg language and has to translate and interpret the new language. However, as the translator of Shakespeare and Dogg language, his authorship is sanctioned since he rewrites the language during translation. At the end as he closes the curtain and thanks the audience in Dogg, he is incorporated in the play and as the decoder of Dogg, he appears as another writer figure as well.

When we consider the readers of the play as the writers, we encounter two types of readers/writers. In “Dogg’s Hamlet”, there is a remarkable difference between the reader of the text and the audience of the play. Since Stoppard gives the English translations of Dogg words in brackets, the reader of “Dogg’s Hamlet” is smoothly included in the text and his “writing” process starts. However, the same cannot be claimed about the spectator of “Dogg’s Hamlet”. Inaccessible to the English translations, the spectator will have much more difficulty in understanding the play. His connection with the play depends on gestures and visual effects; for instance the scene where Easy and the students build up the platform will be helpful in getting into the Dogg language. Thus, in addition to the multiple writers of the play, the “readers” of “Dogg’s Hamlet” respond to the play in two different ways and therefore their “writing”/interpretation will differ as well.

Likewise, in “Cahoot’s Macbeth”, there is a plurality of “writers” and “subjects”. Apart from Stoppard and Shakespeare, the director Cahoot and the actors stand out as possible interpreters of the play. For instance, since Cahoot chooses to cut some of the scenes from *Macbeth* and presents his version of Shakespeare with minimum prop and characters, the title of the play is “Cahoot’s Macbeth”, not Stoppard’s. Furthermore, another writer figure in the play is the single reader/audience of the play, namely the Inspector. As he interrupts the

rehearsals, the hostess and the actor Macbeth kindly utters that this rehearsal is not open to public and requests him to leave (188). Being infuriated by their remarks, he declares his supremacy as a reader:

INSPECTOR: (To 'Macbeth') Now listen, you stupid bastard, you'd better get rid of the idea that there's a special *Macbeth* which you do when I'm not around, and some other *Macbeth* for when I *am* around which isn't worth doing [...] because if I walk out of this show I take it with me. (188)

Indicating his significance as a reader, the Inspector heralds the reader's becoming a crucial figure in a text and a writer of the text.

Therefore, agreeing with Riffaterre, Genette and Barthes on the significance of the reader in intertextuality and agreeing with Kristeva and Culler on the inseparable nature of reader and writer, the Inspector underlines the significance of the reader.

D) Metatheatre: Multiple Acting

Metafiction/metatheatre could be posited as another device of postmodernism. According to Patricia Waugh, "metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (2). Reminding us the fictionality of fiction, metafiction resists the clear-cut boundary between reality and fiction. Thus, it can also be considered a tool for resistance. It helps us to understand to world as artifice, it enacts social criticism (Waugh 9). In addition to that, it deconstructs the idea of an author as begetting a text since it undermines the writer's capacity shattering the illusionary aspect of a work.

According to Patricia Waugh, metafiction has a double aim. First, it shatters the fictionality of fiction offering a different version of reality. Moreover, it casts doubts on the author as an omnipotent element in fiction. It also “converts what it sees as the negative values of outworn literary conventions into the basis of a potentially constructive social criticism” (11). Therefore, when we look from that perspective, it is possible to regard metafiction as a subversive tool revealing the fictional world and offering an alternative to it. Thus, the use of metatheatres in the plays can be analyzed as one of the subversive strategies mentioned in Chapter 2.

However, there is also a possibility of regarding metafiction as a postmodern entity as well. For instance, in his “Introduction” to *Metafiction*, Mark Currie draws our attention to the close link between intertextuality and metafiction since they both signal the artificiality of fiction (4). Thus, self-referentiality of intertextuality and metatheatres liberate the texts from becoming another canon by emphasizing their literariness. Likewise, accentuating the significance of reader in metafiction, Waugh incorporates the reader –another subjectivity– into the text, which contributes to the disintegration of a single subjectivity. According to Waugh, “[t]o be successfully decoded, [...] experimental fiction of any variety requires an audience which is itself self-conscious about its linguistic practices” (64). With the help of familiar texts, the reader can attain recognition and can be freed from the hegemony of earlier texts (Waugh 67). In line with Barthes and Riffaterre, Waugh underlines the significance of the reader. Finally, in order to display the postmodern tendency of metafiction, we can also depend upon Waugh’s theory of open-endedness of metafiction. According to Waugh, in metafiction the reader is never comforted with the assurance of an ending; metafiction resists closure paving the way for endless possibility of fictionality. Differentiating between formulaic fictions and metafiction, she writes: “The reader is offered the temporary consolation of a release from contingency: the comfort of a total ‘sense of an ending’.

However, metafiction always simultaneously undermines such satisfactions and thereby reminds the reader of the necessarily, but not always apparent, selective restriction of *any* ‘formulation’” (82). Thus, it is this resistance towards formulations that makes us categorize metafiction as a postmodern concept. Moreover, the fact that metatheatre presents the reader/audience with multiple acting showing different possibilities of acting makes it a postmodern concept as well.

In Shakespeare adaptations, there is a double aim of using metatheatre as well. The use of metatheatrical devices such as play-within-play and role-playing in the plays draws our attentions to the fictionality of Shakespeare diminishing his authority. In that respect, the metatheatrical devices function as subversive strategies. On the other hand, it is well-known that Shakespeare also uses metatheatre frequently in his plays. In that respect, metatheatre in the plays can be said to be providing a link with Shakespeare. Likewise, in all the plays, metatheatrical devices appear as dominating factors.

Metatheatre used in “Harlem Duet” is provided through the rehearsals of the couple in 1928. The play opens with their prologue when they are rehearsing *Othello* (289). It is both a prologue of “Harlem Duet” since they are talking about a white woman and SHE is asking questions about that woman and a rehearsal of a modernized version of Shakespeare’s play. Therefore, the play reveals its metafictional aspect right from the beginning. Despite the fact that those metatheatrical scenes occur only in four scenes of the play, they have a distinctive significance in that they provide a link with Shakespeare and reveal Shakespeare’s and Sears’ fictionality as well. Moreover, the fact that HE changes the Bard’s text as he performs it highlights the concept of rewriting. As HE rewrites *Othello*, the reader recognizes the self-referentiality of Sears’ text as a rewriting of Shakespeare’s play.

Just like “Harlem Duet”, *Goodnight Desdemona* starts with a dumbshow revealing its metatheatrical aspect. Involving characters from two of Shakespeare’s plays and MacDonald’s play, the dumbshow embodies the metatheatrical aspect of both Shakespeare and MacDonald. Therefore, the metatheatrical aspect in *Goodnight Desdemona* functions as a connecting bond. In addition to that, there is also the blurring of fiction and fact in the play. As the characters from *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet* jump into Constance’s office in Act 1 Scene 1 and in Act 3 Scene 1, Constance moves into Verona and Cyprus. This interaction of fictional characters –Shakespeare’s characters– and Constance underlines the metatheatrical elements and makes us question the reality of Constance as a fictional character of MacDonald. Finally, there is also an emphasis on role-playing. As the characters change their costumes and genders, Constance suddenly turns to the audience and utters “I speak in blank verse like the characters: unrhymed iambic pentameter” (38). Therefore, in MacDonald’s play, the metatheatrical aspect plays a crucial role as well, both deconstructing Shakespeare and MacDonald –through self-referentiality and forming a bond with the Bard through role-playing, cross-dressing and the dumbshow.

Walcott’s “A Branch of the Blue Nile” has an overt emphasis on metatheatricality since the play revolves around a theatre company staging *Anthony and Cleopatra*. Foregrounding Shakespeare’s play and its Trinidadian adaptation by an English director, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” is a manifestation of self-referentiality. As the critic criticizes Harvey’s play for ruining Shakespeare’s culture, the reader questions whether Walcott has deliberately inserted the critic into the play so as to be approved for his Trinidadian adaptation. As the play they are staging is itself an adaptation, “A Branch of the Blue Nile” both deconstructs Shakespeare by changing his text and delegitimizes itself by including criticism for localizing Shakespeare.

In addition to that, the fact that the continuity of fiction and narrative is constantly disrupted with the help of rehearsals is another element of metatheatre and the postmodernist tendency.

In “This Island’s Mine”, just like in Walcott’s play, Selwyn is playing the role of Caliban and has a dispute with the director. Those staging scenes and the disagreement between Selwyn and the director elicit a connection between Shakespeare’s fictionality and reality. Moreover, the fact that the characters in Osment’s play go to watch the premiere of *The Tempest* further reinforces the dyad between reality and fiction. In that respect, we might take Osment’s characters as real characters; however since they refer to themselves as third-person narrators, their fictionality is revealed as well. As they speak, the reader/the audience can no longer see them as real characters, but rather as actors and actresses performing their parts. The distinction between reality and theatrical illusion is blurred. Therefore, neither Osment nor Shakespeare can be categorized as monolithic authors saying the last word.

Finally, both plays of Stoppard deal with the staging of Shakespeare as well. In “Dogg’s Hamlet”, the play starts with the construction of a platform and thus heralds the metatheatrical aspect. However, metafictionality reaches a peak point as Hamlet stages a play in the part they are playing. Therefore, in “Dogg’s Hamlet”, there is a director who stages “Dogg’s Hamlet” in which Dogg stages Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* in which Hamlet stages a play. It is a play-within-the play-within the play. Thus, this double/multiple theatricality goes hand in hand with the postmodern understanding of endless significations. Likewise, “Cahoot’s Macbeth” focuses upon the staging of *Macbeth* and with the intervention of the inspector, the metatheatre is foregrounded (185). References to the real actors and actresses and to Tom Stoppard and Berthold Brecht reinforce the metafictional aspect of the play. Moreover, the reference to Brecht is reminiscent of epic theatre in which defamiliarization, alienation and

metatheatres stand out as crucial aspects. Therefore, in Stoppard's plays, it is possible to talk about the juxtaposition of both familiarization and defamiliarization at the same time. Even though the plays seem to be distancing Shakespeare through rewriting and subversion, they help the reader to form a link with Shakespeare by creating metatheatres, revealing their own fictionality, and negating themselves as fictional texts.

CONCLUSION

The story goes that, before or after [Shakespeare] dies, he found himself before God and he said: 'I, who have been so many men in vain, want to be one man: myself.' The voice of God replied from a whirlwind: 'Neither am I one self; I dreamed the world as you dreamed your work, my Shakespeare, and among the shapes of my dream are you, who, like me, are many persons – and none.'

(Borges¹⁷ qtd. in Fischlin and Fortier "General Introduction" 8)

In the parable above, Jorge Louis Borges creates an imaginary conversation between God and Shakespeare in which God advises Shakespeare not to forget that he is both MANY and NONE. Just as Shakespeare complains, in the hands of the dramatists, writers and directors, he has become many. Thanks to the adaptations and rewritings about Shakespeare and his works, the Bard has been further manifested in many more different ways. However, just as Borges' God points out, he is actually none of those representations. Likewise, in the plays discussed in this thesis project, Shakespeare is manifested in various forms. For instance, in Walcott's "A Branch of the Blue Nile", he is re-positioned within a post-colonial context. The struggles of a Caribbean actress and the problem of staging Shakespeare in a Trinidadian context are displayed. In Sears' "Harlem Duet", the re-positioning of Shakespeare is revealed from both a feminist and an anti-racial perspective. His text is relocated from two different points. Moreover, in Stoppard's two plays, Shakespeare is rewritten with a new language. Therefore, in each play, we are faced with many Shakespeares. However, since all the playwrights change and challenge Shakespeare creating new Shakespeares, those MANY Shakespeares are at the same time NONE as well.

¹⁷ Borges, Jorge L. "Everything and Nothing". *Dreamtigers*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964.

The first chapter of this project discusses the theorists who have worked on intertextuality and influence by dividing them into three groups, which can be roughly classified as the poststructuralists, the reader response critics and the psychoanalysts. The poststructuralists regard both the text and the subject as in a constant transformation. Their understanding of a text is inevitably a collection of previous texts. Moreover, their subject includes the writer, the reader and other subjectivities within a text. The reader response theorists, on the other hand, emphasize the reader as the insertion of a second subjectivity into the text. However, unlike the poststructuralists, their understanding of a text is more closed since it guides the reader to infer the hidden meanings. The third group of theorists, namely T.S. Eliot and Harold Bloom, accentuates literary filiation and the father-son relationship. T.S. Eliot underlines the significance of the tradition, which must be acknowledged by the future poet, or in other words by the “son”. The son’s competence is measured in relation to his appreciation of the father, his allegiance to the tradition. In line with T.S. Eliot’s theory on the significance of tradition, Harold Bloom coins the term “anxiety of influence”, he states that “every poem is a misreading of the former poem”. For him, the tradition is significant because it is the new writer’s relation to the past and it is a “carrying-over of influence”. According to Bloom, the poet exists through rewriting. In relation to Bloom, the fact that those writers are all playwrights invokes them almost an ontological necessity to rewrite their predecessor, the most acknowledged playwright of Western literature. As Bloom uses misreading in an affirmative sense, rewriting, then, engenders a prolific literature. Therefore, being dramatists themselves, Sears, MacDonald, Walcott, Osment and Stoppard had to engage in rewriting Shakespeare. By rewriting Shakespeare, then, Sears, MacDonald, Walcott, Osment and Stoppard not only displayed their allegiance to the tradition but also paved the way for being an influence themselves, opening up new alternatives and rewritings.

Chapter 2 moves onto the idea of resistance and subversion in the rewritings. It underlines that the rewritings of Shakespeare are actually non-Shakespeare or anti-Shakespeare. It further highlights that those subversive strategies aim to eradicate Shakespeare as a canon, as the epitome of Western literary tradition. For instance, the first part about the silenced women in Shakespeare deals with a new feminist Shakespeare in “Harlem Duet” and *Goodnight Desdemona*. Moreover, the second part discusses the post-colonial rewriting of Shakespeare in Walcott’s “A Branch of the Blue Nile”. Likewise, in the third and the fourth parts, the queer perspective in “This Island’s Mine” and the subversion of language in “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth” are examples of new Shakespeare. Furthermore, as subjectivity and identity formation are foregrounded in each play, these rewritings negate Shakespeare as the ultimate author. Therefore, in reference to the Borges’ parable, the rewritings of Shakespeare are actually NOT Shakespeare since each presents a different perspective to Shakespeare.

Chapter 3 starts with the discussion of postmodernism since it advocates that postmodernism would be a savior to avoid essentialism. Within the discussions of multiple time and space, resistances, subjectivity and acting, the plays are analyzed in relation to their using of postmodern elements. The fact that the plays bear postmodern elements saves them from presenting a biased perspective to Shakespeare. With the use of postmodern elements, the plays justify that there are so many other possible Shakespeares. In relation to Borges’ parable, then, these rewritings represent MANY Shakespeares since they pave the way for other alternatives.

If we go back to Thais Morgan’s definition of intertextuality, she defines intertextuality as positing a gray area, as a third space. As the title of Chapter 1 suggests, intertextuality paves the way for a triangular spatialization rather than binarisms or temporality. It points to a third space encompassing a “both/and position” instead of an

either/or position. Just like the term intertextuality, the Shakespeare rewritings discussed in this paper embrace a “both/and position” including both MANY and NONE. Just as intertextuality refers to a third space, the Shakespeare rewritings in this paper mark a third space both denying him (NONE) and showing different Shakespeares (MANY) at the same time. It is this doubleness rather than splitness that Derek Walcott points out in his essay “What the Twilight Says”. This doubleness or both/and position of intertextual rewritings discussed in this project, namely “Harlem Duet”, Goodnight Desdemona, “A Branch of the Blue Nile”, “This Island’s Mine”, “Dogg’s Hamlet” and “Cahoot’s Macbeth”, will be summed up in the rest of the conclusion part.

The intertextual rewritings of Shakespeare are both Shakespeare and anti-Shakespeare. They bring forth what Shakespeare has neglected and challenge his supremacy. However, on the other hand, by writing about Shakespeare, the playwrights revitalize a 16th century dramatist. In addition to that, the fact Sears, MacDonald, Walcott, Osment and Stoppard choose to rewrite the most popular writer of the world signifies their attempt to reach to a wider audience and to be acknowledged and read by a larger number of readers. In other words, they benefit from the popularity of the Bard while subverting his texts.

The intertextual rewritings of Shakespeare are examples of both resistance and admiration. On the one hand, they present a new perspective to Shakespeare. On the other hand, they re-use his plays in a different context. As Linda Hutcheon suggests, intertextuality does mark a difference with the past; but it is a continuation of the past as well (125). She further states that intertextuality does not aim to destroy the past; but “to parody is [...] both to enshrine the past and to question it” (126). Likewise, those adaptations can not be simply categorized as “resistances to Shakespeare”. The playwrights, who are rewriting the most well-known writer of Western literature, could definitely have the aim of aspiring to his

excellence. Along with the idea of resistance and subversion, there is definitely the idea of admiration to the tradition, to the greatest playwright as well. All the plays discussed in this paper question and admit Shakespeare's greatness and desire to be excellent as their father at the same time. First of all, since the playwrights rewrite Shakespeare, they acknowledge Shakespeare as a significant dramatist. As long as they mention Shakespeare in their plays, the playwrights sanction him as the father as well. For instance, Stoppard's "Dogg's Hamlet" and "Cahoot's Macbeth" have this double focus. Accentuating a difference with Shakespeare's language, Stoppard creates his language and thus asserts his capability as a writer without becoming a canonical writer. On the other hand, rewriting the most acknowledged and accessible writer of England, Stoppard longs for Shakespeare's popularity as a writer and recognizes his linguistic capacity. Therefore, it is through "Dogg's Hamlet" and "Cahoot's Macbeth" that Stoppard reveres the tradition and questions it at the same time by both trying to place himself within the tradition and presenting a subversive/an alternative perspective to Shakespeare. Moreover, as MacDonald's scholar Constance is engaged with her thesis on Shakespeare in *Goodnight Desdemona*, MacDonald incorporates Shakespeare as a great writer, whom the academics can work on. Therefore, it is this idea of admiration that goes hand in hand with the idea of resistance. In addition to that, the use of metatheatre in the plays could have a double aim as well. It might contribute to the decentralization of Shakespeare by further fictionalizing him and making him obscure. However, it might also have the purpose of forming a bond with him as the Bard is known for his use of metatheatre and play-within-play. For instance, in MacDonald's *Goodnight Desdemona*, the use of metatheatre and role-playing makes us aware of the fictional world in Shakespeare; yet without those fictional works, Constance Ledbelly would not be able to write her Ph.D. thesis.

The intertextual rewritings of Shakespeare both resist the canon and avoid becoming essentialist. Each play subverts Shakespeare from a different perspective –feminist, post-

colonial, queer and language. However, with the help of postmodern elements such as multiplicity of time and space, of resistances, of subjectivities and of acting, they avoid becoming essentialist. As Linda Burnett suggests in “Redescribing a World: Towards a Theory of Shakespearean Adaptation in Canada”, the rewritings should follow a path between “constructive postcolonialism” and “deconstructive postmodernism”. Embracing both constructivism and deconstructivism then, the plays embody a doubleness, both having the authority to say your idea and shunning from saying the reverse of what you have been reacting. For instance, Philip Osment’s “This Island’s Mine” displays a constructive queer discourse. However, thanks to other relevant discourses and multiple characterization and fragmented scenes, it also reveals a deconstructive postmodernism.

The intertextual rewritings of Shakespeare are both major literature and minor literature. By deconstructing a major playwright, they embody a minor discourse. However, on the other hand, they might also be included in the major discourse by making use of a major dramatist. This dilemma can be further exemplified in the playwrights’ choice of genre. Agreeing with John Gross and Lizbeth Goodman, we could underline the fact that drama has been marginalized as a genre in contrast to fiction and poetry. Then, it is possible to claim that the attempt to rewrite Shakespeare as a dramatic text is a more courageous act since his contemporary adaptations mostly appear as poetry, fiction or film. Sears, MacDonald, Walcott, Osment and Stoppard, then, display a double resistance towards Shakespeare, a double marginalization both towards Shakespeare’s plays and towards contemporary Shakespeare adaptations. On the other hand, being playwrights themselves, Sears, Macdonald, Walcott, Osment and Stoppard have no alternative but to rewrite their father in order to live, according to Harold Bloom. Rewriting Shakespeare in his own genre highlights their reverence to the tradition of playwriting and to the greatest playwright of English. It is

through using the same genre with the predecessor they are situating themselves within the tradition, within the major literature.

The intertextual rewritings of Shakespeare are both creative-original works and critical-interpretive works. Borrowing from Edward Said's distinction of creative-original and critical-interpretive works, we could state that the plays discussed in this paper are critical-interpretive; therefore they are necessary for the future of literature. As Chantal Zabus points out, these critical-interpretive plays are as necessary as creative-original works and vital for the survival of literature. In the same manner, the plays are creative-original as well since they open up new possibilities for the proliferation of new critical-interpretive works.

Therefore, in line with Said and Zabus, the intertextual rewritings of Shakespeare both display allegiance to the tradition and open up new possibilities for other potential rewritings. They pave the way for future criticism and become emblems for ensuring the future of literature. Though the definition and expression might differ, their potentiality has been expressed in different ways by different theorists working on intertextuality. In Kristeva's terms, these plays are in a constant process of productivity. In Barthes' words, they are writerly texts, enabling the reader to think critically on pre-established notions. In Genette's terms, they are transtextual texts encompassing more than one form of intertextuality. In Bloom's words, the act of misreading in these plays paves the way for a future generation of possible poets/dramatists. Last but not least, if we go back to the first theorist, who inspired those critics, these texts, namely "Harlem Duet", *Goodnight Desdemona*, "A Branch of the Blue Nile", "This Island's Mine", "Dogg's Hamlet" and "Cahoot's Macbeth" embody both centripetal –since they find their roots in the tradition- and centrifugal forces –since they allow the emergence of new voices. They are written in a Menippean discourse including the monologic and the dialogic. They posit a third space distinguished from "the first" and "the second" and their potentiality leads them to have their own distinctive voice. It is this

potentiality of these texts that make them embrace both admiration and resistance, constructivism and deconstructivism, canon and non-canon, creativity and criticism. It is this potentiality of these texts that would pave the way for the emergence of other future texts/rewritings, which would probably make Shakespeare more wonder why he cannot be one and only himself.

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