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ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION OF TÜRKİYE

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List the works alphabetically. Remember to ignore articles like "a, an, the."

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Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*. Translated by H. E. Butler, Loeb-Harvard UP, 1980. 4 vols.

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Bile, Jeffrey. *Ecology, Feminism, and a Revised Critical Rhetoric: Toward a Dialectical Partnership*. 2005. Ohio University, PhD dissertation.

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IDEAS: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LITERARY STUDIES
2023, VOL. 3, NO. 2, xvii-xviii (Editorial)

English Language and Literature
Research Association of Türkiye

Editor's Preface

As the editor-in-chief of *IDEAS: Journal of English Literary Studies*, I would love to express, on behalf of the editorial board members, my happiness to be writing this preface for our 6th issue. Time has proved that *IDEAS* has survived and reached the end of its third year and established itself towards being one of the most prestigious journals in the field of English literary studies in Türkiye. Despite all the hard work at our academic institutions, we are dedicated to producing this journal thanks to the altruistic efforts of our editorial board and continuous submissions from academia worldwide.

The sixth issue of *IDEAS: Journal of English Literary Studies* includes five articles and one book review. Cahit Bakır from Marmara University contributes to the issue with an article entitled "The Chicana Narrator as Healer: Reconciliation in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*." Bakır's article reads Ana Castillo's novel as a postmodernist ontological narration. He argues that Chicana mestizaje's identity is healed through storytelling. The article explores how male figures are displaced by the narrator who also acts as a healer for her community.

The second article entitled "'Presume not that I am the thing I was': The Transformation of the Idea of the King and the Concept of Kingship in Shakespeare's Henriad" in this issue is by Meriç Tutku Özmen from Middle East Technical University. The article studies and analyses the concept of kingship in William Shakespeare's Henriad, namely *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Henry IV Part 2*, and *Henry V*. By analysing how each king differs from one another in delicately important ways with their unique weaknesses and strengths, Özmen scrutinizes the transformation of the idea of a king.

Şevket Sarper Dörter from the University of Otago contributes to the journal with "Ruinscapes and Subversion of Temporalities in *For the Mercy of Water*," an article that analyzes Karen Jayes's novel as the representation of exploited, marginal rural space that turns into a manifestation of an overlay between time, industrial time, colonialism, and neoliberal globalization. Dörter uses the term "ruinscape" in the literary imagination as the spatial representation of the negative social, economic, and environmental processes during history.

The fourth article in this issue is contributed by Şafak Horzum from Kütahya Dumlupınar University. The article entitled "A Critique of Exaggerated Libertinism in Thomas Shadwell's *The Libertine*" explores the pioneering roles of Restoration comedies in portraying the philosophy of the time's sorties and libertinism. Horzum discusses the playwright's social and political orientation and explores the play's position in the genre of comedy of manners.

CC BY

The article entitled "From Androgynous to Hybrid Cybernetic Bodies: Salvation or More Subjugation?" by Muzaffer Derya Nazlıpınar Subaşı from Kütahya Dumlupınar University is the fifth in this issue. Nazlıpınar Subaşı scrutinizes how Jeannette Winterson's *Stone Gods* explores Virginia Woolf's idea of androgyny on a new level of questioning deeply the concept of hybrid cybernetic bodies constructed through the implementations of twenty-first-century technology. Thus, Nazlıpınar Subaşı explores whether or not "this d/evolution from androgynous bodies to hybrid cybernetic bodies" brings salvation from "phallocentric restrictions or poses more risks of subjugation."

This issue's book review is by Sonia Zyngier from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, who reviews Willie van Peer and Anna Chesnokova's *Experiencing Poetry: A Guidebook to Psychopoetics*. Zyngier introduces the book as a volume that makes literary devices familiar to undergraduate studies rather than introducing highbrow aesthetes for intellectuals in their ivory towers. Zyngier reviews the book as a highly original and creative one which is simple but not simplistic.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the contributors to this issue. I would also like to thank all members of the editorial board: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Alev Karaduman from Hacettepe University, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rahime Çokay Nebioğlu from Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University, Assist. Prof. Dr. Kübra Kangüleç Coşkun from TOBB University of Economics & Technology, Assist. Prof. Dr. Reyhan Özer Taniyan from Pamukkale University, and Dr. Aylin Alkaç from Boğaziçi University for their excellent work in producing this issue.

My final gratitude goes, as always, to our referees in this issue for keeping this issue's quality at the same academic level as the previous ones with their assiduous feedback to the authors.

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Ali ÇELİKEL
Editor-in-Chief
Marmara University, Türkiye

IDEAS: JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LITERARY STUDIES
2023, VOL. 3, NO. 2, 79–88

English Language and Literature
Research Association of Türkiye

The Chicana Narrator as Healer: Reconciliation in Ana Castillo's *So Far From God*

Cahit BAKIR

Marmara University, Türkiye

Abstract: This article argues that the narrator of Ana Castillo's *So Far From God* is a postmodernist ontological narrator whose project is to heal the Chicana mestizaje's identity through storytelling. Through the privileging of the female identity, returning to oral history and uncovering of subjugated Native American female origin myths, the narrator attempts to reconstruct the female identity. Although the narrator is not fully characterised, unlike other female protagonists in the novel, this essay aims to explore how the narrator is one of the female figures in the novel, and similarly, how she attempts not only to bring about the displacement of the male figure and reposition of the female, but also acts as a healer for her community.

Keywords:

Female identity,
Healer,
Oral history,
Origin myths,
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Bir Şifacı Olarak Chicana Anlatıcısı: Ana Castillo'nun *Tanrı'dan Çok Uzak* Romanında Uzlaşma

Öz: Bu makale, Ana Castillo'nun *Tanrı'dan Çok Uzak* romanının anlatıcısının, amacı Chicana mestizaje'nin kimliğini hikâye anlatımı yoluyla iyileştirmek olan postmodernist bir ontolojik anlatıcı olduğunu tartışmaktadır. Anlatıcı, kadın kimliğini ön plana çıkararak, sözlü tarihe geri dönerek ve bastırılmış yerli Amerikalı kadın kökenli mitleri ortaya çıkararak, kadın kimliğini yeniden inşa etmeye girişir. Anlatıcı romandaki diğer kadın kahramanların aksine tam olarak tanımlanmamış olsa da, bu makale, anlatıcının romandaki kadın figürlerden biri olduğunu, aynı şekilde baskın erkek figürünün konumunu yıkmayı ve kadın figürünün yeniden konumlandırılmasını amaçladığını ve aynı zamanda ait olduğu topluluğu için bir şifacı olarak hareket ettiğini tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler:

Kadın kimliği,
Şifacı,
Sözlü tarih,
Köken mitleri,
Hikâye anlatımı

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CONTACT: Cahit Bakır, PhD, Lecturer (https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6307-1955)
Marmara University, School of Foreign Languages, İstanbul, Türkiye
cahit.bakir@marmara.edu.tr

In Ana Castillo's (1953–...) *So Far From God* (1993), which is written in a conversational and magic realist style, the tumultuous lives of four Latina-American sisters are narrated. In addition to its many other points, the novel widely focuses on the sisters' cultural dislocation and loss of identity in an attempt to help them heal and eventually reconcile with their selves. Castillo's *So Far From God* itself is a quote, derived from Porfirio Diaz's seminal lament: "So far from God – so near the United States". As the novel's single epigraph suggests, Castillo consciously positions her text within the long-established and ongoing dialogue concerning Mexican-American relations, and in the figurative and literal borderlands in which the sisters are "lost, decentered, godforsaken, dispossessed . . . so far from Mexico, their genealogical and spiritual center" (Gillman and Floyd-Thomas 161). Unsurprisingly, the tension between place, language, and loss which is indicative in the work's title also pervades the novel, most importantly in the sisters' attempts to negotiate their unstable or fractured identities that follow in its wake.

The female protagonists in the novel attempt to heal Chicana identity through counter-narratives that serve to subvert the narratives of dominant patriarchal discourse. In the novel, La Loca's resurrection offers a counter-narrative to male-dominated religious history. She becomes the focal point, the "glue," that holds her household together. Sofi replaces her husband as head of the family and later takes the provider role to the rest of her community, becoming the informal mayor of La Tome. She spearheads two cooperatives, one economic and one spiritual. Both organizations allow the community to turn away from the poverty plaguing their community and raise the morale of the town. Esperanza, a political activist, symbolises the role of the female in the Chicano/a movement. Her lover remembers her fondly after her death while fighting to have Chicano studies in the curriculum. The narrator describes her as "consolidat[ing] the spiritual with the practical side of things" (Castillo 37). Doña Felicia, more agile and self-sufficient than any male character in the novel, is said to have picked up the memories of her mother and incorporated them into her storytelling. Like the narrator, thus, she weaves the stories of females which heal the fragments of her community and bring them together. These female figures represent the multiple identities of the Chicana mestizaje[1], and because of the single isolated consciousness employed by the speaker, the narrator encapsulates the female ontological being of the Chicana mestizaje.

The novel emphasises the importance of recovering cultural traditions, knowledges, and history as an important step in healing the complex individual and collective traumas of cultural dislocation and internalised racism which can be read as a crucial step in the journey toward the reconciliation of the sisters' selfhood. Considering that the narrator is attempting to re-establish the female agency, and is asserting that the female is a healer, creator, and storyteller, narrating the lives of powerful female figures,

[1] It is a term used to refer to racial mixture between ethnic and cultural groups of Latin American descent.

it is only necessary for the novel to be voiced by a female figure. Her voice mimics the female figures throughout the novel, and thus the female voice gains agency and transcends a form of spirituality. The consolidation of female figures into one speaker reflects the doubly marginalised, hybrid, and polyvocal identity of the Chicana, that is contained in a single consciousness spoken by a subjective "I." The narrator, therefore, appears to be the collective consciousness of the seemingly fragmented identity of the women in the borderlands. She epitomises a collective communal sensibility and presents the narrative as if it is coming out of a personal experience, as if the experience of the female characters is her own experience.

One of the most notable aspects of the novel is its deployment of a first-person unreliable narrator speaking directly to her reader, the "you." Because of the tone, language, and syntax, the narrator seems to be racializing her ideal reader, addressing a reader whom she has an intimate communal relationship with, and admonishing them to explore, if not recover, this relationship. Furthermore, the direct address creates a multi-faceted dialogue, one that heightens the ongoing relationship between the reader and the speaker. It creates tension on the identity and knowledge claimed by the "I" that is imparted to the reader. While there is always an implicit relationship between narrator and reader in any narrative, postmodern fiction always assumes a "dialogue among author, narrator and the other characters and the reader" (Booth 155). However, in *So Far From God*, this relationship is explicit and heightened and is central to the narrative.

For Castillo writing represents a tactic of resistance, as well as a means of working through the cultural dislocation experienced by her female characters. By employing these various postmodern techniques of non-linearity, multilingualism, magic realism, genre switching, and multiple perspectives, Castillo is able to extend the dialogue beyond her respective storylines and envision or elaborate strategies of resistance and healing that are suggested, unrealised, or beyond the confines of her novel. For Laura Gillman and Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas, novels are more than fiction, they are a "political act" (159), a space for the "intentional expression of women's values, realities, spiritualities, sense of justice, and agency," where "creative dialogues . . . speak to realities of marginalized women's lives, histories, and cultures" (160). Read in such a way, Castillo's novel becomes further transgredient and enlarges the potential for imagining bicultural Latina-American identity. Fiction then, becomes a crucial site "bound . . . by a common location in consciousness, a common psychic and spiritual terrain emerging from similar experiences of colonization" (Gillman and Floyd-Thomas 160) in which these traumas of cultural dislocation can begin to be undone.

Brian McHale analyses the postmodern text and traces the discursive shift in modernist and postmodernist fiction. This shift, he contends, is a movement from authoritative to doubtful or dubious. Modernist fictions are concerned with epistemological interpretation, the problem of "unknowability" (McHale 9) or the limits of knowledge, and the consequence of certainty or reliability at which the knowledge is

transmitted from one knower to another. On the other hand, postmodern narratives deploy a different strategy of engaging and foreground questions in that they are more concerned not about the world one lives in but the aim of a "description of a universe" (Pavel qtd. in McHale 27). Postmodernist writer foregrounds the possibility or the impossibility of describing a universe. He further elaborates this contention by acknowledging Dick Higgins's suggestion that postmodernism is concerned with the "post-cognitive," that is the way that postmodern asks not the reliability of knowledge, but what the self is to do with knowledge(s) in the world in which they live in (10).

While there are distinct differences between modern and postmodern concerns, McHale observes that the move from epistemological to ontological concerns is not clearly discernible. There is not so much a difference, he suggests, but more of a trace between the movements. He notes that

> intractable epistemological uncertainty becomes at a certain point ontological plurality or instability: put epistemological questions far enough and they "tip over" into ontological questions. By the same token, push ontological questions far enough and they tip over into epistemological questions – the sequence is not linear and unidirectional, but bidirectional and reversible. (11)

In *Unnatural Voices*, Brian Richardson demonstrates the difficulty of pointing out or defining a narrator in a postmodern text. He observes that many modernist and postmodern texts use the "we" as a singular point of view. However, in postmodern texts, singular or unified speakers are often unlocalizable, unlocatable, and utter no voice of their own or are mimetically impossible, what he calls "impossible narrations" (76). Albeit it is true that the speaker of *So Far From God* is mimetically impossible in that a singular "I" cannot possibly speak for an entire community, she, however, as a character in the novel uses the "I" perspective with a "we" consciousness. Richardson notes that the "we" voice has been used by a substantial number of colonial and postcolonial authors to "express their struggles against imperial powers." He contends that postcolonial writers have found the first-person plural form to be an especially fitting linguistic device to represent a number of shared concerns (46). Aside from postcolonial writers, feminists have also favoured the "we" voice because of its explicit multivocality and its emphasis on the construction of a powerful collective identity.

In *So Far From God*, Castillo seems to have utilised the various functions of the modern "we" narrator, particularly in the way that the narrator delivers multiple perspectives of various characters and transgresses the natural limits of content and perception of a single consciousness, but extending this further by using a singular person voice to chronicle a collective consciousness. Even though the multiple perspectives collapsed in the "I" make the narrator irreducible to a single character, at the same time, she is fully figured in the text. The novel avoids explicit biographical information about the narrator, but the speaker has a very invariable idiosyncratic subjectivity that is characteristic of a single individual. She is particularly self-reflexive, calling herself a

"highly opinionated narrator," who confesses that her function is to dispense "rumours... once and for all" (250). Her sharp wit and dark humour are also particularly distinct and seem to characterise the neighbour whom Sofi has asked for advice about running for mayor; for example, when Sofi reveals her plans of running, the neighbour mocks internally: "Then why stop at mayor? Why not elect herself la juez de paz or la comandante of Tome as they had had in the old days? Why not be Queen of Tome for that matter?" (137). This humour is very distinct and consistent throughout the text. She makes fun of her characters at their expense even in the most tragic episodes. Because of her "interruptive voice," it can be argued that she is so much at the forefront of the novel, and she is both narrator and protagonist. At the same time, considering that she is an embodiment of all her female characters and the politics of her narration gestures on inclusivity, telling the reader that the story she is narrating is "our story," she is placing her community forward and making them the protagonist of the novel.

The "we" consciousness spoken in an "I" perspective is much closer to a native autobiographer's voice, which Hertha D. Wong has analysed in her study of traditional and recent Native-American women's autobiographies. She observes that the use of a single "I" to consolidate a perspective in stories, oral and literary, has been somewhat uncommon in Western narratives, this practice is typical of Native-American storytellers. She notes that the native autobiographer, "whether speaking or a writing subject, often implies, if not announces, the first-person plural – we – even when speaking in the first person singular" (171). *So Far From God*, in its representation of multiple subjectivities bound in a single voice or self, reflects the Native American narrator.

As the native autobiographer of her community, the narrator is omniscient. She is at the heels of the figures, detailing the setting, and scene, describing all the actions and thoughts, slipping easily, with an unlimited view of events. She gives internal insults privy only to an onlooker. She divulges the feelings and motivations of characters, dispenses rumours and gossip, and contextualises a wide range of subjects from politics to metanarratives. She does not merely comment but owns the comment, directly addressing the reader of her thought about a character or a scene. At times, she drops names as if the reader has a personal connection with the various minute characters in the novel. Other times, she withholds naming, as if to do so would misrepresent an actual neighbour, as when she says, "whose name it is best not to reveal here for this reason as well as some others that we shall soon see" (131). This textual style of digression and commenting gives the narrator an appearance of a certain degree of unreliability, which Wayne C. Booth describes as a "direct and authoritative rhetoric" (6) one that disrupts the reader's suspension of disbelief and emphasises that the narrator is guiding the reader toward a conclusion.

However, far from being merely an omniscient nosy neighbour, the narrator also has an excellent knowledge of her community's material, culture, history, and people. She frequently dispels (and is fond of) Native American mythology, particularly those that are

subjugated. Sometimes, she suspends the plot temporarily to relay stories of powerful female Native-American mythological figures; other times, she weaves myths into characters' lives.

The narrator moves through space just like one of her female mythical figures La Llorona, as an "astral-traveller," and speaks like a "*mitotera*, a stereotyped Chicana woman, an intruding neighbour" (Teubner 69) who much likes oral literature, describes the events in circular and nonlinear style, going back and forth in the events, interrupting the forward flow by linguistically marking it with words such as "years later." One of the most interesting styles deployed by the novel is its consistent lack of foreshadowing. She deconstructs the suspension of information typical of traditional novels by divulging to the readers what would usually be revealed in the end, or what typical literature would keep the novel a "page turner." For example, after describing the disappearance of Esperanza, the narrator immediately reveals to the reader that Esperanza is in fact dead: "[I]t was still assumed by the press that Esperanza was alive and being held captive" (64). Similarly, the use of sub-titles for each chapter breaks the expectation of the reader and summarises (and sometimes humourises) the coming event. The sub-title, for example, of chapter six reads: "The Renewed Courtship of La Loca's Mom and Dad and How in '49 Sofia Got Swept Off Her Feet by Doming's Clark Gable Mustache, Despite her Familia's Opinion of the Charlatan Actor" (103).

Disruption is one of the many features of her storytelling, recognizable in the intermittent opinions she discloses. Similarly, she questions her omniscience to pose an ontological question and recognise multiple possibilities, worlds, and truths. This postmodern aspect is an imposing feature of the novel: the unreliable narrator is concerned about her role as a storyteller and her own role in presenting truths and possibly distorting it. The narrator's awareness is marked by various syntactical techniques in her presentation. At times, she would give parenthetical intermissions either to add a comment or disagree or at other times, she would outright interrupt the flow of the story mid-paragraph to say "actually." Similarly, while the narrator is able to move from consciousness to consciousness, she also abandons them to tell her opinion. Such interruptive devices that interrogate the truth are common throughout the text. Deliberately she makes this very pronounced at the beginning of the novel. In chapter one, for example, the story is temporarily paused to give an intermission. She tells the reader, "[W]ell, if memory served right" (20). This intermission signals to the reader first, that the story she is telling is from of memory and second, that her own memory, like that of any being, is susceptible to forgetting or distortion.

Strategically, because she questions her own role as a storyteller and provider of "truth," she forces the reader to participate in resisting or questioning forms of absolute truths. Her use of confessing, self-reflexivity, and self-conscious narration highlights the metafictional elements of the written narrative to not only deconstruct her own omniscience as a narrator but further comment on the traditional function of the narrator

associated with fabricators of truths in literary texts. While she seems to be knowledgeable and omniscient, she interrupts the text to confess her limitations of knowledge to the reader. She does not pretend to deceive the reader to tell them she knows all there is to say about her identity, but rather categorically states that her own omniscience is fallible; for example, while at times, she would divulge to the reader "factual" events, like when she mentions that Esperanza is already dead and contradicts American press who are reporting that she was still kidnapped. At other times she would outright admit that she does not know, as when she tells the reader after Caridad goes missing that "Now, how she kept herself warm during that bitter winter that had just passed, besides with animal skins and maintaining a fire, no one will ever know" (86). The narrator systematically asks the readers to question, if not destroy, the integrity of "truth," not only of commonly accepted norms but the construction of it. She recognises that fictional narratives are also governed by the same history, in their biases, erasures and lack of recognition.

In the same chapter, the narrator tells the story of the origin of cookies and indirectly asks the reader to participate in the interrogation of the truth-value of objects. She says, "Biscochitos are Spanish cookies or Mexican cookies, depending on who you talk to. Dona Felicia, for instance, would tell you they were dreamt up by Mexican nuns to please some Church official, like a mole. Sofia, on the other hand, was told by her grandmother that the recipe came from space" (167). Thus, while the passage itself is ambiguous about the origin of biscochitos, it acknowledges that both can be true, that in its postmodern sense it just depends on which explanation one prefers to accept. Furthermore, her use of a direct address, the "you," admonishes and foregrounds the ability of the reader, as receiver of "truth." For her, they must create their own fictions and their own truths.

Because "normalized" ideas have "wounded" the perception about Chicanos and Chicanas, she asks the readers then to rethink or apply a certain degree of scepticism to their understanding of truth, and consequently, to their own reading. She asks them to participate in the deconstruction of historical objectivity, of liminal and subjective accounts of events, and recognise that primary resources and re-presented objects are tainted with a particular influence, bias, or predisposition, similar to the ones that have relegated people of the border in the margin. In recognizing those ways of thinking have distorted Chicano/an identity, reconciliation can occur.

This denial or questioning of the possibility of objective truth is employed throughout the novel. The narrator, at every turn, employs a postmodern "attack on truth" where truths become "stories we choose to believe" (Lawson xi). She makes the reader aware of alternative perspectives to critique empirical or epistemological, Christian or indigenous objectivity. As an alternative to normalised "truths," she hybridises science and spirituality where neither one is true(r) over the other; for example, the novel accepts the "death" of La Loca both as a spiritual death and a medical/epileptic episode. For the

narrator, both are truths, as it is similarly true for both indigenous and Christian spirituality to coexist and be practiced without contradiction. Even for the devout doña Felicia, there seems to be no conflict between indigenous spirituality and religious practice. As when she asks St. Anthony for help after Caridad goes missing and the saint “fails” to deliver, she turns the statue upside down to “persuade him to cooperate” (83). The narrator then says that “the truth is, St. Anthony probably just didn't know where Caridad went, since... he is for finding things, not people” (82). While the physical inversion of the material statue represents the metaphorical reversal of a patriarchal religion, it also gestures toward representing the hybridity of traditional and indigenous religions, one that can work hand in hand. At the same time, the scene also comments on the appropriation of symbolic images. St. Anthony, who is known as a saint for missing objects, when taken out of his original context will be appropriated (and rightly so). Truth, therefore, is negotiable in that the narrator’s awareness of spiritualties allows the practice of religion and spirituality without a sense of contradiction.

Critiquing objective truth, and particularly the construction of female identity through the various patriarchal and hegemonic discourses is a recurring motif in the novel. The beginning of the text describes La Loca, who is presumed dead and rises from her coffin to the roof of the church. The priest/father figure, who is himself unsure, asks the girl-child if her miracle is of God or the devil, which earns the rebuke of the child's mother, Sofi. Moments later, the priest pleads for La Loca to come down so he can pray for her. But La Loca tells him that it is she who is to pray for him, which is the second time a female character chastises the father figure, displacing him of his role. This opening scene opens the novel and asks the readers to presume an alternative reading strategy, one that actively involves the reader in the creation of the plot as they are confronted with perpetual uncertainty because of the reading experience.

Similarly, the narrator asks the reader to reassess the value of indigenous myths in their own spirituality and recover mother figures in indigenous cosmologies who have been relegated to the margin. To do so, she retells myths and validates various mythologies, particularly Native-American origin stories as in the forgotten “Tsichtinako” whom the Acoma considered the “invisible one” and “nourished the first two humans, who were both female” (211). Likewise, as Theresa Delgadillo observes, the novel's central focus is making analogies with various indigenous female myths and juxtaposing them with the female figures in the novel. He notes that Castillo makes an analogy between Caridad, la Virgen de Guadalupe, and the Apache warrior Loren by juxtaposing the protagonist's dark skin, her apprenticeship as a curandera (healer), and her discovery alone on the mountains when she retreated (888).

In the middle of the novel, the narrator describes the transformation of La Llorona. According to the narrator, La Llorona exemplifies a Chicana female figure whose identity has assumed various personages throughout history, most of it has been vilified, side-

lined, or reduced to a stereotype, as in the case of the Mexican women who were considered pious or domesticated women. The narrator says:

> Just like a country changed its name, so did the names of their legends change. Once, La Llorona may have been Matlaciuatl, the goddess of the Mexica who was said to prey upon men like a vampire! Or she might have been Ciuapipiltin, the goddess in flowing robes who stole babies from their cradles and left in their place an obsidian blade, or Cihuacoatl, the patron of women who died in childbirth, who all wailed and wept and moaned in the night air. (161)

In this scene, the narrator laments that La Llorona's identity was transformed from the one who cried over the loss of thousands to a kind of "boogey-woman." Scenes such as these elucidate a postmodern narrative and narrator who, as Brenda K. Marshall notes, resist totalization, and instead privileges "use-value identities and local and contingent truths" (6).

In conclusion, the unearthing of indigenous female origin mythical figures gestures toward the reconstruction and reconfiguration of the hybridised, fragmented Chicana identity through the act of storytelling. The role of the new narrator is to explore and unearth subjugated female stories that were once central to her community, and use them as models for female agency, as bodies for negotiation of political and ethical problems that plague female bodies in the borderland. The female storyteller must take on the role of compiler, narrate the testimonies and the common struggle of the lived Chicana experience, and directly impart them to her people. She must recover/reconstruct the ontological being of the female Chicana, the new mestizaje, not only for the female but for her community. She must displace accepted spatiality and temporality and instead project a new world of multiple ontologies, a world where being Western or native is not seen as such nor as contradictory to objective reality, but one that is in practice functional. She must highlight the contested boundaries between worlds. As the Navajo woman in the novel says, her role is to retell and reiterate the "story of interconnectedness of things... and the responsibility we have with 'Our Mother,' and to seven generations after our own" (242). At the same time, the appeal to the reader as "you" is a direct transference of knowledge to the next generation. The "you," the groups of marginalised people whose history may seem disparate but in essence is identical, must coalesce as a community.

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"Presume not that I am the thing I was": The Transformation of the Idea of the King and the Concept of Kingship in Shakespeare's Henriad

Meriç Tutku ÖZMEN

Middle East Technical University, Türkiye

Abstract: From 1584 to 1599, Shakespeare wrote two tetralogies of history plays covering the period from the reign of Richard II to Henry VII. As Elizabeth's age (she was fifty-seven in 1590), her problematic right to the crown, and the fact that the crown would pass to the Stuart dynasty, whose Catholic members had previously been excluded as potential successors, unless the queen would leave an heir make history plays popular among the theatregoers in Shakespeare's time. In his history plays, Shakespeare is concerned with the problems of rebellion, the divine right of kings, and the nature of kingship. In his portrayal of kings, the playwright is more concerned with the monarchs' actions rather than their eloquent speeches. The king in each play, as well as several other characters, provides insight and embodies a different approach to the idea of an ideal monarch. Each king differs from the other in crucial ways and has unique weaknesses and strengths. The hardships of being a king and the responsibility it brings are central to these plays, and the soliloquies delivered by the characters draw attention to what actually makes a king or gives him the right to rule, a question that has been considered at key points throughout the sequence of the history plays. Hence, this paper aims to scrutinize the transformation of the idea of a king and the concept of kingship in Shakespeare's Henriad, namely *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *Henry IV Part 2*, and *Henry V*.

Keywords:

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"Sanma ki ben artık eski bildiğin benim": Shakespeare'in Henriad'ında Kral Fikrinin ve Krallık Kavramının Dönüşümü

Öz: Shakespeare, 1584 ve 1599 yılları arasında II. Richard'dan VII. Henry'ye kadar olan saltanat dönemini kapsayacak şekilde İngiltere tarihini ele alan iki tetraloji kaleme aldı. Elizabeth'in yaşı (1590'de elli yedi yaşındaydı), sorunlu hükümdarlık hakkı ve bir varis bırakmaması ile tahtın, mensupları daha önce olası halefler olarak dışlanmış olan Katolik eğilimli Stuart hanedanına geçeceği gerçeği dikkate alındığında, tarih oyunları Shakespeare döneminin tiyatro severleri arasında çok popülerdi. Shakespeare, tarih oyunlarında isyan sorunları, kralın kutsal varlığı ve krallık kavramının yapısıyla ilgilenir. Yazar, bu oyunlar içerisindeki kralları sunarken kralların süslü konuşmalarından daha ziyade eylemlerine odaklanır. Diğer birkaç karakter gibi, her oyundaki kral, krallık kavramının iç yüzünü anlamayı sağlar ve bu kavrama farklı bir yaklaşım getirir. Her kral

Anahtar Sözcükler:

Shakespeare,
Tarih oyunları,
Henriad,
Krallık kavramı,
V. Henry

CONTACT: Meriç Tutku Özmen, PhD Candidate (https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9839-417X)
Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Türkiye, merictutkuozmen@gmail.com

bir diğerinden çok farklıdır ve kendine özgü zayıf ve güçlü yanları vardır. Kral olmanın zorlukları ve getirdiği sorumluluk, bu oyunların merkezinde yer almakta ve karakterlerin tiratları, bir kralı gerçekte neyin kral yaptığına veya ona yönetme hakkını neyin verdiğine dikkat çeker; bu, tarih oyunlarının ardıl düzeni boyunca kilit olarak kabul edilen bir sorudur. Bu nedenle, bu makale Shakespeare'in Henriad oyunlarında – *II. Richard*, *Kral IV. Henry: 1*, *Kral IV. Henry: 2* ve *Kral V. Henry*'de – bir tür dönüşüme uğrayan kral ve krallık kavramını incelemeyi amaçlar.

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In his history plays written between 1584 and 1599, William Shakespeare (bapt. 1564–1616) mostly used historical facts covering the reigns of kings from Richard II to Richard III and the rise of Richmond, who was the grandfather of Elizabeth I (r. 1558–1603) and the first King of the Tudor dynasty, to power as the future King of England. Since Elizabeth's old age, her problematical right to the throne and the possibility of passing the crown to the Stuart dynasty, previously excluded as successors because of its Catholic identity, were important issues of the period, history plays fascinated the Elizabethan theatregoers. Shakespeare is concerned with political issues like rebellions and the nature of kingship in these plays as the representation of kings in Shakespeare's histories "is governed by the understanding that it is what kings do rather than what they are or claim to be that is important" (Hadfield 455). Hence, this paper aims to explore the transformation of the idea of a king and the concept of kingship in Shakespeare's *Richard II* (1597), *Henry IV, Part 1* (1598), *Henry IV, Part 2* (1600), and *Henry V* (1600).

Richard II (1595–1596) is the first in a series of eight plays that trace the story of the English monarchy from the reign of Richard II (r. 1377–1399) to the fall of Richard III (r. 1483–1485). In *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, Harold Bloom groups *Richard II* with what he calls "The Major Histories," along with the two *Henry IV* plays and *Henry V* (247), as distinct from what he identifies as "The First Histories," *King John*, the three *Henry VI* plays, and *Richard III* (41). *Richard II* is primarily concerned with the questions of the divine right of an anointed king, of the role of a king and how that role with its responsibilities is defined, what a king should be, and what kind of a king Richard was.

The medieval notion of kingship, the notion of kingship in the lifetime of Richard II, involved a divinely ordained ruler who was responsible for protecting his people,

exercising supreme military and judicial power: "the concept of the monarch ruling as the chosen vice-regent of God, independent of the consent of the commons, unfettered by ecclesiastical authority, outside of and prior to the laws of the kingdom – all summed up in the term, 'divine right'" (Carroll 127). In relation to this notion, Richard II became the king in 1377 when he was only 10 years old, at an age when someone cannot be expected to have sovereignty over a country and its people. Furthermore, he was deposed in 1399 at the age of 32, before reaching a mature understanding of kingship which could be observed in his successors portrayed in Shakespeare's Henriad. In *Richard II*, Shakespeare presents Richard as the king, as the ruler through such negatives as John of Gaunt and/or through such foils as Henry Bolingbroke. His relationships with other characters and his attitude towards them and towards certain events provide the insight needed to understand what manner of a king he is. John of Gaunt, the uncle of the king, in an indirect manner, blames Richard and his betrayal of the trust his subjects had in him for England's trials. England is in ruins because of Richard's domestic policies and how he handles certain conflicts like the duel between Mowbray and Bolingbroke. The condition of England's financial ruin reflects the deeper condition of Richard's existential or emotional destitution. Gaunt also accuses Richard's advisors of being corrupt: "A thousand flatterers sit within thy crown, / Whose compass is no bigger than thy head" (II.i.100–101). It can be argued that this is a failure on Richard's part, "a lapse that combines bad judgment in advisers with mortal vanity and a poor sense of his divine responsibility as king" (Heims 95). Furthermore, it can be argued that this failure of the king also included him putting his political ambitions above his position as an anointed monarch. The act of anointing is often used by Christians as a symbol of God's grace, as anointing is seen as a sign that someone has been set apart for a special calling or purpose. The monarch is imbued with sacredness by the act of anointing, and it is about changing the monarch's character by consecration. In the play, Richard explains it as such:

> Not all the water in the rough rude sea
> Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;
> The breath of worldly men cannot depose
> The deputy elected by the Lord. (III.ii.54–57)

However, as Gaunt also complains, "Richard is the 'landlord of England'" (Heims 93), so he does not act like a king, but rather like a manager. "Richard is not seen as fulfilling the heroic, moral, and metaphysical function of God's steward" (Heims 93), which obviously leads him to failure in fulfilling his duty to protect his land and his subjects.

His defective way of handling the conflict between his subjects needs further scrutiny as another instance of his failure in representing the ideal monarch. At the beginning of the play when he stops the duel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, Richard seems to be a wise, impartial supporter of reconciliation and a peacemaker. The king stops the duel with gentle words and these words seem to show how considerate and good-hearted he is. However, nothing is as it seems to be and this is made clear later in the play. When news about John of Gaunt's death reaches Richard, he confiscates all of the wealth

which should have been inherited by Gaunt's son, Bolingbroke. This incident shows that Richard is not a benign monarch; rather, he is a tyrant. As Neil Heims states, "Richard does not represent a strong, divinely sanctioned royal and central manifestation of power around which the state can be ordered. His self-involvement makes him the centre of his concern. It usurps the grace of giving himself, of sacrificing himself, in his function as king, potentially placing his nation's concerns above his own" (Heims 95). Moreover, it can be inferred from the play that the reason why he stops the duel is also a selfish one. The reason behind the duel between Bolingbroke and Mowbray is only ever hinted at in the play. In Bolingbroke's words, it is implied that the king himself ordered the Duke of Gloucester's murder. This means that when Richard stops the duel, he is not acting as a benevolent king who does not want his subjects to be at odds with each other. On the contrary, showcasing his self-centredness, he is trying to avoid creating a scandal that might incriminate him in Gloucester's murder.

What Richard lacks in action, he has in abundance in oratory skills and his use of poetical words. He is the most prominent figure in the play when it comes to delivering elaborate lines. His skill as an accomplished orator makes him seem more sympathetic than he actually is. He is more articulate when expressing himself and this makes him more relatable and easier to understand than his rival Bolingbroke. As Bloom aptly puts it,

> Richard is a bad king and an interesting metaphysical poet; his two roles are antithetical, so that his kingship diminishes even as his poetry improves. At the close, he is a dead king, first forced to abdicate and then murdered, but what stays in our ears is his mock metaphysical lyricism. A foolish and unfit king, victimized as much by his own psyche and its extraordinary language as he is by Bolingbroke, Richard wins not so much our sympathy as our reluctant aesthetic admiration. . . . He is totally incompetent as a politician, and totally a master of metaphor. (249)

Richard's skill as an articulate, eloquent poet makes him one of the most memorable characters in Shakespeare's history plays. In Richard's illustration, therefore, it is not possible to see his transformation, but his unreliable, conflicting character. As Richard only appears in *Richard II*, he can be taken as a link and a point of comparison to the other kings in the tetralogy. He also provides a starting point for Shakespeare's transformation of the idea of and the conception of ideal kingship. As Lisa Hopkins puts it, "*Richard II* is not only a freestanding drama but also the first play of the second tetralogy, and that at least part of its function is thus to introduce us to the story of Hal" (403). Through the Henriad, Shakespeare takes the readers on a journey, beginning with Richard II who is, in a way, an immature king and could only be judged by how he expresses himself, which contradicts how he behaves/acts.

Henry IV, Part 1 (1597–1598) is the second play in the tetralogy and inherits Bolingbroke as its titular character. The previous play, *Richard II*, deals with Bolingbroke's rise to power and his defeat of Richard, becoming the new king. *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Henry*

IV, Part 2 focus on Henry IV's reign and his struggle to keep the peace in the country as well as his struggle to keep the throne. King Henry IV's father was John of Gaunt, of the House of Plantagenet, and his mother was of the House of Lancaster. He was born Henry of Bolingbroke and he later became the tenth king of England, the first Lancastrian to hold the throne. He was the one who deposed Richard II. His reign was not a peaceful one as he spent much of his reign dealing with rebellions and plots to dethrone him. His son, Prince Hal of Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2*, succeeded him to become King Henry V.

Although the titles of the plays are *Henry IV*, King Henry is not the main character of these plays but rather serves as the historical focus of the plays. He provides a sense of constancy and a centre of authority: He is the singular character with ties to the happenings in all of the plays in the Henriad. His actions are largely secondary to the plots of *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2*, and one of his functions in these plays is to act as Shakespeare's spokesperson who voices out some ideas about the notion of kingship. Both parts of *Henry IV* focus mainly on the development of the character of Prince Hal, demonstrating his journey from a seemingly good-for-nothing prince to a competent monarch. However, it is impossible to dismiss the importance Shakespeare seems to attach to King Henry IV. Throughout *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2*, the king is portrayed in a sympathetic way. He is wise to the ways of war and deeply aware of the cost it might bring to his people: "The edge of war, like an ill-sheathed knife, / No more shall cut his master" (I.i.17–18). He is depicted as a considerate and peace-loving monarch, trying to avoid any bloodshed by expressing willingness to negotiate peace with the rebels:

> He bids you name your griefs, and with all speed
> You shall have your desires with interest
> And pardon absolute for yourself and these
> Herein misled by your suggestion. (IV.iii.48–51)

Regal, proud, and somewhat aloof, his persona as a king is vastly different from the one Prince Hal will adopt once he becomes the king. Whereas Prince Hal expresses a desire to be relatable and close to his subjects, King Henry vehemently denies such an option and reprimands the prince for his foolishness. He states that the presence of a king should be "like a robe pontifical, / Ne'er seen but wonder'd at" and "Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast / And won by rareness such solemnity" (III.ii.56–59). His notion of an ideal monarch seems to be the complete opposite of Prince Hal's, in addition to Shakespeare's as the playwright is evidently in favour of the latter and seems to be criticizing the former.

The setting of the play is a kingdom troubled by treachery and rebellion, which explains why King Henry is plagued with worries. He feels guilty because he won his crown by deposing the former king and through a civil war. Furthermore, he is still haunted by the past as his reign has not brought peace or an end to the unrest within the country. He is troubled by his own uneasy conscience and his feelings of uncertainty about the legitimacy of his rule. Due to these troubling matters burdening his mind, King Henry does not seem to reach the expectations set out for him in *Richard II*. In *Richard II*, he is

obviously the better alternative in place of the young landlord-mannered king. He is depicted as a strong warrior with high morals who can be expected to become an effective ruler. Yet, the political atmosphere and the constant rebellions he has to deal with when he becomes the king beg the question of whether he has truly achieved the potential that he has claimed in *Richard II*. Although King Henry insists he will be mighty and fearsome, his position is tenuous, as some of the characters such as Worcester remind him that although he is the king now, there were others who helped Henry advance to power (Knowles 416–417). As a result, he is unable to rule as competently and as effectively as Prince Hal will, once he becomes the king. Although he is without the moral legitimacy that every ruler needs, as he is the usurper of the throne in a way, he keeps his tight yet tenuous hold on the throne and never loses his sovereignty. But with an ethical sense clouded by his own sense of compromised honour, it is clear that Henry IV can never be a great king or anything more than a caretaker to the throne that awaits his son, Henry V.

In *Henry IV, Part 1*, Prince Hal, the central figure who fully and completely illustrates the transformation of the notion of kingship, is introduced. The prince in his youth is seen spending his time in taverns, drinking and wreaking havoc. Throughout the play, his father, Henry IV, constantly voices his complaints against the prince and wishes that he was more like his rival, Henry Hotspur: "Yea, there thou mak'st me sad and mak'st me sin / In envy that my Lord Northumberland / Should be the father to so blest a son" (I.i.77–79) because Northumberland seemingly has a son with the qualities of an ideal ruler. The king remarks that he sees "riot and dishonour stain the brow" (I.i.84) of Prince Hal, and desires that he had Northumberland's son, also named Harry, as his own: "That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged / In cradle clothes our children where they lay, / . . . / Then would I have his Harry, and he mine" (I.i.86–89). However, through Hal's various asides and soliloquies, the prince is clearly not what/who he seems: "Yet herein will I imitate the sun, / Who doth permit the base contagious clouds / To smother up his beauty from the world" (I.ii.189–191). He resembles himself to the sun allowing the clouds to hide its beauty from the world. He implies that when the time comes, "when he please again to be himself" (I.ii.192), he will let the whole world see his true self. Evident in this implication, he is different from his appearance, and his pretence of idleness and frivolity is just an act. For him, this act will allow him to shine much brighter because people will not expect him to be any different/better when he is the king. His logic is sound:

> If all the year were playing holidays,
> To sport would be as tedious as to work;
> But when they seldom come, they wished-for come,
> And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents. (I.ii.196–199)

Hal counts on the rarity of his character. He is aware of the fact that nothing is more precious than rare accidents:

> So, when this loose behaviour I throw off
> And pay the debt I never promised,

> By how much better than my word I am,
> By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
> And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
> My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
> Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
> Than that which hath no foil to set it off. (I.ii.200–207)

His cunning and wit cannot be ignored. He states that when he is reformed and ready to accept the responsibilities of kingship, he will seem like a better man than he is. Giving everyone the wrong impressions and creating false expectations, he sets the stage for his ultimate victory. Until then, "I'll so offend, to make offence a skill, / Redeeming time when men think least I will" (I.ii.208–209). Furthermore, the way he expresses himself and his skill as a master orator is definitely reminiscent of Richard II's elaborate and memorable speeches.

Hal is a study in contradictions: rascal yet noble, playful yet authoritative. Although his father and many others dismiss him as a ne'er-do-well wastrel, he is undoubtedly the most compelling character. Capable of befriending anyone whom he encounters, he has charming adaptability that makes him powerful in ways neither the king nor Hotspur can compete with: "I am king of courtesy. . . . I am so good a proficient in one-quarter of an hour, that I can drink with any tinker in his own language during my life" (II.iv.10–19). Prince Hal spends a lot of time in taverns and becomes the companion of Sir John Falstaff, joining with his tavern-mates in the Gadshill robbery but uses this time as an opportunity to hone his skills as a politician, a negotiator, and a communicator. His 'disgraceful' behaviour enables him to interact with the part of the population who are generally disregarded by the monarch, although they make up the public majority. Thus, Hal can be argued to become a better ruler than his father as he appears more of an open-minded and calculating young man. The prince begins the play as someone unfit to rule and an embarrassment to his father; however, he becomes the man his father has always wished he would become. In the final scenes, he acts in a way befitting of the heir. Just as he explained at the beginning, his wild lifestyle was just a ruse, proving him to be a devious and extremely skilful ruler, one that can be described as a Machiavellian. Prince Hal uses the Machiavellian strategies of power in the realm of politics as mentioned in Niccolò Machiavelli's (1469–1527) *The Prince* (1532). Machiavelli advises the ruler to be cunning like a fox and be strong like a lion:

> It [is] necessary then for a prince to know well how to employ the nature of the beasts, he should be able to assume both that of the fox and that of the lion; for whilst the latter cannot escape the traps laid for him, the former cannot defend himself against the wolves. A prince should be a fox, to know the traps and snares; and a lion, to be able to frighten the wolves; for those who simply hold to the nature of the lion do not understand their business. (67)

Prince Hal is both cunning and strong in his deeds; he has the nature of the fox as well as the lion.

The prince is not the only cunning character in the play. His father, King Henry IV, proves himself to be just as resourceful and manipulative as his son. The only difference between the father and the son is their different approaches to the games which need to be played for the crown. Like Hal, the king is also aware that rare occurrences are more valuable:

> By being seldom seen, I could not stir
> But, like a comet, I was wondered at,
> That men would tell their children "This is he!"
> Others would say, "Where? Which is Bolingbroke?"
> And then I stole all courtesy from heaven
> And dressed myself in such humility
> That I did pluck allegiance from men's hearts,
> Loud shouts and salutations from their mouths,
> Even in the presence of the crowned King.
> Thus did I keep my person fresh and new,
> My presence like a robe pontifical,
> Ne'er seen but wondered at; and so my state,
> Seldom but sumptuous, showed like a feast
> And won by rareness such solemnity. (III.ii.46–59)

He explains that had he not cultivated an image of himself as a mysterious, aloof figure, he would not have been able to attain the support he needed to accomplish what he had done:

> Had I so lavish of my presence been,
> So common-hackneyed in the eyes of men,
> So stale and cheap to vulgar company,
> Opinion, that did help me to the crown,
> Had still kept loyal to possession
> And left me in reputeless banishment,
> A fellow of no mark nor likelihood. (III.ii.39–45)

As can be seen from the king's speech, he is just as manipulative as Hal, but in a different way. Like Hal, he also created an elaborate ruse to appear in a particular way, a way fitting his needs and aims. However, the king's and the prince's different approaches to their public reveal the crucial difference in their understanding of power: The king believes in the need to create a somehow distant, mysterious persona to wield the power necessary to rule. It is clear from his words that he believes that the reason Richard lost the throne was because he

> Mingled his royalty with cap'ring fools,
> Had his great name profaned with their scorns,
> And gave his countenance against his name
> To laugh at gibing boys and stand the push
> Of every beardless vain comparative;
> Grew a companion to the common streets[.] (III.ii.63–68)

He worries that Hal is like Richard: "And in that very line, Harry, standest thou, / For thou has lost thy princely privilege / With vile participation" (III.ii.85–87).

Similar to Prince Hal and King Richard, King Henry is also a decidedly skilled rhetorician and an expert manipulator. Richard II uses his oratory skills to make up for his lack of authoritative ones, and he manipulates people into believing what he chooses for them to see. In a similar vein, Prince Hal embraces his role as a wastrel and hides behind a mask, concealing his true nature and aiming to surprise his enemies and his subjects alike with his 'miraculous' transformation. He toys with other people's perceptions of him and wields power over them by shaping his image in their minds: Everyone sees what he desires for them to see. Not unlike Richard II or Prince Hal, King Henry cultivates an image of himself and protects that image until the last minute. His chosen persona is that of an aloof yet benevolent monarch, and that type of behaviour is definitely not less contriving than the other two. The similar aspects of the father and the son, their duplicity and devious stratagems, are contrasted with "the impetuous, unmediated energy of impulsive ambition and impetuous aggression personified by Hotspur. . . . Whereas Hotspur is naïve, the king and the prince are cunning" (Heims 114). Unlike the king and the prince, Hotspur is simple; he is what you see: "He is transparent in his ambition, in his rebellion, in his displays of anger, pride, and self-assertion" (Heims 114). That is not the case when it comes to Henry and Hal: "They are both politicians. Their speech and their actions are devised to mobilize obedience and support by charming and distracting others, even as the father and son fabricate public images designed to serve a private agenda that has great public consequence" (Heims 114).

The three Henrys in the play (the king, Henry IV; the prince, the Prince of Wales, Henry; and Hotspur, Henry Percy) can also be said to embody a different approach to the concept of kingship. Although they share the same name, they are vastly different from each other and have unique weaknesses and strengths. The king appears to be a considerate monarch who tries very hard to avoid bloodshed. He is willing to negotiate with the rebels even on the battlefield and tries to find a middle ground. Next to him, Hotspur's hot-headedness seems even more childish. Despite being an unquestionably brave soldier, Hotspur is not the ideal warrior he appears to be at the beginning of the play. His pride makes him reckless, causing him to rush into battle and underestimate Hal. His reckless anger, blinding pride, and uncontrollable heedlessness bring his downfall at the end of the play. Of the three Henrys, Hal seems to be the most effective ruler. Especially once he leaves his wild ways in the past and decides to "be more [him]self" (III.ii.93). His maturity process is a proof that he will eventually become the articulate, powerful king of *Henry V*. He is the character whose adaptability is the source of his power and success, and his power as a skilful orator is evident from the beginning, even when he is behaving like a hopelessly unrepentant wastrel. Prince Hal is the only character in the play who has the ability to switch between the language of the court scenes which are in verse and the language of the tavern scenes which are in prose, never losing his eloquence in either scene.

The third play in the tetralogy is *Henry IV, Part 2* (1597–1598) and although each of the four plays that together make up the tetralogy is a complete and independent work

in itself, *Henry IV, Part 2* seems to be the only one not able to stand on its own. The play is directly concerned with what happens after the battle in *Henry IV, Part 1* and before the events of *Henry V*. The change in Hal's attitude starts to become even more apparent in *Henry IV, Part 2* with each passing scene. For the first time since his appearance in *Henry IV, Part 1*, he complains about wasting his time with the likes of Falstaff and expresses his regret:

> . . . I feel me much to blame
> So idly to profane the precious time
> When tempest of commotion, like the south,
> Borne with black vapour, doth begin to melt
> And drop upon our bare unarmed heads. (II.iv.360–364)

His sudden remorse further demonstrates the conflict he is experiencing. He obviously enjoys spending time in the tavern, pulling pranks on others; but he is also aware of the fact that there are more important things afoot. He also refuses to acknowledge Falstaff at the end of *Henry IV, Part 2*. Prince Hal, on his way in the procession for the throne, refuses to acknowledge Falstaff who tries to show his familiarity with the prince in the crowd, calling him "my sweet boy" (V.v.42) and "my heart" (V.v.45). However, Hal's reaction is swift and devoid of any sentimentality: "I know thee not, old man. Fall to thy prayers. / How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!" (V.v.46–47). This incident shows that Prince Hal, as the new King of England, is quite conscious of his royal place and his responsibilities. He is becoming more and more aware of his responsibility to his father and country.

The hardships of being a king and the burden of responsibility it brings are central to *Henry IV, Part 2*. Both Henry IV and Henry V have trouble sleeping and both characters soliloquise about the burden the crown brings when they are awake at night. Both the father, Henry IV, and later the son, Henry V, question why the simple pleasure of sleeping is denied to a king and given freely to their subjects. Unable to accomplish his potential as an ideal monarch due to the circumstances surrounding his sovereignty and his guilty conscience rooted in his usurpation, Henry IV, with his answer to the question "[u]neasy lies the head that wears a crown" (III.i.31), appears to evade the realities of his rule, as well as the crimes he has committed. The idea that wearing the crown is a burden which causes its bearer to lose sleep is further emphasized by Hal when he takes the crown from his father's pillow and accuses it of the troubles it causes, for being "so troublesome a bedfellow" (IV.iii.154):

> O polished perturbation, golden care,
> That keep'st the ports of slumber open wide
> To many a watchful night, sleep with it now –
> Yet not so sound and half so deeply sweet
> As he whose brow with homely biggen bound
> Snores out the watch of night. (IV.iii.155–160)

The prince is aware of the fact that the crown, and the burden it carries with it, is his now that his father is dead. He mourns for his father's death but also seems to be mourning for

the peaceful sleep he is giving up by accepting the responsibilities that come with being the king:

> . . . The care on thee depending
> Hath fed upon the body of my father;
> Therefore thou best of gold art worse than gold:
> Other, less fine in carat, more precious,
> Preserving life in med'cine potable;
> But thou, most fine, most honoured, most renowned,
> Hath eat thy bearer up. (IV.iii.289–295)

It is implied in the play that the unease of carrying the crown comes from the fact that Henry IV wrongfully usurped the throne from Richard II:

> . . . God knows, my son,
> By what bypaths and indirect, crook'd ways
> I met this crown; and I myself know well
> How troublesome it sat upon my head. (IV.iii.313–316)

It is Henry IV's hope that Hal will not have to go through what he himself has suffered because Hal will be getting the crown as his rightful inheritance: "To thee it shall descend with bitter quiet, / Better opinion, better confirmation, / For all the soil of the achievement goes / With me into the earth" (IV.iii.317–320), "How I came by the crown, O God forgive, / And grant it may with thee in true peace live" (IV.iii.348–349). It can be argued that Hal's response to his father's tirade signals and foreshadows an important idea which is explored in the next and final play of the tetralogy, the idea that there is a difference between a capable ruler and a hereditary one:

> You won it, wore it, kept it, gave it me;
> Then plain and right must my possession be,
> Which I with more than with a common pain
> 'Gainst all the world will rightfully maintain. (IV.iii.350–353)

The final play of Shakespeare's Henriad and the last play of the second tetralogy is *Henry V* (1598–1599). This play is argued to be "Shakespeare's most sophisticated analysis of kingship and forces the audience/reader to reconsider the career of England's most celebrated ruler" (Hadfield 464). It can be argued that the play can be read as a work that does not overlook the probability that a country could be ruled more proficiently by a strong and capable leader than a "hereditary monarch, someone who had no claim to govern apart from his intrinsic merit" (Hadfield 461–462). For instance, one image which appears recurrently throughout *Henry V* is that of the king as a player/actor. This is also mentioned in *Henry IV, Part 2* by Henry IV when he is giving his final advice to his son and heir, Prince Hal: "all my reign hath been but as a scene / Acting that argument" (IV.iii.327–328). This image of the king as an actor claims the focal point throughout the tetralogy, starting with Bolingbroke's ascension to the throne, becoming Henry IV. Richard is a performer too, but he is the rightful king and his authority as a ruler and right to rule is never questioned in the play. With Bolingbroke's move against the rightful king, the natural order is disrupted, and in *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2* and *Henry V*, the king has to

prove that he has a right to rule. Henry IV's "need to justify his rule by ceaselessly playing the role of king is a performative burden he bequeaths to his heir" (Hadfield 457). P. Rackin also supports this argument by stating that "[m]onarchs who have no natural right to rule – i.e., no English monarchs after Richard – have to prove themselves worthy of the people's support, endlessly playing a part" (qtd. in Hadfield 457). This idea that a king has to prove himself worthy of the support he is given by the people by tirelessly playing a part is very prominent in these plays. Richard II does not seem to be concerned with playing a part for the sake of his crown or his people. He is more interested in his own agenda and does whatever he sees fit to achieve that. The civil unrest makes it an absolute necessity for Henry IV and Henry V to prove their causes right in changing the royal house and causing the turmoil that ensues. Hence, both Henrys are devoted to their assigned roles as monarchs, and they are willing to keep their public image as benevolent kings to prove their worth in the eyes of their people.

According to Neil Heims, the allure of *Henry V* comes from the "self-conscious theatricality" of the play (154). He explains that the structure of the play draws attention to its fictional nature: Each act opens with Chorus, "who calls attention to the structure and construction of the play, to the fact that it is a work of dramatic writing being acted in a theatre" (154). "Within the context of this overt theatricality," as Heims adds, "the figure of Henry performs himself not just for the audience members but for the characters in the drama, investing himself with his role as king" (154). Henry's oratory skills, his dramatic eloquence, are essential to his portrayal as a king, as well as his success as a monarch. His impressive skill in articulation enables him to charm and impress those around him, winning over nearly every single character in the play. *Henry IV, Part1* and *Part 2*, as well as *Henry V*, "reveal subversion/containment as the very model of early modern power production, . . . track a process of internal conquest that progressively incorporates all Others into the unitary political nation-state," and King Henry V alone seems to have a "grasp of these mechanisms, enabling him to exploit them more successfully than anyone else" (Crewe 440). The charms he exudes is evident from the beginning, starting with *Henry IV*. As Neims puts it, his "cunning wit and . . . resourcefulness at playing the kind of tricks that defined Hal's behaviour in the two parts of Henry IV have not disappeared with his ascension to the throne. . . . They have been translated into another realm or mode, revived" in *Henry V* (155).

King Henry of *Henry V* and Prince Hal of *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2* are so very different from each other. The first scene of *Henry V* is a testament to that. In the opening scene, Canterbury and Ely are discussing the changes in Henry, commenting upon Prince Hal's transformation from a 'seeming' irresponsible youth into a more mature sovereign. Ely says:

> The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
> And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
> Neighboured by fruit of baser quality.
> And so the Prince obscured his contemplation

> Under the veil of wildness, which, no doubt,
> Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
> Unseen, yet crescive in his faculty. (I.i.60–66)

The two men comment on how changed Henry is, praising his dignity, intellect, and maturity. In the previous plays, *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2*, Henry is merely a fun-loving, unruly Prince Hal, who likes to frequent taverns and interact with common people. In the quotation above, the riotous past of the young king is in a way justified, and the changes in him are recognized by the clergymen. Henry hid his true self, concealing his intelligence and maturity by acting the part of a spoiled prince and appearing wild. This was his plan all along, as he had explained in *Henry IV, Part 1*; the seeming wildness of his youth was a calculated act, a type of performance, intended to make his eventual change seem more impressive.

In the beginning of *Henry V*, it can be clearly observed that Henry is looked down upon by his rivals. This is most evident in the scene where the Dauphin sends Henry a box of tennis balls intending them to serve as a mocking symbol of Henry's childish behaviour in the past. However, the young king's reaction to this gift is entirely different than what is expected of him:

> And tell the pleasant Prince this mock of his
> Hath turned his balls to gun-stones, and his soul
> Shall stand sore charged for the wasteful vengeance
> That shall fly with them; for many a thousand widows
> Shall this his mock mock out of their dear husbands,
> Mock mothers from their sons, mock castles down,
> And some are yet ungotten and unborn
> That shall have cause to curse the Dauphin's scorn.
> But this lies all within the will of God,
> To whom I do appeal, and in whose name
> Tell you the Dauphin I am coming on
> To venge me as I may, and to put forth
> My rightful hand in a well-hallowed cause.
> So get you hence in peace. And tell the Dauphin
> His jest will savour but of shallow wit
> When thousands weep more than did laugh at it. (I.ii.282–297)

This speech transforms the symbolism behind the tennis balls: The Dauphin intended them to be an insult towards Henry, carrying the implication that the young king is still the reckless youth of the past, not someone to be taken seriously. However, with Henry's response, the tennis balls turn into a symbol of Henry's new identity, a monarch who has steely resolve and strength.

Although Henry lived a wild and reckless youth, as portrayed in the previous plays, in *Henry V* he is a changed man. His rise to power has turned him into a temperate, honourable, solemn, eloquent monarch who rules with equal parts strength and mercy. He has his moments of weakness in private, when he struggles with the responsibilities of being a king, but publicly he projects the image of a king who is assured of his power

and position, who also inspires his subjects to achieve triumph in war and moral uprightness in their lives. He is also a modest king, always attributing his success to God: "O God, thy arm was here; / And not to us but to thy arm alone / Ascribe we all!" (IV.viii.105–107), "Take it, God, / For it is none but thine" (IV.viii.110–111).

In *Henry V*, Henry is every inch the king his father wanted him to be. On the day of the Battle of Agincourt, he delivers a speech on honour and brotherhood, proving himself once again the consummate orator. He announces that the day of the battle, which also coincides with St. Crispin's Day, will forever be remembered because of the soldier's bravery on the battlefield. Thanks to this rousing speech, the troop disregards the odds stacked against them and charges off in high spirit, overwhelming the French troops. When a herald delivers the casualty report of the day, it is obvious that the English are on the victorious side:

> This note doth tell me of ten thousand French
> That in the field lie slain. . . .
> . . .
> So that in these ten thousand they have lost
> There are but sixteen hundred mercenaries;
> The rest are princes, barons, lords, knights, squires
> And gentlemen of blood and quality.
> . . .
> Where is the number of our English dead?
> Edward the Duke of York; the Earl of Suffolk;
> Sir Richard Keighley; Davy Gam, esquire;
> None else of name, and of all other men
> But five-and-twenty. O God, thy arm was here;
> And not to us but to thy arm alone
> Ascribe we all. When, without stratagem,
> But in plain shock and even play of battle,
> Was ever known so great and little loss
> On one part and on th'other? Take it, God,
> For it is none but thine. (IV.viii.79–80, 86–89, 101–111)

In the tetralogy, *Henry V* is the one most preoccupied with the concept of kingship. Through Henry's soliloquies, the difficulties of being a king are brought into the light. Like his father, Henry V loses the peaceful sleep over the crown's burden. He carries the responsibility of the whole nation:

> Upon the King! "Let us our lives, our souls,
> Our debts, our careful wives,
> Our children and our sins lay on the King!"
> We must bear all. (IV.i.222–225)

He asserts that this responsibility is heavy, painful to carry, and that it comes with being born to greatness. However, he realises that not everybody appreciates his deeds for his people's sake and ponders about his sacrifices due to kingship duties:

> . . . What infinite heart's ease
> Must kings neglect that private men enjoy!

> And what have kings that privates have not too,
> Save ceremony, save general ceremony? (IV.i.228–231)

He questions his own worth, asking why people adore him: "What is thy soul, O adoration? / Art thou aught else but place, degree and form, / Creating awe and fear in other men" (IV.i.237–239). He considers his kingship as an impediment and sees no use in the "ceremony," which, for him, is the only distinct thing a king has. Henry understands all this because he is a king, and neither the fancy title 'king' preceding the name, nor the throne he sits on can provide him with the much-craved peaceful sleep. He argues a "wretched slave" sleeps better than a king; he enjoys the peace without worrying about the vigil of a king:

> The slave, a member of the country's peace,
> Enjoys it, but in gross brain little wots
> What watch the King keeps to maintain the peace,
> Whose hours the peasant best advantages. (IV.i.273–276)

This soliloquy is "Shakespeare's most sophisticated reflection on the problem of kingship" and "[t]here is no historical precedent for this scene or this speech in the chronicle sources or earlier plays" (Hadfield 460). It draws attention to what actually makes a king or gives him the right to rule, a question that has been considered at key points throughout the sequence of the histories. Here, Henry is concentrating on the burdens he must carry as the king and tries to justify his actions as ruler. He admits that only ceremony separates the king from his subjects.

To conclude, it can be argued that Shakespeare's Henriad reflects his beliefs on the concept of kingship, and Prince Hal/Henry V seems to be the ideal ruler/monarch in Shakespeare's mind. Throughout the tetralogy, the reader is given different leader figures who possess extremely different qualities, but although the reader likes and sympathises with them from time to time, none of them has what it means to be the 'perfect' ruler. Richard II is a master orator who is an incredibly likeable character, yet he is a self-centred king who fails in his duties as the anointed king. He is defeated by Bolingbroke/Henry IV, who is a more reserved figure yet a decent ruler. However, he is a usurper and has to deal with the troubles such a situation creates. His qualifications as a king are somewhat shadowed by the way he snatched the throne from Richard II. Henry IV is followed by his son Prince Hal/Henry V, who is a character that combines all the good/desirable qualities of the others in one body. He is as eloquent and charismatic as Richard II. He is a competent ruler who rightfully inherited the throne, unlike his father. Through Henry V, Shakespeare makes the reader realise that neither being the rightful owner of the throne nor possessing the necessary qualities makes one a good ruler; one needs both.

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Ruinscapes and Subversion of Temporalities in *For the Mercy of Water*

Şevket Sarper DÖRTER

University of Otago, New Zealand

Abstract: *For the Mercy of Water* is the story of a writer travelling to an unnamed, abandoned countryside, in an imagined Global Southern country, to interview an old woman identified as "Mother" after the murder of the young girls by the water security guards of "the company." I examine *For the Mercy of Water*'s representation of exploited, marginal rural space as a 'ruinscape' that manifests the palimpsestic overlay between linear time, industrial time, colonialism, and neoliberal globalization. I use the term "ruinscape" in the literary imagination, not as imagery of damaged space, but as spatial representation of the negative social, economic, and environmental processes across historical periods that interpenetrate each other. I argue that the novel also presents an emergence of new potentialities by counter-hegemonic temporalities that reconceptualize the present moment as an ongoing accumulation of time and space, rather than a linear organization of resources.[1]

Keywords:

21st-century South African novel,
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For the Mercy of Water Romanında Harabeleşme Alanları ve Zaman Deneyimlerinin Tahribatı

Öz: *For the Mercy of Water* (Suyun Merhametine), bir grup genç kızın "Şirket"in su güvenlik görevlileri tarafından öldürülmesi üzerine hayali bir Küresel Güney ülkesinde isimsiz ve terkedilmiş bir kasabaya "Anne" olarak adlandırılan yaşlı bir kadınla söyleşi yapmak üzere yola çıkan bir yazarın hikayesidir. *For the Mercy of Water*'daki sömürülen, marjinal kırsal alan temsilini doğrusal zaman, endüstriyel zaman, sömürgecilik ve neoliberal küreselleşme arasındaki tabakaları belirginleştiren bir 'harabeleşme alanı' (*ruinscape*) olarak incelemekteyim. Edebî tahayyüldeki 'harabeleşme alanı'nı bir zarar görmüş alan imgesi olarak değil de tarihsel periyodlar boyunca birbirinin içine geçen negatif sosyal, ekonomik ve çevresel süreçlerin mekansal bir temsili olarak kullanmaktayım. Aynı esnada, romanın şimdiki zamanı, doğrusal bir kaynak organizasyonundan çok, devam eden bir zaman ve mekân birikimi olarak tekrar kavramlaştıran hegemonya karşıtı zaman deneyimleriyle yeni olasılıkların doğuşu olarak gösterdiğini savunmaktayım.

Anahtar Sözcükler:

21. yüzyıl Güney Afrika romanı,
Zaman deneyimleri,
Neoliberal küreselleşme,
Su savaşları,
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[1] This article is based on research conducted for my PhD thesis titled *The Temporalities of Ruinscapes in Twenty-First-Century South African Fiction*. 2023. University of Otago, PhD dissertation. The ideas and findings presented here are largely derived from that thesis.

CONTACT: Şevket Sarper Dörter, PhD (https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7160-5136)
University of Otago, New Zealand, sarperd@gmail.com

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Introduction

Karen Jayes's novel *For the Mercy of Water* (2012) situates water distribution politics within the contexts of the imperial *longue durée*, the externalization of nature, the organization of time, and gender. Narrated by an unnamed woman, *For the Mercy of Water* tells the story of indigenous women living in a mostly abandoned, remote village in an imagined Global Southern country. The names of places, people, and organizations are omitted and replaced with placeholders. In this imagined countryside, the distribution rights of water are under "the company," which ultimately generates the region's systemic inequality by usurping the water sources from the indigenous people.

The novel opens with the narrator making her way to a rural site of recent upheaval. After experiencing years of drought, the people of the countryside have left for urban areas to restart their lives. Following a rainfall in one of those villages, security guards set out to secure the water for the company, only to discover that a group of young girls still live there. In the village's classroom, the guards sexually assault four young girls. Only Eve escapes to the city, after injuring her assailant. In the aftermath, "Mother," the village's elder who had cared for the young girls, is accompanied by a representative of an NGO, a male journalist, a doctor, and the PR representative for the company. The narrator, being a writer herself, wants to take this journey to write an imaginative work. On her way to the village, she is also assaulted by a company guard while her guide is asleep.

Upon arrival, the narrator meets Mother and listens to her story about the assaulted girls and the exploited village. While the PR representative denies the guards' criminal activities, the narrator undertakes a journey to find Eve in the city and return her to Mother. The narrator finds Eve in a detention facility and temporarily becomes her foster parent. Upon learning that one of the guards who assaulted the girls is still alive, the narrator tracks him down and helps Eve face her attacker. The novel portrays vengeful justice as a part of male oppressive systems, but Eve, despite her vulnerability and trauma, spares the guard's life and thus actively chooses not to be complicit in that system. At the end of the story, the narrator manages to return Eve to Mother.

I examine *For the Mercy of Water*'s representation of exploited, marginal-rural space as a 'ruinscape' that manifests the palimpsestic overlay between linear time, industrial time, colonialism, and neoliberal globalization. I use the term "ruinscape" in the literary imagination, not as imagery of damaged space, but as spatial representation of the

negative social, economic, and environmental processes across historical periods that interpenetrate each other. I argue that while the novel's ruinscape exposes the overflowing temporalities between colonialism and neoliberal globalization, it presents an emergence of new potentialities through the reconceptualization of the present moment as an ongoing accumulation of lived and perceived experiences of togetherness in the text.

Jayes portrays how temporal distancing justifies the exploitation of indigenous lands in the text. The text exhibits the liminality between colonial forms of oppression and neoliberal polity, as the company denies the local girls' assault by the company guards while seemingly supporting the locals through PR campaigns. The company PR portrays the struggle of the indigenous people over water as a cultural clash between the old and the new. The temporal arrangement of the countryside manufactures the 'disposable,' the act of which is a part of the imperial *longue durée* and neoliberal governance. In "The Racial Constitution of Neoliberalism," Arun Kundnani argues: "Race enables the limits to the universalisation of neoliberalism to be naturalised and dehistoricized: political opposition to market systems mounted by movements of the global South or racialized populations in the North is read by neoliberal ideology as no more than the acting out of cultures inherently lacking in traits of individualism and entrepreneurialism" (64). The neoliberal framework assumes the history of economic deregulation to be race-independent. Paradoxically, the same framework perceives the disenfranchized people of color who oppose neoliberalism as less rational economic subjects. The colonial power structures between the globalized spaces and the exploited enclosures are narrated as matters of time—specifically, of belatedness. The invisibility of such enclosures within the global society's conscious is consistent with the cheapening of nature, thus neoliberal polity. The narrator challenges the village's marginalization and dehumanization by engaging with its ruinscape.

The village's description as a ruinscape rather than an empty space reveals the entanglement of past, ongoing, and recent processes of ruination. The narrator presents the company through its wounds on the landscape, which stands next to the abandoned village houses. The dominant imagery of the unnamed village does not indicate remnants of a past, exploitative regime, but rather the persistence of one. Jayes's observational style and detail enable a mindful mode of reading that disturbs temporal distancing. Regarding the subversive quality of ruined spaces, Ann Laura Stoler argues that "To speak of colonial ruination is to trace the fragile and durable substance of signs, the visible and visceral senses in which the effects of empire are reactivated and remain" (11). Ruinscapes reveal the palimpsestic overlay of imperial formations within the politics of the present. The rural ruinscape of the novel subverts the hegemonic temporal arrangement, which justifies the village's exploitation by enabling an inspective approach toward time and space. The narrator's mindful engagement with the rural ruinscape produces what Elizabeth A. Bragg defines as the transpersonal self: "self is a social process but at the same time, the self encompasses all the liminal areas between universal, individual, and the

spiritual" (28). The narrator's engagement with the liminality of time and ruination invokes a similarly liminal understanding of self and the other. The narrator's careful investigation of the rural ruinscape creates a sense of coalition in the text.

The narrator's mindful engagement with the rural ruinscape makes her consider the geological time of the landscape, which introduces her to deeper and accumulative temporalities. The narrator's interaction with the spaces that are infused with the indigenous locals' trauma stimulates a sense of existential unity through temporal means: The present as an ongoing accumulation of collective lived experiences positions the narrator as a part of a growing whole, rather than an isolated subject in front of an ahistorical background. As opposed to the linear timeframe that paves the way for the externalization of nature, this "interdependent present" produces a coalition across time and space that perceives the self through the other, thus challenging the profit incentive behind the male-dominated hubris in the story. If a linear timeframe is a conceptual instrument for the organization of labor and trade, it is also an ideological tool to naturalize the denial of coevalness, rendering the exploitation of nature invisible through temporal distancing of the dispossessed other. The narrator's relationship with the present is a slow unfolding of a lived experience that is both an end result and an ongoing process. Through this double movement, the reader witnesses the narrator becoming a part of the village and the dispossessed women's struggle, which she takes on out of a strong sense of interdependency rather than duty.

The title *For the Mercy of Water* implies a temporal formation against the systems that justify the dehumanization of the other for capital extraction. If water is linked to mercy, then there is an implication of trauma; in the novel, water attracts imperial patriarchy, which is mostly represented by the company and the guards. The enclosed spaces of globalism are also marked by the persisting temporality of trauma. Meanwhile, water is also metaphorically positioned as a source of healing, hence the term mercy. When running, water carries marks and residues of what it passes over and through in its chemistry, along with the new interconnections. What I call 'moving with,' or what Donna J. Haraway calls "ongoingness," implies a willing encounter with the traumatized self, a duration that "resists processing," as trauma involves a frozen moment that repeats itself and will not let go of the present (Haraway 101). This encounter externalizes the trauma and releases the subject from "an eternal present, consigns her or his experiences to the past and opens up the future again" (West-Pavlov 107). The eternal present is dissolved only after processing, which requires facing the traumatized moment, and therefore the past self. In the linear organization of time, the self is expected to remove itself from the past as a distinct subject, but the subject is not able to do so, as it feels imprisoned by the self in a spectral, transient present. In this collision, the time and place of trauma are reconfigured. This does not mean that a trace of the trauma does not linger, but rather that the subject regains their agency from the imprisoning transient present. The novel defines the notion of mercy as a regaining of "here and now" against a void present. The

organization of time that is in favor of the accumulation imperative can justify the externalization of nature.

Temporal Distancing: Time and Justification of the Village's Exploitation

Time can also be conceptualized as an organization of resources. Also, time as an organizational tool can depoliticize the externalization of nature. Because time itself is invisible, it can present itself as irrelevant to cultural structures that inform socio-political imaginaries. Matthew Eatough argues that "Cultural forms are historical agents in environment-making, not merely reflective of re-organizations of capitalist nature, but co-productive of them" (111). The relationship between the accumulation imperative and time 'is' an organization of nature itself. The ways one perceives, imagines, and acts in the present do not simply reflect hegemonic systems, but in fact, constitute and support dominant ideologies. Therefore, the study of temporalities is also the study of hegemonic ideologies and practices. According to Jason W. Moore, capitalism advances an epistemic rift "in our understanding of how human organizations are embedded in nature" (601). This separation between nature and society is instrumental in recreating cheap natures while maximizing profit/labor efficiency: "Nature as an external tap and sap" (Moore 601). In this context, time loses both its ground in lived experiences and its body, what Barbara Adam calls "the creation of a non-temporal time" (66). Once time becomes interchangeable with money, it becomes a measuring device, devoid of life and decontextualized from its content. Jayes's use of placeholder names, rather than actual names, makes it easier to identify the agents that externalize and cheapen nature in the novel.

The narrator's choice of utilizing nominal placeholders reflects the faceless, replaceable, and dehumanizing character of institutions and characters that deny coevalness, such as "the company," "Doctor," and "NGO." Jayes chooses not to name most of the characters or institutions in the novel, except for the girls.[2] "The company" is a nominal placeholder for the neoliberal economy. "Doctor" who works in the "NGO" does not portray any form of resistance to the company, despite her knowledge of the social dynamics within the region. The lack of names in the novel reflects how the empire perceives itself outside of history. This relationship between the political economy and the 'tap-and-sap' mentality is either rendered invisible or justified through epistemic displacements. The doctor justifies the company's practices by saying, "The company needs to secure the water in order to ensure that the country survives, that we survive" (Jayes 68). The doctor's security narrative cloaks the company's business interests, and she adds a nationalistic angle to her point: "There are other countries who want the water now, our water, and we need to secure it to gain leverage with them… The water war has started here and it will spill over and into the whole world" (68). Doctor's use of "our" is

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[2] The narrator assures everyone in the story that the people in her testimony will be anonymous. However, Eve insists that her name stays in the text. This is the narrator's creative rationale for using place-holders for names.

a form of reductionism that mystifies the conflict between nature and corporatism. During her dialogue with the narrator, Doctor resorts to deflection to avoid culpability: "You drink the water from the company and you bath in it and you flush your toilet with it" (67). Doctor equates having to use the resource that has been usurped by the company with being complicit in the company's systemic exploitation. Her accusation seemingly recognizes what water constitutes but obscures the company's role in its exploitation.

Temporal othering is another form of dehumanization that relies on the notion of linear progressive time to rationalize colonialism. The journalist at the village confirms to the narrator that the company resorts to essentialism to justify their violence: "You know the line: the violence is 'deeply rooted in their history', that they are riding on a 'tradition of non-payment' and of 'entitlement that's just unworkable in today's economy'" (54). In a linear timeframe, the local is perceived as traditional and therefore has a lesser status (Ferguson 178). The company's temporal discourse is able to dislocate the indigenous people from the present and pushes them out to the moral periphery, as the indigenous people and the company do not have the same visibility or power in constituting the present. "Tradition" implies belatedness, and the phrase "tradition of non-payment" portrays the right to access safe water as an outlandish entitlement. Ironically, the true entitlement lies in the ability to decide who belongs to the "here and now;" the phrase "today's economy" is already charged with a suggestion of belatedness, as the stress on "today" produces a binary between the speaker's "now" and an imagined "then." Even the idea of arguing against the exploitation of the company implies being out of time, what Johannes Fabian calls the "denial of coevalness": "a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse" (Fabian 31). The temporal terms define the other's proximity to dehumanization and accordingly enable the other's displacement. The denial of coevalness serves as an intellectual and cultural basis for the justification of colonialism. Whether during the peak of early colonialism or later neoliberalism, the praxis of accumulation through domination relies heavily on oppressive cultural systems that justify the violence inflicted on the other.

After the narrator arrives at the periphery of the village, she follows the waterway to find the village center: "The town must have been cloaked in a fog of heat so thick that it had been invisible, because I came upon it without warning, through a sheet of watery air as if I had walked through a mirage" (Jayes 25). The stress on invisibility through the use of the words "cloak," "fog," "invisible," "a sheet of watery air," and "mirage" emphasizes the obfuscation of the zone and contributes to the invisibility of the village. The narrator later admits her blindness to the village's water scarcity after the independent journalist from the village informs her that the reason for the problem's invisibility is because the city gets water first (56). The narrator's description of the area continues:

> There were three buildings. They had no doors, and the spaces inside the old frames held the thick dark of the departed. In the corners and along the tops of the walls, they were crumbling. . . . It was the first time I had seen such a place, where the company had been and gone, where the face of defeat was set in all its wan peace, in all its blank, stifling present. (25)

The stress on the village's invisibility is repeated, but this time the narration's focus is on the spaces themselves, which are likened to frames that hold the absence of a presence. What the space holds is the absence of what has departed. However, that absence is described as a "thick dark." The narrator fleshes out what is normally perceived as "empty" by descriptions such as "a thick dark" and "a sheet of watery air." Breathing becomes physical contact with something other than air. The contrast between what-could-have-been and what-now-is is visceral and almost tangible. The company "had been and gone," yet the ruination that is infused by the company's remnants governs the here and now of the scene. The exploitation is shown to be a persisting process, rather than a one-off event. The present moment of the passage is accentuated by the company's non-presence, which echoes Leila Dawney's reverberations of materiality: "The afterlives of infrastructure endure both in their material remains and the affective and experiential modes through which those whose lives were shaped by their promise make sense and meaning in the present" (407). The legacy of the company as an exploitative agent is highlighted even more by its present lack of presence. The ruinscape does not imply a change in the power dynamic, however, and the company and what it entails lingers on. Upon seeing the desolate, abandoned town, the narrator historicizes ruined spaces:

> I thought how for others, towns like these are simply ruins, 'sleepy' places where there is only a mysterious forgetfulness, a sameness that has no answer for anything and offers only the next second and the previous one, all of which resemble each other as if twined together by some invisible cord, and this cord is the only tremulous fragment that remains of a force they call time. (Jayes 25–26)

Ruinscapes without history are objects of a fetishizing gaze. Ruins are not described as reflective spaces, but as decontextualized ruins that would evoke daydreaming and imagination in the spectator. The stress on "sleepy," "forgetfulness," and "sameness," highlights the erasure of memory, decontextualization, and invisibility to the system that the company represents. As an invisible chord, time vibrates and thus temporalizes space and makes the ruinscape perceptible to the narrator. The cultural device that Rob Nixon describes as the "invention of emptiness" categorizes time and space as exploitable and generates invisibility for environmental ruination (165). The lack of imagination leads to forgetfulness as well as a rhetorical justification of exploitation. Emptiness as a rhetorical device for the externalization of nature assumes under-development and therefore implies a reorganization of a particular space and its human and non-human inhabitants. The concept of "empty" justifies the hubristic order of the deregulation of the economy.

Ruinscape as Temporalization of Spectralized Lives: Re-Conceptualization of Time and Self

In *For The Mercy of Water*, Jayes exposes the imperial within the Anthropocene through her mindful description of the landscape and exposition of temporalities. The narrator's microscopic depiction of her interaction with her surroundings draws the reader in by focusing on the sharp details that are deemed unimportant, or "empty" in Nixonian terms. Jayes anchors the reader's present moment by immersing them in the details of the moments when the narrator carefully inspects her connections between the human and nonhuman. Through these connections, she realizes both her and the other's historicity manifesting within the present and highlights the visibility of the imperial *durée* within the present moment.

As the narrator gets closer to the unnamed village, she stumbles upon a material remnant of the company from its older operations: "And then I found a rusted metal sign lying in the ground half buried, and I read the word 'Glacier' and some numbers and very old dates. I realised that I had been walking on the scar of a glacier that had once run through the valley, and the sign must have been written by geologists or tourist people in the days when such signs were made" (Jayes 24). The half-buried signpost bears the mark of an investment that is no more, as the measurement and historical data on the signpost reveal a use-value approach toward nature. The glacier's dry texture is the lingering material consequence of this approach. In other words, the glacier and its surroundings were left without a future, leaving only a "stifling present" (25). Walking on a "scar" of a glacier implies an inflicted condition rather than an outcome of a temporal cycle.

While the narrator continues her observation of the village's peripheral landscape, she notices spatial features that imply deeper temporalities than the company's inflicted damage there: "The scratches where plants and grasses erupted and gather were the marks of ancient ice and stone fragments carried over centuries from the mountains, in a time when the water had been plentiful and had run deep" (24). Unlike the rusty, half-buried signpost, which points towards an industrial activity, the landscape is marked with deeper, "ancient" temporalities. The temporal signifiers of nature are highlighted and rendered stronger with long-term transformations "over centuries." There is also a reference to a time when the extractive blueprint was not present, an era whose water was "plentiful" and would "run deep." In both of the above passages, temporal terms convey that the company is responsible for the scarcity of water. As time not only organizes everyday life but also shapes thought, the invisible toxicity of the imperial *longue durée* can be grasped by understanding time's role in nature's externalization, which can reveal forms of ongoing ruination that usually escape the senses. Jayes compares two temporalities: the first is a duration of extraction whose presence is marked by its absence, while the second is an ancient temporality that spans beyond human interaction. The company's blueprint on the landscape highlights the looming presence of exploitation. The ruinous nature of the glacier site does not suggest a phase

that is long gone. The active absence of the company in the region is due to resource depletion. The "scars" of glaciers, like the abandoned infrastructures, carry their legacies even when they are dead. At the same time, this ruinscape does not suggest a time of melancholy:

> The water they drank was hidden, the blood of a glacial memory held within thin veins and underground, watery batholiths. I walked like this, on the glacial pavement, until something made me look up. Coming from the mountains in a straight line, thin and muddied and tender as an infant vein, was a river. . . .
>
> It was only about five metres wide, but already had pushed a deep enough path in the earth to form small waves in the middle, and the waves caught the sun and gave off sparks of light, brighter and sharper than stars. (Jayes 24)

The ancient temporality of the water is given flesh with the vein and blood metaphors. Despite the exploitative nature of the company, the resource is still pumping with life. The narrator's observation of a thin vein of the river is described almost as a magical moment, as the river might be only five meters wide, but it is wide enough to create sparkles that rejoice and give hope to the observer. The sense of hope is strengthened with the infant metaphor.

The narrator does not lament the loss of the former water sources and instead forms a connection with the fresh source of water and moves along with it. Despite the warning from the company that natural water sources are not safe to drink, she decides to fill her bottle: "Instead I knelt down and I put my hands in it, and I moved them in front of me in wide circles, and I felt the silken body that is water push open the spaces between my fingers, and the pillows of coolness swelled and softened and pushed against my palms and it was gentler than a fleshy hand but heavier and more certain than air" (Jayes 24). The detailed description of a tangible connection between the narrator's hands and the body of water presents a moment of mutual pull and push. Where the borders of the narrator's body end, there opens up a connection to the nonhuman. As the narrator pushes her hands down, water covers up the back of her hands as if she is going through a moment of symbiosis. The body of water is not external to the narrator, rather it is a part of her. Time significantly slows down in the narrator's depiction of the moment she shares with the nonhuman. The slow and immersive nature of the narrator's gaze helps the reader recognize the imperial *longue durée* in the flowing rhythm of the everyday. The form of any gaze produces its temporality, and the practice of the "slow seeing," as Ashleigh Harris puts it, historicizes the looker's temporality and enables them to recognize themselves as a part of a collective experience (131). The narrator's inspective gaze subverts time from what is understood as a series of passing moments to a process of realization of interdependency.

The Emergence of New Temporal Formations and Response-ability Through the Rural Ruinscape

The village and the indigenous women are temporally and spatially distanced from visibility. The spatio-temporal distancing numbs the other characters' urge to respond, since as Ayşe Çağlar argues, "Perspectives based on a denial of coevalness prevent us from seeing the experiences, norms, and values migrants and natives share" (qtd. in Barber and Lem 29). Time as a series of passing points is intrinsic to the externalization of nature and labor relations. As I have discussed in the previous section, the inspective gaze of the narrator helps her to notice the connections between distant spaces and times in relation to the *longue durée*. I argue that Jayes's slow, inspective gaze towards the present moment enables a temporal formation that incentivizes a connection between human and non-human life forms. The self is perceived not as an outside agent, but as integral to the other. The historical compounds that constitute the collective moment actualize themselves through transpersonal temporalities. I call this temporality, which disrupts the nature and society binaries, "the interdependent present."

As the name suggests, the interdependent present is the temporality of co-existence. The narrator connects herself, the landscape, Mother, and the girls through moments of acknowledgment. Through such moments, time thickens and paves the way for introspection through the (human or non-human) other. This is the production of the present as interdependency. The interdependent present would require conceptualizing time not as an organizational tool, but as a cumulative assemblage of heterogeneous moments that inform each other. The accumulative quality of the interdependent present implies that the present is not perceived in a vacuum. The present moment is understood as an ongoing and building process where the individual is made up of human and nonhuman others.

Chthulucene[3] is Haraway's response to the Anthropocene discourse, with a focus on ongoing becoming between human and non-human systems that figure humans as not the only important actors in the ecosystem. This intermesh of systems enables a more conscious form of togetherness that empowers proactive autonomy for the other. Haraway explains that the term is a compound of two Greek roots: *Kainos* means "now as a fresh beginning," and *Chthonic* refers to being related to Earth. The temporality of *Kainos* rejects the linear organization of time, a "now" that does not disregard the past. Therefore, just like the glaciers the narrator walks upon, *Chthonic* both refers to what has been and what is now, "the temporality of the thick, fibrous, and lumpy 'now,' which is ancient and not" (206). She describes *Kainos* as a "sense of thick, ongoing presence, with hyphae[4] infusing all sorts of temporalities and materialities" (2). Chthulucene resists the

[3] The name is similar to H. P. Lovecraft's "Cthulu" monster, but Haraway openly rejects the association for being misogynistic and racialized (Haraway 101). That is why it is spelled differently.

[4] Filaments.

Anthropocene by dropping "self-making" and replacing it with what Haraway calls a "sym-poiesis," or "making with," re-imagining humans as a part of the non-human, as opposed to the externalization of it (58). This way, the urgency of the other becomes the urgency of the self. In the novel, Jayes uses the motif of water to create a temporality that is parallel to Haraway's conceptualization of the Chthonic present as a thick, accumulative, ongoing, and ancient-yet-also-momentary temporal genre.

Water forms the temporal connection between Mother, Eve, the village, and the narrator. The narrator's "leaks," the dried-out glaciers, and the "liquefied" village are the marks of erasure that a human and nonhuman coalition faces in the text. Water also represents a gathering and flowing temporality. There is a sense of accumulated lived experience that does not obstruct the flow of time. A body of water is always at once accumulated and an immediate present that either grows or diminishes. In other words, the text portrays water as an anti-temporality to linear time, similar to *Kainos*. Water expands the narrator's here and now from the immediacy of her surroundings and enables her to perceive herself as a part of the girls' collective temporalities.

Water serves as a spatio-temporal agent that generates the interdependent present which is experienced by the narrator. The pool in the cave where the girls were murdered provides an accumulated consciousness that transfers itself to the narrator upon her contact. After hearing Mother's testimony, the narrator finds the cave where the girls were murdered by the company guards. She squeezes through the narrow cave entrance and proceeds until she finds the chamber with a sunlit pool in the middle of it. The pool reminds her of the girls and the assault, but she decides to step in nonetheless. After a few steps, she loses her footing and dives deep inside: "Under the water, I could only see nearness: this and that, and now. Down there, the water made shapes from solid forms. But there were also tiny dust particles that turned and caught the sun, and they travelled through the water like tiny universes of light" (Jayes 146). Being deep in the water is marked with proximity and immediate temporality, near and now. This is a "now" that evolves and forms as the water shapes even the solid forms it interacts with. The present moment under the water is non-linear, and therefore unpredictable; under the sunlight, even the tiny particles that float around turn out to be universes within themselves. There is no hierarchical chain of being. The accumulation of all the elements in the pool governs the "here and now" in coexistence.

By falling into the pool, the narrator is thus introduced to a different temporal regime, and she goes through an epiphany of a coalition between herself, the girls, Mother, the continent, and nature itself: "I walked on and I turned around. I saw the rock I had slipped on was dark brown. The blood was old but still wet, and it covered the rock with the shape of the first continent. It was on me, on my hands and on my feet, and I saw down in it, and through my tears, the whole cave went red" (Jayes 147). The wetness of the old blood is a temporal marker for the imperial *longue durée*. The long temporality of the violence also carries a sense of immediacy. The narrator witnesses the nonlinear present

of co-existence by slipping on the blood-stained rock. In a way, the rock's wetness as an implication of reverberated damage pushes her to a state of entanglement in shared ruination. Within this entanglement, there is the rock that resembles the continent of Africa, the blood of the girls, and the narrator who is connected with all these experiences through the physicality and memory of water. The narrator's tears and the blood of the girls refer to distinct traumas, but they interact and inform each other, thus the pool turns red with the narrator's tears.

The narrator's symbiotic engagement with the indigenous girls' experiences through the cave enables what Arne Naess calls the "ecological self" (2021). Naess argues that an understanding of the self that constructs itself through nature is required. If the self is external to nature, then its exploitation of it is justified on an epistemological level. If the self is integral to nature, then the ecological struggle becomes a struggle for oneself: "Early in life, the social *self* is sufficiently developed so that we do not prefer to eat a big cake alone. . . . Now is the time to share with all life on our maltreated earth by deepening our identification with all life-forms…" (Naess 28). If the social self is the consciousness that the individual does not exist in a vacuum, the ecological self is the realization of the interdependency between human and nonhuman agencies. According to Bruno Latour, "To be a subject is not to act autonomously in front of an objective background, but *to share agency with other subjects that have also lost their autonomy*"[5] (5). For Latour, subjectivity is actualized through sharing agency. Both Naess and Latour stress imagining the self as a shared interdependency. In *For the Mercy of Water*, the narrator's inspective engagement with geography and geographical temporalities inspires her to actualize herself through the experiences of the exploited indigenous women. By positioning her temporal experience as a part of an accumulative collective process, the narrator forms an existential unity with the human and nonhuman other. Similar to Haraway's Chthuluscene, the temporal formation of the present in the cave invites the narrator to entangle her experience to the village's. Thus, the interdependent present sets the temporal basis for response-ability for the narrator to act for the village as if her own life is under threat.

Conclusion

The discovery of the interdependent present has no short-term, direct effect on the presence of the company. At the very end of the story, the narrator manages to bring Eve back to Mother, and the company agrees to provide free water to the village for Eve's silence. However, near the end of the novel, the narrator *imagines* it is raining after she is done with her quest: "I thought about the rivers that poured down now from the old gorges and peeled away the dead plants and carried the patient, pregnant seeds to root again in the flesh" (Jayes 379). Imagining the rain upon Eve's return implies regaining the

[5] Latour challenges the idea that nature operates objectively as if it is without human agency, and therefore humans have control over their autonomy.

ability to imagine forward. The old gorges that refer to structures are filled with fresh water, and the old plants are being peeled away and replaced by seeds. Despite the company's persistent activities, a cyclical, and therefore dynamic, temporality is underlined, as opposed to the imprisoning present of the spectralized village.

The imperial *longue durée* is centered upon the externalization of nature, which is justified and made invisible through temporal forms of distancing and othering. As time formulates the organization of labor and the thought systems that govern it, the way that time is conceptualized affects how the self is imagined across the past and the present. The novel disrupts the cultural logic of *longue durée* by offering different temporal regime that illuminates the connections between the human and non-human, the past, and the present.

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A Critique of Exaggerated Libertinism in Thomas Shadwell's *The Libertine*

Şafak HORZUM

Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Türkiye

Abstract: This article argues that *The Libertine* by Thomas Shadwell, one of the earliest examples of the Restoration comedies, has one of the pioneering roles in portraying the philosophy of the time's courtiers, libertinism. It is obviously seen in Shadwell's play that the characteristics of libertinism are not given entirely truly in this Don Juan adaptation, but rather in an exaggerated and criminalised way. In this light, the paper will first discuss the playwright's socio-political position during the upheaval of the Restoration of Charles II. Secondly, it will set out to explore the play's position in terms of its exemplary nature in the genre of comedy of manners. Last but not least, libertinism and its characteristics will be analysed through their illustration in the play by means of male characters, particularly Don John, the protagonist.

Keywords:

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Thomas Shadwell'in *The Libertine* Adlı Oyununda Abartılan Libertinizmin Bir Eleştirisi

Öz: Bu makale, Restorasyon dönemi komedilerinin ilk örneklerinden biri olan Thomas Shadwell'in *The Libertine* (Çapkın) adlı eserinin, dönemin saraylılarının felsefesi olan libertinizmi tasvir etmede öncü rollerden birine sahip olduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Shadwell'in Don Juan uyarlaması olan bu oyununda libertinizmin özelliklerinin tamamen doğru bir şekilde verilmediği, daha ziyade abartılı ve kriminalize edilmiş bir şekilde yansıtıldığı açıkça görülmektedir. Bu bağlamda, makalede ilk olarak II. Charles'ın tahta çıkış dönemi sırasında oyun yazarının sosyo-politik konumu tartışılacaktır. Ardından, töre komedisi türündeki ilk örneklerden biri olması açısından oyunun tür içindeki konumu değerlendirilecektir. Son olarak, libertinizm ve özellikleri, oyundaki erkek karakterler, özellikle de başkarakter Don John üzerinden oyundaki tasvirler kullanılarak incelenecektir.

Anahtar Sözcükler:

Libertinizm,
Töre komedisi,
Thomas Shadwell,
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CONTACT: Şafak Horzum, Assist. Prof. Dr. (https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4114-0387)
Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Department of English Translation and Interpreting, Kütahya, Türkiye, shafakhorzum@gmail.com

Libertinism, which began as a philosophy in continental Europe in the late fifteenth century and continued to get recalibrated in the subsequent centuries, has been the central theme of several plays in English, especially the comedies written and performed during the Restoration. One of the earliest examples to portray this philosophy is *The Libertine: A Tragedy* (1675) by Thomas Shadwell. Shadwell's portrayal of rakes like the courtiers around Charles II (1630–1685) in the play seems to do an injustice to the true precepts of libertinism, owing to the adapted nature of the work. As such, this paper aims first to provide an authorial background in relation to the socio-political dynamics of the Restoration era, pointing out the problematic nature of the play's genre. Finally, the article will discuss how libertinism is displayed in a highly exaggerated manner through the male characters' accumulating sensationalism by Shadwell.

Thomas Shadwell, in Wm. Hand Browne's critical biographical account, lived between 1640 and 1692, and studied law first at Caius College, Cambridge, and then in the Middle Temple (258–259). Coming from the gentry, he mostly benefited from his royalist family's boons, except for a limited period of financial setbacks that followed the Civil War (1642–1651) (Wheatley, "'Who'" 342). After his education for the bar, he embarked on the "Grand Tour" in which the young gentlemen of the time would travel in Europe through Germany, "Flanders, France, Switzerland, and the north of Italy" (Clark and Popkin 191). Such a European exploration signalled "economic and physical power" and therefore indicated the nobility's "cultural hegemony" (Thompson 387) since such young men would not only explore several countries, philosophies, politics, and customs but they would also get acquainted with the ways of the world for their future public and private affairs. Upon the restoration of Charles II in 1660, Shadwell, a witty and vivacious man of letters, was easily admitted into the circle of the Carolinian courtiers (Browne 260). John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester (1647–1680), for instance, compared the first poet laureate John Dryden (1631–1700) and Shadwell in terms of the qualities of their comedies and declared the latter and Wycherley as the "true Comedy" writers: "Of all our modern Wits, none seems to me / Once to have touch'd upon true Comedy, / But hasty Shadwell, and slow Wycherley" (Wilmot 41–43). In contrast to this praise, Rochester, as the epitome of the Restoration court wits, stated in his poem "Horace's Tenth Satire of the First Book, Imitated" that "Dryden's Rhimes / Are stolen, unequal, nay, dull, many Times" (Wilmot 1–2) and that his works needed to be "censure[d]" due to "his dull Pen" which could "Proceed from Want of Judgment, or of Wit" (Wilmot 88–90). In the end, Shadwell's court-supported writing career proliferated, largely because Dryden's conversion to and defence of Catholicism cost him the laureate position after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Soon after the enthronement of William III (1650–1702) and Mary II (1662–1694) as co-monarchs in 1689, Shadwell was appointed as the new poet laureate as a reward for his principally consistent support of the Whig cause during the Exclusion Crisis (1679–1681) (Hughes 139), anti-Catholic sentiments, and subtle satires of the Restoration wits in his works (Wheatley, *Drama* 460).

During the Restoration, Shadwell mostly wrote few serious dramas and several comedies adapted from both his homeland predecessors like William Shakespeare (1564–1616) and the continental playwrights like Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, Molière (1622–1673). However, Ben Jonson (1572–1637) was the one who influenced the playwright most, as Shadwell revered Jonson's theory of "humours" in defining one's true character in comedy. For example, his first comic play, *The Sullen Lovers* (1668), is mainly based on the Jonsonian comedy of humours. Later on, he bettered his understanding of humours in the next comedies *The Royal Shepherdess* (1699) and *The Humourists* (1670) (Browne 261–262). Accepted in the high court circles and gaining first-hand experience of the courtly manners and customs of the new elite, Shadwell turned out to be one of the first authors to pen the primary examples of the newly emerging Restoration comedy. However, one could still observe his admiration of the Jonsonian humours in such comedies of manners as *The Libertine* performed in June 1675, hence rendering it difficult for a critic to categorise the play under the same genre.

Following Jonson's footsteps, Shadwell took refuge in the patronage of the same gentleman as Jonson's, Prince William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle (c. 1593–1676), as seen in the dedication of *The Libertine*. With the above-mentioned support of the Earl of Rochester as well as of the Duke of Newcastle, he developed a compelling argument with Dryden over "the form and function of English comedy" (Cannan 23), in which Dryden defended the pure comedy of wit or manners and the other stood his grounds on the comedy of humours or at least a mix of them. In opposition to Dryden's emphasis on comedy's function as a matter of delight and amusement, Shadwell believed in the indispensability of moral didacticism in comedies (Corman 52–56; Cannan 23–24). Their debate, by means of their defences and attacks in the prefaces of their dramatic works, underlined two dominant comic theories of the time. Shadwell, addressing both theories, produced his version, mostly adaptation, of the Don Juan story for the stage, *The Libertine*, employing the elements of manners and humours, notwithstanding a hasty and careless style.

Before its premiere at the Dorset Garden Theatre in early June 1975 by the Duke's Company (Fisk xxi), *The Libertine* was written in a short time, as each of the first three acts was penned in no more than "five days" and the final two "were both written in four days" (Shadwell 5). Such short amounts of time to compose a dramatic work were highly preferred by the theatre companies and were regarded as important skills by theatre owners and dramatists since "slow writing is considered a mark of intellectual dullness" at the time (Fisk 334n26). Moreover, the short amount of playwriting is attributed to producing good comedies, as more serious genres such as satires and tragedies would require quite some time and elaboration, the lack of which Shadwell accused his rival Elkanah Settle (1648–1724) in the play's Preface (Shadwell 6), especially after Settle began to work for the same theatre, the Duke's, as Shadwell. Soon after this brief production period, the play immediately became a great theatrical success as it was "very well Acted, and got the Company great Reputation" and Don John, its eponymous libertine,

"perform'd by Mr. [Thomas] *Betterton* Crown'd the Play" (Downes qtd. in Fisk xxii; italics in the original). The playwright also states his pleasure in its success in Preface: "I have no reason to complain of the success of this play since it pleased those whom, of all the world, I would please most. Nor was the town unkind to it, for which reason I must applaud my good fortune to have pleased with so little pains" (5). Preferred as a favourite of the Restoration theatres until the end of the third decade in the eighteenth century (Ungerer 224), the play owed a great part of its triumph to depicting upper-middle-class manners and intrigues through its employment of the well-known conventions in Spanish cloak and sword plays: "the Spanish setting and names, the mistaken identities and nocturnal rendezvous, the duels, the young woman disguised as a man and [a young woman] pursuing her faithless lover, the loquacious and cowardly servant participating reluctantly in his master's dangerous intrigues" (Ungerer 225). Yet again, these conventions do not suffice to label the work as one example of such plays since *The Libertine* also includes the elements of a "comi-tragic play" (Owen 131), "a horror play, . . . a black comedy" (Wheatley, "'Who'" 345), and a comedy of manners.

Preface, as much as proving the play's success, clarifies this amalgamation of genres. Shadwell borrowed so many elements from *El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (*The Trickster of the Seville and the Stone Guest*, 1630) by Tirso de Molina (1579–1648) and changed de Molina's tragic plot of Don Juan story. It is also assumed that Shadwell saw the Don Juan plays performed in Paris during his Grand Tour. Gustav Ungerer explains that Italian actors performed *Il Convitato di pietra* (*The Feast with the Statue*, 1658), an Italian adaptation by Giacinto Andrea Cicognini, and it gathered a great amount of attention from the time's young gentlemen (222). Quite a lot of French versions and adaptations were also produced by many playwrights including Molière. He explicates this chain of sources in Preface: "It was first put into a Spanish play, . . . the Spaniards having a tradition, which they believe, of such a vicious Spaniard as is represented in this play. From them the Italian comedians took it, and from them the French took it, and four several French plays were made upon the story" (5). Accepting the diversions he made in this new Don Juan story, he expects "the readers will excuse the irregularities of the play when they consider that the extravagance of the subject forced me to it. And I had rather try new ways to please than to write on in the same road, as too many do" (5). Additionally, he maintains that "the extravagance of the subject" renders it challenging to decide the genre of the play because it incorporates music and theatrical machinery on a great scale as well as "slapstick humour" and "chilling scenes of violence and degradation" (Fisk xxii). Due to "its furiously unstable tone," it is sometimes seen as a "dark comedy" (Neill 128), a "sober-faced burlesque" (Hume 312) or a "morally instructive mock-tragedy" whose often-omitted subtitle might suggest (Jaffe 57). Shadwell is perfectly conscious of his amalgamation as he states in Prologue: "The most irregular play upon the stage, / As wild and as extravagant as the age" (15–16). However, the play is regarded as an example of the Restoration comedy of manners in its

employment of English upper-class manners and the philosophy of the era with an infuriating and hyperbolic theatricality.

Before delving into an analysis of the play's twisted portrayal of libertinism, one might benefit from a basic outline of its plot. *The Libertine* opens out on a street in Seville before the houses of Don John and Maria. The three gentlemen, Don John, Don Lopez and Don Antonio, are introduced along with their so-called libertine philosophy. The trio is solely in pursuit of pleasure at the expense of other people's lives, for which Jacomo, Don John's would-be servant, is in distress due to his worries about his own association with the gentlemen's evil deeds and the probable conventional punishment that would ensue. A series of atrocities are revealed here: Don Lopez's murder of his elder brother; Don Antonio's raping and impregnating his own sisters; and Don John's killing Don Pedro, the Governor of Seville, and plotting his own father's murder. Not having enough of these horrendous deeds, they keep on feeding their evil greed even further, hence strengthening their criminal records. When they go for another mischief, Leonora, the faithful lover of the protagonist, arrives to look for Don John. Although she learns Don John's true character from Jacomo who offers himself as a perfect lover-substitute to Leonora, she insists on being loyal to the rake. In the subsequent scene, Don John murders Don Octavio in order to seduce his beloved Maria. Then, disguising himself in his victim's cloak, he tricks Maria and gets into her private chamber. Upon his identity's revelation, he slays Maria's brother and servants who have come to defend the lady's honour. In the second act, the six wives of Don John are introduced in a comic chaos, each insisting on being called the 'true' wife of the libertine. However, in a series of rapid events, one of them commits suicide to protect herself against Don Antonio's and Don Lopez's attempts at raping her, and the rest flee. Don Antonio and Don Lopez bring an old woman to ravish upon Don John's watch and command. Meanwhile, Maria, demanding revenge after her losses, has hired some assassins who beset the libertine's house. Despite the number of assassins, the Dons are triumphant and run to a ship which would be sunk by a storm and a fire later. In the third act, saving themselves with a lifeboat, the trio reaches a shore in Seville again. In the next act, they seduce Clara and Flavia, the daughters of Don Francisco, who has hosted them as guests at his lodge after the shipwreck, kill the host, and wound the bridegrooms on the eve of their weddings. Don John poisons Leonora to death who has come after him out of love. While escaping from Don Francisco's house, they beat off a group of shepherds and shepherdesses, and rape one of the herdswomen. Finally, hiding in the convent where Clara and Flavia have taken refuge, they try to reach these young girls by setting the convent on fire. In the last act, Don John blasphemes in spite of Don Pedro's statue's revival and demand of repentance, only to be blatantly turned down by him. After the demonstration of some demons waiting for them, his two acolytes are plunged down to hell with the earth loudly cracking for the effect. Even the descent of his two companions into hell cannot make him repent. True to his twisted ideal, without any sign of guilty conscience, and indifferent to the threatening thunderbolts, he sinks into hell in the company of the devils.

The Libertine, as can be seen from its plot, rightly falls under the category of the Restoration comedy of manners, which, for Ashley H. Thorndike, has "its chief interest . . . in the exhibition of the habits, manners, and customs of the society of the time" (259). It provides a vivid, though exaggerated, illustration of the period following the enthronement of Charles II as the English monarch in 1660 after the pseudo-Republican era (1649–1660) of Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658). The early examples of the comedy of manners like Thomas Shadwell's *The Libertine* provided a philosophical basis for the atmosphere and content of the genre, before the full representation of the Restoration way of life on the stage by means of the plays such as *The Country Wife* (1675), *The Man of Mode or, Sir Fopling Flutter* (1676), and *The Luckey Chance, or an Alderman's Bargain* (1686) respectively by William Wycherley (c. 1641–1716), Sir George Etherege (c. 1636–c. 1692), and Aphra Behn (c. 1640–1689). Almost all these playwrights, with regard to their individual patronage and ties with the court, both praised and satirised the gentlemen's and ladies' wits and social dealings in their quotidian affairs and official relations.[1] Earl of Rochester was the most popular centre of praise and critique as in the period *The Libertine* was written in, when he – drunk and insolent – upset the king due to his imprudence and destroyed the king's sundial "which stood in the middle of the Privie [Gard]ing" and "esteemed the rarest in Europ" (John Oldham qtd. in Zimbardo 70). For the sake of representing the court as it was, the characters in these comedies were based on real-life courtiers and hence displayed the philosophical ideology of the Restoration shared by the members of the "Court Wits" like Rochester, George Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham (1628–1687), Sir Charles Sedley (1639–1701), and Charles Sackville (1643–1706), namely libertinism.

Libertinism has pejoratively been associated with the liberal sexual actions of the elite Restoration gentlemen, perhaps rightly because of their unexemplary lifestyles since the second half of the seventeenth century. In its foundation, however, lies a philosophy that derived several principles from Renaissance scepticism, classical naturalism, (neo)Epicureanism, and Hobbism (Bozer 225–226). "Libertine" as a term was first used to indicate someone with "free-thinking or antinomian opinion" in 1563 (Mintz 134) and was closely linked to the denial of "the truth and relevance of Scripture" during the Protestant Reformation (Turner 78). At the beginning of the seventeenth century, two significant continental figures enabled the term to gain its notorious meaning: the Italian philosopher Lucilio Vanini (1585–1619) and the French poet Théophile de Viau (1590–1626). Both men rejected the scholastic doctrines of Catholicism and challenged the notion of the soul's immortality; yet, such rejections and challenges were outright blasphemies due to their undermining the long-established institutions such as social classes, law, government, family, and marriage (Novak 55). For them, these institutions were artificially constructed, hypocritical, and hindered human senses and bodies from

[1] Some Restoration woman writers like Aphra Behn even destabilized the hedonistic ways of life in the Restoration patriarchal order in their plays, just as their male counterparts did by means of their female characters in the plays (Canfield 216–218; Karabulut 99–101).

providing themselves with the pure pleasure they sought. Such a transformation from a nonconformist religious meaning to a secularly sensational ideology has brought to life further connotations and terms such as "the Priapean, the spark or ranter, the roaring blade, the jovial atheist, the cavalier, the sensualist, the rake, the murderous upper-class hooligan, the worldly fine gentleman, the debauchee, the beau, the man of pleasure, and even the 'man of sense'" (Turner 77–78). This vagueness in its definition fundamentally prevents its simple equation with illicit and irresponsible sexuality; rather, the term might be argued to refer to "merely a person of loose morals" (Underwood 10).

In its protest character, libertinism relied on "the self-aware, philosophically oriented practice of more or less sexualized freedom" (Cryle and O'Connell 2), and hence defied Puritanical structures of private relations and nuptial principles. Similarly, when Puritanism was closely linked with the Whig Parliamentarians, this philosophy directly aligned itself with the royalists. Much influenced by "typified continental thinking," it merged "scepticism with materialism" (Fisk xiii). For the libertines, humans were imperfect, and therefore any social and political institution they structured was doomed to bear the markings of the same imperfection. Reviewing its (anti)religious foundations during the Restoration, Maximilian E. Novak underscores its rejection of artificiality in the above-mentioned social conventions and then its elevation of bodily experiences and senses (55). With its nature disapproving of the strictness imposed by the sentimentalist belief system, libertinism was thought to "infiltrate the popular culture" (Fisk xvi) as soon as it began to echo in the utterances and attitudes of the re-established members of the formerly exiled aristocracy.

The opening lines in *The Libertine* portray these essential assumptions concerning the libertine code of manners embraced by the protagonist, Don John. "Thus far" in their lives, he declares, "we have enjoyed / Our prosp'rous pleasures, which dull fools call sins" and "Laughed at old feeble judges and weak laws" that originated in the notion of "conscience / Which serves for nothing but to make men cowards" (I.i.1–4). He has come together with Don Lopez and Don Antonio to expose their gruel past deeds along with their worldview. For the trio, conscience contradicts human nature which is supposed to stem purely from one's senses: "Nature gave us our senses, which we please, / Nor does our reason war against our sense. / By nature's order, sense should guide our reason" (I.i.28–30). Their verbal exchanges elaborately capture the gist of a Christianised version of ancient natural philosophers' – Epicurus's (341–240 BCE) and Lucretius's (c. 99–c. 55 BCE) – hedonistic schools of thought. Their ideas of atomism and empiricism were linked to Christianity by the French philosopher Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655) who later founded neo-Epicureanism. Declaring "there is nothing in the intellect which has not been in the senses" (qtd. in Wentworth de Witt 356), he explains that experience one can attain through senses is more valuable than acts based on reason. Other than such continental thoughts that the Dons seem to have embraced, their utterances remind the audience of a native voice, that of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). Life, as Hobbes details in *Leviathan* (1651), finds its meaning in one's pursuit of desires and pleasure (34).

While uttering their convictions, the play's libertines also declare war against the Puritans whom they call "dull" or "melancholy fools" in "the dull slavery of pupillage" (I.i.2, 12, 23). Objecting to the ideals of the past, also in the theatrical sense, the Dons even call Jacomo the servant a "phlegmatic coxcomb" with "neither courage not yet wit enough / To sin," when he tries to warn them (I.i.41, 42–43). Such insults toward the believers in the puritanical sentiments of conscience and piety represent the Restoration phenomenon of the courtiers: Both the court and the theatre would revive old norms of socio-politics, and their collaboration referred to a political statement for the re-establishment of royalist ideologies influenced by the continent. Thus, the Restoration theatre, as a class-conscious platform, served its target class in a congenial manner to uphold their manners and philosophical tendencies (Rosenthal 6–7). For Don John, most likely an exaggerated depiction of Rochester who embraced the libertine way of living, the senses "emphasised pleasure and sensual experience over abstract, arbitrary ideals" (Webster, *Performing* 63) such as reason, honour, piety, conscience, and repentance. For Hobbes too, humans are unable to control their desires through such abstract notions related to reason. Right and wrong are total psychological concoctions fabricated by humans to exploit non/human resources around them to their delight, and that is why they differ from one society to another (Montgomery 83). Hobbes argues in *Leviathan*:

> But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth good; and the object of his hate and aversion, evil; and of his contempt, vile and inconsiderable. For these words of good, evil, and contemptible are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: there being nothing simply and nothing absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves; but from the person of the man. (35)

Hence, "good" and "evil" are determined by the use-values humans employ through reasoning. On the contrary, the senses, "the only admissible source of knowledge" (Wilcoxin 192), bring out the ultimate gain, pleasure. Therefore, experience directed by senses in pursuit of desires is the only way of life for the libertines. In this course, such a pursuit is "creative, life-giving, vital" (Birdsall 37). By the same token, the Dons in the play consider their actions as a quest to attain pleasure at the expense of their lives and for the sake of their pleasures while "sense should guide [their] reason" (I.i.30). Then, they declare Don John a "very civil person, a man of honour" (II.i.387) and their "oracle" (I.i.20) who has been a proselytizer of libertinism for the other two. With him in the lead, they become the "fashionable gentlemen of the age" (I.i.47).

The play's first scene aims to portray a gushing outburst of libertinism in its most extravagant form, even beyond what Hobbes might have imagined regarding such actualisation in life or on stage. Declaring this extravagance, Don John addresses the ones around him about how to spend their lives:

> Let's on and live the noble life of sense.
> To all the powers of love and mighty lust,
> . . .

> What ways soe'er conduce to my delight,
> My sense instructs me, I must think 'em right. (I.i.143–144, 146–147)

In their "noble sense of life," their pleasure principle is that "There is no right or wrong but what conduces to or hinders pleasure" (I.i.125–126). Relying on this principle, Don John has a long list of criminal records like "Some thirty murders, rapes innumerable, frequent sacrilege, parricide" (I.i.121–122). Believing that "the pursuit of pleasure is a worthy activity in and of itself," these libertines argue that "pleasure allows us to experience and experience gives one greater knowledge" (Webster, *"This"* 18). They might fight against any economic, social, or institutional structure that might chain them down whereas they could not help but exploit their aristocratic advantages in their pursuit of pleasurable experiences. They use their educated verbosity to convince women like Leonora who says in Don John's praise, "How eloquent were all his words and actions!" (I.i.179–180) and "His person and his parts are excellent" (I.i.181). He confirms this advantageous manipulation in the next act when he responds to Leonora's accusations: "Pish, 'tis nothing but a way of speaking which young, amorous fellows have gotten" (II.i.83–84). Their gentlemanly manners also guarantee them a safe house after the shipwreck when "Don Francisco, a rich and hospitable man" identifies them as "cavaliers" (III.ii.41–42, 130). They regard fashionable speech and personal interactions merely as a "game" or instruments to empower their "adventure" (I.i.283, 284), so much so that they kill Don Octavio just to forcefully possess his beloved Maria.

Consonant with their pleasure pursuit, the libertines regard marriage as "another burdensome, ill-conceived practice to be avoided at all costs" (Novak 55) and "a mercenary and social affair" (Barnard 8). The libertine rakes avoid the marital precepts and impositions made by the elderly who were less capable of experiencing senses than those libertine youths. Along with the pleasure principle, Hobbes's notion of "good" and "evil" can be traced in Don John's exploits of his 'harem.' Upon his six wives' simultaneous arrival at his home, Don John tries to get rid of them by offering them to his two fellows, Don Antonio and Don Lopez. The epithalamium cherished by these men repeats the same hedonistic chants:

> But the silly, fond animal, man,
> Makes laws 'gainst himself, which his appetites sway;
> Poor fools, how unhappy are they?
> . . .
> . . . I'll live like a man,
> Who, by nature, is free to enjoy all he can.
> Wise nature does teach
> More truth than fools preach[.] (2.1.280–283, 296–299; italics removed)

Their disbelief in and ridicule of the credibility of the marriage institution also resonates staunchly all throughout Clara's and Flavia's lines before their wedding day. The two sisters, potential female libertines, become the mouthpiece of libertinism when they condemn their arranged marriages since a "Spanish wife has a worse life than a cooped chicken" or a "singing bird in a cage" (III.ii.250–251, 252). Then, they express their envy

for ladies in England where, according to their imaginations, "wives run and ramble whither and with whom they please and defy all censure" (III.ii.264–265). Their image of nuptial relations in England does not actually coincide with the case of all the women in England but rather echoes Shadwell's satirical perception of court affairs and a libertine's defamatory liaisons with married women. When the sisters see potential English husbands as "the prettiest, civil, easy, good-natured, indifferent persons in the whole world," their wedding day as their "execution day," and the wedding vow as a "curse" (III.ii.272–273, 245, 317), they are unaware that the three Dons – also Spanish but suiting their ideals – will become the cause of their forthcoming familial destruction.

Alongside marriage, the rakes define religion with its "phlegmatic coldness" (II.i.126). Unlike Epicurus, Lucretius, and Hobbes, they declare all authority illegitimate and "parasitic on man's fear of freedom" rather than challenging their falsities (Chernaik 25). In contrast to Hobbesian reverence before God's unconceivable "greatness" and "power" to be honoured by humans (19), the Dons are completely sceptical about religion and eventually disregard the presence of a divine being. Hence, Don John as their cult leader becomes the epitome of the most common atheist archetype toward the end of the play. Turning into "a youthful villain" or "an artist of destruction" who individually shapes his own life and, at the same time, destroys those of the others in pursuit of his own "sinful" pleasures (Ungerer 229), Don John frequents churches to commit murder or theft (I.i.114–115), rapes and wounds nuns (I.i.117–119), and eventually sets "fire on the nunnery" (V.i.44) to abduct Clara and Flavia who has confined themselves there for repentance. He cannot stand Jacomo's prayers like "Heaven bless us!" (I.i.91) and even offends the helpful Hermit by asking him to find them "a whore, a fine, young buxom whore," upon their immediate landing on the shore (III.ii.63). Hermit's confusion upon their request is the outcome of the conflict of their appearance with their real nature. He affirms they are gentlemen "by their outsides," yet he adds that "their insides declared them devils" (III.ii.174–175). As much as they deny any religious authority, they do not believe in the act of repentance which, to them, is for "Cowards and fools" (I.i.102). Even when they are thunderstruck (III.i.48–51), or when they see Don John's father's ghost warning them to repent (II.iii.84–90) and Don Pedro's statue's coming alive in the last act, they prefer to ignore these heavenly admonitions. Dedicated to blasphemy, murder, and rape, such libertines deem being hanged "an honour," which fops like Jacomo "will ne'er have courage to deserve." (I.i.61–62). For such reasons, Don John is described as "the first that ever set up a religion to the devil" by his servant (II.i.6–7).

Don John's actions, as well as Jacomo's description of his master, suggest that the libertine ideals are not Don John's guide, but his cruel sense of nature and his phallus-centred pleasure: "If he were to live here [in Seville] one month longer, he would marry half the town, ugly and handsome, old and young" (I.i.194–195) just as he "has married six within this month and promised fifteen more, all whom he has enjoyed and left" (I.i.205–206). Don John's courage transforms into a series of acts of arrogance imitated by his sidekicks. In their company, he seeks and finds pleasure in the variety of sins. When

confronted, they put the blame on the shoulders of nature which has created them as such: "Our constitutions tell us one thing and yours another; and which must we obey? If we be bad, 'tis nature's fault that made us so" (III.ii.110–112). Obviously, these men have the characteristics of libertine men in Restoration comedies which appear in their fully-developed forms as Dorimant in *The Man of Mode*, Horner in *The Country Wife*, and Gayman in *The Luckey Chance*. Nonetheless, they confuse the means and ends while seeking a life of pleasure and demonstrate "the absurdity of fashionable hedonism" (Wheatley, "'Who'" 346) at its extreme. Through these anti-rationalist rakes, Shadwell shows that the "misuse of reason results from man's inability to reconcile the conflict between reason and nature" (Mulcahy 77). Violating socio-political, familial, and religious conventions, the Dons are given an exaggerated portrayal of libertinism which excels through their festive modes of murder, sacrilege, and parricide.

On the whole, Shadwell's libertines are one-dimensional and almost like caricatures in *The Libertine* of the others in the court. The play might be providing defences of expiation and Christianity; however, these defences remain, indeed, much weaker and shorter than the praises for the twisted libertinism. Rather, it highlights the libertine sceptic worldview of the era. While doing so, the playwright grotesquely embellishes the libertines in numerous crimes and extends his strong satirical statement that is performed in front of the same coterie who used to visit theatres to watch themselves acted on the stage. In terms of genre, one cannot certainly find particular characteristics of a Restoration comedy of manners in *The Libertine* like the sensible couple, which is briefly hinted at by the relationship of Maria and Don Octavio—but no more, the fast-paced series of intrigues, and a sub-plot. The libertine couple is also absent in the play because no female character is equal to the wit and manners of Don John. On the other hand, the five-act structure of the play, the ample use of disguises in very few simple intrigues, and foppish characters like Jacomo make the play fit in the early oeuvre of such genre works at the onset of the Restoration comedy. Thus, more like a transitional comedy between humours and manners, *The Libertine* demonstrates the common ideals of the Restoration aristocracy that imported these ideals specifically from the Continent, albeit in a highly hyperbolic manner. Therefore, a foreign setting is integral to its emphasis on the chasm between the Commonwealth morality of the Puritan past and the Royal novelty of the libertine present at that time. The play alerts the audience/readers to the beginnings of a new era seething with scepticism, sensations, sensuality, and entertainment which would inevitably bring horror to the faithful ones of the time.

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From Androgynous to Hybrid Cybernetic Bodies: Salvation or More Subjugation?

Muzaffer Derya NAZLIPINAR SUBAŞI

Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Türkiye

Abstract: Throughout the world, the predominant understanding of gender is based on the claim that there is a causal relationship between sex, gender, and body. The assumption is that first there is a sex, which is conveyed through a socially constructed gender, and then bodily desires and sexuality are shaped in accordance with that constructed gender. However, Virginia Woolf, one of the prominent literary figures of the twentieth century, persistently tries to challenge this assumption that all people fall into one of the two distinct gender categories, masculine or feminine, established on biological sex traits. For her, de(con)structing the gender distinctions and liberating the imprisoned body from the phallocentric determinism is possible through a dynamic and fluctuating quality of identity accompanied by a non-exclusive form of androgyny. In keeping with Woolf's idea of androgyny, Jeanette Winterson, a contemporary British writer and critic, also stresses the importance of breaking free from the constraints imposed by heteronormativity through multifarious identities and gender fluidity. Nevertheless, Winterson takes this androgynous exploration of Woolf to a new level in her *The Stone Gods* (2007) by delving deeper into the concept of hybrid cybernetic bodies constructed through the implementations of twenty-first-century technology. Thus, considering the above discussions of Woolf and Winterson and basing its argument on gender and body politics of posthumanism, this paper explores whether this d/evolution from androgynous bodies to hybrid cybernetic bodies heralds salvation from phallocentric restrictions or poses more risks of subjugation for nonhu(*man*)s[1] through the implementations of heteronormative technology.

Keywords:

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Androjenden Hibrit Sibernetik Bedenlere: Kurtuluş ya da Kabulleniş?

Öz: Dünya genelindeki hâkim anlayış cins, cinsiyet ve beden arasında nedensel bir ilişki olduğu iddiasına dayanır. Varsayıma göre önce biyolojik bir cinsiyet vardır, bu cinsiyet toplum tarafından inşa edilen bir toplumsal cinsiyet aracılığıyla aktarılır ve ardından bedensel arzular ile cinsellik bu inşa edilen cinsiyete uygun olarak ortaya çıkar. Ancak, yirminci yüzyılın önde gelen edebi figürlerinden Virginia Woolf, tüm insanların biyolojik özellikleri üzerinden eril

Anahtar Sözcükler:

Androjen,
Hibrit,
Sibernetik bedenler,

[1] "(Non)human" or "non/human" are widely accepted terms in posthuman and ecocritical studies to reveal the dichotomies between humans and what are considered "others" in the context of animals and nature. Nevertheless, in this study, nonhu(*man*) and hu(*man*) are used to emphasise that the core reason for the prevalent dualities and conflicts within the society is the "man" and man-made ideologies.

CONTACT: Muzaffer Derya Nazlıpınar Subaşı, Assist. Prof. Dr. (https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0798-1142)
Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Department of English Translation and Interpreting,
Kütahya, Türkiye, derya.nazlipinar@dpu.edu.tr

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ve/ya dişil olarak oluşturulan iki farklı toplumsal cinsiyet kategorisinden birine ait olduğu varsayımına ısrarla karşı çıkmıştır. Ona göre, ataerkil normlar ve fallosantrik determinizm çerçevesinde tanımlanan cinsiyet ve beden kavramlarının yeniden tanımlanması ve özgürleştirilmesi gerekmektedir; bu da, değişken, dinamik ve kapsayıcı nitelikleri olan androjenlikle mümkündür. Woolf'un androjenlik fikrine uygun olarak, çağdaş İngiliz yazar ve eleştirmen Jeanette Winterson da çoklu kimlikler ve cinsiyet akışkanlığı yoluyla heteronormativitenin dayattığı kısıtlamalardan ve yaptırımlardan kurtulabilmenin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bununla birlikte Winterson, 2007 tarihli *Taş Tanrılar* eserinde Woolf'un androjenlik arayışını derinleştirir ve yirmi birinci yüzyıl teknolojisinin uygulamalarıyla inşa edilen hibrit sibernetik bedenler kavramına yoğunlaşır. Bütün bu bilgiler ışığı altında, Woolf'un ve Winterson'ın kaygılarını göz önünde bulunduran ve argümanını posthümanizmin toplumsal cinsiyet ve beden politikalarına dayandıran bu çalışmada, androjen bedenlerden hibrit sibernetik bedenlere d/evrilişin '(eril)insan olmayanlar' için fallosantrik sınırlamalardan bir kurtuluş mu, yoksa heteronormatif teknolojiler aracılığıyla daha fazla tahakküm riskine maruz kalma anlamına mı geldiği incelenmiştir.

Jeanette Winterson, *Taş Tanrılar*

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Introduction

Throughout HIStory, the female body has been unceasingly scrutinised, tightly surveilled and objectified by the panoptic male gaze. From the restrictive corsets of the Victorian era designed to achieve the male desired hourglass body to modern-day beauty standards that force women to have slim and toned bodies with flawless skin and Barbie-like facial features, women have had to struggle with the endless desires and demands of hegemonic masculinity. In order not to be defined and imprisoned by that hegemonic masculinity and its dictations, women have tried to subvert the long-established belief that women's bodies exist primarily for sexual satisfaction and/or reproduction, which degrades them into "two-legged wombs" (103), as described by Margaret Atwood (1939–...) in *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985). In order to de(con)struct these phallocentric stigmatizations and empower women to reclaim agency over their bodies, feminist scholars, critics, and writers encourage women to redefine female sexuality as an indispensable part of their bodies by breaking free from the male gaze and commodification.

Being aware of the significance of biological sex and the body in determining gender construction, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) paves the way for women by re-

exploring the concept of androgyny that she praises in *A Room of One's Own* (1929) through the character Orlando, who embraces both "the man-womanly, and . . . woman-manly" features (82). Orlando, living for centuries as 'a man' and ending in 'a woman' "painlessly and completely and in such a way that Orlando herself showed no surprise at it" (Woolf, *Orlando* 125), allows Woolf to subvert the phallocentric sublime and biological essentialism by creating an alternative self that moves fluidly between genders and time periods. That is, her scrutinising of androgyny accompanied by her feminist views not only provides all-encompassing possibilities for those who do not conform to phallocentrically constructed heterosexuality, but it also becomes a source of inspiration for many other women/writers to portray the diversity of experience by going beyond the rigid boundaries of gender dichotomies. Among these writers underlining the importance of subverting gender norms and stereotypes to achieve the most intimate part of the subject's relation to one's gender is Jeanette Winterson (1959–...), who personally challenges the phallocentrically constructed heteronormative norms by publicly speaking about her experiences as a lesbian woman/writer. Thus, considering that both Woolf and Winterson have similar concerns, this paper explores their way(s) of challenging the heteronormative constraints imposed on nonhu(*man*)s through multifarious identities and gender fluidity in *Orlando* (1928) and *The Stone Gods* (2007).

Like Virginia Woolf, Winterson also aims to reveal the constraints enforced by heteronormativity in her works by frequently touching on themes of identity, love, and belonging, all of which are closely associated with her own experiences and perspectives on gender and sexuality. Although both women lived and wrote in different periods, Winterson has been greatly influenced by Woolf, the prominent figure of literature leaving a heritage of crucial importance, as she states in the fourth edition of the "Literary Rendezvous at Rue Cambon: Portrait of Virginia Woolf by Jeanette Winterson," held at Somerset House on September 28th, 2021. In that event, Winterson explains how much Woolf's "Professions for Women"[2], a speech that she delivered before the National Society for Women's Service in 1931, is still relevant today as in the following:

> Did [the speech] sound like something that was written ninety years ago? No, not at all. Not only because those problems are still prescient, are still with us, are still things that all of us, men and women alike, need to grapple with. Her mind was so ahead of itself, it was so fresh. And she saw the world as a whole, as a round. She did not sectionalize things, so when she was talking about the position of women, we understood that she was really talking about the distortion in humanity. Really, as she says in other parts of the piece – why should one sex be prosperous and so secure? And why should the other sex be so poor and so dependent? That is a very good question to ask.

[2] "Professions for Women" is an abbreviated version of the speech Virginia Woolf delivered before a branch of the National Society for Women's Service on January 21, 1931; it was published posthumously in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays.*

Thus, by repeating the same questions that Woolf asked in 1931, Winterson aims to underline the fact that all *non*-men are still disadvantaged and oppressed throughout the world, even in this day and age. These otherised groups have to fight against the phallocratic structures and gendered norms that perpetuate inequality and injustice upon them. For Winterson, to break this vicious circle that stigmatises marginalised 'others' as inferior and deviant, questioning and dismantling the underlying power structures and socially-constructed norms that uphold heteronormative masculinity have the utmost importance. Only then will it be possible to establish an all-encompassing society valuing diversity and tolerance, regardless of gender and sexual orientation. Having these considerations in her mind and following the steps of Woolf, Winterson promotes fluidity and rejects fixed and rigid norms in her writing and personal life. For instance, in her most famous semi-autobiographical novel, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* (1985), she encourages her readers to explore and express more about their gender identities without conforming to societal norms by revealing her own fluidity through the story of a young lesbian girl who rejects fixed and constructed identities. Seeing that her writing and sharing her personal experiences encourage people to recognise and embrace the multiplicity of identity, Winterson keeps on creating more complex, ambiguous, and fluid characters to subvert "the narrow, cisgender cosmovision [and] invoke *Orlando*" ("I Believe"). With that aim, she takes the androgynous exploration of Woolf as a starting point and then focuses more on the possible ways of establishing new alternatives for a fluid type of posthuman identity.

According to Shareena Z. Hamzah-Osbourne, both Woolf and Winterson are "writers at the forefront of shifts in thinking about women's writing itself . . . as part of the same literary lifespan between modernism, postmodernism and post-postmodernism" and many things indicated as "feminist concerns by Woolf [are] addressed more directly by Winterson" (111). For instance, by adopting the gender-bending motif employed by Woolf in *Orlando* that focuses on the issues of androgyny, bisexuality, and gender transformation, Winterson takes this exploration to a new level in her *The Stone Gods* by delving deeper into the concept of cybernetic bodies through Spike, a "Robo*sapiens*, who are the future of the world" (56; italics in the original). Being aware of the fact that the hu(*man*) has been usually accepted as the idealised model, in the same way that the male and masculinity have been, Winterson aims to deconstruct this myth by creating new bodies and identities that blur the dichotomies established by the Cartesian rationalism suppressing and marginalising nonhu(*man*)s. In this deconstructive process, Woolf advocates a non-exclusive form of bisexuality as portrayed in *Orlando*: "Orlando as a man with that of Orlando as a woman . . . both are undoubtedly one and the same person" (152). Winterson also praises Woolf's *Orlando* as the first trans triumph in English, which is far ahead of its time in terms of gender politics and gender progress as in the following: "Orlando refuses all constraints: historical, fantastical, metaphysical, and sociological. Ageing is irrelevant. Gender is irrelevant. Time is irrelevant. It is as though we could live as we always wanted to; disappointments, difficulties, sorrow, love, children, lovers,

nothing to be avoided, everything to be claimed. *Not locked. Not limited*" ("Shape Shifter"; italics added). Thus, Winterson picks up where Woolf has left off and goes further to be able to subvert the phallocratic conception of body and gender. Using the ideas of Woolf regarding age, time, and gender, Winterson focuses on a new understanding of the body, which is the 'posthuman cybernetic body' that transgresses the male-assigned boundaries and morphs into an ideal state of what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari call "becoming" in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (2004). That is, by ignoring the fixed forms of embodiment and merging hu(man)s with nonhu(*man*)s and machines, Winterson establishes new alternatives for a fluid type of posthuman identity, a kind of "amalgam, a collection of heterogeneous components, a material-information entity whose boundaries undergo continuous construction and reconstruction" (Hayles 3). However, this "amalgam," or cybernetic body, which is "less impressed . . . with the singularity of the human and more interested in similarities and crossovers among people, animals, and machines" (Pickering 393), comes with some ethical issues. For some groups, these bodies would lead to the destruction of the human-centred universe as they pose a threat to the "purity" of species, as Robert Pepperell argues in *The Posthuman Condition* (171). Others believe that the harmonious co-existence and hybridity in these bodies would contribute positively to both hu(*man*) and nonhu(*man*) species through an interconnected view that recognises the interdependence of all life forms. Subverting the phallocentric male logic prioritising the hu(*man*) which "functions to domesticate and hierarchize difference within the human (whether according to race, class, and gender) and to absolutize difference between the human and the nonhuman," these hybrid cybernetic bodies enable the formation of "the posthuman [that] does not reduce difference-from-others to difference-from-self, but rather *emerges in the pattern of resonance and interference between the two*" (Halberstam and Livingston 10; italics added).

In keeping with Judith [Jack] Halberstam and Ira Livingston's ideas of posthumanism, Winterson also delves into the concept of the body in the posthuman age, in which "a human being is not what a human being was even a hundred years ago" (*Stone Gods* 55). In this age, the new posthuman bodies are enhanced or replaced through radical developments in technology and biomedicine involving practices varying from anti-ageing procedures to cosmetic surgery. In an interview with Victor Recort regarding biomedical and technological developments, Winterson admits she is optimistic by nature, thereby believing in human beings and technology to create a better future ("I Believe"). However, she also reminds us the fact that all these tools are used and controlled by hu(*man*)s who "have done some terrible things . . . and will probably do it again . . . and every invention of ours ends up being used in the worst possible way" ("I Believe"). Realising this reality, Winterson makes a critique of the d/evolution of technology and highlights the dark sides of these tools in *The Stone Gods* by revealing the entangled relationship between the body and technology. For her, the body, especially the female body, is not just a form of existence but an ideological entity shaped by cultural

meanings and discourses, thereby systematically objectified and sexually abused by heteronormative technology prioritising male desires.

In line with Winterson, Sadie Plant, a British philosopher and author writing in the fields of technology and cultural studies, compares women and machines to depict how they both share a subjugated history, as in the following: "Women, nature and machines have existed for the benefit of man, organisms and devices intended for the service of a history to which they are merely the footnotes. The text itself is patriarchy, the system within which women occupy a world of objects, owned by men and exchanged between them" (503). This oppression has not slowed down, but even increased in the twenty-first century because of the drastically changed practices and understandings regarding the body. It has become the centre of attraction for hegemonic masculinity to be shaped and transformed through emerging technologies. According to Rachel Alpha Johnston Hurst, an American author and scholar writing in the fields of feminist theory and gender/cultural studies, this obsessive and irrational interest of hu(*man*)s in the body emanates from "normative narcissism" (91), which has emerged during the late-stage capitalism in response to the market-driven biotechnologies aiming to embellish the body.

These issues arise in Winterson's *The Stone Gods.* On the planet Orbus, which is extremely polluted and exhausted of natural sources, the Central Power and then MORE-Corporation produce and advertise "routine cosmetic surgery and genetic Fixing" (51) for both sexes to be able to take them under control. In contrast to men usually fixed in their late forties, all mature women look like young girls with "implants, buttocks, thighs and breasts [giving them] the pneumatic look" (63), which mirrors the gender injustice. Orbus women and their bodies are subjugated and objectified through technological reshaping and manipulation, to the point where "the female body has nowhere to go" (Braidotti 233). Thus, in the light of these discussions, this paper aims to reveal that as long as the heteronormative masculinity and its desires exist within society, nonhu(*man*)s will continue to be objectified and commodified, no matter whether they have organic or cybernetic bodies.

From Androgynous to Hybrid Cybernetic Bodies

In the TED Talk given in 2022, Jeanette Winterson laid out a vision of the future where human and machine intelligence could meld and form a place without any binaries through "alternative intelligence," a term she prefers to use instead of artificial intelligence. For her, it is not intelligence but "humans who are obsessed with false binaries," thereby leading to "utopia or dystopia" ("Is Humanity Smart"). Thus, she states that if humans can use that tool in a non-binary way, a better being that is not defined as hu(*man*) or nonhu(*man*) and a welcoming space where gender and sexuality are no longer labelled in the same way can emerge. Winterson outspeaks that possibility in *The Stone Gods* through Spike:

> "Gender is a human concept . . . and not interesting." . . .
> "In any case, . . . is human life biology or consciousness? If I were to lop off your arms, your legs, your ears, your nose, put out your eyes, roll up your tongue, would you still be you? You locate yourself in consciousness, and I, too, am a conscious being." (55)

Along these lines are uttered by Spike, a hybrid cybernetic being, Winterson tries to make her readers understand that the gender divide is phallocentrically constructed and is as artificial as the very notion of the hu(*man*). This has been actually voiced out by Virginia Woolf through Orlando, the androgynous self. Nearly a century later, Winterson underlines the necessity of establishing fluid, permeable, and multiple identities to be able to subvert the essentialist structure of the patriarchal order. She believes that the transition into cybernetic bodies can pave the way for creating post-gender societies, in which nonhu(*man*)s, machines and multiple identities purified from binaries live without any fear of subjugation. The "inappropriate/d other," in the words of Donna Haraway (*Haraway* 67), can put a strain on phallocentric dictations and liberate the self from any supposed determinism of the body through the dynamic and fluctuating quality of identity.

However, Winterson is also aware of the adverse effects of unchecked advancements in technology and biomedicine, forewarning her reader(s) about toxic masculinity and its dominance in heteronormative technology. For her, hegemonic masculinity, once more, has found a new way to objectify and commodify "women's bodies in a masculinist orgy of war" (Haraway, *Simians* 295) so as not to lose its power and control on "inappropriate/d others." This new way, according to Winterson, is the high level of gendered control and disempowerment of bodies through the implementation of technologies and biomedicines, as she has displayed in *The Stone Gods.* Focusing on the plausible outcomes of recent developments in biotechnology and medicine through this novel, she tries to offer thought-provoking perspectives for her readers about the unsettling tendencies of hu(*man*)s regarding gender and female/body politics.

According to Ursula K. Le Guin (1929–2018), Winterson's complex and critical science-fiction novel is "a keen lament for our irremediably incautious species" ("Head"). In line with Le Guin, Winterson explains that this 'incautious species', "*mankind*, . . . wherever found, Civilized or Savage, cannot keep to any purpose for much length of time, except the purpose of destroying himself" (*The Stone Gods* 91; italics added). Mankind's destroying himself and then searching for a second chance is actually the repeated theme in the four sections of *The Stone Gods*. Each part has duplicated main characters, 'Billie/Billy Crusoe and Spike/Spikkers', and remarkably similar plots. However, despite these overlaps, each plot depicts a different aspect of dystopia. Winterson experiments with the components of the plots and creates a story that is more powerful than the entire sum of its constituent parts; nevertheless, the reader may be confused while reading the

story as the plots are not chronologically organised. That is why, Winterson provides the following overview of *The Stone Gods* on her website:

> *The Stone Gods* is written in four parts; the first part begins on Orbus, a world very like earth, and like earth running out of resources and suffering from the severe effects of climate change. This is a world where everyone is bio-enhanced and bored to death. It is a world that has run out of possibilities. Then, a new planet is discovered, perfect for human life. This planet, Planet Blue, has only one drawback—the dinosaurs. A mission leaves Orbus to get rid of the dinosaurs. Our guide through the novel is Billie Crusoe, a disillusioned scientist in Parts 1, 3, 4, and a young sailor, (Billy), in Part 2, which is set on Easter Island in the eighteenth century. Billie is part of the mission to Planet Blue, and so is Spike, a perfect robo-sapiens. What happens between them explores the boundaries between carbon and silicon life forms—in other words, what is a human being, how do we define what is human, and how do we define what is love and what is possible when love is present? ("On *The Stone Gods*")

Blurring the boundaries between organic life (carbon-based) and artificial life (silicon-based) is one of the major tenets of posthumanism due to the increased interactions "between human, viral, animal, and technological bodies," as Jane Bennett states (108). This connection makes hu(*man*) realise that they no longer exist in an exclusive epistemological realm, but expeditiously become 'hybrids' based on the environmental relations "characterized by networks of complex crossings and interchanges with other beings and material forces" (Oppermann 27). These hybrid creatures, for Winterson, are the signifiers of a promising post-gender society in which nonhu(*man*)s can destabilise the phallocratically dictated dichotomies and eradicate the gender-biased categories. However, she is also fully conscious of the fact that the developments in this hybridised world are not outside the panoptic gaze and the control of hegemonic masculinity. Although the boundaries between 'carbon and silicon life forms' are modified and displaced by technological and biomedicine innovations, "the gendered boundary between male and female . . . remains heavily guarded" (Balsamo 217), because the systematic patriarchal tendencies of technology and medicine still exacerbate the marginalization of women and their bodies by ab/using the pre-existing inequalities and injustices. This is what Winterson explores and criticises in *The Stone Gods* through Spike, a genderless but female-formed Robo*sapiens*, who "looks amazing [with] clear skin, green eyes, dark hair" (109). According to the President of MORE-*Futures*, a corporate infrastructure governing and controlling the people of the Central Power, Spike has been "developed to take the planet-sized decisions that human beings are so bad at" (109). Nevertheless, as its name signifies, the company represents the hu(*man*) hubris and greediness that adopts the "MORE IS MORE" motto (110). Behind this motto and technological achievements lies the misogynistic phallocracy "reduc[ing] women to framed pictures/holograms/robots," as Mary Daly premonished nearly a half-century ago (56). That is, contrary to the President's claim that Spike is a technologically designed tool to help and save hu(man)ity in the space expedition to Planet Blue, her "incredibly sexy"

(6) appearance reveals the never-ending desire of hegemonic masculinity. This first Robo*sapiens* is not only a highly qualified worker, but a sexual fantasy and a fetishised object for the male gaze as well, or more precisely, "the perfect Eve for the male astronauts' solace during their long space travels, an object of consumption," as Sonia Villegas-López defines (32). Thus, Spike is a practical 'tool' for men both sexually and technologically, which mirrors women's subjugation throughout HIStory. In other words, even in the highly technological and post-gender age, gender labelling is still prevalent and forceful, and continues to categorise both 'carbon-based organic bodies' and 'silicon-based electronic bodies'.

The starting point of these gendered bodies is the oppression and violence imposed on nonhu(*man*)s, which Peter Singer defines as a "prejudice or attitude of bias in favor of the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species" (6). This speciesism and master-slave relationship is co-produced in human-robot interactions as formulated by Sadie Plant in *Zeros and Ones*: *Digital Women and The New Technoculture:* "Women have been trapped by economic dependence on men as surely as robots are controlled by the implicit threat that their *masters* can always cut the power supply, turn the on-switch off, leave or *put them back on the shelf*" (105; italics added). Along these lines comparing women and robots, Winterson creates some female*bots* on Planet Blue*:* "There is Kitchenhand for the chores, Flying Feet to run errands or Lend-a-Hand too, for the temporarily unpartnered. . . . [or there are] LoBots, who have no feet because they spend all their time on their knees cleaning up" (13). Thus, by assigning qualities and features that align with patriarchally constructed femininity, Winterson indicates how strong hegemonic masculinity is, and how patriarchal expectations and desires recreate new 'docile bodies' for the male gaze and ab/use. For her, the 'angels' of the past are biotechnologically reconstructed, and then, given to the service of hu(man)s to perform gendered duties. That is, Winterson underlines that the hegemonic masculinity still keeps on commodifying women and robots.

This commodification and abuse of 'female' bodies d/evolves in a new direction with the implementation of new technologies in cosmetic surgery and genetic fixing. Winterson portrays that reality in *The Stone Gods* through MORE's ambitious project about creating perfect and ageless bodies that are "cosmetically altered in shape and size" (13). Most of the inhabitants of the Central Power are biogenetically fixed as they desire to be young and beautiful. For those, ageing is a kind of disease, "information failure [through which] the body loses fluency;" therefore, "most men prefer to Fix younger than [late-forties], and there are no women who Fix past thirty" (9). As they do not get older anymore, they have no worries about throwing birthday parties, because for them, "[birthdays] mark the passing of the years, and . . . years don't pass in the way that they once did. G is the day and year [they] genetically fix. It's a great day to celebrate" (14). That is, everything seems perfect for everybody; nevertheless, the phallocentric implications of the objectification of women and their bodies still persist, even in this 'utopian' society, and women keep on being subjugated by heteronormative technology

serving masculine demands and desires. The pressures for youthfulness disproportionately impact women, as unravelled through Mrs. Mary McMurphy, or most often known as "Pink," who desires to receive genetic reversal to be able to get back to her adolescent years. However, she wants that surgery not for herself, but to satisfy her husband who is "mad about Little Señorita, a twelve-year-old pop star who has Fixed herself rather than lose her fame" (14–15). Pink, then, declares that they do not have sex anymore as she is too old for her pedophiliac husband. Thus, to be able to get her husband's attention, she has "[her] vagina reduced [and becomes] tight as a screwtop bottle" (51). Here, with the character Pink, Winterson criticises the patriarchal tendencies prevalent in biomedicine and cosmetic surgeries ranging from breast implants to vaginoplasty, which are overwhelmingly realised in 'dominant male' and 'dominated female' dynamics. For her, the primary purpose of these implementations inflicted on women by male desire is to regulate women's bodies and self-autonomy. Thus, despite not having a negative appraisal of technology but rather the issue of gender exploitation, Winterson underlines the fact that heteronormative technology and biomedical surgeries constantly reproduce the system of binary oppositions privileging hu(*man*)s over nonhu(*man*)s, thereby leaving no place for women to go. It is a patriarchal circle for women that is difficult to get out "insofar as conventional heterosexual male and female sexualities are experienced psychically and represented culturewide as the relationship between *the one who penetrates* and *the one penetrated*, surgical interventions can function as very eroticized versions of the [hetero]sexual act" (Blum 45; italics added). This long-established phallocentric stereotype of 'dominant penetrator' and 'passive penetrated' is criticised by Winterson in her depiction of Spike. Although Spike is built for an exploratory space mission to Planet Blue, and she is "the most advanced member of the crew" on the spaceship, she has to "use up three silicon-lined vaginas" (24–25) to satisfy the sexual desires and fantasies of the men on board.

Briefly, through the portrayal of Pink and Spike, Winterson reminds her readers of the fact that the gendered control and manipulation of women's bodies is still prevalent due to society's use of technology, even in a post-gender world that promises the subversion of normative heterosexuality. Hence, "the future of women is uncertain [as] there will always be men" (20), and this uncertainty hinders Winterson's dream of establishing an all-encompassing world, in which "androgynous bodies, cyborgs, humanoid robots and hybrid beings contribute to a non-differentiation of the sexes" (Carrasco et al. 68). Winterson emphasises that this uncertainty has emanated from heteronormative system and technology that prioritise masculine demands and desires, and it will continue so far as power relations are still based on the supremacy of the male principle.

Conclusion

Despite living in different times and contexts, both Virginia Woolf and Jeanette Winterson voice out the everlasting struggle of nonhu(*man*)s against hegemonic masculinity and try

to subvert the phallocentric notions of gender and sexuality imposed on them through their works. With that aim, Woolf explores the concept of androgyny in *Orlando* and aims to prove that a harmonious integration of the masculine and feminine within one can transcend heteronormative constraints. Thus, she creates a shape-shifting and gender-fluid hero/ine, "an alternative aesthetic, an alternative model of self" (Lokke 242) that transgresses the boundaries of gender and sexuality of her time. Thus, through this fluid and alternative self, Woolf invites readers to imagine the possibilities of living without being constrained by sex, as "the change of sex, . . . [does] nothing whatever to alter their identity" (*Orlando* 125). In line with Woolf, Winterson also focuses on the ways of creating an all-encompassing future that celebrates the multiplicity and fluidity of identities. In this quest, she encourages readers to reconsider a future where technology can empower individuals to go beyond the limits of heteronormativity and create cybernetic hybrid bodies that blur the lines between biological and artificial entities. Having that concern in *The Stone Gods*, Winterson introduces a genderless but female-formed Robo*sapiens* and describes her as below:

> [She] is made of a meta-material, a polymer tough as metal, but pliable and flexible and capable of heating and cooling, *just like human skin*. . . .
>
> She has no blood.
> She can't give birth.
> Her hair and nails don't grow.
> She doesn't eat or drink.
> She is solar-powered.
> She has *learned how to cry.* (60; italics added)

Portraying both the limitations and possibilities of Spike, a cybernetic being, Winterson aims to subvert the long-established notions that separate hu(*man*)s from nonhu(*man*)s and emphasises the potential for new forms of existence and a more inclusive world without any binaries and labelling with the help of rapidly advancing technology. As she voices out through Spike, "gender is a human concept, and . . . not interesting" (55); therefore, it can be deconstructed to envision a more diverse future.

Briefly, both Woolf and Winterson encourage readers to imagine a world where phallocentric notions of gender and sexuality are replaced by a more fluid and inclusive understanding. Nevertheless, they also underline the fact patriarchy is everywhere and it is still the dominant social system in many fields of the world. For instance, Orlando's changing sex and having an androgynous body did not change her/his identity, but "altered [her/his] future" (*Orlando* 125). Once thoroughly committed to pursuing "Life! A lover!" (181), Orlando is forced to realise, by a vibration on the 'third finger' of her left hand, that she lacks a husband. Thus, Orlando has to accept the dictations of her age, as "wedding rings were everywhere. . . . Gold, or pinchbeck, thin, thick, plain, smooth, they glowed dully on every hand" (180). Like Orlando, Spike has no place to go since her future and body is also highly controlled by MORE: "We're hurt, we're battered. It will change, but by then MORE will control everything and everyone. They'll decide the future, just as they decide the present" (*The Stone Gods* 134). That is, even in this high-tech culture

enabling fluid and multiple experiences through the cybernetic hybrid bodies, it is almost impossible to be outside the dichotomous system of gender and sex since MORE, representing hegemonic power and control, will not allow nonhu(*man*)s to determine their own destinies. That is, the masculine mind and science will keep on segregating the sexes and reinforcing gender exploitation.

Actually, since the early twenty-first century and especially with the growing use of artificial intelligence, hu(*man*)s' destructiveness and greediness have gone beyond the limits as it always happened throughout HIStory, regardless of the level of cultural or societal advancement. Thus, Woolf's and Winterson's works forewarn readers by highlighting the fact that so long as the phallocentric implications insist on objectifying and otherising nonhu(*man*)s, there will be no evolving from androgynous bodies to hybrid cybernetic bodies that can transcend patriarchally constructed boundaries. On the contrary, the sexual objectification and mistreatment of women will increase due to the prevailing ethics of technology utilised to meet men's unlimited sexual desires and ab/uses. Spike, the first Robo*sapiens* built for salvation in *The Stone Gods*, will devolve into the position of XX-BOT, "[a] *pulsing vagina that never say[s] no*" (Winterson 56; italics in the original) in *Frankissstein*: *A Love Story* (2019). Briefly, for Winterson, creating a post-gender world cleared of expectations or restrictions based on one's gender and constructing a posthuman trans-corporeality with hybrid identities will be hindered by phallocentric manifestations that keep and enforce sexist and binary body politics.

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"Pocket full of seeds": A Review of *Experiencing Poetry: A Guidebook to Psychopoetics*, by Willie van Peer and Anna Chesnokova, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2023, pp. xiv+236, $110,00 (hardback), ISBN: 9781350248014.

Sonia ZYNGIER

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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On February 23, 2023, an article published in *The New Yorker*[1] warned about the threats that have been looming over Departments of English in the US. The author provides evidence that enrollment in the Humanities is plummeting in educational institutions in the US and, I would add, in many different parts of the world. Today, the market has been favouring STEM (acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) rather than Humanities students, who find themselves jobless after they graduate. In this article, the acknowledged literary scholar Stephen Greenblatt is quoted as having said that Literature Departments should do more with TV than with canonical texts. In fact, according to the article, it is now possible to receive a degree in English from Harvard without taking a single course in poetry. To make matters worse, ChatGPT is now seen as a potential instrument that may replace college essays and creative writing.

Actually, the loss of prestige of Humanities Departments, especially of literature courses, is not new. It was already noticed by John M. Ellis (1997), Robert Scholes (1998), and Tzvetan Todorov (2009), among others. Years ago surveys such as *Reading at Risk* (Bradshaw, 2004) already signaled a crisis in reading and, despite *Reading on the Rise* (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009) later reporting an increase in adult reading, there has not been an increase in students' enrolment in the Humanities. Lack of interest

[1] Nathan Heller's "The End of the English Manor."

CONTACT: Sonia Zyngier, PhD, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
(https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6355-6407), sonia.zyngier@gmail.com

in literature courses has not relented.[2] So, at a time when Humanities Departments are on the wane, when even experienced readers waste too much of their precious time on social media, the publication of a book entitled *Experiencing Poetry: A Guidebook to Psychopoetics* could seem rather anachronistic. But, this is not the case, as we will soon see.

On the shelf, this volume may lead the prospective reader to consider whether it is yet another academic publication on the theoretical framework of poetry. Its sophisticated black cover and its subtitle may anticipate that reading will require hours of deep concentration and reflection needed to grasp the complex issues it will be dealing with. However, the book captivates us from the first line and surprises us at each new paragraph. The authors practice what they preach. Not meant for "highbrow aesthetes only, for intellectuals or ivory tower academics" (van Peer and Chesnokova 101), it is mostly aimed at making literary devices familiar to undergraduates or novices, including those in STEM-related programs. In fact, it could be used across the curriculum. It really feels like "a friend, a relative, or a teacher explains something to you" (101), in this case, the art of poetry and the theory that it involves. The book may also fascinate seasoned scholars who might be curious about the remarkable and unique links the authors make and how they manage to turn complex considerations into simple explanations.

Experiencing Poetry is simple indeed but far from simplistic. It owes much to the tradition of reader-response studies and it would be more than welcome if, for instance, references were made to forerunners such as Louise Rosenblatt and to her argument that literature "provides a *living through*, not simply *knowledge about*" (Rosenblatt 38; italics in the original) creative productions, and that the teacher should create "a situation favourable to a vital experience of literature" (58). *Experiencing Poetry* aims at developing an evidence-based psychopoetics, that is, how one can account for the experience of reading poetry. The authors take an empirical perspective, "one based on independent data, controllable observations and evidence" (van Peer and Chesnokova 82), going against what they suggest are stereotypical discussions in literary courses where critics try to find out "whether Pushkin smoked" (83) rather than providing students with tools to understand the workings of texts. Engaging with poetry, the authors argue, goes beyond hermeneutic interpretations. It requires mastery of stylistic procedures and strategies as well as evidence-based methods borrowed from social sciences that may account for the experience. This is how they pave the way towards a psychopoetics.

The authors never lose sight of their target audience. Aimed primarily at students, the book offers guideposts such as keywords at the beginning of each chapter, a summary of the core issues at the end of each, a glossary, ancillary resources with samples of questionnaires, and further reading if one would like to expand one's knowledge of the subject. As they address 21st century undergraduates, for instance, they weave a web of

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[2] For a review, see Fialho et al.

links between the most popular manifestations such as a football anthem and a song from the Beatles to show how the structures they are based on are similar to those in canonical poetry. In this section, for instance, they explain how the magic of poetry is embodied by quoting Dylan Thomas (1914–1953): "Poetry is what in a poem makes you laugh, cry, prickle, be silent, makes your toe nails twinkle, makes you want to do this or that or nothing, makes you know that you are alone in the unknown world, that your bliss and suffering is forever shared and forever all your own" (56). A light and flowing style, almost like a casual conversation, pervades the book [for instance, "Wait! Do not run away: you may find out how close it is to present-day concerns" (2); or "Let us put the serious matters away for a while and play a game. Yes, we are not joking" (5)]. This is where the challenge lies: to grasp the attention of young and inexperienced students willing to understand the workings of poetry and, at the same time, have a good time.

To make the journey enjoyable, the writers provide an excellent Companion[3] which invites the reader to pause the reading and experience live shows, poetry readings, etc. As the authors explain, "we position poetry where it belongs: in the real world, in the social sphere, embedded in a live performance, vibrant with music, and making use of modern technology" (19). The chapters and the Companion do provide a wealth of links between different artistic manifestations – mostly concentrated on music (from folk and popular manifestations to classic music) – and poetry.

The book's originality is also reflected in the chapter titles, built on the parallel formula 'POETRY IS X.' Chapter 1 ("Poetry is Structure") opens with the most difficult question, that is, what poetry is. After some considerations, the authors settle on the definition that the closer the text is to being short, having typical formal qualities (meter, rhyme, etc.), presenting layers of meaning, and emphasizing emotional aspects, the closer it is to poetry. No mention is made of how far prose can be poetic, though. To prove their point, the authors take a seemingly simple poem as a sample for providing the basic principles of poetic form. They provide a stylistic analysis to show how the chosen form leads to contextualized meaning and relate it to other art productions, in this case, a song by Franz Schubert (1797–1828). Then, they associate these with an English ballad, recreating the sound patterns and emphasizing the emotions that render the experience vivid to the reader. The chapter brings up the distinction between high and low forms of art, arguing for a continuum instead of a dichotomy between these productions. However, it is not too clear how the connection between the enjoyment of art and the distinction between high and low culture is made. The chapter ends with a justification for a "psychopoetics," namely "the study of the psychological experience of literature and, more specifically, of poetry in its various aspects and meanings" (1).

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[3] For the Companion, please visit https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/experiencing-poetry/resources-by-chapter.

In Chapter 2 (“Poetry is Madness”), basic elements of statistics for the Humanities are gradually presented (for instance, the notions of significance, generalizability, valence, sample, graphs) so as to make them quite understandable to novices. In this chapter, as in all the others, the authors aim at reaching out to an international readership, providing an intercultural and historical perspective which goes beyond a Eurocentric view. To this purpose, they take the bold step of providing a variety of languages other than English, a decision to be commended, but which may raise problems. For instance, in this chapter, they associate the Portuguese singer Mariza (1973–…) and her interpretation of the fado “Loucura” with the characters of Ophelia and Lear to explain the theme of madness that pervades poetry throughout times. Based on the lyrics in Portuguese, they explain why Mariza seems to have gone mad. However, what she actually says is that she is aware it is madness to insist on singing the fado. It does not imply that she considers herself to be mad. There is a difference between “her position as an outsider, trapped in madness” (29) or “of someone who declares herself mad” (177), and what happens to the Shakespearean characters. In Mariza’s case, madness is a figure of speech, not a mental health problem. Elsewhere, the authors refer to “her endless weeping (*chorai, chorai*) (177). However, it is not Mariza who is weeping. “Chorai” is in the imperative mood. She is actually addressing “poets of my country” and asking them, not us, for help. Having said that, these few setbacks do not invalidate the excellent experiment they offer the readers on page 20: “Are you ready? Then listen again to Mariza, and give your response to the ten emotions—(1) your feelings while watching, and (2) the feelings you think the singer experienced. You may do so during, but also after the performance. Then pause.” Having the readers go through their own experience, they then ask them to compare their data with those obtained in previous studies.

In Chapter 3 (“Poetry is Prettiness”), the authors provide basic elements in poetics such as the notion of literariness, foregrounding, repetition, and parallelism, and Roman Jakobson’s principle of equivalence is explained in the most direct and objective terms. Each example is analysed stylistically in detail, from prayers to political speeches to poems, to show how readers are affected by foregrounding. Examples of figures of speech such as chiasmus and anaphora are discussed, Popperian falsification is introduced and further notions of statistics are added, more specifically Likert scales, Anova tests, p-value, and factor analysis. These are illustrated in a research experiment intended to falsify the theory of parallelism. More links are made between poems and music as they show how Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791) composed *Das Veilchen* (K. 476) building on Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s (1749–1832) poem, and they associate both with the *Heidenröslein* folk song presented in Chapter 1.

With the intention of having the reader feel the effects of foregrounding, at the beginning of Chapter 4 (“Poetry is Surprise”) the authors offer an upside-down photograph of themselves, the picture of a house also built upside down and an actor performing part of Leo Tolstoy’s (1828–1910) monologue in which a horse questions the meaning of the words “my” and “mine.” After discussing these experiences, the notion of

foregrounding and deviation are presented followed by a discussion of avant-garde art and Vladimir Mayakovsky's (1893–1930) poems. The concepts of hypothesis and probability are also introduced here.

Chapter 5 ("Poetry is Revelation") illustrates and discusses epiphany. Here the authors show how moments of epiphany can be better gauged using qualitative methods. They provide an analysis of one of John Keats's (1795–1821) sonnets where the poet reveals his awe when reading George Chapman's (1559–1634) translation of Homer and how the beauty of poetry was revealed to him. This is followed by the description of a research to find out students' own responses to this poem. Continuing their line of associations, the authors link Keats's epiphany to Paul the Apostle's on the road to Damascus.

In Chapter 6 ("Poetry is Power"), the authors show how poetry "conjures up before our mental eye the processes of suffering and healing, leading to readers' enlightenment and emotional relief" (119). Mentioning bibliotherapy and making available to the reader the relevant and powerful TED-UCLA talk ("Shakespeare in Shackles: The Transformative Power of Literature"), the authors provide evidence that poetry may indeed alleviate suffering. A very impactful discussion is the one provided after the reader is invited to view the video clip of a game called "World of Warships."

Chapter 7 follows by arguing for the timelessness of art ("Poetry is Persistence"). Here, the Epic of Gilgamesh, written on clay tablets in cuneiform script in Sumerian is used as evidence that some themes do travel in time. Their point is that there are themes that persist over time and over geographic areas. From oral African tradition to Ovid´s *Metamorphoses,* to William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the theme of animism and transformation, to the theme of forbidden love in a medieval French romance in verse, in Arthurian romances, to the contemporary film version of Camelot, all lead to the question of what these themes tell us about human psychology and the workings of societies. They refer to studies which conclude that "themes in popular literature relate to economic and social/political events of a society" (149).

Breaking the pattern established by the previous chapters, Chapter 8 aims to familiarize readers with methods that will enable them to study psychopoetics. Step by step they describe how an experimental research can be designed and carried out. Looking at a real experiment, they show how qualitative and quantitative methods may be combined. They also stimulate cooperation and exchange in carrying out research illustrating such a joint venture with the REDES project, an international project where junior researchers worked together and published their results widely.[4]

To conclude the book, Chapter 9 ("Toward a General Theory of Psychopoetics") discusses various studies on the effects of narrative and offers fifteen strands in poetic

[4] See, for instance, Zyngier et al.; Viana et al.; Van Peer et al.; Chesnokova et al., "Long-term Research Assessing in the Humanities"; and Chesnokova et al., "Learning through Research."

experiences or possible hypotheses that still await empirical evidence for validation. Among them is the assumption that the reader embodies the experience, that poems have universal values and concerns, that, differently from narratives, poetry involves an aura of sincerity and authenticity, and that it has a soothing effect. Emphasizing the salutary effects of literature, the authors show how necessary literature is for the individual's overall well-being. However, research still needs to be done to validate these arguments that poetry carries emotions and that reading literature has effects which can be accounted for. In their words, "The efforts to elucidate these effects of poetry could be called a theory of psychopoetics. But does such a theory exist? No. Not yet" (175).

In one word, the book is highly original and creative: from the structure, the choice of vast materials from different fields of art, all producing new links that intrigue the reader and challenge canonical approaches to the subject matter. One can imagine the pleasure the authors themselves experienced while writing the book. And the readers are invited to share it. Plutarch's words "elements of the emotional, the surprising, and the unexpected" (77) can be applied to the experience of reading *Experiencing Poetry: A Guidebook to Psychopoetics*. At a time when individuals are expressing themselves through social media, when the figure of the solitary reader holding a book by the fire or in a hammock belongs to the past, this book succeeds in offering 21st-century students a most enjoyable and entertaining journey into poems, stylistics, and statistics.

The book ends with a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950) to illustrate how some themes are universal and remain throughout the times. They ask us to "enjoy the way it tells one of the oldest stories of humanity to us, some 4,000 years later" (150). Indeed, *Experiencing Poetry: A Guidebook to Psychopoetics* is a "pocket full of seeds" (150). There is much to be planted, promising a new beginning to evidence-based studies of poetry.

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