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TRACES OF POST-STRUCTURALIST FEMINISM IN LOCHHEAD'S BLOOD AND ICE

Abstract

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*, which is considered as the foremost British gothic novel, has influenced numerous writers as a source of inspiration. Liz Lochhead, a renowned Scottish poet and playwright, offers her unique perspective on the classic novel of *Frankenstein*, which has been retold and reinvented numerous times in contemporary literature. Lochhead skilfully weaves together the ideas of dream and reality, as well as past and present, in a seamless and significant manner throughout the play. In the play, she raises doubts about Mary's ability to create as a writer and care for her child, while also questioning Claire's feminine identity. Lochhead is able to demonstrate her remarkable power that defies the limitations imposed by the phallogocentric society and traditional gender roles. Through her characters Mary Shelley and Claire, Lochhead serves as a force that contradicts and challenges the prevailing patriarchal mind set. Using the theoretical principles of poststructuralist feminism, this study initially intends to demonstrate how Lochhead challenges the binary oppositions that





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have historically limited women's roles and identities in the play. In the light of Cixous's écriture feminine concept, the second objective is to examine how Lochhead approaches the issue of women's alienation in a phallogocentric culture, how she disrupts patriarchal linguistic structures, and opens up new avenues for women's self-expression.

Keywords: écriture féminine, Hélène Cixous, Contemporary British theatre, poststructuralist feminism, Liz Lochhead

LOCHHEAD'IN BLOOD AND ICE OYUNUNDA POST-YAPISALCI FEMİNİST İZLER

Öz

İngiliz gotik romanının önde gelen bir örneği olarak kabul edilen, Mary Shelley'nin Frankenstein ya da Modern Prometheus, romanı birçok yazara ilham kaynağı olarak, onları etkilemiştir. Ünlü İskoç şair ve oyun yazarı olan Liz Lochhead, çağdaş edebiyatta birçok kez yeniden anlatılmış ve yeniden keşfedilmiş olan klasik Frankenstein romanını benzersiz bakış açısı ile bizlere sunar. Lochhead, oyun boyunca rüya ve gerçeklik, geçmiş ve şimdiki zaman gibi örüntüleri ustalıkla bir araya getirirken, bu unsurları sorunsuz bir şekilde birleştirir. Oyunda, Lochhead, Mary'nin yazar olarak yaratma yeteneğini ve çocuğuna bakma yeteneğini sorgularken aynı zamanda Claire'in kadınsal kimliğini de sorgular. Lochhead, fallosentrik toplum ve geleneksel cinsiyet rolleri tarafından dayatılan sınırlamalara karşı koyan olağanüstü gücünü ortaya koymayı başarır. Mary Shelley ve Claire karakterleri aracılığıyla, Lochhead, egemen olan ataerkil düşünceyi sorgulayan ve ona meydan okuyan bir güç olarak hizmet eder. Bu çalışma, ilk olarak, post- yapısalcı feminist teoriyi kullanarak, Lochhead'in oyun içinde kadın rollerini ve kimliklerini tarihsel olarak sınırlayan ikili karşıtlıklara nasıl meydan okuduğunu göstermeyi amaçlar. Araştırmanın ikinci amacı ise, Cixous'un "écriture féminine" kavramı ışığında, Lochhead'in fallosentrik bir kültürde kadınların yabancılaşma sorununa nasıl yaklaştığını, ataerkil dil yapısını nasıl bozduğunu ve kadınların kendini ifade etmek için ne gibi yeni yollar açtığını incelemektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: écriture féminine, Hélène Cixous, Çağdaş İngiliz tiyatrosu, post-yapısalcı feminizm, Liz Lochhead

Introduction

"I abruptly learned that my unacceptable truth in this world is being a woman. Right away, it was war. I put the explosion, the odour of misogyny" Cixous

Starting from the oldest literary examples, it becomes apparent that the heroes of myths such as Beowulf, Odysseus, and Theseus are consistently men, while women are predominantly portrayed as passive figures. It is worth considering whether this pattern is





coincidental, given that the first notable mention of a Scottish woman writer, Mary, Queen of Scots, arises in the 18th century. In the 1990s, an increased awareness of this dualism prompted Scottish women writers to actively assert their presence within the Scottish literary canons.

“Joe McMillan noted in 1986 that with few exceptions, the experience of women writers for the stage in Scotland was often of exclusion” (Brown, 2011: 154). Nonetheless, the inception of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 marked a profound shift in cultural consciousness and the Parliament follows a supportive policy towards art and theatre. With the strength of this support, contemporary Scottish women playwrights such as Anne Downie, Liz Lochhead, Sue Glover, etc. focus on unveiling “the unspoken histories of women” (Stevenson: 141) and make “a valuable addition to the body of work dealing with women's lives” (Stevenson: 2019: 141). Scottish women playwrights who skilfully intertwine gender and national culture, often prefer rewriting in a marginal form of rewriting. This is what Kristeva calls “intertextuality” or what Bakhtin calls “dialogism”. They highlight literature’s nurturing influence on literature itself.

Christianson and Lumsden (2000) advocate that “Scottish women's playwriting is characterised by the transformative and transgressive, presenting ‘the classic experience of the Other, where otherness becomes a multiple oppression crucial to character structure’” (55). In a way, by rebelling the phallogocentric structure, they both redefine 'the other' from a distinct perspective and create their own literature, thereby “they have contributed to the creation of a public sphere where women are better able to define those categories for themselves” (Maguire: 149). While Anne Downie rewrites the autobiography of Betsy Whyte in *Yellow on the Broom* (1989), in *Bondagers* (1991) Sue Glover delves into the power dynamics between genders. With her own unique interpretation, in *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* (1987) Lochhead, a poet and a playwright, also presents the reimagining life of Mary Stuart, the unfortunate sovereign of Scotland, and examines the notorious authentic figure from a feminist stance. By virtue of gender dualism, being excluded from the stage is not only the impediment that Scottish women have faced. As Gifford notes that “Scottish women's writing arguably suffers from the double bind of being Scottish and being by women” (2020:ix-x). That's the reason why these Scottish female playwrights intertwine historical allusions and mythical references with their play to explore the complex themes of gender dynamics and identity.

With “Lochhead's astonishing creativity, its plurality, its intimacy, its unassuming power” (Varty, 2013:1), she gained prominence after the publication of her first poetry collection, *Memo for Spring*, in 1972. Lochhead, born in Scotland in 1947, has embarked on a counter-narrative journey against the established literary corpus, boldly engaging with historical events from a feminine standpoint. Auston and Reneilt admire her colourful themes and claim “What makes her work especially pertinent is her explicit engagement with and





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paralleling of gender (specifically women's) and national (specifically Scottish) identities throughout her writings and in her theatre making generally" (2000: 95-96). She has accomplished this feat through meticulous examination of the biographies of prominent historical figures and re-evaluating the novels of known female novelists. Harvie and McDonald also affirm that "Lochhead's work reconfigures each story both thematically and structurally, from a feminist standpoint" (Harvie and McDonald, 2013: 124). In *Pride and Prejudice* (2016), she adapts Jane Austen's renowned novel *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and reconsiders the society through an alternate societal lens to reflect her feminist perspective. In *Blood and Ice* (1982), she adapts the well-known gothic novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and offers her critical view to her readers and audience. She is acutely cognizant of the firm closeness of narration in articulating the restrained thoughts and stories of females. This is the reason why she poses questions about the Western mythologies which glorify patriarchy and keeps a critical eye on themes like gender and power. In essence, Lochhead answers the call of Cixous to "write herself" (1976: 875), and embraces "écriture feminine" to challenge patriarchal Scottish politics.

Whilst Running and Johnson (1989) contend that for theatre "écriture feminine" is one of convenient theories "with its emphasis upon transformation and profusion and its reference to the corporal" (179), Blyth believes that it is hard to give the exact definition of "écriture feminine". According to Helene Cixous, a prominent French feminist theorist and a writer, "écriture feminine" or "feminine writing" is only possible with opposing to the phallogocentric culture to reveal the feminine point of view. In this regard, Cixous posits the necessity of cultivating novel approaches to writing, which are capable of subverting conventional patriarchal constructs and affording a platform for the expression of women's experiences and perspectives. She claims that women are able to challenge rigid binary contradictions, which characterize traditionally gender roles, and express authority in a patriarchal environment through adopting a non-linear and fluid language. This approach is the only key to create their own history against the "history of phallogocentrism, history of appropriation: a single history. History of an identity: that of man's becoming recognized by the other" (Cixous & Clément, 1986: 201).

The emergence of poststructuralist feminism in the 1970s, is notable for its distinctive emphasis on language, power dynamics, and the construction of gender. Pioneers of poststructuralist feminism such as Irigaray, Cixous and Kristeva notice the necessity of equality in all spheres of life, asserting "women must bring to surface what masculine history has repressed in them" (Warhol & Herndl, 1997: 374). That's why they deconstruct the observable gender differences in language usage and reject the phallogocentric language. As Derrida argues, "deconstruction must through a double gesture, a double science, a double writing, put into practice a reversal of the classical opposition and a general displacement of the system. It is on that condition alone that deconstruction will provide the means of





intervening in the field of oppositions it criticizes and which is also a field of non-discursive forces” (Culler, 2007:85). Thusly, poststructuralist feminists unmask double-séance, challenging conventional oppositions. Criticizing Freud's penis envy and Lacan's symbolic order theory, In *The Laugh of the Medusa* (1975), Cixous inspires women to write. She advocates that the articulation of feminine sexuality within the literature is crucial in challenging the impasse of male-dominated writing and this is the only way to destroy phallus.

“now, women return from afar, from always: 'from' 'without,' 'from the heath where witches are kept alive, from beyond 'culture, 'from their childhood which men have been trying desperately to make them forget, condemning it to' eternal rest”. (1976: 879-880)

She uses the myth of Medusa who was afflicted with a curse by the goddess Minerva to provide an interpretation of the myth of Medusa's demise as an endeavour by men to repress the discourse of women. She admires the beauty and power of Medusa and fosters women to embrace her perspective because she is the one who “hasn't accused herself of being a monster” (1976: 876). Rejecting all categorizations and binary oppositions to define women, she calls all women for solidarity and to write down their experiences without restraint.

In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva also posits that “writing is the notion of dominant ideology” (1984: 8) which became popular in the nineteenth century. She emphasizes how symbols and signs influence women's creative abilities. According to Kristeva, women possess the ability to resist inequitable societal structures by employing a malleable linguistic approach, thereby exemplifying the capacity to independently determine their own paths. In *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1974), questioning Freud's established principles and his theories; Irigaray also fosters women to use their own language to express their desires and experiences. A woman should not accept to be an object “even if she is less able to read the inscription, poorer in language, crazier in her speech, burdened with matters that history has laid on her” (Irigaray, 1985: 198). Concordantly, instead of arguing on hierarchical orders based on gender differences, French feminists believe that women can overturn phallogocentric discourses through their writing and create their own discourses, so they can get rid of their secondary position.

Scottish female playwrights of the 1990s, while creating their own canon, initially started with novels and myths influenced by the patriarchal politics. Within this context, Lochhead makes precious contribution to contemporary Scottish theatre with both her poems and plays. In accordance with her contemporaneous observation, Lochhead authored the dramatic production titled *Blood and Ice* (1982).

In *Blood and Ice*, she rewrites Mary Shelley's classic novel, *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus*, with her feminist and authentic perspective. Throughout the dramatic work, Lochhead consistently and coherently incorporates spiral transitions between the abstract





themes of dream and reality, as well as between past and present. She critically interrogates Mary's dual roles as an author and a parent, scrutinizing the complexities of feminine identities. Her work questions identities and live experiences.

The aim of this article is to explore how Lochhead highlights societal expectations and women's limitations while subverting the dominant phallogocentric discourses and binary oppositions between genders. Analyzing the power dynamics and gender roles through a poststructuralist feminist lens and Helene Cixous's concept of "écriture féminine" provides insight into Lochhead's feminist stance within her play.

1. Influence Of Cixous and Post-structuralist feminisim in *Blood And Ice*

"Love is never free to any woman" (Lochhead, 2012: 61)

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* (1818) is notorious as the seminal British gothic novel and has served as a source of inspiration for numerous writers like Brian W. Aldiss, Joanna Russ, Michael Anania and Jeanette Winterson. While Aldiss's *Frankenstein Unbound* (1973), Russ's *The Female Man* (1975) and Winterson's *Frankisstein* (2019) exhibit elements of science fiction, Anania's *The Frankenstein Notebooks* (2003) focuses on minor female characters' -Frankenstein's sister and wife-struggles against patriarchy. Liz Lochhead, a prominent Scottish dramatist and esteemed poet, also contributes her own unique interpretation of *Frankenstein*. She interweaves Shelley's recollections and nocturnal visions with her own authentic comment to challenge phallogocentric ideologies.

The play *Blood and Ice* by Lochhead exists in multiple versions, showcasing her dual proficiency in both poetry and playwriting. The first version, titled *Mary and the Monster*, debuted at the Belgrade Theatre in 1981. Then in 1982, it was performed at the Traverse. "In 1984, Lochhead revised the script of *Blood and Ice* for the Pepper's Ghost Theatre Company in London" (Middeke et al. 1999: 96). The last form of *Blood and Ice* was premiered at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in 2003. To explain why there are several versions of *Blood and Ice*, critics focus on Lochhead's both poetic and playwriting skills. While Scullion (Aston and Reinelt, 2000) believes that Lochhead ingeniously uses her intertwined poetic and prosaic skills, Brown (2011:18) admires the intensity and rhythmic qualities of her poetic work, driving her to create alternate versions. With the additions in the last version of the play, reflecting her evolving perspectives, she constructs new identities and power dynamics between genders. The second reason why critics believe that her play is complicated is her habit of metatextuality. Even though Brown admires her language in *Blood and Ice*, he confesses that her usage of metatextuality is a kind of "distancing device from stage realism" (2011: 181). In the play, Lochhead refers to her third scientific novel *The Last Man* (1826), Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and William Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning*





Political Justice (1793). Although her usage of metatextuality makes the play's flow impede, it is symbolic.

Instead of depicting her feminist perspective explicitly, she prefers to use more implicit language. In Shelley's novel *The Last Man*, humanity perishes due to a pandemic. In *Blood and Ice*, Mary also indicates that the only way to salvation is through *The Last Man* when she struggles to take care of her son. When Elise is forced into marriage without Mary's protection, Lochhead reminds her readers/viewers of Wollstonecraft's philosophy on women's rights. Lastly, when Byron questions the sisterhood between Elise and Mary, Lochhead refers to Godwin's work which is about patriarchal politics. Thus, Lochhead's play is much more than a traditional one.

Scullion defines *Blood and Ice* "is as much a memory play as it is a history play" (2000: 98). In the play, Lochhead depicts Mary's, our heroine, experiences in the pre-writing process of her book. The advance of writing her book, which is overshadowed by her father's reputation, the experience of marriage, and the unsatisfied relationship triangle with Lord Byron, Clair and Percy Bysshe Shelley, gain a new meaning and dimension with Lochhead's reinterpretation of these issues.

In *Speculum of the Other Woman* (1985: 103), Irigaray portrays the diverse between feminine and masculine writing. Irigaray argues that feminine writing is unique for its individualistic and distinctive qualities. He struggles to comprehend the significance of her words as her ideas take many different paths. Since he organizes his thoughts according to pre-established beliefs, he is unable to comprehend her words or her contradictory sentences may seem meaningless for him. In her statements- when she is brave enough to say them out loud- she alters herself continuously. In this context, Lochhead's language is fluid and her unfinished sentences, repetitions or the monster's unanswered questions, words with double meanings and flashbacks make her language feminine. Lochhead's play, which draws attention to its poetic language, rejects to follow a certain order in terms of time and space. Throughout the play, Lochhead makes transitions between the past and the present. So, in a sense, she reinterprets the traces of the past with the present. Like Shelley's gothic novel, Lochhead uses gothic features such as "darkness, shadows, whisper, and a creature's voice, Byron's ghost".

Affirming the value of language, Cixous also supports women to write about their experiences which is lost between binaries-Culture/Nature, Active/Passive, Sun-Moon. That's why deconstruction is indispensable to create a feminine writing. Lochhead also uses binaries-male/female, active/passive, death/live- to subvert them with her metaphoric language. She gives clues to make her audience/reader to grasp the meaning implicitly. For instance, the title of the play, *Blood and Ice*, refers to the moment Mary gave birth. Mary miscarries and loses a lot of blood. Shelley puts Mary in a tub of ice to heal her and stop the bleeding. Lochhead





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associates Blood/ Ice to Death / Life. While women represent death, phallogocentric power signifies life. Nevertheless, Lochhead reverses death/life binary concepts at the end of the play.

Moi (1985: 105) has expressed her belief that the entire theoretical project of Cixous can be summarized as an attempt to dismantle the dominant logocentric ideology in our society. Cixous's mission is to showcase women as the primary source of life, power, and energy, and she aims to welcome the arrival of a new feminine language that continually undermines the patriarchal binary schemes. These schemes are responsible for working with phallogocentrism in an attempt to exert oppression on women and suppress their voices. By advocating for a new language that subverts these oppressive schemes, Cixous hopes to liberate women from the constraints of the existing discourse and give them the opportunity to express their wishes and aspirations in their own way. In this sense, both Cixous and Lochhead do not rebel against the phallogocentrism but they use it for the logocentric ideology. In the play, focusing on logocentrism – that is, binary words- Lochhead subverts phallogocentrism. Thus, she creates the monster and disrupts the woman's silence by reversing Lacan's symbolic order. The monster is actually man-made, but Lochhead changes it to women-made: "His yellow skin... the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was lust... his teeth of a pearly whiteness... more horrid contrast with watery eyes..." (Lochhead, 2012: 52). The depiction of the monster is as dreadful and extraordinary as can be. Lochhead does not obviously depict what the monster signifies or what it is and she leaves the interpretation to the audience/ reader. Jan McDonald argues that 'She [Mary Shelley] is "Frankenstein" (Aston& Reinelt, 2000: 98). The monster actually refers to Mary's dual personality. Lochhead, on the one hand, creates Mary, who is married and has children; while on the other hand, she creates an unusual woman-monster who pushes the patriarchal boundaries with her strong writing skills, outside the phallogocentric boundaries. Throughout the play, Mary is not frightened by the monster or startled like when she hears Shelley's voice because she is aware that her other half is the subversive feminine side.

Cixous and Kristeva reject Freud's Oedipal stage: Electra complex. Kristeva divides the oedipal period into two: Oedipal Prime and Oedipal Two. In Oedipal prime, there is a strong attachment between mother and daughter. In Oedipal Two, "The Girl's love object becomes the father and the law" (Oliver:2010:2)2) The aim of oedipal two is only to protect her mother. In that sense, rejecting Electra complex, for both Cixous (1986) and Kristeva (2010) motherhood and childbearing are unique and valuable sentiments seeing that it is a crucial experience to express feelings and to know the female body. On the other hand, Lochhead does not praise childbearing or being a mother, but even mentions that childbearing is dangerous- Woollstonecraft dies after giving birth to Mary, Mar Mary has a lot of miscarriages and is in life-threatening danger. For Lochhead, giving birth or being a mother is, in a way, being trapped within phallogocentric boundaries. That's why Mary and Clair's children die and they are set free.





By stating that women are the same regardless of race, religion, language and class, sisterhood is one of the substantial themes emphasized many times by feminists in order to reveal the effect of women's power and to overturn phallogocentric policies. Cixous believes in the existence of solidarity since it's not where you're from, the class difference, or the color of your skin that matters. For her, from the beginning of the history "There have to be two races- the masters and the slaves" (1991: 201). On the other hand, Lochhead's characters illustrate a complex portrayal of sisterhood. With her character named Elise, Lochhead explores the class difference problem between women in view of the capitalist and patriarchal system. In the play, Mary is quite kind to Elise, the maid. Nonetheless, because Elise can read and write, she is humiliated by Byron, the patriarchal icon. Byron goes further and makes a comparison between Elise and Mary. He asks Elise that when Elise and Mary are surrounded flames, who Elise would save, herself or Mary. With the honest response of Elise, Lochhead agitates the concept of solidarity even though Mary persists that "... we are sisters? Are we not somewhat alike?" (Lochhead, 2012: 60). In fact, creating Byron, Lochhead reflects her negative belief in the concept of sisterhood among women, and Mary eventually releases Elise to the hands of the patriarchy because of her pregnancy.

In *Coming to Writing*, Cixous states that women can never escape patriarchal oppression because they are men's sexual toys. However, one way to overturn Freud's theory of castration and the liberation of 'the other' depends on being bisexual, albeit a terrible call for the patriarchy. "Bisexuality as a fantasy of a complete being, which replaces the fear of castration and veils sexual difference..." (1991: 209). In the play, Shelley, Byron, and Mary decide to have a horror story-writing contest. While Mary creates Frankenstein, Shelley builds her story on a beautiful creature that is "half-man, half-woman" (Lochhead, 2012:40) Shelley's creature is sexless, perfect, yet terrifying. In act two, Lochhead once again reveals Shelley's fear, realizing that men and women are the same. Shelley has a dream before he dies. In his dream, he sees that Mary and he are the same and that Mary is the one he wants to kill. However, Shelley, not Mary, suffocates to death while traveling. Lochhead is aware that phallogocentric destruction is only possible with genderless creatures, and she makes clear the fear that this equality creates in patriarchy. Moreover, she ironically associates the destruction of heterosexual identity with Shelly. Lochhead portrays Shelley's character at the beginning of the play as being different from Byron, outside of phallogocentric politics. Shelley believes that "freedom and justice for both men and women then must be universal" (Lochhead, 2012: 19). However, Shelley cannot hide his fear when he deems genderlessness and full equality. Lochhead highlights that there is a fear of equality at the root of patriarchal politics, even if it stretches its boundaries.

In *The Newly Born Woman*, both Cixous and Clement explain the concept of mastery which means power and knowledge. "It creates the illusion of accessibility, for it is only accessible to those who already have a relationship with mastery" (Crawford, 2006: 43).





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Lochhead affirms the reality of this genre distinction with her female characters. Mary is a powerful character with her strong pen. Nonetheless, her power as a writer is despised by Byron and Shelley, and Mary's body and power are associated with her father's mastery. While Byron states that Mary was overshadowed by her parents, Shelley explains that she fell in love with Mary before she saw her because he admired Mary's father for his outstanding achievement as a writer, so Shelley associates her love for Mary with her father's success. Lochhead uncovers the phallogocentric selfish logic and how feminine power is ignored.

Lochhead's female characters are not accepted by the patriarchal society with their lifestyle. Mary falls in love with Shelley, who is married to Harriot, and elopes. On the other hand, Clair falls in love with Byron, who is married, and becomes pregnant out of wedlock. Elise, who becomes pregnant out of wedlock, has to get married in order to execute her life. Neither Clair nor Mary belongs to a specific place or geography. They constantly travel to different countries. In this sense, although Lochhead's women may seem independent, they cannot escape the oppressive policies of the patriarchy. Moreover, as women and mothers, they are real monsters. While Byron kidnaps Allegra from Clair, Mary's all children die. Since both Clair and Mary do not have the capacity to raise a good child, they are left childless by God and Byron. In this sense, Lochhead uncovers that a woman who does not obey the patriarchal policies, are punished cruelly. Nonetheless, Lochhead does not let her characters to be submissive.

For Kristeva, love and marriage are about accepting and loving each other as they are. She asserts that "Love is the full recognition of the other in their otherness. If this other is very close to you, as in this case, it seems to me that what's at stake is harmony within difference." (2016:1) According to Cixous, marriage is as dangerous as 'men's world' and love is seductive, because no woman thinks that the person she loves will slowly kill her. She claims that "In the face of love we disarm ourselves, and indeed we keep the vulnerability. It does not disappear, but it is offered to the other. With the person we love, we have a relationship of absolute vulnerability" (Gruber, 2012: 22). That's exactly why love is a disadvantage for women. Lochhead also reflects both her own innovative and traditional - that is, the one who killed the woman - perspective about love. The love between Clair and Byron is entirely pathological and phallus-centred. For Claire "True love differs from gold and clay" (Lochhead, 2012: 70). In a way, Byron and Clair's love is based on the binaries, and Clair's vulnerability makes Byron see her as frivolous - like Byron's inability to show Allegra, their daughter, to Clair or his constant flight from Clair. For Shelley and Mary, on the other hand, love and marriage are built on respect and freedom. Shelley mentions that "Abolish marriage and all connections between women and men will be natural. And right - because choice and change will be possible - will even be desired by both!" (Lochhead, 2012: 38). Similar to Cixous, Lochhead also states the meaninglessness of marriage and denies marriage, which is a policy of patriarchy. In the play, Mary, moreover, confesses that all the pain and hardships she has





experienced - people's gossip about Shelley and herself and the deaths of her children - have turned her heart to ice (Lochhead, 2012: 57), and her own inner voice reminds Mary that the cause of all this is only love.

Lochhead discusses the theme of death in the last chapter. Cixous tells that "History, history of phallogentrism, history of proration: a single history. History of an identity...as Hegel says, death is his master. " (Cixous, 1991: 204). Lochhead's male characters, both Byron and Shelley, succumb to death at the end of the play. Thus, Lochhead liberates them by destroying phallogentric bodies for Mary and Clair, and the winners are women.

Conclusion

In *Blood and Ice*, Lochhead masterfully reinterprets Mary Shelley's memories and the monster in Shelley's book, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* and reveals the inner voice and experiences of Mary imprisoned in a phallogentric structure. Echoing Cixous's theory of écriture feminine, Lochhead challenges binaries such as soul/body, life/ death, real/ fictional, now/past, woman/man. In this sense, with her metaphorical and fluid language, Lochhead rejects the conventional- man-made, plot structures- expository, rising action, climax, resolution- and defies linear narrative forms. Her non-linear language also embraces ambiguity using the monster's voice and seamless transitions between past and present. All these similarities are indicative of Lochhead's support for Cixous's concept of feminine writing. Thus, while some critics view Cixous's theory of écriture feminine as utopian to confront the whole phallogentric structure, Lochhead adeptly performs this challenge and subverts these structures.

Lochhead's female characters are subjected to the oppression of the patriarchy and despised. Since Lochhead reveals what women experience under the patriarchal structure in its simplest form and collaborates with phallogentrism while creating a form of logo centrism – for instance, comparing Mary's authorship with her father's writing ability, Clair's disdain, Elise's humiliation as a servant. Nevertheless, with the deaths of Byron and Shelley at the end of the play, Mary and Clair are free. When faced with problems, female characters choose to move to another city and manage to become subjects, not objects. In this regard, Lochhead once again defeats the phallogentric structure.

Throughout the play, Lochhead elucidates the audience/reader that the institution of marriage is a policy of the patriarchy. For her, love and marriage mean the deliberate and willing surrender of a woman to her murderer and the exhaustion of her body. That's the reason why Lochhead leaves Mary and Clair outside the phallogentric boundaries. Both of them are free to write about their own bodies and experiences at the end of the play. Lochhead, moreover, questions the notion of solidarity, which is often emphasized by feminists. Evidently, Lochhead does not support the phenomenon of solidarity, but for her, gender-neutral identities are the only way out. As a result, Lochhead rejects the phallus-centred





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perspective, but like poststructuralist feminists, this rejection is not a rebellion. To overturn the phallogocentric structure, she dramatically introduces her reader-audience to traditional gender policies and women's issues. Then, defending the creation of gender-neutral identities and making female characters subjects, she brings out the strength and energy of women. Thus, with her fluid language, Lochhead both subverts phallogocentric linguistic parameters and supports *écriture féminine* theory.

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