

**MYTHMAKING IN PROGRESS:  
PLAYS BY WOMEN  
ON FEMALE WRITERS AND LITERARY CHARACTERS**

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## ABSTRACT

### MYTHMAKING IN PROGRESS: PLAYS BY WOMEN ON FEMALE WRITERS AND LITERARY CHARACTERS

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This thesis analyzes the process of women's mythmaking in the plays written by female playwrights. Through writing the lives of female writers and rewriting the literary characters, which have been created by male writers, the women playwrights assume the role of a mythmaker. A mythmaker possesses the power to use the 'word,' thereby possessing the power to control 'reality.' However, for centuries, women have been debarred from generating their own myths, naming their own experiences, and controlling their own 'realities.' Male mythmakers prescribed the roles women were required to perform within the society.

Feminist archetypal theorists believe that through a close study of related patterns in women's writing, common grounds, and experiences, the archetypes shared by women will be disclosed. Unveiling these archetypes will eventually lead to the establishment of new myths around these archetypes. As myths are regarded as the source of collective experiences, analyzing how women have rewritten, revised, devised, and originated myths would thus permit women to reclaim the power to name, and hence to influence the so-called reality established by the patriarchy.

Hence, this study analyzes the constantly developing process of women's mythmaking/mythbreaking in Liz Lochhead's *Blood and Ice*, Rose Leiman Goldemberg's *Letters Home*, Bilgesu Erenus' *Halide*, Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale*, Bryony Lavery's *Ophelia*, and Zeynep Avcı's *Gilgamesh*.

These playwrights try to depose the stereotypical images attributed to women by male mythmakers.

**Keywords:** Rewriting, Archetypes, Mythmaking, Mythbreaking, Feminist Archetypal Theory

## ÖZ

### MİT YARATMA SÜRECİ:

#### KADIN OYUNLARINDA KADIN YAZARLAR VE EDEBİ KARAKTERLER

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Bu çalışmada kadın oyunlarında mit yaratma süreci incelenmiştir. Kadın oyun yazarları, tarihi kadın yazarların hayatlarını ve erkekler tarafından yaratılmış edebi kadın figürlerini eserlerinde ön plana çıkararak mit yaratıcısı konumuna ulaşırlar. Bir mit yaratıcısı dili kullanma gücüne sahip olduğu için, gerçeği kontrol etme gücüne de sahiptir. Ancak, yüzyıllar boyunca kadınlar, kendi mitlerini yaratamamış, ve bu nedenle kendi tecrübe ve gerçeklerini belirleyememişlerdir. Erkek mit yaratıcıları, kadının toplumda oynayacağı rolleri belirlemiş ve yaratmış oldukları kadın şablonlarını kendi eserlerinde kaydetmişlerdir.

Feminist arketip kuramcıları, kadınların yarattığı eserlerin incelenmesi sonucu kadınların ortak motiflerine, tecrübelerine ve oluşturdukları arketiplere ulaşılabilineceğini savunmaktadır. Kadın sanatçıların yarattıkları arketiplerin belirlenmesi, yeni mitlerin ortaya çıkarılması demektir. Mitler toplumun ortak tecrübeleri olarak görüldüğü için, kadınların mitleri tekrar yazmaları, değiştirmeleri ve yeni mitler oluşturmaları onlara ataerkil toplumun gerçeklerini sorgulama ve kendi gerçeklerini oluşturma gücü vermektedir.

Bu nedenle, bu tezde Liz Lochhead'in *Blood and Ice*, Rose Leiman Goldemberg'ün *Letters Home*, Bilgesu Erenus'un *Halide*, Timberlake Wertenbaker'ın *The Love of the Nightingale*, Bryony Lavery'nin *Ophelia* ve Zeynep Avcı'nın *Gilgamiş* adlı oyunlarındaki mit yaratma ve mit kırma süreçleri incelenmiştir. Bu oyun yazarları, erkek mit yaratıcılarının oluşturduğu kadın şablonlarını yıkmayı ve kadınlığı tekrar tanımlamayı amaçlamışlardır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yeniden yazma, Arketipler, Mit Yaratma, Mit Kırma, Feminist Arketip Kuramı

To My Family

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Before the woman writer can journey through the looking glass toward literary autonomy ... she must come to terms with the images on the surface of the glass, with, that is, those mythic masks male artists have fastened over her human face both to lessen their dread of her “inconstancy” and by identifying her with the “eternal types” they have themselves invented to possess her more thoroughly.

*The Madwoman in the Attic*  
Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar

William McNeill declares that those truths shared by a social group, which “provide a sanction for common effort, have obvious survival value” (7). Whether or not the truth shared by the group possesses any validity, this truth supplies a certain refuge for the endurance of that group of people. McNeill continues by stating that, “without such social cement no group can long preserve itself” (7). For McNeill, sharing the consciousness of a common past “is a powerful supplement to other ways of defining who ‘we’ are” (7). Therefore, certain shared values help to ensure the future, as well as the identity, of societies.

Some women playwrights have made use of women writers and literary women characters in their texts to question the previously established myths around these figures in order to reclaim their rightful place in the society, and to ensure their future. In order to discover some of the persistent patterns in plays of contemporary women, the following plays will be analyzed in detail: *Blood and Ice* by Liz Lochhead, *Letters Home* by Rose Leiman Goldemberg, *Halide* by Bilgesu Erenus, *The Love of the Nightingale* by Timberlake Wertenbaker, *Ophelia* by Bryony Lavery, and *Gilgamesh* by Zeynep Avcı. This dissertation will try to reveal the conscious, as well as the unconscious mythical patterns woven by these six women playwrights in creating, revising, and even deconstructing myths (mythbreaking) as a reference point for understanding their own experiences, acknowledging their own identities, and finally declaring their own freedom as women.

The consciousness of a similar heritage is the major trait of any society. Having a similar ancestral past, inhabiting the same lands, enjoying common traditions, and speaking a similar language provide humans with the necessary means of identifying themselves with a certain group. These groups develop ways to ensure the future of their established societies. One of the major means of ensuring the future of a society is through protecting the language of this society. This is because, the common language of a society enables them to develop similar myths that secure the social norms of the given group, since “myths are by nature collective and communal: they bind a tribe or a nation together in common psychological and spiritual activities” (Guerin 149). Therefore, myths play a major role in the structure of all societies: myths not only ensure the continuation of a society, but provide the material for a society to identify itself. Myth, deriving from the Greek word *mythos*, means “word” or “a story”. Consequently, “myth usually takes the form of an unusually potent story or symbol. Regardless of its origins (in group ritual or in the dreams of individuals), it is repeated until it is accepted as truth” (Lauter 1984:1). For such reasons, myths have powerful effects both on the consciousness as well as the unconsciousness of people:

Myth is ubiquitous in time as well as place. It is a dynamic factor everywhere in human society; it transcends time, uniting the past (traditional modes of belief) with the present (current values) and reaching toward the future (spiritual and cultural aspirations). (Guerin 149)

Through such a perspective, bind and identify a certain group, throughout their historical existence. Northrop Frye, in his book *The Stubborn Structure*, further acknowledges the uniting effect of mythology as follows:

Mythology as a whole provides a kind of diagram or blueprint of what literature as a whole is all about, an imaginative survey of the human situation from the beginning to the end, from the height to the depth, of what is imaginatively conceivable. (102)

Philip Wheelwright also argues that “myth is the expression of a profound sense of togetherness of feeling and of action and of wholeness of living” (11). Through this approach to the interpretation of mythology, myths displace their fictitious qualities, and turn into the source of hidden truths about certain peoples. Often fiction and myth are woven together by literary critics who regard myth not as mere fiction, but as an “ancient and primitive counterpart to modern science” (Segal 5), in other words, an

instrument to explain the world, and/or a way of “controlling the world” (Frazer 5), since myths embody universal concerns.

The canonized texts, written mainly by male authors, are the texts that embody the myths that help us to identify ourselves, to obtain a consciousness of togetherness, and to shape our future lives. Do these texts also serve the female gender as a means of identifying itself? Although there are various myths taking women and goddesses as their subject, “myths about women are not necessarily women’s myths” (Larrington xii), since these myths were recorded through male discourse. Carolyn Larrington adds by indicating that, “Historically women have been disbarred from the means to fix their myths in literary form, to give them a distinctively female perspective” (xii).

Women, having been prevented from “fixing” myths in literary forms according to their own perspectives ever since the ancient times, were placed in the literature about these myths through the male point of view. To acknowledge the issue that these canonized texts are mainly the products of male writers leads one to come to the conclusion that it is those patriarchal texts that have determined an identity for women as well as fixing their place in the society. As Philip Goldstein states,

Certainly feminist, Afro-American, and third-world critics have shown that the established canon is neither neutral nor objective. It presents women, blacks, and Hispanics as fearful “others” who reveal the repressed longings of dominant white males. (2)

Such canonical works that identify especially women as the “other,” in fact strengthen the binary oppositions, which work by attributing positive and negative connotations to concepts such as women versus men. Binary oppositions have been entrenched, and the distinctions between the sexes have been perpetually emphasized throughout centuries, which, in return, have established stereotypes of men as the holder of intelligence, and women as the source of nurturance. Even the great psychologist of the twentieth century, Carl Gustav Jung, contributed to maintaining the inferior position of woman as the “nurturer,” as opposed to man who is the “thinker” (Lauter 1985:6).

Although he based his research on the explorations of the traces of the unconscious upon the conscious by Sigmund Freud, Jung gradually formulated the key concepts of his theories. Jung’s concepts of the “collective unconscious,” and the “archetype,” and the vast research he had done on the unconscious provided generous

information about the basis of the human psyche. Jung believed that the human psyche was organized through the repeated patterns called the “archetypes,” which are known as “the contents of the collective unconscious” (1969: 4). Collective unconscious can be explained as the natural instincts that determine human characteristics. According to Jung “The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear” (5). Thus, archetypes are contents which are hidden in the human unconsciousness. Archetypes can also be referred to as the mythical images, since through myths, archetypes become evident and coherent to the conscious mind. Jung classifies archetypes into structural components of the collective unconscious, which he refers to as the *shadow*, *anima / animus*, and the *persona*. Furthermore, he claims that the archetypes found their expression in dreams, fantasies, and myths. The archetypes are changed when they become perceived by the human consciousness. Human actions can be explained through archetypal patterns, which are revealed in archetypal images and forms. Thus, “mythology is a pronouncing of a series of images that formulate the life of archetypes” (Evans 67). Consequently, archetypes reveal the models that teach individuals and societies how to behave. As Jung describes archetypes, humans give “colour”, that is shape to them, which becomes the source for “mythological motifs” (1969:58). Consequently, Jung has proposed that mythology was man-made, and this belief has provided the roots for many theories on myth and archetypes.

However, Jung was unable to escape the binary oppositions and was influenced by gender differences, which were a product of culturally generated principles, rather than individual intellects. As a result, Jung in discussing his concepts of the maternal “Eros” or “anima” and paternal “Logos” or “animus” inherent in men and women, fell into the trap of generalization and claimed that “Eros,” dominant in the female psyche, would remain weaker in males, and “Logos,” dominant in the male psyche, would remain weaker in females. Therefore, feminist archetypal theorists such as Annis Pratt has argued that, “Women, in Jung’s schema, are either exterior containers for male projections or subordinate elements of the male personality” (8). Moreover, feminist archetypal theorists, who have followed in the steps of Jung, declare that Jung, at certain points, ignored the intellectual capacities of men and women; hence, he established some of his major concepts upon mere assumptions about the differences

between the sexes, depending on “culturally induced gender differences” (Lauter 1985: 6).

The Postmodern movement that began to surface in the 1950s allowed new social movements to raise their voices. In fact, the myth of the postmodern movement was its endorsement of freedom of speech and autonomy of minority groups. Postmodernism moved “towards an aesthetic of consumption and stylistic eclecticism or a politics of cultural subversion energized by the new social movements” (Brooker 2). One of these new social movements was composed of women. Under the feminist movement, women acknowledged their minority position in an attempt to subvert it. Many internal movements, such as Marxist, Liberal, and Radical feminisms developed within the feminist movement. Feminist archetypal theory is a recently established means to allow women to discover their own place in history and the world. As mentioned earlier, Jung has greatly contributed to psychoanalytic studies; however, some of his concepts need modification. Feminist archetypal theory emerged in the 1980s to bring a new direction to archetypal studies. Annis Pratt’s *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction* (1981), Estella Lauter’s *Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth Century Women* (1984), and Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht’s *Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-Visions of Jungian Thought* (1985), served to re-define Jung’s archetypal theories so as to serve feminist demands. Thus, feminist archetypal theory, while accepting the “basic Jungian premise that works of art, like dreams, furnish material from the unconscious” (Lauter 1985: 46), attempts to reconsider, to adjust, and to alter the theories put forth by C.G. Jung, through an eclectic study among various disciplines. They attempt to devise a new ground for the major concepts Jung proposes, in order to reveal the experiences of women more precisely.

Feminist archetypal theorists initially aim to reveal the patterns of repeated images and experiences in women’s art, poetry, and fiction to advance the development of archetypes and myths that will eventually alter the established social order that has contributed immensely to women’s inferior positioning in the world. Hence, this research will attempt to analyze the dramatic works of contemporary women playwrights, which explore the lives of women writers and revision female characters previously created by male writers, so as to provide extensive ground for finding mythical patterns that will contribute to the progress of women’s mythmaking.

It is evident that there is still very little information about the female mental processes in relation to behavior. The steps required in the construction of identity in women are still not determined; internalization of the male ideas and ideals still plays a major role in the construction of female identity. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have written, “a woman writer must examine, assimilate, and transcend the extreme images of ‘angel’ and ‘monster’ which male authors have generated for her. Before we women can write, declared Virginia Woolf, we must ‘kill’ the ‘angel in the house’” (17). However, as Gilbert and Gubar add, women “must dissect in order to murder” (17). In other words, understanding the character and origin of the man-made images of women as ‘angel’ and ‘monster’ would lead to a stronger self-definition for women. Annis Pratt acknowledges this argument by stating, “Women’s fiction reflects an experience radically different from men’s because our drive towards growth as persons is thwarted by our society’s prescriptions concerning gender” (6). Thus, analyzing similar patterns of images and experiences in women’s writing would reveal how the advancement of women has been thwarted and this would eventually lead to the discovery of a stronger ground for self-definition. For these reasons, the images and the mythical patterns created consciously or unconsciously by women must be revealed so as to help them develop knowledge about their own identity.

These shared patterns of images and experiences, in other words the archetypes in women’s writing, can be found in all art forms, as well as dreams. These archetypal patterns “are part of the human struggle to order existence” (Lauter 1985: 15). Therefore, feminist archetypal theorists believe that a close study of related patterns in women’s writing, finding the common images and experiences used in their works, will reveal the archetypes shared by women. As Jung discusses, the collective unconscious is revealed through archetypes, which are patterns of psychic energy, common to all men, existing in the human unconscious. At this point, the line between archetypes and stereotypes needs to be distinguished. As defined in Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, an archetype is “an inherited idea or mode of thought in the psychology of C. G. Jung that is derived from the experience of the race and is present in the unconscious of the individual” (60), whereas a stereotype is “something conforming to a fixed or general pattern; *esp.*: a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment” (1153). Thus, as

Lorraine Code argues, “an archetype opens a range of interpretive possibilities, a stereotype has just the opposite effect. It closes off interpretation, conceals complexity and ambiguity. (193)

According to feminist archetypal theorists, archetypes embody “images, symbols, and narrative patterns that differ from stereotypes in being complex variables, subject to variations in perception” (Pratt 4). They all agree that unlike the invariable stereotypes, archetypes are constantly changing and developing, thus they define archetypes “not as an image whose content is frozen but as a tendency to form and re-form images in relation to certain kinds of repeated experience” (Lauter 1985: 13-4). Annis Pratt emphasizes the connection of archetypal patterns with literature. Pratt writes,

Archetypal patterns, as I understand them, represent categories of particulars, which can be described in their interrelationships within a given text or within a larger body of literature. A dogmatic insistence upon preordained, invariable sets of archetypal patterns would distort literary analysis: one must not deduce categories down into a body of material but induce them from images, symbols, and narrative patterns observed in a significantly various selection of literary works. (5)

Such an approach to the concept would “serve to clarify distinctively female concerns that have persisted throughout human history” (Lauter 1985: 14). If the theory is applied to an extensive range of women’s material, “it could expose a set of reference points that would serve as an expandable framework for defining female experience, and ultimately the ‘muted’ culture females have created” (Lauter 1985: 14). Feminist archetypal theory attempts to analyze female experiences, inherent in art, verse, and prose. However, in order to be able to do this, Estella Lauter demands that archetypes must be redefined:

If we redefine the archetype as a tendency to form images in relation to recurrent experiences and we acknowledge that women as well as men must have this capacity, we need only uncover enough images created by women to discover the patterns in our experiences. (1984: 8)

Finding similar images, motifs, and persistent patterns in women’s work will eventually lead to the myths created by women. As noted earlier, “In order to be accepted as a living myth, images must cohere into a story that seems ‘true’ to significant numbers of people. It is not possible for a single individual in complex

modern culture to create a myth” (Lauter 1984: 172). According to feminist archetypal theorists like Estella Lauter, signs of myth reveal themselves in repeated patterns of “images, narratives, ritual gestures, attitudes, or tones that might belong to a coherent story” (172). Thus, seeking the persistent patterns formed in women’s writing and art is an attempt to expose the potential of women’s mythmaking in its progressive stages.

Hence, this research will use the archetype, according to the definition provided by feminist archetypal theoreticians, as a tool to reconsider and re-assess the common patterns that can be found in the texts written by women playwrights. The persistent patterns, images, and the ideas which are expected to be found in these plays, are mainly mythic patterns that are constantly being formed and reshaped in the collective unconscious, since the archetypes that construct these patterns are not “fixed entities” (Lauter 1985: 223). Consequently, as myths are regarded as the source for collective experiences, analyzing how women have revised, devised, and originated myths would thus permit us to find out “which of our experiences have been most critical or enduring” (Lauter 1984: 8). As Alicia Ostriker suggests,

Whenever a poet employs a figure or story previously accepted and defined by a culture, the poet is using myth, and the potential is always present that the use will be revisionist: that is, the figure or tale will be appropriated for altered ends, the old vessel filled with new wine, initially satisfying the thirst of the individual poet but ultimately making cultural change possible. (317)

Ostriker refers to this process as “revisionist mythmaking” since “one can discern a sizeable portion of nineteenth - and twentieth century women’s writing as an attempt to revise and reconstitute those tales, legends, and stories by which we live our lives” (Shurbutt 43). As implied, “revisionist mythmaking” is in fact the attempt to “revise and reconstitute” the previously created myths in order for these myths to include women. Thus, “revisionist mythmaking” becomes an attempt to rewrite and to break those grounded myths to make way for women to establish their own myths. Sylvia Bailey Shurbutt declares that,

Women have always been uniquely aware of the power of the printed word; and women writers, from Amelia Lanier to Virginia Woolf, have made a concerted attempt to rewrite or revise the myths and to seize for themselves the language that constructs and reconstructs the lives of women. (44)

Shurbutt perceives revisionist mythmaking as women's "masking, encoding, and subversive use of language in order to create-or recreate- themselves through words; and in so doing, they are able to create not just a literature of their own but a mythic life of their own" (44). Dilek Direnç also argues that, "revising myths is as much an ideological project as it is a literary invention strategy for women writers who attempt to revise culture as they reinvent 'the writing of the past'" (170). Direnç also discusses that,

intertextuality at work in women's revisionist fiction is inevitably subversive; the (re)construction of the new text is accomplished through the deconstruction of the inter-text. These writers, therefore, are like Penelope at her stitching, sewing to take apart; they "unweave" the male texts of given mythologies by using the fabric of their deconstruction to weave their own texts. (179)

Thus, as mentioned earlier, for women to obtain "a mythic life of their own," they must first reveal and then break the established myths. As Maggie Humm argues, "In the 1940s and 1950s many American women writers turned to myths as a means of redefining women's culture and history" (54). This search for the myths of women has especially found a fertile ground in the feminist archetypal theory. In addition to the search for women's myths in theory, many creative women writers have found "rewriting" as a strategy to rewrite the predetermined patriarchal order. Thus, patterns of women's myths recur extensively in women's rewriting, in other words in women writers' revising of the already existing female writers and literary characters.

The purpose of this study, thus, is to seek out the common mythical patterns that can be found in the texts written by women on female writers and literary women characters. Feminist archetypal theory, which follows the principles set forth by Jung, will be employed throughout the study. Furthermore, keeping in mind the phrase that "past serves present demands" (Palmer 1), it would be justifiable to seek how history and classical literature are rewritten by women writers, in order to evaluate their shared perceptions of contemporary life as a product of the past. As Keith Peacock states, "history written during a given period will reflect, in addition to the individual concerns of its author, the beliefs, social structure, aspirations, and myths of its society" (9). Thus, history and mythology have strong links, since as Northrop Frye declares "mythology helps to create a cultural history" (1982: 34) and history, in time blends into myth.

Accordingly, this study aims to deal with women mythmakers, who try to overthrow the image attributed to them by male mythmakers since ancient times. Women playwrights, such as Liz Lochhead, Rose Leiman Goldemberg, Bilgesu Erenus, Bryony Lavery, Timberlake Wertenbaker, and Zeynep Avcı have rewritten the lives of woman writers and revisioned male constructs of literary female characters to establish firm grounds for the mythic patterns they are consciously or unconsciously creating. These patterns will bind their past to the present and the future, and enable women to identify themselves apart from the models so far produced within the patriarchal order. As Palmer argues, theatre - by using history on stage - has this “intrinsic urge to seduce its spectators with the illusion of truth” (1). Thus, historical women and literary characters used in the process of mythmaking deepen the value of the myths created or re-created by the female playwright.

This dissertation regards mythmaking as a constantly developing process, constructed through the establishment of similar mythical patterns which will be sought in the works of six women playwrights, who belong to Scottish, British, American, and Turkish backgrounds. Regarding the diversity of backgrounds these playwrights present, the dissertation will aim at polyphony in presenting the myths of these women writers. Estella Lauter states, “myth usually takes the form of an unusually potent story or symbol. Regardless of its origins (in group ritual or in the dreams of individuals), it is repeated until it is accepted as truth” (1984: 1). As indicated by feminist archetypal theory, women’s experiences will be revealed to depict the repeated stories in these works, which gradually will evolve into new archetypes and later into new myths of women.

After an introduction to the reasons for and ways of mythmaking, these six texts will be analyzed in two separate chapters, each of which include the analysis of three plays; the third chapter will be on mythmaking through the rewriting of the lives of female writers, and the last developmental chapter will be on mythmaking through the rewriting of literary characters.

The third chapter of the dissertation will reveal the process of mythmaking through biography. By making use of historical women in their writing, women playwrights simultaneously attempt to legitimize their work, as well as to emphasize that women have suffered through the same unjust acts and experienced similar feelings throughout time. The first play that will be analyzed in this chapter is *Blood*

*and Ice*, written by the Scottish playwright Liz Lochhead. *Blood and Ice* represents the events between Mary Godwin Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, and Mary Shelley's half sister Claire. Through flashbacks, the audience is taken through Byron and Shelley's affairs to their death, while Mary Shelley simultaneously struggles to explore her own freedom through reading her own novel, *Frankenstein*. The play also focuses greatly on Mary Shelley's maid Elise, who eventually makes Mary realize her own imprisonment as an end result of the ideas of freedom belonging to Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, and Percy Shelley.

The second play which will be dealt within the third chapter is *Letters Home*, written by the American playwright Rose Leiman Goldemberg. This play is based on Sylvia Plath's work, *Letters Home*, which was composed of Plath's letters selected and edited by her mother Aurelia Schober Plath. Rose Leiman Goldemberg chose to take all the dialogues in the play from these letters, since she thought too much fiction had been already written about Sylvia Plath's life and family. The play will provide a dual, even a triple, process of mythmaking: Goldemberg's choices when collecting and distributing her material, Sylvia Plath's own words, as well as her mother's commentary upon these letters.

The final play of the chapter is *Halide* written by the Turkish playwright Bilgesu Erenus. The play deals with the life of Halide Edip Adivar, from her youth to her political activist years. The inner as well as the outer conflicts Adivar has suffered as a Turkish woman at the beginning of the twentieth century have been dealt with in depth by Erenus. Very few women experience and enjoy such an honorary role as Adivar plays in Turkish history. Erenus devises her play to combine the woman and the politician in Adivar.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation will consider mythmaking through the rewriting of literary woman characters. There have been many classical myths rewritten by woman playwrights. Many of these texts involve the mythical figures of Medea, Jocasta, Antigone, Helen, Penelope, Procne, and Philomele. However, male writers, due to their own preconceptions about women, have embellished these female figures. These women have become literary characters through classical tragedies, and epics. For the purpose of this dissertation, all these figures will be regarded as literary rather than mythical figures, since the sources for these women figures have been found in the texts written by Euripides, Sophocles, Homer, and Ovid.

The first play to be dealt with in the fourth chapter will be *The Love of the Nightingale* written by the American-born playwright Timberlake Wertenbaker. This play retells the myth of Philomele and Procne as written down by Ovid in the *Metamorphoses*. The violent nature of the tale, from the rape of Philomela, to Tereus cutting her tongue, including Procne murdering her son, is represented in the play from a woman's perspective.

Secondly, one of William Shakespeare's greatest female characters will be analyzed through the British playwright Bryony Lavery's *Ophelia*. The play begins at the end of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, where young Fortinbras requests the players to perform a play for everyone to regain their morale. This play within the play is entitled "Tragedy of Ophelia: Lady of Denmark" and Lavery's play no longer has any resemblances to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but has been written by Ophelia herself to tell her own tragedy. The process of mythmaking, as well as mythbreaking has a major role in the play's construction. As revealed through the combination of its words, "myth" and "breaking", I suggest to use the term "mythbreaking" to refer to the process of the women writers' breaching the authority of overused male myths about women by the subversive use of these myths in women's works. Such a use of the man-made myths about women diminishes the authentic qualities of the myth by presenting the male myths' stereotypical views about women.

In a similar way, the anonymous *Epic of Gilgamesh*, rewritten by the Turkish playwright, Zeynep Avcı will be analyzed in the fourth chapter of this dissertation. Although the epic revolves around the adventures of Gilgamesh and his soul mate Enkidu, the character named Yosma, as well as the figure of the snake, presents an extensive source for the patterns required in the process of mythmaking. Zeynep Avcı rewrites the epic through the eyes of a woman, while emphasizing how Yosma loses her only love, Enkidu, to Gilgamesh, after civilizing Enkidu by giving herself to him.

Representations of female writers and literary characters in the dramatic works of contemporary women playwrights, hence, would provide extensive ground for finding mythical patterns that will contribute to the progress of women's mythmaking. This evaluation will be an attempt to reveal the parallel mythic patterns created in the late twentieth century drama by women of diverse backgrounds. If a parallelism is in fact found among these playwrights, this will provide a new direction for contemporary woman's studies and feminism, as well as gender studies.

## CHAPTER II

### MYTHMAKING: DEFINITIONS AND MEANINGS

Before concentrating on mythmaking, it would be viable to go through the approaches towards comprehending and defining “myth”. There have been various critical approaches to explaining the nature of myths; all these approaches acknowledge that myths are human products. To begin with, the theories behind the comprehension, as well as the methodological study, of myths fall into two categories: “those that assume an external basis, such as a reaction to physical nature, for the creation of myth, and those that see mythmaking as spontaneous and internal, an instinctive expression of the human mind” (Platzner 30).

The scholars who have followed an external basis for interpreting and theorizing on myths occupy the first category. For instance, Max Müller, the primary advocate of the Nature Myth theory in the late nineteenth century, argues that myths developed as a result of the reactions of primitive people against the powers of nature. According to Müller, “[m]ythology, in the highest sense, is the power exercised by language on thought in every possible sphere of mental activity” (151). In addition to Müller, Sir James Frazer, in the early twentieth century, also used an externalist approach to interpreting myths. Frazer claims in his Ritual theory that myths were created by people to explain the long forgotten reasons behind their rituals and religious rites. Frazer states: “By myths I understand mistaken explanations of phenomena, whether of human life or of external nature” (xxvii). When a group of people forgot about the original reasons behind their rituals, they made up stories/myths, so that their offspring would continue the same rituals without thinking twice. In addition to Müller and Frazer, Bronislaw Malinowski, during the first half of the twentieth century used the Charter theory to explain how myths were actually stories created in order to provide reasons for customs that maintain the social order of a group. Malinowski states,

Myth fulfils in primitive culture an indispensable function: it expresses, enhances, and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality; it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains practical rules for the guidance of man. Myth is thus a vital ingredient of human civilization; it is not an idle tale, but a hard-worked active force; it is not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imagery, but a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and moral wisdom. (18-9)

Thus, myth, according to Malinowski, is a major cultural force of utmost importance for human civilization. Similar to the Ritual theory, the Charter theory briefly argues that the stories/myths are created to preserve the solidity of the social order. In brief, Müller, Frazer, and Malinowski have used an externalist approach to explain the origins of mythology.

As opposed to externalist means of interpreting myths, the internalist interpreters of myth regard mythmaking as the expression of the unconscious mind. For example, as Sigmund Freud discusses in *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*,

When human beings began to think, they were, as is well known, forced to explain the external world anthropomorphically by means of a multitude of personalities in their own image; chance events, which they interpreted superstitiously, were thus actions and manifestations of persons. They behaved, therefore just like paranoiacs, who draw conclusions from insignificant signs given them by other people, and just like all normal people, who quite rightly base their estimate of their neighbours' characters on their chance and unintentional actions. (1965: 330-31)

Therefore, Freud approaches myth as an internalist, since myths for Freud are the outcomes of an attempt to explain the world through establishing connections between the internal psychologies of humans and the natural occurrences. Freud regards myths as wish fulfillment, enabling individuals to violate taboos safely through displacement. For example, Freud argues that by repeating the myth of Oedipus Rex, people are purged out of their own desires to commit similar acts. Thus, mythology for Freud becomes "psychology projected to the outer world" (330).

Another internalist approach to the interpretation of myth came from Freud's student, Carl Jung. Jung declares that myths, just like dreams contain universal archetypes, which are derived from our collective unconscious. According to Jung,

The primordial image, or archetype, is a figure [...] that constantly recurs in the course of history and appears wherever creative fantasy is freely expressed. Essentially, therefore, it is a mythological figure. When we examine these images more closely, we find that they give

form to countless typical experiences of our ancestors. They are, so to speak, the psychic residues of innumerable experiences of the same type. They present a picture of psychic life in the average, divided up and projected into the manifold figures of the mythological pantheon. (1966:81)

An in depth study of myths, which enclose these collective archetypes, will therefore reveal invaluable information about humanity, since as Jung argues, the collective unconscious is expressed through the archetypes. However, not one of these approaches to interpreting mythology is adequate by itself in explaining the full content of many myths. This study will concentrate on the internalist interpretation of myth, while accepting the externalist idea that myths are created in order to establish and maintain the social foundations of any given culture. For this reason, throughout this study, rather than forcing an established myth into any one of these theories, a variety of these approaches will be used whenever applicable.

After discussing the possible approaches to the methodological analysis of myth, as well as some of its theories, it would be feasible to present various definitions of myth. As Clyde S. Kilby states,

To define myth, as to define any other ultimate, is in part at least to destroy it. Myth is equally indefinable with man, life, reality. To search for definitions is less to define than to discover the paucity of words. (xii)

Although Kilby refrains from defining what myth is, many scholars have attempted to establish solid grounds when speaking about myth. To begin with, the word “myth” is thought to be derived from the Greek word *mythos*, which means word or story. This detail immediately underlines the fictional quality of mythology. Mythology is either a story or a word: If *mythos* merely means a story, why then do many scholars regard myths as the ultimate source which must be studied to comprehend human thought and actions? However, the indication that *mythos* could also mean “word” changes the approach towards the comprehension of mythology. If myth has a connection with “word” or utterance, this presents myth as having a connection with means of communication through the usage of words or utterances. To define communication, it is a “symbolic process in which people create shared meanings” (Lustig 25). This paragraph then provides the overview for this study; whoever is able to use the “word,” is able to create meanings. As Roland Barthes defines the meaning of myth

today, “myth is a system of communication, [...] it is a message” (1973: 109). In other words, whoever handles the *mythos*, either the word or the story, has the power to control the message, which is to create meaning in an effort to construct truths. However, these truths are generally structured by male discourse.

Anthropologists such as Ernst Cassirer, declare that “Myth and language are inseparable and mutually condition each other” (1955:40). Cassirer argues that humans have been using myth, language, and science to comprehend their own experiences and to understand the world around them. Thereby, similar to language, myth also established a means to comprehend natural phenomena. Cassirer argues that “between language and myth there is not only a close relationship, but a real solidarity. If we understand the nature of solidarity, we have found the key to the mythical world” (1946: 217). However, Cassirer insists that myth, unlike language, creates images to dominate reality: mythic image becomes the “true” object created. Due to this tendency of seeing “myth” as a source for “reality” humans aim to provide meaning and intelligibility to the world. Consequently, myths provide men with the necessary equipment to explain natural phenomena, acts of their unconsciousness, and the long forgotten reasons behind rituals.

Lévi-Strauss also contributes to Cassirer’s argument by indicating that in terms of language, myth is “language functioning on an especially higher level” (1958: 210). He is determined “to show not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men’s minds without their being aware of the fact” (1983: 14). He defines the purpose of myth as to afford models of logical reasons for surmounting contradictions deriving from the binary oppositions established by the human mind. According to Lévi-Strauss, myths are created by individuals as an attempt to comprehend or to reconcile the binary oppositions. For the Structuralists, these binary oppositions reproduce the ways humans perceive the world as a reflection of their own physical structure which is composed of dual aspects, like two hands or two parts of the brain. Therefore, analyzing myths, Lévi-Strauss argues, will allow mankind to obtain important information about humanity. Not only Cassirer, but Lévi-Strauss as well, acknowledges the power of myth in the roots of human civilization. Thereby, mythmakers not only reflect the structure of the human imagination, but they also establish the unspoken human laws.

Similar to Frazer, Jung, and Campbell, Northrop Frye also recognizes the verbal structure of cultures and drawing from the relationship between language and myth, he states that, “every human society possesses a mythology which is inherited, transmitted and diversified by literature” (1990: xiii). According to all these mythographers, literature emerges from mythology, and both literature and mythology embody the values and beliefs of their society. Frye insists that mythological thinking establishes all the bonds and boundaries of all forms of thinking. Once again, the power to dominate society lies behind mythology and literature - the two areas that use the “word” extensively.

As revealed in its combination of the words “myth” and “making”, mythmaking suggests that myths are made/created by people to suit their needs. As stated earlier, myths become the narrative patterns that provide individuals with the necessary experience, language, words, or stories that help them shape their lives. Myths function as the keys that unite a group of people. Thus, once again, mythmakers, who possess these keys, have the power to adjust, to manipulate, and to change these societies.

However, the major argument is that for centuries now, only certain people/groups have had the advantage of using these keys. A great number of people were left as outsiders, who had no function in using the “word” so as to create any meaning. Many people, as well as groups, were withheld from creating their own truths; more powerful groups, who could access the “word”, imposed their truths upon these outsiders. One of these outside groups consists of women, who have been excluded from establishing their own myths and truths. Their identities, and the roles they were required to perform within the society were established by the masters of the “word”: men. As Kate Millett states in her *Sexual Politics*,

Under patriarchy the female did not herself develop the symbols by which she is described. As both the primitive and the civilized worlds are male worlds, the ideas which shaped culture in regard to the female were also of male design. The image of women as we know it is an image created by men and fashioned to suit their needs. (46)

How did women lose this right to develop their own identities is not known; however, almost all the myths that have been established by men aim to secure women in their limited and subordinate place. Having lost this right of access to the

“word” in a sense has destroyed all the chances of women in practicing similar rights as men. This loss in fact is an end result of an agenda conducted by men to ensure their domination of the “word”, and women’s deprivation of it. The loss of control over language has prevented women from creating their own meanings, identities, and experiences, since they are unable to put them into words. The power to use words possesses the power to turn things into reality. Therefore, the power to use words and to give names to experiences turns into the power to control meaning and reality.

Cheris Kramarae declares that, “those who have the power to name the world are in a position to influence reality” (165). For critics like Jane Caputi, as well as Toril Moi, women lack the power to name things, and therefore they are unable to influence reality, or at least contribute to the construction of the illusion of reality. Moi also argues that “as a consequence, many female experiences lack a name” (158-9). Thus, any experience of women that has not been named, or suggested in language, does not exist. The definition of female mythmaking, for the purpose of this study, is creating utterances of probable female experiences, as an attempt to reclaim the power to name, and hence to influence the so-called reality established by the patriarchy.

Aristotle highlights the differences between the poet, who depends on stories/myths, and the historian, who depends on facts;

it is not the poet’s function to describe what has actually happened, but the kinds of things which might happen, that is, that could happen because they are, in the circumstances, either probable or necessary. The difference between the historian and the poet [. . .] is that one tells of what has happened, the other of the kinds of things that might happen. For this reason poetry is something more philosophical and more worthy of serious attention than history; for while poetry is concerned with universal truths, history treats of particular facts. (43-4)

Therefore, being capable of creating stories and myths as a poet should come to connote the person would be dealing with universal truths, according to Aristotle, rather than mere particulars. However, as Robert Graves declares, the female has been represented as an inspiration; she is therefore a mere symbol made to carry the meaning created on her behalf by men. Thus, women perceive universal truths only as they are represented through the male perspective. They have not been given the authority to challenge, to alter, or to rewrite these myths/truths for centuries. As Diana Purkiss explains,

By rewriting the myth – changing the narrative, changing the position of the speaker, changing the spaces available for identification – you are held to be at once making a dramatic break with the myths as told by the fathers, and also to be recovering the dark, secret, always unconscious truths which the fathers have struggled to repress. (444)

This revolt against patriarchal authority indicates a massive change in the formation of the social order - a transformation in the attributed roles men and women play in these societies, and a collapse of all traditions. Jane Caputi describes this change as an accompaniment of the feminist movements of the twentieth-century:

One of the most significant developments to emerge out of the contemporary feminist movement is the quest to reclaim that symbolizing/naming power, to refigure the female self from a gynocentric perspective, to discover, revitalize and create a female oral and visual mythic tradition and use it, ultimately, to change the world. (425)

The attempt to establish a distinctive women's language came with the recognition that very few feminist theorists were concerned with women's writing. Hélène Cixous and Patricia Meyer, the first women to concentrate on how being a woman influenced the ways of expression used by female writers came forth in 1975. Cixous and Meyer simultaneously acknowledged that there had begun a shift from an androcentric criticism to "a gynocentric feminist criticism" (Davis 55). Cixous, in her "The Laugh of the Medusa," explained that the new writing, "écriture féminine," would endow women with the opportunity to make their voice heard. Following such examples, a great amount of gynocentric feminist criticism developed in the second half of the 1970s.

Two years later, in 1977, Elaine Showalter urged women to find the discourses necessary for them to establish their own traditions by clearly pointing out that women have been left "without a history" (11) and this has disabled them from realizing a collective discourse that could be referred to as a "movement" (12). Showalter wrote,

But if contact with a female tradition and a female culture is a center; if women take strength in their independence to act in the world, then Shakespeare's sister, whose coming Woolf asked us to await in patience and humility, may appear at last. Beyond fantasy, beyond androgyny, beyond assimilation, the female tradition holds the promise of an art that may yet fulfill the hopes of Eliot and Woolf. (319)

Showalter has coined the word, “gynocritic” to define the feminist critic who focused his/her attention on literary works written by women. She claims that the concerns of the gynocritic will include “the psychodynamics of female creativity; linguistics and the problem of a female language; the trajectory of the individual or collective female literary career; literary history; and, of course, studies of particular writers and works” (1988: 268). Showalter makes it clear that “the task of feminist critics is to find a new language; a new way of reading that can integrate our intelligence and our experience, our reason and our suffering, our skepticism and our vision” (272).

Showalter recapitulates the need to take the power of using the “word” for women. For women to be able to change the world, their mythos must be achieved. The word and the myth must be brought together to ensure and to secure the future of women. Indeed, there are various Greek myths written about women, such as *Medea*, *Antigone*, and *Philomela and Procne*. Also, there are many important literary characters, such as Ophelia, Gertrude, Lady Macbeth, Desdemona, and Beatrice. However, these mythical and literary female figures have been merely written down by male writers according to male perspectives, biases, and stereotypes about women. For such reasons, contemporary women playwrights have attempted to rewrite these mythical and literary women figures to express a new perspective about women, and to represent the figures through genuine women’s thought and experience. As Jacqueline de Weever explains, “contemporary women writers have turned to antique molds, but in a new way” (2). The antique molds have been brought forth and have been rewritten and revised by women to provide for their own needs. Contemporary female playwrights aim to rewrite the classical myths and texts that have been influential in the creation, as well as the preservation of the established cultural codes, which have determined the roles attributed to men and women throughout centuries.

In addition to the rewriting of classical myths and texts, women playwrights have also attempted to document the lives of historical woman figures such as Mary Shelley, Halide Edip Adıvar, Sylvia Plath, Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Brontë, Kathrine Mansfield, Emily Dickinson, Anne Boleyn, and Queen Mary. All these attempts to inscribe women’s experiences fall within the process of mythmaking, which will be analyzed in this study. As Gerald Siegmund states,

If myth translates the unrepresentable or even the unspeakable into the representable by bringing heterogeneous elements originating at the same time into a linear narrative, then myth is the very heart of theatre. The mirror and the mirrored only exist when they meet. Translated into theatrical terms this can be read as: theatre only exists when actors and audience come together. It is this union that marks the moral aspect of theatre beyond the telling of a moral fable. (208)

Similarly, women exist when their experiences find a name; when their myths are retold, and accepted so as to link them to the contemporary social order. Women have to keep on creating and retelling their own myths to progress into the future and drama serves as a primary tool for producing and transmitting their “word”, their myth, their experiences, and voices. Women have been “confined to the domestic domain and denied admittance to the public arena” (Case 46). Their space has often been limited within their homes. For such reasons, their experiences lacked the authentic female voice, being mere representations of male perspectives. As Yvonne Hodkinson states,

Drama becomes a stimulating medium to carry out this endeavor, as it journeys from the personal realm to the public arena. In this public arena, women’s presence must be recognized and consolidated. The stage, as a metaphor for the world, becomes the setting in which women project their vision, enabling women to move out of the silent margins into vocal celebration of life. (15)

Representations of female figures, by woman playwrights will find new meanings through theatre, since “stage and audience co-produce the performance text” (Case 118). Theatre will provide a greater domain for the expression of women’s voices to reach a larger community. As Jane de Gay and Lizbeth Goodman declare, “Theatre is a place and space in which we can dream such large dreams and attempt to realise them” (1). This research will make use of drama/theatre to uncover the experiences of women and their voices that have been silenced and kept away from the stage for a long time. As Sue-Ellen Case writes,

The feminist in theatre can create the laboratory in which the single most effective mode of repression – gender – can be exposed, dismantled and removed; the same laboratory may produce the representation of a subject who is liberated from the repressions of the past and capable of signaling a new age for both women and men. (132)

### CHAPTER III

#### PLAYS BY WOMEN ON FEMALE WRITERS

Hayden White argues that, “There is something in a historical masterpiece that cannot be negated, and this non-negatable element is its form, the form which is its fiction” (1978: 43). A historical work is a fiction in its form, and therefore, history is an individual construction. The historian has to make use of his/her “constructive imagination” (Collingwood 151), to complete a historical record. Therefore, as Collingwood adds, “historical knowledge, if we may still call it by that name, seems now to be a mere tissue of imagination, pegged down as it were to the world of reality only at the fixed points provided by recorded fact” (152). Since imagination is the source of literature, “the discourse of the historian and that of the writer of imaginative fictions overlap, resemble, or correspond with each other” (White 1976: 21). In Hayden White’s words “the fictions of factual representation” (1976: 21) is this discourse that is used both by the historian and the fiction writer. White explains that the usage of this similar discourse is the outcome of the similar aims both writers desire to supply: “a verbal image of ‘reality’” (1976: 22).

Furthermore, Edward H. Carr defines history as “a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past” (30). Thus, Carr’s definition of history is that it is a dialogue between the writer and his own perception of facts. Moreover, Alun Munslow, in his *Deconstructing History* defines history “as the narrative interpretation and explanation of human agency and intention” (4). Therefore, according to Edward Carr and Alun Munslow, the historian, as the source behind history, plays a major role in the definition of history, since history depends on his own interpretation of events. Accordingly, having noticed the major part the historian plays in the historical process, Roland Barthes in his article entitled “The Discourse of History” attempts to define historical discourse through finding the function of the historian him/herself. Barthes states,

The historian is not so much a collector of facts as a collector and relater of signifiers; that is to say, he organizes them with the purpose of establishing positive meaning and filling the vacuum of pure, meaningless series. (2002: 121)

According to Barthes, a historian collects and organizes signifiers to establish a meaning, preferably positive, which will enable him to fill in the void created by meaninglessness. Through such a function of the historian, historical discourse becomes a form of “ideological” or to be more exact “imaginary” elaboration. (2002: 121). Previously, Friedrich Nietzsche in his *The Will to Power* had argued that there are no facts “only interpretations” (481), Edward H. Carr also agrees with this statement by indicating that “History means interpretation” (23). Carr remarks,

History consists of a corpus of ascertained facts. The facts are available to the historian in documents, inscriptions and so on, like fish on the fishmonger’s slab. The historian collects them, takes them home, and cooks and serves them in whatever style appeals to him. (9)

The historian interprets the materials he has at hand. Thus, the objectivity of history is to be questioned. As Michel de Certeau, the French historian states, “What we initially call history is nothing more than a narrative” (287). Any historical event could be only an interpretation or even a story told by an individual historian. To solve this dilemma, David Carr in his article “History, Fiction, and Human Time” writes, “History must, at the very least, be recognized as a mixture of fiction and fact” (251). Similar to David Carr, Alun Munslow also declares “History is thus a class of literature” (5). He further adds,

In writing history it is impossible to divorce the historian from the constitution of meaning through the creation of a context, even though this is seemingly and innocently derived from the facts. (Munslow 7)

Shortly, Munslow is supporting the suggestion that history is an individual construction, although the historian claims to have obtained his material from history. As Michel de Certeau writes “History has become our myth” (45). Writing history according to these critics has become a means to construct modern myths, in other words it is a process of mythmaking.

Niloufer Harben also acknowledges the power of the playwright in creating new myths while dealing with history. He states, “A really powerful playwright can create new myths in dealing with history” (Harben 7). This is in parallel to the attempts of

the three mythmakers who will be studied in this chapter. Liz Lochhead, Rose Leiman Goldemberg, and Bilgesu Erenus all have taken their material from history. They have rewritten the lives of Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Halide Edip Adivar, historical women who were also mythmakers themselves, although the myths of these historical women were decentered and disregarded by the dominant myths of the patriarchy. Thus, the aim of this chapter will be to reveal the attempts of Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus at mythmaking by rewriting the lives of the above mentioned historical figures while breaking the existing myths about women.

As the word suggests, the story of the world has been his-story. As Beverley Southgate, the author of *History: What and Why?* writes “the male-oriented focus of most past historical writing is indisputable” (96). Women have been interpreted through the perspectives of male historians for centuries. Such arguments have pushed women to accept that “women either ‘have no history’ or have achieved little worthy of inclusion in the historical record” (96). Southgate adds,

The past is shown to have been determined by men; it is men’s lives and achievements that are selected for study; and the whole patriarchal pattern is justified in a (viciously) circular argument which has very practical outcomes in contemporary society. (96)

The society therefore is a construction of patriarchy. Its norms are determined by men. Southgate suggests that the only way women can escape from this vicious circle is by changing their language, “to modify it in such a way that it encapsulates and expresses female rather than male values and aspirations” (99). Finding a female language is one of the main attempts of feminist critics such as Cixous, and Irigaray. Accordingly, establishment of a new way of articulation for women will enable their contribution to the construction of society.

In addition to Beverley Southgate’s arguments, Sue-Ellen Case in her *Feminism and Theatre* also argues that women have been pushed away from the public scene ever since the ancient times and this restraint of actual women has eventually resulted in the male invention of what ought to be a woman. Case argues that “it was this fictional ‘Woman’ who appeared on stage, in the myths and in the plastic arts, representing the patriarchal values attached to the gender while suppressing the experiences, stories, feelings and fantasies of actual women” (7). The recent feminist approach acknowledges that historical women carried little connection to the “male

produced fiction” (7) about women. Case further argues that in the past male actors performed the roles of women characters, since women were prohibited from the stage. According to Case such practices of having men play female roles contributed to the generalizations about women and the creation of female stereotypes. Case argues,

This practice reveals the fictionality of the patriarchy’s representation of the gender. Classical plays and theatrical conventions can now be regarded as allies in the project of suppressing real women and replacing them with masks of patriarchal production. (7)

Women’s space outside the center of male domination was secured through such practices. Contemporary women playwrights have comprehended the importance of revealing the women of the past through female perspectives. Bringing the historical women on the stage, through the eyes of fellow women, would contribute extensively to the eradication of the established generalizations and stereotypes about women.

Contemporary women playwrights have discovered the potential of using historical material in their works very recently. As Keith Peacock states, “Not until after 1968 did the radical historical drama [...] pay any serious attention to women” (153). Women were the last to discover the opportunities history presented to them to change the future for all women.

There are various advantages for a playwright to use historical subjects or settings in their texts. First of all, once a play is set in a past historical period, the requirements of realism will decrease. As Robert Bolt wrote in his preface to *A Man for All Seasons* “the historical setting would enable [him] to treat [his] characters in a properly heroic, properly theatrical manner” (xvii). Bolt takes his characters away from everyday, human activity, and places them in a mythical realm, with which the contemporary audience is not closely related. Enabling the audience to obtain a detached view concerning the actions of the protagonist serves as a means to disable the audience from perceiving the protagonist as a mere human engaged in everyday events. Raised to a mythical realm, Bolt manages to transform the historical Sir Thomas More into a heroic, legendary personality without paying any regard to the demands of realism. The expectations of the audience concerning realism in theatre would already be fulfilled through the usage of the ‘real’ historical persona of Thomas More, as created within the play. This fictionalized/historical character will provide a

sense of 'reality' for the audience. Thus, the playwright obtains the opportunity to create a hero, a mythical character through the usage of a historical figure. The writer realizes an opportunity to rewrite his/her truth about the historical man, Thomas More. Accordingly, the playwright contributes to the creation of a myth about More as a consequence of the multiple truths behind More's existence.

Furthermore, according to Harben, the involvement of the audience in the stage presentation develops immensely through the usage of history within the plot, since such historical allusions provide "a degree of factuality" (253) for the play. Thus, the usage of historical materials, such as characters, plot, and setting in plays, highlights the line between reality and myth. Myth becomes more realistic and rational, therefore achieving the expected "reality" for the audience. As Richard H. Palmer wrote in his *The Contemporary British History Play*,

Historical data, by itself, is notoriously incomplete in ways that frustrate the curiosity of audience members and fulsome in ways that bore them. The solution, for playwrights, has been to rearrange, interpolate, and invent, expanding upon what is presumably known as far as the limit of violating accepted fact or losing credibility. (8)

As Palmer argues, no one can know the exact occurrences in history. Therefore, the solution for the playwrights is to edit, invent, and develop the missing pieces in history. This practice of rewriting history has been conducted by both male and female writers. However, as mentioned before, female playwrights started working with history very recently in the 1970s. As Janelle Reinelt declares in her article entitled "Beyond Brecht: Britain's New Feminist Drama" that "Exposing hidden aspects of the past and exploring their consequences for contemporary experience has provided a fruitful undertaking for feminist playwrights" (43). With women seeking for material in the big chest of history, women began to take part in determining the subjects of history as well. Now, women could have a word to say in the formation of the canon, in determining what was going to be speculated by the masses of society.

As Bertolt Brecht in his article "The Popular and the Realistic" claims "It is in the interest of the people, the broad working masses, that literature should give them truthful representations of life; and truthful representations of life are in fact only of use to the broad working masses, the people; so that they have to be suggestive and intelligible to them, i.e. popular" (107). Using history presents the audience with something that is popular, with something that they would recognize. If this is a

popular historical figure or an event, their interest would be captured further, since the material used within the play would be more “suggestive and intelligible to them” (Brecht 107). Making something popular is making something intelligible to a specific group of people, living in a certain period in history. While making his/her play comprehensible and popular for the audience, the playwright must draw links between their shared traditions developed in the past, carry it to their present, and eventually establish their future. Thus, according to Brecht, bringing forth material from a group’s shared historical memory onto the stage would guarantee the plays’ popularity and the comprehension of its message.

Using historical materials to achieve popularity provides probably the smallest benefit of using history in contemporary theatre. The main aim behind Bertolt Brecht’s usage of history is, as stated before, the effect of distancing or alienation it provides for the audience. Brecht defines the concept of “realism” in terms of a power to influence social aspects in human life,

We must not abstract the one and only realism from certain given works, but shall make a lively use of all means, old and new, tried and untried, deriving from art and deriving from other sources, in order to put living reality in the hands of living people in such a way that it can be mastered. (109)

Living people mastering the “living reality” acquired from all possible sources is an indication that reality is a construction. Brecht demands that this constructed reality present the viewpoints of the dominant groups. Accordingly, using material from all possible sources will enable women to contribute to this construction process. Thus, women playwrights have valued the techniques of Epic Theatre in answering the demands of the dominant group. As Richard H. Palmer observes, “Feminist playwrights frequently use this Brechtian strategy of historicizing material to encourage the audience to take a detached view of contemporary issues” (154). Through using Brecht’s alienation techniques, especially historicization, women were able to distance their audience so as to make them perceive their play more critically.

History is engraved in all women’s experiences and actions. As Estella Lauter states,

Whatever our desire for purity, we are unlikely to be able to disentangle our roots in prehistory from our roots in history. In fact, there seems little point in doing so, since by means of female collectivity we have discovered our ability to generate images and stories of the sort that

should lead to changes in the symbolic code itself. It may be more fruitful to begin to look for new branches in our mythological tree. (1984: 208)

There is no possible means to change or erase history so as to change the established myths about women. Rather, as Lauter suggests, women should work to find new images and stories, in other words, mythical patterns, which will eventually evoke a change in the patriarchal order. Thus, this chapter will analyze the works of three women playwrights who have turned to history to generate stories about three female writers: Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Halide Edip Adıvar. Rather than escaping history, the playwrights have turned to it for inspiration.

The first subchapter will analyze Scottish playwright Liz Lochhead's work entitled *Blood and Ice*. Lochhead explores the means how Mary Shelley wrote her own story while she wrote her famous novel *Frankenstein*. The second subchapter will explore Rose Leiman Goldemberg's *Letters Home*. The American playwright has edited the play from Sylvia Plath's *Letters Home* selected and edited by Aurelia Schober Plath, Sylvia Plath's mother. The final subchapter will study Halide Edip Adıvar as seen through the eyes of a Turkish playwright Bilgesu Erenus. Erenus attempts to expose the women behind one of the heroes of the Turkish War of Independence and her struggles to understand her mistakes.

### **III. I. LIZ LOCHHEAD'S *BLOOD AND ICE*<sup>1</sup>**

According to Susan Bassnett, a cultural studies scholar, the Scottish playwright Liz Lochhead, who is a performance artist, a poet, and a playwright, "can be seen as representative of the new Scottish writer, who re-examines her history of links with the English and draws attention to the relationship between the past and the present" (2000: 79). Lochhead started writing revues in 1975 and due to the steady escalation of her work managed to become the "Writer in Residence for the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in 1989" (Triesman 127). As Adrienne Scullion claims, Liz Lochhead is a

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<sup>1</sup> *Blood and Ice* is Liz Lochhead's first full length play and "a slightly more complex and difficult version" (Lochhead 117) than the one this dissertation has made use of was staged in the Traverse Theatre "at the Edinburgh Festival of 1982" (Lochhead 117)). Later, with some changes, the play was "performed at New Merlin's Cave, London, on 27 February 1984" (Lochhead 82) directed by Joanna Proctor. Sue Britten performed the role of Mary Shelley in this production.

very prominent figure in the circle of Scottish playwrights due to her constant usage of, “the key socio-cultural tropes of history and myth, national and sexual identity, popular, traditional and ‘high’ cultural forms, and a deliberate deployment of strategies of politicized deconstruction and feminist revisioning” (95).

According to Scullion, Lochhead’s feminist dramaturgy attempts to disclose the historical and mythical aspects of being Scottish and to reveal the identities constructed as a result of “nationalism, imperialism, and colonialism” (96). The theatre director Susan C. Triesman, emphasizes the discourse on power struggle one can find in the plays of Liz Lochhead. Triesman states that Lochhead’s work,

deal[s] in what Foucault described as the instability innate in the procedures of mastery in patriarchal society, unleashing links between desire and power, creating discourses that reclaim the repressed and deny prohibition and exclusion. (127)

Lochhead’s plays raise questions about the mythologies concerning not only female identity, but also national identity. By using stereotypes and generalizations, she reveals how identities are constructed. Although, her texts seem to disclose how female identities are constructed, she also emphasizes her Scottish identity and employs Scottish dialects in most of her plays as well. As Ilona Koren-Deutsch states,

Although Lochhead’s relationship to feminism is complex, her understanding of feminism is straightforward: “Feminism is about very simple issues.... I am a feminist.... All feminism means is equality for women” (personal interview). Her writing explores women’s lives and women’s emotions. To Lochhead that is political, but it is also entirely natural: “I can’t not be a woman, the same way I can’t not be Scottish” (personal interview). (242-3)

Furthermore, as Scullion argues Lochhead “uses the past to make clear and political comment on the present” (96). *Blood and Ice* (1982), and *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* (1987) use two well known women from history as protagonists to discuss the issue of being a woman. Lochhead’s historical figures of the past reveal that contemporary women are still suffering from the prejudices and the limitations, which hindered the advance of women in the past.

Moreover, Lochhead uses established myths in her version of *Dracula* (1985), *Medea* (2000), and *Thebans* (2003). She rewrites these myths, as a woman, through the perspectives of the women characters in these texts. Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, Euripides’ *Medea*, and Sophocles’ *Oedipus* and *Antigone*, thus, become the sources of

new myths seen from the perspective of a woman playwright. Lochhead refuses to acknowledge the mentioned male writers' interpretation of the female characters in their plays. Her version of these works retells the story of the women in these myths or legends through the voice of a female writer. Liz Lochhead, therefore, brings the male myths about women to the surface in order to destroy them, and to establish new myths that will eventually transform the position of women for the better.

When dealing with the mythmaker Mary Shelley, in *Blood and Ice*, Liz Lochhead seems to have the same intentions in mind again: to re-write and to break male myths. As Keith Peacock observes in his *Radical Stages: Alternative History in Modern British Drama*, Liz Lochhead tried to “replace Mary Shelley as wife of the poet Shelley and daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft (the author of *The Vindication of the Rights of Women*) and William Godwin the libertarian, with Mary Shelley as mother and a poet in her own right” (159). Thus, Lochhead sought to reveal the myths behind Mary Shelley, to disclose the similar experiences women go through, and to understand not only what it means to be a woman, but also her own self and experiences. In the epilogue to *Blood and Ice*, Lochhead informs her reader that she resembles both Mary Shelley, and Dr. Frankenstein, since similar to Shelly and the doctor, Liz Lochhead's first attempt at creation was a fearful and a troubled journey.

Initially, Lochhead had written *Blood and Ice* in 1981 with another title: *Mary and the Monster*. She had planned to write a play on Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley's mother. Wollstonecraft had died while giving birth to Mary Shelley, “the myth-maker, Frankenstein the creator's creator” (Lochhead 117). Lochhead's first instinct was to write about this powerful woman, who had become the victim of childbirth just like many women in her time. However, trying to study Wollstonecraft's life, she kept encountering the tragic life of her daughter, Mary Shelley, and kept wondering why Mary Shelley, the daughter of such a powerful woman, would write *Frankenstein*, which she thought was a “Gothic Horror” (117). This curiosity led Lochhead to read Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Lochhead states that after reading the novel, her “fantasies of writing a play about Wollstonecraft evaporated. [She] wrote like a being possessed” (117) about Mary Shelley instead. Adrienne Scullion argues that Lochhead presents,

Mary Shelley as daughter of famous parents and lover of a more famous man – and peels back the mythology, drawing out the essential

humanity of the person. She strives to find in her creations a more empowering identity than has traditionally been represented. (97)

Thus, Lochhead challenges the traditional myth of Mary Shelley as the woman who had been drowned under the shade of her mother Mary Wollstonecraft, her father William Godwin, and her lover Percy Shelley. Rather, Lochhead writes *Blood and Ice* to take place in Mary Shelley's memories where Shelley remembers how she had to struggle with the burden of being a mother, a mistress, and a widow, as well as an artist. Some of the persistent patterns Liz Lochhead underlines in *Blood and Ice* are the importance of women's self-reliance, women's bonding through sharing their experiences, and women's self-realization through writing and reading. Lochhead puts great emphasis on women's power to determine their own freedom, and never to allow themselves to be victimized. She stresses the ideas that love can be dangerous for women, and that motherhood can be a burden for them. Through her depiction of Mary Shelley's life, Lochhead rewrites the mythic journey of initiation and carries it into the domestic environment of women. She also establishes the idea that shared experiences blur gender differences. Through constantly altering the connotations attributed to the established archetypes of blood and ice, Lochhead allows her audience/reader to continually interpret these images according to their own experiences. For this reason, *Blood and Ice* requires the participation of all women in the mythmaking process of Lochhead.

Gilbert and Gubar argue that "*Frankenstein* really enacts the story of Eve's discovery not that she must fall but that, having been created female, she is fallen, femaleness and fallenness being essentially synonymous" (234). Almost after 200 years Liz Lochhead in *Blood and Ice* makes use of Mary Shelley's life to expose the mythical pattern that even today all women go through analogous experiences due to their fallen position in the society. As Carol Christ suggests,

Because of women's unique position as menstruants, birthgivers, and those who have traditionally cared for the young and the dying, women's connection to the body, nature, and this world has been obvious. Women were denigrated because they seemed more carnal, fleshy, and earthy than the culture-creating males. The misogynist *antibody* tradition in Western thought is symbolized in the myth of Eve who is traditionally viewed as a sexual temptress, the epitome of women's carnal nature. (279)

Due to this Western belief, women have been sharing the same fallen position throughout history. Carol Christ further argues that the positive image of the Virgin Mary in Christianity does not alter the “denigration of the female body” (280), because the Virgin Mary, “in her perpetual virginity, transcends the carnal sexuality attributed to most women” (280). Therefore, not even the image of the Virgin Mary has been able to raise women from their degraded position in Western society. Christ further adds, “the denigration of the female body is expressed in cultural and religious taboos surrounding menstruation, childbirth, and menopause” (280). Menstruating women were forbidden to enter religious sanctuaries in ancient Hebrew, premodern Christian, and even Muslim religions. Most women are taught that, “menstruation is a curse and [they] grow up believing that the bloody facts of menstruation are best hidden away” (Christ 208). In addition to menstruation, childbirth has been “treated as a disease requiring hospitalization, and the woman is viewed as a passive object, anesthetized to ensure her acquiescence to the will of the doctor” (208). Furthermore, since Western culture “is based on a denial of aging and death” (208), postmenopausal or aging women have lost dignity, since they are no longer young and beautiful. Thus, Western myths have been devaluing women for centuries, and many women have been suffering due to such beliefs.

*Blood and Ice* also suggests that all women go through similar experiences concerning not only menstruation, childbirth, and menopause, but also in their love affairs, and domestic life. Lochhead aims to awaken women to free themselves from their confinement, so as not to sacrifice their own freedom for the good of others. Moreover, Lochhead demands that women go forward in order to find their own selves and freedom, and to value their creativity and wisdom. Carl Jung defines this process of discovery as individuation, “the process by which a person becomes a psychological ‘in-dividual,’ that is, a separate, indivisible unity or ‘whole’” (1969: 275) or in other words, individuation is the “development of the self” (145). Liz Lochhead unveils Mary Shelley’s final acknowledgement of freedom or discovery of self in three stages. The first stage involves Shelley’s realization of her imprisonment; the second stage is Mary Shelley’s unconscious revolt against those that restrain her; and the final stage is her understanding of her own actions and thus learning who she is, apart from the images imposed upon her by her parents and Percy Shelley. Lochhead uses the tools of writing and reading for Mary Shelley to find who she is.

These tools stand as another version of the journey/quest archetype. In many myths great heroes have undertaken a quest which has led to the hero's initiation. In a similar way, the stages of Mary Shelley's realization of her boundaries, her unconscious revolt through writing, and self-realization through reading lead to the acknowledgement of her identity and power. Thus, Lochhead rewrites the mythical quests of the heroes such as Odysseus and Gilgamesh, and transmits the initiation journey of her heroine to a domestic environment. Through Mary Shelley's journey of initiation, Lochhead breaks the established myths concerning motherhood and the victimized woman, while establishing firm attitudes concerning the understanding of individual freedom. Her attempts at rewriting and breaking established myths, constant emphasis on ideas that have become persistent patterns, and her usage of the archetypes of blood and ice will be studied by analyzing these stages of awakening through realization of her confinement, writing, and finally reading her own story.

### **III.I.A. Stage One: Realization of Limits Constructed by Others**

Lochhead wrote *Blood and Ice* to take place in the consciousness of Mary Shelley (Lochhead 118). The play is Mary Shelley's self-evaluation of her life, and her understanding of her self-confinement, thus enabling Lochhead to break the traditional perception of women as the victims of their society. As Keith Peacock claims, the play "exhibits the kind of lateral structure of inter-linked images that is often seen as characteristics of female thought process" (160). Giving more importance to "emotional and imagistic" (160) memories of Mary Shelley, Lochhead uses various staging techniques to have her audience distinguish between the present, which is given in candlelight, and the past, which is presented in normal light. In the stage descriptions, Act One opens with "The ghostly nursery" where "Mary alone, in a cold circle of candlelight is reading her *Frankenstein*, surrounded by packing cases and nightmare toys" (Lochhead 83). This setting is accompanied by a monologue by Mary Shelley, which explains that this is the time when she has lost two of her children, including her husband Percy Bysshe Shelley. The empty, childless nursery and the "nightmare toys" suggest the loss of her children. Throughout her monologue, moonlight shines on her and she exclaims, "My element. I swim in it and I do not drown. I dream in it. Swimming, *dwamming* (daydreaming), dreaming... drowning. Sleeping in a dead man's bed. Not yet thirty and I'm sleeping in a dead man's bed"

(83). Mary Shelley's uneasy state of mind, after losing her children and husband, is reflected in this scene through light, setting, acting, as well as dialogue. Thus, in the first stage of Liz Lochhead's process of mythmaking, the audience is introduced to the dame in distress. Similar to the way Liz Lochhead uses history to reveal the present condition of women, her character Mary Shelley returns to her past to reveal her current situation. Through her memories, the audience is informed how Mary Shelley's parents and her relationship with Percy Shelley contributed to her confinement to slavery. Through her experiences, the audience is made aware how ideas of freedom can turn into imprisonment. Liz Lochhead uses Mary Shelley's helper Elise and her stepsister Claire Clairmont to mirror how Mary, Elise, and Claire have similar experiences as women. They all have been imprisoned in human-made cells.

To begin with, Mary Shelley's childhood, as reflected by Liz Lochhead, can be analyzed to expose the standards that have placed Mary Shelley in a prison. As Byron says several times in the play, "Poor Mary – Mary. Wearing her mother round her neck and her father on her sleeve" (94). Initially, Mary Shelley's mother Mary Wollstonecraft died while giving birth to her. The imagery of blood Liz Lochhead uses as an ascription of Mary Shelley is thus established at her birth. Having lost her mother at such a young age Mary Shelley has not been allowed to ever forget her, since Mary Wollstonecraft was the spokesperson for the freedom of women at her time, and she had said, "Make brothers and equals of your husbands and lovers" (93). However, when Mary Wollstonecraft's ideas about women's freedom are applied to lower class women, they seem not to be applicable. As an illustration, Elise, the maid-servant whom Mary Shelley taught how to read, asks, "so free love is not to be afforded to the working classes!" and Mary Shelley replies "Love is never free to any women, Elise" (107). According to Lochhead, Elise in fact reveals the double standards behind Mary Wollstonecraft's words, and how her daughter had to carry its weight. As Elise explains,

Well, I read the book too! You were always encouraging me to improve my mind, were you not: Even although I was only a maid-servant. Indeed I understood it very well. The Rights of Woman. The marvelous Mary Wollstonecraft was very keen on freedom for Woman. At least freedom for the Woman with six hundred a year and a mill-owning husband to support her – and a bevy of maid-servants sweeping and

starching and giving suck to her squalling infants - not to speak of rutting husband. (107)

After Mary Shelley slaps her, there is a reechoing of a mirror scene between Claire and Mary in Act One, and Elise adds, “Don’t you think we are sisters? Are we not somewhat alike?” (107). However, all Mary can do is to tell Elise to get married to the man who had impregnated her, since he was the one responsible. Marrying this man, who is “responsible” for Elise’s pregnancy, means the end of her freedom. Thus, Elise, who knows that she too is responsible for her pregnancy, ironically remarks, “Oh yes, *he* is responsible!” (107). The scenes between Elise, the maid-servant, and Mary Shelley, the lady of the house, suggest that the two women are actually the one and the same. Although there is a class difference between the two, there exists no difference between their experiences. This is one of the major ideas Liz Lochhead weaves in her work; all women share similar experiences and thus, they should all share their stories.

Another woman in Mary Shelley’s life is her stepsister, Claire Clairmont. Claire had accompanied Percy and Mary Shelley in their elopement. She had a short relationship with Lord Byron and had given birth to his daughter Allegra, who was taken away from her after their breakup. The mirror scene that occurs between Mary and Elise in the second act is a repetition of the scene in Act One between Mary and her stepsister, Claire. The obvious jealousy between the two women had been apparent since childhood; as it is stated in the stage directions, “Mary looks at Claire with all her old childhood spite and Claire is transformed in her eyes (and therefore ours) to the little stepsister of those days” (88). Their fights where they could not share a thing continue in their maturity; Mary gives the dress Claire wanted to her servant, Elise, and when Mary and Claire are brushing their hair, they cannot share the same mirror. They try to avoid seeing themselves through the same mirror. Both women try to project their own existence and experiences as dissimilar from each other. They reject finding similarities between their love affairs, and the consequences of these affairs. However, as discussed earlier, Liz Lochhead once again underlines that all women share similar experiences in their inability to adhere to their own sense of freedom, and confine themselves by submitting to the ideals of freedom belonging to others.

Furthermore, the mirror scene between Claire and Mary involves Mary's criticism of Claire for "behaving like a maidservant" (Lochhead 86). Mary tries to warn Claire about her relationship with Byron, since he is already married. However, Claire laughs at her comment by saying,

And you are a hypocrite! (*Pronouncing it 'Ippocreet' Frenchly.*) Byron loathes and detests Annabel with all his heart. Byron has far less truck with Annabel Algebra after only a month or two's parting than Shelley has with his Harriet after nearly three years! (87).

Claire opens up the issue between Harriet, Shelley's wife and the mother of his children in order to hurt Mary, since she is jealous of the relationship between Mary and Shelley. Claire admits, "Mary, you do not know how cruel my life was, *vraiment!* You had Shelley to be your protector, I had no one" (87). As it is clear, protection by a man is a requirement for Claire, and that is the reason why she has been running after Byron all the time. Claire also reminds Mary that her "mother [Wollstonecraft] wanted that women should be free" (87), to pursue men as well. However, Mary clearly puts forward that she fears Claire may become pregnant. Claire responds to this fear by saying "There is no stronger bond between a man and a woman than the making of a child. It is only nature Mary" (87). Unfortunately, her earlier reminder of Harriet and Shelley's relationship, which had finished despite the children, destroys the validity of her last remark. Shelley did have children from Harriet, but it did not stop him from eloping with Mary. To sum up, the teaching of Mary Wollstonecraft hangs like an albatross on Mary's neck, because she could not agree with her mother's teachings about freedom for women. Mary Shelley knows that women could not act as freely in sexual matters as men do, since women are the ones who have to carry the burden of a child. Mary's aim in protecting Claire could also be a result of her own repentance for claiming her freedom according to her mother's teachings and eloping with Shelley. Liz Lochhead once again validates, and thus establishes as a persistent pattern the idea that women's experiences come out the same; as Claire states "Mary we do resemble each other after all. Oh, not in colouring, no, but in bearing" (86).

In addition to the ideas of freedom belonging to her famous mother, Mary's father, William Godwin, also had his own ideas about freedom and equality. Shelley admits that since Mary was the daughter of such an intellectual, he was already in love with her even before they met. However, Godwin, who preaches equality for all men

and women, is unable to validate his teachings when it comes to his own family. As Shelley states, “Godwin espouses Free Love for every maiden in England but not for his own Mary” (94). Furthermore, Byron invalidates Godwin’s teachings through questioning why Godwin advocates that one must sacrifice him/herself to save another who would be of more benefit to society. Byron makes Elise admit that unlike Godwin’s teachings, Elise would save herself in case of danger, rather than sacrificing herself to save Mary for the benefit of the society. Byron ends his argument by stating, “But then I am no Godwinite, I won’t tyrannise the world by force-feeding it freedom” (96). Shelley and Byron are able to reveal the double standards in Mary’s parents’ teachings; however, Mary’s relationship with Shelley was a result of her parents’ teachings of freedom. Moreover, her suffering in her relationship is due to the ideas of freedom Percy Shelley preaches instead of her own understanding of freedom.

As well as the double standards about freedom in her parent’s teachings, Mary also suffers as a result of Percy Shelley’s ideas about freedom. Shelley’s relationship with Mary can be summarized with these lines from his poem “Epipsychidion”; “True love differs from gold and clay / To divide is not to take away” (90). Percy eloped with Mary while he was married to Harriet Shelley. In the play, Shelley describes his relationship with his wife Harriet as “never one of passion and impulse” (90). Mary agrees with Shelley’s words by declaring “It’s true! Because ... because Shelley loves me it does not mean he must stop loving Harriet, I should be wrong to wish him to!” (90). Shelley further states that Harriet never agreed to meet with Mary and if she had their relationship would have been very different. He adds, “There could not have been devised anything more hostile to human happiness than marriage” (90). Although Mary seems to be agreeing with Shelley’s ideas on free love, later in the play Byron forces her to face her own hypocrisy. Byron reminds Mary of her relationship with Thomas Hogg, Percy Shelley’s best friend. Mary explains, “I wanted to show Shelley I felt as he did about freedom” (99). She adds that Byron would not be able to understand the importance of such a “noble experiment” (100), which would have led to the finding of a new way to live. However, Byron finds it incomprehensible and states, “intellectually I can conceive of it, Mrs Shelley. But there is something ... hideously unnatural in such a cold-blooded put-together passion” (100). As for the hypocrisy of the relationships Mary Shelley had to endure merely to prove herself to Percy Shelley, Byron adds, “Frustrated love perverts,

produces monsters!” (100). As Byron restates his wish for Mary to write a horror story, he tells her that she is “holding it all within” (101), and he advises Mary not to “sit on [her] wit just to please Shelley” (101). Mary asks Byron, “What good does wit do a woman?” (101).

The dialogue between Byron and Mary reveals that Liz Lochhead tries to represent Mary as a woman who has given up her own understanding of freedom to live by the ideas of freedom belonging to others. This is another frequently used persistent pattern in Liz Lochhead’s process of mythmaking; limits of freedom must be determined by the individual, it cannot be established to engage all. Mary states,

we are treated like monsters, Shelley and I, cut off from all the world. I was sixteen years old, my mother wrote it, my father wrote it, my lover wrote it! ‘Marriage was a sad charade: it ought not to be prolonged for one moment longer than the natural affections did spontaneously dictate.’ (108)

Mary Shelley’s quest to seek freedom in the sense her parents taught her leads her to enter Percy Shelley’s sense of freedom, which actually imprisons her. As an attempt to exorcise the monsters within, Mary Shelley this time seeks liberation through writing, which Byron has encouraged her to embellish with facts from her own life. Later, Byron also tells Mary to read her story to “Understand [her] freedom. Understand what keeps [her] freedom from [her]. Or [she would] never own it” (115). Therefore, the three stages of Mary Shelley’s initiation would be accomplished; awareness of one’s boundaries established by others, unconscious revolt through writing, and finally reading your story to understand your own freedom.

All in all, her parents and Percy Shelley have equally contributed to confining her to slavery. Mary Shelley’s experiences in her life prove to the audience that one’s freedom is another’s prison. Liz Lochhead makes use of Mary Shelley’s maid-servant Elise and her stepsister Claire Clairmont to mirror how women go through similar experiences, especially concerning their relationships with men. The Mary doll, which becomes Elise when turned upside down, is the indication that Liz Lochhead does not distinguish between the experiences of the master and the maid. As Mary Shelley states looking at the Mary-Elise doll, “To be born poor is to be born a slave. To be born a woman is to be born a slave. Poor Elise, you were a slave’s slave – and that’s a jumbled up collection of wood and wires! I should not have sent you away” (114). Having understood the connection between herself and her maid-servant, Mary

repents sending away Elise who had become pregnant, since Mary was afraid of gossip. Furthermore, Mary adds that her small child William had loved the doll and laughed with joy “to see his mama, and how under her skirt she was but a maid!” (114). According to Lochhead, women all go through similar degrading experiences, and they have to share their version of the story with each other to find their own sense of freedom.

### **III.I.B. Stage Two: Unconscious Revolt Through Writing**

Writing for Lochhead, becomes a mirror that reflects one’s unconscious desires, his or her unconscious imprisonment. She treats the subject of writing as a dream that reveals one’s most hidden secrets. Therefore, Liz Lochhead treats the process of women’s writing similar to the way Sigmund Freud treats dreams. As Freud declares in his *The Interpretation of Dreams*, “every dream will reveal itself as a psychological structure, full of significance, and one which may be assigned to a specific place in the psychic activities of the waking state” (3). Thus writing, just like dreams, actually has links to one’s conscious actions. Hence, Mary Shelley’s first rejection of joining in the horror story contest becomes ironic. As Mary Shelley states,

The sweet light of reason! Oh, Shelley, I do not want to write of horror, and fantasy, and sickly imaginings. My mother wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. And I am to pervert my imagination to writing foul fairy stories which do not have anything anchoring them to real life? (Lochhead 92)

Mary also adds that she is a mother and cannot lose time with such diversions as writing such fiction. Although Mary Shelley claims that the writing of “foul fairy stories” has nothing connecting them to real life, all throughout the play, links between her life and her “foul fairy” novel *Frankenstein* are established. Furthermore, as discussed in the earlier section, the practicality and accuracy of the ideas in Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* are questioned through the experiences of Elise and Claire, as well as Mary Shelley herself. Thus, through Liz Lochhead’s acknowledgement of the subject of writing, one can claim that Lochhead is underlining the idea that fiction is more real than facts, since through the writing of *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley verbalizes her unconscious revolt against her imprisonment. As Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar argue, the madwoman, or in this case a monster, “in literature by women is not merely, as she might be in male

literature, an antagonist or foil to the heroine. Rather, she [or the monster] is usually in some sense the *author's* double, an image of her own anxiety and rage" (78). Thus, another persistent pattern is established in Liz Lochhead's play; either consciously or unconsciously, writing becomes a necessary step for releasing your monsters in order for women to obtain their individual identities.

First of all, her nightmare makes Mary Shelley write *Frankenstein*. The stage descriptions state,

*Black music. A wind gets up, then a thunderstorm. In its lurid light we see, near the original area of Mary's old circle of candlelight, her lying by Shelley's side asleep. He is flat out covered in the sheet. What we see of his head is turned away. Mary begins to struggle as in a nightmare.* (Lochhead 102)

In this atmosphere, Mary awakens shouting "No! No! I can't ... you're stifling me! Can't breathe, can't. No!" (102). She wakes up from her nightmare by thinking that someone or something is strangling her. As soon as she is awake, her first reaction is to try to wake up Percy Shelley, but he does not stir. She is alone in a soliloquy and narrates her nightmare:

I saw him! The pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous, hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then with a jolt from some powerful engine stir with an uneasy half movement then snap up rigid and live. Was it a dream? Why won't it fade? I cannot shrug it off. Oh, how such success would terrify the artist; he would rush away from his handiwork, horror-stricken. He would begin to hope that, left to itself, this slight ... spark of life would fade ... this thing would ... He sleeps. But he is awakened. He opens his eyes. Behold, it stands by his bedside looking down at him with yellow, watery but hungry eyes. (102)

The plot of her novel *Frankenstein* was founded like this as it is stated by Mary Shelley herself in her Introduction to *Frankenstein* (Shelley 22-3). Nightmares thus become a source of creative power. However, when one analyzes the dream, it indicates that the artist would be terrified with his/her success, since s/he has created something which s/he fears. As J.A. Hadfield notes in *Dreams and Nightmares*, "nightmares are one of the most common causes of repression of our rage, our sex, and fear itself, and so lead to the production of neurotic disorders" (200). Then the nightmare of the monster of your own creation watching you with "yellow, watery but hungry eyes" is a result of Mary's repressed rage, sex, or fear. The nightmare Mary

has in fact is a reflection of her unhappiness. When Mary puts her nightmare down onto writing, her unhappiness can be read within the lines of her book.

Mary Shelly's discomfort with her life is evident even before she writes the novel. As she objects to writing a horror story as a diversion, she asks, "how can I write when William screams all day?" (Lochhead 92). When Shelley tells her to ask for the help of the nursemaid, she replies, "He needs me. Every child needs his mother" (92). Mary clearly reveals that she is making various sacrifices for her child, unwillingly. She is looking after her child not because she wants to, but because the child needs his mother like all children. Thus, baby William is revealed as a burden for Mary Shelley. Liz Lochhead, by suggesting the burden of motherhood upon Mary Shelley, is shaking the established myths of motherhood.

Furthermore, by juxtaposing Mary Shelley and Byron as two parents who have lost a child, Liz Lochhead argues that individuals become non-sexed beings in the face of pain. When Byron and Mary are having an argument over whether Claire and Percy Shelley ever had an affair, Mary out of spite reveals that Allegra, Claire and Byron's child, has died. As she reveals this she sees how Byron, as a father, is crushed and states "there is something wrong in how we all live" (110). Byron's reply to this is, "look in the mirror of my grief and see yourself" (110). This time Byron and Mary become the mirror reflections of one another, since they are at this point non-sexed beings, sharing pain. Mary has lost her three children; her firstborn had died at birth, then Clara, and finally William. Upon this Byron asks her whether or not she could live with the guilt. When Mary denies any guilt in losing her children and states that she has lived for her children, Byron answers, "Well, I have never pretended to live for anyone but myself. And there's where we differ. Infants do benefit from travel, don't they? Florence, Venice, Padua, a bit of culture and cholera does broaden the mind" (110). Byron openly blames Mary for the death of her children. He claims that she only pretends to live for her children, and that in fact, she is as self-centered as himself. He finds the difference between them in the fact that Mary, as a woman, refuses to admit her egotism. In the Christian conception of the Divine Mother, motherhood came to symbolize "the most perfect sublimation of instinct and the most profound harmony of love" (Chevalier 677), it embodies "love and nourishment" (Chevalier 677). However, Lochhead breaks this myth of motherhood, by revealing the burden of being a mother in the sense that the society expects the mother to be all

giving, and inseparable from her child. This becomes a burden for a woman, like Mary Shelley, since she cannot fully dedicate her whole life to her children. Rather, she wishes to accomplish her own desires as a woman, and take care of her children at the same time. However, her pursuit of her own desires of uniting with Shelley results in the loss of her children. Thus, Lochhead draws the persistent pattern that motherhood and womanhood are two contrary portions in a woman's life, which cannot be united.

Furthermore, Byron adds, "Oh yes, I have read your book. Very powerful it is too. Remarkable for a young girl of ... what were you? Nineteen? I'm sure I cannot imagine where you got your ideas" (Lochhead 110). When Mary replies, "It's nothing to do with anything in real life" (111). Byron states,

Have you read your book: Oh, I know you wrote it, have you read it though recently?

I'm sure it is silly of me to read between the lines though. Oh, if only the naughty reader would keep his gladeyes on the text. No profit in noticing an author name a character after her beloved baba, blonde curls and all, and then strangle him to death on page sixty-nine – oh, not many mamas, especially not busy fingered distracted mamas, who have not occasionally, en passant, wished to silence the little darling. (111)

Mary had earlier in the play stated, "how can I write when William screams all day?" (92). Now, Byron accuses her of revealing how she wanted little William dead in her novel *Frankenstein* by naming the little boy who was strangled to death by the monster after her own child. Byron further accuses her by stating that she caused the death of her children by taking them on long journeys in pursuit of Percy Shelley. The murder of William in her novel becomes a wish fulfillment in her real life. Thus, her fiction unconsciously revolts against her life; her book reveals her unhappiness. Having realized this, Byron suggests to her to "Read that story" (111), so that she will also realize her unconscious desires and know who she is.

Liz Lochhead by juxtaposing Mary Shelley's motherhood and Byron's fatherhood blurs the gender difference between the two figures. As non-sexed beings who have gone through the same experience of losing a child, Mary and Byron are presented as equals for the first time in the play. Therefore, when Byron advises Mary to read her story, his male identity does not play a role in his words of wisdom. Liz Lochhead carries her persistent pattern of sharing similar experiences between women

onto a level where sharing common experiences leads to a mutual understanding which can blur the gender lines. Thus, writing, and reading your story also functions for both men and women as the required steps towards self-realization.

### **III.I.C. Stage Three: Self-Realization Through Reading**

After the process of writing her novel, Mary Shelley is not able to achieve a complete self-realization. Liz Lochhead implies that even though Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, she had no idea how her novel revealed Mary's unconscious desires. Consequently, as Mary reads her novel starting from the beginning of the play, she has a chance to evaluate her life and her actions. As stated earlier, Act One opens with "The ghostly nursery" where "Mary alone, in a cold circle of candlelight is reading her *Frankenstein*, surrounded by packing cases and nightmare toys" (Lochhead 83). The passage between the present moment, where Mary is reading her novel and her past suggests that through reading her novel Mary Shelley is able to evaluate her own life, thus identity. For this reason, Lochhead establishes the persistent pattern that the act of reading one's own text becomes a means to achieve self-realization, and understanding of one's unconscious desires. As Mary Shelley reaches self-realization, Lochhead also breaks the myth of the socially victimized woman, to replace it with the woman who victimizes herself.

After Byron tells Mary Shelley to read her own story, he states, "Understand your freedom. Understand what keeps your freedom from you. Or you will never own it" (115). Having read *Frankenstein*, in pursuit of her self-identity, Mary first thinks that she resembles Dr. Frankenstein, "the creator who loves creation and hates its result" (115). Essentially, Dr. Victor Frankenstein and Mary Shelley have many common points. They both are life givers, or mothers in the sense that Mary Shelley gives life to children, and the doctor to the monster. In fact the creative power in both *Frankenstein* and Mary reveals itself through Frankenstein's creating a monster, and Mary Shelley creating a novel, which in turn reveals the monsters – everything she feared and hated - in her subconscious. Consequently, they both create something that is beyond their control. Mary Shelley's writing of the Introduction to *Frankenstein* presents her as a mere transmitter of events, who is unable to control her own story. When she is narrating the story of the writing of *Frankenstein*, she states, "My imagination, unbidden, possessed and guided me, gifting the successive images that

arose in my mind with vividness far beyond the usual bounds of reverie” (x). Mary Shelley dreams of a doctor frightened of the monster he had created. The dream, or the nightmare, had presented Mary Shelley with the idea of *Frankenstein*, thus her creation was beyond control, just like the monster created by Victor Frankenstein.

Although the monster Dr. Frankenstein created was a hideous creature, it was in fact more humane than the doctor himself. The monster became monstrous upon the rejection of his creator. Thus, the frustrated love of the monster for his creator turned into something dangerous and eventually became monstrous. Similarly, the monsters Shelley releases in her novel are also very humane, because her monsters are actually the fears shared by many women about motherhood, reputation, and love. The first monsters she reveals through writing this novel are her trauma of motherhood. Her frustration and fears of giving birth, miscarriage where she could have died herself, and the hardships of being such a young mother equal Frankenstein’s suffering due to his creation. In addition to this, just like the doctor, she was also afraid of creating/writing the novel, since she had constantly feared that she would disappoint the legacy of her famous parents, thus her reputation. Finally, Mary Shelley’s fears about love equal the doctor’s, since they both suffer as a result of the love their creations feel for them. The doctor suffers due to the frustrated love of the monster, and Mary Shelley suffers due to the free love of Percy Shelley, which leads her to elope with a married man, and to have illegitimate children. Just like the doctor, the monster in Mary Shelley’s novel becomes all the things she cannot control in her life.

Furthermore, both Victor and Mary had to endure great loss, after their creations. After Dr. Frankenstein created the monster, he lost his brother, father, and wife. In a similar way, after Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, she lost her children, and husband. However, although there are many similar points between Mary Shelley and Dr. Frankenstein, the doctor cannot be an unconscious double created by Mary, since unlike the doctor, Mary cannot pursue the monsters she has released in determination to destroy them. Although Dr. Frankenstein fails at his attempts to catch and destroy the monster he has created, he dies in pursuit of achieving his goal. There are no records about Mary Shelley’s attempts to ease herself from her monsters; instead she denies her fears about motherhood, reputation, and love. She chooses to act like a good mother and pursues Percy Shelley in his travels until his death. Furthermore, she writes a novel of “horror, and fantasy, and sickly imaginings” (Lochhead 92) despite

her fear of ruining her family legacy and reputation. She also denies her fears about love and even after Percy Shelley's death; she continues to love him and never remarries. Thus, her resemblance to the stronger figure of Victor Frankenstein is not satisfactory, since she is only strong in repressing her fears, not in overcoming them.

In a similar way, Lochhead makes Mary notice that she is not Dr. Frankenstein, but believes that she is the monster, "poor misunderstood creature feared and hated by all mankind" (115). Mary Shelley's account of likening herself to the monster is evident in that the monster reflects Mary Shelley's position in the patriarchal society. Gilbert and Gubar argue that the monster "is himself as nameless as a woman is in patriarchal society, as nameless as unmarried, illegitimately pregnant Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin may have felt herself to be at the time she wrote *Frankenstein*" (241). Gilbert, in the parallel she draws between Mary Shelley and her monster, emphasizes the point that Mary Shelley had eloped with Percy Shelley, who had been married to Harriet Shelley at the time of this elopement. In addition to this connection between the monster and Mary, both creatures are motherless, since Mary's mother had died upon giving birth to her. Furthermore, to enhance the connection, according to Mary and the monster, their fathers eventually abandon them. Dr. Frankenstein runs away from his own creation, and William Godwin eventually remarries another woman and brings home a stepsister for Mary.

Consequently, the monster becomes a true monster when he takes revenge on his creator who has abandoned him. Brutally murdering people, all that the monster wants is his creator's acknowledgement of him. He is only able to obtain the full attention of his creator upon murdering all those his creator loves. In turn, this creator seeks his creation only to destroy it. Still the doctor's pursuit of his creation, the monster, can be perceived as a victory for the monster, who desperately works to obtain this attention. Upon his creator's death, the monster leaves to seek his own death. Furthermore, by forcing his master to pursue him desperately, the monster assumes the role of master, and thus obtains control over his master. Similarly, Mary Shelley was never able to attain Percy Shelley's full attention, since he was a believer in free love. Rather, like Dr. Frankenstein following the monster, she pursued Percy in his travels, which eventually resulted in the sickness, and death of her child, William. For such reasons, Mary Shelley's resemblance to her monster is quite limited. On the other hand, as Harold Bloom claims, "the monster is the total form of Frankenstein's

creative power and is more imaginative than his creator” (3). In a similar way, Mary Shelley’s creative power is *Frankenstein*, the novel. The novel is her monsters on the loose, since as stated before, Shelley’s “imagination, unbidden, possessed and guided” (x) her in the writing of this novel. Hence, Mary Shelley in her consciousness is not as powerful as the fictive monster she created. Rather, more like the doctor, she suffers due to her monsters.

Accordingly, Shelley later thought that her situation was worse than being a monster and that she was the female monster, whose creation was requested by the monster, but was denied by the doctor with these words, “What is repellent in the male will be ten times more disgusting in the female, I cannot grant it life” (Lochhead 111). Consequently, Mary Shelley realizes that she is Captain Walton in the novel, “explorer, Survivor” (115). Captain Walton had initially taken a journey to find a new world. He is the narrator of *Frankenstein* who delays his own dreams to help the doctor follow the monster until they are stuck in the ice of the North. Under such dangerous conditions, the Captain is unable to object to the wishes of his crew, and gives up his dreams and returns to England without having accomplished his own wishes. Mary believes herself to be the narrator of *Frankenstein*, Captain Walton, who had gone on a journey on his ship “The Endeavour,” to find a new land for men and women to live in, a new paradise, and had retreated with the first barrier he met. As it is stated in the opening of Act Two of *Blood and Ice*:

Once upon a time there was a man called Walton. And this Captain Walton had a dream. That he should set off on a marvelous voyage of discovery, beyond the Pole, beyond the most extreme where he would discover not frost and desolation, but their banishment.  
A new temperate region of wonder where men and women might live.  
(103)

Mary Shelley, according to Liz Lochhead resembles her narrator Captain Walton, who was an idealist with high hopes of finding a new land where women and men could live in freedom. As Gilbert and Gubar claims, “Walton’s story is itself an alternative version of the myth of origins presented in *Paradise Lost*” (226). Walton and Mary both were in a search for the lost paradise; and in a similar sense in search of a lost sense of self. However, this Captain also was “The one who, when the ice came, stuck fast, unable to go back or forward. The one who saw what it might cost and promised if they would be released would turn south, head for more moderate

regions” (Lochhead 115). Thus, Walton, like Mary Shelley, was the one who had to yield to the others and “gave up all [he] once most dearly hoped for” (116). As Keith Peacock states,

Blood gives life to Frankenstein’s monster, while the icy waste of the North Pole is the context for the scientist’s hunt for his escaped creation and the place where he meets the book’s narrator, Captain Walton, who is himself seeking “a new and temperate region of wonder where men and women might live.” These considerations are united at the close of the play in Mary’s long monologue during which she identifies herself in succession as a mother, as Frankenstein, as a female monster who is “tied to the monster bed for ever”, and as Captain Walton the idealist who, because he could not endure the cold, abandoned his quest for a place where “Men and Women Might Live in Freedom”, and scuttled back to his warm fireside. (160)

The play ends with Frankenstein’s words to Walton stating, “The ice cannot stop you if your hot hearts say it shall not!” (Lochhead 116). Ice symbolizes the barriers that limit women. Mary, now identifying herself with Captain Walton wishes that she had let the Captain continue his journey to achieve his own ideals. However, first of all, the Captain agrees to follow Dr. Frankenstein and finds himself stuck in the ice, and later, he abandons the doctor, since his men demand that they go back home. Therefore, the Captain, just like Mary herself, gives up his own ideals to follow the wishes of others. She states that the Captain is “The one who could not go on without the consensus of all fellow travelers” (115), and she wishes that women were not obliged to act in accordance with the wishes of others but they could instead draw their own routes. Hence, Liz Lochhead establishes the persistent pattern of reading one’s own story as a route to realizing one’s unconscious desires.

For these reasons, after reading her own story, Mary Shelley likens herself to Captain Walton who is a “survivor” (115), unable to stand up for his own ideals, but who agrees to achieve the ideals of others. Having realized how she has sacrificed her own sense of self for others, Mary finally realizes that Frankenstein really “knew who was responsible” (107). Mary had surrendered herself willingly to her own imprisonment. Just like Dr. Frankenstein, she had created the monster who had taken control over her. She was the creator who had shunned his creature. However, unlike Frankenstein who was determined enough to follow the monster until his death to destroy it, Mary Shelley could not destroy the monster she herself had created. Thus, Liz Lochhead breaks the myth of the victimized woman to establish the persistent

pattern of the woman who victimizes herself, so that women can realize their own contribution to their assimilation in the patriarchal order.

In addition, Lochhead uses various symbols to create new archetypal images about the initiation of women. As Susan C. Triesman comments, Liz Lochhead's "symbols operate on the edge of danger, ready to slip out of control, just as the Creature –Mary/Lochhead's art – has a life and desires of its own" (128). As Triesman writes, Liz Lochhead uses her symbols as transforming images, which define her work as a constantly growing and changing being of its own. Lochhead's images are quite similar to Julia Kristeva's concept of the *chora*, "a nonexpressive totality formed by the drives and their stases in a motility that is as full of movement as it is regulated" (453). In other words, just like the concept of the *chora*, the images Lochhead uses can be "designated and regulated," although they "can never be definitively posited" (Kristeva 453). As a result, Lochhead's images can never be given a self-evident form. The most obvious of these images would be the blood and ice imagery suggested in the title of the work.

As stated before, by the end of the play, ice comes to suggest barriers placed in front of women, either by themselves or others. However, earlier Mary Shelley had stated, "... I thought, [ice] is my element. I swim in it and I do not die" (Lochhead 112). This dialogue had occurred when Percy Shelley had reminded her of the time when he had saved her by putting her into an ice bath to stop the flow of blood when she had lost her child at birth. Percy Shelley suggests making another baby, since Mary is in such a melancholic stage after the loss of her baby at birth. Mary rejects the idea by stating how she had almost lost her life. Percy Shelley's reaction is "I saved you. It was pure instinct, the ice!" (112). To this Mary replies "... I thought, [ice] is my element. I swim in it and I do not die" (112). However, by the end of the play, she questions whether or not ice will save her again with these words; "The ice is invading the house. This house? A blood bath. A bath of ice. Will the ice save me? It saved me once. Will it save me twice?" (116). Percy saved Mary's life by giving her an ice bath, but Claire had tried to stop Percy by saying that "the shock would kill" (112) Mary. This comes out to be true, because going through the experience of losing a baby and almost dying make Mary realize the dangers of being a woman. Therefore, the ice comes to symbolize "sterility, coldness and rigidity" (Fontana 113). It no longer gives life, but reminds Mary of her loss of her child and her near death. Shelley claims that

it is his loss, too. He exclaims, “Why is it every woman thinks she has the patent out on pain?” (Lochhead 112). Mary’s reply to this is,

You bled on paper. I bled through every bit of bedlinen in this house. I lost it. I wonder, was it a boy or a girl: Or a monster. What are little girls made of: Slime and snails and ...  
What are monsters made of? (112)

Mary rejects the ice presented to her by Shelley, ice being love without “responsibility. Love With Full and Mutual Freedom” (112). Shelley by presenting her the ice, had previously saved her life, however, now Mary rejects the ice, which comes to represent Shelley’s free love. Mary rejects Shelley’s sense of free love, because he still has other relationships although he tries to assure Mary of his love with these words, “Remember. I’ll never turn from you. To turn sometimes to others is not to turn from you” (112). However, Mary reveals that she can no longer bear her life with Shelley without changing herself. She states; “I must take myself to bits, put myself together again, leave out the bit that makes me ... jealous” (113). As Dr Frankenstein did, she must create a monster out of herself to accept Percy without repenting. When she literally bled and lost her child, she melted the ice, her confinement to Shelley’s sense of love, which had frozen her sense of self-respect. She was not going to be a girl made up of “Slime and snails” (112), rather she wanted to bleed to set herself free from Percy Shelley’s love made of ice. Therefore, the imagery of bleeding comes to signify the process of bleeding to get the poison out of oneself. Furthermore, the blood imagery is referred to in Mary’s menstruation, and therefore Lochhead charges the imagery of blood to build itself as an archetype of “life”. However, as Susan C. Triesman claimed, Liz Lochhead’s symbols have a life of their own, and within the same dialogue between Mary and Percy Shelley, blood comes to mean “death” to all women through childbirth. As Mary tells Percy, “When man and woman lie down together they are at once each other’s strange wild savage beasts and each other’s sacrificial victims. And death sits at the bedhead” (Lochhead 114). She adds that love is dangerous to all women and that reading, writing, love, or money will not stop her from dying since “the blood will not stop” (114).

The images of blood and ice are not fixed and change for Liz Lochhead all throughout the play. Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht define “the archetype not as an image whose content is frozen but as a tendency to form and re-

form images in relation to certain kinds of repeated experience” (13-4). Liz Lochhead, constantly changes the possible meanings behind the images of blood and ice according to the different experiences Mary Shelley confronts. This constant play with the images used in a text forces the readers to constantly interpret these images according to their own experiences. Thus, the experiences of the reader and writer, as well as the major character merge together in order to provide a name for their shared experiences. Furthermore, Liz Lochhead constantly changes the archetypal attributions of blood and ice while creating a play that is constantly developing through its shape shifting images and therefore, archetypes.

This is the process of establishing the persistent patterns for women’s mythmaking. Liz Lochhead writes a play that constantly grows in interpretation. With each individual interpretation, the play develops in its establishment of new ideas and images that will eventually turn into myths established by women. As Susan C. Triesman argues about Liz Lochhead’s work,

Hers is increasingly imagistic work, where the play of significations across the central image precludes single readings. This is a passionate process that launches the audience into contradictions, into the questions that appear in the interstices of a complex intertext. This does not necessarily happen at a conscious level, but the audience is itself repositioned as subject in relation to its engagement. The text continues to cook, as it were, after the performance. (127)

Therefore, Lochhead’s usage of imagery and her attempts at turning them into fluctuating archetypes results in the constant development of her texts. Lochhead allows the readers to contribute to her process of mythmaking by letting them interpret the motifs, images, and archetypes she uses.

In conclusion, Liz Lochhead, by re-writing Mary Shelley’s life, reveals the experiences this powerful woman might have gone through. Firstly, as many other women, Mary Shelley has to define her own identity apart from her celebrity family and lover to exist. Lochhead underlines the importance of women’s self-reliance and the necessity for women to determine their own limits of freedom. She stresses that everyone’s story is important, and that women should share their stories, and experiences, since she believes that all women share similar experiences concerning family relationships, love affairs, and in issues of individual confinement.

Furthermore, Lochhead emphasizes that, especially romantic love becomes “the pivot of women’s oppression” (Firestone 126), since this love prevents women from becoming autonomous. She describes how frustrated love produces monsters within the individual, which could be very destructive. However, Mary Shelley manages to feel her monsters before they destroy her. Hence, she begins to write her own story unconsciously, in other words she begins to release the monsters growing within her in-between-the-lines of her novel. Lochhead establishes writing as an unconscious means of releasing one’s most secret desires and fears. Finally through reading her inscription, she manages to acknowledge an understanding of herself: her fears and desires. Thus, “she moves to being the subject and narrator of her own story” (McDonald 125).

The story Mary Shelley narrates of herself is her way to release her own monster/power. The unconsciously imprisoned monster is the mythology of many other women who have surrendered their own freedom for others. Many women have denied their monsters/power for the approval of their families and lovers. Liz Lochhead reveals Mary Shelley’s monster as a persistent pattern for establishing new myths that will propose other women to reveal their own monsters to understand their own desires, by not allowing the ice to stop them. In other words, Lochhead draws the persistent pattern that reveals women’s self-realization through the processes of writing and reading. She makes use of the tools of writing and reading as an alternative version of the journey/quest archetype. The dangerous journeys of great heroes resulting in the hero’s initiation have been a major archetypal pattern in classical mythology. Lochhead rewrites this pattern of initiation through a quest by carrying it into the domestic environment of women. Through the journey of writing, and later reading, the individual achieves a self-realization. Writing, in Lochhead’s play, is presented as a necessary means to release the monsters, which inhibit women’s unconscious desires. Consequently, Lochhead emphasizes reading one’s own story to understand these unconscious desires. Thirdly, Liz Lochhead establishes the idea that shared experiences can eventually blur gender difference. In the case of Byron, who tells Mary to read her story, he shares the loss of his daughter, just like Mary’s loss of her child, before he insists that Mary read her story. These points reveal themselves as the major themes of Liz Lochhead’s play, consequently

establishing the persistent patterns she effectively uses to communicate her messages to her readers.

Although Liz Lochhead draws various ideas that will eventually lead to the creation of women's myths, she also works to break various established myths about women in this play. She rejects the myth of motherhood as established by social norms. Lochhead presents Mary Shelley as a mother who is unable to bear the traumas of being a mother, just like Dr. Frankenstein who is unable to take the responsibility of his own creation. In addition to this, Lochhead rewrites the myth of victimized women, and claims instead that sometimes it is the women who allow themselves to be victimized. Thus, Lochhead tries to establish stronger grounds for women's development, and eventual mythmaking by using mythbreaking in her play.

In terms of the archetypes it involves, *Blood and Ice* becomes a play that teaches women to acknowledge their own power. The archetypes of blood and ice as Liz Lochhead builds them paradoxically provide life and death at the same time. As the images of blood and ice are not fixed and change constantly throughout the play, the readers continually interpret these images according to their own experiences. Thus, blood and ice, which embody the experiences of women, can be a vehicle for women to give voice to their own monsters. Through the patterns she establishes, the myths she rewrites, the myths she breaks, and the archetypes she emphasizes, Liz Lochhead summarizes the extent of power women possess within by presenting Mary Shelley's life in *Blood and Ice*.

### III. II. ROSE LEIMAN GOLDEMBERG'S *LETTERS HOME*<sup>2</sup>

Rose Leiman Goldemberg (born in 1928) is an American playwright, who has received prizes for her plays entitled *Letters Home*, *The Rabinowitz Gambit*, and *Rites*

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<sup>2</sup> Goldemberg's best known work, *Letters Home*, was first staged in the American Place Theatre, New York in 1979, and was published by the Performing Arts Journal Publications and American Place Theatre in 1980. As stated in the introduction to the play, "*Letters Home* was given a rehearsed reading by The Women's Project on March 19, 1979. It was performed as a studio production May 31 through June 10, 1979, and opened as a full production at The American Place Theatre on October 12, 1979" (Goldemberg 110). This production was directed by Dorothy Silver, where Doris Belack (Aurelia) and Mary McDonnell (Sylvia) performed the roles of the mother and the daughter. The play was later performed in Theatre at New End in London, Playbox Theatre in Melbourne, and the Dublin Festival in 1982.

of *Passage*. She has also written musicals, *Apples in Eden*, *Sophie*, as well as screenplays *The Burning Bed*, *Stone Pillow*, *Born Beautiful* and *Adios, Hollywood*.

Rose Leiman Goldemberg establishes the format of her play *Letters Home* (1979) to reconstruct Sylvia Plath and her mother Aurelia Plath's life story. Aurelia Plath, in 1975, "in an effort to set the record straight" (Goldemberg 106) published her daughter's letters under the title *Letters Home*. This volume included an introduction and various commentaries by Aurelia Plath. After reading *Letters Home*, the autobiographical collection of Sylvia Plath's letters, Goldemberg stated that the book "was about a mother and daughter who were very famous, and I had always related to them. It was a tragedy that both women had tried to avoid. I saw a play in it" (qtd in Greene 7). Thus, Rose Leiman Goldemberg composed her version of the *Letters Home* as a drama by using these letters Aurelia Plath had brought together. In the "Author's Note" to *Letters Home*, Goldemberg states,

Sylvia Plath was already recognized as a brilliant poet when she took her own life, at thirty, in 1963. Since that tragedy, and in part because of it, the interest in the details of Sylvia's life and death has kept pace with the growing interest in her work. But few biographers have bothered to consult the person who knew Sylvia best and longest. In 1975, in an effort to keep the record straight, Aurelia Plath published a huge volume of her daughter's letters home, with spare but meaningful commentary. Every word of the play was drawn from that book. It seemed crucial to me that the real words of this mother and daughter be heard because so much fiction had been written about them. (106)

Thus, while Rose Leiman Goldemberg devised *Letters Home* as a play, she brought together the letters, Aurelia Plath's introduction to the collection of these letters, various commentaries Aurelia Plath made, and Sylvia Plath's diaries. In other words, Goldemberg made a montage out of these sources according to her own perspective. The play is made up of two long acts, without any scene breaks. In the first act, the audience is introduced to Aurelia and Sylvia's life. As Aurelia gives the events of her marriage to Otto Plath, Sylvia and Warren's birth, her struggle as a woman trying to raise two children while serving as a secretary to her husband, and Otto Plath's death, Sylvia reads excerpts which express her own feelings towards her father, and the experiences in her own life like her relationships with men, her friends, the parties she goes to, her worry about her mother's health and financial struggles, and her attempts at writing. The first act reveals Sylvia's first depression due to her

overloaded study at Smith College, and Aurelia's futile attempts to help Sylvia recover. This act ends with Sylvia's first suicide attempt where she takes pills and hides underneath their house, and the harsh therapy she is forced to take. The second act opens as Sylvia returns to Smith College and tries to build up her confidence through dating boys. Sylvia earns various awards in this period in her life as the "Fulbright grant to study at Cambridge University" (Goldemberg 149). The second act reveals the events of Sylvia's meeting Ted Hughes, their marriage, the birth of their children, the hard times due to Sylvia's jealousy and Hughes' infidelity, the divorce, and finally Sylvia's death. The act closes as Aurelia reads an entry dated November 13, 1949 from Sylvia's diary, where Sylvia has written about her fears and her expectations from the future. The play ends as Aurelia reaches an understanding of her daughter and as Goldemberg establishes learning as a persistent pattern.

Rose Leiman Goldemberg explains that,

*Letters Home* was not a reading; it was performed fully, acting out events as they were told. Actors and directors must constantly explore, and finally pinpoint: What exactly is happening at each moment? When that was done with clarity, the whole leaped to life. (106)

Goldemberg adds that during the rehearsals together with the actors and the producers they noticed that Aurelia and Sylvia often "speak the same words, but with different meanings; they do the same actions, often with different intent" (107). As they explored "the details of the lives of the two women, [they] found that they were often together when apart, and apart when together" (106). For this reason, the whole play must be performed with the idea that Sylvia and Aurelia "were one and different, as all parents and children, all lovers, are" (107). Goldemberg explains that,

Humor is essential to the play. All the recognitions of 'how it is' between parent and child must be offered to the audience so they can laugh. The more they share this laughter, the more powerful the play becomes, and the more Aurelia can share in gratitude and relief her feelings about her daughter. (107).

Various writers have studied Sylvia Plath's life and most have perceived her novel, *The Bell Jar*, as her autobiography. Her story has been written through many different visions, and various myths have been established on the reasons for her suicide. Due to her depiction in *The Bell Jar*, many of these writers often derive the conclusion that Aurelia Plath was indifferent to Sylvia's distress. Goldemberg, by

composing the materials collected from Aurelia Plath's *Letters Home*, has devised her own persistent patterns and revised already existent myths in her play. Thus, Goldemberg's play turns out to represent Aurelia's desperate need to understand the actions behind her daughter's suicide. Some of the persistent patterns Goldemberg has emphasized and devised are the importance of reading, writing, and learning for women, necessity of individuation and at the same time the mother daughter bonding as an act of survival, passing on experience to the daughter as well as the next generations, being in control of one's life and not depending on male approval, destructive qualities of the obsession for success, and children and marriage as causes for women's confinement and lack of creativity. In her play, while establishing various persistent patterns concerning women's experience, Goldemberg also rewrites the archetypal figures of the mother, which is Demeter; the victimized woman, as in Persephone; the abandoned woman, as can be seen in Medea; and the sinful Eve who causes Adam's fall from grace. Thus, analyzing the persistent patterns Goldemberg establishes in *Letters Home* will allow women to give names to their shared experiences, and eventually to obtain their own voices to create their own truths.

Goldemberg in her "Author's Note" explains her aims to her audience. She writes,

*Letters Home* is really two plays: one takes place in the mind of Aurelia: Sylvia's life and their fight to save it. The other takes place here and now, in this audience, as Aurelia, in telling and remembering her story, struggles for and achieves understanding: she is alive and her brilliant child, who needed – and had – her love, is gone. (106)

Thus, the two levels of the play merge in one another, to initially present Aurelia Plath as the narrator of her own daughter's life, and also as the interpreter of Sylvia Plath's life. As the narrator, Aurelia Plath is presented as the person who is struggling to understand her daughter's life through the letters they have exchanged. Act One, opens with the stage descriptions indicating, "A light picks out Aurelia. She moves forward uncertainly. She is an amateur, in a strange place. Who are these people? What will they think of her?" (111). Aurelia is moving uncertainly to the front of the stage as the first protagonist of *Letters Home*. This is because she is uncertain about her daughter's life, especially about the reasons behind Sylvia's suicide. Although they have exchanged thousands of letters, only after arranging them into a whole, and by reading them, Aurelia manages to obtain a sense of understanding about her own

daughter. Thus, Goldemberg immediately highlights the persistent pattern of the importance of reading as a process of understanding in this play.

The play focuses on two protagonists; Aurelia as a mother who is a survivor, and Sylvia as a daughter who has failed to take control of her life. Although Aurelia Plath seems to be recollecting and narrating various parts from the letters Sylvia has written to her, Goldemberg by giving voice to Sylvia also evolves her as the second protagonist in the play. Goldemberg creates a chorus through the voices of these women to be able to empower them as complete subjects, since alone none of them function effectively in the patriarchal world, and merely become servants of the men in their lives.

As stated earlier, throughout the play, Goldemberg tries to emphasize that Aurelia and Sylvia are “one and different” (107) from each other. Initially, Goldemberg brings together Aurelia and Sylvia as each other’s reflection. They speak at the same time, complete each other’s sentences, and even repeat each other’s words. In her “Author’s Note”, Goldemberg explains that in the duets, when Aurelia and Sylvia speak at the same time, “it is not intended that the audience hear every word of each actor” (107). The mother and the daughter function as one woman at certain times in the play, rather than two separate beings. In the beginning of the play, Aurelia narrates how she fell in love with her husband, giving up all her dreams “for THE BOOK, a treatise on *Insect Societies*” (116), and became “more submissive” (117) to have a peaceful house. Simultaneously, Sylvia falls into despair, and starts explaining that she wants a man who is not jealous of her “creativity in other fields than children” (117). However, Sylvia’s life almost becomes a replay of her mother’s. She also submits to her husband to have a peaceful house, and just like her mother, Sylvia works for the benefit of her husband rather than herself. Also, Goldemberg frequently merges the daughter and the mother into one as in the examples when Aurelia begins to dance as Sylvia narrates the dance she has gone to, when they complete each other’s sentences as they narrate their own stories, and when they both give the same reactions simultaneously to events.

As Nancy Chodorow explains, “Mothers tend to experience their daughters as more like, and continuous with, themselves. Correspondingly, girls tend to remain part of the dyadic primary mother-child relationship itself” (1978: 166). For this reason, mothers and daughters maintain a sense of connection and sameness as opposed to

boys. In *Letters Home*, Goldemberg allows the mother and daughter to merge into one at certain points. Aurelia, at the very beginning of the play, states, “Throughout her prose and poetry, Sylvia fused parts of my life with hers. So I feel it is important to lead into an account of her early years by first describing my own” (Goldemberg 112). Aurelia’s mother managed the business of her husband after the financial catastrophe they went through in the 1920s. Although Aurelia’s father knew four languages, she was only taught to speak her mother’s tongue, German, and she learned English much later. The figure of the powerful mother is established beginning with Aurelia. Her mother was a very powerful woman, who controlled all the financial issues in the family, and for a long time, Aurelia was only fluent in her mother’s language.

Aurelia, who was an English teacher, met her husband Dr. Otto Emil Plath when she went back to college to get an MA. As they “dreamed of projects jointly shared, involving nature study, travel, writing” (115), as soon as they were married, Aurelia yielding to her husband’s wish, became “a full-time homemaker” (115). Her life was spent nursing her husband, and helping him with all the academic duties he had, from typing essays to correcting quizzes. She managed to raise her two children on her own, when her husband died. Throughout the play Goldemberg represents Aurelia as a woman who sacrificed her life for her husband, who eventually caused his own death through his wrong diagnosis. However, Aurelia manages to raise her two children by herself, and thus, echoes the figure of her strong mother. Similarly, Sylvia gets married, assumes the subservient role of the homemaker, eventually is separated from her husband and has to raise her children alone. Thus, the lives of the two women repeat each other’s at times.

Although Goldemberg represents the oneness of Sylvia and Aurelia throughout the play, their difference is also emphasized by depicting Sylvia’s struggles to achieve a separate identity and a separate future from her mother. Aurelia states that when Sylvia was in her teenage years, they were able to share each other’s life and they used to “enjoy long talks about books, music, paintings” (128). She adds that the reason for this was that they “shared a love of words and considered them as a tool to achieve precise expression in describing [their] emotions, as well as for mutual understanding” (128). There existed “a sort of psychic osmosis” (128) between Aurelia and Sylvia. They existed as one woman, sharing different bodies. The mother-daughter bond was unbreakable then. However, eventually Sylvia made Aurelia feel

“an unwelcome invasion of privacy” (128). As Chodorow explains, “a mother is more likely to identify with a daughter than with a son, to experience her daughter (or parts of her daughter’s life) as herself” (1989; 49). Goldemberg emphasizes that Aurelia eventually realizes that she should not “refer to previous voluntary confidences on [Sylvia’s] part” (128) and tries to perceive Sylvia as a separate individual. Likewise, Goldemberg stresses that Sylvia too tries to break apart from her mother, since as Chodorow explains, “for the daughter, feminine gender identification means identification with a devalued, passive mother” (1989: 64). The reason for this according to Chodorow is that,

Most psychoanalytic and social theorists claim that the mother inevitably represents to her daughter (and son) regression, passivity, dependence, and lack of orientation to reality, whereas the father represents progression, activity, independence, and reality orientation. (64)

Mary Lynn Broe claims that, “Otto Plath actually became the real prototype of self-destruction for [Sylvia]; he willed his own death by refusing life-saving medical care” (93). In a similar way, Sylvia, by taking a male figure as a role model and marrying Ted Hughes, willed her own death by refusing the life-saving quality of her mother’s care. Sylvia rejected dependence on her mother, and did not return to the United States to get Aurelia’s help. As Katha Pollitt argues,

Throughout her career, Plath worked with a tightly connected cluster of concerns – metamorphosis, rebirth, the self as threatened by death, the otherness of the natural world, fertility and sterility – and applied them all to what she saw as the central situation of her life, the death of her worshipped father when she was eight years old and the complex emotions of loss, guilt, and resentment it aroused in her even as an adult. (98)

Goldemberg reveals that, rather than choosing to become a survivor, Sylvia desired to become an individual woman in the patriarchal world when she refused to return to the United States even after her divorce from Ted Hughes.

As the play contemplates on this unity as well as the separation of the mother and daughter, at the end of the play Goldemberg has Aurelia realize that Sylvia and she are separate, and that Sylvia has chosen her own path. From the beginning of the play by having Aurelia read her daughter’s letters and journals, Goldemberg

establishes Aurelia as a woman in search of her real daughter. The whole play actually revolves around Aurelia's rigorous attempts in understanding her daughter.

Goldemberg refers to Aurelia's attempts to make Sylvia see the good side of life. In the play, Sylvia writes to her mother, "Now stop trying to get me to write about 'decent courageous people'! Read the *Ladies, Home Journal* for those! I believe in going through and facing the worst, not hiding from it" (169). In reference to this, Aurelia's reasoning for Sylvia's ambiguous references to her family in her work is due to her ambition for experiencing and 'facing the worst' in life. This tendency towards pessimism in her work and life can also be noted in her dialogue where she mentions Ted Hughes upon their meeting; "The most shattering thing is that I have fallen terribly in love, which can only lead to great hurt" (150). As Aurelia states in the play, this tendency was an outcome of her earlier experiences with publishers. Sylvia learned that writing about the worst in life sold the best. Thus, Sylvia learned to find the painful aspects in all events. By emphasizing this aspect of the publishing world, Goldemberg aims to criticize it. In addition, Goldemberg highlights the idea that a negative approach to life and continuously repeating it at one's work, eventually leads to depression.

As the interpreter of the events Sylvia Plath went through, Aurelia Plath, by reading Sylvia's life through her letters and journals, finally reaches an understanding. As Rose Leiman Goldemberg writes in the stage directions,

A summation of Sylvia's life and death in which Aurelia comes to understand. She has done her best. Though much of this is true of her also, she is not Sylvia. She has survived. She is strong – and learning. (174)

Goldemberg argues that, Sylvia in the struggle to achieve her identity and to take control of her life has made her own final choice. Therefore, Goldemberg by stressing the difference between the mother and the daughter, emphasizes that Aurelia should not feel responsible for Sylvia's choice of suicide.

As Chodorow explains, the feeling of responsibility develops more in women, because they do not experience the same sort of differentiation from their mothers as men do. Chodorow states,

As if the woman does not differentiate herself clearly from the rest of the world, she feels a sense of guilt and responsibility for situations that did not come about through her actions and without relation to her

actual ability to determine the course of events. This happens, in the most familiar instance, in a sense of diffuse responsibility for everything connected to the welfare of her family and the happiness and success of her children. (1989: 58)

However, having realized this connectedness with the mother, Sylvia tries to break her bonds with Aurelia, to stand on her own as an individual. Unfortunately, Sylvia is unable to develop an individual self and in turn becomes dependent on Hughes. Goldemberg emphasizes the idea that this break from the mother and willful submission to a male is the lethal step in a woman's life.

In addition to refusing to bond with the mother, Plath also refuses female bonding. Concerning this issue of female bonding in general, Pamela Annas writes,

The lack of community among women writers in the 1950s and early 1960s had, for Plath, the result of isolating her within her own psyche. If any one thing leads to Sylvia Plath's anger and her sense, finally, that there was no place to get to, it is this experience of isolation: temporally, from history, in that she could not find a tradition from which she did not feel alienated; spatially, in that she could not find a community that shared her language, images, assumptions. (160).

Goldemberg reveals that especially after her divorce, Plath's obsession for creativity, and her need for expression led her to seek her identity through her work. However, As Chodorow explains,

The tragedy of woman's socialization is not that she is left unclear, as is the man, about her basic sexual identity. This identity is ascribed to her, and she does not need to prove to herself or to society that she has earned it or continues to have it. Her problem is that this identity is clearly devalued in the society in which she lives. (1989: 44)

Although, Plath had begun to achieve credit for her work, she was unable to proceed as fast as she wanted to within the literary world. After her divorce Sylvia constantly tried to be strong. In one of her letters to her mother Sylvia states,

My life can begin.  
Every morning, when my sleeping pill wears off, I am up about five, in my study with coffee, writing like mad – a poem a day before breakfast. Terrific stuff, as if domesticity had choked me.  
I need a bloody holiday.  
I miss *brains*, I hate this cow life, am dying to surround myself with intelligent, good people. I am a famous poetess here – mentioned this week in *The Listener* as one of the half-dozen women who will last. (Goldemberg 165)

Similarly, as Steven Gould Axelrod suggests concerning Sylvia Plath's life, Sylvia "increasingly compared herself with women writers rather than with men" (99). However, Sylvia also had a tendency to be critical of her own gender. In the first years of her marriage, when they had moved to the United States, Ted's working at Smith College was out of the question. As Sylvia states, "The girls at Smith are unscrupulous. I would be absurd to throw Ted into such hysterical, girlish adulation. I shouldn't have a minute's peace" (Goldemberg 152). Joyce Carol Oates argues, "A woman who despises herself as a woman obviously cannot feel sympathy with any other woman" (41). Sylvia Plath did have a predisposition towards undermining herself. As David Lester argues, Plath had a low-esteem as a woman and she "needed always to have a man interested in her" (661). She thought that being a woman meant being considered beautiful, charming, and intelligent. This can be observed in the below dialogue between Sylvia and Aurelia,

Sylvia: "There is sudden glorying in womanhood, when someone kisses your shoulder and says 'You are charming ....'"

Aurelia: beautiful...

Sylvia: and most important,

Aurelia: intelligent!" (Goldemberg 127)

After the divorce, Sylvia once again needed to verify her sense of importance by stating that "It is heaven to be liked for myself alone" (170), and got a haircut. Sylvia states that she is very happy and that everyone whistles at her new hair style, which makes her feel like a woman once again. Her constant tendency to fear her own gender is repeated when Sylvia mentions that she is no longer jealous of Ted and his girl friend, because "she has only her high-paid job, her vanity ... and everybody wants to be a writer" (170). Goldemberg reveals Sylvia as a woman unable to trust her own gender. She rejects not only the community that her mother could provide for her, but also the community of other women. As Axelrod explains, "Plath took Virginia Woolf as a model very early in her career" (100). Sylvia Plath undoubtedly considered a parallel between Woolf's and her own life and pain. Goldemberg draws a persistent pattern that the community among women is of utmost importance; however Plath, sensing how she was devalued in society as Chodorow explains, decided to struggle alone and lost this struggle.

While Goldemberg effectively supports female bonding, especially the bonding between a mother and her daughter, she also acknowledges the necessity of differentiation. As Steven Gould Axelrod explains, after her therapy, Sylvia “struggled between an impulse to express grief and anger and an impulse to appear the courageous, decent, and self-controlled individual her mother wished her to be” (88). Goldemberg in *Letters Home* suggests that rather than taking control of her own life for her own sake, Sylvia presents the façade to her mother that she is in control. Goldemberg argues that in the pursuit to separate herself from her mother, Sylvia is unable to function alone and will eventually find another person to attach to. Therefore, while Goldemberg stresses the importance of obtaining a sense of self, she also emphasizes the destructive effects of a daughter’s separation from the demanding mother through binding herself to a male figure. As in the case of Sylvia, she finds this male bondage in Ted Hughes, who eventually separates from her, thus leaving her incomplete once again. After the divorce, Sylvia’s resistance to returning to America, to her primal bonding with her mother is a proof to Nancy Chodorow’s argument about the daughter’s attempt to isolate herself from the mother. Chodorow explains that, the mother who grows up not having established a firm sense of identity tends to identify with her daughter, and crosses over her boundaries. Therefore, a daughter “makes a rather unsatisfactory and artificial attempt to establish boundaries: she projects what she defines as bad within her onto her mother and tries to take what is good into herself” (1989: 59). Chodorow perceives this problematic of the mothers’ crossing of boundaries as “girl’s Oedipal ‘rejection’” (59). Thus, after Sylvia’s suicide attempt and her wish to try her own wings to fly, Act Two in *Letters Home* opens with these words; “They are feeling each other out, reassuring each other – making boundaries” (Goldemberg 146).

Sylvia’s attempt at differentiating herself from her mother ends up in her trying on various different identities. Initially, Sylvia goes back to college and starts dating again. As Aurelia claims, this helps her to build up her confidence again. Through these words, Goldemberg underlines the dangerous tendency of women to seek male attention and approval to regain self-assurance. Furthermore, at this point in her life, Aurelia states that Sylvia “made me think of deep-sea plants, the roots firmly grasping a rock, but the plant itself swaying in one direction then another with the varying currents that pass over and around. It was as though she absorbed each new

personality she encountered and tried it on, later to discard it” (147). Aurelia adds that later Sylvia bleached her hair and continued her attempts to change herself. However, as Aurelia explains, “it was more than a surface alteration. She was trying out a more daring, adventuresome personality” (148). Goldemberg underlines that Sylvia constantly tries to find her own identity without success.

Eventually, Goldemberg reveals that Sylvia receives a scholarship to study at Cambridge University and perceives this as her chance to develop her own sense of self. Sidney Blatt and Shula Shichman argue that, “the development of a sense of self is neglected in exaggerated and distorted struggles to establish satisfying interpersonal relationships” (223-224). Thus, Sylvia in her struggle to achieve success and make her mother happy in her early years is unable to develop her own sense of self at this point in her life. For this reason, when she obtains a Fulbright scholarship to study at Cambridge University, Sylvia remembers the letter she had written to her brother Warren, “I know the Fulbright is the best and only thing for me; staying in New England or even New York would suffocate me completely. It does take guts to change and grow. My wings need to be tried” (Goldemberg 149). Goldemberg by making use of this letter underlines that Sylvia seeks alienation as a way of achieving a peace of mind. Sylvia perceives change as a necessary means for her to mature. Sidney Blatt and Shula Shichman comment that “struggles to achieve separation, definition, and independence from controlling, intrusive, punitive, excessively critical, and judgmental figures are expressed in conflicts around the management and containment of affect, especially aggression directed toward others and the self” (224). Sylvia’s struggle to achieve independence from her mother, results in her devotion to a new figure in her life, Ted Hughes. Jung describes women who identify themselves with their mother as the ‘Nothing-But Daughter.’ He declares that such women have a high chance for individuation only through the help of a man, who literally would abduct them from their mother. He adds that, “such women may become devoted and self-sacrificing wives of husbands” (1959: 31). In Goldemberg’s play, Sylvia Plath is aware of her attachment to her mother, and she constantly struggles to refute it through finding male figures like her absent father, or her unfaithful husband to attach to. Jung adds that,

these women sometimes have valuable gifts which remained undeveloped only because they were entirely unconscious of their own

personality. They may project the gift or talent upon a husband who lacks it himself, and then we have the spectacle of a totally insignificant man who seemed to have no chance whatsoever suddenly soaring as if on a magic carpet to the highest summits of achievement. (31)

Similarly, Goldemberg emphasizes that Sylvia, who has a great talent, is also unsure and even unaware of her skill. In the pursuit of separating herself from her mother, Sylvia immediately replaces her mother with Hughes, and submits to his wishes, and is unable to establish her own sense of self, or take control of her own life once again. This is because she is occupied with committing herself to the new persona in her life, her husband. She devotes all her energies to him and therefore, her conflicts restart as soon as she loses Ted Hughes. Therefore, Goldemberg establishes assuming control of one's life as a necessity for the development of a woman's identity. According to Goldemberg, this control of one's life should never be forfeited to another person, not even to a person whom one can consider as his/her soul mate.

When Sylvia meets her future husband, she describes him with these words, "Met, by the way, a brilliant poet at the wild party last week; will probably never see him again, but wrote my best poem about him afterwards – the only man I've met here who'd be strong enough to be equal with – such is life" (Goldemberg 150). Although Sylvia knows that she is a strong woman, upon falling in love with him, she acknowledges that her commitment to a man would be disastrous for her. She writes, "The most shattering thing is that I have fallen terribly in love, which can only lead to great hurt" (150). She admires the strength of Hughes and believes that she has finally found someone whom she can be equal to, however, simultaneously she begins to assume the traditional role of women and she asks her mother to send her the book entitled, *Joy of Cooking*. She states that Hughes tells her "fairy stories and dreams, marvelous colored dreams, about certain red foxes" (151). Furthermore, she adds that she is living in Eden. The fantasy world Hughes has created for Sylvia resembles Eden according to her. However, this Eden is the Paradise from which the inhabitants were thrown out. Adam and Eve were discarded from Eden, because of the apple Eve ate, and later gave to Adam. In this Christian myth, it is the figure of a woman, who destroys a man, since the man depends too much on the woman, trusts her, and eats the apple. Goldemberg is reversing this Christian myth to reveal that depending on and trusting a man leads to a woman's destruction in return.

Goldemberg follows up on her pattern of the necessity of autonomy for women throughout Sylvia and Ted's marriage. Upon their marriage, Sylvia starts referring to herself through the names Hughes give her. "Mrs. Sylvia Hughes, Mrs. Ted Hughes, Mrs. Edward James Hughes, Mrs. E. J. Hughes (wife of the internationally known poet and genius)" (152). Following Sylvia's dialogue, Aurelia remembers how she was so proud to become the wife of "Dr. Otto Emil Plath" (152). Sylvia goes on explaining her happiness, "My whole thought is how to please him. The joy of being a loved and loving woman; that is my song" (152). Sylvia then continues to tell how she was so happy since Ted received a first prize in Poetry Center. As the stage descriptions write, "Very carefully; [Aurelia] will not criticize" (153), Aurelia states, "From the time Sylvia was a very little girl, she catered to the male of any age, to bolster his sense of superiority" (153). Aurelia at this point becomes the voice for Goldemberg, who is suggesting that giving a sense of superiority to a man is an act of submission on behalf of the woman. Submission, according to Goldemberg, is the first step in losing one's identity. Thus, Goldemberg once again emphasizes the persistent pattern that not having an identity through yourself, depending on another, and not controlling your own life, is not only destructive, but also very lethal.

Goldemberg informs the reader that in 1962, Sylvia and Ted's marriage began to collapse, and Sylvia committed suicide eight months later. As Aurelia states in the play, "The marriage was seriously troubled. Ted had been seeing someone else and Sylvia's jealousy was very intense" (162), Sylvia, overlapping Aurelia's words, tries to deny it, and finally states, "Never speak to God again!" (162). This is the last time Aurelia sees her daughter alive. Through her letters, Sylvia informs her mother of her separation from Ted, and her future plans to hire a live-in nanny. She has some financial problems and tries to give herself courage by stating, "I must get control of my life" (164). Goldemberg emphasizes that Sylvia refuses to go back to the United States to live closer to her mother with these words, "America is out for me! If I start running now, I will never stop. I shall hear of Ted all my life, of his success, his genius. I must make a life all my own as fast as I can! The flesh had dropped from my bones. But I am a fighter" (164). She begins to understand her own weakness of depending on another. She tries to obtain a control of her own life by not running, and fighting alone.

Having lost Ted as a confidante, she refuses to give that place to her mother, since she has understood its dangers. Sylvia states, "I was very stupid, very happy ... no time to make any plans of my own" (164). She understands the necessity of handling her own life, solving her own problems, however, she still needs the protection of a man, and she states, "I will need protection. I look to Warren now that I have no man, no adviser" (164). Still in need of a male figure in her life, Goldemberg clearly reveals that in the desire of finding the other, Sylvia is confused about where she should go and feels that everything around her "is breaking" (164). This, in Lacan's terms, is Sylvia's struggle to pass to the Symbolic Order, or in Jung's terms individuation. Margaret Mahler points out that, "this normal separation-individuation process takes place in the setting of a developmental readiness for, and pleasure in, independent functioning" (215). Sylvia is neither ready, nor willing to obtain an "independent functioning". Goldemberg stresses that upon learning that Ted is seeing someone else, Sylvia immediately loses her faith and she remarks, "Never speak to God again!" (162). Goldemberg also reveals that as Sylvia becomes self-conscious, she begins to direct her aggression towards herself, and eventually commits suicide. Therefore, Goldemberg draws the persistent pattern that although individuation from the mother is necessary, a woman must not try to separate herself from the mother by depending on others.

Furthermore, Goldemberg establishes the pattern that obsession with success not only destroys women, but also patriarchy's chances of using women's abilities for its advancement. Nancy Chodorow argues that, "in any given society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than masculine personality does" (1989: 45). Thus, according to Chodorow, for women, this search for independent functioning is not an urgency. Women are fonder of plurality, rather than singular individuality. This is one of the significant differences between the two genders. Women have a stronger tendency to form interpersonal relationships, rather than achieve individualism. Nancy Chodorow also emphasizes this point by stating,

Separateness from the mother, defining oneself as apart from her (and from other women), is not the only or final goal for women's ego strength and autonomy, even if many women must also attain some sense of reliable separateness. In the process of differentiation, leading to genuine autonomy, people maintain contact with those with whom

they had their earliest relationships: indeed this contact is part of who we are. (107)

However, during this process of attaining a 'reliable separateness,' if there is an "omnipresent infantilizing mother who interferes with the child's innate striving for individuation" (Mahler 216), this process of separateness / individuation may be retarded. Steven Gould Axelrod explains in his analysis of Sylvia Plath's life that, Aurelia Plath's striving too much in trying to stand courageous against the loss of her husband Otto Plath resulted in her repression of "negative feelings such as grief, fear, anger, and shame" (87). Since, Aurelia constantly presented the picture of a powerful woman to her environment, Sylvia had to struggle against this powerful woman, who never showed any signs of weakness. Axelrod adds that Aurelia's "strategies for survival exacted a considerable toll on her own emotional life and that of her daughter" (87). Due to Aurelia's behavior, Axelrod argues that, "Sylvia learned early to sublimate her feelings in a quest for achievement" (87-88). Thus, Goldemberg stresses the point that Sylvia, rather than obtaining her own identity, has gained a tendency to please the people whom she depended on either through her own achievements, or through dedicating herself to the achievement of others, as she does with her husband.

Goldemberg reveals Sylvia's obsession for achievement throughout the play. To begin with, Sylvia's science course, which she had to take during college, leads her to great despair. She believes that this course is corrupting her creativity; "Life is so black, anyway. Everything is empty, meaningless. How could I ever persuade the college authorities, how could I convince the psychiatrist? My reason is leaving me! Everybody is happy, but this has obsessed me from the day I got here" (Goldemberg 132-133). Goldemberg observes that Sylvia is unable to be moderate in her life; she needs to be successful in everything she does. Aurelia is also aware of Sylvia's obsession with success, and states that Sylvia "can't stand the idea of being mediocre" (114). Aurelia further claims that, "Sylvia was too demanding of herself" (136).

Goldemberg emphasizes that at times, Sylvia's obsession for success even turns to self-recrimination. When her mother informs Sylvia that she was not accepted into Frank O'Connor's short-story writing class, Aurelia guesses that "Sylvia would see it as a rejection of her as a competent or even promising writer" (136). Consequently,

not being accepted to the writing class makes Sylvia lose her belief in herself. As Sylvia states, “It turned out that not only was I totally unable to learn one squiggle of shorthand, but I also had not a damn thing to say in the literary world; because I was sterile, empty, un-lived, unwise, and UNREAD” (139). Patriarchal systems’ giving value to individuality brings together the establishment of a hierarchical order, where women are never allowed to occupy the center. Therefore, a woman’s struggle for success in the patriarchal world turns out to become a futile attempt, which can only end in disappointment. As Aurelia narrates, after being rejected by the writing class, Sylvia begins to damage her body. Aurelia states that she saw “partially healed gashes on her legs” (139) and upon questioning Sylvia about these wounds, Sylvia states that she “just wanted to see if [she] had the guts” (139). In addition to giving damage to her body, Sylvia states, “Oh, Mother, the world is so rotten! I want to die! Let’s die together!” (139). Therefore, a doctor advises them to seek “psychiatric counseling” (139).

Throughout her treatment, Sylvia receives shock treatments, and “increased doses of sleeping pills” (139). Ironically, Goldemberg reveals that despite her treatment, Sylvia constantly considers suicide. As Sylvia states “I was going to make use of my last ounce of free choice and choose a quick clean ending. I figured that in the long run it would be more merciful and inexpensive to my family” (140). Aurelia explains that Sylvia took a large dose of the sleeping pills Aurelia had been hiding in her closet and hid under the basement. She was saved from dying after two days, and as she began to regain consciousness she had “a hatred toward the people” who had dragged her “back into the hell of sordid and meaningless existence!”(142). Sylvia’s words to her mother were “It was my last act of love” (143). Mrs. Prouty, Sylvia’s benefactress sent her to a mental institution where she could receive more help. Sylvia states that she wants “to be out in the wide open spaces of the very messy, dangerous, real world” (145) which she still loves. However, Goldemberg’s stage descriptions note that she says these words with “a blazing false smile” (145). Rose Leiman Goldemberg stresses that Sylvia’s obsession with success is one of the reasons for her eventual destruction. As Goldemberg establishes the dangers of being obsessed with success as a persistent pattern in female experience, she reveals how the patriarchal world would never allow a woman to occupy the center. By excluding women from

the center of patriarchal society, patriarchy loses its chances of using women's skills to the highest extent for the betterment of the society.

In addition to establishing various persistent patterns concerning the importance of the empowerment of women in controlling their life, securing one's bonds with the mother and the dangers of obsession with success, Goldemberg also makes use of various well-known myths in her play, and re-writes these myths from her own perspective. The play is narrated in two levels; one from the perspective of Aurelia Plath, and the second from Sylvia Plath's point of view. Initially, Goldemberg shifts the dialogues between Aurelia and Sylvia to reflect the story of a mother-daughter relationship, which has been reflected in the classical myth of Demeter and Persephone. Secondly, she presents the story of a woman who has been rejected by her lover and is led to her own destruction, and the destruction of others, which has been told in the myth of Medea. Both myths have been retold various times, and shifted in their plot frequently, until they were written down by Homer and Euripides. Jane de Gay argues that, "The victorious Olympian cult re-wrote the stories of these figures into a narrative that reflected the patriarchal family [...] In this view, classical mythology celebrates the submission of matriarchal power to patriarchal" (14). Furthermore, these patriarchal narratives establish women as weak creatures, or villains. Jane de Gay explains the reason why women playwrights make use of such figures as follows:

The challenge for women theatre-makers in retelling stories such as these lies in avoiding objectifying these female figures as victims while also preventing the audience from identifying themselves with the victims in a disempowering way. (16)

Goldemberg in her depiction of the historical characters of Aurelia and Sylvia Plath combines these two figures with the mythical figures of Demeter, Persephone, and Medea. This is Goldemberg's attempt to reveal the mythical aspects of history, while retelling the stories of these women by emphasizing the importance of a mother-daughter relationship, as well as presenting women as powerful figures in control of their fate. As Goldemberg makes use of the Demeter and Persephone myth, she chooses to represent Aurelia as Demeter, in search of her daughter, but who is unable to save her daughter's life. However, Aurelia as Demeter seeks to understand her daughter through the process of reading the letters she has sent her and thus, reaches

an understanding of her daughter at the end of the play. Although, Aurelia, as Demeter is unable to save her daughter, she gains an understanding, which enables her to become a survivor, as well as an agent to spread this knowledge to future generations. For this reason, Goldemberg's Demeter becomes a stronger woman, who does not conform to the patriarchal powers that only enable her to see her daughter for two-thirds of a year. In addition to this, if Sylvia is regarded as an extension of Persephone, Goldemberg refrains from presenting her as a victim abducted by a patriarchal figure. Rather, Goldemberg presents Sylvia as a woman who has surrendered herself to the patriarchal order, but upon understanding the pressure, has taken a major step in hopes of obtaining the control of her life. After her divorce as Sylvia writes to her brother Warren,

I know what I need, want, must work for. Please convince mother of this. She identifies much too much with me, and you must help her see how starting my own life in the most difficult place, here [in London] – not running, is the only sane thing to do. (Goldemberg 167)

In this respect, Sylvia can best be associated with Medea, who has gone through similar difficulties in her marriage and has taken rooted steps towards obtaining the control of her life.

Initially, to evaluate the myth of Demeter and Persephone, Persephone manages to return to life, only through her mother's insistence on her return. The Homeric Hymn to Demeter states that Hades abducted Persephone through the will of Zeus, Persephone's father. Demeter having learned the truth of her daughter's abduction from Helios, decides to take revenge on Zeus by killing all the humans who would worship the gods. She, being the vegetation goddess, stops the earth from giving any crops to humans to live on. Zeus, who does not want to lose the sacrifices humans give to him, calls Demeter forth, but she does not yield from her wish to reunite with her daughter. Zeus then sends word to Hades to send Persephone back to her mother, however, the cunning Hades forces Persephone to eat a pomegranate to make sure that she comes back to him, since once you eat anything in the lands of Hades, you will have to return there. Zeus has no choice but to interfere in order to enable Persephone to return to Demeter two-thirds of every year. Thus, with the arrival of Persephone on earth, spring comes. Demeter is forced to yield to this contract, and in return both

Demeter and Persephone are forced to enter the patriarchal order only to save their mother-daughter relationship. Marsha Norman in an interview declares that,

The mother-daughter relationship [...] is one of the world's great mysteries; it has confused and confounded men and women for centuries and centuries, and yet it has not been perceived to have critical impact on either the life of the family or the survival of the family. Whereas the man's ability to earn money, his success out in the world, his conflict with his father – those are all things that have been seen as directly influencing the survival of the family. Part of what we have begun to do, because of the increasing voice of women in the word, is redefine survival. (qtd in Btsko 338)

This is what Goldemberg is doing in her play: To redefine survival through the bonding of mothers and daughters. Although Goldemberg's definition of survival cannot be defined in the sense of maintaining one's physical life, she establishes an idea of survival through understanding.

Goldemberg's play could be perceived as a metaphor for this classical myth; her characters re-echo the struggles of Demeter to save Persephone. Aurelia as the personification of Demeter searches for her daughter all throughout the play. Sylvia is the Persephone figure who is taken to a far away land. Unlike Persephone, Sylvia leaves on her own for England, and does not wish to return having failed her journey. Although Aurelia insists that Sylvia should return to the United States since her marriage is over, Sylvia rejects by saying "I must make a life all my own as fast as I can! The flesh has dropped from my bones. But I am a fighter" (Goldemberg 164). However, Sylvia unable to fight any longer fails her mother, and commits suicide. Aurelia as Demeter longs for the return of her daughter even after her death. Aurelia struggles to achieve an understanding of her daughter, trying to understand Sylvia through her letters and writings. By keeping her link with her mother, Persephone remains alive. Sylvia retires to Hades, since she objects to keeping her links with her mother and her home.

Sylvia constantly tried to break away from her mother through her life. When she was in college, she had tried to work away from home during a summer vacation. Stage descriptions write, "June 15, 1952. The beginning of the terrible time. Aurelia knows it" (130). Sylvia writes to her mother,

Do write me letters, Mummy, because I am in a very dangerous state of feeling sorry for myself. Just at present, life is awful. I am exhausted, scared, incompetent, unenergetic and generally low in spirits. Working

in side hall puts me apart, and I feel completely uprooted and clumsy. But as tempted as I am to be a coward and escape by crawling back home, I have resolved to give it a good month's trial. Don't worry about me, but do send little pellets of advice now and then. (130)

Her words reveal that she is in despair, but rather than going back home to escape it, she will try to hold on for a month. As the stage descriptions state, at this point, Sylvia moves "up and down" where "Aurelia tries to keep her up" (130). However, Aurelia is unable to keep her up, since Sylvia tries to survive on her own, and is not equipped to do it. Through such an analysis, the Demeter and Persephone myth remains to be a major myth that presents a bonding with men as death in Hades, and bonding with a mother as a chance for life.

The opposition between patriarchal and matriarchal worlds is revealed through the play. Goldemberg rewrites the myth of Demeter and Persephone to emphasize the higher chances of survival for women in the matriarchal order. Although, many critics have blamed Aurelia Plath as one of the people responsible for Sylvia's death, Goldemberg tries to construct Aurelia as the matriarchal figure, who has struggled very hard on her own to raise her children. Upon Sylvia's death, Goldemberg writes in her stage descriptions that, "Aurelia comes to understand. She has done her best. Though much of this is true of her also, she is not Sylvia. She has survived. She is strong - and *learning*" (174). Goldemberg establishes the importance of learning as a persistent pattern in women's individuation process.

Aurelia narrates a part of Sylvia's diary written on November 13, 1949, fourteen years before her suicide where Sylvia has written, "I want, I think, to be omniscient. I think I would like to call myself 'the girl who wanted to be God' ... perhaps I am *destined* to be classified and qualified. But, oh, I cry out against it. I am I" (174). As Aurelia reads Sylvia's letter, Sylvia begins to speak simultaneously. As Aurelia reads, "Never, never, never will I reach the perfection I long for with all my soul" (175), Sylvia says, "Blue" (175), which "is the most insubstantial of colours; it seldom occurs in the natural world except as a translucency, that is to say as an accumulation of emptiness" (Chevalier 102). Sylvia's state of being 'blue' began in a very early age. She always felt a state of emptiness as seen from Aurelia's reading, "There will come a time when I must face myself at last. Even now I dread the big choices which loom up in my life. I am afraid, I feel uncertain. I am not as wise as I have thought"

(Goldemberg 175). Aurelia continues reading Sylvia's journal entry and explains that although she is able to see the roads lying open ahead of her, she "cannot see the end – the consequences" (175-6). She acknowledges her strength, and that her "life is still just beginning" (176). Sylvia herself simultaneously remarks, "It is an Indian summer day / I feel that I am ... / ... learning" (176). As she underlines the effects of "Learning," Goldemberg also emphasizes the importance of sharing one's experiences and developing one's self strongly.

Furthermore, at the beginning of the play, Aurelia declares that she has collected all the letters Sylvia and she have exchanged, and that she intended to give Sylvia all these letters one day for her "to make use of them in stories, and through them, meet herself" (112). Writing to understand one's self becomes a pattern in Goldemberg's writing. However, she further emphasizes the process of reading as mutual understanding, and a step in one's personal development. Goldemberg sets forth Aurelia Plath as Demeter in search of her daughter throughout the play. Survival is redefined as the ability to reach an understanding among women, and to pass this on to the following generations, as Aurelia states "This book is dedicated to my grandchildren: Frieda and Nicholas, Jennifer and Susan" (111). Goldemberg writes in her stage descriptions what Aurelia's opening statement means, "I am a woman who above all knows never to forget her children" (111). Through Goldemberg's mention of Aurelia's dedication to her children and the future generations, the importance of passing on information between a mother and a daughter is emphasized. While doing this Goldemberg once again suggests that through the sharing of experience, the matriarchal world and mother-daughter bonding provide higher chances for the survival of women.

In addition to the Demeter and Persephone myth, Goldemberg also rewrites the myth of Medea through her perspective. Plath just like Medea fell in love with a man, and later was betrayed. Medea was skilled in magic, while Plath was skilled in writing. Having fallen in love with Jason, Medea went to a far away land, as Sylvia Plath who had to reside in England due to her marriage. Furthermore, Medea gave Jason "a magic ointment that would protect him from harm" (Morford 479). Thus, Medea helped Jason in his journey, and enabled his advancement as a hero. Similarly, Sylvia worked on behalf of Ted Hughes, to publish his work, and helped him to become a great writer. "Jason divorced Medea to marry Glauce, the daughter of King

Creon” (485). Likewise, Ted Hughes and Sylvia divorced due to another woman. Finally, unlike Medea who murdered her children to take revenge on Jason, Sylvia killed herself. However, in Goldemberg’s play the figures of Sylvia and Medea merge into one with their final act of reestablishing their power. Medea takes revenge on her husband in the cruelest way possible, to obtain her control of the situation. Similarly, Sylvia takes her own control through deciding on her own fate. Thus, Goldemberg draws a parallel between Medea and Sylvia Plath in her play *Letters Home*. Sylvia Plath has often been criticized as a horrible mother for her selfish act of suicide, since she had left her two children motherless. This is similar to Medea’s depiction as the horrible mother who has murdered her children for revenge. However, Goldemberg emphasizes the persistent pattern that Sylvia’s suicide was an act of love and empowerment, since Plath’s suicide was her own choice that freed her children of the burden of having a mentally unstable mother who was unable to control herself.

Sylvia’s double suicide attempts, one in college and the one that ended her life, could be regarded as an act of love and her final attempts at empowering herself, gaining her own control. During her first depression at Smith College Sylvia states,

The only alternative I could see was an eternity of hell for the rest of my life in a mental hospital, and I was going to make use of my last ounce of free choice and choose a quick clean ending. I figured that in the long run it would be more merciful and inexpensive to my family; (*Then with great clarity and passion*) instead of an indefinite incarceration of a favorite daughter in the cell of a State San, instead of the misery and disillusion of sixty odd years of mental vacuum, of physical squalor, I would spare them all by ending everything at the height of my so-called career, while there were still illusions left among my profs, still poems to be published in *Harper’s*, still a memory at least that would be worthwhile. (Goldemberg 40-41)

Through these lines Sylvia emerges as a loving daughter who will make use of her free will to save her family from a future where she will become a source of misery and a mere burden for them. As Elizabeth Hardwick writes, “Committing suicide is desperation, demand for relief, but I don’t see how we can ignore the way in which it is edged with pleasure and triumph in Sylvia Plath’s work” (104). Elizabeth Hardwick also emphasizes how Plath’s work constantly displays “a mind in a state of sensual distortion, seeking pain as much as death, contemplating with grisly lucidity the mutilation of the soul and the flesh” (104). Thus, she declares that, “Suicide is an assertion of power, of the strength – not the weakness - of the personality. She is no

poor animal sneaking away, giving up; instead she is strong, threatening, dangerous” (106). Considering how Plath received the literary interest she had wished for all through her career right after her death, one cannot undermine her suicide as a means to achieve strength.

Consequently, when her first suicide attempt is considered, Sylvia had attempted suicide to save her mother from worry, and financial problems due to her stay in an expensive asylum. Her depression had led her to madness and the feeling of confinement in a hopeless world, which offered nothing, and which had become too hard to bear for Sylvia. For such reasons, she had chosen suicide. Upon being retrieved to life, Sylvia had said these words to her mother, “It was my last act of love” (Goldemberg 143). Accordingly, rather than committing suicide merely for her own rescue, Sylvia had committed suicide to free her mother from the burden of taking care of her. Thus, Goldemberg argues that Sylvia’s suicide attempts were not only to achieve self-control, but to prove her love as well.

In her final suicide Sylvia was also retreating towards madness and confinement. As Phyllis Chesler states,

madness and confinement were both an expression of female powerlessness and an unsuccessful attempt to overcome this state. Madness and asylums generally function as mirror images of the female experience, and as penalties for *being* ‘female,’ as well as for daring *not* to be. If the dare is enacted deeply or dramatically enough, death (through slow or fast suicide) ensues. (15-16)

Sylvia’s feeling of confinement began a few years after her marriage. Sylvia in a letter, complained to her brother Warren with these words, “My ideal of being a good teacher, writing a book on the side, and being an entertaining homemaker, cook and wife is rapidly evaporating!” (Goldemberg 154). As she lost her feminine instincts, she blamed her job at Smith College. Her job was hindering her from her creative work, since teaching was taking too much of her time.

In 1960, Sylvia became a mother. She writes “Things seem much calmer and more peaceful with the baby around. Ted will have a study and utter peace by the time I have all my strength back and am coping with baby and household” (156). The situation will be the opposite for Sylvia who is unable to write and handle the baby at the same time; however, she gives more importance to her husband’s peace of mind.

When she loses her second baby, she immediately writes to her mother, who had made plans to come visit her,

I feel awful to write you now after changing your plans and probably telling your friends about another baby, because I lost the little baby this morning, and really feel terrible about it.

Ted is taking wonderful care of me. He is the most blessed, kind person in the world. (157)

Sylvia has lost her baby, but rather than giving the details of her own feelings and suffering, she notes how Ted helped her get through it. She says, “All weekend, while I was in the shadow of this, he gave me poems to type and generally distracted me” (157-8). At this point, she is still depending on Ted to save her from depression by giving her the jobs that he is supposed to do.

Finally, the stage descriptions reveal, “Cautioning, the beginning of trouble” (160), as Aurelia mentions that Ted has been spending time in London alone. At this point in their lives, they have financial difficulties. Upon the birth of her son, Nicholas, Sylvia starts complaining about the noise of the baby, and how she is unable to see Ted “over the mountains of diapers and demands of babies” (161). Goldemberg frequently juxtaposes Sylvia’s words of her love and joy about having her babies and her tiredness of cooking the whole day, and looking after the children. Sylvia complains to her mother, “I have such spring fever, don’t want to see another dish or cook another meal!” (161). However, in the next letter Sylvia writes,

Having babies is really the happiest experience of my life! I would just like to go on and on!

I have the queerest feeling of having been reborn with Frieda, as if my real, rich, happy life only started about then. I feel I’m just beginning at writing, too!

Well, I must get supper for my family. Lots of love from us all. Sivvy. (161)

Sylvia’s words seem to become a means to convince herself and her mother that she is really happy. She seems to be repressing her real feelings, however in between the lines, Sylvia keeps repeating that she is really tired and is in need of sleep. She states, “I seem to need sleep all the time ... the day a whirlwind of baths, laundry, meals, feedings, and ...” (161). Aurelia completes Sylvia’s sentence in an overlap by saying

“The marriage” (162). Goldemberg allows Aurelia to understand her daughter’s real feeling of suffocation due to her role as parent and wife. Sylvia’s feeling of confinement has already begun during her marriage, although she constantly tries to reflect that everything is fine in her life. Sylvia writes, “I have found that the whole clue to happiness is to have four or five hours perfectly free and uninterrupted to write in, the first thing in the morning – no phone, doorbells, or baby” (158). Goldemberg is revealing the persistent pattern that children and marriage can hinder one’s creativity, and thus, add to his/her confinement.

In addition to her problems at home, Goldemberg emphasizes that Sylvia has become very vulnerable to outer happenings as well. In her letters, she complains about the bad weather, her lack of sleep, and writes that she has been, “very gloomy about the bomb news” (161). She is also concerned about the “terrifying marriage of big business and the military in America” (161). Her worries over the Cold War and the collaboration of big business and the military towards the creation of warfare, also contribute to Plath’s gradual depression and her feeling of confinement. When Aurelia begins to notice that Sylvia’s marriage with Ted is in trouble, Sylvia first denies it, however when Aurelia reveals that Ted is seeing someone else, Sylvia once again makes the same remark she made upon her father’s death, “Never speak to God again!” (162). Upon deciding, Sylvia informs her mother that she wants to separate from Ted. Sylvia writes, “I want a clean break, so I can breathe and laugh and enjoy myself again” (163). Thus, Goldemberg emphasizes how marriage has been imprisoning Sylvia, and hindering her from breathing.

After she begins to get used to her new life apart from Ted, she once again declares that she is “joyous, happier than [she has] been for ages” (165). However, it is clear that this is once again repression because, in between the lines, she also claims that “domesticity had choked” her (165). She is in desperate need of something “to look forward to” (165), so she asks her brother to take her to Austria with them. As her depression grows, Sylvia writes to her mother,

I am writing with my old fever of 101 degrees alternating with chills. I need help very much just now. Home is impossible! I can go nowhere with the children, and I am ill, and it would be psychologically the worst thing to see you now. I am a writer. I am a genius of a writer. I am writing the best poems of my life. They will make my name. (165-6)

Goldemberg emphasizes the idea that depression, hopelessness, and fever fertilize creativity, and although Sylvia is in desperate need of help, she declares that she is writing the best creative pieces of her life. The connection between hurt and creativity had been established earlier in the play with Sylvia's words, "out of misery comes joy, clear and sweet. I feel that I am learning" (113). These lines are repeated as the last words of the play. Goldemberg establishes misery, as the force of creativity and experience, as a persistent pattern.

Creativity, created out of her misery, comes to mean hope for Sylvia. Writing is the only thing that makes her keep on going. However, she is not able to find a good nanny, and requires urgent help to look after the children. She even suggests that Warren should send his new wife to take care of the children. Aurelia realizes that Sylvia is "fighting" (166) not to lose her strength. Sylvia is very ill, and trying to manage her family on her own. As soon as her mother arranges a young nurse to take care of the babies, Sylvia begins to revive. She asks Warren to convince her mother that "not running, is the only sane thing to do" (167). She wants to remain in England and stand on her own feet rather than go back home to live with her mother. She has the strength now, because her first novel has been accepted. She finds strength from the success of her work. Furthermore she writes, "Living apart from Ted is wonderful – I am no longer in his shadow. It is heaven to be liked for myself alone" (170). She has begun to taste her own success, rather than living under Ted's shadow where she constantly undermined her own work. As Aurelia states, Sylvia's work was "renouncing the subservient female role, yet holding to the triumphant note of maternal creativity in her scorn of 'barrenness'" (171). Sylvia's creative work depicts her disrespect for women's submission to patriarchal order, and her search for creativity finds its source in her maternal instincts. However, in contrast to this view, in her life, she is still assuming the "subservient female role". She once again writes that she is very busy taking care of her house and her children, and that she is "going to start seeing a woman doctor free on the National Health" (173) to help her get through her difficult times. Unable to balance her contrasting instincts of a writer and a woman, eight days later, Aurelia receives a cablegram from Ted, announcing Sylvia's death. Aurelia states, "I'll ... never ... speak ... to ... God" (174) repeating Sylvia's words upon her father's death, and upon her divorce. Thus, Goldemberg

reveals how God has disappointed both women and dismisses God and religion as a sanctuary for women.

Phyllis Chesler argues that, trying to escape the burden of being a woman results in “death (through slow or fast suicide)” (16). Sylvia’s gradual retreat into confinement, and her inability to assume a female role, and be a writer at the same time, results in her suicide. Goldemberg focuses on the psychological confinement of a woman writer’s struggle to achieve creativity in a patriarchal world, simultaneously trying to assume the female role attributed to her. This is women’s struggle to obtain a control over their life, however, with the unconditional loss of their life, or their femininity. As Sylvia tries to hire a helping hand, she actually tries to pass her feminine role in the house to someone else, in order to concentrate on her work. In the patriarchal order a women’s enactment of a male role cannot be accepted, and as Chesler explains, results in her death.

As stated earlier, Goldemberg allows Aurelia to achieve an understanding of her daughter’s fear of life, and her ambition to be free, her fear of growing old, and of marriage. Sylvia had written, “Spare me from cooking three meals a day – spare me from the relentless cage of routine and rote” (Goldemberg 175). All her fears had come true by the time she became thirty years old. She was not free as she hoped to be when she was seventeen. Thus, Aurelia sees how Sylvia had felt trapped in her life, and how her confinement had to be relieved. Aurelia understands that Sylvia saw all the roads she once saw as “lying open” (175) for her, close one by one, and she had no wish to continue her life under these circumstances. Aurelia understands and learns who Sylvia really was after reading her letters, which signify her life. Aurelia has understood that although she also went through similar experiences as her daughter, she managed to survive from her entrapment in patriarchal order due to the untimely death of her husband. Goldemberg permits Aurelia to learn the consequences of being a woman, and the disillusionment following a woman’s hope to live a free life, hope to be creative, and hope for advancement in the patriarchal world. For this reason, when Goldemberg merges Medea and Sylvia together, they are no longer the horrible mothers, but women who have been disillusioned. Their last acts of murder and suicide are not only their final attempts at gaining control of their life, but also the consequences of the love they feel for their children. Therefore, Goldemberg by

merging Medea and Sylvia together breaks the archetype of the horrible mother that has been attributed to Medea, as well as Sylvia.

In conclusion, Rose Leiman Goldemberg establishes unity with the mother as the life-saving force in a women's life. As Carol Christ tries to find the reasons why women need a goddess, she states,

Christianity celebrates the father's relation to the son and the mother's relation to the son, but the story of mother and daughter is missing. So, too, in patriarchal literature and psychology the mothers and the daughters rarely exist. Volumes have been written about the oedipal complex, but little has been written about the girl's relation to her mother. (285)

Goldemberg, in *Letters Home*, rewrites the archetypal mother figure Demeter as a metaphor for Aurelia to signify the necessity of the mother daughter bond in women's life. Aurelia achieves an understanding of her daughter, and unlike Demeter, this will enable her everlasting unity with her daughter, although she is dead. Goldemberg establishes the persistent pattern of learning as a means to understand each other, and to pass on this understanding to future generations. Thus, reading and writing about the experiences of women becomes a major persistent pattern in the play. In addition to constructing various ideas concerning the importance of the empowerment of women in controlling their life, and securing one's bonds with the mother, Goldemberg rewrites the myth of Medea to replace Sylvia, not as a victim of the patriarchal order, but as a woman in the pursuit of regaining her power and identity.

Similarly, Goldemberg reveals the destructive effects of obsession for achievement on the part of women. Being too demanding of one's self or dedicating oneself to the achievement of others can have wounding effects. Also, Goldemberg criticizes patriarchy for hindering women from participating in the development of the social order. Furthermore, reinforcing a man's sense of superiority, results in the loss of identity, or even death, on the part of women. Goldemberg also redefines the meaning of survival for women by suggesting the bonds between the mother and the daughter, and also through strengthening the ties in a women's community. Thus, survival becomes sharing among women, and passing on these ties to the next generations.

Finally, Goldemberg also emphasizes the importance of women's creativity, and not undermining one's creative skills. She draws the persistent pattern that misery,

depression, and hopelessness fertilize creativity. However, she is well aware of the difficulty for a woman to express her creative powers in the confined spaces she has been imprisoned to survive in. Goldemberg establishes the confinement of women through submission to domestic duties of husband and child care. However, for Goldemberg, even under such conditions, a woman can and should learn to express her creative energies.

Myths are the stories that shape a society, and the patterns repeated in stories eventually become the models that teach individuals, and further societies how to behave. One person is not able to create a myth, since a myth is a social process of understanding and requires repetition. However, “Someone has to supply the material which others may then add to or alter” (Ruthven 70-71). Goldemberg in her *Letters Home* supplies the persistent patterns that are necessary for the survival of women, and their creative powers. As H  l  ne Cixous demands of all women,

Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies – for the same reasons, for the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text – as into the world and into history – by her own movement. (347)

### III.III. BILGESU ERENUS' *HALIDE*<sup>3</sup>

A prolific writer, Bilgesu Erenus has various plays staged in T  rkiye, as well as abroad. She was born in 1943, in Bilecik, T  rkiye. She graduated from the Journalism Institute at İstanbul University, and began working as a scenarist in the TRT (Turkish Radio and Television). She began writing plays at this stage in her life. Erenus finds feminist struggle rather limited, according to her, there should not be a feminist struggle focusing on men, rather a struggle should mean to create oneself, to question everything, such as nature, class, and injustices around the world. (Karaca 77-80). *El Kapısı, Ortak, İkili Oyun, Güneyli Bayan, Misafir, Arka Bah  e, Halide, Birbirine Eş*

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<sup>3</sup> Bilgesu Erenus wrote *Halide* in 1985 and MitosBoyut Tiyatro Yayınları published it in November 2000. The play was staged in 1985 by G  lriz Sururi-Engin Cezzar Theatre Group, under the direction of Rutkay Aziz. *Halide* was performed by G  lriz Sururi, while the role of her fears, C  ce (the Dwarf), was taken by Engin Cezzar.

The analysis of this Turkish play will be conducted by translating the relevant dialogues to English. Therefore, all the quotations used within this analysis will be translated freely by the author of this dissertation.

*Beş Kardeş*, *İnsan Aklını Koruma Enstitüsü*, *Dokumacılar*, *Böyle Bir Dünya* are some of her publications, which display her attempts at questioning almost everything in life.

Halide Edip Adıvar (1882-1964) was also a prolific writer herself. She acted as a fervent feminist political leader, and served in the Turkish military during the Turkish War of Independence. Born in İstanbul, she was sent to the American College for Women from which she graduated in 1901. She got married to her own mathematics teacher Salih Zeki, and had two children from him before they divorced. In 1909, she had her first novel *Seviye Talip* published. In 1912 she began working in the *Yeni Turan* newspaper. She married once again in 1917 to Dr. Adnan Adıvar. She began working as a lecturer at the Faculty of Letters in İstanbul. Her increasing interest in the Turkish nationalist movement resulted in her taking action in the War of Independence and traveling to Anatolia with her husband to work with Mustafa Kemal. In this war, she served as a soldier and later as a corporal. After the war, she lived in Western Europe for some time, and then traveled widely teaching and lecturing in the United States, and India. She returned to Türkiye in 1939, and continued teaching at the Faculty of Letters in İstanbul as a professor. In 1950 she worked for four years in the Turkish parliament. However, Halide Edip is mostly known for her insightful novels, such as *Handan*, *Son Eseri*, *Sinekli Bakkal*, *Vurun Kahpeye*, *Kalp Ağrısı*. She creates strong, independent female characters in her novels.

The two acts of the play are divided in short scenes describing the influential events of Halide Edip's life. The first act of this semi-biographical play refers to Halide Edip's childhood years as she is raised without a mother, her school years and her immediate marriage to her Mathematics instructor Salih Zeki right after high school, their divorce, the events of her career as a journalist, her marriage to Dr. Adnan, her involvement with various national associations, the siege of İzmir, her vocation as a public speaker against the occupation of the nation, Mustafa Kemal's invitation to join him in Amasya to initiate the Turkish War of Independence, and finally the death sentence the Sultan orders for those who join Mustafa Kemal. The second act begins with the dangerous journey to Anatolia to meet Mustafa Kemal, Mustafa Kemal's request of utmost obedience to all his orders, her task as the investigator of war crimes, victory in the War of Independence, and meeting Mustafa

Kemal's future wife, Latife. The play ends as the audience realizes that Halide had come back from death to reevaluate her life and mistakes. The character of the Dwarf functions to represent her fears and helps her reevaluate her life by reenacting the important events in her life. The director of the 1985 production of the play, Rutkay Aziz, explained the role of the Dwarf with these words,

When Halide drifts into her memories, there is a role performed by Engin Cezzar which symbolizes the corruptions and the fears in her life. When Engin Cezzar performs these fears, only Gülriz Sururi and the audience function in the frame of the stage. For the other actors, Engin Cezzar does not exist on stage<sup>4</sup>. (Akçura 188-9)

Zeynep Oral states that the Dwarf becomes Halide's "subconscious, the power behind her actions"<sup>5</sup> (Akçura 191). At the end the Dwarf announces that Halide's attempts to evaluate her life were fruitless, however, Halide refuses defeat since she has finally faced her fears, and Halide ends the play by asking the audience to judge her. Briefly, the Dwarf functions as a means for Bilgesu Erenus to reveal Halide Edip's inner world, for her to present the vulnerable woman behind the strong figure of the war hero. Some of the persistent patterns Erenus establishes and emphasizes in *Halide* are the importance of women's self-realization and trust in themselves, the need for women to function outside their homes, the dangers of seeking acceptance in the male community, and not running away from one's fears and mistakes, since one must acknowledge his/her fears to understand his/her desires.

The play has a large cast where Halide and the Dwarf are the major characters. Erenus has noted at the beginning that the minor characters can perform more than one role when necessary. Erenus makes extensive usage of expressionism, which aims to reflect the "inner person and the soul's journey" (Mackey 323), to stress the point that the whole play is Halide's reenactment of her life. Halide chooses the events she wants to relive again and forces the Dwarf to accompany her in this reenactment. Thus, Erenus's play turns into a play-within-a play as Halide and the Dwarf determine the events they want to reenact. Some of the expressionistic techniques used in this play-within-a play can be observed in the usage of masks, lights, and sounds to

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<sup>4</sup> Rutkay Aziz: Anıların içine girdiğinde, yaşamın içindeki çarpıklıkların ve korkuların simgesi olarak Engin Cezzar korkuları oynadığında, sahne çerçevesi içinde Gülriz Sururi ve izleyiciler var. Ama diğer oyuncular için Engin Cezzar sahnede yok. (Akçura 188-9)

<sup>5</sup> Zeynep Oral: [Cüce] Halide'nin bilinç altı, itici gücü oluyor. (Akçura 191)

enhance the events on the stage. The Dwarf makes use of various masks as he performs the roles of the Sultan, the foreign soldiers who occupy İstanbul, and the village headman. The lights and sounds are frequently used in the form of storms and winds to parallel Halide's inner feelings of fear and distress. However, light is also used in the depiction of Mustafa Kemal, who is represented by a light source, accompanied by military boots and a fur cap on stage, as the Dwarf speaks Mustafa Kemal's lines. As Erenus makes a light symbolize Mustafa Kemal, she also elevates him to a mythical realm, as a Godlike figure full of light and knowledge.

The play is Bilgesu Erenus' depiction of Halide Edip in her struggle to make a sense out of her own life. Halide Edip is represented by Erenus in the different stages of her life, as she tries to find someone to answer her questions for her, a person whom she will feel that she belongs to. However, neither Bilgesu Erenus, nor history itself allows Halide Edip to feel whole through the help of another person. Thus, the whole play turns into a quest for initiation, as can be reflected in various hero myths through the ages. Linda Seger explains,

The hero myth has specific story beats that occur in all hero stories. They show who the hero is, what the hero needs, and how the story and character interact in order to create a transformation. The journey toward heroism is a process. This universal process forms the spine of all the particular stories, such as the *Star Wars* trilogy. (309)

However, Erenus has re-written the archetypal hero myth to replace the archetypal hero with a heroine; a woman seeking a transformation to set her life straight, to understand who she is, and how she can find the peace she needs after she dies.

Right at the beginning of the play, the stage descriptions reveal a very gloomy setting. The painful sound of a wind will echo through the dark stage. The stage upon the turning of the lights will resemble "a storehouse of used material and human beings"<sup>6</sup> (Erenus 5). There will be lighting effects used at this moment, and finally the audience will meet Halide, who is forcefully pulling the Dwarf through the stairs. The dialogues begin with the Dwarf screaming for her to let him go, since he does not want to go with her. However, Halide remarks that he has to come, because he is responsible for all the conflicts in her life. Dwarfs are represented as "fairies' companions" (Chevalier 321) in the tradition of northern Europeans. Thus, Halide can be regarded as a fairy, and the Dwarf becomes her companion throughout the play.

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<sup>6</sup> (*Sahne tüm kullanılmışlık ve atılmışlıklarıyla bir insan ve eşya deposu görünümündedir.*) (Erenus 5)

The image of Halide as a fairy can be acceptable, since in the play, Halide comes back from death to reevaluate her life. Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant define fairies as such:

Originally, fairies, confused with women, were messengers from the Otherworld. They traveled in the guise of birds, for preference as swans. However, after the arrival of Christianity this function was no longer understood and those who copied out the pagan legends turned them into lovelorn women coming in search of their heart's desire. (368-9)

In accordance with the above explanation, Erenus represents Halide as a messenger from the Otherworld. Unable to rest her soul, Halide returns to life. Erenus does not represent Halide as a 'lovelorn' woman, but as a woman who has not been able to understand her own life, and desires. Her restless soul has prevented Halide from accepting death, and therefore silence. Bilgesu Erenus chooses to resurrect Halide, so that she can make sense of her life, experiences, desires, and mistakes in order to rest her soul. Thus, Erenus turns the historical figure of Halide into a messenger, who brings all women the message to understand their own life, experiences, desires, and mistakes.

Dwarfs were often "associated with the gods of the Underworld. Coming from it and remaining linked to it, they symbolize those dark forces which are within us and which can so easily take monstrous shapes" (Chevalier 321). In this play the Dwarf is also the representative of the monstrous, since he is the embodiment of Halide's fears. As Halide forces the Dwarf to follow her she states, "You will come with me, you have to. You are the reason for all the wrong in my life. You are my fears. Now walk, come on"<sup>7</sup> (Erenus 5). The Dwarf who represents her fears is the cause of all the wrong in her life. Thus, Erenus represents Halide as a woman determined to make things right, since her mistakes have disabled her from having a peaceful soul even after death. Gradually in the play, the Dwarf comes to project Halide's mistakes, since she constantly blames her fears for her actions. Halide states, "You are the reason for all the wrong in my life! This wreckage is your work. We have things to settle. Take

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<sup>7</sup> Halide: Geleceksin, mecbursun. Yaşadığım bütün çarpıklıkların nedeni sensin çünkü. Sen benim korkumsun. Yürü hadi. (Erenus 5)

your place, now!”<sup>8</sup> (7). If it had not been for her fears, Halide would not have made any mistakes in her life. Erenus seems to be criticizing the tendency of people in finding a scapegoat to relieve themselves of any guilt. By projecting her mistakes onto the Dwarf, Halide hopes to forgive herself and rest her soul. However, Bilgesu Erenus does not let Halide escape her own mistakes by blaming the Dwarf. At the end of the play, Halide realizes that not her fears or mistakes, but her choices were the source of her restless soul.

Furthermore, dwarfs’ “freedom of speech and gesture in the company of kings, ladies and grandees personify the uncontrolled outbursts of the unconscious” (Chevalier 321). Similarly, the Dwarf becomes a projection of Halide’s unconscious. The Dwarf states, towards the end of the play when Halide is unable to change things to rest her soul, “You cannot imagine how I pity you Halide... Admit that you are a mere scrap!”<sup>9</sup> (Erenus 119). Dwarfs are not only regarded as speaking their minds freely, but also they speak “the naked truth” (Chevalier 321). Therefore, Bilgesu Erenus draws the persistent pattern that the truth about one’s desires can only be revealed if one is able to comprehend and face his/her fears.

At this point, Erenus represents Halide as a woman who wants to go back to her childhood, to make sense of her fears, and to comprehend how her life and her memories had turned into “an endless waste of war”<sup>10</sup> (Erenus 7). Thus, Bilgesu Erenus has devised the play as Halide Edip’s personal journey to rediscover her own identity. As Halide states in the play, “until I find my identity again, the thunders will remain, they must remain”<sup>11</sup> (7). In order to discover herself, Halide wants to reenact her life all over again. Until she understands herself, she will face the thunder/her fears throughout her journey. She will begin from her childhood, will direct her own life story, and be the leading actress in her own play. Since Bilgesu Erenus presents Halide Edip as a woman trying to comprehend her life, this struggle also becomes

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<sup>8</sup> Halide: Yaşadığım tüm çarpıklıkların nedeni! Bu yıkıntı senin eserin. Görülecek hesabımız var seninle. Yerini al, hadi! (Erenus 7)

<sup>9</sup> Cüce: Sana nasıl acıyorum Halide bilemezsin... Hadi hurdaya çıktığımı itiraf et! (Erenus 119)

<sup>10</sup> Halide: Ah, hepsi de bitmez tükenmez bir savaş artığına dönüşmüş anılarım. (Erenus 7)

<sup>11</sup> Halide: Hayır, kimliğimi yeniden bulana dek sürecektir bu şimşekler, sürmeli. (Erenus 7)

Halide's first attempt to take control of her own life. Therefore, Erenus presents this play as Halide Edip's journey of initiation.

Erenus establishes Halide Edip's journey to echo the mythical quest of the hero. Unlike the great archetypal heroes such as Odysseus and Gilgamesh, her adventure does not involve a search for her home, or a search for immortality. Halide wants to take a journey of her own life again, so as to understand herself. As Halide states, "I am looking for the used voices and the visions. Where I started at and where I ended up... I am looking for my mistakes, anger, shock, power, and weaknesses"<sup>12</sup> (7). Just like King Oedipus, Halide attempts to find an answer to her true identity; she tries to make sense of her life. At one point in the play, Halide points a gun at the Dwarf as if to shoot him. When the Dwarf begs her not to, Halide states, "You are the reason of all the wrong in my life. I would not shoot you"<sup>13</sup> (101). The Dwarf replies, "Of course you would not shoot me. My existence is your justification"<sup>14</sup> (101). As Halide, just like Oedipus, seeks to find the truth of her identity, she notices that her fears had caused her to make the mistakes she did. Erenus, enhancing existential thought, emphasizes the idea that one's fears are the reason for one's mistakes. Just like Oedipus, Halide realizes that she herself was the source of all the wrong in her life. It was her fear of disapproval which led her to make mistakes. Therefore, just like Oedipus she decides to punish herself. At the end of Erenus' play Halide does not run away with her husband, but rather confronts her fears. Rather than blinding herself like Oedipus, Halide Edip, having understood her mistakes, strips herself naked, opens her arms as if ready for crucifixion, and says, "Go on and judge me. Jesus sent me!"<sup>15</sup> (123). At this point Erenus presents Halide as a follower of this religious figure who sacrificed himself for his people. Having evaluated her life through enactment, Halide becomes ready to accept her death.

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<sup>12</sup> Halide: Kullanılmış sesleri, görüntüleri arıyorum. Nereden çıkıp, nereye vardığımı... Yanlışlarımı, küskünlüğümü, şaşırışlığımı, gücümü, güçsüzlüğümü arıyorum. (Erenus 7)

<sup>13</sup> Halide: Yaşadığım bütün çarpıklıkların nedeni! Vurmam seni. (Erenus 101)

<sup>14</sup> Cüce: Tabii vuramazsın. Benim varlığım seni kendi gözünde akıyor çünkü. (Erenus 101)

<sup>15</sup> Halide: Hadi yargılayın beni! Beni İsa Yolladı! (Erenus 123)

However, only at the end of the play, when she decides to re-evaluate her life, the reader is made aware that Halide came back from death. As Joseph Henderson explains,

The initiation rite celebrated in the Eleusinian mysteries (the rites of worship of the fertility goddesses Demeter and Persephone) was not considered appropriate merely for those who sought to live life more abundantly; it was also used as a preparation for death, as if death also requires an initiatory rite of passage of the same kind. (145)

As Henderson elucidates, the initiation rituals were not only conducted for a long fruitful life, but also for death as well. The rituals helped prepare individuals for their passage to the next life. As in the case of Halide Edip, Erenus arranges Halide Edip to take her journey after her death. As suggested at the end of the play, Halide Edip is in distress due to the chaotic atmosphere in Türkiye, where people are no longer interested in the principles of humanity, justice, and freedom. The Dwarf throws a big party at the end, where people dress up in the fashion between the years 1923 until 1985. The people at the party are chatting about how she could only return to Türkiye after Atatürk's death, since she was supporting the mandate of the United States during the War of Independence. Halide blames the people at the party for being corrupt and degenerate, and referring to the Turkish War of Independence, she asks, "Did this country face all the chaos for nothing? In the thirties, fifties, sixties, seventies ..."<sup>16</sup> (Erenus 122). At this point the Dwarf interrupts with these words, "Slow down, you died in 1964!"<sup>17</sup> (122). Thus, the audience realizes that the play takes place after her death. The whole play becomes a ritualistic attempt of Halide Edip to ease her soul, and become ready for the after-life.

As stated earlier, Bilgesu Erenus has divided the play into two major acts; these acts consist of short episodes, separated through different titles. The first episode is titled "A Celebration which Fear itself Fears"<sup>18</sup> (5). Halide Edip's journey begins as she states at the end of this short scene, "I wish that my anger and my hopes were re-created. Everything begins over, only this time without me being offended or shocked,

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<sup>16</sup> Bunca çalkantı, bunun için mi yaşandı bu ülkede? Otuzlar'da, elli'de, altmış'da, yetmiş'ler... (Erenus 122)

<sup>17</sup> Cüce: Hoop, hoop, sen altmış dörtte öldün bir defa! (Erenus 122)

<sup>18</sup> Korkunun da Korktuğu Bir Bayram Günü (Erenus 5)

only through awareness, once again”<sup>19</sup> (8). Halide wishes to experience and evaluate her life once again. Therefore, Halide and the Dwarf take the audience to Halide Edip’s childhood years. The title of the section reads “The Little Girl Called Halide is Looking for Her Owner”<sup>20</sup> (8). Right at the beginning Halide cries for her father. The audiences who know the historical figure Halide Edip Adıvar immediately remember that Halide Edip had lost her mother before she began kindergarten. Her father married two women, and Halide ended up passing back and forth between the houses of her maternal grandmother and her father. Her father was working as First Secretary to Sultan Abdülhamid II’s Privy Purse. In Erenus’s play, as Halide cries to see her father, four women try to calm her down. One of these women remarks that Halide is so wild that she has “twenty wild monsters”<sup>21</sup> dwelling in her chest (8). Unable to calm Halide down, they take her to the palace for her to see her father. The next title reads, “The First Time Halide Meets the Dwarf in Her Memories”<sup>22</sup> (9). At this point in the play, Halide tells the Dwarf to take his place to start acting. The Dwarf warns her with these words, “Ok! But note this. Remembering these will not do any good for you. Only a new disappointment”<sup>23</sup> (9). Although the Dwarf represents Halide Edip’s fears, even he does not want to re-live Halide’s life through enactment. However, Halide Edip is determined to remember her past, thus the Dwarf has to act his part in the play.

As Halide is brought to the palace to see her father, the Dwarf playing the role of a common man from the palace asks the young Halide what she is doing there. When Halide replies that she is waiting for her father, the Dwarf in his role as a common man, just to scare her, states, “Edip is not your father, he is my father”<sup>24</sup> (9). Halide faces losing her father for the first time and tries to make sure that the Dwarf is

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<sup>19</sup> Halide: Öfkem ve umudum yenibaştan bilensin istiyorum. Her şey yeni baştan, küsmeden, şaşırmadan, bilinçle, bir kez daha. (Erenus 8)

<sup>20</sup> Halide Adlı Küçük Kız Sahibini Arıyor (Erenus 8)

<sup>21</sup> 3. Kadın: Ka bu kızın göğsünde yirmi tane vahşi canavar vardır. (Erenus 8)

<sup>22</sup> Cüce’yle Halide’nin Anılardaki İlk Karşılaşması (Erenus 9)

<sup>23</sup> Cüce: Pekâlâ! Ama şunu iyi bil. Bunları hatırlamanın hiçbir yararı olmayacak sana. Yeni bir düş kırıklığı yalnızca. (Erenus 9)

<sup>24</sup> Cüce: Edip Bey senin baban değil ki, benim babam. (Erenus 9)

mocking her, so she asks her father “Father, this is a joke right? A mere foolery, a joke?”<sup>25</sup> (9). Her father comes to appease her, and the section reads “Halide’s Initial Questions which Remain Unanswered”<sup>26</sup> (10). In this section Halide is still acting as a child, and she has recently lost her mother. She keeps questioning her father about death, religion, and freedom. However, as Erenus writes in the stage directions “The father does not reply Halide’s questions. Helplessly, Halide comes down from her father’s lap”<sup>27</sup> (11). As a child, all her questions remain unanswered. At this point, as her father walks out of the stage, Halide complains after him with these words, “Oh dad, you were not able to answer any of my childhood questions. If I had been able to live a secure childhood, my development would probably have been quite different”<sup>28</sup> (11). However, the Dwarf tells her to stop seeking someone to blame. He comments “Do not do this Halide... You are a grown woman... Seeking to find justification to your problems through blaming your parents is the solution unsuccessful psychiatrists have found”<sup>29</sup> (11). Halide’s final words in this episode are that she will find someone who will answer her questions.

So far in the play, Bilgesu Erenus has represented Halide Edip as she struggles to find what was wrong in her life when she was a child. Erenus lets the audience understand that Halide Edip had lost her mother when she was very young, and she rarely could spend time with her father, due to his work and his marriage with two women. Erenus represents Halide as a woman who lacks an idealized figure in her life who will answer all her questions for her. As Jessica Benjamin states,

The frequent occurrence of woman’s submission confirms the old idea that women enter into love relationships with men in order to acquire vicariously something they have not got within themselves. [...] This search for ideal love, the eroticization of submission in fantasy or reality, points us back to the problem of masochism. Underlying the wish for submission to an idealized other can be seen in the issues of

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<sup>25</sup> Halide: Şaka değil mi baba? Maskaralık, şaka? (Erenus 9)

<sup>26</sup> Halide’nin Yanıtsız Kalan İlk Soruları (Erenus 10)

<sup>27</sup> (*Baba yanıtlamaz. Halide babanın kucağından iner çaresiz.*) (Erenus 11)

<sup>28</sup> Halide: Ah baba, çocukluk sorularımın hiçbirini yanıtlayamadın sen. Güven içinde bir çocukluk yaşayabilseydim, gelişme çizğim çok daha başka olurdu belki. (Erenus 11)

<sup>29</sup> Cüce: Yapma Halide... Koskoca kadınsın... İnsan yaşamına yaklaşımda çaresiz kalmış psikologların aldatmacası o. Suçu ana babanda arama. (Erenus 11)

separation-individuation and self-other recognition. These issues, I shall demonstrate, are intricately bound up with the establishment of early gender identity and the search for an object of identification. Masochism, especially the variant I call ideal love, can be seen as an alienated attempt to resolve the difficulty of representing female desire – a difficulty that arises out of the tension between identifying with and separating from a desexualized mother, between wishing and being unable to identify with a father who stands for desire. Unable to create a representation of desire based on maternal identification, a sense of sexual agency that is active and feminine, the girl turns to idealizing love for a male figure who represents desire. (456-7)

Submission, as Benjamin declares, occurs due to women's need to fulfill their lack. In a similar way, since she lacks a mother, Halide's father becomes the ideal figure capable of fulfilling her incompleteness. However, due to his busy schedule and his insufficiency in answering Halide's questions, Halide begins her search for an alternative ideal father figure. Halide's search to find a person who would answer all her questions clearly disables her from finding her own answers. This can be seen in her remark "I will definitely find someone who will not leave my questions unanswered"<sup>30</sup> (Erenus 11). She obsessively searches for a man, to grant recognition to her questions, shortly herself. Karen Horney regards people who constantly require reassurance, affection, and attention through love as masochistic people. Horney describes the widespread masochistic trends in individuals as follows:

Being loved is the particular means of reassurance used by a masochistic person. As he has a rather free-floating anxiety, he needs constant signs of attention and affection, and as he never believes in these signs except momentarily, he has an excessive need for attention and affection. He is therefore, generally speaking, very emotional in his relations with people; easily attached because he expects them to give him the necessary reassurance; easily disappointed because he never gets, and never can get, what he expects. The expectation or illusion of the "great love" often plays an important role. (227)

Similarly, Bilgesu Erenus represents Halide as a woman who needs the assurance of being recognized. Halide's determined search for an ideal person who will answer her questions will turn into her search for an ideal object of identification, and a search for ideal love. In Erenus's depiction, unable to depend on her father's answering her questions and his love which she has to share with two other women, Halide will seek especially the attention of people around her. She will seek attention and reassurance

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<sup>30</sup> Halide: Sorularımı yanıtızsız bırakmayacak birini bulacağım mutlaka. (Erenus 11)

in her marriages and Mustafa Kemal, and will become disappointed easily. As Kate Millett explains, “The female is continually obliged to seek survival or advancement through the approval of males as those who hold power. She may do this through appeasement or through the exchange of her sexuality for support and status” (54). After her first marriage fails, Erenus will represent a Halide who will begin to forsake her femininity in exchange for approval, assurance, and attention of men. Not her fears, but her need for love and approval will be revealed as the sources of Halide’s mistakes.

Since the Dwarf advises Halide not to label her parents as the sources of her problems, Erenus seems to be establishing the Dwarf as the voice of reason in the play. However, the audience has been informed earlier that the Dwarf is the representation of Halide’s fears. Thus, Erenus seems to be creating a new kind of hero, who rather than defeating his/her fears, embraces these fears to be able to find his/her identity and reason. Although Halide Edip is represented by Erenus as a woman/heroine who has been able to face her fears to understand her own life, Halide Edip is only able to do this after she is resurrected from death. Halide’s reenactment of her life reveals to the audience how Halide pathetically wasted her life to find a person who would approve of her and answer her questions for her.

The next episode is titled “Halide Marries Someone Whom She Believes Will Answer Her Questions”<sup>31</sup> (Erenus 11). Halide Edip marries the manager of the observatory, a well educated mathematician Salih Zeki. Salih Zeki has a son from his previous marriage, and their marriage enables Halide Edip to become a step-mother. In this episode, the Dwarf will act the part of Halide’s step-son. Halide’s sudden marriage with a man, who is much older, has shocked her friends, who had regarded Halide as the only one among them unlikely to get married. As Halide introduces the Dwarf as her step-son to her friends, the Dwarf voices her uneasiness about her marriage by saying “Come on mommy, let’s build up our house. These impudent girls can gossip all they can”<sup>32</sup> (12). Bilgesu Erenus in the next episode titled “Halide’s

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<sup>31</sup> Halide Sorularımı Yanıtlayacağımı Sandığı Biriyle Evleniyor (Erenus 11)

<sup>32</sup> Cüce: Hadi anneciğim, biz evimizi kuralım. Bu arsız kızlar da rahat rahat dedikodularını yapsınlar. (Erenus 12)

Married Life or The Unanswered Questions Increase”<sup>33</sup> (12), reveals that Halide is very affected by what other people say about her, which proves her passion for approval. She immediately recalls one of her friends’ comments about her marriage. This girl says, “We are supposed to be the first graduates of the American College. It is not suitable. Halide married as our ancestors did”<sup>34</sup> (12). This girl regards the graduates of American College to be modern women, who would marry men of their own choices, rather than older men whom their grandmothers were forced by their fathers to marry. In this episode Erenus also emphasizes that Halide has become a full time homemaker taking care of children, cooking, and waiting for her husband to call her whenever he needs. She not only becomes the caretaker of her husband’s child, but also his personal assistant, helping with his studies, and typing all his notes. In this scene Erenus underlines Halide’s struggle to cook while her husband constantly calls her to help him. Erenus in the stage descriptions writes that Halide finds the papers her husband asks for. However, Salih Zeki, who has concentrated on his work, does not look at her face. Halide waits for some time in silence. Finally, Salih Zeki, who becomes irritated, looks at her. Halide asks, “If there is nothing else?” (13). Salih Zeki is lost in thoughts and cannot understand her. Thus Halide returns to her cooking.<sup>35</sup> Erenus is showing how Halide has surrendered herself to the service of her husband.

In the next episode which is titled “Halide’s Search for Herself”<sup>36</sup> (13), Erenus begins to show how Halide begins to question her marriage to Salih Zeki. In this section, she complains to herself about her husband’s attitude towards her mystical and spiritual beliefs. She states,

I do not know Salih Zeki. Am I comfortable when I am with you? How can you mock everything that does not enter the area of science? My head is about to explode. You invalidate all the mystical concepts of

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<sup>33</sup> Halide’nin Evlilik Hayatı ya da Yanıtsız Kalan Sorular Büyüyor (Erenus 12)

<sup>34</sup> 2. Kız: Söзде Amerikan Koleji’nin ilk mezunları olacağız. Hiç yaraştıramadım. Ninelerimiz gibi bir evlilik yaptı Halide. (Erenus 12)

<sup>35</sup> (Halide ekleri bulup verir. Salih Zeki onun yüzüne bakmaz hiç. Hızla işine koyulmuştur. Halide bir süre bekler. Salih Zeki tedirgin, başını kaldırır işinden.)

Halide: Başka bir isteğiniz yoksa?...

Salih Zeki: (Dalgın) Efendim?

(Halide pirinç tepsisine döner.) (Erenus 13)

<sup>36</sup> Halide’nin Kendini Arayışı (Erenus 13)

literature and art Rıza Tevfik had taught me. But what do you replace them with?<sup>37</sup> (13-14)

Finally, the Dwarf once again gives voice to her inner thoughts and observes that Salih Zeki is treating Halide as his secretary. He adds, “I wonder how long an ambitious woman like you will take this treatment”<sup>38</sup> (15). Halide agrees and states, “You are right. It is time for me to find a place for myself and my own thoughts within this marriage”<sup>39</sup> (15). In the next episode Bilgesu Erenus presents Halide’s first attempts to change the situation for her own benefit. Halide begins to translate *Hamlet* to Turkish. Salih Zeki’s first reaction shows that he is happy about Halide’s attempt, however, he immediately tells her what she must do while translating. Since Halide is intimidated by her husband’s criticism, she is embarrassed to share her translation with him. He begins to criticize her translation, and meanwhile he reveals his fear of mosquitoes. The mosquito becomes a metaphor for the spies, who will arrest them for criticizing the totalitarian Ottoman Empire.

In this part of the play, Erenus once again reveals Halide’s fear of being criticized by the people around her, and therefore her constant need for approval. Halide’s lack of trust in her own skills and personality discourages her from writing and even translating male texts at first. She sees herself as inferior and incapable in the male world, and fears criticism greatly. However, Erenus reveals that although patriarchy as represented by her husband tries to turn Halide into a secretary or a servant, Salih Zeki is also held under control by greater powers. As Halide translates Marcellus’s words in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, “Something is rotten in the state of Denmark” (I.IV.90), Halide Edip chooses to write “There is something rotten in the Empire of Denmark”<sup>40</sup> (Erenus 16), so that it echoes the Ottoman Empire. As Erenus explains in her stage descriptions, Salih Zeki becomes irritated, since there is no

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<sup>37</sup> Halide: Bilemiyorum Salih Zeki. Sizin yanınızda rahat mıyım, değil miyim, bilemiyorum. Düşünce alanına girmeyen her şeyle nasıl bu kadar kolaylıkla alay edebilirsiniz? Off başım çatlayacak gibi. Rıza Tevfik Hocadan edindiğim edebiyat ve sanat öğelerinin mistik yanlarını çökertiyorsunuz. Yerine koyduklarınız ne peki? (Erenus 13-14)

<sup>38</sup> Cüce: Babası, sana hep sekreteriymişsin gibi davranıyor ama. Senin gibi hırslı bir kadın bakalım daha ne kadar dayanabilir buna? (Erenus 15)

<sup>39</sup> Halide: Evet, kendime ve düşüncelerime yer açma zamanı geldi bu evlilikte. (Erenus 15)

<sup>40</sup> Halide: Danimarka İmparatorluğu’nda tefessüh eden bir şeyler var. (Erenus 16)

freedom of thought or speech in the Ottoman Empire at that time, but only the “terrorism of the State”<sup>41</sup> (18-19). The political situation not only suffocates Halide, but also Salih Zeki. Feeling that she cannot depend on her husband, who is as helpless as herself, Halide states, “If I was a mother I probably would not fear so much”<sup>42</sup> (21). Erenus underlines that Halide till this point in her life has not been able to feel safe and whole through her marriage. Not only is the political situation of her time, but also her marriage suffocates her. As Karen Horney explained earlier about attachments and disappointments, Erenus reveals that Halide’s early attachment to her math teacher has easily turned into a disappointment. Thus, Halide decides to have children, believing that this will make her feel worthy again. Therefore, Erenus is juxtaposing two aspects of Halide Edip at this point in the play. One is Halide as the homemaker, and the other is Halide as the politician. So far Erenus has tried to present that Halide is not happy being the homemaker, however, still at this point she feels the politics in the Ottoman Empire is suffocating her and refuses to become a part of it, so decides that becoming a mother will save her from these conflicts.

The next episode begins with the Dwarf threatening Halide, indicating that she will become one of the intellectuals who are wasted away by their fear every decade. Halide insists that when she becomes a mother, her fears will not control her any longer. However, Erenus reveals how Halide’s intense desire to become a mother causes her to become disappointed again. As soon as she becomes a mother, Halide understands that becoming a mother has not given her solitude. She states, “I have become a mother, then why am I not in ease? My head is about to explode...”<sup>43</sup> (22). Although she has given birth to her second child, she is still uneasy. She wants to stop the awful situation in her country. She wants her husband to become involved in politics to save the country. At this point, Erenus emphasizes that Halide is unable to find the courage in herself to work for the benefit of her people, since she is still expecting her husband to take action in saving the country. The Dwarf, as her fears, works to prove that the Turkish people do not have the power to change things for the better, because they fear change itself. However, Halide wants Salih Zeki and her

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<sup>41</sup> Salih Zeki: Devlet terörü bu, tam anlamıyla... (Erenus 18-19)

<sup>42</sup> Halide: Ana olsaydım bu kadar korkmazdım belki? (Erenus 21)

<sup>43</sup> Halide: Ana oldum ama, neden rahat değilim hala? Off, başım çatlayacak gibi... (Erenus 22)

father to say that it is possible to bring change to a resisting public. As if delirious, Halide moans as she begs the people of her nation “My sons, all my sons... Please tell him that we have the power to fight”<sup>44</sup> (24). Erenus represents a Halide who is uneasy because of the totalitarian regime in her country, however, since she has no trust in herself, she is merely waiting for someone to change things for the better.

Next Erenus portrays Halide in her gradual alienation from Salih Zeki and her role as the homemaker. The Dwarf enacts the role of the father of a Young Turk<sup>45</sup>, who is angry at his son for preaching freedom, since the public is not aware of the importance of freedom. At this point Constitutional Monarchy is declared. Halide is thrilled with joy. Salih Zeki and Halide decide to become the members of the Progress and Union Party<sup>46</sup>. However, Halide still fears that the Constitutional Monarchy is an ambush devised by the Ottoman rulers to imprison those who work for the progress of the empire. The Dwarf enacts the role of Sultan Abdülhamit II. As Abdülhamit, the Dwarf reveals he is only giving the illusion of freedom to ease the opposition. He states in an aside to Halide, “Just watch how they will become a herd, just like sheep!”<sup>47</sup> (33). The public, unaware of his motives, celebrates their fake freedom. At this point Salih Zeki changes his mind and declares that he will not apply to join the Progress and Union Party, rather he will go home. Although Halide knows that it is an ambush devised by the State, she is overjoyed to see the public acting in a unity in their celebrations. As she sings and dances with the public, she states, “Despite everything you cannot comprehend how happy I am”<sup>48</sup> (36). She wants to remain celebrating with the public, even though her husband has stated his wish to go home.

In this part of the play, Erenus clearly reveals that Halide needs to be a part of the public celebrating their freedom. She wants freedom and needs to take action to work for the benefit of her country. When Salih Zeki decides to join in the union as a

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<sup>44</sup> Halide: Oğullarım, bütün oğullarım... Mücadele gücümüz olduğunu söyleyin ona. (Erenus 24)

<sup>45</sup> A member of a reformist and a nationalist group in Turkey in the late 19th century. The Young Turk's (Jöntürk) rebelled against the totalitarianism of the Ottoman rulers.

<sup>46</sup> Progress and Union Party (İttihat ve Terakki Partisi) was founded illegally in 1889. They forced the Ottoman rule to accept the Constitutional Monarchy (Meşrutiyet) in 1908.

<sup>47</sup> Cüce: Birazdan sürülecekler, meeeee, izle! (Erenus 33)

<sup>48</sup> Halide: Her şeye rağmen, nasıl mutluyum, nasıl mutluyum, bilemezsin Salih Zeki... (Erenus 36)

party member, Halide Edip is overjoyed. However, even when her husband decides to stay out of the events, sensing that they are dubious, she decides to remain with the public. Erenus portrays a Halide who needs to be a part of a union, since there is a greater possibility of fulfilling her need for attention and approval within a larger group of people. By denying his request to go home and instead joining the public celebrations, Halide has renounced her husband as the only possible object of love. Erenus wants to show that Halide has finally noticed that Salih Zeki is unable to be her ideal love, who will answer all her questions and fulfill her desires. Furthermore, in this part, Halide decides to take an active part in the politics of her time by becoming a journalist. As she states “I must do something... I should do something... (*Unable to stand still*) Salih Zeki, do you suppose I can get a job working at the Tanin Newspaper?”<sup>49</sup> (37). Erenus presents Halide as a woman feeling suffocated in her home, however, when Halide is presented in the public, she forgets her uneasiness and becomes a part of the public, which she considers as a tight fist made out of people’s unity. Thus, she decides to take active action and becomes a journalist. She decides to use a pen, which is “a metaphorical penis” (Gilbert 3). As Gilbert and Gubar add, “Male sexuality, in other words, is not just analogically but actually the essence of literary power. The poet’s pen is in some sense (even more than figuratively) a penis” (4). In accordance with the argument raised by Gilbert and Gubar, as Halide assumes a role as a literary figure, she will gradually strip off her feminine sexuality in exchange for gaining literary power. Immediately, as she begins to work Erenus presents Halide Edip as a stronger person, who has some authority over the word belonging to the patriarchy. Halide states, “I need to write continuously. Maybe then I will fear less”<sup>50</sup> (Erenus 39). Bilgesu Erenus establishes the persistent pattern that a woman needs to become a part of something other than her family and husband. Women, according to Erenus, must function outside of their homes in order to feel whole and strong.

In the next section Halide is introduced in front of her typewriter contemplating on the dethronement of the Ottoman Sultan, Abdülhamit. She declares her pity for the

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<sup>49</sup> Halide: Ah, bir şeyler yapmalıyım... Bir şeyler yapmalıyım ben de. (*Yerinde duramaz sanki*) Tanin Gazetesi kadrosunda bana da yer verirler mi acaba Salih Zeki? (Erenus 37)

<sup>50</sup> Halide: Sürekli yazmam gerek. O zaman çok daha az korkacağım belki. (Erenus 39)

Sultan, and announces herself mad to still feel pity for his dethronement, since he has deserved it. The Dwarf mentions that she should feel pity for herself since as the Dwarf states, “Your husband is preparing to bring another woman to your house. And you have an unsigned letter”<sup>51</sup> (40). Salih Zeki, who is not content with Halide as a wife is allowed to marry three other women according to the marriage practices before the construction of the Republic of Türkiye. Halide remarks “it is his right to bring three more women to the house (according to the religious norms). However, I will not be in that house”<sup>52</sup> (41). As she begins to write, she feels more confident and is less intimidated by the unsigned threat letters she is receiving. As she uses her father’s last name to sign her article, she states, “I must learn not to fear the streets. I must stand on my own feet!”<sup>53</sup> (42). Erenus has highlighted the importance of autonomy as a necessary pattern in the identity formation of women.

As İstanbul is held under foreign military occupation, the Dwarf, dressed as a foreign soldier follows Halide to intimidate her. However, she is not scared. Her only pain is caused by her fear that Mother Earth, who represents the mothers of all Turkish revolutionist fighters, will be harmed and dirtied in the hands of the foreign intruders. Thus, Halide states, “Please do not consider these brave, innocent people accountable for the crimes of the feet that violated you, the hands that hurt you, tore and polluted you, the traitors who gnawed at your bones”<sup>54</sup> (43). As a woman, she regards her country as a mother, who suffers most from the foreign military occupation. At this point her father comes in asking if she is all right, and her immediate reply is that she has been very busy. She states “I am so busy these days... I must admit, at times I neglect the sons. I still have not made some long pants for Hikmet”<sup>55</sup> (43). Erenus emphasizes that Halide’s duty to her children is in conflict with her duty to her country. Erenus represents Halide as a woman who is suffering

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<sup>51</sup> Cüce: Kocan eve yeni bir kadın getirme hazırlığında. Ha bir de imzasız mektubun var. (Erenus 40)

<sup>52</sup> Halide: İsterse üç kadın daha getirebilir, yasal hakkı. Ama ben olmayacağım o evde. (Erenus 41)

<sup>53</sup> Halide: Sokaktan korkmamayı öğrenmeliyim artık. Kendi ayaklarımın üzerinde durmayı da! (Erenus 42)

<sup>54</sup> Halide: Seni çiğneyip geçen ayakların, seni yaralayıp, tırmıklayıp, kirleten haydut ellerin, senin kemiklerini kemiren hainlerin kötülüklerini, bu mert, bu suçsuz, kuşaklardan sorma...” (Erenus 43)

<sup>55</sup> Halide: Bu ara öyle koşuşturuyorum ki... İtiraf edeyim, oğulları ihmal ettiğim de oluyor. Hâlâ uzun bir pantolon dikemedim Hikmet’e. (Erenus 43)

due to her divided loyalties, since she has no one to help her accomplish both duties. As Halide states, “I am not only tired, I am confused. There are times when I am fed up with everything. But who in this occupied İstanbul is in a better condition?”<sup>56</sup> (43). Thus, Dr. Adnan is introduced into the play. Halide describes him as a calm person, who is the same age as her. Halide’s father remarks “You needed someone like Adnan. You seem to be very excited over the last few days. Please be careful Halide!”<sup>57</sup> (43). Bilgesu Erenus represents Halide’s growing tension in the face of the situation of her country, which has contributed to her growing anxiety. She has become an active participant in her country’s affairs; and thus, is in need of someone to support her. Erenus presents Dr. Adnan as this person who will ease her tension, rather the person who will answer all her questions, as she had expected first her father, and later Salih Zeki to do. For this reason, her marriage to Dr. Adnan will continue, since he is not expected to have all the answers to Halide’s questions. As Halide explains, Dr. Adnan “does not like to fight much. He is an easygoing and a peaceful person”<sup>58</sup> (43). Dr. Adnan will be Halide’s soul mate, rather than her soul maker. Erenus is highlighting the idea that for a marriage to persevere, women must find the questions they seek by themselves, rather than hoping that their husbands would answer them.

Erenus presents a Halide who disguises her own search for identity, her need for belonging to a group, in the embodiment of her struggle to find an identity suitable for the establishment of a new Türkiye. While İstanbul is being occupied by foreign powers, Halide tries to contribute to the struggle of independence in any possible way. However, her memberships in national associations like the Turkish Hearth reveal to be very disappointing, because they ignore Halide’s insistence on including the foreign minorities in these associations. Other associations, such as the Village Hearth Association, and Wilson’s Principles Association, that seem to be working for the benefit of the country gradually expose the true intentions of their hope for the country to become a mandate of America. Her insistence on the equality of minorities,

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<sup>56</sup> Halide: Yalnızca yorgun değil, şaşkıyım. Canımdan bezdiğim de oluyor bazen. Ama kim benden daha iyi ki baba, bu işgal İstanbul’unda?” (Erenus 43)

<sup>57</sup> Baba: Böyle birine ihtiyacın vardı. Seni çok heyecanlı görüyorum son günlerde. Dikkatli ol Halide! (Erenus 43)

<sup>58</sup> Halide: Kavgayı pek sevmiyor. Rahat ve dingin bir insan. (Erenus 43)

and her memberships in various associations supporting the mandate of America, result in her being labeled as Halide the 'Lover of Mandate'. Concerning her role in the formation of Wilson's Principles Association, Halide states,

Much later they used that against me! As if we established the link between America and Türkiye through this association. I do not know. I will not try to defend myself on this issue. However, I still do not doubt the good intentions behind the initiation principles of that organization. Wilson's Principles Association was on America's side... How about the Village Heart Association?<sup>59</sup> (48)

In Erenus's play, as Halide remembers these events, she tries to get herself to believe that she did everything with good intentions. The Dwarf reminds Halide of her obstinacy in the equality of minorities, although the minorities began to treat the majority of the people with disrespect after İstanbul's occupation by foreign powers. She agrees that she was inflexible about her thoughts about freedom for all, Halide remarks, "I did not change my mind even in the worst periods of the War of Independence. This is because; peace in the Middle East and in the world depends on the siblinghood of the people"<sup>60</sup> (50). Halide realizes that during the time of peace, it is the governments that spread seeds of hatred among the people for their own benefits. Unfortunately, Bilgesu Erenus's Halide understands this as she is trying to find her own identity after her death. Thus, she realizes that although she did everything with good intentions, she was misunderstood by the public due to her involvement with such associations. Consequently, Erenus argues in the play that being misunderstood, and therefore not being approved make Halide come back to life. Her returning from death also suggests Halide's masochistic need for approval. Halide's ideas about the survival of the Turkish people through becoming the mandate of America once again highlights her search for approval and submission to an idealized other, since becoming a mandate is an exchange of individuality for support and status. Erenus underlines the idea that Halide Edip's search for identity / totality, under the disguise of her search for an identity for the new nation, led her to seek

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<sup>59</sup> Halide: Çok sonra, nasıl aleyhime kullandılar bunu! Sözde Amerika ile Türkiye'nin ilk bağlantısını bu yolla sağlamışız. Bilemiyorum. Kendimi savunacak değilim bu konuda. Kuruluş aşamasındaki iyi niyetimizden hâlâ hiç kuşum yok ama. Wilson Prensipleri Derneği, Amerikancı idi... Ya Köy Ocakları Derneği neydi peki? (Erenus 48)

<sup>60</sup> Halide: Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın en kızgın anında bile dönmedim düşüncelerimden. Ortadoğu ve dünyada huzur, halkların kardeşliğine bağlı çünkü. (Erenus 50)

wholeness in various associations; however, she had to first stand on her own feet to realize her own and her nation's entirety.

In the next section of the play, the audience finds the Dwarf disguised as the spy who is watching Halide's house. She is constantly being controlled by the foreign mosquitoes. With the knowledge that her house is being watched, Halide Edip, who has begun to teach Western Languages in a college, prepares her course notes, and her new husband Dr. Adnan tries to help her as much as he can. However, her occupation seems to have influenced her life in the house badly. As she speaks on the phone with her father, she still continues working on her studies. As the stage directions read, "Halide pulls the phone cord as close as she can get to her desk. As she speaks to her father, she is editing her essay"<sup>61</sup> (51). She cannot spare time for her children, and although her husband is coughing violently, she is not stopping to help him with some medicine. As she remembers her family, the Dwarf states, "You finally remembered that you are a mother and a wife"<sup>62</sup> (52). Since Erenus presents the Dwarf as Halide's subconscious, at this point Halide begins to question her motherhood and her being a wife. As portrayed by Erenus, in her first marriage, Halide had become her husband's puppet at first, and as soon as she had begun to take control of her own life, the marriage had collapsed. However, now Erenus introduces the audience to a new Halide, who is making a puppet of her husband by making him look after the children, answer all the phones, and rub her neck.

Erenus is depicting a Halide who is incapable of finding her identity, which leads her to adapt various different characteristic qualities in her life. As one can see through her two marriages, she is first the archetypal submissive housewife, and later becomes the controlling working woman. This shift in character suggests Halide's inability to assume her own personal development, and foreshadows extended problems for the individual. As Kate Millett states, "Patriarchal circumstances and beliefs seem to have the effect of poisoning the female's own sense of physical self until it often truly becomes the burden it is said to be" (47). Halide's participation in the patriarchal world endangers her feminine self which neither of her husbands can satisfy. Horney states that "women who are ambitious for themselves and who always

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<sup>61</sup> (*Halide telefonun kordonunu yettiğince masaya çeker. Babasıyla konuşurken bir yandan da gerekli düzeltmeleri yapmakta yazısında.*) (Erenus 51)

<sup>62</sup> Cüce: Sonunda bir ana ve ev kadını olduğunu hatırlayabildin. (Erenus 52)

want to be on top, yet who do not dare to realize these ambitious dreams, instead expect their husbands to fulfill these wishes for them” (124). Salih Zeki was a failure in fulfilling her desires, thus in her second marriage Halide unconsciously becomes motivated by her own masculine attitude, which she obtains through her occupations as a journalist and a lecturer. However, such women who are overruled by their own masculine attitudes, as Karen Horney adds,

also harbor a desire for a strong brutal male who will take them by force. Therefore, they will hold against the husband his inability to live up to both sets of expectations and will secretly despise him for his weakness. (124)

Dr. Adnan seems to be a better companion for Halide, who can give the affection, and the approval she needs. However, Erenus makes it clear that Halide’s search for the strong, brutal male figure has not ended.

In the next part, Halide finally becomes a member of the secret organization to save the country. As she joins the organization, the Dwarf stays behind indicating that he does not know the password. Erenus is showing that Halide’s fears as revealed in the embodiment of the Dwarf stop functioning as she finally manages to take part in what she believes to be a true cause. She will be writing down all the public speeches given during the National Struggle. As Halide becomes a public speaker, she no longer fears. The Dwarf tries to intimidate her by making sounds like an English fighter aircraft ready to throw bombs at her: however, Halide says “As if a wild bumblebee is buzzing! How all fears become pitiful and funny in such times”<sup>63</sup> (Erenus 60). She has united herself with the public during her oration and she knows that “light will shine most when the darkness seems eternal”<sup>64</sup> (61). Erenus emphasizes that as Halide becomes a part of the public with whom she shares the same hopes, she grows further away from her fears.

When Halide and Dr. Adnan receive Mustafa Kemal’s invitation for them to join him in Amasya, Halide Edip articulates her admiration for Mustafa Kemal right next to her husband. Erenus foreshadows the problems Halide will live, with these words

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<sup>63</sup> Halide: Bir yaban arısı vızıldıyor sanki! Böylesi anlarda nasıl zavallılaşıp, gülünç duruma düşüyor tüm korkular. (Erenus 60)

<sup>64</sup> Halide: Gece en karanlık ve ebedi görüldüğünde... Gün ışığı, gün ışığı... Biliniz ki en yakındır gün ışığı... (Erenus 61)

Halide utters about Mustafa Kemal; “Did you ever see him Dr. Adnan? I saw him once in Bab-ı âli. He looked exactly like a lighthouse”<sup>65</sup> (68). Once again, Erenus reveals that Halide will see a man as the source of light, in this case knowledge, who will answer all her questions. However, before she takes her journey to meet Mustafa Kemal, she makes sure her children will be sent to America if something unfortunate happens to her. She also takes poison with her in case she is caught, since there is a Sultan’s decree that together with other six people, Halide Edip will be executed if she is caught. Act One closes as the stage directions read, “the Dwarf dresses Halide in execution clothes”<sup>66</sup> (79). Up to this point in the play Bilgesu Erenus reveals a persistent pattern where becoming involved in the greater good of the public, diminishes one’s fears. In such a representation, Halide Edip becomes a sacrificial victim echoing the personification of Jesus Christ sacrificing himself for the good of his people. Thus, the irony in the secret code, “Jesus Sent Us”<sup>67</sup> (71), becomes clear. The ones fighting for the welfare of their nation are the messengers of Jesus, ready to sacrifice themselves like Jesus Christ if necessary. Under such circumstances, Erenus treats Halide Edip as Jesus Christ, and therefore, elevates the historical figure of Halide Edip Adıvar into a mythic realm.

As the Second Act opens, Halide is still wearing her execution dress. She has passed to the Anatolian side to join Mustafa Kemal. Dr. Adnan and Halide have been traveling separately due to safety reasons, since their journey is long, and dangerous. Halide, on this journey to Amasya, meets many nice people and she discovers that she has many followers, who approve of her and try to make her as comfortable as she would be in her own house. The present situation builds no fear for Halide. Even if her life were in great danger, she does not have fear, because, her people have proved that they are devoted to the establishment of an independent Türkiye. As Halide states, her only fear is “Not the revolution, but its aftermath”<sup>68</sup> (88). Erenus represents Halide as a woman, who is taking a very hard, and a dangerous journey to help establish a

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<sup>65</sup> Halide: Onu hiç yakından gördünüz mü Doktor Adnan? Ben bir kez, Bab-ı âli’de gördüm. Tıpkı bir deniz fenerine benziyordu. (Erenus 68)

<sup>66</sup> (*Cüce, idam giysisini Halide’nin üstüne geçirivermiştir.*) (Erenus 79)

<sup>67</sup> Halide: Bizi İsa yolladı! (Erenus 71)

<sup>68</sup> Halide: İhtilaller değil ama, sonrası hep korkuttu beni. (Erenus 88)

new republic for her people. She is released of her fears in the sense that she no longer cares about her own welfare, but values the welfare of the people more. She has dedicated herself to a cause, and thus, her individuality has turned into collectivity, which is a matriarchal idiosyncrasy. As soon as she leaves her individuality behind, she knows that she will not bear problems alone. However, Erenus gradually reveals that this collectivity within her turns into dependence and submission as she identifies Mustafa Kemal with a lighthouse, and upon seeing him states, “The little girl inside of me, has finally found her owner”<sup>69</sup> (96). Halide Edip as created by Erenus will intentionally yield herself to the cause Mustafa Kemal fights for. Erenus tries to point out that Halide, by submitting to Mustafa Kemal as the strong male she had been hoping to find, forgets that Mustafa Kemal’s cause to save the country was the same cause she herself has been struggling to achieve. Later, the Dwarf demands that he should play the role of Mustafa Kemal with these words, “If you fear Mustafa Kemal, I can also act in his role. Were not I your fears?”<sup>70</sup> (96). However, Halide refuses it by denying ever fearing Mustafa Kemal, but remarks that rather than fear, it was a kind of respect she had felt for him. At this moment, Halide shivers and adds, “I do not think it was fear”<sup>71</sup> (96). With these words Erenus once again reveals Halide’s inner apprehension about Mustafa Kemal. In addition to this, rather than the Dwarf or any other human being, Erenus makes a light source represent Mustafa Kemal on stage. Thus, Halide rather than seeing Mustafa Kemal as a human, perceives him as a source of light, somehow like a god. Bilgesu Erenus seems to be revealing that Halide perceives Mustafa Kemal as the ideal figure who will answer all her questions.

As Halide begins working for Mustafa Kemal, she learns that her house in İstanbul has been occupied. Her life is in crucial danger, since bringing the heads of Mustafa Kemal and his collaborators has been announced as a religious duty by the Sultan. At the headquarters Mustafa Kemal asks all of them about their thoughts on the order of the execution the Sultan has announced for them. While everyone worries that this order of execution will put them out of favor, Halide believes that this

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<sup>69</sup> Halide: İçimdeki bu küçük kız, ilk kez sahibini buldu sanırım. (Erenus 96)

<sup>70</sup> Cüce: Mustafa Kemal’den korkuyorsan, onu da ben oynayabilirim. Ben senin korkuların değil miydin hani? (Erenus 96)

<sup>71</sup> Halide: Yani korktuğumu sanmıyorum. (Erenus 96)

execution will make them more popular. In addition to this, she gives a romantic view of her execution when she comments that during the execution she wants to shout to the world “raise my feet so that I can see the world from a better view”<sup>72</sup> (98-99). Furthermore, as Mustafa Kemal says his decision to open the Parliament, Halide murmurs “Ministry of Education”<sup>73</sup> (99), which Mustafa Kemal hears. Upon this, Halide becomes quite stressed and states,

I did not say a thing like that... I am sure you misunderstood me when I said the execution will make us more popular. Please do not confuse me with the others. From İstanbul to Erzurum, there is a road built with blood. To die silently for a free and an independent country is the greatest reward for me. I have the necessary power for this.<sup>74</sup> (99)

Erenus emphasizes that Halide greatly fears Mustafa Kemal and seeks his approval. In addition to this, her previous definition of Mustafa Kemal as a “lighthouse”<sup>75</sup> (68), suggests her dependency on him to lead her to safety, or to show her the right way. The phallic image of the lighthouse indicates that Halide seeks refuge, dependency, and affection from patriarchal measures. Thus, at this point in the play, Erenus portrays Halide as a woman in her “neurotic need for love” (Horney 245), assumes Mustafa Kemal to be the one who will recognize, help, advise, and support her.

Next, Halide and Mustafa Kemal have a conversation, where Mustafa Kemal clearly states, “I do not want any criticism, or opinions! Only total submission to my orders”<sup>76</sup> (Erenus 105). At this point Erenus represents Mustafa Kemal as the patriarchal order which is the “original model of oppression” (Rich 483), where women are unheard, unseen, and marginalized. Upon this the dialogue continues:

Halide: As long as you serve the national struggle, I will always obey you.  
- You will always obey my orders.

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<sup>72</sup> Halide: Ayaklarımı yerden kaldırım ki, yüksekte dünyayı daha iyi görebileyim. (Erenus 98-99)

<sup>73</sup> Halide: Maarif Vekilliği! (Erenus 99)

<sup>74</sup> Halide: (*Telaşlı*) Hayır, böyle bir şey söylemedim ben... Demin idam hükmü ünümüzü arttıracak derken beni yanlış anladığınızdan emindim zaten. Lütfen beni başkalarıyla karıştırmayınız! İstanbul’dan Erzurum’a değin, kanlı bir yol var ülkemde. Özgür ve bağımsız bir ülke için tüm inanmışlar gibi sessizce can vermek yeterli bir ödüldür bana. Gerekli gücüm var buna! (Erenus 99)

<sup>75</sup> Halide: . Tıpkı bir deniz fenerine benziyordu. (Erenus 68)

<sup>76</sup> Mustafa Kemal’in sesi: Ben hiçbir tenkit, hiçbir fikir istemiyorum! Yalnızca emirlerimin ifasını... (Erenus 105)

(Halide in awe. She moves her chair away from him.)  
Halide: Is this a threat, general?  
(The Dwarf laughs.)  
- Unlikely. I would never threaten you.<sup>77</sup> (Erenus 106)

Erenus reveals how Halide is intimidated and confused upon such a request of total submission to orders. For this reason, Halide decides to occupy a more feminine job, and becomes a nurse away from the battlefield where Mustafa Kemal resides. As she desperately tries to save lives in the hospital, she learns that her first husband Salih Zeki has died and she remembers her sons, who are somewhere in America. Erenus presents a Halide who is unable to find ease in motherhood and powerless in the face of death as a nurse. For this reason, Halide decides to go back to the battlefield, and becomes a soldier serving Mustafa Kemal. Mustafa Kemal invites her to the battlefield and Halide once again starts to admire him while she sees him fighting in Kocatepe. After this battle, she is appointed as a corporal in the Turkish military, and soon she becomes the Chief of War Crime Investigations. She decides to investigate the crimes conducted by both Greek and Turkish soldiers. She once again remarks that she does not believe in the culpability of people, she states that “only governments”<sup>78</sup> (113) are to be blamed for the cruelty of war. Very soon, the war is over and Mustafa Kemal orders Halide to join them on their way to İzmir. Halide refuses to enter İzmir with the victory troops, since she is supposed to be the objective investigator of War Crimes. However, once again Mustafa Kemal forces her to follow his orders and to join them. Erenus is also highlighting how Mustafa Kemal appreciates Halide Edip’s skills and wisdom, and in return constantly requires her support and approval. Erenus thus, breaks the stereotypical image of the submissive women in her rewriting of Halide Edip’s story.

The next section is entitled “Halide has to face her fears alone on the Wharf of İzmir”<sup>79</sup> (114). As Halide congratulates Mustafa Kemal on his victory, he says that he

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<sup>77</sup> Halide: Milli maksada hizmet ettiğiniz sürece, size daima itaat edeceğim.  
- Benim emirime daima itaat edeceksiniz hanımefendi!  
(Halide şaşkınlık içindedir. Koltuğunu uzaklaştırır.)  
Halide: Bu bir tehdit mi paşam?  
(Cüce’nin kıkırdaması...)  
- Teessüf ederim hanımefendi. Ben sizi hiçbir zaman tehdit etmem. (Erenus 106)

<sup>78</sup> Halide: Suçlu milletlerin varlığına inanmıyorum ben. Olsa olsa hükümetler... (Erenus 113)

<sup>79</sup> Halide İzmir Rıhtımı’nda Korkusu ile Yalnız Başına Kalacak (Erenus 114)

has met a young lady named Latife. He says that she carries his picture on her neck on a gold chain, and that she is in love with him. Upon this the stage directions write, “Stage becomes a scarlet color”<sup>80</sup> (115). Erenus reveals that Halide is disappointed once again. Halide’s initial act is to call for her dog for support, whose name “Yoldaş” could be translated as “companion” or “comrade”. Her disappointment is unbearable; however, Mustafa Kemal wants her to say something about his news. He adds that Latife is the daughter of a well-off family, she has recently returned from Paris, and that she is twenty-four years old. Halide with a shaking voice comments “all the Turkish women are wearing your picture on their neck these days... However, I do not know whether they carry it on a gold chain or not”<sup>81</sup> (115). Mustafa Kemal explains that he will introduce Latife to Halide the next day, and hopes that she will like Latife. Then he orders, “You must like her”<sup>82</sup> (115). This, once again reveals Mustafa Kemal’s need for approval from Halide. However, Halide takes this as a threat and embraces the Dwarf, who is acting the part of her dog Yoldaş. She states that she feels closer to the dog than to any human being at that moment. As she notices the scarlet color of the air, she says “This cannot be the fire in me”<sup>83</sup> (115). The Dwarf observes that it is the Greeks burning everything before they leave İzmir. Although Erenus makes it clear that Halide is also burning inside due to losing Mustafa Kemal to another woman, Halide denies being in love with Mustafa Kemal. She states, “No, I do not think it was love. Maybe some sort of an admiration... Maybe a sigh”<sup>84</sup> (116). Then she adds “He did not perceive me as a woman anyway. (*Laughs*) My boots, military coat... Maybe I am not a very beautiful woman... But my eyes...”<sup>85</sup> (116). The Dwarf states “You are right to love him, because compared

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<sup>80</sup> (*Bankın da içinde bulunduğu mabedi, bir kızıllık kaplar.*) (Erenus 115)

<sup>81</sup> Halide: Şu günlerde bütün Türkiyeli kadınların koynunda sizin resminiz var Mustafa Kemal... Ama altın zincirli mi, bilemem? (Erenus 115)

<sup>82</sup> Mustafa Kemal’in sesi: Yarın onu sizinle tanıştıracığım hanımefendi. Mutlaka seveceksiniz. Sevmelisiniz. (Erenus 115)

<sup>83</sup> Halide: Şu anda, sana, bütün insanlardan daha yakın hissediyorum kendimi. Bu kızıllık ne böyle? İçimdeki yangın olamaz... (Erenus 115)

<sup>84</sup> Halide: Hayır, sevgi olduğunu sanmıyorum. Bir çeşit hayranlık... Belki bir göğüs geçirme. (Erenus 116)

<sup>85</sup> Halide: Bana pek kadın gözüyle bakmadı zaten. (*Güler*) Çizmelerim, kaputum... Çok güzel bir kadın değilim belki... Ama gözlerim... (Erenus 116)

to Salih Zeki and Dr. Adnan, Mustafa Kemal is an activist and a strong person”<sup>86</sup> (116). Halide agrees by saying that he saved the pride of his country, and they owe him greatly. However, like a revolutionary, she adds that she too is devoted to her pride. The Dwarf adds, “Maybe that is why you are alone? He found you too strong, too independent”<sup>87</sup> (117). Erenus tries to show that Halide’s past disappointments have led her to develop a mask that hides her femininity.

As Halide states “he did not perceive me as a woman anyway” (116), Erenus makes Halide realize that she does not resemble a woman any longer. Kate Millett contemplates on the issue of femininity with these words, “Patriarchal circumstances and beliefs seem to have the effect of poisoning the female’s own sense of physical self” (47). In Erenus’s portrayal of Halide, Halide’s mistakes turn out to be an outcome of her “exchange of her sexuality for support or status” (Millett 54). Erenus represents a Halide, whose fear of disapproval has led her to seek patriarchal figures for attachment. Unable to trust her own self, Halide constantly becomes disappointed, because whatever she does, she is never fully approved by the male gender, who expect women to have virtues such as “compliance, [and] reticence” (Gilbert 600). Although Mustafa Kemal appreciates Halide’s strength and always wants her to support and approve him, when it comes to marriage, he would also require a compliant and a reticent woman. Thus, Erenus is building the persistent pattern that whatever they do women can never obtain the full approval they need from a male community. At this point, Erenus is also emphasizing the idea that the patriarchal society destroys its chances for advancement by making women feel inferior and incomplete. Therefore, patriarchy cannot benefit fully from the intelligence of women.

In addition, under the circumstances of war she has been in, she does not have a chance to experience female bonding either. Even when Mustafa Kemal’s soon to be bride Latife presents Halide a chance for female bonding, Halide refuses. When Halide meets Latife, it turns out that as a student Latife, who is much younger than Halide, had taken Halide’s courses. Thus, Latife respects Halide very much, and gives a toast to her benefit, since Halide was her instructor. Halide says that she needs to leave immediately to finish her work and refuses to bond with Latife. When the Dwarf

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<sup>86</sup> Cüce: Onu sevmekte yerden göğe kadar haklısın Halide. Salih Zeki, Doktor Adnan’dan sonra, böylesine eylemci ve güçlü bir insan!... (Erenus 116)

<sup>87</sup> Cüce: Belki bu yüzden yalnızlığın? Fazla kişilikli buldu seni, fazla bağımsız? (Erenus 117)

asks what she thinks about Latife, Halide replies condescendingly, “just as I had hoped, very appealing”<sup>88</sup> (Erenus 118). Then the Dwarf reminds her of what she had said in the beginning of the play: she was not going to sulk, or be appalled when she re-enacted her life. However, Halide changes the subject and this proves that she cannot resist the feeling of disappointment in Mustafa Kemal for being with someone else.

As Halide changes the subject, she remembers the poems Nazım Hikmet wrote. However, the Dwarf reads one of Nazım’s poems which he wrote about those who tried to surrender Türkiye to the American mandate. As the Dwarf ruthlessly states that this poem was written for Halide, she answers “No, no, I cannot bear the whole blame on my own!”<sup>89</sup> (119). The Dwarf states that he pities Halide and declares “I am tired of your search for an owner! I am the only one who owns you, Halide. You know it!”<sup>90</sup> (119). Erenus allows the Dwarf to take over the stage, since Halide still has not found her answers. The Dwarf will give a party on the stage, and all Halide must do is to agree with everything the Dwarf and his followers say, if she wants to stay with them. Here, Erenus is criticizing the ones who cannot accept criticism. At this point, Dr. Adnan comes to take Halide to England, France, or America, since neither Mustafa Kemal, nor the public wants them in the country for their support of the American mandate.

As Halide leaves the stage, various guests come onto the stage. As stated earlier, the guests represent the Turkish people living between 1923 and 1985. Halide re-enters wearing a collage of the costumes she had worn throughout the play. The Dwarf is confused to see her, and asks her, “Were you not going to Europe with your husband to write your memoirs?”<sup>91</sup> (120). In the introduction to *Memoirs of Halide Edip*, Hülya Adak states, “Halide Edip and Dr. Adnan’s self-imposed exile to the United Kingdom and to France began in 1925 and ended in 1938, after Mustafa Kemal’s death” (xiii). Bilgesu Erenus, by enabling Halide to resurrect like Jesus

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<sup>88</sup> Halide: Umduğum gibi... Çok cazip! (Erenus 118)

<sup>89</sup> Halide: Hayır, hayır, tek başıma bu sonucu yüklenemem ben! (Erenus 119)

<sup>90</sup> Cüce: Ah, bıktım ama senin bu sahip aramandan! Senin tek sahibin benim Halide, biliyorsun! (Erenus 119)

<sup>91</sup> Cüce: Kocanla Avrupa’ya kaçıp, İngilizce anılarını yazmayacak mıydın sen? (Erenus 120)

Christ, gives Halide a second chance to evaluate her life with the help of the Dwarf. In her second chance, after evaluating her whole life beginning from her childhood, Halide decides to change only one thing in her life. She decides not to exile herself from Türkiye this time. She remains among the people, and does not run away. Erenus presents a picture where Halide Edip remains in her country rather than running away in exile.

As Halide comes back to the stage, ready to face the people of Türkiye, all the guests scorn her for supporting the mandate of America, and daring to come back to Türkiye only after Mustafa Kemal's death. Halide answers them by indicating that unlike some other Turks she never praised Mustafa Kemal, and then condemned him behind locked doors or in mosques. She cannot believe how people had distorted her temple, her name. Halide states, "This is not the history I contributed to"<sup>92</sup> (Erenus 121). She cannot believe how corrupt people have become and she questions the chaos in the 1930s, 50s, 60s, and 70s. Despite all the chaos in the country, people had not changed one bit. The Dwarf tells her that she had died in 1964. Halide denies dying, as she states, "Death is a kind of solitude. How can I die when I have so many unanswered questions on my mind?"<sup>93</sup> (122). Erenus fuses resurrection with apprehension, as she presents Halide Edip's resurgence. Thus, Erenus establishes resurrection as a persistent pattern that is evoked when the distressed woman revives to find answers to her questions.

Halide, in her resurrected self, decides to give a speech to the guests. As she talks about the importance of education, the guests mock her as Erenus states in her stage descriptions, "The people at the party seem to be making fun of an old person. Giggling and joking..."<sup>94</sup> (122). Halide, as if speaking in a public meeting, states "Now swear with me, repeat my words. We will adhere to the principles of humanity and justice. [...] We will never yield to any power, whatever the circumstances are"<sup>95</sup> (122-23). At this moment, Halide begins to take off the costumes she is wearing. She

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<sup>92</sup> Halide: Hayır, hayır, benim oluşumuna katıldığım tarih bu değil, olamaz! (Erenus 121)

<sup>93</sup> Halide: Ölüm mutlak bir dinginliktir. Nasıl ölebilirim bunca soru yanıtlanmamışken kafamda? (Erenus 122)

<sup>94</sup> (*Bayramcılar bir bunakla eğlenir gibidirler. Gizli saklı gülüşmeler...*) (Erenus 122)

<sup>95</sup> Halide: Şimdi benimle yemin ediniz, tekrarlayınız! İnsanlık ve adalet esaslarına bağlı kalacağız! [...] Hangi şartlar altında olursa olsun, hiçbir kuvvete boyun eğmeyeceğiz. (Erenus 122-23)

claims, “Independence is something like love, which you must earn everyday over and over again”<sup>96</sup> (123), as she says these she takes off her cape and tears off her military ranks. The guests can no longer laugh at her, but watch her with amazement. Halide continues, “Just as we seek love everyday and lose it, we seek independence and lose it everyday”<sup>97</sup> (123). As she says these, Halide tears off her execution clothes, her college blouse, and her boots. Halide adds, “The fight for independence never ends. The independent spaces never find solitude”<sup>98</sup> (123). She stands naked, and demands, “Go on and judge me!”<sup>99</sup> (123). She opens her arms like Jesus Christ on the cross and claims, “Jesus sent me!”<sup>100</sup> (123). Her last posture, naked and her arms open, as if she were on a cross, implies her identification with Jesus Christ. Just like Christ, Halide will sacrifice herself for the sake of her people, because the Turkish war of Independence is not over yet. She sees that the public, who was blind to the requirement of independence back in her time, is still blind. Although she too was blind to the requirements of independence, as she supported the mandate of America and sought constant approval from the male gender, she finally realizes the importance of independence. Erenus’s Halide understands that running away from criticism is also a means of self-imprisonment, and unlike the historical Halide Edip Adivar, Erenus makes Halide stay in her country to face the criticisms. Her statement repeating the password they used during the war “Jesus sent me,” suggests that the war of independence is not over, and that the public should be made aware of it.

Erenus emphasizes that one must know the importance of freedom, and free speech. Running away in exile to seek independence is only a selfish motive. Erenus makes it clear that Halide Edip should have stayed in Türkiye to fight for the things she thought were right. As Hülya Adak wrote, the reasons why Halide Edip and Dr. Adnan chose exile are not clear. However, Adak adds,

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<sup>96</sup> Halide: Hürriyet, öyle bir şeydir ki hürriyet! (*Pelerinini çıkarır*) Tıpkı aşk gibi! (*Onbaşı şeridini söker*) Her gün yeni baştan... (*Hilal-i ahmer önlüğü*) Her gün yeni baştan kazanılması gerek. (Erenus 123)

<sup>97</sup> Halide: Nasıl her gün aşk istersek... (İdam gömleği) ve kaybedersek... (Etekliği) Hürriyeti de öyle ister... (Kolejli bluzu) Ve kaybederiz... (Çizmeleri) (Erenus 123)

<sup>98</sup> Halide: Hürriyet kavgası bitmez hiç! Hürriyet alanı asla sükûn bulmaz! (Erenus 123)

<sup>99</sup> Halide: Hadi yargılayın beni! (Erenus 123)

<sup>100</sup> Halide: (*Kollarını kaldırır çarmıhta gibi*) Beni İsa Yolladı! (Erenus 123)

The most probable cause was the establishment of the single-party regime of Mustafa Kemal, the Republican People's Party, and the closing of the opposition party, The Progressive Republican Party, whose founding members included Dr. Adnan. After the establishment of the Republic, Halide Edip was severely attacked in newspapers for propagating the American mandate and for her association with the Wilsonian League in 1919. When asked in 1924 which party she supported, Edip responded unhesitatingly that she did not support any party that did not give political suffrage to women, making clear that she supported none of the parties. Mustafa Kemal has often been heralded as a feminist, but, in 1923, much to Edip's chagrin, he refused to grant the long-promised political vote to women. Political suffrage was finally granted by Kemal himself in 1934. (xiii)

Halide Edip chose to run away, rather than to remain in the lands she fought so hard to retain. Erenus represents Halide's separation from Mustafa Kemal not only as an act of resistance to patriarchy, but also a result of unrequited love. Mustafa Kemal is also unable to answer Halide's questions. Thus, the Dwarf claims that he is her only owner; her fears are the stimuli that lie underneath her motives. At the final scene Halide is able to strip off all the images attributed to her by the patriarchal society. As Kate Millett states, "The image of women as we know it is an image created by men and fashioned to suit their needs" (46). As Halide reclaims her identity, she stands tall and tells the people to judge her now. Halide, who had sought approval in exchange for her sexuality, now stands among the public as a woman, and states the military password, "Jesus sent me"<sup>101</sup> (Erenus 123). Thus, women's war of independence continues. Erenus revives Halide Edip in order for her to reevaluate her life, and to reveal the mistakes she made. Halide Edip, a beloved Turkish woman, is made ready to sacrifice herself for her beliefs as she assumes the position of Jesus Christ. Erenus creates a mythical image of Halide Edip, for her to serve as a model for all Turkish women so that they do not make the same mistakes.

In conclusion, Erenus has re-written Halide Edip's life to parallel the archetypal hero myth of individuation. By replacing the archetypal male hero with a female who is seeking her identity, her true place in the society, Erenus represents Halide Edip as a hero. Thus, she is a hero who is keen on gaining her "rightful position in [her] society" (Miller 4). As Arthur Miller declares,

For, if it is true to say that in essence the tragic hero is intent upon claiming his whole due as a personality, and if this struggle must be

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<sup>101</sup> Halide: Beni İsa Yolladı! (Erenus 123)

total and without reservation, then it automatically demonstrates the indestructible will of man to achieve his humanity. (7)

In a similar way, Erenus brings Halide back to life for her to perceive her life over again as an attempt to reclaim her own personality, her own humanity. Unfortunately, Halide realizes the importance of achieving her identity after she dies. Thus, Erenus reveals Halide as a heroine, coming back to life to assure the next generations about the importance of knowing one's self, and gaining one's 'rightful position' in the society.

Halide Edip's struggles to comprehend her life, becomes Halide's initial attempt to take control of her own life. Erenus emphasizes the idea that one must comprehend and face his/her fears, in order to achieve a sense of self. Thus, awareness of oneself becomes a major pattern Erenus constructs in her process of mythmaking. Furthermore, by presenting Halide Edip as a woman not only dependent on others to answer her questions, but also in constant need of love and approval, Erenus argues that women must achieve self-realization only through themselves. In addition to self-realization, Bilgesu Erenus emphasizes that women need to function outside of their homes in order to feel whole and strong. Becoming involved in the greater good of the public during the Turkish War of Independence lessens Halide's fears. In such a representation, Halide Edip becomes a sacrificial victim echoing the personification of Jesus Christ or the archetypal hero of Prometheus who sacrifice themselves for the good of the people. Bilgesu Erenus, by enabling Halide to suffer like Prometheus and to resurrect like Jesus Christ, not only gives Halide a second chance to evaluate her life, but also carries the historical figure of Halide Edip to the mythical realm. Thus, Erenus provides the reader with a heroine who seeks to understand her own life and mistakes; a heroine with whom they can share similar experiences. Thus, re-evaluating the lives of female figures not only allows these figures to obtain "a past of their own," but also permits the reader to find "female figures with whom to bond" (Aisenberg 83).

Throughout the play, Erenus argues that Halide Edip constantly opposed all sorts of patriarchal attitudes, as in the case of the Ottoman Sultan's spies, Mustafa Kemal's request of obedience, and the Dwarf's statement, "If you want to stay here with us, the

only thing you should do is to approve of everything we say and do”<sup>102</sup> (Erenus 119). Erenus argues that there is really no freedom of thought as she makes Halide claim that “the fight for independence never ends”<sup>103</sup> (123). Although the main reasons are not clear behind the willful exile of the historical figure of Halide Edip Adivar, in Bilgesu Erenus’s play, this figure suffers so much due to the choices in her life that she comes back from death to correct all her mistakes. The only thing she changes in her reenactment of her life is that this time she does not run away from her country, but wishes that her people judge her. Having stripped off all her clothes and fears, Erenus’s Halide stands naked only as a woman, ready to face the consequences of her actions. Thus, Erenus by presenting her version of Halide Edip, seeks to break all the preconceptions about this writer, and asks the audience to re-evaluate Halide Edip’s actions and choices. In another sense, Bilgesu Erenus by writing *Halide*, wants history and the myths behind Halide Edip’s willful exile to be reconsidered.

The playwright “can create new myths in dealing with history” (Harben 7), and these myths will enable people to find “a cultural history” (Frye 1982: 34). This reveals one of the basic motives behind the attempts of the three playwrights who have been discussed in this chapter. Liz Lochhead, Rose Leiman Goldemberg, and Bilgesu Erenus all have chosen a historical female writer to rewrite their own past as women, and to establish a new future for all women. They have rewritten the lives of Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Halide Edip Adivar. Shelley, Plath, and Adivar were women who were also mythmakers themselves. They were writers who attempted to express their own selves, and to find their “rightful position in [their] society” (Miller 4). Through rewriting the lives of these historical women, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus aimed to enhance and construct the myths these historical women created, or to break those myths created by the patriarchal order that hindered their attempts to find their ‘rightful’ place in society. As women share their experiences, these playwrights share similar ideas which can gradually gain the shape of mythical patterns. For instance, while rewriting the hero myth, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus emphasize the idea that women should take control of their own lives, and that

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<sup>102</sup> Cüce: Burada kalmak istiyorsan, sana düşen, yalnızca onaylamak bizi. (Erenus 119)

<sup>103</sup> Halide: Hürriyet kavgası bitmez hiç! (Erenus 123)

they should function outside of their homes in order to reach self-awareness. Love for Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus is destructive for the female individual and unlike the established social norms, motherhood can be a burden for women. Finally, analyzing the past for Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus becomes a means to comprehend one's self, therefore the importance of writing, reading and/or enacting is emphasized greatly by the three playwrights.

## CHAPTER IV

### PLAYS BY WOMEN ON LITERARY CHARACTERS

The binary oppositions, such as activity/passivity, culture/nature, which are inherent in the structure of language, have led to the hierarchical organization of the world. As Hélène Cixous claims “Organization by hierarchy makes all conceptual organization subject to man” (579), and therefore the male gender has always been privileged in comparison to the female gender. Many feminist writers argue that “it is masculine rationality that has always privileged reason, order, unity and lucidity, and that it has done so by silencing and excluding the irrationality, chaos and fragmentation that has come to represent femininity” (Moi 160). This discrimination of sexism inherent in language has resulted in women’s inability to adequately express their own experiences throughout centuries. For such reasons, “Women writers have always tried to steal the language” (Ostriker 315) to give voice to their own experiences. The need for women to release their own narrative voices has led them to seek ways in which they could express themselves. As Nancy A. Walker suggests,

Narratives are essential to our sense of place in a human continuum, and one of the strategies that women have employed to mark out their own places is to challenge the authority of existing narratives by telling them anew out of their own necessities. (11)

Challenging already existing texts, is to rewrite these texts: in the postmodern era, it is to parody these texts. Linda Hutcheon defines parody in the postmodern sense as “repetition with critical distance” (6), not merely “ridiculing imitation mentioned in the standard dictionary definitions” (5). Hutcheon perceives parody to be “one of the major forms of modern self-reflexivity” (2), which works towards the realization of the discourses of the past. Briefly, parody “is a form of imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text” (Hutcheon 6). The critical distance of parody enables one to mark the differences, rather than the similarities between a parodied work of art, and the new work itself. Therefore,

through interaction with satire, through the pragmatic need for encoder and decoder to store codes, and through the paradox of its authorized transgression, the parodic appropriation of the past reaches out beyond textual introversion and aesthetic narcissism to address the 'text's situation in the world.' (Hutcheon 116)

Parody derives out of the need to comprehend the codes of everyday life. It makes use of satire, to criticize and to remind its audience of the past and the present. The writer of parody acknowledges the condition of the parodied work of art written in the past, and its interaction with the contemporary text, as well as culture.

Walker argues that women's aim in retelling already existing texts is to 'mark' their own place in society by challenging the hierarchical organizations determined by the patriarchal order. Nancy A. Walker adds that "The practice of appropriating existing stories in one's own work – borrowing, revising, recontextualizing – has a long and distinguished history that includes such unquestionably major works as Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the plays of Shakespeare" (1). The human tendency to adapt to his/her environment, leads to their tendency to alter existing traditions according to their own needs. In a similar way, Nancy A. Walker declares that,

The human impulse to work changes on the inherited stories of a cultural tradition – to tell the story from a perspective or with narrative elements that make it more congenial to one's circumstances or goals – may if anything be abetted by the existence of such stories on the printed page, where they can be returned to again and again and ultimately transposed and transformed, as Shakespeare turned histories into tragedies and Milton turned Biblical narrative into epic poetry. (2)

However, this alteration of "the inherited stories of a cultural tradition" (2) was a practice mainly conducted by male writers. They were not only the ones to record down oral literature and myth, but also the ones to determine which historical event required recognition and praise. Thus, male writers were the ones to shape their culture, to appropriate acceptable behavior patterns, and to establish the social norms through their own perspectives. Women were kept at a far distance from the control over the authority of the 'word'. As Walker states,

Because of the way in which Western literary traditions have been formulated, however, most male writers who have appropriated and revised previous texts have worked within a tradition that included them and their experience, whereas women writers have more commonly addressed such texts from the position of outsider, altering

them either to point up the biases they encode or to make them into narratives that women can more comfortably inhabit. (3)

Thus, women's attempts in altering existing traditions according to their own needs have been regarded as a guerrilla attempt, fighting outside the center of social control. This is why Nancy A. Walker calls the writer who practices revisionist writing 'the disobedient writer' as suggested in the title of her book. As Walker comments "Revisionary, 'disobedient' narratives, expose or upset the paradigms of authority inherent in the texts they appropriate" (7). When women reconstruct these stories according to their own perspectives, they are not only subverting the authoritative structure of the previous text, but they are also claiming their own voice as existent within the reconstructed text. As two versions of a story are established through the rewriting process, neither story can assume sole authority.

The disobedient writer aims to rewrite the existing story from his/her point of view, to change the "inherent tradition" (4) the previous writer aimed to enhance. This process of changing the inherent traditions has been especially difficult for woman writers, since women have been excluded from establishing social traditions. Walker elaborates on this point by indicating that "cultural mythologies, which, though extant for centuries in written form, emerged from an oral tradition that reflected the dominant values of Western culture and disseminated them in stories available to the non-literate as well" (4). The female figures in these cultural mythologies were "emblematic of approved or unapproved female behavior" (5). These cultural mythologies were pinned down by male writers who determined and shaped them according to their own ideals throughout the centuries. Therefore, women's revisionist writing must aim to take control over these cultural mythologies shaped by the phallogocentric world view.

Susan Sellers in her book *Myth and Fairy Tale in Contemporary Fiction* also seeks to understand whether feminist rewriting is possible or not. She claims that,

rewriting myth is not only a matter of weaving in new images and situations but also involves the task of excavation, sifting through the layerings of adverse patriarchal renderings from which women were excluded, marginalized or depicted negatively to salvage and reinterpret as well as discard. (22)

If women succeed in rewriting myth, then they will be able to perceive how women were depicted in these sources through the male perspective. Thus, women would be

able to comprehend how they were marginalized in the patriarchal order. She argues that feminist rewriting is possible, and that rewriting would allow women “to envisage rewritings not only as pleasurable reversals or ingenious tinkering but as new embroideries, adding fresh images and colours to radically alter the picture” (29). As the female writers add their own images and colors to the myths, they will find various “tactics that would open the myth from the inside as well as out, leaving in place enough of the known format to provide evocative points of reflection for its reader, but also encompassing different possibilities and other points of view” (29). If the woman writer makes use of rewriting in her speculation of mythology, she will not only provide her reader with the interrogative power of analysis of the known myth, but also with a new perspective with which the reader can evaluate this myth. Therefore, Susan Sellers argues that,

Feminist rewriting can thus be thought of in two categories: as an act of demolition, exposing and detonating the stories that have hampered women, and as a task of construction—or bringing into being enabling alternatives. (30)

As Sellers explains, rewriting myth brings the woman writer the power to deconstruct the beliefs which have led to women’s inferior positioning in society, and to reconstruct new alternatives, which will eventually change their position in society for the better. Thus, rewriting of classical mythology is an initial attempt that furnishes women with the necessary tools to deconstruct the phallogocentric construction of myths. By rephrasing these classical myths, women writers can reveal how these myths were devised to secure the patriarchal power structure in societies, and in the meantime, women can find ways to change these established standards. As Jane de Gay states, “increasing diversity of response to classical mythology is a source of strength for women seeking to make mythology their own or to make mythologies their own” (13). In search for their own myths, women writers have made repeated use of mythological figures like Medea, Medusa, Phaedra, Cassandra, Antigone, Demeter, Persophone, Philomele, and Procne. These myths, which were recorded down by male writers, represent male ideological perspectives. Jane de Gay adds,

classical mythology may be seen as the record of the suppression of a female culture: put very simply, it provides a set of narratives in which women are the victims. [...] The goddesses of pre-classical Greece had been represented as closely tied to the earth and independent of men: for example, Hera was a maiden and Demeter and Kore were Mother

and Maiden. The victorious Olympian cult re-wrote the stories of these figures into a narrative that reflected the patriarchal family, so that Hera became the wife of Zeus, the father-god, with various other gods becoming their sons and daughters. Demeter and Kore became Mother and Daughter rather than Mother and Maiden. In this view, classical mythology celebrates the submission of matriarchal power to patriarchal. (14)

Therefore, classical mythology as recorded down by male writers such as Homer, Ovid, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Euripides, and many more, reveals the attempts of the patriarchal order in pursuit of prevailing over the matriarchal powers. These myths were devised in order to secure the phallogocentric power structure. In addition to this, Jane de Gay argues that classical mythology “rehearses and substantiates a fear of women: in other words, it is a set of narratives in which women are often villains or, if they are victims, their weakness also provokes fear” (14). In order to keep this fear under control, myths have been recorded by male writers to enhance the appropriate female behavior, which would value male power over the female.

Many feminist writers have sought ways to reclaim the female power. The most effective of these strategies have been to reclaim and to create their own myths. In using female figures from mythology, feminist writers have chosen to represent these female villains or victims of classical mythology as characters who have their own motivations to justify their actions. By presenting these female figures of mythology as round characters, who are “explaining their motives and seeking sympathy and understanding often by exploring and critiquing the circumstances which have led to their fate” (de Gay 15), feminist writers repeatedly expose the oppressive ideology of the patriarchal society. Furthermore, feminist writers have avoided representing these classical female figures as victims of patriarchy, and they have tried to prevent their “audience from identifying themselves with the victims in a disempowering way” (16). If one was to identify with the characters of the classical myth, then the end result of the play would once again be to rob women of their power. The women of classical mythology were either pitiful victims of powerful male figures or these women were jealous crones who were as mad as to murder children like Medea, Philomele, and Procne, or to cause the death of their unrequited love object like Phaedra. Thus, identifying with such female figures would only result in the audiences’ pitying of the female characters in the plays. However, the aim of these

feminist writers was to alienate their audience, for them to be able to critically approach the issues dealt with on stage. Therefore, many feminist playwrights used alienation techniques on stage to achieve their ends.

Brecht's Epic Theatre offers female writers the necessary tools to articulate their message to their audiences.

Brecht's theorization of the social gest, epic structure, and alienation effect provide the means to reveal material relations as the basis of social reality, to foreground and examine ideologically-determined beliefs and unconscious habitual perceptions, and to make visible those signs inscribed on the body which distinguish social behavior in relation to class, gender, and history. For feminists, Brechtian techniques offer a way to examine the material conditions of gender behavior (how they are internalized, opposed, and changed) and their interaction with other socio-political factors such as class. (Reinelt 35-6)

Brecht's Epic Theatre, with its *gestus* and alienation techniques, enables women writers to uncover the materialist society where beliefs and perceptions are established by ideology, and where social behavior is determined through class, gender, and history. Briefly, Brechtian theatre allows feminist writers to expose the conditioning and construction of gender behaviors, and their contact with other socio-political factors, which destabilize women's place in societies. Janelle Reinelt acknowledges that although feminist playwrights are making extensive use of Brechtian techniques in their plays, they are "simultaneously engaging in the process of discovering appropriate and effective contemporary methods" (46). As female playwrights aspire to rewrite classical myths in order to establish their own myths, these women also seek to discover their own methods of presentation. The whole aim is to find and express women's identity, voice, and experiences.

Therefore, from the perspective of the feminist archetypal theory, this chapter will analyze three plays written by women playwrights in order to identify the similar ideas and persistent patterns used by women as they seek ways to express their identity, voice, and experiences. These ideas and patterns will eventually reveal how a woman writer "breaks into the common house of myth in order to make it her own" (Lauter 1984: 12). The first subchapter will analyze Timberlake Wertenbaker's work entitled *The Love of the Nightingale*. Wertenbaker rewrites Ovid's version of the Philomele and Procne myth, where Philomele is raped by her sister's husband, and

where her tongue is cut off for her to keep silent. The next subchapter will investigate Bryony Lavery's *Ophelia*. Lavery reconsiders Shakespeare's archetypal female figure Ophelia, and retells the story from Ophelia's perspective while bringing many women characters created by Shakespeare together. In the final subchapter Zeynep Avcı's version of *The Epic of Gilgamesh* will be analyzed to reveal how such a masculine myth can be rewritten to allow the alternative voices to be heard.

#### **IV.I. TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER'S *THE LOVE OF THE NIGHTINGALE*<sup>104</sup>**

Wertenbaker was born in New York, but she spent her childhood in the Basque located in the southwest of France. First, she went to University in the United States where she studied philosophy and Greek, and later, she participated in courses at the Sorbonne University. Wertenbaker worked in publishing and journalism in New York and London before going to Greece, where she worked as a language teacher and wrote her first plays. She has been writing and translating plays since 1980. In the 1980s Wertenbaker benefited from the support of Women's Theatre Group and the Royal Court. However, in the 1990s "Wertenbaker found herself 'homeless'" (Aston 2003: 149), since she had resigned from the Royal Court Board due to the Court's insistence over private sponsorship. She regarded this step as a hindrance to new writing. Her feeling of homelessness around the theatrical establishment as she explains was "partly due to cultural identity and partly due to gender: being a woman in a male-dominated profession" (150). Against all obstacles, she has written various prize winning plays such as *Our Country's Good* (1988) and *Three Birds Alighting on a Field* (1992). Wertenbaker's other plays include; *New Anatomies* (1981), *Abel's Sister* (1984), *The Grace of Mary Traverse* (1985), *The Love of the Nightingale* (1988), *After Darwin* (1998), *Credible Witness* (2001), *The Ash Girl (A Cinderella Story)* (2000), *Galileo's Daughter* (2004).

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<sup>104</sup> *The Love of the Nightingale* "opened in 1988, at the Royal Shakespeare Company's The Other Place in Stratford-upon-Avon and later transferred to the RSC's small London theatre, The Pit" (Carlson 134-35). The role of Procne was performed by Marie Mullen, Philomele by Katy Behean, and Tereus by Peter Lennon. The play was awarded the "1989 Eileen Anderson Central TV Drama Award" (Goodman 2000: 21).

Wertebaker regards identity as a major theme in her work. As Susan Carlson argues,

Consistent in all of Timberlake Wertebaker's writing has been a problematisation of the global politics of identity, a problematising marked by characters – from ex-expatriates to middle-class professionals – struggling through a crisis of identity. She offers on-stage a view of late twentieth-century 'Great' Britain in which she examines the multiple and conflicting subjectivities of the world and brings to life the various 'others' created by hierarchies of gender, race, and nation. (134)

Wertebaker in her work constantly questions identity, and the politics of the construction of gender. She explains this tendency in her work as follows, "I have no identity. I have no single identity" (qtd in Billington 67). She states that due to her diverse background she always feels as an outsider. For this reason, she constantly tries to "grasp on to things" (67). Her multilingual background can also be traced in her plays through their sense of questioning language, and the inability to adequately express one's self through the usage of this tongue. Wertebaker explains her tendency to reflect the dilemma of language as follows:

I was brought up in Basque country, in the southwest corner of France – brought up by a mixture of my parents and a Basque family. That upbringing was very influential, because it was at a time when the French authorities weren't allowing Basque to be spoken in the schools. And, although I didn't realize it at the time, that affected me deeply, because it was my first direct experience of not being allowed to speak a certain language. Growing up in a generation that could not talk to its parents in their native language started an obsession with language: what it means to have a language, what it means not to have a language, what it means to have a second language. (54)

Thus, her fears of prohibition, undependability, and instability of language at certain times, her feelings of marginalization and loss of identity constantly find voice in her plays. As Trevor R. Griffiths states,

Unlike many of her contemporaries she has chosen to write about geographically and temporally distanced subjects, dealing like Churchill with issues of innocence and experience at the margins, and with the construction of normality and the sense of self identity, and in many of her plays there is an almost Faustian bargain in which knowledge is purchased at the expense of innocence. (73)

Wertenbaker's obsession with identity parallels her questioning of personal experience in formulating an identity. She seeks to find her answers as she wants to reflect the experiences of individuals living on the margins of social life.

*The Love of the Nightingale* is made up of twenty-one short scenes where the myth of Philomele and Procne is retold by Wertenbaker in the pursuit of establishing her own mythical patterns. In *The Love of the Nightingale*, Wertenbaker not only rewrites the myth of Philomele and Procne, but also makes use of the myths of Phaedra and Hippolytus, and various other mythological female figures, like Niobe, Echo, Helen, and Iris. In Greek mythology, all these characters have significant stories behind them. Although, Wertenbaker does not refer to the Greek myths behind these characters, she names her female chorus with these well known figures of Greek mythology, to remind her audience that in classic Greek performances, women were not able to contribute to the performance in any way. Furthermore, her rewriting of the myth of Philomele and Procne becomes the outer frame story as the audience is introduced to the Phaedra and Hippolytus myth, which is presented as a play within a play. *The Love of the Nightingale* becomes a disobedient text, "concerned with the making of myths, the power of language, gender roles and the role of fantasy" (Griffiths 76). As Susan Carlson argues,

*The Love of the Nightingale* is marked by its tough and raw treatment of rape and violence as well as its spare stylization of the mythical story of Philomele, Procne, and Tereus. The play's poetic, philosophical conversations challenged audiences to scrutinize their assumptions about gender and power, as well as language. Although the play follows the bleak inevitability of its mythical source in documenting the rape and mutilation of Philomele by Tereus, it is enlivened by its ruminations about language and voice, ruminations energized by feminist awakenings in Philomele and Procne. (135)

Although the classical version of Philomele and Procne story is known, and the ending cannot be evaded, the reasons behind all actions are made more explicit as the characters find a new identity in Wertenbaker's play. In the classical version of the Philomele and Procne story, as Ovid recorded in *Metamorphoses*, Philomele is raped by Tereus, the husband of her sister Procne. Tereus cuts out Philomele's tongue in order to prevent her from revealing his sin. However, through her weaving of a tapestry, Philomele finally succeeds in informing her sister of her situation. On this tapestry, Philomele weaves the story of her rape and the cutting off of her tongue.

Upon learning the truth, Philomele and Procne take their revenge by murdering Tereus's son Itys. Procne, who is the mother of Itys, assists this murder in order to fulfill her revenge, and the two sisters together prepare a dish made out of Itys' flesh and feed it to Tereus. As Procne watches Tereus feed upon his own son's flesh, Philomele enters and the sisters reveal their revenge. Tereus out of rage attacks the sisters, however, Gods turn them all into birds: Tereus becomes a hoopoe, Philomele a nightingale, and Procne turns into a swallow.

In *The Love of the Nightingale* Timberlake Wertenbaker discusses various feminist and theatrical issues simultaneously. By rewriting the myth of Philomele and Procne, Wertenbaker initially reminds her audience of the conventions of Greek culture, theatre, and myth, as she directs her audience to reinterpret these aspects that have been regarded as the core of western civilization. As Wertenbaker reevaluates Greek culture and myth, by linking the past and the present together, she deconstructs Ovid's recorded version of the myth of Philomele and Procne, in order to reveal the persistent phallogocentric power struggles and to exemplify their consequences. Through the usage of metatheatre, Wertenbaker criticizes not only theatre, but the cultural formulations it emerges from. Furthermore, Wertenbaker by rewriting this myth constructs her own mythic patterns some of which state the importance of theatre in cleansing society from violence, the necessity of women's bonding, and finding other means of self-expression for women. Wertenbaker also establishes various ideas to reveal how forceful silencing will lead to violence, how ignoring violence can result in a chain reaction of more violent acts, and how violence must be constantly questioned. In addition to these, Wertenbaker emphasizes the idea that some men suffer equally due to the phallogocentric worldview, and other men manipulate the language of this order according to their own needs, but can never control it fully. Finally, Wertenbaker through *The Love of the Nightingale* presents the possibility that metatheatre provides a language for women, with which they can reclaim their power in the formation of their contemporary societies.

First of all, in *The Love of the Nightingale* Wertenbaker parodies Greek theatre and culture in order to reveal the patriarchal formulations conveyed by the myth of Philomele and Procne. Pat Easterling explains that "No woman participated directly in the writing, production, performance or judging of [classical Greek] plays" (62). Elaine Aston adds that Greek society even excluded women from attending theatre as

an audience. In the core, women were excluded from any access to the construction of any social practices. Therefore, Aston argues that Wertebaker's play is actually "a feminist critique of the theatrical conventions and ideological concerns of Greek theatre, culture, and society" (1995: 18). Aston declares further that,

Athenian society which condoned rape (Agamemnon's rape of Cassandra), was willing to sacrifice its daughters (Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia), and punished those women who transgressed its orders (Phaedra, Medea, or Clytemnestra), is subjected to feminist scrutiny. The signs of masculinity dominant in Greek theatre such as the phallus, valiant soldier, or conquering hero, are parodied. The dramatization of the rape and silencing of Philomele (her tongue is cut out by her rapist) is critically alienated as paradigmatic of the violent silencing of women in Greek theatre, and in their descendents: male-authored representations of women of the Western stage. (18-19)

Aston argues that Wertebaker aims to use parody to awaken her audience to the formulation of the Greek theatre. However, the classical Greek traditions are the foundations of western civilization, which depend upon phallogentric social structures. Therefore, Wertebaker is in fact parodying the whole phallogentric world view of western civilization, past and present. The play opens with the male chorus' word "War" (Wertebaker 25). The soldiers stand cursing each other with these words, "Second Soldier: You son of a bleeding whore. / First Soldier: You son of a woman!" (25). Immediately women's situation is depicted through the perspectives of the male characters in the play. Being the son of a whore, or a woman is something defamatory. As the first soldier kills the second soldier, the male chorus interferes to contemplate on death and how death is the outcome of war, and how "wars make death acceptable" (25). As opposed to this view of death, the male chorus informs the audience that "Athens is at war, but in the palace of the Athenian king Pandion, two sisters discuss life's charms and the attractions of men" (26). The male chorus establishes the perspective that women are merely involved with trifles, and they are ignorant of serious issues, such as war and death.

In Greek drama, the functions of the chorus were to give information about the past events, to provide explanations, to comment on the actions of the major characters, to guide the emotions and the attitudes of the audience, and to express the action in the play. In a similar way, the chorus in *The Love of the Nightingale* provides information and explanations; however, they deny commenting directly on the actions

of the major characters. Instead, the chorus urges the audience to consider the events as an outsider. The audience encounters two choruses; one is the male chorus, the other is the female chorus made up of individual female characters that have been given names, such as Iris, Helen, Echo, and Hero. However, unlike the chorus in Greek plays, “The Chorus never speak together” (23). Furthermore, Wertebaker treats the male chorus as an outside observer, narrating the events, and uttering the thoughts of the male soldiers within the play. The male chorus not only informs the audience about the phallogocentric views of the male characters within the play, but also expresses Wertebaker’s views on the subject in various occasions.

The first of these occasions happen right after Tereus and Procne are married. Male chorus comments that after the war, King Pandion gave Procne to Tereus, who had helped them win the war. As the male chorus explains,

After an elaborate wedding in which King Pandion solemnly gave his daughter to the hero, Tereus, the two left for Thrace. There was a relief in Athens. His army had become expensive, rude, rowdy. Had always been, but we see things differently in peace. That is why peace is so painful.  
Nothing to blur the waters. We look down to the bottom.  
And on a clear day, we see our own reflections. (29)

As the male chorus explains, peace makes them see everything differently. The heroes, who enable them to win the war, show their true faces and they become unwanted. Peace permits people to see their own reflections, their real feelings. However, war blinds people, they cannot see their situations clearly, because of the blind hopes war imposes upon them. Wertebaker allows her male chorus to plainly analyze how the phallogocentric world view values war. The male chorus interrogates how the patriarchal society itself suffers through their own actions. In a similar way, the male chorus later utters these words, “We are here only to observe, journalists of an antique world, putting horror into words, unable to stop the events we will soon record” (37). Wertebaker permits the male audience to realize their position as mere observers. They are being controlled by a higher power which they are unable to escape. The Male chorus states,

What hasn’t been said and done in the name of the future? A future always in someone else’s hands. We waited, without the pain of responsibility for that promised time, the good times. We asked no more questions and at night, we slept soundly, and did not see. (46)

The male chorus frequently repeats how they choose not to see many of the actions committed by their fellowmen. The reluctance to ask questions relieves them from the burden of responsibility. Silvia Montiglio explains this process,

Unlike prophets, who show their superior knowledge by choosing silence only when silence is in agreement with the will of the gods, humans who do not see think that by their silence they can stop the unfolding of their fate. They cling to silence in the foolish hope of suppressing a word inscribed in the divine order, a word that no human silence could ever hold back. (7)

Their inability to speak is not only a ‘foolish hope’ of preventing things from happening, but it is also an outcome of their submission to a greater power, which controls their future. The male chorus will later remain silent although they know that Tereus raped Philomele. In a similar way, the soldiers will remain silent although they have witnessed how Philomele and Procne murdered Tereus’s son Itys, during the festival of Dionysus. These silences, which have been the domain of women, include men in Wertebaker’s play. Fear and suppression cause silence, and Wertebaker reveals that this silence gradually leads to corruption. In fact, Wertebaker draws the idea that suppression is maintained in a hierarchical order, and forced silencing leads the suppressed to revert to a new language, which is often the language of violence.

In addition to revealing that males are also victimized under greater patriarchal powers, Wertebaker also discloses that myths control societies. The male chorus comments on myth:

What is a myth? The oblique image of an unwanted truth, reverberating through time.  
And yet, the first, the Greek meaning of myth, is simply what is delivered by word of mouth, a myth is speech, public speech.  
(Wertebaker 41)

The male chorus first discusses the meaning of myth, which is ‘an unwanted truth’ according to them. Then they talk about the classical meaning of myth, which meant utterance; ‘speech.’ Later, they ask how has “the meaning of myth been transformed from public speech to an unlikely story?” (42). They cannot comprehend how the meaning of myth shifted from “counsel, command” to “a remote tale” (42). Finally, the chorus leaves the audience alone to think about the meaning of myth:

Let that be, there is no content without its myth. Fathers and sons, rebellion, collaboration, the state, every fold and twist of passion, we have uttered them all. This one, you will say, watching Philomele

watching Tereus watching Philomele, must be about men and women, yes, you think, a myth for our times, we understand.  
You will be beside the myth. If you must think of anything, think of countries, silence, but we cannot rephrase it for you. If we could, why would we trouble to show you the myth? (42)

Wertenbaker acknowledges that every content, subject matter, and message has its myth, and every passion has been uttered in a myth. The myth of Philomele, Procne, and Tereus seems to be about men and women; however the male chorus urges the audience to consider “countries” and “silences” when they present this myth. Wertenbaker clearly wishes her audience to realize the story of Philomele and Procne in a greater perspective, where the characters become metaphors for countries, which have been forced into silence as Philomele herself. Wertenbaker reveals how oppressed countries can revert to violence, when they have been silenced for a long time. In such a perspective the male chorus turns into the voice of Wertenbaker to articulate her political views. Thus, Wertenbaker highlights the idea that myths embody universal struggles that need to be constantly perceived for evaluation.

In addition to the male chorus, Wertenbaker makes use of a female chorus. Considering the fact that Greek plays were performed with only male actors as well as a male audience, Wertenbaker’s usage of a separate female chorus, with names, presents a challenge to the classical understanding of theatre. Women have been excluded from the stage for too long, and Wertenbaker is underlining this fact in her parody of a Greek performance. Wertenbaker’s female chorus represents the Thracian women in the play. The Thracian women are endowed with the gift of intuition; however, they feel shame and suffering due to their power of intuition, since they are mocked and suppressed by the Thracian men. Procne refuses to acknowledge the perspectives of the female chorus, and this act of silencing women, not only parallels the oppression of these women by the Thracian men, but also the exclusion of women from the Greek stage by the patriarchal social formation. Jane de Gay argues that the female members of the chorus speak “cryptically, but (to an audience which knows the outcome of the story) foretell events accurately” (18). Their encrypted words express their struggle to find words for their intuitions. As Hero, a member of the female chorus, states,

Sometimes I feel I know things but I cannot prove that I know them or that what I know is true and when I doubt my knowledge it

disintegrates into a senseless jumble of possibilities, a puzzle that will not be reassembled, the spider web in which I lie, immobile, and truth paralyzed. (Wertenbaker 42)

Hero suffers due to her inability to acknowledge her intuitions. She is unable to prove that her intuitions are true, and also she is taught not to trust her intuitions within the patriarchal order that values reason over intuition. Similarly, another member of the female chorus, Helen, states that she has trouble expressing herself: “The world I see and the words I have do not match” (42). The insufficiency of language in expressing women’s feelings is evident in these words. The character of June summarizes the consequences of a women’s inability to trust her intuitions and express her feeling, “I am the ugly duckling of fact, so most of the time I try to keep out of the way” (42). Iris, who is unable to endure this situation, remarks that she must speak, and calls to Procne. The Chorus of women explains to Procne that they sense danger. Upon this Procne states,

You always sense something, and when I ask you what, you say you don’t know, it hasn’t happened yet, but it will, or it might. Well, what is it now? What danger? This place is safe. No marauding bands outside, no earthquake, what? What? (43)

By ridiculing the intuitions of the Thracian women, Procne remains outside the women’s community. She believes that these women, whom she perceives as ‘others,’ merely speak trifles. She refuses to listen to their intuitions. As Lynn Janet Thiesmeyer explains, “The action of silencing is accompanied by social and political judgments of what is acceptable and unacceptable. For this reason silencing offers the chance to see how discursive actions operate within the social field” (xii). Procne acts as the voice of reason as she degrades the instinctive voices of the Thracian women. With this act, Procne regards herself as if she were in a higher position than the rest of the women, and therefore, distances herself from the women’s community. Wertenbaker introduces Procne as an outsider earlier in the play. Five years after her marriage to Tereus, Procne becomes very homesick, and asks, “where have all the words gone?” (Wertenbaker 29). The female chorus shows sympathy for her situation as a person who has come to a strange land all alone, and they try to make her feel at home. Iris states that they speak the same language. However, Procne argues that “The words are the same, but point to different things. We aspire to clarity in sound, you like the silences in between” (30). Procne makes a distinction between her own

clear language, and that of the Thracian women, which is a language, filled with silences. Although her language in Athens seems to allow her more freedom of voice, the phallogentric worldview still forces her to marry a foreign soldier like a reward. Thus, Wertebaker reveals the idea that not merely the phallogentric language, but the whole patriarchal worldview is imprisoning and suppressing.

Procne not only suffers due to her marginalization from her language, but also due to her marginalization from her society. As Hero remarks that they tried to include Procne in their practices, and life, Procne states, “Barbarian practices. I am an Athenian: I know the truth is found by logic and happiness lies in the truth” (30). As Procne distances herself from the female community in Thrace, she seeks the company of Philomele. The Thracian women state that she has a family, a husband and a son now; however, Procne utters, “I cannot talk to my husband. I have nothing to say to my son. I want her here. She must come here” (31). Although the Thracian female chorus begs her not to call Philomele, indicating that it is a dangerous journey for a young girl, Procne insists and thus, silences the female chorus. At this point, Procne is using her superior hierarchical position as queen in order to silence the opposition. Procne marginalizes herself from the female society, very similar to the way the patriarchal society marginalized her, only because she has a higher social position from the rest of the women around her. Her rejection of intuition and her willful marginalization from the female society make her dumb to the warnings of the women around her. Wertebaker compares Procne to Tereus at this time, because both reject listening to others, and this will turn out to be destructive for both. Furthermore, Wertebaker emphasizes the idea that marginalizing oneself from a collective community decreases one’s chances for survival.

As Wertebaker parodies classical Greek drama in their exclusion of women from the stage, she finds parallels between this exclusion and the silencing of women from everyday life. Furthermore, by refusing to listen to her fellow women, Procne herself becomes a contributor to her sister’s rape. Thus, Wertebaker emphasizes that the “silencing of oppressed people – normally an unspoken, unacknowledged action – is a hideous crime” (de Gay 19). Tereus and Procne participate in silencing others, and the outcomes of both actions turn out to be lethal. Thus, Wertebaker begins to establish the persistent pattern that suppression will find itself a new language of expression, which often turns out to be violence.

When Procne realizes that she has done wrong to silence her fellow women, it is too late. Tereus, who has fallen in love with Philomele, resists going home for a long time. Procne is worried about them greatly, and questions the female chorus on the whereabouts of her husband and sister. Procne says, “A friend tells the truth. Will you be my friend? No, don’t turn away, I won’t impose the whole burden of this friendship. One gesture, one gift. One question. [...] Is Tereus dead? [...] please pity” (Wertenbaker 52). She only receives a reluctant ‘No’ to her question. As she begs the female chorus to tell her the things they know, Tereus enters to tell her that Philomele has drowned. The male chorus comments, “We said nothing. It was better that way” (53). After being forcefully silenced, neither the male chorus nor the female chorus shares their thoughts with any of the characters in the play. Only after Itys’ murder, which is initially narrated through the eyes of the soldiers, the female chorus once again speaks.

Itys’ murder is at first narrated through the soldiers’ mouth, which is suitable for classical Greek drama where violence was not portrayed on stage. Non-representation of violent action on stage carried a major purpose for the classical Greek playwrights, which was “to draw all the attention to the problematic nature of the violent deeds” (Easterling 155). The playwrights aimed to have their audience concentrate on the nature of the violence, rather than the shocking effects violence accompanied. Pat Easterling, explains this non-violence on stage as follows:

Greek tragedy is essentially a drama of words. Characters enter, talk with each other, exit. Very little ‘happens’ on stage – no battles and no blindings as in Shakespeare. Physical action, though sometimes dramatically crucial, is usually limited in scope and relatively static – acts of supplication, gestures of affection or pity or lamentation. Violent events tend to be described in messenger-speeches, a convention that has often been interpreted as a matter of decorum, but more likely stems from the realization that, within the conventions of the fifth-century theatre, such things can be made far more vivid through narration than through stage presentation. (199)

Drawing all the attention to the narration of the violent actions, without the shocking effects of using violence and blood on stage, the classical Greek playwrights were able to reach their effect of catharsis much more easily. This is because the audiences were forced to question the results of the violent actions, which were narrated to them, rather than being shown.

In *The Love of the Nightingale*, there are three violent actions. The first one is Philomele's rape, which is narrated to the audience through her maids' recounts, second is the mutilation of her tongue, which is also implied by having Philomele crouch "in a pool of blood" (Wertenbaker 56), and third Itys' murder. Wertenbaker chooses not to present the rape on stage, since she does not want to present Philomele as a victimized woman. The second violent action is not explicitly presented on stage either, since the scene immediately closes when Tereus cuts Philomele's tongue, and in the next scene the audience perceives her standing in the middle of blood. The scene is simple, since Wertenbaker avoids using any enthralling effects. Finally, in the third violent action, Wertenbaker, first, chooses to imply the violent murder of Itys through the narration of the shocked soldiers. This seems to conform to the aims of the classical Greek playwrights. However, later Itys' murder is visualized with the introduction of the female chorus. Wertenbaker insists that her audience perceive the murder of the child, although they already understand that Itys is killed. This third violent action is first implied through the dialogues of the soldiers who are in fear. The soldiers leave the stage shocked and claim that they had seen nothing of the murder. At this point, the female chorus advances to the stage declaring that there is nothing left if one is raped of all words. Initially, the female chorus "bridges the gap between a distant mythical past and our present by means of anachronistic choral commentaries" (Breen 189). They raise questions from the past and the present that have not found answers for centuries. The female chorus speaks one by one:

Iris: To some questions there are no answers. We might ask you now: why does the Vulture eat Prometheus' liver? He brought men intelligence.

Echo: Why did God want them stupid?

Iris: We can ask: why did Medea kill her children?

June: Why do countries make war?

Helen: Why are races exterminated?

Hero: Why do white people cut off the words of blacks?

Iris: Why do people disappear? The ultimate silence.

Echo: Not even death recorded.

Helen: Why are little girls raped and murdered in the car parks of dark cities?

Iris: What makes the torturer smile?

Echo: We can ask. Words will grope and probably not find. But if you silence the question.

Iris: Imprison the mind that asks.

Echo: Cut out its tongue.

Hero: You will have this.  
June: We show you a myth.  
Echo: Image. Echo.  
Helen: A child is the future.  
Hero: This is what the soldiers did not see. (Wertenbaker 64-5)

By choosing a distant myth from the past, Wertenbaker seems to be distancing her audience from the dangers presented in the play. However, by having her female chorus utter anachronistically the evils of contemporary life, where wars continue, blacks are still exterminated, people disappear, and little girls are raped, Wertenbaker is actually trying to make her audience become aware of the potential evils all around the world. Therefore, Wertenbaker is emphasizing the persistent pattern that ignoring these evils, believing that one is immune to such suffering and violence, is unacceptable and childish. Tereus' forced suppression of Philomele triggers a chain reaction, where first a child is murdered, then as if to ease the violence Tereus, Philomele, and Procne are turned into birds, before Tereus murders them all. One forced action results in a multiple number of violent acts. The female chorus introduces Itys' murder as a result of this forced silencing. They do not only dwell on the silencing of women, but rather, Wertenbaker makes her female chorus question all kinds of suppression. Jane de Gay explains Wertenbaker's aim with these words: "The moral climate of the play prevents the female characters from appearing either as victims or as monsters and the killing of Itys acts as a warning of the sort of violence which may ensue when groups are victimized and denied a voice" (19). Wertenbaker makes her female chorus emphasize that 'a child is the future,' however, Itys' characterization is presented as a copy of his father. Just before his death, Itys runs into the midst of the Bacchae, where her mother has found Philomele, and has found the truth about Tereus' rape. Itys demands that the slave woman, who is Philomele, give him his sword back. He threatens Philomele and all women with these words, "Give me my sword, slave, or I'll kick you. Kill you all. Cut off your heads. Pick out your eyes" (Wertenbaker 65). The stage descriptions read: "Itys goes for Philomele. Procne holds him. Philomele still has the sword. Philomele brings the sword down on his neck. The Female Chorus closes in front. Tereus enters" (65). Wertenbaker shows the brutal action of murdering a child to emphasize the potential of destructive powers a group can possess if they are silenced for a long time. Violence accompanies silence, when silence is imposed on any group of people. As de Gay argues,

The play deals with political oppression in general in that it has resonances for many silenced groups, including women, with specific implications for Wertebaker's experience of the situation of the Basque people. [...] Wertebaker is able to put victimization in context and draw lessons from it. This is partly because she could ask direct questions and make clear points in a scripted play. (20-21)

Although the audience comprehends that Itys is murdered, through the implications of the two soldiers, Wertebaker insists on re-enacting the murder in front of the audience. However, before the murder scene, Wertebaker allows the female chorus to ask questions that expose the brutality of human beings, past and present. Thus, Wertebaker chooses to remind her audience of the cruelty which they are capable of conducting. This is very similar to Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty.

Artaud believes that the true aim of theatre lies in the fact that it emerged out of a need to express and share. He argues that theatre, in its ritualistic origins, has a direct connection to the individual unconscious and healing, where the members of the ritual would contribute to the transformative religious/mystical experience. Theatre of Cruelty as Artaud suggests has to place the spectator in the middle of the action, and to expose the spectator to the cruelty evident in everyday life. As Artaud explains, this cruelty is,

Not the cruelty we can exercise upon each other by hacking at each other's bodies, carving up our personal anatomies, or, like Assyrian emperors, sending parcels of human ears, noses, or neatly severed nostrils through the mail; but the much more terrible and necessary cruelty which things can exercise against us. We are not free. And the sky can still fall on our heads. And theater has been created to teach us that first of all. (79)

Artaud believes that through this exposure to cruelty, the audience will be purified from the desire to enact such brutality in real life situations. Also, the collective experience would not only bond the spectators together, but also would cure the society of its evils. Wertebaker's relentless aim in presenting Itys' murder on stage is linked to her endeavor of purifying her audience and society. By presenting the murder of a child on stage, Wertebaker is highlighting the idea that violence and suppression work in chain reactions that inevitably lead to bloodshed.

In addition to her parody of the well-known Greek myth, Wertebaker makes use of the myth of Philomele and Procne to reveal how women search for a language when they are not acknowledged and/or denied by the patriarchal order. As Trevor R.

Griffiths argues, in Wertenbaker's play there is "a powerful exploration of the construction of 'proper' male and female roles and identities, particularly as they affect Philomele, whose powerful curiosity is accompanied by an innocent sexuality, which is the occasion of her brother-in-law Tereus's lust" (76). In the patriarchal order, women's free expression of their desires cannot be accepted. A sane woman could never articulate her desires, rather as Gail Finney describes, hysteria is the only form of expression which allowed women "the expression of secret sexual desires" (10). Therefore, in the second scene, when Philomele is enthusiastically expressing her dreams about love and sex, this freedom of using phallogocentric speech by a woman gives fear to her sister Procne. Philomele states her ideas about sex, "When I'm old enough, I won't stop doing it, whatever it is. Life must be so beautiful when you're older. It's beautiful now. Sometimes I'm so happy" (Wertenbaker 27). Procne tells Philomele to be quiet and adds, "Never say you're happy. It wakes up the gods and then they look at you and that is never a good thing. Take it back, now" (27). Procne knows that the proper feminine qualities, acceptable for the patriarchal order are "virtues of modesty, gracefulness, purity, delicacy, civility, compliancy, reticence, chastity, affability, politeness" (Gilbert 600). Philomele is neither reticent nor chaste in her wish to wrap her legs around a soldier (Wertenbaker 26). However, being the elder princess forces Procne to acknowledge the rules of her parents, and the patriarchal society. Concerning her marriage Procne states, "It's our parents' will. They know best" (27). She knows that she will have to get married to the warrior Tereus, who came to liberate Athens. She will be the one who will be rewarded to the liberator of Athens, as an object.

Philomele, unlike her sister, is not aware of her objectification in society, since she has her elder sister before her to forcefully obey social rules. Rather than Philomele, Procne is forced to comprehend the dangers of acting outside the borders of the patriarchal formation. She is taught to be obedient and is expected to act maturely. Procne, who fears her sister's bold outburst of her sexual desires and love of life, tries to impose on Philomele moderateness according to her own teachings. Procne states, "You must try to become more moderate. Measure in all things, remember, it's what the philosophers recommend" (27). Although, Procne seems to be disturbed by her sister's use of language so freely, simultaneously she seems to be enjoying Philomele's freedom with words. The audience can understand this as they

witness Procne's longing for words and Philomele five years after her marriage and their separation. As Christine Downing explains,

Same-sex siblings seem to be for one another, paradoxically, both ideal and self and what Jung calls 'shadow.' They are engaged in a uniquely reciprocal, mutual process of self-definition. [...] The differences between siblings can be negotiated, worked on, redefined by the siblings themselves. The work of mutual self-definition seems typically to proceed by way of a polarization that half-consciously exaggerates perceived differences and divides up attributes between the sisters ('I'm the bright one, and she's the pretty one'). Often, too, sisters seem to divide up their parents between them ('I'm Daddy's girl, and you're Mommy's'). I am who she is not. She is both what I would most aspire to be but feel I never can be *and* what I am most proud *not* to be but fearful of becoming. (11-12)

The contrasting mutual sentiments of Procne and Philomele can be acknowledged as a simultaneous longing for identification with and separation from each other. They are both the same and the other, simultaneously. Procne fears and identifies with Philomele's free articulateness: Philomele envies her sister's approaching marriage and her soon to be experience of sexuality. Although Procne hopes for her sister to be less articulate on issues concerning sexuality, it is Tereus who will impose his power on Philomele to silence her. Philomele's constant questioning, her hope of understanding life and her sexuality are taken away by Tereus. She is forced to keep silent. Procne's attempt to silence Philomele emerges out of her need to be a part of the patriarchal world. However, she is a woman who has no power in the phallogentric order.

As a contrast, Tereus, who occupies a central place in this order due to his position as king, is also unable to secure his place in the phallogentric order when he falls in love with Philomele, and when she mocks his manhood. Tereus' inability to assert his control over the phallogentric language is emphasized twice in the play. The first is when he falls in love and has to manipulate women's language to justify his own ends. Wertebaker by using the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus as a play-within-a play constructs two simultaneous arguments. Initially, her usage of metatheatre helps her question the usage of theatre as the spokesman of western morality, and also it allows her to question how patriarchal society aims to manipulate the language of women to fulfill their aims. Thus, the play-within-a play allows Wertebaker to investigate the phallogentric ideologies inherent in western society. As

Helen Gilbert argues, “One of the most prevalent ways through which to subvert the gaze is by means of a play-within-a-play, a device which carefully focuses the audience’s attention, while, paradoxically, fracturing assumed unitary sightlines” (250). Metatheatre allows the playwright to question the established ways of interpreting existing plays, and thus, enables the audience to re-evaluate these plays. Gilbert adds, “The refracted play-within-a-play thus has the potential to articulate a different interpretation of events, or to deemphasise the power of axiomatic ways of seeing” (250). Thus, metatheatre allows Wertebaker to rewrite the ideology inherent in the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus.

Initially, Wertebaker uses the play-within-a play to reveal how phallogentric worldview controls women, by imposing their own morality through theatre. In the myth of Phaedra and Hippolytus, Phaedra falls in love with her step-son. Her unrequited love causes her to commit suicide, and to take revenge on Hippolytus by accusing him of raping her, which causes his death as well. The play is performed as a part of a celebration of Tereus’ arrival in Athens, due to Procne’s wish to bring Philomele to Thrace. Tereus does not know the play, and declares that he prefers sports. At this point, King Pandion, Philomele’s father, likens Tereus to Hippolytus who “prefers the hard chase to the soft bed, wild game to foreplay” (Wertebaker 32). Hippolytus is indifferent to women, and is not after sexual pleasures. Thus, he is pure and innocent, unlike Phaedra who loves and desires him madly. Phaedra states, “Hold me, hold me, hold up my head. The strength of my limbs is melting away” (33). Deeply influenced by the love of Phaedra, Philomele utters, “How beautiful to love like that! The strength of my limbs is melting away. Is that what you feel for Procne, Tereus?” (33). Philomele is combining art and life together, and she wants to understand whether love is really how it is narrated in plays. However, her mother immediately silences her. Without replying to Philomele, Tereus utters that it is wrong for Phaedra to love her step-son. As if to enforce the phallogentric worldview, Phaedra states in the play within the play, “Oh, pity me, pity me, what have I done? What will become of me?” and acknowledges that she has “strayed from the path of good sense” (33). Tereus refuses to pity her, since “these plays condone vice” (33). King Pandion replies to Tereus stating, “Perhaps they only show us the uncomfortable folds of human heart” (33). Once again, King Pandion emphasizes that Phaedra is uncomfortable, thus guilty, and her guilt is reflected in this play, as if to teach its

audience not to make the same mistakes. However, Philomele, perceives Phaedra's guilt as her uncontrollable desire, and states that "love is a god and you cannot control him" (33). She adds that you must obey the gods and follow your heart. Philomele only articulates this because Phaedra decides to inform Hippolytus about her love, following the advice of her nurse. Philomele knows that repressing your desires would lead to worse outcomes. She prefers communication to hypocrisy, since she knows that Phaedra would be a hypocrite to treat Hippolytus as a son. As opposed to Philomele, the chorus in the play within the play give voice to patriarchal morality, and they curse the love which turns them "blind with the bitter poison of desire" (34). The chorus prays that love would keep away from them, and they give the moral that it is better to repress ones desires. However, Wertenbaker again draws the persistent pattern that violence/suffering pursues silence and repression. She reveals how Greek civilization made use of theatre to convey their sense of morality, and established their phallogocentric control over individuals.

Furthermore, Wertenbaker exposes how Tereus manipulates the language of women when Philomele refuses to reciprocate his love. Her father does not want Philomele to go to Thrace, and the chorus in the play utters, "I rage against the gods who sent you far away, out of your father's lands to meet with such disaster from the sea-god's wave" (35). However, Philomele claims that she must, with these words, "I'm not Hippolytus. You haven't cursed me. And Tereus isn't Phaedra" (35). However, later Tereus will reveal that he is Phaedra; he will yield to his desires just like a woman, and argue that "the power of god is above the law" (50). This god he mentions is the god of love whom Philomele believed that one had to yield to. Tereus is using Philomele's words to seduce her to love him. Philomele feels ashamed of her careless tongue, and remembers how Procne always complained about her "wandering tongue" (50). Now her words are being used against her. Procne always tried to stop Philomele from being so free with words, because she knew the dangers of the phallogocentric world, and their ability to manipulate words.

Philomele's god of love could not be controlled, and wanted her to express herself freely and to "feel everything there is to feel" without any regrets (34). On the other hand, Tereus' love-god turns out to be himself, since he uses this love to justify his murder and rape. When Philomele falls in love with the captain of Tereus' ship, she articulates her love for the captain and wishes that he would yield to the love-god

and be with her. However, Tereus out of jealousy murders the captain. Later, to justify this murder and his love for Philomele, he states that “The power of the god is above the law. It began then, in the theatre, the chorus told me. I saw the god and I loved you” (50). When Philomele refuses to love him, Tereus says, to justify his subsequent rape, “The god is out” (51) as if to say that he can not control his love-god, similar to Philomele. He says Philomele does not have to consent to the love-god, but, he adds that the god does not ask for permission. Whereas Philomele’s love-god represents emotional unity, Tereus’ love-god represents sexual desires. Tereus validates his rape by remarking that it was Philomele who had stated that one should obey the god of love. Although, she had meant one has to be true to his/her feelings, and not deny or repress them, Tereus manipulates her language and uses it against her. Wertebaker reveals that the phallogocentric worldview has great experience with the usage of language, and when they cannot maintain their control over women with their own language, they manipulate women’s language according to their desires. Their control over language makes them believe they have control over the world. However, Wertebaker acknowledges that male language is unable to function adequately, when men’s sexual power is questioned.

In the second instance when Tereus faces an inability to control Philomele with his language, he chooses to maintain his control by silencing her altogether. The phallogocentric center, Tereus, fails to maintain his control over Philomele when she scorns his manhood after the rape. Philomele after the rape first questions herself to understand whether or not she was the cause of Tereus’ sexual violence. However, she comprehends that she should not blame herself, since she would not cause her own pain. Then she realizes that Procne is alive and cannot comprehend why Tereus still raped her. Philomele asks,

What did you tell your wife, my sister, Procne, what did you tell her? Did you tell her you violated her sister, the sister she gave into your trust? Did you tell her what a coward you are and that you could not, cannot bear to look at me? Did you tell her that despite my fear, your violence, when I saw you in your nakedness I couldn’t help laughing because you were so shriveled, so ridiculous and it is not the way it is on the statues? Did you tell her you cut me because you yourself had no strength? Did you tell her I pitied her for having in her bed a man who could screech such quick and ugly pleasure, a man of jelly beneath his hard skin, did you tell her that? [...] There’s nothing inside you. You’re only full when you’re filled with violence. And they obey you? Look

up to you? Have the men and women of Thrace seen you naked? Shall I tell them? Yes, I will talk. (55)

When challenged with impotence, Tereus is unable to control Philomele, whose language overpowers him. His impotency dethrones him from his center in the patriarchal world. As Trevor Griffiths writes, “Philomele is silenced when she threatens to expose his [Tereus’] impotence, which she associates with his failing as a ruler, seeing the failure of the penis as a failure of phallocracy” (76). When his penis fails him, Tereus loses his power with words and as a revenge cuts Philomele’s tongue to secure his place in the social order. This is pitiable, since as Chodorow explains, “Maleness is more conflictual and more problematic” (1990: 430). Male infants learn the value of masculinity from identifying it as anything which is “not-feminine, or not-womanly” (430). Chodorow continues,

They come to emphasize differences, not commonalities or continuities, between themselves and women, especially in situations that evoke anxiety, because these commonalities and continuities threaten to challenge gender difference or to remind boys and men consciously of their potentially feminine attributes. (431)

Under such circumstances, when his manhood is questioned by Philomele, Tereus feels weak and helpless, and remembers his feminine attributes. In order to forget his feminine side and to reassure his masculinity, he has to silence the threat against his manhood, Philomele. However, Patricia Klindienst argues that the male attempt to silence women always fails. As Klindienst asserts,

behind the woman’s silence is the incomplete plot of male dominance, which fails no matter how extreme it becomes. When Philomela imagines herself free to tell her own tale to anyone who will listen, Tereus realizes for the first time what would come to light, should the woman’s voice become public. In private, force is sufficient. In public, however, Philomela’s voice, if heard, would make them equal. Enforced silence and imprisonment are the means Tereus chooses to protect himself from discovery. But as the mythic tale, Tereus’ plot, and Ovid’s own text make clear, dominance can only contain, but never successfully destroy, the women’s voice. (615)

By forcing silence upon her, Tereus hopes to reinforce his superiority and reestablish his control over Philomele; however, as a woman Philomele knows how to overcome her silence. In Ovid’s recorded version of the myth it is written; “Cunningly she [Philomele] set up her threads on a barbarian loom, and wove a scarlet design on a

white ground, which pictured the wrong she had suffered” (150). Weaving has been “considered the domain of women” (Pantelia 493) and it is a domestic act of women’s self-expression. However, Wertebaker, rather than revealing Philomele’s sufferings through weaving a tapestry, has Philomele enact the rape through the help of the three life-size dolls she makes. Although Philomele still uses the traditional women’s art of sewing, she “uses it in order to create for herself an alter ego, a huge doll puppet through which she can enter and control the public space and performance” (Cousin 116). She finds a new language for herself, a new tongue to replace her mutilated one, and brings herself out of the privacy and the domesticity of her chamber to the center of the female social activity: the feast of the Bacchae which is the only time when all the women of Thrace gather together without the intervention of the patriarchal system. Wertebaker urges the persistent pattern that finding various means of self-expression apart from language is of utmost importance for women to move from the private to the public domain.

During the feast of Bacchus where women of Thrace “run the city and the woods, flit along the beach” (Wertebaker 59), Niobe, Philomele’s nurse, takes Philomele to join the festivity believing that it would be a good change for her. Niobe states that “Tereus said, get her out quickly, into the city. She’ll be lost there. Another madwoman, no one will notice” (59). However, Niobe cannot get Philomele to give up her life-sized dolls she had been sewing for years, and suddenly Philomele throws her dolls onto the stage. Although Niobe tries to grab the dolls and Philomele out of the center of attention, she is unable to handle the three huge dolls. Their struggle “seems to be between the two dolls. One is male, one is female and the male one has a king’s crown” (59-60). Wertebaker’s stage directions read:

The rape is re-enacted in a gross and comic way, partly because of Niobe’s resistance and attempt to catch Philomele. Philomele does most of the work with both dolls. The crowd laughs. Philomele then stages a very brutal illustration of the cutting of the female doll’s tongue. Bloody cloth on the floor. The crowd is very silent. Niobe still. Then the Servant comes inside the circle, holding the third doll, a queen. At that moment, Procne also appears in the front of the crowd’s circle. She has been watching. The Procne doll weeps. The two female dolls embrace. Procne approaches Philomele, looks at her and takes her away. (60)

Wertenbaker by having Philomele enact her rape with the help of life-sized dolls emphasizes the power of theatre in articulating experience. Philomele subverts her forced silencing by using the dolls as a counter discourse to articulate her experience. As Helen Gilbert states, “Counter-discourse seeks to deconstruct significations of authority and power exercised in the canonical text, to release its stranglehold on representation and, by implication, to intervene in social conditioning” (16). This new discourse allows Philomele to regain her authority and power over Tereus, her mutilator. Worthenbaker’s act of finding alternative methods of discourse allows her to establish a counter discourse against the phallogocentric language.

Furthermore, her usage of metatheatricality reveals how Worthenbaker resisted presenting the rape of Philomele on stage, since she did not want to present Philomele as a mere object of male violence. Rather, by presenting the rape with the help of dolls, in a comical way as a contrast to the violence of rape, she allows not only the audience, but all the female characters on stage to question the impact of rape, without being involved in the pathos of the situation. As Geraldine Cousin argues,

Timberlake Worthenbaker’s retelling of the Philomela story, *The Love of the Nightingale*, both in its form and its content, foregrounds spoken language, its evasion and also its confrontative power. Deprived of words, Philomele (as she is called in the play) finds, however, a different language within which to express her violation – not music, but another subversive non-verbal sign system. (114)

Philomele’s new language will allow her to articulate her emotions and experiences to all women. Thus, the shocking effects of the real rape will evoke questions in the spectators’ minds when staged by the help of dolls, and “behavioural patterns that cause violence and suffering” (Pankratz 189) might be broken if the event is constantly questioned.

Through using metatheatricality, Worthenbaker is able to limit the emotional reactions of her audience to have them stand at a critical distance from the actions on stage. By first refraining from presenting a violent scene of rape on stage, Worthenbaker articulates rape as a common universal problem, which can happen to all women. However, by having the rape scene enacted in a theatrical manner with the dolls, Worthenbaker draws the persistent pattern that although rape is a common act of violence, constant questioning of rape should never cease. Thus, re-enacting her rape in a shared public space not only relieves Philomele of the burden of suffering her

rape alone, but also using metatheatre breaks the illusion of the play, and reminds the audience that they are only watching a performance which they should constantly be questioning. As Niall Slater argues, “Metatheatre is by nature metacritical: by opening up the theatrical process to our gaze, it invites our contemplation not only to the *quality* but the *goals* of the theatrical performance” (7). The usage of metatheatre is very similar to Brechtian distancing effect where the audience is always held at a critical distance to question the action on stage. It urges the audience to evaluate the theatrical performance, and observe the values and the aims of the playwright.

After Procne sees the performance of the dolls, she realizes that her sister has been raped. However, she hesitates to believe it at first, she asks, “How can I know that was the truth? (Pause.) You were always wild. How do I know you didn’t take him to your bed? You could have told him lies about me, cut your own tongue in shame” (Wertebaker 60). Procne blames Philomele for her wild nature, for her love of expressing her desires freely, without repressing them. Philomele stands silently against her sister’s accusations. As Helen Gilbert states, “Silence can be more active than passive, especially on stage where a silent character still speaks the languages of the body and of space” (190). Philomele’s silence becomes more forceful than her language, which was always pushed towards moderation by Procne. Even though Philomele stands soundless, Procne gradually realizes that Tereus is capable of conducting such violence. Procne states, “He would do this. (Pause.) Is that what the world looks like? (Pause.) Justice. Philomele, the justice we learned as children, do you remember? Where is it?” (Wertebaker 61). Procne asks help from Dionysus, and together with Philomele they drink and join the Bacchae.

At this point, Itys catches some soldiers as they are secretly watching the Bacchae dance. When Itys threatens to tell his father, since his mother told him that no men is allowed to observe this feast, the scared soldiers state, “Aren’t you a prince? A king’s son? You let women tell you what is and is not allowed?” (62). Itys again states “You shouldn’t have looked” (62) However, the soldiers insist,

First Soldier: It’s just women.

Second Soldier: Why don’t you see for yourself? A king has to be informed.

First Soldier: You can sit on my shoulders.

Second Soldier: Do you know how to sit on somebody’s shoulders? Are you strong enough?

Itys: Of course I know.

Second Soldier: You sure? It's difficult.

First Soldier: We'll hold you.

Second Soldier: No we won't. You have to climb all by yourself. Like a man. Can you do it?

Itys: I'll show you. (62-63)

The soldiers mock Itys' manhood, just like Philomele mocked his father Tereus' manhood. Just like his father, Itys tries to overcome this mockery by showing that he is a man, and watches the feast of Bacchae. When he sees a female servant holding his sword, he goes among the Bacchae and is murdered by his mother and aunt. Once again Wertebaker reveals her idea on how patriarchal society has a tendency to weaken itself, since it constantly reverts to violence or forceful silencing in order to reject its feminine attributes.

After the murder, Tereus comes on stage and tells the Bacchae that it is morning and that the feast is over so they should go home. Unfortunately, he sees Philomele, and is unable to speak. Procne says that he has a tongue and can explain his actions. Tereus can only state that, "When I ride my horse into battle, I see where I am going. But close your eyes for an instant and the world whirls round. That is what happened. The world whirled around" (65). Tereus is unable to articulate his reasons for raping his sister-in-law. Instead he states that the world turned around, and he raped Philomele. Tereus is actually saying that he could not control himself, and acted irrationally. When Procne questions him whether his silence was the outcome of his shame, Tereus denies being ashamed of anything. Procne insists on knowing why he had kept silent about the rape, and he says, "I can't say. There are no rules" (65). To this reply Procne says, "I obeyed all rules: the rule of parents, the rule of marriage, the rules of my loneliness, you" (66). Procne means to say that she obeyed all the patriarchal rules that were set in front of her by the social morality. However, Tereus was unable to follow these patriarchal rules that he, as a king, worked so hard to secure. Wertebaker is revealing the idea that although patriarchy sets the norms, women work harder to obey these rules, whereas men break them whenever it suits their own purposes.

Tereus was unable to follow the rules that he wished to protect. Knowing that he cannot justify his violation of Philomele, he reverts to silence, which is the female language he had forced upon Philomele. He states that he has no other words; however, this time Procne will force him to find words, as Tereus forced Philomele to

find her own expression when he had silenced her. Procne reveals Itys' dead body and she states, "If you bend over the stream and search for your reflection, Tereus, this is what it looks like" (66). The violence of Itys' mutilated body echoes the violence of Tereus. Procne adds that when Tereus forced his power to suppress Philomele for his own ends, he "bloodied the future" (66) for all of them. Suppressing women, stealing away their freedom of speech led them to find a new way to articulate themselves in the patriarchal world. This new expression they found was violence, and it enabled them to gain a space in the patriarchal world. Thus, Wertebaker establishes the idea that it is the consequence of male suppression, which leads women to revert to violence.

When Tereus tries to emphasize that it was his love for Philomele that forced him to silence her, Procne rejects the idea that love can be taken by force. Tereus tries to justify himself by stating "How could I know what love was? Who was there to tell me?" (66). However, Procne replies that he never asked her, and reveals that Tereus was inadequate in using the phallogentric language himself. He as a man was unable to ask questions to women, whom he considered inferior. Wertebaker draws the persistent pattern that neither men nor women can control the phallogentric language. Although communication is necessary for cooperation, women who are decentered cannot use this language, and men revert to their physical superiority when they are unable to articulate themselves in this discourse. After all this violence, cooperation is impossible and Tereus attacks both Procne and Philomele, once again reverting to violence, the best language he knows. The female chorus briefly narrates the end of the struggle where "Tereus pursued the two sisters, but he never reached them. The myth has a strange end" (66). The female chorus declares that they find the ending of the story strange, because it does not suggest a finalization, since Philomele becomes a nightingale, Procne a swallow, and Tereus a hoopoe. The chorus asks the question that echoes in the minds of the audience, "why does the myth end that way?" (Wertebaker 67), in "Such a transformation. Metamorphosis" (67).

In Ovid's and Wertebaker's versions of the myth, Philomele, Procne, and Tereus are all metamorphosed into birds. As Patricia Klindienst argues,

Metamorphosis preserves the distance necessary to the structure of dominance and submission: in the final tableau all movement is frozen. Tereus will never catch the sisters, but neither will the women ever cease their flight. Distance may neither collapse nor expand. In such

stasis, both order and conflict are preserved, but there is no hope of change. (621)

When the myth ends in this way in Ovid's version, Klindienst asserts that the sisters will always be remembered as more violent than the man, since they were the ones to kill and cook their own child to take revenge. Also, by turning the characters into birds, Klindienst remarks that, "Culture hides from its own sacrificial violence" (621). The myth seems to stop the violence by turning the major characters into birds; however, it also suggests that the violence will forever continue, and the metamorphosis of the main characters remains the only transformation in the social structure of the myth. All in all, transforming the characters to birds does not affect a change in the society. Therefore, when Wertenbaker adds another scene to her version of the myth, she breaks the myth for it to function as a force of healing for her society.

In this last scene, Philomele regains her voice as a bird and interviews Itys. Although Itys wants Philomele to sing a song, Philomele urges him to ask questions first. When Itys asks if she likes being a nightingale, Philomele replies "I never liked birds, but we were all so angry the bloodshed would have gone on forever. So it is better to become a nightingale. You see the world differently" (Wertenbaker 67). Then, Philomele asks Itys if he understands "why it was wrong of Tereus to cut our [her] tongue" (68). However, Itys asks another question as a reply, "What does wrong mean?" (68). When Philomele says, "It is what isn't right" (68), Itys this time questions what right means. Unable to answer his questions, Philomele starts singing, as if to silence his questioning. Not merely men, but women are being submerged in the teachings of the Symbolic Order. Unable to escape the language of the phallogocentric world, Philomele asks Itys to understand the meaning of the two binary oppositions of right and wrong. Instead, Itys questions these binary oppositions and Philomele, unable to avoid her phallogocentric teachings, cannot find an answer to Itys' questions. When Philomele devoid of words begins to sing, so as to avoid answering Itys' questions, Itys asks "Didn't you want me to ask questions?" (68). These are the last words of the play. Therefore, Itys being the future is made to question, whereas the present is unable to escape the teachings of the patriarchal world. The present generations remain ignorant to changing the old myths, which were defined as "unwanted truths" (41) by the male chorus. Therefore, not only women, but also men are still under the control of the phallogocentric world, and therefore patriarchal

worldview still determines what right and wrong is, and which truths/myths should be believed in. However, theatre for Wertebaker remains to be “a space that allows us to understand, and (hopefully) to know more about ourselves (not just personally, but socially, culturally, politically)” (Aston 2003: 168), and therefore to achieve change in the phallogentric world.

In conclusion, Wertebaker initially parodies classical Greek drama in *The Love of the Nightingale* to emphasize several points. First of all, Wertebaker reveals the phallogentric views of the classical Greek society by reminding her audience that the classical Greek drama did not allow women to participate either in the formation of the stage production, or in the formation of the social order. Secondly, Wertebaker establishes a male chorus, representing the male public, and suffering forceful silencing very similar to the women in the play. The male chorus has been silenced by Tereus, who is the representative of dominant powers in *The Love of the Nightingale*. The male chorus functions to show how the patriarchal society also suffers due to their own actions. As a result of their fears, the male chorus is powerless to change things for the better; the powerful authority of Tereus has emasculated the male chorus. Furthermore, Wertebaker’s female chorus presents a challenge to the classical Greek drama which excluded females from the stage. The female chorus functions to reveal how they have been silenced, and made to be embarrassed of their intuitions, since the phallogentric view was to depend on reason. Finally, Wertebaker parodies classical Greek drama in its insistence on denying violence on stage. Wertebaker by resisting presenting Philomele’s rape on stage denies presenting her as a mere victim. However, in presenting Itys’ murder on stage she reveals how oppression could result in violence. Wertebaker emphasizes how theatre can heal through cruelty.

As Elaine Aston argues, “Wertebaker has always been attracted to the idea of tackling ‘big subjects’, frequently turning to classical myths or plays and giving them a contemporary twist” (2003: 150). The Greek myth “offers a way of resisting the received view of women’s writing as somehow confined to and concerned only with domestic, ‘female’ environments” (150). In her parody of the Greek tragedies, Wertebaker demonstrates the patriarchal formulation of power, which only belongs to those who occupy the highest hierarchical positions in society. Wertebaker by rewriting the patriarchal myth of Philomele and Procne foregrounds and retells the

narratives of silenced individuals, “in a way which empowers the feminist spectator/reader to participate in changing them, rather than endorsing the value-system of the ‘father’ text” (Aston 1995: 23). Thus, Wertebaker through parodying a well-known myth deconstructs the codes this myth carries and re-builds the myth in a way to provide her audience/reader with adequate tools to rebuild the myth to suit contemporary requirements. As Susan Bassnett explains,

History, like myth, though in different ways, provides a framework within which explorations of identity can be made without the restrictions of a naturalistic context. A play set in West Belfast, for example, is grounded in the realities of the circumstances of the characters who live in that environment, whereas a play that uses the myth of Medea or Philomel can be both general and particular at the same time. Moreover, the use of myth reinforces the notion of hybridity, since myths transcend national boundaries and become part of a shared inheritance. (2000: 78-79)

By using the well known myth of Philomele and Procne, Wertebaker turns a female experience of rape and suppression into a universal experience. In her revision of the Philomele and Procne myth, she “is using a myth premised on an idea of metamorphosis that serves as a device for inviting the audience to think through questions of transformation and change” (79). Making use of the well-known myth leads the audience to be involved in a re-interpretation process, where the myth is no longer a mere story of adultery and revenge. Rather, in Wertebaker’s production, it turns into a microcosm of a universal struggle between the dominant powers and the minorities. Therefore, Wertebaker can be perceived as a “representative of the post-colonial writer” (79), since she is directing her audience “to consider the ways in which power relations in the world have been shaped by the language imposed by the dominant power” (79). In her parody of the Greek myth, Wertebaker strips the conventions of the western phallogocentric view, and forces her audience to acknowledge the consequences of forceful restraint. Therefore, as she breaks the myth of Philomele and Procne, she constructs it so as to emphasize the persistent pattern that forceful silencing will lead to unwanted consequences.

Also, Wertebaker through using metatheatrical signifies how Greek civilization used theatre in order to spread its phallogocentric worldview. Thus, she acknowledges the power of theatre in the formation of civilizations, and insists that her audience

should constantly ask questions as they perceive a performance on a stage. Klindienst states,

If women have served as a scapegoat for male violence, if the silenced woman artist serves as a sacrificial offering to the male artistic imagination (Philomela as the nightingale leaning on her thorn – choosing it – to inspire the male poet who then translates her song into poetry), the woman writer and the feminist critic seek to remember the embodied, resisting woman. Each time we do, we resist our status as privileged victim; we interrupt the structure of reciprocal violence. (623)

Thus, Wertebaker's play-within-a play sequences constantly remind her audience that this is a play which they are supposed to critically perceive. Each time Wertebaker makes use of a well known myth, like the myth of Philomele and Procne, and Phaedra and Hippolytus, she forces her audience to acknowledge these women not as victims of phallogocentric formulation, but as women who try to find their voice in this order. As long as they are denied their voice by the patriarchy, mutual violence will occur. However, Wertebaker is not only speaking about women's suppression, she is establishing the persistent pattern that men suffer equally due to the phallogocentric worldview, and they are also silenced, or submit to silence to escape the burden of responsibility. Thus, those who keep silent, and who oppress are equally guilty for the violence which will eventually erupt due to suppression.

#### **IV.II. BRYONY LAVERY'S *OPHELIA*<sup>105</sup>**

Bryony Lavery was involved in the development of British alternative theatre since the 1970s, and contributed to the development of British theatre not just as a writer, but as a performer as well. In addition to forming the theatre group Les Oeufs Malades, she also worked in theatre companies as the Monstrous Regiment, Clean Break, and the Women's Theatre Group / The Sphinx. Bryony Lavery "was an artistic director of Gay Sweatshop from 1989 to 1991, and has performed in and also written for the gay pantomimes at London's Drill Hall" (Aston 2003:100). She is also well-known for her broadcast outlets which include "a major adaptation of *Wuthering*

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<sup>105</sup> *Ophelia* was written in 1996, under the direction of Rosemary Hill, and performed in November 1997 by the Stanton Campus and Collage Theatre Companies at Stantonbury Theatre.

*Heights*” (Goodman 2000: xxxvii). Some of her major plays include *The Catering Service* (1975), *The Family Album* (1976), *Grandmother’s Footsteps* (1977), *Missing* (1979), *The Wild Bunch* (1979-80), *Witchcraze* (1980), *Origin of the Species* (1984-85), *The Two Marias* (1988), *Her Aching Heart* (1990), *Flight* (1991), *Ophelia* (1996), and *Goliath* (1997).

Heidi Stephenson and Natasha Langridge state that, “Bryony Lavery has swum against the mainstream with verve, nerve and success since the beginning of her career in the early seventies” (105). Her bold subversion of mainstream theatre and her feminist perspectives in return bring her forth as a political activist in theatre. Lavery herself argues that she is tired of her role as cleaner of men’s rubbish in the theatre. She states in an interview,

I’m desperately tired of that role as cleaner. And, to expand the metaphor, I’m an increasingly aged cleaner: more crotchety about the aching joints, with housemaid’s knee from the bending, lifting, scrubbing, etc. So, the role of women has not changed nearly enough: there are still ‘writers’, and ‘women writers’. (qtd in Goodman 1996: 41)

However, Lavery also believes that feminism brought an effective change in theatre and “male chauvinism is now riddled with feminist challenges” (43). Lavery states that “there is a huge fear in a lot of people’s hearts at the power of women” (qtd in Stephenson 112). She adds that in the mainstream theatre,

the future they want is very similar to the past, and actually doesn’t include women being *really* powerful. It’s so deep. I come across in time and time again. An awful lot of men really don’t want to give up power, which, of course, one understands. And a lot of women don’t really understand what they can have. (112)

Concerning “male jealousy and powerlessness in the face of women’s capacity to give life”, Lavery states that it is not mere jealousy but a fear “which is at the root of every behavior” (112). She states that,

We are ‘other’. With women, the way of feeling our fear is to understand it. It seems that that is not the way men cope with their fear. Their way is to put it out in the distance, to put the barrier up. But nobody ever admits to it, it’s peculiar. (112)

In addition to her ideas about men’s fear of the things they cannot understand, concerning *Ophelia*, Lavery declares that she wanted her female characters “to have more confidence” (114). Lavery continues with these words:

It's not particularly anti-men thing, it's for themselves. Human beings are infinitely more capable than they think they are. It's very noticeable when you do workshops with people how, particularly women, need to be given permission to improve. It would be a fabulous world if we retained that five-year-old 'I can do this. I'm the most wonderful thing on the planet' confidence. You see people handing over their power, their strength and getting tired and getting grey. I think what I would like is to explode the world back into colour! (114)

Thus, Bryony Lavery's initial attempts at mythmaking can be revealed through her own words. Lavery, in her play *Ophelia*, aims to empower especially her female audience with confidence and an awareness of their strength. By introducing various female characters from Shakespeare's plays and by re-visioning the events in *Hamlet* from Ophelia's perspective, Lavery brings a new play onto the stage. The reason why Lavery chose Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was probably because Ophelia is the most colorless female character of Shakespeare. She mainly exists with Hamlet, her father, and brother. However, since *Hamlet* is a problem play where nothing seems as it looks; the play provides Lavery with the possibility to give voice to the silenced female characters in Shakespeare's play.

"Frustrated by the scarcity of good female parts" (de Gay 50), Rosemary Hill, who was the director of the theatre group named Shakespeare's Women, requested Lavery to write a play. Jane de Gay explains that "Bryony Lavery's play was intended as a feminist project, both in its subject matter and in its creation of opportunities for female characters" (49). Thus, the main aim of the play was "the need for giving strong voices and story lines to a variety of female parts" (Goodman 2000: xxxvi). However, according to Jane de Gay, due to the large and the "mixed nature of the cast" (50) Lavery and Hill could not follow this female agenda to the extent they wanted. As Jane de Gay adds,

In particular, many of the younger members were less aware of gender issues than were the older actors. Although questions of gender were discussed during some of the rehearsals and workshops, this discussion was limited by constraints of time and by the director's need to maintain discipline over a large and partly inexperienced cast. The mixed nature of the cast also imposed certain conditions on the kind of play that was required: besides providing good parts for women, it also had to include smaller roles for the less experienced women and good parts for the strong male actors in the company. As a result, although there were more women than men in the cast, the women characters did

not necessarily have any greater importance or prominence than the male characters. (50)

Marianne Novy argues that “Shakespeare’s plays have been interpreted and rewritten to drench women in assumptions about gender, but women have also interpreted and rewritten them to question those assumptions” (11). Therefore, Lavery explores in *Ophelia*,

a form of rewriting which does not replace ‘father’ texts, so much as take place in the gaps and spaces left when the written record is ruptured. It can therefore be seen as subversive for exploring particularly ‘feminine’ ways of making meaning in text and performance. (de Gay 57)

Through intertextual references to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Lavery’s *Ophelia* seeks to explore how women make meaning. As Dilek Direnç agrees “intertextuality at work in women’s revisionist fiction is inevitably subversive” (179), since while the female writer makes use of the father text, she deconstructs it. Direnç adds that these writers, “‘unweave’ the male texts of given mythologies by using the fabric of their deconstruction to weave their own texts” (179). Thus, the act of creating meaning through a revision of the father text becomes equivalent to what this dissertation considers as establishing mythical patterns and breaking the established myths of the patriarchal order.

In the pursuit of establishing her own mythical patterns, Lavery follows various steps in *Ophelia*. First of all, Lavery organizes the events in *Ophelia* like a frame story to allow her audience to acknowledge that the actions in *Ophelia* explain the past, present, and the future events in *Hamlet*, and therefore allows the audience to question the events that could have happened before and after Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Secondly, Lavery alters the plot of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* to present her own perspectives and explanations about the actions and the characters in *Hamlet*. Through using metadrama, Lavery aims to enable her audience to question all established truths by keeping her audience awake. Furthermore, Lavery seeks to prove that all truths are constructed through manipulation in the patriarchal order, and therefore she emphasizes the idea that manipulation and deceit can easily construct what the society considers as truth. In addition, Lavery establishes the perspective that considers gender roles to be mere social constructions as a persistent pattern. Bryony Lavery revises the characters in *Hamlet* along with Shakespeare’s other female characters to

establish and emphasize persistent patterns such as how men are more frail than women when it comes to desiring the other sex, how the patriarchal society manipulates women into supporting their own suppression, how women must quit their old and quiet habits and take action to free themselves from the clutches of patriarchal immasculation. Lavery also determines rewriting as a means to have women write their own stories through their own perspectives to exist in the social order, and emphasizes the persistent pattern that through writing and theatre, future generations must be informed of the conflicts women have endured under the patriarchal order.

As Jane de Gay argues, Bryony Lavery has written *Ophelia*,

as an attempt to rescue [Shakespeare] for feminists by interpreting his female characters in ways which raised gender issues, and by viewing the characters sympathetically and offering explanations for some of the actions they are given in the original plays. (50)

Bryony Lavery organizes her play like a frame story, which makes intertextual references to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. The first frame is a new play, which tells the events after Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is over. In this part Fortinbras comes onto the stage to see all the dead bodies of the royal family and orders them to be buried. At this point the players come in and are asked to perform a play called "The Tragedy of Ophelia: Lady of Denmark." In the second frame there is also a new play which begins before Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In this new play, which is in fact the play within the play called "The Tragedy of Ophelia", Lavery writes the events before King Hamlet's funeral and Gertrude's marriage to Claudius. These two frames only make intertextual references to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and therefore turn *Ophelia* into a new play, whereas the last frame retells the events in *Hamlet* through a different perspective. This third frame is a revision of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and proposes to the audience to perceive and evaluate Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with new eyes. As Peter Widdowson argues,

The term 're-vision' deploys a strategic ambiguity between the word *revise*: 'to examine and correct; to make a new, improved version of; to study anew,' and *re-vision*: to see in another light; to re-envison or perceive differently; and thus to recast and re-evaluate the original. (164)

For this reason, while Bryony Lavery writes a new play in the first two frames, she weaves her persistent patterns among the lines. However, mythbreaking is especially emphasized in the third frame of *Ophelia*, since Lavery allows her audience to reconsider Shakespeare's play from a new direction. In order to understand Lavery's revision of *Hamlet*, it might be useful to briefly narrate the actions that happen in *Ophelia*.

As stated before, Lavery's *Ophelia* begins where Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ends. *Ophelia* consists of two major acts which are divided by short scenes. The prologue in Act One is titled "Noble Deaths" (Lavery 1), and this is the first frame established by Lavery, which tells the future events that could have happened after Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ends. As Fortinbras comes onto the stage, he

stands surveying a dreadful scene of bloodshed. Two young men, HAMLET and LAERTES lie dead from stab wounds, swords and daggers about. The king, CLAUDIUS, sits stabbed and poisoned, the Queen, GERTRUDE, sprawls in her throne, poisoned. (1)

As the noble bodies are carried out of stage, "Some of his soldiers bring in a gaggle of people, mostly women. PLAYER KING with manuscript. PROPS with appropriate large prop for Scene One. They go still with horror at the scene they are in" (1). Upon Fortinbras' inquisition about their identity, The Player King, who is in fact a "middle-aged actress wearing a rehearsal crown and a false moustache" (Lavery 1) states that they were rehearsing a play for their majesty. When Fortinbras requests further knowledge about the play, the Player King states,

A young lady of the court wrote it.  
This one [young woman] plays her.  
Her father died... untimely.  
[points out POLONIUS in the players.]  
She went mad, poor thing.  
And killed herself.  
Drowned.  
[PROPS acknowledged.]  
Her brother lies there.  
[PLAYER KING prompts the young woman actor, who is transfixed with horror at the carnage. She stares as SOLDIERS carry HAMLET and LAERTES off.]  
This manuscript was in her room.  
It was discovered when she died. (2)

As Fortinbras takes the manuscript from the Player King, he states, ““The tragedy of OPHELIA, lady of Denmark.”” We’ll watch it. Set it out” (2). However, the Player King objects stating that “it is women’s work... and the ending’s not yet fixed” (2). However, Fortinbras insists that they perform the play to pass the time. Upon this request the stage directions read,

[THE PLAYERS go professionally to work. They have a collection of props, effects, sketchy costumes which they use within the scenes and scene changes to thrilling, enchanting effect. The effect is always of minimum resources and externals, but maximum virtuoso staging ingenuity and acting. PLAYER KING and PROPS work together as a team, directing, organizing. So, for example, in this instance, the actors set up beach, wind, view, etc... while the young woman about to play OPHELIA runs pell-mell about, getting out of breath for her entrance...]. (3)

Player King directs Fortinbras to his seat in the audience, and the play within the play begins. This first part of the play within the play is in fact the second frame established by Lavery, which tells the events that could have happened before Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* begins. In the first scene titled “Into the Sea” (3) Ophelia runs onto the stage followed by her Nurse where they observe a boat and a body floating behind the boat. The people in the boat bring in the body to the shore and the audience learns that it is the body of Gertrude’s handmaid Iras. Hamlet comes out of the boat as well and through their actions of “holding hands, not looking at one another for a long time in silence” (8), the audience is made aware that Hamlet and Ophelia are in love. At this point Hamlet introduces Ophelia to “the lady-scholar Horatia” (Lavery 8), who perceives the black flags in the castle, which signifies that there is a “high-born death” (9) in the castle. As Hamlet worries about this high-born death, Laertes comes on stage and reveals that Hamlet’s father the King has died. Thus, the audiences, who are familiar with *Hamlet*, realize that Ophelia’s tragedy begins at an earlier period than Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* opens two months after the death of Old Hamlet when Marcellus, Bernardo, and Horatio see the ghost of King Hamlet for the second time. Therefore, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* begins when Claudius and Gertrude are already married, and Hamlet is unable to endure his mother’s marriage with his uncle. However, in Bryony Lavery’s *Ophelia*, the play within the play, “Tragedy of Ophelia,” opens soon after King Hamlet’s death, just before his funeral. The audience is introduced to an Ophelia, who wants to be free and leave Denmark; a Hamlet, who

is actually relieved about his father's death; a Gertrude, who has deceived Claudius into murdering her husband; a Claudius who is truly repentant for murdering his brother; a Charmian, who comes to investigate her sister's death in Denmark (Charmian and Iras are faithful attendants to Cleopatra in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*); and finally, the audience meets the ghosts of the Old King and of Iras, who reveal themselves to Ophelia and Hamlet.

In the first act of Bryony Lavery's *Ophelia*, Lady Capulet (Juliet's mother from *Romeo and Juliet*), Lady Macbeth (who is pregnant in Lavery's play), Katherina (from *Taming of the Shrew*), Goneril (King Lear's daughter), and Portia (who saves Antonio from Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*) come to Denmark for the Old King's funeral. These women are the noble representatives of their husbands in the funeral of Old King Hamlet. However, they are unable to return to their homes, even after the funeral, due to the wild storms in Denmark. The first act ends as the ghost of Iras reveals herself to Ophelia and explains that she has been murdered. Iras states, "I cannot leave the earthly world... / till my death's appeased... / or journey to the heavenly world / till my soul's released" (43-44). Upon this Ophelia decides to help her with these words, "Oh pitiful spirit, your call answers mine! / As you from this miserable world would go, / So I from hellish Elsinore also... / How can I help you fly?" (44). However, at this point Hamlet enters and the stage descriptions read "HAMLET goes to embrace OPHELIA, but she suddenly reacts fiercely against his touch... he is surprised [...] She fights him fiercely ... he tries to calm her. She faints. HAMLET comes out of character" (44). The actor, who is playing Hamlet is worried that Ophelia has fainted, and states "This doesn't happen! Mama!" (44), and he explains to the Player King that the actress in the role of Ophelia has really fainted. At this moment the play within the play is over and Fortinbras states "Then we who are your audience will / like your heroine there drink, sit rest / and come back when we are all refreshed / and see how this villainy is addressed!" (45).

The second act opens as Fortinbras questions why the authoress of the "Tragedy of Ophelia" went mad. Player King explains that she went mad because of her love for Hamlet and states that they are ready to continue with the play, since "now young motherhood" (46) is ready to perform her part. Thus, it is revealed that the actress playing Ophelia is pregnant. The play within the play begins once again from the part where Hamlet had come into Ophelia's room. This time rather than fighting Hamlet,

Ophelia makes love to him. The Player King and the Scribes, acting “as theatrical midwives”, explain,

Two months of storms!  
[...] The devilish weather imprisoned our funeral guests  
boredom, frustration, high-rank ennui reigned...  
[...] till good Queen Regent Gertrude kindly deigned  
[...] to marry Claudius her brother-in-law and make him King...  
[...] Then Prince Hamlet seems to go quite mad!  
[...] then we poor humble actors were bespoke  
to perform “The Mousetrap” with some of Hamlet’s padding...  
and so fell out of favour with Lord and Lady there... (48)

At this point the stage descriptions reveal that Laertes and Polonius find the love letters exchanged between Ophelia and Hamlet. Polonius agrees as Laertes tells his father to separate Ophelia and Hamlet. Laertes states, “So by their separation you our young Prince / from temptation take / and my sweet sister a virgin fair re-make. Thus by your hand you split both son and daughter / Their sin soon washed in purest water!” (50). Unlike Shakespeare’s covert hinting, Bryony Lavery’s characterization of Laertes indicates that Laertes has an incestual feeling for Ophelia. As Laertes tries to separate Hamlet and Ophelia, unlike her characterization in Shakespeare, Ophelia revolts against her brother. Ophelia states, “Reptile! / Night-Crawler! / Love-Killer! / Rape-Swordsman! / Brother-Animal! / Here’s water pure!” (50) and spits into Laertes’s face.

Meanwhile, the noble visitors are frustrated, since they are unable to leave Denmark due to the storms, while Laertes can leave for Paris, since he is a man. At this point Lady Macbeth has a miscarriage, and Ophelia reveals to Lady Katherina that she is also pregnant. The Guards enter and similar to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, the audience is told that Hamlet has killed Polonius. Gertrude is very upset and Portia together with Goneril try to calm her down. Finally, Goneril states that she will take Hamlet to England to “find his noble mind again” (56). As Claudius complains to Gertrude, “while your son walks we are not safe” (57), Gertrude remarks, “I cannot let this poison in my ear! / You rid me of my husband, / you’ll not also have my son!” (57). Upon this remark Claudius states, “No, you’ll have mine!” (57). Thus, in Lavery’s play, the audience is made aware that Gertrude knows that Claudius murdered her husband.

Upon learning that Hamlet murdered her father, Polonius, Ophelia decides to take revenge on Hamlet. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Ophelia loses her mind after Polonius dies; however, in Bryony Lavery's play, Ophelia is characterized as a woman who seeks to punish her father's murderer. At this point, the ghosts of Iras and Old Hamlet come onto the stage where Old Hamlet states "I am unavenged on he that had my kill. / The foul serpent who poured death in my ear / has my castle, my kingdom and my wife so dear!" (59). To this complaint Iras answers,

Your wife so dear? Poor spirit you are blind!  
I was her handmaid when this vile snake spat  
and was the bonded servant of your spouse's mind  
who painted her with hues so it seemed that  
King Hamlet beat Gertrude, his good wife  
for this Claudius took your life...  
and, for you pursued me, would take me to your bed,  
she thought me false and wished me dead,  
she disbelieved I you refused  
so noble minds close rank when servants are abused  
then she suffocated me to stop my revealing breath  
tho he is snake, she's The Devil who wrought your Death! (60)

Lavery goes further to argue that in fact it was Gertrude who persuaded Claudius to murder her unfaithful husband who was after Iras, Gertrude's handmaid. Gertrude also murdered Iras, so that she would not reveal her evil plans.

As the noble visitors are finally about to leave Denmark, Katherina and Lady Capulet ask Gertrude to let them take Ophelia away with them. However, Gertrude objects by stating "you lost a daughter, take not mine, / tho not of my flesh, she's that to me" (63). Later, the Nurse tells Gertrude that Ophelia is pregnant and she lies about the fact that Hamlet is the father. Gertrude is worried that Ophelia's child from Hamlet, would prevent her child from Claudius from getting the throne. Thus, when Charmian comes to see Gertrude about Iras's murder, Gertrude states that Ophelia murdered Iras. Gertrude claims that Ophelia killed Iras, because she was very jealous, since Gertrude also loved Iras so well. Thus, Charmian decides to avenge Ophelia, who is trying to avenge Hamlet. Although Ophelia swims hard to find Hamlet on the ship to England, she is unable to take her revenge, since Hamlet states showing his hand, "look on the marks writ there. / The lines are short. / There is no future. / I am dead already" (69). After Ophelia forgives Hamlet and they exchange their farewells, Ophelia swims back to the shore where Gertrude and Charmian are waiting for her. As

“OPHELIA comes into GERTRUDE’s embrace, CHARMIAN traps her with [a] cloak” (70). The stage descriptions read “GERTRUDE and CHARMIAN overcome her... CHARMIAN drowns her... GERTRUDE watches for a little, then calmly walks into the next scene where” (70), she tells Claudius and Laertes that Ophelia is drowned. The play within the play ends as Claudius states “Let’s follow, Gertrude. / How much I had to do to calm his rage! / Now fear I this will give it start again. / Therefore let’s follow!” (71-72).

Lavery ends the play within the play at the moment where in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Claudius and Laertes arrange the plot to murder Hamlet in the fencing match with the poisonous dagger, or with the poisonous pearl Claudius will throw into Hamlet’s wine. As the play within the play ends, Player King comes onto the stage and states, “Sir, Good lord Fortinbras, / there the manuscript ends... / what happens next... the terrible scene / whose bloody ends you entered on... / this fearful family expunged” (72). Fortinbras claps as he states,

the poetry’s uncertain, the action strange,  
the women too angry and the men too few,  
but it passed a time, and if she’d lived  
she’d have made... a woman playwright,  
by my word!  
More pity it is she took the child with her to the grave (72)

As Fortinbras says these he stares at the actress playing Ophelia, so that Player King and Props embrace her saying “Ay sir... we humble players thank God our daughter here is lowborn” (72). Fortinbras comments about the baby the actress playing Ophelia is carrying; “if it were that sweet Hamlet’s son, / I could raise up that royal house once more in Elsinore!” (72), and he departs. Player King calls after him saying, “And if it were that sweet Laertes one, / double house of Polonius could take the floor!” (72). Thus, Bryony Lavery raises the question in the audience’s mind whether the baby Ophelia was carrying is from her brother Laertes or from Hamlet.

While the players are packing to leave, the Player King asks how lady Ophelia liked the play. The actress playing Ophelia mimics Fortinbras saying “the poetry’s uncertain, / the action strange, / the women too angry and / the men too few; / but it passed a time... / and if she’d lived” (73). The Player King interrupts her by saying “Which mercifully she did” (73). Ophelia adds “Because she held her breath / and swam and fought against the tide” (73). Knowing that she will have a child and a

pleasant future traveling with the players, Ophelia states, “then ‘Tragedy of Ophelia’ it is not / and she must rewrite / and bend her pen to scrawl its ink / upon the next page blank and white” (73). Thus, the audience realizes that the actress playing Ophelia is actually Ophelia herself. She has survived the plot of Gertrude and Charmian by holding her breath and swimming hard. Now Ophelia has joined the players, where she will travel with her friends and rewrite the “Tragedy of Ophelia,” since it is no longer a tragedy. Lavery ends the play as Ophelia sings, together with the players she carries the “cases, boxes, carts into the future” (74).

The ending of the play once again reminds the audience that the “Tragedy of Ophelia” is a play within the play *Ophelia*. As Marina Jenkins explains the function of the play within a play,

The idea of a play within a play is a frequently found theatrical device. Its popularity with dramatists may lie in the fact that it is a language in which characters explore their world in a way that cannot be done by any other means. By this method playwrights underscore the value of plays themselves as means of communication. (2)

As Bryony Lavery emphasizes that she is trying to communicate a message through her usage of the play within the play, the audience is also forced to keep awake so as to question the action on stage. As Gregory Dobrov states,

Since “metadrama” and “metatheater” are, on the whole, used interchangeably, both terms figure in this study as a theatrical subset of a generalized “metafiction” - that process whereby a representation doubles back on itself, where a narrative or performance recognizes, engages, or exploits its own fictionality. (9)

As the audience is made aware of the fictionality of *Ophelia* and the play within the play called “Tragedy of Ophelia,” they begin to question and evaluate the performances on stage through their own perspectives. Thus, through the usage of metatheatre, Lavery has her audience ready to question all the statements and the messages given in the production, so as to come to their own conclusions about the characters previously created by Shakespeare. As Juliet Dusinberre writes,

Shakespeare inherited ideas about women as well-defined and apparently impregnable as the principles of the Ptolemaic universe. Theology authorised a view of women as a separate and inferior species, a view which pervaded the popular culture of proverbs, ballads and folk wisdom, but which also determined women’s political and social position. Poetry offered an exotic choice between beauty and the beast, the goddess and the devil. (305)

Therefore, through using metadrama, Bryony Lavery seeks to break all the established perceptions behind the figures Shakespeare created. These perceptions are often patriarchal views of life and their sense of establishing the social constructions of reality. When a female writer like Bryony Lavery uses techniques to remind her audience that this is a play, it becomes subversive. This is because the female playwright is questioning reality and the constructions of the patriarchal order. As Richard Hornby claims,

Whenever the play within the play is used, it is both reflective and expressive of its society's deep cynicism about life. When the prevalent view is that the world is in some way illusory or false, then the play within the play becomes a metaphor for life itself. The fact that the inner play is an obvious illusion (since we see other characters watching it), reminds us that the play *we* are watching is also an illusion, despite its vividness and excitement; by extension, the world in which we live, which also seems to be so vivid, is in the end a sham. We watch a play, within which there is another play – ultimately, all is play. In other words, the play within the play is projected onto life itself, and becomes a means for gauging it. (45)

As Lavery questions life, she subverts all established interpretations and truths. Shortly, Lavery is arguing that nothing seems as it looks in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. All meaning is constructed and manipulated according to the “well-defined and apparently impregnable” (Dusinberre 305) perspectives of the patriarchal order. For instance, Gertrude manipulates Claudius into murdering his brother by deceit; the Nurse manipulates Gertrude into believing that Ophelia is impregnated by Hamlet; and Ophelia manipulates the thoughts of Gertrude, Charmian, and Fortinbras and makes them think that she is dead. Additionally, Lavery seeks to reveal how Shakespeare was manipulated by the patriarchal order in his characterization of his major characters in *Hamlet*.

First of all, in Lavery's *Ophelia*, unlike Shakespeare's characterization, Gertrude is not presented as “the nurturing, loving, careful mother and wife – malleable, submissive, totally dependent, and solicitous of others at the expense of herself” (Smith 207). In Shakespeare, Gertrude is presented as “a soft, obedient, dependent, unimaginative woman who is caught miserably at the center of a desperate struggle” (194) between her husband and her son. However, Lavery represents Gertrude as a manipulative and a deceitful woman, who believes that the end justifies the means in

the Machiavellian sense. To avenge her husband's debauchery with her handmaid Iras, Gertrude manipulates Claudius to murder the Old King Hamlet. In Lavery's play, after the murder of Old Hamlet, Claudius comes into Gertrude's chamber and the dialogue between the two characters follows as,

Claudius: This bottle I have used is yours.

Gertrude: The contents, lord, are thine.

Claudius: The contents, lady, eat away your husband's brains.

Gertrude: It was you?

Claudius: It was me.

Gertrude: He was your brother!

Claudius: You were his wife...

[He roughly pulls her wrap down from her shoulders. Her back is covered in the bruising of lashes.]

Claudius: Neither his heart nor he beat more. / He keeps his connubial promise to honour and obey.

[GERTRUDE slowly pulls her wrap about her.]

Gertrude: This unasked-for service is acquitted. / The bill is written; its payment due. / I need to know the cost so I may pay.

Claudius: I need but one coin pressed in my hand; / I simulated snake so well, the part's my own, / by its vile mask I am possessed / I am cold-blooded, my flesh crawls / I administered the poison but it entered me! / I would be human again... / make me warm! (27-28)

At this point Gertrude "takes him in her arms, like a child" (28), and he starts to cry. Gertrude states that "It seems that I am reptile too" (28), however, Claudius states that he loves her and the scene finishes as they kiss with "a great burst of desire" (29). In this scene Gertrude gives the impression that she was being maltreated with lashes. Although there is no reference to who was responsible for whipping her, Gertrude seems to have reasons for avenging the person responsible for the lashes. Thus, even though she seems not to acknowledge that she wanted Claudius to murder her husband, she is willing to pay for "this unasked-for service" (28). Shortly, she knew that Claudius was to murder her husband; however, she did not stop him from accomplishing his plans. Later, Gertrude has Charmian clean the paint of the lashes. Gertrude states, "I have paint upon my back. / I was in a play. / Pray remove it. / The design mislikes me now" (42). Thus, the audience realizes that no one was hurting Gertrude, but she had painted her back to give the impression that she was being whipped. Gertrude wanted Claudius to believe that the Old King was being cruel to her, so she manipulated Claudius into murdering his brother.

Gertrude also manipulates the truth and deceives Charmian into believing that Ophelia murdered Charmian's sister, Iras. Gertrude states,

Sad Charmian, there is, I've got a tale of woe,  
a tapestry bag of envy, wicked threads shot through.  
I loved your sister Iras, who, tho she served me  
I thought of her as dear as daughter,  
this my sweet loved Ophelia liked not well,  
and turned her jealous gaze at your sister's quarter...  
I said "there's love for all within this breast"  
Iras was content, But Ophelia could not rest  
and when I bid them to the fields to gather herbs,  
for hues, for lotions, all the lea to comb...  
I sent them both to open up their hearts,  
but only one, with heart of stone came home. (65)

However, through the words of the ghost of Iras, the audience learns that Gertrude thought Iras and Old Hamlet had an affair, and therefore Gertrude suffocated Iras. To escape Charmian's revenge, Gertrude accused Ophelia of murdering Iras. In Lavery's play, Gertrude through manipulation and deceit formulated her own truths and got Claudius and Charmian to believe in her.

In addition to this, Ophelia's nurse through deceit manipulates the truth behind Ophelia's pregnancy. After Lady Macbeth loses her child during birth, she leaves her sheets stained with blood. Nurse is cleaning and sees that while Lady Macbeth's sheets need bleach, Ophelia's sheets are white and therefore does not need cleaning. Another servant Raag states that Ophelia's sheets were left white "from the night [her] lord Hamlet stayed with [Ophelia] till dawn" (61). Thus, immediately the audience acknowledges that Ophelia was not a virgin. Nurse answers Raag,

My girl Ophelia grows with child  
yet no virgin blood the night of Hamlet **wild**  
so who's the father, that is who **pays**?  
the one has **most** makes childhood happy days!  
On this blank sheet there's nothing writ  
[She exchanges Ophelia's sheet for Lady Macbeth's bloodstained one.]  
I'll take **this** to the Queen, there's coin in it! (62)

When the Nurse takes the bloodstained sheets to Queen Gertrude, she explains that Ophelia is carrying a child. As the Nurse shows Gertrude the bloodstained sheets, she states "though whose its sire's not writ / Here's her bedsheet, the one Prince Hamlet pressed, / perhaps he's it?" (64). Gertrude objects by stating that "This tells us

nothing. / No evidence is here... / except this night Ophelia was virgin pure” (64).

Nurse immediately replies,

And good Prince Hamlet showed himself a man...  
there's pleasure **untold** when **mum** becomes a **gran!**  
whatever's the truth, one thing is chapter and verse,  
the babe will surely need a **nurse!** (64)

Gertrude is very unhappy about this incident, since it can ruin her own baby's chances of becoming the future king; however, she says nothing and tells the Nurse to keep this intelligence a secret as she gives the Nurse some money. Although the Nurse knows that Ophelia was not a virgin the night she was with Hamlet, she manipulates the truth so as to make Gertrude believe that Hamlet took Ophelia's virginity, and also to receive some compensation for this news she gives to Gertrude. The Nurse is often represented as a materialistic woman who takes money from Laertes and Hamlet so that they can see Ophelia, or learn news about her. In this instance, she creates her own truth and thus receives money in return. Thus, Lavery establishes the persistent pattern that truth is a mere construction and can be altered according to one's desires.

Furthermore, in Bryony Lavery's play, Gertrude takes over the role of the villain from Claudius, and manages to manipulate the patriarchal order. Lavery challenges the social constructions of masculinity by attributing to Claudius and Hamlet feminine characteristics of weakness. Claudius's regret in having murdered his brother is apparent in his crying and his description of himself with these words, "I am cold-blooded, my flesh crawls / I administered the poison but it entered me" (28). He wishes Gertrude would make him warm and "human again" (28). In addition to this, Claudius feels very guilty when he sees Hamlet. In an aside Claudius remarks "I have betrayed a boy I love / with blood stained a white dove / put poison in a good king's ear / a brother who I cared for dear / bar not the door, the devil's within / cover your body's orifices, I am Sin!" (15). Claudius is depicted as a weak man, who is manipulated by women. In a similar way, Hamlet is described as a weak boy by Polonius with these words "[Hamlet's] a poor cub to wear a lion's mane! / He needs a strong pride about him / to hunt this Northern plain!... / I like not boys to cry... touch fondly and such / it damps the gunpowder, cuts out the wick! / rusts up our manly armour so we cannot war!" (15). Also Hamlet's emotional nature is emphasized by Lavery when he cries in Ophelia's arms and Ophelia "babies him" (47) after they

make love. By shifting the positions of the villain, the hero, and the fragile woman, Lavery challenges the traditional construction of gender roles.

Bryony Lavery also creates her persistent patterns by explaining the reasons behind the actions of Shakespeare's characters. Initially, as opposed to Shakespeare's representation, Gertrude turns into a villainous character in *Ophelia*. In Lavery's representation there is no question whether or not Gertrude knew that Claudius murdered Old Hamlet. However, Lavery gives reasons for Gertrude's vengeance: Old Hamlet is an immoral man, who seduces Gertrude's handmaid. Gertrude states, "To my husband I was always true... / though he this honour neer gave me" (40). Therefore, unable to endure the disloyalty of her husband, Gertrude manipulates Claudius to murder him. With this, Lavery breaks the well known line in *Hamlet*, "Frailty, thy name is woman" (I.ii.146), and establishes the idea that when it comes to desire, men can be more frail.

In addition to Gertrude's representation, in Lavery the audience meets a strong Ophelia, unlike "the obedient daughter" (Dash 119) of Shakespeare. Lavery breaks Shakespeare's depiction of an Ophelia who descends into madness. When Fortinbras questions why the authoress of the "Tragedy of Ophelia" went mad, the Player King states that she went mad "for love of noble Hamlet [...] so says our royal history" (Lavery 46). However, the royal history is not accurate in Lavery's play, since Ophelia is no longer mad. Irene G. Dash argues that in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*,

Like Hamlet, the drama's protagonist, the women too struggle toward self-understanding: Ophelia stumbling, Gertrude growing. Unlike Hamlet, however, the women's struggles are interwoven with their socially assigned roles and with their attempts, whether consciously or not, to extricate self from role. In these characters, hedged about by a patriarchal society, Shakespeare shows not only that women's lives are hinged to those of the men but also that ultimately such a dependency hampers individual growth. (112)

As opposed to Shakespeare, Lavery brings on an Ophelia, who is struggling for her independence. Right at the beginning of the play within the play, Ophelia runs to the sea begging,

Mother Sea,  
who can race from land to land,  
continent to continent make your lap  
run your heat across the world...  
come to the straw here

let your waters break  
and bear me!  
Queen Sea,  
who can break rocks tall as royal palaces  
crumble them to invisible grains of sand  
with foaming fingers fondle a king's great ship  
from hand to waving hand hurl it across a bay...  
rule me!  
Wolf Sea,  
roar and howl  
nip my animal neck in your velvet foaming mouth  
drag me between your waving paws  
and steal me away from here! (Lavery 4)

Lavery's Ophelia seeks unity with the Mother Sea, who is powerful and majestic. As soon as she calms down, she asks her Nurse to warm her, and adds "I have been cold all my life!" (5). Upon seeing the boat and a figure swimming behind it, Ophelia remarks, "oh how cold I am! / my blood is sleet. / my heart is ice. / my soul snow. / Something dreadful comes!" (6). Ophelia emphasizes her distress even to her brother when he asks her where she was; Ophelia states "My chamber was all dark, brother. / Its walls stood too close. / The sea called me into this great hall of air / with its high ceiling of frescoed clouds" (9). Her coldness, the darkness of her chamber and life, as well as her hopes of uniting with the sea signify her depression due to living in Elsinore. However, unlike Shakespeare's Ophelia, Lavery's Ophelia does not conform to her situation and asks Gertrude "Dearest of Friends to a Motherless Girl. / kindest of counselors / Mother in all but blood... / grant me leave to depart from here, / to commence my own journey in the world... / the son of your blood is with you now, / let the daughter of your affection go" (16). She describes herself as a sick bird and wishes Gertrude would allow her to "take it far away and set it free" (16). However, Gertrude does not allow her to leave with these words,

The first fine day for many a month.  
My royal husband sits in the sun under a tree  
My favoured handmaid walks into the sea  
he sleeps, she swims, the world smiles, Eden.  
a serpent kisses my husband on his ear  
a sea folds my handmaid in a fond embrace  
love kills.  
You must stay here. (16-17)

Gertrude cries and asks Ophelia to nurse her. At this point Hamlet comes in and Gertrude is overjoyed to see her son. She welcomes Hamlet with these words, “My son! / My blood! / My child! / Hold your poor Mother!” (17). Ophelia is unable to disobey Gertrude and cannot leave Elsinore; however, she is aware that mothers always favor their sons. Ophelia states “Though I had never mother, / I am as daughter versed / we are loved when we give / but sons always loved first!” (17). Lavery’s Ophelia is well aware of the patriarchal order’s favoring of men. As Ophelia meets the ghost of Iras, she decides to help the ghost with these words “Oh pitiful spirit, your call answers mine! / As you from this miserable world would go, / So I from hellish Elsinore also” (44). Briefly, Lavery takes out Ophelia from her traditional role as the obedient daughter, and explains that her Ophelia wanted to change her life. Although Lavery’s Ophelia also does not have the freedom to lead her life according to her desires, she at least has the power to survive.

Lavery’s Ophelia is skilled in using her words to stand up to her brother and father when they want her to keep away from Hamlet. After calling Laertes “Reptile! / Night-Crawler! / Love-Killer! / Rape-Swordsman! / Brother-Animal!” (50), she spits in Laertes’s face and says “Here’s pure water!” (50) which Laertes had asked for to clean Ophelia’s sins. By describing her spit as pure, Ophelia is denying the accusations of her brother, who regards her to be sinful for having a relationship with Hamlet. Furthermore, Ophelia is skilled in using weapons. As she states, “Oh I am fortunate! / I know these weapons well! / My brother Laertes taught them all to me! / He knew without a mother by I’d not be safe!” (58). In addition to her skills in words and weapons, Ophelia is skilled in swimming. Hamlet describes her skill in water with these words,

When we were children and we played in the sea,  
It seemed you could live in the water...  
When you dived, you stayed forever till I  
Thought you drowned... then up you’d burst,  
And I would, laughing, call you fish. (67)

This skill enables Ophelia to survive by escaping Gertrude and Charmian’s attempts to drown her. Therefore, she is able to use her free will to make a change in her life and leave Elsinore with the players. Lavery finishes Ophelia’s tragedy with a happy ending. Lavery establishes the importance of learning skills for women to survive in the patriarchal world as a persistent pattern.

As stated earlier, Lavery brings Lady Capulet, Lady Macbeth, Portia, Goneril, and Katherina into her *Ophelia* as the royal guests coming to attend Old Hamlet's funeral. Lavery revises these female characters to express her views on the patriarchal order. First of all, upon the arrival of these royal guests, Claudius states,

These countries in their turn  
slap sorrowing Denmark's tear-stained cheek...  
with insults sharp as daggers stab our  
kingdom's already broken heart...  
they have sent Women!!!! (30)

Gertrude gives the same reaction as Claudius and states, "My husband waits on his bier for his friends / we looked for knights to ride him into heaven / what does this mean?" (30). Lady Macbeth demands that she is equal to them with these words, "My lord, no mirth was intended here. / My blood weighs as heavy in the balance as my lord's / and my lord's flows a blue river next to yours / Though I kneel in your mud, I am as high as you" (31). Goneril threatens Denmark with these words "my father sent me here to grieve. / He thought it sound / if you like it not send message round / the funeral waits, and when you feel his breath / he'll show you how to deal with death!" (31). Portia is unable to understand the reactions of the men and states "How strange it is when the gentler sex / come bearing in our arms the gift of love / men think we carry sticks and stones / fingers clenched inside a silken glove!" (31). As Claudius stops the funeral preparations until the "so-called allies" (31) come to pay their respect to the Old King, Lady Capulet speaks,

I can not send my husband, for he is gone  
nor send my child to avenge my wounded pride  
for she is but a girl and she has died  
and lies forever still on a bed of stone.  
[...] I'd the hand of any stranger seize  
whether cutpurse or king, if he'd bring me ease  
To mourn you need no high-thought name  
In grief, all living creatures are the same. (31-32)

Upon Lady Capulet's words, Gertrude ends the fight by saying "Lady, your sorrow pours water on our burning rage; / Your step joins ours. / Let us walk the road together" (32). The funeral is continued and the tension is eased. As Jane de Gay argues, Lavery's

scenario proposes a radical view of power: where one might expect a feminist view of Shakespeare's female characters to give them greater

political strength and status, this production celebrates moral courage and strength as worth more than wealth or social and political status. (51-52)

Lavery represents Lady Macbeth and Goneril as women who make use of their power in the patriarchal order. However, Lady Capulet, who has lost her husband and her daughter Juliet, knows that patriarchal power and status are transitory. All men and women are equal in the face of sorrow. As indicated by Jane de Gay, Lavery through Lady Capulet emphasizes the persistent pattern that power and status are materialistic as opposed to moral courage and strength.

In addition to this, Lavery establishes the idea that women who seek power often become the tools of the patriarchal system. For instance, when Gertrude asks for advice from Lady Macbeth on whether or not to marry Claudius, Lady Macbeth supports her with these words,

... be his Queen!  
You are Queen till your son Hamlet puts on the crown;  
and as Queen, you make kings.  
Hamlet you've made, but he is young  
and has far to travel, much to learn.  
Hold him in reserve, till he is grown,  
draw up another, Claudius in his place,  
he is your king, then make him so...  
you have a son, the line is secure,  
now take a husband, so the family is sure! (Lavery 40)

In Lavery's play, Lady Macbeth gives great importance to securing the family line. First of all, in Lavery's play she is carrying a baby which will protect the family line. Unfortunately she loses her baby in this play. Those who are familiar with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* know that Lady Macbeth will lead her husband to destruction, since she "is a woman driven by ambition to seek a higher position for herself and her husband" (Wright 97). Lavery, through her depiction of Lady Macbeth, explains the reason behind Lady Macbeth's ambitions in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Lavery argues that due to the loss of her baby and all her chances of having any other children, Lady Macbeth loses all her chances to secure the family line. For this reason, Lady Macbeth becomes ambitious and reverts to using her husband as a pawn to secure a higher position in the patriarchal order.

Furthermore, Lavery emphasizes that women are being suppressed by men, since it is the women's duty to secure their family line. Thus, Lavery argues that a

barren woman is forced to hate and pity herself by the patriarchal society. As the Queen, Gertrude will make sons, who will protect the name of their father. Although at first the statement “as Queen, you make kings” (Lavery 40) indicates that women are the ones to choose the men, it actually comes to mean that if you are fertile, you can make kings. Lavery presents Lady Macbeth as a woman who has inherited and accepted the rules of the patriarchal order, and who tries to make herself believe that she has an admirable position in this order by saying that we make kings. Lavery establishes the persistent pattern that the patriarchal society manipulates women into unconsciously supporting their own suppression.

Judith Fetterley explains the tendency of women to support patriarchal order as,

Though one of the most persistent of literary stereotypes is the castrating bitch, the cultural reality is not the emasculation of men by women but the *immasculation* of women by men. As readers and teachers and scholars, women are taught to think as men, to identify with a male point of view, and to accept as normal and legitimate a male system of values, one of whose central principles is misogyny. (xx)

Thus, Fetterley asks her readers to “become a resisting rather than an assenting reader” (xxii). In a similar way, Lavery writes *Ophelia* for her audience to reconsider the “male mind that has been implanted in” women (xxii). Fetterley continues, “While women obviously cannot rewrite literary works so that they become ours by virtue of reflecting reality, we can accurately name the reality they do reflect” (xxiii). Lavery rewrites various other characters to rename the reality Shakespeare had implanted them with. In addition to Lady Macbeth, Katherina and Portia are also immasculated characters; although they try to legitimate the male value system, they both suffer due to its suppression.

Katherina from Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew*, is well known as the shrew, who is an ill-tempered, nagging woman. Bryony Lavery “adds a gloss to Katherina’s apparent transformation from a ‘shrew’ into an obedient wife at the end of *The Taming of the Shrew*” (de Gay 52). Katherina’s final speech in Shakespeare’s play has often “been deprecated as antifeminist dogma” (Bean 69).

To wound thy lord, thy king, thy governor:  
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,  
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,  
And in no sense is meet or amiable.  
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,

Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty;  
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty  
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.  
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,  
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,  
And for thy maintenance commits his body  
To painful labour both by sea and land,  
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,  
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure and safe;  
And craves no other tribute at thy hands  
But love, fair looks and true obedience;  
Too little payment for so great a debt. (V.ii.139-55)

For Katherina a husband asks very little for the things he does for his wife. Such submission to male authority is subverted in Bryony Lavery's play. However, Lavery does not allow her Katherina to overcome her suppression under the patriarchal order. Right after Old Hamlet's funeral, Katherina acknowledges that "invisible fists bruise women's breast here [in Denmark]... / kisses hurt, glances black the eyes" (Lavery 34). However, Katherina is unable to overcome these fits and can only advise how Ophelia can avoid them. Katherina advises Ophelia with these words, "If family... as father, brother, husband, son... / Love them above yourself, / for so the world does run... / Cherish him, worship, obey and it will be true / you have a prick keeps other pricks from / shafting you!" (39). To avoid conflict, Katherina advises Ophelia to love the man near her, above herself. Katherina also validates this reasoning by adding that if you have a prick, it will protect you from other pricks. Thus, Katherina is accepting the male order through justifying that she needs a man to protect her from other men.

Lavery is apparently mocking the male order through her representation of Katherina. However, Lavery also reveals how Katherina has become immasculated, since she is indoctrinated in masculine values. As Judith Fetterley argues the immascultation of women doubles the oppression felt by the reader, and in this case the audience. This is because the reader/audience is constantly "reminded that to be male – to be universal – is to be *not female*" (Fetterley xiii). Lavery frequently emphasizes the powerless position of the female guests. Although Katherina is represented as a strong woman, "wearing boxing gloves" (Lavery 50), she is unable to return to her home due to the wild storms in Denmark. As she hears that Laertes is leaving despite the storm, she states, "To be **man** and quit this overhanging museum! / This constant deluge and my / **womanness** hold me here!" (51). Also, Katherina

implies that she has suffered from household conflict and thus chooses to keep silent. As she advises Ophelia to keep silent until she is sure that she is carrying a baby, Katherina states, “if your news to others distress may cause, / till it be fact, let prudence give you pause! / since I became true woman I know one saw / rash words must never hasty leave your maw!” (54). Lavery makes it apparent that Katherina has become a true woman by constantly suppressing her thoughts and feelings. This repression is also revealed in the sheets of Katherina. As the Nurse inspects the sheets of the visitors for cleaning, the stage descriptions read, “next sheet. White. Great rip in it” (61). The Nurse states “Lady Katherina’s. In sleep she still is fighting” (61). Lavery makes it clear that although Katherina has been emasculated to accept the patriarchal order, she is actually in great distress due to this emasculation. Thus, Lavery is once again repeating the idea that a woman who has accepted a male system of values faces constant suppression.

In addition to Katherina, Lavery’s Portia frequently reminds the audience that all women suffer due to their womanness. Shakespeare’s Portia is a very smart woman, who in *The Merchant of Venice* saves Antonio from death through diplomacy. As Clara Claiborne Park argues about Shakespeare’s Portia, she “is allowed to confront a man over matters outside a woman’s sphere, and to win” (109) However, Portia can only exercise her wit when she disguises herself as a man. Clara Claiborne Park comments on Shakespeare’s female characters who disguise themselves,

The most useful dramatic device for mediating the initiatives of the female, however, is the male disguise. Male garments immensely broaden the sphere in which female energy can manifest itself. Dressed as a man, a nubile woman can go places and do things she couldn’t do otherwise [...] With male dress we feel secure. In its absence, feminine assertiveness is viewed with hostility, as with Kate the Shrew, or at best, as with Beatrice, as less than totally positive. Male dress transforms what otherwise could be experienced as aggression into simple high spirits. (108)

Lavery’s Portia, who is not dressed in the attire of a man, is equally wise in diplomacy, however, only in the cases of the sleeping arrangements of the royal guests. As all the hand maids of the guests argue about why their lady should get the better room, Portia stops the fight by stating,

The Princess Goneril must have by rank the largest room...  
Ophelia’s young she can climb to the turret  
room... Lady Macbeth we must protect from

chill in the small, warm chamber... and my  
Lady Capulet must lie above the kitchen,  
for age sleeps fitfully and may require  
some heated wine. (Lavery 37-38)

Lavery allows Portia to have adequate wits and an ambition to develop her learning, however, Lavery has Portia repeatedly articulate the insignificance of her sex. For instance, as she is leaving, Portia thanks Gertrude with these words, “you have entertained me well, / your learned tomes have been my pillow reading, / they tell me we of this sex were never here / save for our task of gentle breeding” (63). Although Lavery makes Portia aware of her insignificance as a woman, she still makes use of Portia as her mouthpiece who constantly gives advice for women’s empowerment. For example, right after the sleeping arrangements are settled, Portia states to Ophelia,

we women are so gifted at being kind  
to others, submitting to their wish;  
we have no talent for a selfishness  
to its lore we’re blind  
we’re at the back of the queue  
holding an empty dish;  
it’s folly, not love, we deserve to languish on the shelf  
you deserve not love till you love yourself! (38)

As Bryony Lavery’s mouthpiece, Portia contemplates on the nature of woman, which leads them to be devoid of selfishness. However, Lavery establishes the pattern that until women learn to love themselves, no one will truly love them in return. In addition to this, Portia’s departing words are also significant. Lavery makes Portia emphasize how women allow themselves to be immasculated. Portia states,

And I agree. I review our defenses and find it thin  
We pleaded womanliness and let this old house take us in  
We held high rank, yet used it to lessen other’s pain  
We let the storm fright us, we merely watched the rain. (64)

Portia’s final advice is to all women,

Let this be writ, it is morn, the day is new,  
all females lift their eyes, walk into the sun  
we must leave our old quite habits, stand in clear view  
and ride to do the deeds that must be done! (64)

Lavery establishes the persistent pattern that women must quit their old and quiet habits, and take action to free themselves from the clutches of patriarchal immasculatation.

At the end of the play, Lavery seems to be suggesting that the initial way for women to take action is through rewriting. As the play within the play is over and Fortinbras leaves the stage, the audience is made to realize that Ophelia has escaped Gertrude and Charmian's murder attempt, and joined the players. All through the play within the play, the actress performing Ophelia's role, was actually Ophelia herself. Therefore, the ending of the play within the play could no longer be called the "Tragedy of Ophelia" since she has survived her tragic end. For this reason Ophelia states, "then 'Tragedy of Ophelia' it is not / and she must rewrite / and bend her pen to scrawl its ink / upon the next page blank and white" (73). In this new page Ophelia believes that there will be new images.

there she'll find the rainbow images  
to fill with dreams this empty space,  
and all lies, betrayals, unkindness, woe  
will henceforth happen only here upon the stage,  
and in no other many-blessed worldly place! (73)

These rainbow images created by women will fill the empty space which women were forced to inhabit through their silence. As women rewrite on this page, all the wrongs, lies, betrayals, unkindness, and woe will cease to exist anywhere else except on the theatre stage. As Bryony Lavery advises women to create their own images and to rewrite their own stories, she establishes the persistent pattern that theatre will remain to exist as a space of learning for all, since in the world Lavery envisions, lies, betrayals, unkindness, and woe will only exist on the theatre stage.

In the final song Ophelia sings, Lavery once again emphasizes that she dreams of a new world for women. Ophelia sings,

the dawn  
a new fresh day  
the dew is fresh upon the grass

we rode with fire  
your hayrick burned down  
last night

the dawn  
a stiffening breeze  
sand swirls across the shore

we sailed with fire  
your ship burned out

last night

the dawn  
with crumpled sheets  
lovers wake in each others arms

we dreamed with fire  
the sky was red  
last night. (74)

In this new dawn, Lavery states that women have burned down the hayrick and the ship of the patriarchal order. Now it is a new day where lovers wake up equal in each others' arms. As the song is over, the stage descriptions read, "The players and Ophelia carry cases, boxes, carts into the future" (74). The players will spread their fire to the whole world and burn all thoughts and ideas that suppress women. Lavery, by having the players and Ophelia walk towards the future, emphasizes the persistent pattern that together future generations must be informed of the conflicts women have endured under the patriarchal order.

To conclude, in writing *Ophelia*, Lavery allows her audience to perceive an alternate version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In her play, she presents her own perspectives and explanations about the actions and the characters in *Hamlet*. Through her play within a play titled "Tragedy of Ophelia: Lady of Denmark" Lavery uses the techniques of metadrama, and keeps her audience awake for them to question all established truths behind Shakespeare's characters. Lavery's main aim is to prove that reality and gender are mere constructions of the patriarchal system. While doing this, she emphasizes the persistent pattern that manipulation and deceit play a major role in the construction of social truths. In addition to this, Lavery rewrites Shakespeare's famous statement "Frailty, thy name is woman" (*Hamlet* I.ii.146) to prove that men are frailer than women. Lavery emphasizes that the patriarchal society manipulates women into supporting their own suppression, and establishes the persistent pattern that women must quit their old quiet habits to free themselves from the clutches of patriarchal immasculation. Lavery constructs the necessity of rewriting as a persistent pattern, where women should write their own stories through their own perspectives, so as to establish a new order where they can overcome the patriarchal oppression, and live equally in this new order. Finally, Lavery emphasizes the importance of

theatre as a means to inform future generations about the injustices women had to suffer under the patriarchal order.

#### IV.III. ZEYNEP AVCI'S *GILGAMESH*<sup>106</sup>

Zeynep Avcı (1947) worked as a journalist in *Cumhuriyet*, *Yeni İstanbul*, *Hürriyet*, and *Milliyet* newspapers. For some time, she worked in Sipa Press and the TRT office in Paris before she returned to Türkiye to take her position working in the journals titled *Yazko Somut*, *Focus*, and *İstanbul*. She has various translations, which were staged, such as *Twelfth Night*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Measure for Measure* by Shakespeare; *The Servant of Two Masters* by Carlo Goldoni; *Abélard and Héloïse* by Ronald Duncan; *Separation* by Tom Kempinski; *Proof* by David Auburn; *Molly Sweeney* by Brian Friel; and *Creditors* by August Strindberg. She has written scripts which have been filmed, such as, *Cahide*, *İstanbul'da 24 Saat*, *Şahmaran*, *Tavuk Göğsü Kazan Dibi*, and *Nihavent Mucize*. She has written various short stories and the biography of Abidin Dino.

*Gilgamesh* is also made up of twelve parts very similar to the standard version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. In Avcı's play, the Snake who steals the plant of immortality, and Yosma, who is known as the harlot, Shamhat, in the standard version of the epic, take the center stage and watch the action on stage as outsiders, who participate in the action of the play when required. Both Yosma and the Snake seem to be living the events, which happened in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, over again. Yosma retells the story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu from her perspective, which frequently emphasizes that Gilgamesh stole Enkidu from her. In a similar way, the Snake retells the story from his own perspective, and wishes that his destiny could be changed and that he had never eaten the plant of immortality. Thus, in the case of the Snake, the story becomes

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<sup>106</sup> Zeynep Avcı wrote *Gilgamiş* in 1996, and the play was published by MitoşBOYUT publishing house in the same year. Zeynep Avcı narrates the events concerning the publication of her version of *Gilgamesh* at the beginning of her play. Zeynep Avcı received a prize for *Gilgamiş*, from Ankara Art Institution in 1998. Işıl Kasapoğlu directed the 1997-1998 Ankara National Theater production of *Gilgamiş*. Burak Serger was playing *Gilgamesh* and Hakan Özgömeç was in the role of *Enkidu*. *Gilgamesh* was also produced by İstanbul City Theatres in 2003-2004 theatre season, under the direction of Ragıp Yavuz.

The analysis of this Turkish play will be conducted by translating the relevant dialogues into English. Therefore, all the quotations of Zeynep Avcı used within this analysis will be translated freely by the author of this dissertation.

a lament, since, unlike Gilgamesh, the Snake does not want to be immortal. Through bringing in the Snake and Yosma to function as the chorus in her play, Zeynep Avcı seeks to keep her audience awake and to question the play on the stage. Therefore, Avcı makes use of metadrama to pass her message to the people of the twenty first century.

In an interview Işıl Kasapoğlu spoke about his perspectives behind the themes of death and immortality in *Gilgamesh*:

There are two major subjects in *Gilgamesh*: Friendship and immortality. For ages these subjects have been dealt with in many works of art. In many of the epics created before the birth of Christ, the heroes who sought immortality chose to fight for their own benefits, either achieved or failed in their attempts. This is a subject of many science-fiction movies as well. Thus, we will always seek immortality. *Gilgamesh* is different from many of these other epics: Gilgamesh seeks immortality to reunite with his friend Enkidu. When he eats the plant of immortality, he wishes to be reborn, he wants to grow up, mature, and meet and become friends with Enkidu once again. Thus, the theme of friendship is emphasized.<sup>107</sup> (Girgin Can np)

However, when Zeynep Avcı's version of *Gilgamesh* is analyzed, one can see that Işıl Kasapoğlu's interpretation can be challenged. In Zeynep Avcı's *Gilgamesh*, friendship is emphasized; however, the figure of Yosma, who seems to be narrating us the events, degrades this friendship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu in several ways. Zeynep Avcı demeans the male friendship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu by attributing supplementary homosexual overtones to their relationship. By doing this, Zeynep Avcı reminds her audience of the patriarchal view that regards such male bonding as lethal and base. As Avcı tries to present male bonding as lethal, she also stresses through Istar the phallogocentric view which perceives female bonding as inferior to male bonding. By reminding her audience of these patriarchal patterns that demean women, Avcı also creates the persistent pattern that reveals how the patriarchal society tends to weaken itself through its overvaluation of heroism. Moreover, by referring to the different versions of the Flood story, which can be found in the *Epic of*

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<sup>107</sup> Işıl Kasapoğlu: Başlıca iki konu var *Gılgamış*'da irdelenen: Arkadaşlık ve Ölümsüzlük. Çağlar boyu çeşitli yapıtlarda işlenmiş bu konular. Milattan önce yaratılan birçok destanda ölümsüzlüğü arayan kahramanlar hep kendileri için savaşmışlar, amaçlarına erişmişler ya da erişememişler... Bu bir çok bilim - kurgu filminin de başlıca konularından. Demek ki hep arayacağız ölümsüzlüğü. Destanın diğerlerinden önemli bir farkı var; Gılgamış ölümsüzlüğü arkadaşı Enkidu'ya ulaşabilmek için arıyor. Nuh'tan ölümsüzlük otunu alarak tekrar doğmak, büyümek, gençleşmek ve Enkidu ile tekrar karşılaşmak ve arkadaş olmak istiyor. Burada da arkadaşlık teması giriyor işin içine. (Girgin Can np)

*Gilgamesh*, the *Bible*, and the *Koran*, Avcı breaks the chronology of history and establishes the idea that both polytheistic and monotheistic religions depend on the same mythos. Finally, Zeynep Avcı emphasizes that only love is immortal, and manages to break the established myth of reaching immortality through heroic action. By breaking these myths she allows her reader/audience to reconsider the dangers the phallogocentric world presents to individuals.

Gilgamesh is believed to be a king who had “reigned in the city of Uruk on the Euphrates River about 2500 B.C.E.” (Davis et al 796), since, “the name Gilgamesh is actually found in Sumerian lists of kings after a flood” (796). The stories about him are believed to be “passed down orally until poets around 2100 B.C.E. began to record some of his adventures” (796). It is stated that “most of the twelve chapters of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* were found during the last century at Nineveh in the ruins of the temple of Nabu and at the palace library of Ashurbanipal” (McCall 38). It is known that,

Since the late 1800s, other versions of the Gilgamesh story have been found, and it is safe to conclude that the *Epic of Gilgamesh* was widely known and extremely popular for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, before it was lost under the sands of Mesopotamia. (Davis et al 796)

However, the “standard version is the best known, mainly from the tablets found at Nineveh which include more than one copy of the work (each with different arrangements of tablets and columns” (Dalley 46). Although not definite, “Mesopotamian tradition ascribed the authorship of the seventh-century version found at Nineveh to one Sin-leqe-unnini, a master scribe and incantation-priest of the Kassite period” (47). However, no one can be sure whether “he took a ready-formed oral narrative and just divided the text up into eleven tablets” (47). This dissertation will make use of the standard version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* which was recorded in twelve tablets found in Nineveh and translated by Stephanie Dalley. In order to perceive how Zeynep Avcı has rewritten the epic, it would be useful to remember the original epic.

The first tablet of the standard version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* celebrates the deeds of Gilgamesh, who in his wisdom knew all things, and “found out what was secret and uncovered what was hidden” (50) to bring back to his people “a tale of times before the Flood” (50). The translation of the epic continues as, “He had

journeyed far and wide, weary and at last resigned. / He engraved all toils on a memorial monument of stone” (50). The first tablet informs the reader that Gilgamesh was the son of Lugalbanda and the goddess named “the wild cow Ninsun” (51). Therefore, Gilgamesh was a king who was two-thirds divine and one-third mortal. Although, the first tablet begins by celebrating the virtues of Gilgamesh, who had no rival, the tablet also emphasizes that his people often complained about Gilgamesh. This was because, “as an untested king” (Davis et al 797), Gilgamesh “claimed first sexual rights to brides and other women in Uruk. He also alienated sons from their fathers” (797). In their anguish, people of Uruk “called upon great Aruru,” (Dalley 52) the great mother goddess, who “created a [primitive man], Enkidu the warrior” (53), out of clay. Initially Enkidu lived with animals and freed the animals from the traps of the hunters. The complaining hunters this time went to Gilgamesh for help. Gilgamesh advised them to take the harlot Shamhat to Enkidu, for her to domesticate this primitive man.

Although Gilgamesh advises a harlot, to domesticate Enkidu, prostitution did not have the negative connotations during the time the epic was recorded. This harlot “was probably a temple priestess, familiar with the time-honored arts of sexuality and well suited to initiate Enkidu” (Davis et al 797). For six days and seven nights Shamhat and Enkidu make love. When Enkidu is rejected by his animals, Shamhat offers to take him to Uruk “where Gilgamesh is perfect in strength, / And is like a wild bull, more powerful than (any of) the people” (Dalley 56). Enkidu agrees to go to Uruk, but only to challenge Gilgamesh. Shamhat wishes Enkidu to change his mind about punishing Gilgamesh, since all the gods support Gilgamesh. Shamhat states, “Shamash loves Gilgamesh, / And Anu, Ellil, and Ea made him wise! / Before you came from the mountains, / Gilgamesh was dreaming about you in Uruk” (57). Gilgamesh in his dream saw that something like a sky-bolt fell upon him, and everyone kissed his feet, and Gilgamesh “loved it as a wife, doted on it” (58). The first tablet ends as Shamhat tells Gilgamesh’s dream to Enkidu and interprets the dream by saying, “The dreams mean that you will love one another” (59).

In the second tablet, Enkidu challenges Gilgamesh and after they fight, they become friends. Together they begin their first journey to kill Humbaba, who is the protector of the Pine forest. Gilgamesh, who has decided to fight Humbaba, does not listen to the warnings of Enkidu and the great counselors of Uruk, and the people who

love Gilgamesh force Enkidu to guard Gilgamesh in this fight. In the third tablet, the gods advise Gilgamesh not to trust solely his own strength. They say “He who leads the way will save his comrade. / He who knows the paths, he will guard his friend. /Let Enkidu go in front of you, / He knows the way of the Pine Forest” (64). Although Enkidu is reluctant to go, in the fourth tablet after a long journey they reach the pine forest. They finally encounter Humbaba in the fifth tablet and with the help of Shamash, the sun god, they defeat Humbaba. In the sixth tablet, Istar, goddess of love and war, admires the victorious Gilgamesh and asks him to be her lover. However,

This is not a simple request for sexual pleasure; [Istar] represents the earth’s fertility and is proposing that Gilgamesh become the year-king. As such, he symbolizes the annual vegetation cycle and must be sacrificed to the Great Mother in order to guarantee the harvest at the end of the season. (Davis et al 797).

Gilgamesh rejects Istar by emphasizing how she has destroyed many great men. This rejection becomes a turning point in masculine consciousness, because “Gilgamesh is charting a new destiny for the patriarchal hero as a solitary individual meeting challenges on his own and searching for personal answers” (797). Unable to stand his insults, Istar asks her father Anu, the sky god, to give her “the Bull of Heaven, and let [her] strike Gilgamesh down” (Dalley 80). As the Bull of Heaven attacks the city of Uruk, Enkidu seizes the Bull and Gilgamesh kills it. As “the two brothers sat down” (82), Istar comes and “as a final insult, Enkidu tears out the bull’s right thigh (symbolic of genitals?) and flings it in Istar’s face.” (Davis et al 797). In her fury, Istar arranges her followers, the prostitutes and the harlots to weep over the Bull of Heaven.

In tablet seven, Enkidu describes his dream to Gilgamesh, where the counsel of the gods come together and decides that Enkidu must die to compensate for “the destruction of Humbaba and the Bull of Heaven, for the humiliation of Istar and the old religion” (798). As human beings, Gilgamesh and Enkidu have gone so far as even to insult the gods. Knowing that he will die, not as a hero in a battle, but through illness, Enkidu curses “all the educators” (Sandars 30), like the harlot and the hunter who tore him away from his free life in the wilderness.

By the end of tablet seven, Enkidu becomes ill, and grows worse each day. In tablet eight, Gilgamesh mourns over Enkidu and tells his people to weep for this great

hero as well. In tablet nine, Gilgamesh expresses his fear of death, and decides to see Ut-napishtim, “the one mortal who has been granted immortality by the gods” (Davis et al 798). In the next tablet, he is assisted by Siduri, the alewife, on how to find Urshanabi, the ferryman who protects Ut-napishtim. Finally, Gilgamesh meets Ut-napishtim and explains that he is afraid of death. Ut-napishtim answers that “death is inevitable” (Dalley 107), and states that by grieving so much Gilgamesh only brings “the distant days (of reckoning) closer” (108).

In tablet eleven, Ut-napishtim reveals the secret of the gods and tells the story of the great flood. After Ut-napishtim states that the gods saved him and his wife from this flood, he says that Gilgamesh too can have the gods on his side to become immortal. The first thing Gilgamesh has to do is to stay awake for six days and seven nights. Then, Gilgamesh immediately falls asleep and loses this chance for immortality. Pitying Gilgamesh, Ut-napishtim’s wife wants Ut-napishtim to give something to Gilgamesh to take back to his country. Thus, Ut-napishtim once again reveals the secret of the gods and tells him about the plant of immortality. Gilgamesh finds the plant and speaks to Ur-shanabi, the boatman,

Ur-shanabi, this plant is a plant to cure a crisis!  
With it a man may win the breath of life.  
I shall take it back to Uruk the Sheepfold; I shall  
give it to an elder to eat, and so try out the plant.  
Its name (shall be): “An old man grows into a young man”.  
I shall too eat (it) and turn into the young man that I once was. (119)

Gilgamesh, however, delays eating the plant when he goes into the water to wash himself, and, a snake smells the fragrance of the plant and carries it away; “As it took it away, it shed its scaly skin” (119). N. K. Sandars questions why Gilgamesh had to lose his chances for immortality, and comes to this conclusion,

The purpose of each of these incidents is cumulative, and is aimed at breaking down his refusal to accept human destiny. Gilgamesh’s search was not for any eternal renewal of nature, such as the goddess Istar might have given, nor for the mere escape from old age into a life of ease and idleness, such as Utnapishtim had been granted; but much more an earthly immortality with its opportunity for heroic action, and for glory on the earth like that of the gods in heaven. It needs the repetition of the lesson to drive home the truth that Gilgamesh, the king, is not different from other men. Only after the return of the snake to its pool does he at last accept the futility of struggling for what cannot be had. (43)

Having lost the plant, Gilgamesh cries and goes back to Uruk, where “Gilgamesh proudly points out his true achievement, the magnificent city walls” (McCall 49), he had ordered to be built. According to Henrietta McCall, the epic probably ended there, because the twelfth tablet “does not fit harmoniously with the rest of the epic because in it Enkidu is still alive, when we know he died in Tablet VII” (49). McCall goes on to explain that in the final tablet,

Gilgamesh makes two wooden objects, a *pukku* and a *mekku* (exactly what these are we do not know), and they fall into the underworld. Enkidu descends into the underworld to retrieve them for Gilgamesh but fails to follow his instructions, and so cannot return to the land of the living (a popular motif). Gilgamesh goes from god to god trying to secure Enkidu’s release, which eventually he achieves, whereupon Enkidu is able to tell his friend all about the gloomy conditions in the underworld. Thus the epic ends in a somber mood, very different from that at the end of Tablet XI, where a reconciled Gilgamesh realizes that his perpetual memory is ensured by his magnificent building work. (49-50)

In this last tablet, through the wishes of the gods, Enkidu is brought back from the underworld to “return to his brother Gilgamesh” (Dalley 123), and they are reunited. Gilgamesh asks about the conditions of the underworld and Enkidu refuses to tell, stating that if he talks about the conditions in the underworld, “you must sit (and) weep” (123). The standard version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* ends as Enkidu continues telling Gilgamesh that everyone is weeping in the underworld, and has to endure horrible conditions there. Thus, ending the epic with this tablet stands as a reminder of the inevitability and the horror of death, where one’s achievements in the present life gain utmost importance. Stephanie Dalley argues that,

The work is classified as an epic because it features the heroic exploits of a dimly historical figure with, on the sidelines, gods and goddesses who sometimes take a part in the action, and occasionally direct mortal affairs; nevertheless, we gain an overall impression of the free will of man which can fashion its own destiny and occasionally thwart the wishes of heaven. (39)

Although there are gods and goddesses who take part in the action, the myth emphasizes the role of the individual in the world. Free will plays a significant role in this Mesopotamian myth, and Gilgamesh can fashion his own destiny, except his desire for immortality. As a male hero, he takes his journey of initiation and encounters various events. However, his hubris leads to the loss of his beloved

Enkidu. Hubris is the Greek word for “overweening pride, arrogance, excessive confidence” (Barnet 112), and this hubris is a crime conducted against the goddess, Istar. Thus, the myth can be interpreted so as to reveal the clash between the matriarchal and patriarchal orders. As Rivkah Harris argues,

What must be emphasized at the very outset, for it touches on all that follows, is the assumption that the *Gilgamesh Epic*, in whatever version, was composed by men for the edification and entertainment of a presumably male audience who read or to whom the epic was read. [...] Therefore, what we find in the epic are essentially male attitudes toward women, both human and divine. Central to the *Gilgamesh Epic* are the concerns and activities of men, with women functioning as supporting and subsidiary characters in the cast. (120)

Harris goes on to state that “women are regarded positively only when they assist Gilgamesh (and Enkidu) in those heroes’ activities, when they nurture and advise in maternal fashion” (120). Thus, analyzing how Zeynep Avcı has rewritten this epic through her own perspective as a woman can reveal a woman’s attempts at subverting male myths.

In Zeynep Avcı’s version of the epic, the audience first sees the dead body of Gilgamesh lying on an altar. As the stage descriptions state, the Snake crawls on the floor and raises his head only when he speaks. The stage is decorated with the magnificent walls of Uruk, which were built by the order of Gilgamesh. Yosma is in her old age in this scene and stands next to a cedar tree at a corner. The first person to speak is the Snake in Zeynep Avcı’s version of the epic. The Snake states,

If they had told me that you will be rich and your cover would always shine... but you will still crawl on the ground! I would not want it. I would prefer to grow old and die, to immediately end this life of crawling. The human beings ruined me. Gilgamesh! The hero who sought to live like gods, since he did not like the life in Uruk. He was running after immortality breathless. I stole eternal youth from him. But he became immortal instead. Gilgamesh! The fifth sovereign of Uruk! Hero of five thousand years! You are my enemy. You became a legend, I am still crawling.<sup>108</sup> (Avcı 9)

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<sup>108</sup> Yılan: Deselerdi ki, hep genç kalacaksın, hep pırl pırl olacak kılıfın... ama yine de sürüm sürüm sürüneceksin!.. İstemezdim. Yaşlanıp ölmeyi, bu sürüngen hayatı bir an önce bitirmeyi yeğlerdim. Şu insanoğlu yüzündendir bu halim. Gılgamış! Uruk krallığını beğenmeyip tanrısal hayatı arayan kahraman. Ölümsüzlüğün peşinde koşuyordu soluksuz. Sonsuz gençliği çaldım ondan. Ama ölümsüzlüğe kavuşan o oldu. Gılgamış! Uruk’un beşinci kralı! Beş bin yıllık kahraman! Düşmanımın benim. Sen destan oldun, bense hâlâ sürünüyorum. (Avcı 9)

All through Zeynep Avcı's play, the Snake tells how he managed to steal the plant of immortality from Gilgamesh and how he is sorry to have done it. Right at the beginning of the play, the Snake remembers how he first saw the plant of immortality as Gilgamesh brought the thorny plant out from the depths of the river. Gilgamesh went back into the water to wash his bleeding hands and the snake contemplates,

He was playing in the water, cleaning his bleeding hands. I could not resist the craving; I challenged death and swallowed the bitter green plant. My body shook, my blood burned, and boiled. I saw my body separate from my skin. Ever since that day, I change my skin and grow younger, but live differently inside and out. I am a cursed snake that will not grow old.<sup>109</sup> (11)

Throughout the play, the Snake tries to change his destiny, however, as an outsider he can only watch how his life was ruined. The Snake tries to change his destiny by having Gilgamesh stop searching for the plant of immortality. For example, the Snake wants Gilgamesh to be with Istar and states,

Will you not seek immortality Gilgamesh? Istar might give you that as well. Is running after a plant your destiny? Change your destiny, and change mine as well, take Istar. She is stronger than the strongest, a goddess! Give her your seeds. Is your kingdom and being a hero so important?<sup>110</sup> (29-30)

However, the Snake is unable to change his fate and is doomed to repeat it every time. Towards the end of Zeynep Avcı's play, when the Snake once more steals the plant of immortality from Gilgamesh, the play repeats the first part and the Snake speaks,

I could not resist the craving, and swallowed the bitter green plant. My body shook, my cold blood burned, and boiled. My skin shivered with an unexpected chill. I saw my body separate from my skin. Ever since that day, I change my skin and grow younger, but live differently inside and out.<sup>111</sup> (77)

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<sup>109</sup> Yılan: Karşımda, sularda çırpınıyordu coşkuyla, kanlarını yıkıyordu ırmağın temiz sularıyla. Tutamadım içimden gelen o sancılı isteği, ölüme kafa tuttum kendimce, acı yeşil otu bir lokmada yuttum. Titredi gövdem, kanım alevlendi, kaynadı. Bir de baktım ki, kendi içimden çıkıyor, gidiyorum. O gün bu gündür derimi değiştirir, gençleşirim ama içim başka dışım başka yaşarım. Ben, lanet olası, yaşlanmayan bir yılanım. (Avcı 11)

<sup>110</sup> Yılan: Ölümsüzlük istemeyecek misin Gılgamış? İstar belki onu da verir. Bir ot peşine düşmek kaderin mi Gılgamış? Değiştir kaderini, boz benim de kaderimi, al İstar'ı koynuna. Güçlüden de güçlü, bir Tanrıça! Sun meyveni ona. Bu kadar mı önemli krallığın, kahramanlığın? (Avcı 29-30)

<sup>111</sup> Yılan: Tutamadım içimden gelen o sancılı isteği, acı yeşil otu bir lokmada yutuverdim. Bir anda titredi uzun gövdem, soğuk kanım alevlendi, kaynadı. Tenim ürperdi ansızın çıkan serinlikle. Bir de baktım ki, kendi içimden çıkıyor, gidiyorum. O gün bu gündür, derimi değiştirir, gençleşirim ama içim başka dışım başka yaşarım. (Avcı 77)

Thus, the play gains a circular structure through the characterization of the regenerating Snake, who repeats the same lines at the beginning and towards the end of the play. At this moment, Gilgamesh who has lost the plant of immortality is in mourning and states, “The crawling snake will live as a youth, I will grow old, the people of Uruk will grow old, I will never see Enkidu again! Ur-shanabi! Who cursed me so? Why did the curse of the gods fall upon me?”<sup>112</sup> (78). The Snake is upset and states his last words,

I am a cursed snake... Really? I will poison human beings every time I see them.

Make the crawling crawl more, hit the one who has already fallen, is that it? Humans are reptiles, worse than I. You only think of yourself, you create and destroy the fate of the earth as you wish. I will poison you every time I see you. You always seek to be above yourself, and never consider what happens to those who are below you, is that right? I will poison you every time I get my teeth in you.<sup>113</sup> (78)

In the original epic, the snake does not speak, but only eats the plant of immortality. However, in Zeynep Avcı’s version, the Snake watches his own story being enacted and narrates how he has eaten the plant of immortality right at the beginning of the play. Therefore, when the story is repeated again at the end as Gilgamesh loses the plant of immortality, the play acquires a circular structure. The beginning and the ending of the play tie together, in order to suggest the circular nature of time and the eternal nature of the story being told. As Kasapoğlu, the first director of Zeynep Avcı’s version of *Gilgamesh*, states, “*The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the Gilgamesh tablets, which have been translated into many languages, is one of the shared products of humanity”<sup>114</sup> (qtd in Girgin Can np). Thus, by having the Snake tell his story in a circular narration, Avcı emphasizes the endless nature of the *Epic of*

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<sup>112</sup> Gılgamış: Sürüngen yılan genç yaşayacak, ben yaşlanacağım, Uruk’un insanları yaşlanacak, Enkidu gözüme görünmeyecek! Urşanabi! Kim lanetledi beni böyle? Neden üstüme çöktü tanrıların laneti? (Avcı 78)

<sup>113</sup> Yılan: Ben lanetli yılan... Öyle mi? Her gördüğümde zehirleyeceğim insanoğlunun etini. Sürüneni bir daha süründür, düşene bir daha vur, öyle mi? Sürüngensin insanoğlu, benden de beter. Kendini düşünürsün, yeryüzünün yazgısını yazar bozarsın keyfinin istediği gibi. Her gördüğümde zehirleyeceğim senin etini. Gözünü senden büyüklere dikersin insanoğlu, senden küçüklerin ne olduğuna bakmazsın, değil mi? Her dişim geçtiğinde zehirleyeceğim senin etini. (Avcı 78)

<sup>114</sup> Işıl Kasapoğlu: Çeşitli yabancı dillere çevrilmiş olan *Gılgamış Destanı*, Gılgamış Tabletleri... insanlığın ortak ürünlerinden. (Girgin Can np)

*Gilgamesh*, and how it carries its messages of friendship and immortality through heroic action from generation to generation.

In addition to the Snake, Yosma is also the narrator of Zeynep Avcı's version of *Gilgamesh*. Yosma is the second speaker and she introduces the story for the audience. Yosma states:

Gilgamesh! The unstoppable mason king of Uruk. When he took a step, the ground shook. His beard and mustache were tangled, and his hair down to his waist. He bellowed like a wild bull in the streets of Uruk. All his guns were up and ready. He did not leave the son to his father, the beloved to the lover, the wife to her husband. He made all the girls of Uruk bleed by taking their virginity! So he is after immortality! He says he will also save the elders of Uruk. Don't believe it! I know what the women and the girls suffered in his hands.<sup>115</sup> (Avcı 10)

Then Yosma tells the events about how the people of Uruk asked the gods to create a hero to challenge Gilgamesh. Yosma narrates how Enkidu was created and destroyed the traps of the hunters, since Enkidu was still living with the animals. At the end of the first part, Gilgamesh tells the Hunter to ask for a harlot to civilize Enkidu, so that he will not be accepted by the animals again. Yosma states, "You remember me when you are in need? Try facing your enemy without my help!"<sup>116</sup> (14). Her final words in the first part indicate that Gilgamesh needed a woman to handle his opponent, Enkidu. Thus, Yosma questions the courage of Gilgamesh right from the beginning of the play. Yosma later falls in love with Enkidu and mourns as Gilgamesh takes him away from her. Zeynep Avcı immediately presents the complaining Yosma and establishes her as the woman in distress, whom the audience comes to sympathize with. Therefore, by having the Snake tell his own side of the story and having Yosma challenge Gilgamesh's courage in her own sorrow, Zeynep Avcı seems to take the authority from the hero of the story, Gilgamesh, and make him share it with the Snake and Yosma. Zeynep Avcı's epic is not the epic of Gilgamesh anymore, but of the

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<sup>115</sup> Yosma: Gilgameş! Uruk kentinin dur-durak bilmeyen duvarcı kralı! Bir adım attı mı, yerler sarsılırdı. Bıyıkları sakallarına karışır, saçları beline ulaşırdı. Yaban boğası gibi böğürürdü Uruk sokaklarında. Bütün silahları kalkıktı. Oğlu babaya, maşuku aşıkaya, karıyı kocaya bırakmadı. Uruk kızlarını herkesten önce hep o kanattı! Ölümsüzlüğün peşine düşmüşmüş! Uruk'un yaşlılarını kurtaracakmış sözde. Hepsi hikaye! Karıların kızların çektiklerini bilirim ben. (Avcı 10)

<sup>116</sup> Yosma: İşine gelince girdim değil mi aklına? Ben olmadan düşmanına yanaşsana! (Avcı 14)

Snake and Yosma as well. For this reason, the audience has the chance to judge the epic through the different perspectives of the characters in Zeynep Avcı's version.

In *Gilgamesh*, Zeynep Avcı reveals the persistent pattern that male bonding is lethal, and thus, must be destroyed. Initially, in the standard version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Gilgamesh sees the coming of Enkidu in a dream. In Stephanie Dalley's translation the dream of Gilgamesh is as follows,

Mother, I saw a dream in the night.  
There were stars in the sky for me.  
And (something) like a sky-bolt of Anu kept falling on me!  
I tried to lift it up, but it was too heavy for me.  
I tried to turn it over, but I couldn't budge it.  
The country(men) of Uruk were standing over [it].  
[The countrymen had gathered (?)] over it,  
The men crowded over it,  
The young men massed over it,  
They kissed its feet like very young children.  
I loved it as a wife, doted on it,  
[I carried it], laid it at your feet,  
You treated it as equal to me. (57-58)

When one reads Zeynep Avcı's version, the homosexual connotations are evident. In Avcı, Gilgamesh states,

Holy mother! Ninsun! I woke up from a dream. In my dream a meteor fell next to me. The stars in the sky began to fall from my head. I fell down, and tried to get up. It was heavy, I could not move. I looked and saw the people of Uruk at our side. They were kissing the feet of the creature that had fallen on me. I got on top of it, his body felt like a woman under mine, I took pleasure from it. Then I carried it to your side. Please tell me what this strange dream means.<sup>117</sup> (12-13)

The difference in Zeynep Avcı is apparent in the way Gilgamesh sees Enkidu in his dream. Avcı foreshadows that Enkidu will be like a wife to Gilgamesh, and Gilgamesh will feel some sort of a sexual pleasure from their friendship.

In another example, in the second tablet of the standard version of the epic, Enkidu comes to Uruk and challenges Gilgamesh. Just as in Gilgamesh's dream, people of Uruk support Enkidu and believe that "for godlike Gilgamesh an equal

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<sup>117</sup> Gılgamış: Kutsal anam! Ninsun! Bir düşten uyandım. Düşümde gök taşı gibi bir taş düştü yanıbaşıma. Gökyüzünün yıldızları dökülmeye başladı başımdan aşağıya. Yıkıldım yere, kalkayım dedim. Ağır geldi, devinemedim. Baktım ki ne göreyim; Uruk halkı üşüşmüş başımıza. Ayaklarını öper dururlar tepeme düşen yaratığın. Ben de çıktım üstüne, bir karı gibi geldi gövdesi gövdeme, bir karı gibi zevk aldım. Sonra kucakladım onu, senin huzuruna vardım. De bana, ne demek oluyor bu tuhaf rüya? (Avcı 12-13)

match was found” (Dalley 60). Enkidu challenges Gilgamesh and will not let him take the virginity of a newlywed wife. After they test each other in strength, Enkidu loses, but Gilgamesh and Enkidu become close friends. As stated in Daley’s translation, “(Then) they grasped one another, / And embraced and held (?) hands” (61). In this standard version, Gilgamesh represents the man of civilization, whereas Enkidu represents nature. Their relationship almost resembles the unity of two opposites where “two of them together represent wholeness and health, almost as if Enkidu were a psychological extension or an alter ego of Gilgamesh” (Davis et al 797).

When Zeynep Avcı’s version is analyzed, Gilgamesh and Enkidu do not fight each other. Enkidu challenges Gilgamesh saying that he will not let Gilgamesh take the virginity of the newlywed wife. Gilgamesh’s reply in Zeynep Avcı’s version is, “Come and kiss me. At night, in my dreams, I took you under me like a woman. I took pleasure from you like a woman. Come and kiss me”<sup>118</sup> (19). Enkidu is puzzled and states, “I was born again in the arms of that perfumed, soft breasted woman. If you are a hero, I am challenging you as a hero. I am speaking to you as a hero. Fight with me”<sup>119</sup> (19). However, Gilgamesh once again repeats, “Come and kiss me. You are my friend, you will help me in my times of need. This is fate. In my dreams your skin touched mine. Come and kiss me”<sup>120</sup> (19). Enkidu gives up and states,

I grant you to your mother Ninsun, the holy abundant cow. She has given birth to one like you. She has raised you, and let you rise higher than all others. The god Enlil has written on your forehead and made you the king of Uruk. You are the fate of our humanity. Since you pulled away your chest from my body, since you kneeled in front of me, now I need to be the hero... Give me your hand so that I can kiss it.<sup>121</sup> (20)

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<sup>118</sup> Gılgamış: Gel, öp beni. Seni karı gibi altıma aldım, geceleri, düşümde. Karı gibi zevk aldım senden. Gel de öp beni. (Avcı 19)

<sup>119</sup> Enkidu: İtır kokulu, yumuşak memeli o kadın insanın koynunda, bir daha doğdum ben. Kahramansan eğer, kahraman gibi meydan okuyorum sana. Kahraman gibi konuşuyorum seninle. Dövüş benimle. (Avcı 19)

<sup>120</sup> Gılgamış: Gel, öp beni. Arkadaşımsın, dar günümde yardıma koşacak yoldaşımsın. Kader böyle. Düşlerimde benim değdi tenine. Gel de öp beni. (Avcı 19)

<sup>121</sup> Enkidu: Anana, koca ağılın verimli ineği kutsal Ninsun’a bağışladım seni. Bir tanecik doğurmuş senin gibisini. Büyütmüş, bırakmış, başının yüksekliği herkesi aşmış. Tanrı Enlil güzel alına Uruk halkının krallığını yazmış. İnsanlığımızın kaderisin sen. Göğsünü çektin ya üstümden, diz çöktün ya önümde, kahramanlık bendedir şimdi... Ver de öpeyim elini. (Avcı 20)

As Enkidu gives up his thoughts about fighting Gilgamesh, Yosma narrates the rest of the action. She states,

They held each other like the dry land and the rain, like the sapling and the morning sun. No man had embraced me so. Never before saw a man embrace a woman like this. [...]

They walk around eye to eye, hand in hand. Nobody walked like that with me. Nobody touched my skin like Gilgamesh touched Enkidu.<sup>122</sup>  
(20)

The love goddess Istar states “The hands of a friend is much warmer than the hands of a lover, harlot. Men look at the eyes of men with more courage than they look at women. Love hides in deeper wells than the ones you have dug”<sup>123</sup> (20). Although, Zeynep Avcı makes the goddess Istar explain the relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu as a friendship, Avcı still makes Istar emphasize that male bonding is much stronger than a bonding between a man and a woman. Furthermore, through Gilgamesh and Yosma’s words, Zeynep Avcı attributes further homosexual connotations to this male relationship between Gilgamesh and Enkidu. However, as Neal H. Walls explains,

There is no Akkadian or Sumerian word for “homosexual” and thus no Mesopotamian conception of the personal or public identity in the modern sense. Contemporary readers force ancient literary characters into anachronistic sexual and social identities by classifying them with modern labels such as homosexual, heterosexual, gay, or bisexual. [...] There are so few references to male-male sexual behavior in cuneiform sources that we cannot determine if it was strictly prohibited, socially acknowledged, or generally ignored in the various cultures of ancient Mesopotamia. (14-15)

For this reason, by overemphasizing homosexuality in her version of Gilgamesh, Zeynep Avcı seems to be anachronistic. However, through this overemphasis, Avcı is revealing “the taboo against homosexual behavior” (Millett 50) which is inherent in some cultures, and reminding her audience of the established phallogocentric view which demeans male bonding, in other words, homosexuality. This male bonding is

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<sup>122</sup> Yosma: Susamış toprakla yağmur, taze fidanla sabah güneşi gibi sarıldılar birbirlerine. Hiçbir erkek bana böyle sarılmamıştı. Hiçbir erkeğin bir kadına böyle sarıldığını görmemişim daha önce. [...] Onlar göz göze el ele dolaşıyorlar. Benimle böyle dolaşmadı kimse. Tenime kimse böyle değmedi, Gılgamış’ın Enkidu’ya değdiği gibi. (Avcı 20).

<sup>123</sup> İstar: Dost eli aşğın elinden sıcaktır yosma. Erkek erkeğin gözüne daha mert bakar, kadına baktığından. Aşk, senin kazdığından daha derin kuyularda gizlenir. (Avcı 20)

lethal because Enkidu and Gilgamesh are not allowed to live happily ever after. Enkidu dies, and Gilgamesh searches to reach him through immortality, in vain.

Unfortunately, through emphasizing the idea that male bonding is dangerous, Zeynep Avcı seems to contribute to the same patriarchal system, which oppresses women. As Gayle Rubin argues, “The suppression of the homosexual component of human sexuality, and by corollary, the oppression of homosexuals, is [...] a product of the same system whose rules and relations oppress women” (180). In a similar way, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick argues that, “homophobia directed by men against men is misogynistic” (521). Although, misogyny is defined as the “hatred of women” in Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (744), in this case, homophobia comes to mean not merely a fear or discrimination against homosexuals, but also a hatred of all feminine attributes. Sedgwick also claims that this homophobia is not only “oppressive of the so-called feminine in men, but that it is oppressive of women” (521). Thus, while Zeynep Avcı emphasizes a pattern that demeans male bonding, she seems to be reminding her audience about the oppression of all feminine qualities.

Zeynep Avcı also stresses that female bonding is regarded as inferior to male bonding. As Kate Millett argues “nearly every powerful circle in contemporary patriarchy is a men’s group” (48). Millett believes that sexual segregation is prevalent in all aspects of society and she adds,

Women’s groups are typically auxiliary in character, imitative of male efforts and methods on a generally trivial or ephemeral plane. They rarely operate without recourse to male authority, church or religious groups appealing to the superior authority of a cleric, political groups to male legislators, etc. (48)

Zeynep Avcı also reveals this subordinate positioning of women’s groups in *Gilgamesh*. In Zeynep Avcı’s version of the epic, Yosma calls Ishtar to help her win back Enkidu. In the standard version of the epic there is no indication that Yosma, who is named Shamhat, and Ishtar are connected, except that Yosma / Shamhat “probably belonged to the cult personnel of Ishtar’s temple in Uruk” (Dalley 328). However, in Zeynep Avcı’s version, after Enkidu and Gilgamesh defeat the great Humbaba, Yosma begs Ishtar with these words,

I am being forgotten as Gilgamesh advances his beauty. I am being forgotten as their hands unite. Enkidu is becoming lost in the depths of Gilgamesh’s eyes. [...] I am a woman, who does not even have a man. Oh women! A man stole my man. Ishtar! I beg you, send the scent of a

woman on Gilgamesh. Make him give Enkidu back to me. Istar! Use your charms on Gilgamesh. Make him give Enkidu back to me.<sup>124</sup> (27)

Thus, Istar asks Gilgamesh to marry her. However, Gilgamesh refuses by stating that he has his friend Enkidu and that he will become a greater hero. Gilgamesh states, “I am a king who has a friend. The name of my good friend is Enkidu. Stay away from me. A woman’s scent is covering my guns, the scent of a goddess. Her perfume is in the air. Do not remind me of yourself. I have a good friend. His name is Enkidu”<sup>125</sup> (29). Yosma supports Istar secretly by saying:

Take him under you Istar. Show him the skills of women. Even though he is a king, a man is a man. You are a professional, do not fear. Be patient. Look, he is hot all over. Look, there is fire in his eyes. Look, he will raise his guns. Look, he is coming towards you. Look, his strong legs are shaking. Open your breasts Istar. [...] Do not stop. Be soft, make him soft. He fears you, do not alarm him. Make him lie on you enough, so that you can take him under you later. Take him under you Istar! Take him, so that I can have Enkidu.<sup>126</sup> (29)

However, Gilgamesh rejects Istar by reminding her of all the male partners she had, who ended up dead. He blames Istar for being insatiable and adds “I got the oil for my skin, clothes for my back, food for my stomach, wine to drink, and a home that is made for the kings. I got my companion, my friend Enkidu... I got love in my heart. What do you know about love Istar!”<sup>127</sup> (30). For this reason, in Zeynep Avcı’s play, Gilgamesh reveals that women’s bonding cannot break the bonding between two men. As Istar says, “men look at the eyes of men with more courage than they look at

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<sup>124</sup> Yosma: Unutuluyorum Gılgamış güzelleştikçe. Unutuluyorum, elleri birleştikçe. Enkidu dalıp kayboluyor, derinlerinde yok oluyor Gılgamış’ın bakışlarının. [...] Bir erkeği bile olamayan kadını ben. Ey kadınlar! Erkeğimi bir erkek çaldı. İstar! Yalvarırım, kadın kokusu sal Gılgamış’ın üstüne. Enkidu’yu bana bırak. İstar! İşveni kullan Gılgamış’ın üstünde. Enkidu’yu bana bırak. (Avcı 27)

<sup>125</sup> Gılgamış: Dostu olan bir kralım ben. Dostumun adı Enkidu. Uzak dur, bana yaklaşma. Kadın kokusu sınıyor silahlarıma, hem de bir tanrıçadan. Buram buram tütüyor. Hatırlatma kendini bana. Dostum var benim. Adı Enkidu. (Avcı 29)

<sup>126</sup> Yosma: Al onu altına İstar. Göster kadınlığın hünerini. Kral da olsa erkek erkektir. İşinin ustası, korkma! Sabret. Bak, ateş bastı her yanını. Bak, ateş çıkıyor gözlerinden. Bak, kaldıracak silahlarını. Bak, yaklaşıyor sana. Bak, titriyor güçlü bacakları. [...] Durma! Yumuşa, yumuşat. Korkuyor, yatıştır. Üstünde çokça yatır ki, sonra onu hep sen altına alacaksın. Al onu altına İstar! Al ki, Enkidu bana kalsın. (Avcı 29)

<sup>127</sup> Gılgamış: Gövdemi yağlayacak yağım, üstüme giyecek urbam, yiyecek azığım, içecek şarabım, krallara layık bir evim var benim. Hem de yoldaşım, dostum, Enkidu... Sevgi var benim yüreğimde. Sen sevgiyi ne bilirsin İstar! (Avcı 30)

women” (Avcı 20)<sup>128</sup>. Therefore, Zeynep Avcı establishes the pattern that female bonding is unlikely to break the bonding between men, and therefore women’s union to win over a man is most likely to fail. Through representing the weakness of the female community against the male community in the play, Zeynep Avcı is emphasizing the loneliness and vulnerability of Yosma and Istar within the patriarchal society. Yosma and Istar become the representatives of all women who suffer within the phallogocentric order.

In addition to her arguments about male and female bonding, Zeynep Avcı establishes the persistent pattern that patriarchy weakens itself by overvaluing heroism. As soon as Enkidu and Gilgamesh become friends, Gilgamesh states,

Now I have a companion who will support me in my hard times. I have become stronger, I have become greater. I want to accomplish new things. I want to swim in the waters that I have never known before. (To Enkidu) We deserve to be heroes. Dry your eyes and look above, look higher to the mountains where the endless cedar forests reside. There the dragon-like Humbaba stays. He keeps the forests for the gods, he does not let the people of Uruk pass by. Hold my hand, cover my back, let us go and break his waist, break his neck, let us demolish him.<sup>129</sup> (Avcı 23)

Gilgamesh is now challenging Humbaba, who is protecting the forests for the gods. In Zeynep Avcı’s version of the epic, Gilgamesh is over confident and this will cause his downfall. In all tragedies defying the gods ends in disaster. In the standard version, translated by Stephanie Dalley, Gilgamesh does not boast about growing bigger and stronger, he only insists that Enkidu should follow him to overcome Humbaba. In the standard version Enkidu and Gilgamesh talk over whether or not to slay Humbaba. Gilgamesh states “My friend, we really should” (Dalley 62) and turns to the people of Uruk and speaks, “I am adamant: I shall take the road [to Humbaba], / [I shall] face unknown opposition, / [I shall ride along an unknown] road. / Give me blessing, since I [have decided (?)] on the course” (62). Unable to stop Gilgamesh, in the standard version of the epic, Enkidu gives advice to the elders of Uruk and states “Tell him not

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<sup>128</sup> Istar: Erkek erkeğin gözüne daha mert bakar, kadına baktığından. (Avcı 20)

<sup>129</sup> Gilgamesh: Artık dar zamanlarımda yanımda olan bir yoldaşım var. Kuvvetlendim ben, daha da büyüdüm. Yeni şeyler başarmak istiyorum. Bilmediğim sularda yüzmek istiyorum. (ENKİDU’ya) Kahramanlık düşer ikimize. Sil yaşlarını da bak yukarılara, daha yukarılara, dağların uçsuz sedir ormanlarına dik gözlerini. Orada ejder yapılı koskoca Humbaba oturuyor. Sedirleri tanrılara saklıyor, geçit vermiyor Uruk halkına. Tut elimden, güçlendir sırtımı, gidelim, bükelim belini, kırılım boynunu, ortadan kaldıralım onu. (Avcı 23)

to go to the [Pine] Forest, / That journey is not to be undertaken!” (63). Therefore, the counselors advise Gilgamesh with these words,

Do not trust entirely, Gilgamesh, in your own strength.  
When you have looked long enough, trust to your first blow.  
He who leads the way will save his comrade.  
He who knows the paths, he will (?) guard his friend.  
Let Enkidu go in front of you,  
He knows the way of the Pine Forest. (64)

Enkidu is told to protect Gilgamesh, therefore he has no other choice but to follow Gilgamesh in this journey. However, in Zeynep Avcı’s version Gilgamesh forces Enkidu to follow him with these words,

Beating Humbaba suits us. It would be a shame for us to stay in Uruk. [...] Gods will live as long as this sun resides in this sky. However, our days are short. If I will die to live again somewhere on this sky, or in a piece of this soil, I must look back and see my accomplishments. If being a hero boils in your soul and you do not act, what is the purpose of this life? Enkidu! Or are you scared?<sup>130</sup> (Avcı 24)

At this point, Zeynep Avcı shows how Gilgamesh seeks to become immortal through his accomplishments. He is seducing Enkidu to join him by demeaning his pride. In Avcı’s version, Gilgamesh continues his seduction as follows,

Either stay with the elders of Uruk, or come with me. If I die you can tell everyone that “The lethal enemy of the dragon-like Humbaba, Gilgamesh, has died.” If you stay in Uruk and I die at the hands of Humbaba, I will rejoice in the fact that I got to love you. If I come back safe, the walls of Uruk will look at me with your eyes, and I will see you on the throne.  
Do as you wish, just do not hesitate! Mother, Ninsun! My holy mother! Did you not say he would support me in my hard days? Did you not tell me he was my friend?<sup>131</sup> (25)

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<sup>130</sup> Gılgamış: Bize Humbaba’yı yenmek yaraşır. Uruk’ta dizimizi kırıp oturmak bize ayıptır. [...] Tanrılar yaşayacaktır, gözümün gördüğü şu güneş, tepeme sarılı şu gökyüzünde durdukça. Oysa insanoğlunun günleri sayılıdır. Ölüp de yine yaşayacaksam şu havanın bir yerinde, şu toprağın bir tozunda, dönüp de yaptıklarına bakmalı. Ruhunda kahramanlık kaynıyorsa insanın, var olmanın faydası ne? Enkidu! Korkuyor musun yoksa? (Avcı 24)

<sup>131</sup> Gılgamış: İster kal burada, Uruk’un ihtiyarlarıyla, ister gel peşimden. Önden gider de ölürsem, söylersin geride kalanlara: “Ejder yapılı Humbaba’nın azılı düşmanı Gılgamış ölmüştür” dersin. Benimle gelmez Uruk’ta kalırsan, ben de Humbaba’nın elinde ölürsem, seni gönlüme göre sevdiğime sevinirim. Sağ salım dönersem, Uruk duvarı senin gözlerinle bakar bana. Senin zevkini arar, seni tahtlarda görürüm.  
Ne istersen onu yap, yeter ki ikirciklenme! Ana, Ninsun! Kutsal anam! Hani dar zamanlarımda yoldaşımıydı? Hani arkadaşımıydı? (Avcı 25)

In Zeynep Avcı, Gilgamesh forces Enkidu to follow him, whereas in the standard version the elders of Uruk and Gilgamesh's mother, Ninsun, ask Enkidu to follow and guard Gilgamesh. After they kill Humbaba, Istar asks Gilgamesh to be her husband. Gilgamesh refuses and Istar sends the Bull of Heaven to kill them. However, Enkidu and Gilgamesh overcome the Bull of Heaven and kill it. In Zeynep Avcı's play, Gilgamesh now is more arrogant than ever, since he even threatens to kill the goddess Istar. Gilgamesh states,

Istar! The insatiable goddess! If I had the chance I would tear you up in pieces like a butcher and throw you at the feet of Shamash. [...] I am a hero now, more than ever. I swam as I wished in the waters I had never known before. I killed the Bull of Heaven!<sup>132</sup> (35)

His arrogance makes him forget that without the help of Enkidu, he would not have killed the Bull of Heaven. Yosma, who is proud of Enkidu's success, tells the gods that Enkidu helped Gilgamesh kill the Bull of Heaven. Yosma with good intentions to praise the man she loves, states to the gods,

Gilgamesh slew the Bull of Heaven, but how could he have done it without Enkidu's help? How could Gilgamesh challenge the Bull of Heaven, if Enkidu was not there with him? How would Gilgamesh look into the eyes of the bull, tear his heart if Enkidu had not filled his eyes with love? Enkidu also killed that bull. Enkidu is stronger, Enkidu is the man of all men, Enkidu is a mere mortal, and he does not have the flesh of the gods in his flesh.<sup>133</sup> (36)

Learning that both Enkidu and Gilgamesh murdered the Bull of Heaven, the gods become mad, and decide to punish them. After long arguments, the gods decide to only kill Enkidu. In Avcı's play, Yosma is unable to endure losing Enkidu and states, "Gilgamesh stole my man. Gilgamesh misled him away from the road of humanity, he lead him towards the impasse of manhood. Gilgamesh extinguished the light of my

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<sup>132</sup> Gılgamış: İhtar! Gözü doymaz tanrıça! Elimde olsa, usta bir kasap gibi, senin de kolunu kanadını, başını bacağını ayırır gövdenden, böylece atardım Şamaş'ın önüne. [...] Ben kahramanım şimdi, eskisinden de fazla. Ben istediğim gibi yüzdüm bilmediğim sulara. Ben gökyüzünün boğasını öldürdüm! (Avcı 35)

<sup>133</sup> Yosma: Gökyüzünün boğasını kılıcıyla Gılgamış kesti ama, Enkidu yanında olmayınca nasıl yapardı bunu? Enkidu yanında olmayınca nasıl meydan okurdu gökyüzünün boğasına? Enkidu yüreğini sevgiyle doldurmasaydı nasıl bakardı gökyüzünün boğasının gözlerinin içine, nasıl sökerdi yüreğini? Enkidu da öldürdü o boğayı. Enkidu daha da kuvvetli, Enkidu erkeklerin en erkeği, Enkidu ölümlü üstelik, etinde tanrı eti bile yok onun. (Avcı 36)

heart”<sup>134</sup> (38). In the standard version of the epic, these words of the harlot do not exist. There is no reference that demeans heroism by calling it “the impasse of manhood”. Therefore, by adding Yosma’s words to her play, Zeynep Avcı establishes the persistent pattern that patriarchy weakens itself by overvaluing heroism, and thus, wasting the lives of many good men.

Zeynep Avcı also establishes the idea that both polytheistic and monotheistic religions depend on the same mythos. In her version of the epic, Avcı brings together the flood myth as told in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the *Bible*, and the *Koran*. The stage descriptions for the section entitled “Ut-napishtim and the Great Flood” state,

The section is reserved for the Great Flood, in other words Noah’s Flood. The story of the flood will be read from three separate sources: from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the *Bible*, and the *Koran*. As the story is read, Ut-napishtim acts the role of Noah as he reads the sections from the *Bible* and the *Koran*. All throughout the section, Gilgamesh listens to the story on the stage, and has fallen asleep by the end of it.<sup>135</sup> (63)

In the eleventh tablet of the standard version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Ut-napishtim speaks to Gilgamesh,

Let me reveal to you a closely guarded matter, Gilgamesh,  
And let me tell you the secret of the gods.  
Shuruppak is a city that you yourself know,  
Situated [on the bank of] the Euphrates.  
That city was already old when the gods within it  
Decided that the great gods should make a flood. (Dalley 109)

Then Ut-napishtim tells the rest of the story where he is told to build a ship and to tell his people a lie that Ellil has rejected him and has told him to never “set foot on Ellil’s land again” (110). Later Ut-napishtim gives in detail how he had built the boat, and loaded the ship “with everything there was” (111), such as silver, gold, seed of all living things, cattle, and “wild beasts from open country” (112). Then the storm came and together with his kinsmen, Ut-napishtim got on the boat. The storm lasted for six days and seven nights, and the storm was so destructive that even the gods were afraid, so “they went up to the heaven of Anu” (113). Istar becomes very sorry and

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<sup>134</sup> Yosma: Gılgamış çaldı erkeğimi. Gılgamış insanlığın yolundan saptırdı onu, erkekliğin çıkmazına sürükledi. Gılgamış söndürdü yüreğimin ışığını. (Avcı 38)

<sup>135</sup> (Bölüm, tümüyle Büyük Tufan’a, yani Nuh Tufanı’na ayrılmıştır. Tufanın hikayesi, tarihi üç ayrı metinden, *Gılgamış Destanı*’ndan, *İncil*’den ve *Kur’an-ı Kerim*’den okunur. Bu okunuş sırasında UTNAPİŞTİM *İncil*’e göre Nuh ve *Kur’an*’a göre Nuh kimliğine bürünür. Bölüm boyunca GILGAMIŞ sahnede öyküyü dinler; bölüm sonunda ise uyuya kalmıştır.) (Avcı 63)

she states “How could I have spoken such evil in the gods’ assembly? / I should have (?) ordered a battle to destroy my people” (113). When the storm ceased Ut-napishtim’s boat came “to rest on Mount Nimush” (114). Then Ut-napishtim released first a dove, then a swallow and both birds came back. In his third attempt, Ut-napishtim released a raven and the bird did not turn back. Realizing that they were saved, Ut-napishtim made a sacrifice to the gods, who all gathered around him. When Ellil came to the gathering, he became furious, since he did not want anyone to survive the flood. Ea told Ellil that the punishment of the flood was too cruel for the human kind. Ellil realized his mistake and approached Ut-napishtim with these words, “Until now Ut-napishtim was mortal, / But henceforth Ut-napishtim and his woman shall be as we gods are” (116). As Ut-napishtim finishes his story, he tells Gilgamesh that in order to have the gods on his side, Gilgamesh should not sleep for six days and seven nights. However, Gilgamesh falls asleep immediately.

In Zeynep Avcı’s version of the epic, Ut-napishtim begins to tell the story of the flood in a different way and states,

The gods decided to create a flood. The all knowing, speaker of the gods Ea told a bamboo fence the decision of the gods. I was standing behind this fence. Ea saw that I was standing there, and spoke as if I was not hearing the secret of the gods.<sup>136</sup> (63)

Ea speaks, “Bamboo fence! Wall, wall! Listen to me bamboo fence, wall remember! Tear the house, build a boat. Leave all the riches. Seek life. Hate possessions. Save your life”<sup>137</sup> (63). Ea was secretly telling Ut-napishtim to save his life by building a boat. In Zeynep Avcı’s version Noah reads the *Bible*,

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great on earth, and that man only thought of doing evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. God told Noah “I

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<sup>136</sup> Utnapiştım: Tanrıların aklına bir tufan yapmak geldi. Bilgelerin bilgesi, tanrıların sözcüsü Ea, Tanrıların verdiği kararı bir kamış çite anlattı. Kamış çitin gerisinde duruyordum ben; Ea kamış çitin gerisinde bir duvar gibi durduğumu görüyordu, tanrıların gizli kararını dinleyen ben değilmişim gibi söylüyordu. (Avcı 63)

<sup>137</sup> Ea: Kamış çit, kamış çit! Duvar, duvar! Kamış çit dinle, duvar hatırla! Evi sök, bir gemi yap. Serveti bırak. Hayatı ara. Mülkten nefret et. Canını kurtar. (Avcı 63)

will destroy mankind, because they filled the earth with wickedness”.<sup>138</sup>  
(63-64)

Then Noah reads the *Koran* which states, “Then We inspired Noah, saying, ‘No other than your people will believe you. Do not sorrow over what they do. Make the ship under Our eyes and Our inspiration. And plead not with Me on behalf of those who have done wrong. Lo! They will be drowned’”<sup>139</sup> (64). Briefly, the three versions of the Flood all state that the gods or God decided to make a flood, and all three versions reveal that the gods or God warn(s) Ut-napishtim or Noah about this flood. Then Zeynep Avcı reveals how the ship is built, how the storm begins and ends as it is written in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the *Bible*, and the *Koran*. Finally, Ut-napishtim tells that after the flood the gods made him an immortal and settled him to live away from the people. Ut-napishtim continues, “Ever since that day, I reside here. I consider whether my immortality was a punishment or a reward. The gods chose me Gilgamesh; I did not ask for immortality”<sup>140</sup> (71). However, Ut-napishtim’s wife warns him that Gilgamesh has already slept. Thus, even though the names, the places, or the details that make up the motifs of the Flood story change, the story remains the same. Zeynep Avcı creates the persistent pattern that all religions depend on the same stories; humanity shares a common past and must love one another to avoid the wrath of God(s) and to build a shared future.

Zeynep Avcı’s emphasis on love is revealed throughout the play. She regards love as the only thing that can make humans immortal. Before Ut-napishtim tells Gilgamesh about the flood, they talk about immortality. Gilgamesh cannot comprehend why Ut-napishtim seems in distress although he is an immortal. Thus, Ut-napishtim speaks,

The underworld hell is a salvation for a lonely soul, for an empty heart.  
Death is not the end, but the beginning for a soul that is freed from its

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<sup>138</sup> Nuh: (*İncil okur*) Rab baktı, yeryüzünde insanın yaptığı kötülük çok, aklı fikri hep kötülükte. İnsanı yarattığına pişman oldu. “Yarattığım insanları, hayvanları, sürüngenleri, kuşları yeryüzünden sürüp atacağım” dedi, “Çünkü onları yarattığıma pişman oldum.” Tanrı Nuh’a “İnsanlığa son vereceğim” dedi. “Çünkü onların yüzünden yeryüzü zorbalık doldu...” (Avcı 63-64)

<sup>139</sup> Nuh: (*Kuran okur*) Nuh’a vahiy olundu ki “Kavminden inanmış olanlardan başkası inanacak değil. Onların yaptıklarına üzülme. Nezaretimiz altında ve sana vahiy olduğu üzere gemiyi yap. Zalimler için bana hitap edip yalvarma. Çünkü onlar suda boğulacaklar.” (Avcı 64)

<sup>140</sup> Utnapiştim: O zamandan beridir burada otururum. Düşünürüm: Ceza mıydı ödül müydü ölümsüzlüğüm? Tanrılar seçti beni Gılgamış; ölümsüzlüğü ben istemedim. (Avcı 71)

body. When human flesh touches another human, when human flesh kisses another human, love begins to fade in your heart. Love fades but the soul becomes insatiable. As your body gains pleasure, an endless pit grows in your heart. An empty heart in an immortal body, isn't that death? Gilgamesh, is it possible to plant hope and to reap joy among dying flowers, drying leaves and earth? What will I do with a loveless body all through my immortal life?<sup>141</sup> (61)

Ut-napishtim regards his immortality as a punishment, since his heart can no longer love. Gilgamesh states that his heart is full of love and speaks “There are so many things I must do, I can love Enkidu all through my immortal life. I can take him out of the soil that I had to place him in like a rotten fruit, like a dry leaf. How many times his body died in me, but his life still gives me life”<sup>142</sup> (61). Thus, Ut-napishtim states,

This is immortality Gilgamesh. Neither the gods, nor could I give you this, place it in the depths of your heart. Immortality is in the depthless heart Gilgamesh, not in the rotten flesh. Immortality is not a solution, but a new problem like invading a new land. The earth ends, human life ends, when your heart moans like drying rivers in you, and still the soul does not leave the flesh, immortality becomes worse than death, Gilgamesh.<sup>143</sup> (61-62)

As mortality gains importance in Zeynep Avcı's play, love becomes the only thing that makes life worth while. At the very end of the play, as Gilgamesh loses the resurrected Enkidu once again, he questions the awful pain he is feeling. Gilgamesh states,

No! No! Do not go! Do not take him away from me Ereshkigal! I will build a throne for you as well, I will cut down all the Huluppu trees for

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<sup>141</sup> Utnapiştım: Yalnız bir ruh, boş bir yürek için yer altı cehennemi kurtuluştur Gılgamış. Ölüm, sonu değil, belki başlangıcıdır gövdeden kurtulan canın. İnsan eti insan etine değdiğinde, insan eti öteki insan etini öptüğünde aşk solmaya başlıyor yüreğinde. Aşk soluyor ama doymak bilmiyor gövde. Etin sevinirken dipsiz bir boşluk büyüyor yüreğinde. Ölümsüz gövdede boş bir yürek, asıl ölüm değil mi sence? Solan çiçekler, kuruyan yapraklar, çatlayan topraklar arasında ümit ekip neşe biçmek olur mu, Gılgamış? Aşkın yaldızlamadığı, sevgi suyu çekilmiş bir eti ne yapacağım ben, ölümsüz ömrüm boyunca? (Avcı 61)

<sup>142</sup> Gılgamış: Yapacak çok şeyim var, Enkidu'yu ölümsüz ömrüm boyunca sevebilirim. Çürümüş bir yemiş, kurumuş bir yaprak gibi yatırdığım topraktan çıkarabilirim onu. İçimde kaç kere öldü gövdesi, ama canı canımı hâlâ kabartıyor. (Avcı 61)

<sup>143</sup> Utnapiştım: Ölümsüzlük bu işte Gılgamış. Tanrılar da ben de veremezdik bunu sana, koyamazdık yüreğinin derinine. Ölümsüzlük dipsiz yürekte Gılgamış, çürüyesi ette değil. Ölümsüzlük derde çare değil, yeni bir derttir yeni bir ülke kuşatır gibi. Yeryüzü biter, insan biter, yürek kuruyan dereler gibi inlerse göğsünde, yine de can etini terk edip gitmezse, ölümsüzlük ölmekten beterdir Gılgamış. (Avcı 61-62)

you Ereshkigal! Give him back to me! Anu! Shamash! Istar! Ea! Enlil! Gods! Do not leave me to myself. What is this pain I feel?<sup>144</sup> (86)

The last words of the play are stated by Yosma who replies that, the pain Gilgamesh feels “is called love. It makes heroes kneel”<sup>145</sup> (86). In the original epic, Gilgamesh gains “an earthly immortality with its opportunity for heroic action, and for glory on the earth like that of the gods in heaven” (Sandars 43). Thus, the mythical pattern the original epic establishes is that immortality depends on the earthly accomplishments of the individual. However, by establishing love as the only thing that can make a person immortal, Zeynep Avcı creates a pattern that replaces heroism and accomplishments with endless love, which keeps the soul alive.

However, Kate Millett declares that “romantic love [...] obscures the realities of female status and the burden of economic dependency” (37). In addition to Millett, Shulamith Firestone states that romantic love is “the pivot of women’s oppression” (126), and she acknowledges the dangers of love. Furthermore, Denise Thompson argues that,

Such constructs as ‘female chastity’ and ‘male honour’, ‘wifely duty’, ‘filial piety’, ‘maternal instinct’, etc., are also ways of managing women’s consent to their subordination to men. Like the ideology of ‘romantic love’ they, too, channel women’s desire and commitment in ways detrimental to women’s well-being. (25).

If one acknowledges that romantic love created the ideal of the romantic lovers like Romeo and Juliet, it is impossible to refute the idea that Western culture ended up confining women “in a narrow and often remarkably constricting sphere of behavior” (Millett 37), to force them into the frame of their perspective of the ideal beloved. Considering the dangers of love for women, Zeynep Avcı’s replacing immortality through heroic action with endless love would eventually lead women to acknowledge their subordinate positioning in the patriarchal order. Therefore, proposing the persistent pattern that replaces heroic action with love would equally oppress the female gender. However, Zeynep Avcı still manages to break the established myth of

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<sup>144</sup> Gılgamış: Hayır! Hayır! Gitme! Ereşkigal, alma onu benim elimden! Sana da taht yaparım, bütün Huluppu ağaçlarını keserim senin için Ereşkigal! Geri ver onu bana! Anu! Şamaş! İstar! Ea! Enlil! Tanrılar! Bırakmayın beni kendimle baş başa. Nedir bu çektiğim acı? (Avcı 86)

<sup>145</sup> Yosma: Sevgi denir adına. Kahramanları bile dize getirir böyle. (Avcı 86)

reaching immortality through heroic action in order to allow her reader/audience to reconsider the dangers phallogentric world presents to individuals.

To sum up, in her version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Zeynep Avcı creates various persistent patterns which reveal the dangers of the phallogentric order and leads women to create their own myths. First of all, through overemphasizing the love between Enkidu and Gilgamesh, Avcı attributes supplementary homosexual overtones to the male bonding found in the original epic. Through this overuse of homosexual implications, she reveals the established phallogentric views that perceive homosexuality as a taboo and all feminine qualities as abject. In addition to this, Avcı stresses the patriarchal belief that female bonding cannot break the bonding between men. Therefore, female bonding cannot succeed especially when it is established to gain the love of a man. Furthermore, Avcı constructs the persistent pattern that patriarchy weakens itself by overvaluing heroism, since it leads many good men to waste their lives in the name of heroism. Moreover, she sustains the pattern that both polytheistic and monotheistic religions derive their sources from the same stories, and therefore the future of humanity depends on the unity of all the peoples on earth. Finally, Avcı breaks the mythical pattern of the original epic which emphasizes that immortality depends on individual accomplishments, and instead, she establishes the idea that love is the only thing that can make a person immortal. Replacing heroic action with love can also lead to women's suppression; however, by reminding her reader/audience about the views and values of the phallogentric order, Avcı emphasizes the need to reconsider all established perspectives before accepting them as truth.

As Jane de Gay declares, "mythology may be seen as the record of the suppression of a female culture: put very simply, it provides a set of narratives in which women are the victims" (14). Patriarchal social structure forces the individuals to live according to these sets of narratives that in turn suppress and victimize women. Liedeke Plate acknowledges that "postmodern rewriting dramatizes its incapacity to write originally, female-authored rewritings create out of the inability to believe the stories of old" (10). For this reason, many women writers have attempted to revise these texts in order to subvert the authoritative structure of the patriarchal myths. This

chapter has analyzed such three plays written by women playwrights, from the perspective of the feminist archetypal theory, in order to identify the similar ideas used by these writers who seek ways to alter the existing male texts. The writers have revitalized the myth of Philomele and Procne, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and the *Epic of Gilgamesh* in order to express their own persistent patterns in the pursuit of constructing their own myths. Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı, establish women's rewriting as a powerful tool that can empower the silenced and the oppressed. They all emphasize that phallogocentric world view not only suppresses women, but many men as well, and through its suppression of men, patriarchy will ruin itself. Furthermore, the three playwrights all share the idea that women who try to be a part of the patriarchal order will not be allowed to succeed and that they are under constant danger for trying to be a part of the phallogocentric world. Finally, through parody and metadrama, they remind their audience of these patriarchal texts, in order to break their authoritative structure.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

For centuries, history, literature, and myth have been the domain of men: Men have been constructing the truths shared by social groups, and women have been forced to fit into the constructed realities of the patriarchal perspectives. Women had no other choice but to accept that “women either ‘have no history’ or have achieved little worthy of inclusion in the historical record” (Southgate 96). 1950’s postmodernist movement allowed voice to various minority groups. One of these minority groups included the women who formed various movements within the feminist movement (Liberal, Radical, Marxist Feminisms). These women acknowledged their minority position in an attempt to subvert it. Feminist archetypal theory is a recently established means to allow women to discover their own place in history and the world. Annis Pratt’s *Archetypal Patterns in Women’s Fiction* (1981), Estella Lauter’s *Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth Century Women* (1984), and Estella Lauter and Carol Schreier Rupprecht’s *Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-Visions of Jungian Thought* (1985), served to re-define Jung’s archetypal theories so as to serve feminist demands. Feminist archetypal theorists initially aim to reveal the patterns of repeated images and experiences in women’s art, poetry, and fiction to advance the development of archetypes and eventually myths that will eventually alter the established social order that has contributed immensely to women’s inferior positioning in the world. Exploring the lives of women writers and revisioning female characters in the dramatic works of contemporary women playwrights would also provide extensive ground for finding persistent patterns that will contribute to the progress of women’s mythmaking.

Consequently, the purpose of this study is to seek out the persistent patterns that can be found in the texts written by women on female writers and literary women characters. Women playwrights, such as the Scottish Liz Lochhead, American Rose

Leiman Goldemberg, Turkish Bilgesu Erenus, British Bryony Lavery, American born Timberlake Wertenbaker, and Turkish Zeynep Avcı, rewrite the lives of woman writers and revision male constructs of literary female characters to establish firm grounds for the mythic patterns they are consciously or unconsciously creating. These playwrights have realized the significance of representing the women writers of the past and the women who have been created in male literature, through female perspectives. When these playwrights carry the historical women and literary women characters onto the stage, they contribute to the abolition of the established generalizations and stereotypes about the female gender, because these playwrights create their own persistent patterns, which will eventually change these established myths about women. Regarding the diversity of backgrounds these playwrights present, the dissertation aims at polyphony in presenting the words, the myths of these women writers. As indicated by feminist archetypal theory, women's experiences will be revealed to depict the repeated stories in these works, which gradually will evolve into new archetypes and later into new myths of women.

After an introduction to the dissertation, the second chapter has provided various definitions and meanings of myth. The third chapter entitled "Plays by Women on Female Writers" has analyzed historical women figures: Mary Shelley, Sylvia and Aurelia Plath and Halide Edip Adivar. The fourth chapter titled "Plays by Women on Literary Characters" rewrites male myths: Philomele and Procne, Ophelia, and Gilgamesh.

In the third chapter of this dissertation, Liz Lochhead's *Blood and Ice*, Rose Leiman Goldemberg's *Letters Home*, and Bilgesu Erenus' *Halide* have been analyzed. Using historical subjects in their texts have enabled Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus "to treat [their] characters in a properly heroic, properly theatrical manner" (Bolt xvii). The playwrights carry their characters into a mythical realm, where their life experiences find voice without being engaged with the demands of realism. However, the historical characters enhance the demands of realism within the audience, since their historical existence provides "a degree of factuality" (Harben 253). Since, the exact occurrences in history cannot be known, the playwrights can edit, invent, and develop the missing pieces in the historical lives of Shelley, Plath, and Adivar. Thus, the playwrights manage to create heroines through rewriting the lives of these historical figures. These heroines struggle to understand their life, they

struggle to make sense out of their experiences, and through their constant efforts become symbols of self-esteem for other women. Thus, as Nadya Aisenberg comments,

today's heroine need not be an extraordinary person, endowed with extraordinary powers and set apart from her fellows in the manner of the hero. [...] Not concerned, for instance, primarily with her own immortality and the honor she must win to ensure it, the heroine need not court death as does the hero. Instead, freed from the hero's obsession with his own mortality and desire to transcend it, she can view the future not as end, but as beginning. She is attached to life. (191)

In this view, Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, her mother Aurelia Plath, and Halide become heroines. Their comprehension of life, their experiences, and the efforts they make in acknowledging their rightful positions in society, present models for the future generations of women to follow. They are weak, they make mistakes, but they manage to understand themselves. They fear remembering their past, they fear their own unconscious desires, they fear facing the truth, and they fear facing their own fears: However, since they are "freed from the hero's obsession with his own mortality and desire to transcend it" (Aisenberg 191), they confront their own mortality, and seek to understand their own human desires. Rather than fighting to insure their own immortality and trying to secure their honor in the eyes of the society, these heroines justify their own existence, in their own eyes. Thus, they become heroines which demonstrate "the indestructible will of man to achieve his humanity" (Miller 7).

As the playwrights create heroines for other women to idolize, they also attain an opportunity to rewrite their truths about the historical women engaged in their plays, without being forced to emphasize their reality. As they carry their characters to a mythical realm, the demands of realism become diminished. Therefore, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus enable their historical characters to review their lives, and to communicate their life experiences without depending on any realistic staging, or chronological order. Furthermore, revealing material from a society's shared historical memory onto the stage assures the comprehension of the play's message. By using Brecht's methods of historicization and the alienation techniques, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus are able to distance their audience in order for the audience to perceive the plays more critically.

Changing or erasing women's history created by male writers for centuries is a Herculean task for the women playwrights, however, as Estella Lauter suggests, women should work to find new images and stories, in other words, persistent patterns, which will gradually induce a change in the patriarchal order. Thus, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus, rather than escaping from the male construction of history, have turned to it for inspiration. They tend to rewrite the history of women, and to emphasize that history should also include herstory, from her own voice. They reveal various persistent patterns, which eventually will turn into mythic patterns. Furthermore, these women playwrights constantly break the established myths to eventually construct new ones to replace the already existing mythologies of the patriarchy.

Initially, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus all aim to devise their heroines to undertake a mythical journey of initiation. Mary Shelley, Aurelia Plath, and Halide Edip Adivar enter this archetypal journey to confront the questions they were unable to answer as they experienced them. Thus, their journey is an inward journey where they have to face their past to understand their own experiences. Mary Shelley takes this journey as she reads her own story, Aurelia Plath as she reads the letters she exchanged with her daughter and Halide Edip as she resurrects from the dead in order to reenact her life again to find answers to her questions. Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus build the persistent pattern that reading and reenacting are the necessary tools the heroines must use in their alternative versions of the mythical quest. The archetypal journeys of great heroes resulting in the hero's initiation have been a major pattern in classical mythology; however Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus rewrite this archetypal pattern of initiation by carrying it into the docile environment of women. Through the journey of writing, reading, and enacting, the female individuals achieve self-realization.

In addition to rewriting the hero myth, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus emphasize the persistent pattern that women should take control of their own lives. Mary Shelley is unable to define her own identity separately from her celebrated family and later from Percy Bysshe Shelley, Sylvia Plath from Ted Hughes, and Halide Edip Adivar from her first husband Salih Zeki, and later from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. However, these heroines have to define their own autonomous identity in

order to exist, and feel their own individual selves. Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus underline the importance of women's self-reliance in woman's development.

Moreover, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus emphasize that women need to function outside of their homes in order to reach self-awareness. Therefore, these writers strongly suggest that becoming significant through one's own work and being involved in the greater good of the public enable women to achieve self-esteem and therefore an identity. Knowing the existence of women who achieve significance through their own work, and who work for the benefit of the public supplies an equal hope of advancement for the next generation of women. Thus, Lochhead, Goldemberg, as well as Erenus create heroines with whom women can identify.

Love is defined as the force that "empowers the return to oneness, the reintegration of the universe marked by the passing from the unconscious oneness of primeval chaos to the conscious unity of a definitive order" (Chevalier 618). However, love for Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus is destructive for the female individual. Romantic love changes to become a force which is "the pivot of women's oppression" (Firestone 126). Love felt for the male prevents women from becoming autonomous. Mary Shelley's frustrated love produces monsters within her. Although, Mary Shelley manages to feel her monsters before they destroy her, Sylvia Plath is unable to realize the destructive effect of her love and is diminished. Halide Edip, in a similar way, seeks to fulfill her desires through the men in her life, and thus her love destroys her sense of self. Love becomes submission and an acceptance of a man's sense of superiority, since the man's approval is the ultimate goal a woman is taught to reach. Consequently, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus underline the persistent pattern that love is the loss of identity, or even death on behalf of women, and that women must achieve self-realization only through themselves. Briefly, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus rewrite the myth of the victimized women, to establish the persistent pattern that sometimes it is the women who permit themselves to be victimized. Thus, the playwrights by breaking the established myths of love, attempt to institute stronger grounds for women's progress through warning against love.

For Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus, analyzing the past becomes a means to comprehend one's self. As Mary Shelley returns to her past, she is able to understand her hidden desires concerning freedom. Aurelia Plath's reading the letters, which she had exchanged with her daughter, reflects Aurelia's understanding of the reasons

behind her daughter's suicide. Furthermore, Halide's resurrection to reanalyze her life turns to her comprehension of her fears and mistakes. Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus also emphasize the persistent pattern of learning one's self through an interrogation of the past, as a means to understand each other, and also to pass on this understanding to future generations. Thus, comprehension of the past becomes a necessity to achieve a future.

Finally, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus reject the myth of motherhood as established by social norms. Lochhead represents Mary Shelley as a mother who is incapable of abiding the traumas of being a mother, similar to her character Dr. Frankenstein, who is not capable of taking the responsibility of his own creation. Goldemberg presents the gradual decay of Sylvia Plath, who is unable to take care of her children alone, and Aurelia Plath as a mother who is powerless to save her daughter. Furthermore, Erenus presents Halide Edip as a woman who has to separate from her children to follow the truths she believes to be right. Thus, Freud's understanding that a mother's love for her child is a direct outcome of her need of a penis, in order to substitute for her lack, becomes destroyed in the depiction of motherhood as represented in Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus. As opposed to the prevalent belief that "mothers are anchors of shelter, warmth, love and nourishment" (Chevalier 677), Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Halide Edip separate from their children in order to protect the children from their own uneasy souls. Therefore, as Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus break the established patriarchal myths of motherhood, they draw attention to their protagonists' lack of involvement in the welfare of their offspring with the purpose of stressing the persistent pattern that motherhood can be a burden for women.

Through understanding one's self, the individual "moves to being the subject and narrator of [his/her] own story" (McDonald 125). Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus stress that everyone's story is important, and that women should share their stories, and experiences. All the playwrights imply that every woman shares similar experiences concerning construction of identity, love affairs, and personal confinement. Through rewriting the lives of historical women, the playwrights rewrite the history of all women, and enable their audience to interpret their own past.

As Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus rewrite the lives of their historical characters, they fill in the gaps of history according to their own perceptions.

However, if one is able to remove an adequate number of these details with which these playwrights adorn their works, then the revealed particulars presented to the audience will materialize as the truths about the lives of women, which have been concealed for too long. The aim of these playwrights is “to make us see the past from within and from without at the same time” (Hernadi 45). In other words, while distancing us from the historical figure presented through alienation techniques, the playwrights aim to lead us towards a clear understanding of our own past. Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus attempt to disclose the experiences of their historical figures, as they reveal the persistent patterns of how these women were conquered by the patriarchal forces which oppressed their individualisms. The stories of Shelley, Sylvia and Aurelia Plath, and Halide Edip Adivar have been known by the interested audiences. However, the way their stories are told by Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus elevate these historical figures to the realm of myth, since their stories remain to be the stories of all women.

In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, Timberlake Wertebaker’s *The Love of the Nightingale* (the myth of Philomele and Procne), Bryony Lavery’s *Ophelia*, and Zeynep Avcı’s *Gilgamesh* have been analyzed. First of all, Timberlake Wertebaker, Bryony Lavery, and Zeynep Avcı revitalize the patriarchal versions of these texts by rewriting them. Initially, Wertebaker rewrites the myth of Philomele and Procne to display how patriarchy formulates hierarchical divisions in society to grant voice to those who are more powerful than others. Tereus, who rapes Philomele, also silences the male chorus in Wertebaker’s play. In addition to Tereus, Procne, who is his Queen, silences the female chorus by using her high rank. Therefore, Wertebaker retells the narratives of these silenced individuals, to allow “the feminist spectator/reader to participate in changing them, rather than endorsing the value-system of the ‘father’ text” (Aston 1995: 23). Wertebaker deconstructs the inherited codes in this myth to empower her audience/reader to rebuild the myth to hear the voices of those who have been silenced. Bryony Lavery also enables the silenced women of Shakespeare to raise their voices on the contemporary stage. Not only Ophelia, but Shakespeare’s various other female characters, such as Portia, Katherina, Lady Macbeth, Goneril, and Lady Capulet, are able to find voice to provide reasons for their negative depictions imposed on them through Shakespeare’s characterization. In Lavery’s play, Ophelia finds the chance to overcome her powerlessness, and to

build a future for herself, away from Elsinore. Finally, Zeynep Avcı makes Gilgamesh share his authority as the hero of the epic together with the harlot (Yosma) and the Snake. She allows Yosma and the Snake to articulate their pain caused by the actions of Gilgamesh. Therefore, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı, through rewriting these texts empower those characters that have been silenced by the patriarchal formulations of the dominant power structure. For this reason, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı establish the persistent pattern that women's rewriting is a powerful tool that can empower the silenced and the oppressed.

Furthermore, these three writers create the persistent pattern that reveals how the patriarchal society destroys itself. In Wertebaker's *The Love of the Nightingale*, the male chorus suffers due to the actions of Tereus. However, they feel helpless to change things, since they have been suppressed by Tereus for too long. Therefore, Wertebaker reveals that patriarchy suffers due to their own actions, as a result of their fear of authority. Similarly, Bryony Lavery also draws the persistent pattern that shows how patriarchy ruins itself. Through her characterization of Hamlet and Claudius as weak men, Lavery shows how men become powerless in the patriarchal order. These men lose their power to emasculated women, like Gertrude, Goneril, and Lady Macbeth, who manipulate their rank in the patriarchal world, to crush weak men. Therefore, through stressing how emasculated women consent to using the patriarchal tools to overcome men, Lavery foreshadows the demolition of the patriarchal order. In addition to this, Lavery rewrites Shakespeare's famous statement "Frailty, thy name is woman" (*Hamlet* I.ii.146) to prove that men are more frail than women, and often destroy themselves, since they also have to live according to the established rules of the patriarchal order. Furthermore, Zeynep Avcı in *Gilgamesh* constructs the persistent pattern that through its overvaluation of heroism and heroic accomplishments, patriarchy weakens itself. Gilgamesh loses his most beloved friend Enkidu, and his chances to find him again, through his insistence on becoming a world known hero. Thus, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı all emphasize that phallogocentric world view not only suppresses women, but many men as well, and through its suppression of men, patriarchy will gradually weaken itself.

In addition to stressing the dangers the patriarchal world causes to men, all three plays emphasize that women who accept the patriarchal order are under constant danger. Wertebaker shows how Procne loses her chance to become a part of a female

community by demeaning female qualities like intuition. Procne constantly ignores the warnings of the Thracian women, and therefore, contributes to Philomele's rape by insisting that Tereus should bring Philomele to Thrace. In *Ophelia*, Bryony Lavery reveals how becoming a tool of patriarchy can be lethal by showing the outcome of those women, who are immasculated. Gertrude dies, Katherina continually has nightmares, and Portia is constantly reminded of her degradation through the patriarchal texts she reads. Only Ophelia survives, since she rejects becoming a part of the patriarchal order. In addition to this, Avcı in *Gilgamesh* reminds her reader/audience of the patriarchal belief that perceives male community as superior to female community, and underlines the futile attempts of women who bond in order to be included in this phallogentric order. Yosma, who falls in love with Enkidu, seeks the help of the goddess Istar. Yosma, who keeps repeating that she is a woman without a man, begs Istar to seduce Gilgamesh, so that Enkidu would return to her. However, this female bonding conducted for the sake of winning over a man, fails, and Enkidu follows Gilgamesh and dies. Yosma feels utmost pain from having lost her love, and Istar is degraded through Gilgamesh's rejection. Thus, Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı establish the persistent pattern that women who try to be a part of the patriarchal order will not be allowed to succeed and that they are under constant danger for trying to be a part of the phallogentric world.

Finally, through parody and metadrama, all three writers emphasize the importance of theatre as a means of informing the future generations about the injustices of the patriarchal order. First of all, in her parody of Greek theatre, Wertenbaker reveals the phallogentric views of the classical Greek society by reminding her audience that the classical Greek theatre did not allow women to participate in social events such as theatre. Wertenbaker's female chorus is in conflict with the classical Greek theatre which neither included women in their performances on the stage, nor allowed them to watch it as the audience. Therefore, Wertenbaker's female chorus functions to reveal how women have been silenced, by the phallogentric order. Secondly, Wertenbaker in *The Love of the Nightingale* parodies classical Greek drama in its persistence on denying violence on stage. In presenting Itys' violent murder on stage, Wertenbaker displays how silence can transform into violence. As opposed to Greek theatre, Wertenbaker emphasizes how theatre can be a tool for healing the society through cleansing the audience by confronting them with

violence on stage. Furthermore, through her usage of play within a play sequences as in the performance of the Phaedra and Hippolytus myth and Philomele's reenactment of her own rape, Wertebaker constantly reminds her audience that this is a play, which they should be questioning.

Likewise, Lavery also makes use of parody and metadrama. Lavery divides *Ophelia* into three frames. In the first frame she writes of the events that happen after Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ends. In the second frame, Lavery tells us about the events that could have happened before the point Shakespeare's *Hamlet* begins. In her third frame, Lavery parodies and rewrites Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Through this new perspective, the actions of Shakespeare's characters are given further explanation. The women of Shakespeare become full characters who have motivations for their actions. Lavery by using metadrama also allows Ophelia to have a voice, and to build a future for herself. In the play within the play "Tragedy of Ophelia: Lady of Denmark," Ophelia gets a chance to write her own tragedy, while becoming a role model for all women.

Zeynep Avcı's parody of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, allows Avcı to take the authority of the epic from one protagonist, who was Gilgamesh, and to make him share his authority with Yosma and the Snake, who never had voice in the standard version of the epic. As Yosma and the Snake share their feelings on the stage, Gilgamesh's actions and his motivation of heroism are questioned. Through her parody, Zeynep Avcı allows the silenced to raise their voice within the patriarchal epic. As Yosma and the Snake begin to tell the events in the epic, they act as the chorus that prepares the audience for the upcoming performance. Thus, Avcı's *Gilgamesh*, is written in the form of a play within a play, which tells the story of a hero who has changed the lives of Yosma and the Snake. Especially by having the Snake narrate his story within a circular narration, Zeynep Avcı emphasizes the endless nature of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and seeks to break its mythic pattern of immortality through heroic action, in order to replace it with love as the only thing that can keep a person immortal to give the human dimension of feeling to the epic.

Thus, through parody and metadrama, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı aim to remind their audience of these patriarchal texts, in order to break their authoritative structure. "Contemporary women writers have turned to antique molds, but in a new way" (de Weever 2) and these antique molds are modified by Wertebaker, Lavery,

and Avcı to answer the needs of women. These women playwrights have challenged the applicability of the cultural codes these antique texts have created for the benefit of the phallogocentric order. They have established their own persistent patterns for the construction of new myths which will eventually “become part of a shared inheritance” (Bassnett 2000: 78-79), where women as well as men are no longer silenced. These playwrights acknowledge that “No cultural myth could survive for long or develop into greatness without being open to participation by diverse groups” (Lauter 1984: 170). Through establishing women’s persistent patterns, these playwrights have allowed the voice of women to arise from the set myths of the phallogocentric world, in order for them to reveal their own persistent patterns in the pursuit of creating their own myths.

Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı, thus, have created various persistent patterns in their plays. Some of these persistent patterns are repeated in all the plays this dissertation has analyzed. Some of these shared persistent patterns emphasize writing as a means to empower all those who have been oppressed and stress the importance of self-awareness and self-reliance for all women. Necessity of learning and sharing through women’s bonding in order to have a future is also a common pattern that can be found in the works of these artists. Furthermore, these playwrights establish persistent patterns which reveal the dangers of love and immasculation, and the way patriarchal society is destroying itself.

Through their plays Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı all establish the persistent pattern that writing is a means to empower all those who have been oppressed. For instance Lochhead emphasizes the importance of writing to release the oppressed feelings one feels. Mary Shelley meets her monsters through the act of writing, and becomes aware of the dangers of conforming to sources of her suppression. She is made to release her monsters and to share her experiences with all other women. Goldemberg in a similar way presents writing as the most important thing in Sylvia Plath’s life. Goldemberg presents a Sylvia, who enters into depression, when her creative power is hindered, through becoming a wife and a mother. Erenus reveals how Halide Edip becomes suppressed by her fears, when she is not writing. Therefore, Erenus presents a Halide who overcomes her fears as she begins to write. Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus have a point that they all share. This is their writing the lives of women, who are also writers themselves. Mary

Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Halide Edip Adivar are all major writers who have contributed to the literature of their time, and who are themselves mythmakers. However, all three writers also have confronted similar problems caused by the male order that at certain times have worked to hinder the creativity of these women. It seems that these three writers are trying to say what H  l  ne Cixous claims in “The Laugh of the Medusa,”

I know why you haven’t written. (And why I didn’t write before the age of twenty-seven.) Because writing is at once too high, too great for you, it’s reserved for the great – that is for ‘great men’; and it’s ‘silly’. [...] Write, let no one hold you back, let nothing stop you: not man. (348)

Therefore, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus have established the persistent pattern that writing is an act of survival for women.

Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı also share a similar point, since they all rewrite previously existing patriarchal texts, such as the myth of Philomele and Procne, *Hamlet*, and the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Through their rewriting they manage to reveal how men have constructed and determined the suitable behavior patterns for women. Therefore, by rewriting these patriarchal texts, these writers attribute female perspectives to the texts that have been shaped by men. As Estella Lauter argues, these playwrights rewrite existing myths in order to break “into the common house of myth in order to make it her own” (1984: 12). Thus, the persistent patterns these women playwrights establish will give voice to the female characters created by men. For this reason, similar to Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus, Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı also establish writing as a persistent pattern that is necessary for women to gain a voice and to survive.

In addition to the persistent pattern of writing as an act of survival, all the writers that have been analyzed in this dissertation emphasize the importance of self-awareness and self-reliance for all women. Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, Halide Edip Adivar are all presented as women who have been robbed of their sense of self-trust. They all believe that they are not as good as men. However, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus all insist that women should not feel inferior to men, and that these women should actualize their struggles and their own feelings through reading their own work. Similarly, Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı, present how powerless women have been drawn in patriarchal texts, and they aim to empower these women, by making

them aware of their oppression, and of not needing male help to survive. Therefore, all the six writers underline the persistent pattern that women must be aware of their power and must rely on themselves to survive.

Throughout the six plays this dissertation evaluates, the pattern of sharing through women's bonding is emphasized for women to have a future where they can exist on equal terms with men. Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath, and Halide Edip all suffer due to the lack of women whom they can bond with. Mary Shelley has no mother and she has to endure Claire, whose only aim is to win over Byron's love. Thus, not having any women figures to bond with, Lochhead's Mary dedicates herself to her bonding with Percy Shelley. In a similar way, Goldemberg's Sylvia Plath rejects bonding with her mother, to obtain a chance for individuation; however, she falls into the trap of bonding with a man. Similar to Mary Shelley and Sylvia Plath, Halide Edip does not have any women with whom she can bond and she too dedicates herself to the men in her life. Therefore, Lochhead, Goldemberg, and Erenus emphasize how bonding with a man ends in destruction, since it involves submission to the patriarchal order. Furthermore, Wertebaker allows the bonding of two sisters; however, this bonding ends in disaster. This is because Procne refuses to bond with the women of Thrace and demands that her sister Philomele be brought to Thrace by Tereus. However, Procne's rejection of bonding with other women leads to her sister's rape by Tereus. Lavery presents the importance of women's bonding by having Ophelia join the Player King, who is in fact a woman, and to walk towards the future together with these players. Lavery's Ophelia cannot establish any bonding with the women of her rank, since all of them have become the servants of the patriarchal order. Finally, Zeynep Avcı emphasizes that women's bonding can never succeed if it is done for the sake of achieving a man's love. Women must help each other to survive, not to become part of the patriarchal order. Yosma and Istar's bonding fails, since the reason they come together is to have Enkidu return to Yosma. Therefore, all the six writers make references to women's bonding in their plays to create the persistent pattern that this bonding is necessary for women to achieve equality in the future.

Furthermore, Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı all emphasize the dangers of love. All six playwrights seem to be arguing that love and unconditional devotion to another ruins a woman's chances of initiation. For example, Lochhead's Mary Shelley has hindered her chances of initiation through

devoting herself to Percy Shelley. Goldemberg's Sylvia Plath, tries to distance herself from her mother in order to stand on her own feet, however, she ends up surrendering to Ted Hughes. Bilge Erenus' Halide Edip Adivar seeks to find a male figure to answer all her questions and is unable to answer them on her own. Wertebaker's Procne destroys her sister's life through her trust in and her love for Tereus. Lavery's Ophelia is the only one who can overcome her love for a male figure, and build a future for herself. Zeynep Avci's Yosma also becomes pitiable due to her unrequited love for Enkidu. Therefore, all the six playwrights establish the persistent pattern that love hinders a woman's initiation, and leads to her submission to the phallogocentric order.

Finally, these playwrights also underline that patriarchal society is weakening itself in several ways. Lochhead emphasizes that many people suffer due to the limitations patriarchal society determines for them. For example, Mary Shelley is made to live by the thoughts of freedom Percy Shelley imposes on her. However, Lochhead argues that freedom can only be defined by the individual, and the freedom of others can become an individual's imprisonment. In addition to this, Goldemberg reveals how the patriarchy's overvaluation of success destroys women, since the phallogocentric world view would not allow them to reach complete success. Furthermore, Goldemberg reveals that the patriarchal order loses its chances for betterment by excluding women from the center. In Bilgesu Erenus, patriarchy fails to develop itself through women's contribution to the betterment of the state. By disabling women from trusting themselves, patriarchy is unable to benefit from women's power and intelligence. Halide, who only trusts a man to answer all her questions can neither develop herself, nor help in the development of her country. Wertebaker reveals how the patriarchy destroys itself through her depiction of the male chorus. Tereus has applied so much pressure on these men that they keep rather silent about all the wrong things happening around them. Wertebaker stresses the pattern that if one keeps silent about a violent act it will lead to a greater counter reaction. Lavery reveals the way patriarchy destroys itself by emphasizing how it emasculates women. Those women who "are taught to think as men, to identify with a male point of view, and to accept as normal and legitimate a male system of values" (Fetterley xx), in turn manipulate men to achieve their own ends. For example, Gertrude is a woman who has been emasculated, and she manipulates all the people

around her according to her own benefits. However, at the end she causes the destruction of the court of Elsinore along with herself. Therefore, Lavery argues that through this immasculation, patriarchy damages itself. Zeynep Avcı also emphasizes that the patriarchy weakens itself, and she believes that patriarchy prepares its end through the overvaluation of heroism. Therefore, Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı all establish the idea that patriarchal world view works in a way that constantly weakens itself.

In addition to the persistent patterns these women playwrights create, they also share a technique, which allows them to forward their message strongly. Janelle Reinelt argues that feminist playwrights are making extensive use of Brechtian techniques in their plays, and they are “simultaneously engaging in the process of discovering appropriate and effective contemporary methods” (46). Through their usage of Brecht’s alienation techniques, these writers keep their audiences awake for them to question the action on the stage objectively. In all the plays analyzed in this dissertation, metadrama is used. Lochhead has Mary Shelley read her *Frankenstein* and later to enact her life. Through this reading process, the events of her life seem to be presented within a play within the play. Goldemberg also has Aurelia Plath read the letters her daughter has sent her, and therefore, this play also turns into a play within the play. Similarly, Erenus has Halide reenact her life once again after her death. Wertenbaker, makes use of the Phaedra and Hippolytus myth as well as the enactment of Philomele’s rape as play within the play sequences. Lavery’s “Tragedy of Ophelia” is the play within the play, which retells the events in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Through the usage of *Yosma and the Snake*, Zeynep Avcı also presents her play through using the play within the play. Therefore, as female playwrights aspire to write their own persistent patterns, they also attempt to discover their own methods of presentation. The whole aim of the techniques these women writers make use of reveal that they want to keep their audience at a distance in order for them to perceive the plays through critical eyes. This similar aim is the result of the belief that all these playwrights share. This belief is that theatre provides a chance to change the society for the better. As Jane de Gay and Lizbeth Goodman declare, “Theatre is a place and space in which we can dream such large dreams and attempt to realise them” (1). Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertenbaker, Lavery, and Avcı all agree that theatre allows them to carry women’s experiences to the public arena. Through theatre,

women who have been silenced for long enough can raise their voices. As Yvonne Hodkinson argues,

In this public arena, women's presence must be recognized and consolidated. The stage, as a metaphor for the world, becomes the setting in which women project their vision, enabling women to move out of the silent margins into vocal celebration of life. (15)

Narrative, as Hayden White states, "is a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted" (1987: 1). In the articulation of a narrative, one needs to use words of communication. If one is to define mythmaking as the power to use words, to create myths, and to give names to experiences, Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı gradually evolve into the sources of power that control meaning and reality. As Estella Lauter argues, women must create their own myths

because of the psychosexual inadequacy of traditional religion; because of life-threatening crises; because of the desire to tell the rest of the story; because of the need to validate nonproductive female creativity; because of the desire to survive without being devalued; and because of the necessity to envision a new world in order to find one's rightful place. (1984: 18)

Therefore, feminist mythmaking, in other words, creating utterances of probable female experiences, becomes an attempt to reclaim the power to name, and hence to influence the so-called reality established by the patriarchy. Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertebaker, Lavery, and Avcı reclaim this power to name the experiences of women, by communicating their actions, and their voices. As Paul Hernadi suggests, the audience and the actors are always reminded that there are multi-perspectives that theatre provides for them, "more Action, and more Vision, and more interpretations of both Action and Vision" (51). Therefore, if more persistent patterns of women's experiences are revealed, then there will be more interpretation of their actions, experiences, voices, and visions. Analyzing the persistent patterns in the plays written by women will eventually "expose a set of reference points that would serve as an expandable framework for defining female experience, and ultimately the 'muted' culture females have created" (Lauter 1985; 14). Eventually, the patterns of women's experiences will secure themselves in cultural myths, and achieve the aims of feminist

mythmaking and thus, finding the persistent patterns of experience revealed in women's work will be the initial tread in discovering the process of women's mythmaking.

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## APPENDIX I

### TURKISH SUMMARY

#### MİT YARATMA SÜRECİ:

#### KADIN OYUNLARINDA KADIN YAZARLAR VE EDEBİ KARAKTERLER

Mitler toplulukları bir arada tutan temel öğelerdir. İnsanlığın ortak paydası olarak görülen mitler, toplumların kimliklerini belirleyen normları oluşturan öğelerdir. Carl Jung, arketipin tanımını insan bilincinde tekrarlanan motifler olarak yapmıştır. Ortak bilinci oluşturan bu motifler mitleri oluşturmuştur. Sözlü olarak nesilden nesile aktarılan mitlerin günümüze değişmeden taşınmasını sağlayan ise yazının bulunması olmuştur. Yazının bulunması ile toplumların ortak paydalarını oluşturan bir çok mit gelecek nesillere aktarılmıştır. Ancak, bu mitler her zaman erkek yazarlar tarafından, onların seçtiği kelimeler ve onların vurgulamak istediği öğeler ön plana çıkartılarak yazılmıştır. Bu tezde sözü edilen mit yaratıcısı bu mitleri kendi yargıları doğrultusunda yazıya döken kişidir. Mit yaratıcısı dili kullanma gücüne sahip olduğu için, insanları kendi yargıları doğrultusunda etkileme ve bu sayede gerçeği kontrol etme gücüne de sahiptir. Ancak, yüzyıllar boyunca erkek mit yaratıcıları, kadının toplumda oynayacağı rolleri belirlemiş ve yaratmış oldukları kadın şablonlarını kendi eserlerinde kaydetmişlerdir. Homer, Ovid, Sophocles, Aechylus ve Euripides gibi yazarlar sözlü edebiyat geleneğinden gelen mitlerde bulunan kadın figürlerini yazıya dökerken, kendi önyargıları doğrultusunda hareket etmişlerdir. Bu sebeple Jacosta, Antigone, Electra, Clytemnestra, Helen, Philomele, Procne, Medea, Phaedra ve Penelope gibi kadın figürleri ataerkil toplum yapısının kadına yüklediği özellikler ve roller doğrultusunda yazılı edebiyata geçmiştir. Bu kadın figürleri erkeklerin kadınları nasıl gördüğünü ya da görmek istediğini betimlemiştir. Dile sahip çıkan ataerkil toplum yapısı gerçekleri kendi istediği doğrultuda oluşturmuş ve kadınlardan bu gerçeklere uymaları beklenmiştir. Yazmak için gereken kalem, Gilbert ve Gubar'ın da söylediği gibi yazının yüzyıllarca erkeklerin hegemonyasında kalmasında etkili olmuştur. Bu nedenle kadınlar, kendi mitlerini yaratma fırsatını asla elde edememiştir.

Dolayısı ile kendi tecrübelerini ve gerçeklerini kendi kalemleri ile yazmayı başaramamışlardır.

Günümüzde, Feminist arketip kuramcıları, kadınların yarattığı eserlerin incelenmesi sonucu kadınların ortak motiflerine, tecrübelerine ve oluşturdukları arketiplere ulaşılabilineceğini savunmaktadır. Kadın sanatçıların yarattıkları arketiplerin belirlenmesi, yeni mitlerin ortaya çıkarılması demektir. Mitler toplumun ortak tecrübeleri olarak görüldüğü için, kadınların mitleri tekrar yazmaları, değiştirmeleri ve yeni mitler yaratarak onlarla ataerkil toplumun gerçeklerini sorgulayıp kendi gerçeklerini oluşturmaları gerekmektedir.

Bu nedenle, bu tezde Liz Lochhead'in *Blood and Ice*, Rose Leiman Goldemberg'ün *Letters Home*, Bilgesu Erenus'un *Halide*, Timberlake Wertenbaker'ın *The Love of the Nightingale*, Bryony Lavery'nin *Ophelia* ve Zeynep Avcı'nın *Gilgamiş* adlı oyunlarındaki mit yaratma ve mit kırma süreçleri incelenmiştir. Bu oyun yazarları, erkek mit yaratıcılarının oluşturduğu kadın şablonlarını yıkmayı ve kadınlığı tekrar tanımlamayı amaçlamışlardır.

1950'lerde ortaya çıkan postmodernizm akımı Amerika ve Avrupa'da bulunan azınlık topluluklarının seslerini duyurlamalarını sağlamıştır. Bu azınlık topluluklarından biri feminist akım çerçevesinde bir araya gelen kadınları kapsamaktadır. Feminist akımın bir araya getirdiği tüm kadınlar toplumda azınlık olarak nitelendirildiklerinin farkına varmış ve bu durumu değiştirmek için uğraş vermişlerdir. 1980'lerden sonra oluşturulan Feminist arketip kuramı, feminist akımın etkisinde gelişen en son kuramlardan biridir ve tarihte ve dünyada kadının kendi yerini belirlemesini amaç edinmiştir. Annis Pratt'in *Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction* (1981), Estella Lauter'ın *Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth Century Women* (1984) ve Estella Lauter ile Carol Schreier Rupprecht'in *Feminist Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-Visions of Jungian Thought*'u (1985), Carl Jung'un arketip kuramını tekrardan tanımlayarak, feminist amaçlara hizmet etmesini sağlamak için yazılmış kitaplardır. Feminist arketip kuramı, ilk olarak kadın ressamların, şairlerin ve yazarların eserlerinde tekrar edilen mitik motif ve kadın tecrübelerini gün yüzüne çıkartmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu arketiplerin belirlenmesi kadın mitlerinin ortaya çıkmasını sağlayacaktır ve bu doğrultuda kadınları ezen sosyal düzenin sorgulanmasına neden olacaktır. Feminist arketip kuramcıları henüz günümüz kadın oyun yazarlarının eserlerini incelememişlerdir, ancak özellikle 1960'ların

ortalarından itibaren kadın yazarların hayatlarını inceleyen bir çok oyun yazılmıştır. Bununla birlikte yine kadın yazarlar eski mitleri ve klasik olarak kabul edilen eserleri tekrar yazarak, bu yazılarda erkeklerin ortaya çıkarttıkları kadın şablonlarını gözler önüne sermeye başlamışlardır. Feminist arketip kuramcılarının kadın oyun yazarlarının gözüyle tarihi kadın yazarlarını ve edebi kadın karakterlerini incelemesi, kadınların yarattığı arketiplerin belirlenmesi ve bu doğrultuda kadın mitlerinin yaratılması sürecinin hızlanmasını sağlayacaktır. Lauter'ın ileri sürdüğü gibi eğer arketipin tanımını tekrarlanan tecrübelerden imge oluşturma eğilimi olarak yaparsak ve erkeklerin ve kadınların eşit olarak bu beceriyi paylaştıklarını kabul edersek, kadınların ortak tecrübelerini belirlemek için kadın eserlerinde tekrar edilen imgeleri ortaya çıkartmak yeterli olacaktır (1984: 8).

Bu nedenle, mitler ortak tecrübelerin kaynakları olarak kabul edildiği için, kadınların var olan mitleri nasıl tekrardan değerlendirdikleri ve kendi mitlerini nasıl yarattıklarını araştırmak, kadın deneyimleri ve bu doğrultuda kadın gerçekleri hakkında bilgi edinmemizi sağlayacaktır. Alicia Ostriker'in belirttiği gibi, bir yazar toplumun önceden tanıdığı bir figür ya da bildiği bir hikaye hakkında yazdığı zaman, bu yazarın yaptığı iş genelde saptırmak, yani karşı çıkmak, sorgulamak ve yeniden değerlendirmek olarak nitelendirilir. Yazarın üzerine yazdığı kişi ya da hikaye yepyeni gözlerle değerlendirilmiştir ve değiştirilmiştir. Yazarın bu saptırmacı tutumu uzun zamanda kültürel değişimin kaynağı olabilir. Ostriker, bu yazım yöntemini uygulayan yazarı saptırmacı / sorgulayıcı mit yaratıcısı olarak nitelendirir. Ostriker, ondokuzuncu ve yirminci yüzyılda yazan kadın yazarların çoğunda bu saptırmacılığı gözlemiştir. Saptırmacı kadın yazarların çoğu erkeklerin yazmış olduğu hikayeleri ve efsaneleri kadın gözüyle baştan yenilemek amacını taşır. Bu yenilemenin amacı: bu hikaye, efsane ve mitlerin erkeklerin yarattığı şablonları yıkarak kadını kadın gözüyle içermesini sağlamaktır. Bu nedenle saptırmacı mit yaratma süreci kadınlara kendi mitlerini yaratma şansını vermektedir. Bu doğrultuda, kadınlar toplumdaki gerçeklerin oluşturulmasını sağlayan dili de kullanma şansını yakalarlar. Dilin doğrudan kullanımı kadınların toplumdaki ikincil konumunu değiştirecek ve kadınların toplumda erkekler ile eşit koşullarda söz sahibi olmalarını sağlayacaktır.

Bununla birlikte erkekler tarafından yazılmış hikaye, efsane ve mitlerin kadınlar tarafından tekrar yazılması, erkeklerin sürekli tekrarlayarak toplumsal doğrular veya toplumsal gerçekler olarak belirledikleri koşulların da değişmesi

demektir. Diğer bir deyişle, kadınların mit kırma süreçleri de toplumsal değişimin oluşmasında en önemli etkenlerden biri olacaktır. Erkek hikayelerinde, efsanelerinde ve mitlerinde sürekli tekrarlanarak doğruluğu kabul edilen bir çok motifin kadın eserlerinde yeniden ele alınarak, kadını ikincil kılan ataerkil normların gözler önüne serilmesi, bu tezde mit kırma süreci olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Varolan mitlerin yeniden ele alınarak bu mitlere dikkat çekilmesi ve onların sorgulanmalarının sağlanması mit kırma girişiminin en önemli amacıdır. Bu sorgulamanın sağlanması için seyircinin her zaman uyanık tutularak sahnede gerçekleşen olayları dışarıdan bir gözlemci gibi algılaması gerekmektedir. Bu Bertolt Brecht'in kuramsallaştırdığı Epik Tiyatro geleneğinde açıkça anlatılmaktadır. Yabancılaştırma teknikleri kullanılarak sürekli uyanık tutulan seyirci sahnede gerçekleşen olaylara yalnızca seyirci kalmaz, onları gerçek hayatına taşıyarak toplumda değişim yaratmaya çalışır. Bertolt Brecht'in de Epik Tiyatro kuramını yaratırken yapmaya çalıştığı budur. Günümüzde kadın oyun yazarları, Bertolt Brecht'in yabancılaştırma yöntemlerine başvurmakta ve hatta Janelle Reinelt'in savunduğu gibi bu yöntemleri geliştirmektedirler. Seyirciyi sahnedeki olaylardan uzaklaştırmak ve onları oyun olaylarını sorgulamaya itmek amacıyla en sık kullanılan teknik metadramadır. Metadrama, oyun hakkında oyun anlamında kullanılır ve günümüz kadın yazarları da oyunlarında bu tekniğe çok yer verirler. Genel olarak oyun içinde oyun düzenini kurup, seyircinin oyuna dışardan gözlemci olarak bakmalarını sağlarlar. Amaç, seyircinin sahnede izlediği olaylar zincirini, tarafsız bakış açısıyla görmesini sağlamaktır. Metadrama dışında en sık kullanılan diğer bir yabancılaştırma tekniği de parodidir. Postmodern anlamıyla kullanılan parodi daha önce yazılmış oyun, hikaye, destan ya da mitleri sorgulamak amaçlı hatırlatma, veya tiyatro tekniklerini eleştiri amaçlı kullanma olarak nitelendirilebilir.

Bu nedenle daha önce de belirtildiği gibi bu tezde İskoç yazar Liz Lochhead'in *Blood and Ice*, Amerikalı yazar Rose Leiman Goldemberg'ün *Letters Home*, Türk yazar Bilgesu Erenus'un *Halide*, Amerika doğumlu Timberlake Wertenbaker'ın *The Love of the Nightingale*, İngiliz yazar Bryony Lavery'nin *Ophelia* ve Türk yazar Zeynep Avcı'nın *Gilgamiş* adlı oyunlarındaki mit yaratma ve mit kırma süreçleri incelenmiştir. Bu tez için kadın yazarların seçiminde çok sesliliğe önem gösterilmiştir. Söz konusu İskoç, İngiliz, Amerikan ve Türk kadın yazarlarının eserleri bireysel olarak incelendikten sonra, tüm oyunlarda tekrar eden motifler belirlenmiştir. Bu motifler zaman içinde kadın mitlerinin oluşmasını sağlayacaktır.

İlk bölümde tezin amacını anlatan genel bir giriş yapıldıktan sonra, ikinci bölümde mitin tanımları ve inceleme yöntemleri hakkında bilgi verilmiştir. Üçüncü bölümün başlığı “Kadın Yazarlar Üzerine Kadın Oyunları” olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu bölümde Mary Shelley, Sylvia ve Aurelia Plath ve Halide Edip Adıvar üzerine yazılmış üç tane oyun incelenmiştir. Dördüncü bölümün başlığı “Edebi Karakterler Üzerine Kadın Oyunları”dır. Bu bölümde erkeklerin yazmış olduğu üç anlatı kadın gözüyle tekrardan yazılmıştır. Ovid’in Philomele ve Procne miti, Shakespeare’in *Hamlet*’i ve dünyaca ünlü *Gılgamış Destanı*. Tezin beşinci bölümü sonuç bölümüdür ve bu bölümde ele alınan altı oyunda rastlanan ortak motifler incelenerek, bu motiflerin kadın mitlerini yaratma sürecinde etkili olduğu savunulmuştur.

Üçüncü bölümde incelenen oyunların hepsi de tarihi kadın yazarların hayatı ile ilgilidir. Yazılarında ya da oyunlarında tarihi figürlere referans vermek kadın yazarların kendi yazılarını meşrulaştırırken, onlara kadınların tarih boyunca benzer tecrübeler yaşadıklarını göstermelerini sağlar. Günümüz kadın yazarları tarihi kadınları günümüze taşımanın önemini kavramışlardır. Bu nedenle tarihi kadınları sahneye yine kadın gözüyle taşımak, yerleşmiş genellemelerin ve şablonların yıkılmasına katkı sağlayacaktır.

Tezin üçüncü bölümünde incelenen ilk oyun İskoç asıllı oyun yazarı Liz Lockhead’in *Blood and Ice* başlıklı çalışmasıdır. Lockhead, Mary Shelley’nin *Frankenstein* romanını yazarken aslında nasıl kendi hikayesini yazdığını keşfeder. Mary Shelley, kendi yazdığı romanı okurken, hayatını tekrar gözden geçirir ve yaşadığı tecrübeler anlam vermeyi başarır. Liz Lochhead’in *Blood and Ice* adlı oyununda Mary Shelley’nin kendi hapsedilmişliğini anlama süreci, bu sınırlandırılmanın dile getirme süreci ve son olarak kendi romanını okuyarak sınırlandırılmışlığını anlama süreci incelenmiştir. Bu süreçlerin sonunda kendini anlamayı sağlayan okuma süreci Liz Lochhead’in en çok tekrarladığı motiflerden biridir. Oyun, Mary Godwin Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, ve Mary Shelley’nin üvey kızkardeşi Claire’in hayatlarından kesitler verir. Oyunda Mary Shelley’nin hizmetçisi Elise’e de yer verilmiştir. Amaç, Mary Shelley’nin hizmetçisi Elise ile aynı kısıtlamalara maruz kaldığını göstermektir. Yazar, Elise’in özgürlüğünün hizmet etmek zorunda olduğu insanlar tarafından kısıtlandığını ortaya koyar. Aynı şekilde Mary Shelley’nin özgürlüğü, ailesinin ve Percy Bysshe Shelley’nin farklı özgürlük anlayışlarını, ona zorla kabul ettirme çabalarından dolayı kısıtlanmaktadır. Lochhead

bu sayede, hizmetçi ve dünyaca ünlü bir kadın yazar arasında özgürlük bağlamında pek bir fark olmadığını göstermektedir. Mary, oyunun sonunda annesi ünlü kadın araştırmacı Mary Wollstonecraft, babası ünlü araştırmacı William Godwin ve kocası ünlü şair Percy Bysshe Shelley'nin inandıkları özgürlük kavramlarının içinde hapsediğini anlar. Liz Lochhead'in amacı, bu ünlü kadın yazarın hayatını tekrardan anlatarak, kadınların yaşadığı tecrübelerin benzerliklerini ortaya koymaktır.

*Blood and Ice* oyununu izleyen ikinci oyun Amerikalı yazar Rose Leiman Goldemberg'ün yazmış olduğu *Letters Home* adlı oyundur. Bu oyun Sylvia Plath'ın ölümünün ardından, onun tüm mektuplarını bir araya getirerek kitaplaştıran annesi Aurelia Plath'ın aynı adlı kitabından esinlenerek yazılmıştır. Oyun Aurelia Plath'ın kızının intiharının ardındaki sebepleri anlama çabasını anlatır. Oyundaki tüm diyaloglar Aurelia Plath'ın topladığı mektuplardan alınmıştır. Rose Leiman Goldemberg, bu oyunu yazarken anne kız ilişkilerinin önemini ve kadının bireyselleşme sürecini betimler.

Üçüncü bölümün son oyunu Bilgesu Erenus tarafından kaleme alınan *Halide* adlı oyundur. İsminden de anlaşılacağı gibi Erenus, Halide Edip Adıvar'ın hayatını oyunlaştırmıştır. Oyun Halide Edip'in ölümünden sonra tekrar hayata dönerek yaptığı hataları çözme girişimini anlatır. Korkularını Cüce karakterinde kişileştiren Halide, Cüce ile birlikte hayatından kesitleri tekrardan yaşamak ve yaptığı hataları anlayabilmek için oynar. Oyunun sonunda, Halide Edip, onu mezarında huzursuz kılan olayın ülkesini terk etmek olduğunu anlar. Bu nedenle hayatında ona yüklenen tüm kimliklerden sıyrılarak insanların onu yargılamasını ister. Halide Edip'in hayatında yapmış olduğu eylemler ve vermiş olduğu kararlara farklı bir gözle yaklaşan Bilgesu Erenus, Halide Edip Adıvar'ın bir İstiklal Savaşı kahramanı olması ötesinde bir kadın olduğunu vurgular.

Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus, tarihi kadın figürleri oyunlarında tekrar hayata döndürerek onlar hakkında oluşturulmuş ataerkil mitleri yıkarken, onların yarattıkları mitleri ön plana çıkarmaya çalışmışlardır. Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus oyunlarında tekrar hayata döndürdükleri kadın yazarların kendilerini bulma ve anlama çabalarını Gilgamiş ya da Odysseus gibi kahramanların çabalarıyla özdeşleştirmişlerdir. Bu mitik kahramanlar çıktıkları yolculukların sonunda kendilerini bulur ve toplumları için iyi birer birey olmayı başarırlar. Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus bu mitik yolculuğu kadının her gün yaşadığı ortamına taşır, ve

dolayısıyla kadınlara da doğru yolu arayan kahraman kimliğinin yakışacağını ispatlarlar. Üç oyun yazarı da okumanın ve hayatını tekrardan hatırlamanın bu mitik yolculuktaki önemini tekrar eden bir motif olarak belirlerler. Dolayısıyla Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus'a göre, yazarak, okuyarak ve tekrar hatırlayarak bireyler kendilerini anlamayı başarabileceklerdir.

Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus için kendini anlama süreci bir kadının gelişiminde en önemli süreçtir. Üç yazar da aşık olmanın kadınlar için oluşturduğu tehlikelere değinir ve aşık olmanın kadına zarar vereceğini mitik bir motif olarak işler. Karşı cinse duyulan aşk, kadının kendi kontrolünü karşı cinse teslim etmesine ve kendi kimliğini kaybetmesine neden olmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus kurban edilen, zavallı kadın şablonunu kırarak, kadınların kendilerini feda ettiklerini mitik bir motif olarak vurgularlar. Bununla birlikte Adem'in cennetten kovulmasının suçunu Havva'ya atan miti kıran yazarlar, kadının cennetten kovulmasına erkeklerin neden olduğunu savunurlar. Ayrıca üç yazar da geçmişi sorgulayarak kendini anlama sürecinin bir sonraki nesillere aktarılmasının önemini oyunlarında mitik bir motif olarak işlerler. Son olarak kadınlara ataerkil toplumun yüklediği annelik içgüdüsünün kadında oluşturduğu baskıyı betimler ve bu baskıya mitik bir motif olarak yer verirler.

Bu üç yazarın en çok üzerinde durdukları motif kadınların tecrübelerinin benzerliği ve bu nedenle onların tecrübelerini ve hikayelerini paylaşma gereksinimidir. Bu nedenle, Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus, tarihi kadın figürlerini günümüze taşıırken, tüm kadınlara kendi geçmişlerini hatırlatarak onlara sorunlarını paylaşma zemini hazırlamaktadır. Bu sayede bu üç yazar kadın gerçeklerini ortaya çıkartarak, kadının ataerkil toplumdaki ikincil durumunu değiştirmede büyük rol oynamaktadırlar.

Dördüncü bölümde erkeklerin yazmış olduğu eserlerdeki kadın figürlerinin kadınlar tarafından tekrar yazılması incelenmiştir. Ovid'in yazıya döktüğü Philomele ve Procne mitini yorumlayan Timberlake Wertenbaker'ın *The Love of the Nightingale*, Shakespeare'in kadın karakterlerini bir araya getiren Bryony Lavery'nin *Ophelia* ve Gılgamış'ın hikayesini tekrar yazan Zeynep Avcı'nın *Gılgamış* adlı oyunları bu bölümde incelenmiştir.

*The Love of the Nightingale* adlı oyun Timberlake Wertenbaker'ın Philomele ve Procne mitini bir kadın gözüyle dile getirme çabasıdır. Eniştesi tarafından tecavüze

uğrayan ve konuşmaması için dili kesilen Philomele, ablası Procne ile birlikte tecavüzcü eniştesi Tereus'tan intikamını alır. Mitin Ovid'in yazıya dökmüş olduğu uyarlamasında Philomele ablası Procne'nin çocuğu olan Itys'i öldürmesine yardım eder ve Tereus'a güzel bir yemek gibi yedirirler. Ellerinde Itys'in gövdesinden ayrılmış kafasını tutarak Tereus'tan tam anlamıyla intikam alırlar. Öfkeden çıldıran Tereus Philomele ve Procne'yi öldürmek üzere takip eder. Daha fazla şiddete razı olamayan Tanrılar hepsini kuşa çevirir. Wertebaker'ın uyarlaması Philomele ve Procne miti sessizliğe mahkum edilmiş bireylerin sessizliklerini vahşete başvurarak bozduklarını gösterir. Yunan tiyatrosunun parodisini yapan oyunda erkek korosu üyeleri Tereus'tan korktukları için sessiz kalmayı seçmişlerdir. Kadınların oluşturduğu koro bireylerin korkudan dolayı sustuklarını ya da susturulduklarını izleyiciye hatırlatırken, sessizliğe mahkum edilmiş toplumların vahşetini gözler önüne serer. Wertebaker, oyunun sonunda kuşa döndürülen Philomele, Procne ve Tereus'un vahşeti sona erdirmediğini, sadece susturulduğunu savunur. Bu nedenle oyuna eklenen son bölümde Philomele kuş olarak sesine tekrar kavuşmuştur ve yeni nesilleri temsil eden Itys'in dünyada gerçekleşen tüm vahşeti sürekli sorgulaması gerektiğini anlatır. Susturulan toplumların er geç vahşete başvuracağını açıkca gözler önüne seren Wertebaker, baskının vahşet ile birlikte hareket ettiğini mitik bir motif olarak oyununda işler.

Dördüncü bölümün ikinci oyunu İngiliz yazar Bryony Lavery'nin yazmış olduğu *Ophelia* adlı oyundur. Shakespeare'in *Hamlet* adlı oyununda Hamlet'in sevgilisini canlandıran Ophelia karakteri, Lavery'nin uyarlamasında Shakespeare'in çizdiği itaatkar rolünden kurtulur. *Ophelia*, *Hamlet* oyununun bittiği yerden başlar. Fortinbras, Hamlet, Gertrude, Claudius, Laertes'in öldüğü saraya gelir ve cesetlerin dışarı taşınmasını emreder. Bu arada salona giren oyuncuların morallerini düzeltmesi için bir oyun oynamalarını ister. Oyuncular "Ophelia'nın Trajedisi" adlı oyunu oynamak üzere olduklarını söylerler. Bu sayede oyun içinde oyun başlar. Lavery'nin uyarlamasında Gertrude, Claudius'u kandırarak Hamlet'in babası olan eski kocasını öldürtür. Eski kocasını öldürtme sebebi kocasının hizmetçi ile olan ilişkisidir. Hizmetçisini de öldüren Gertrude, Claudius ile evlenir ve tahta eski kocasından olan Hamlet yerine, Claudius'tan olacak bebeğini oturtmaya karar verir. Bu nedenle Hamlet'ten hamile olduğunu düşündüğü Ophelia'yı öldürmek ister. Oyun içindeki oyun burada biter ve oyuncular Fortinbras'a "Ophelia'nın Trajedisi'nin" bu şekilde

sona erdiğini söyler. Fortinbras salonu terk ettikten sonra kendi aralarında konuşan oyuncular çok iyi bir yüzücü olan Ophelia'nın Gertrude'un cinayet girişiminden kurtulduğunu konuşurlar. Bu konuşmanın sonunda izleyici, Ophelia'yı canlandıran oyuncunun gerçekten Ophelia olduğunu anlar. Bununla birlikte seyirci Ophelia'nın beklediği çocuğun babasının Hamlet veya Laertes'ten olabileceğini fark eder. Ophelia sarayda yaşadığı baskılardan kurtularak oyuncularla birlikte kendi geleceğini kurmak için yola çıkmıştır. Bu oyunda Lavery Shakespeare'in diğer kadın karakterlerini de oyuna katar. Lady Macbeth (Macbeth), Portia (Venedik Taciri), Katherina (Huysuz Kız), Goneril (Kral Lear) ve Lady Capulet (Romeo ve Juliet) Hamlet'in babasının cenazesi için Danimarka Krallığına gelirler ve Lavery bu karakterleri Shakespeare'in çizdiği şablonlardan çıkartmaya çalışır. Aslında Lavery, bu kadınların ataerkil toplumda yaşadıkları baskıları gözler önüne sererek, Shakespeare'in yüzyıllardır okuyucularına çizdiği kadın imajlarını yıkmayı başarır. Lavery, oyununda, ataerkil sistemin kadınları, kendi baskılarını desteklemek için, nasıl ataerkil çıkarlar doğrultusunda yönlendirdiğini gösterir. Ancak bu yönlendirme, ataerkil toplumu güçsüzleştiren temel öğelerden biridir. Bununla birlikte Lavery, *Ophelia* oyununda gerçeklerin ve cinsiyetlerin ataerkil toplum tarafından belirlenen kurgular olduğunu mitik bir motif olarak işler.

Tezin dördüncü bölümünün son oyunu Zeynep Avcı tarafından yazılan *Gılgamış* adlı oyundur. Zeynep Avcı Gılgamış adlı kahramanın öyküsünde Yosma ve Yılan'a seslerini duyurma şansı verir. Yılan ölümsüzlük otunu Gılgamıştan çalmıştır, ancak buna çok pişmandır. Oyun boyunca Gılgamış'ı durdurarak ölümsüzlük otunu yememiş olmayı diler, çünkü ölümsüzlük, Zeynep Avcı'nın oyununda bir lanetten başka birşey değildir. Bununla birlikte, hayvanlarla yaşayan Enkidu'yu topluma kazandıran Yosma, Gılgamış yüzünden aşık olduğu Enkidu'yu kaybeder. Zeynep Avcı'nın uyarlaması boyunca Enkidu'yu Gılgamış'tan uzak tutmaya çalışan Yosma, oyunun kapanış sözlerini söyler. Enkidu'yu kaybeden Gılgamış ağlarken içindeki acının kaynağını sorar. Yosma bu acının aşk olduğunu söyler. Zeynep Avcı'ya göre, bu aşk, kahramanları dize getirir ve onları ölümsüz kılar. Bu sebeple Zeynep Avcı, bu oyun ile ölümsüzlüğün ismini duyurmakta değil, sevgiyi yaşamakta olduğunu savunan mitik motifi ortaya koyar.

Timberlake Wertenbaker, Bryony Lavery ve Zeynep Avcı'nın oyunlarında ortak motifler olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Bu motiflerin en başında erkeklerin yazmış olduğu

eserlerin kadın gözüyle yazılmasının kadınların toplumdaki ikincil konumlarından kurtulmaları için çok güçlü bir silah olduğu yer alır. Ayrıca, üç yazar da ataerkil toplumda kendilerine yer arayan kadınların büyük tehlike altında olduğunu motif olarak çizerler. Bununla birlikte, üç yazar da ataerkil toplumun kendini güçsüz bıraktığını savunur. Wertebaker'ın oyununda, erkek korosu, Tereus'a karşı duydukları korkudan dolayı yanlış giden olaylar karşısında sessiz kalmayı seçmişlerdir. Bu sessizlik onların kendilerine olan saygılarını sarsarak, topluma yararlı eylemlerde bulunmalarına engel olacaktır. Bryony Lavery'nin *Ophelia*'sı aynı şekilde ataerkil toplumun kurallarına uyan kadınların oluşturduğu tehditleri gözler önüne serer. Hiyerarşik üstünlüklerini kullanarak toplumu kendi istedikleri doğrultuda yönlendiren kadınlar, ataerkil toplumun asıl bireyleri olan erkekleri güçsüz bırakabilmektedirler. Bununla birlikte Zeynep Avcı kahramanlık uğruna erkek toplumunun güçlü bireylerini ölüme gönderdiğini gözler önüne serer. Wertebaker, Lavery ve Avcı, kahramanlığa duyulan bu büyük hayranlığın, ataerkil toplumun kendini güçsüz bıraktığını mitik bir motif olarak oyunlarında inceler.

Bu üç yazar parodi ve metadramayı kullanarak gelecek nesillere ataerkil toplumun yanlışlarını göstermek için tiyatronun önemini vurgularlar. Oyun içinde oyun gibi teknikleri kullanarak seyirciyi oyundan uzak tutan yazarlarının amacı, seyircinin oyunlarını sürekli sorgulamasıdır. Düşünen ve sorgulayan seyirci toplumda var olan hataları düzeltmek için uğraşacaktır. Bu nedenle Wertebaker, Lavery ve Avcı düşünen seyirciye ihtiyaç duymaktadırlar. Baskı altında tutulan kadınların toplumda eşit muamele görmesini ancak bu şekilde sağlayabileceklerine inanırlar.

Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertebaker, Lavery ve Avcı'nın oyunlarında ortaya çıkan ortak motifler beşinci bölümde incelenmiştir. Altı yazarın paylaştığı motiflerden ilki kadınlar için yazmanın ve öğrenmenin önemidir. Ataerkil toplumda yaşadıkları baskılardan kurtulmaları için altı oyun yazarı da kadınların deneyimlerini yazmaları gerektiğini savunmaktadır. Buna ek olarak, bu tezde incelenen tüm oyunlarda, kadının kendi önemini bilmesinin ve kendi ayakları üzerinde durabilmesinin önemini vurgulamıştır. Kadınların birbirlerine destek olmalarının gerekliliği tüm oyun yazarlarının üzerinde durduğu motiflerdendir. Bu motiflere ek olarak aşkın getirdiği tehlikeler ve ataerkil toplumun kendisini güçsüz bıraktığı fikri de bu oyunların hepsinde tekrarlanmaktadır.

İlk olarak kadınlar için yazmanın gerekliliğini tartışan tüm yazarlar, kadınların tecrübelerini ve duygularını yazarak ataerkil toplumun baskısından kurtulabileceklerini savunmuşlardır. Örneğin Liz Lochhead *Blood and Ice* oyununda Mary Shelley'nin yazarak bastırılmış duygularından kurtulduğunu savunmuştur. Lochhead, Shelley'nin *Frankenstein* adlı romanının, onun bilinç altında hissettiği baskının dışı vurumu olduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Mary Shelley, bastırıldığı duygularıyla işlediği romanı okuduğunda kendi gerçek duygularıyla tanışır ve duygularını bastırmanın tehlikelerini fark eder. Bu nedenle Lochhead'e göre insan yazarak içinde yaşayan canavarlardan kurtulur ve tecrübelerini başka insanlarla paylaşarak onları da bilinçlendirme şansını yakalar. Lochhead gibi Rose Leiman Goldemberg de oyununda, yazmanın Sylvia Plath için ne kadar önemli olduğunu gösterir. Sylvia Plath bir eş ve anne olunca üstüne yüklenen sorumluluklardan dolayı bir türlü yazmak için fırsat bulamaz ve depresyona sürüklenir. Duygu ve düşüncelerini yazıya dökemediği zaman Sylvia içindeki birikmiş duygulara yenik düşer. Aynı şekilde Bilgesu Erenus'un çizdiği Halide Edip karakteri de yazmadığı ve topluma bu şekilde hizmet etmediği zaman korkularına yenik düşer. İlk evliliğinde sadece eşinin istekleri doğrultusunda hareket eden Halide korkularına yenik düşmek üzereyken yazar olmaya karar verir ve bu sayede adım adım korkularından uzaklaşarak kendini tanımaya başlar. Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus'un oyunlarında kendileri de yazar olan kadınlar vardır. Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath ve Halide Edip Adıvar edebiyatta isim yapmış yazarlardır ve hepsi de aslında birer mit yaratıcısıdır. Ancak hepsi yaşadıkları dönemlerde ataerkil toplumun baskılarına maruz kalmış ve yaratıcılıkları engellenmiştir. Ancak Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus bu üç yazarın hayatlarını yazarak onların yaşadıkları baskılardan günümüz kadınlarının ders çıkarmalarını sağlamaya çalışmışlardır. Sanki Shelley, Plath ve Halide Edip, Hélène Cixous'nun "The Laugh of the Medusa" adlı makalesinde söylediklerini tekrarlamaktadır:

Neden yazmadığımı biliyorum. (Bende neden yirmi yedi yaşına gelmeden önce yazamadığımı biliyorum.) Çünkü yazım yeteneğinin sadece üstün insanlara verilen, bizi aşan, ulu bir yetenek olduğunu düşünüyorduk - 'Üstün erkeklere' verilen bir yetenek: ve bu çok saçma. [...] Yaz, kimsenin seni engellemesine izin verme, hiçbirşeyin seni durdurmasına izin verme: hiçbir erkeğe izin verme. (348)

Bu nedenle Lochhead, Goldember ve Erenus yazma sürecinin kadınlar için bir kurtuluş olduğunu, bir motif olarak sürekli oyunlarında işlemektedirler.

Wertenbaker, Lavery ve Avcı'nın paylaştığı ortak noktada hepsinin daha önceden yazılmış olan ataerkil eserleri oyunlarında kullanmalarınıdır. Ovid'in yazıya döktüğü Philomele ve Procne mitini, Shakespeare'in *Hamlet*'ini ve Gılgamış Destanını oyunlarına taşımışlardır. Bu yazarlar, söz konusu eserleri tekrar yazarak, erkeklerin yarattıkları kadın şablonlarını gözler önüne sermektedirler. Böylece kadın bakış açısını yazılarına taşımışlardır. Estella Lauter'ın söylediği gibi erkek yazılarını tekrardan ele alarak bu mitleri kendi mitleri yapmayı başarmışlardır. (1984: 12). Bunu yaparken erkeklerin eserlerinde yarattıkları kadın figürlerinin kendi seslerini duyurabilmelerini sağlamışlardır. Bu nedenle, Worthenbaker, Lavery ve Avcı yazma sürecinin kadınların ataerkil baskılardan kurtularak kendi seslerini yükseltmeleri için ne kadar önemli olduğunu vurgulamışlardır.

Yazma sürecine ek olarak, bu tezde incelenen tüm yazarlar, kadının kendi önemini bilmesinin ve kendi ayakları üzerinde durmayı başarmasının gerekliliğini vurgulamışlardır. Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus oyunlarında, Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath ve Halide Edip Adıvar'ı kendilerine olan güveni kaybetmiş kadınlar olarak işlemişlerdir. Üç yazar da, kendilerini erkeklerden daha aşağı gören bu kadınların kendi eserlerini okuyarak ya da hayatlarını gözden geçirerek kendilerini tanımlarının ve böylece kendilerine olan güvenlerini yeniden sağlamalarının önemini vurgulamışlardır. Buna paralelde Worthenbaker, Lavery ve Avcı ataerkil eserlerde kadınların ne kadar güvensiz ve güçsüz olarak çizildiğini göstermeye çalışmışlardır. Bu figürlerin maruz kaldıkları baskılardan kurtularak erkekler olmadan ayaklarının üzerinde durmaları gerektiğini vurgulamışlardır. Bu nedenle altı yazar da ayakta kalmak için kadınların kendi önemlerini fark etmelerinin ve kendi ayakları üzerinde durmaları gerekliliğini bir motif olarak oyunlarında tekrarlamışlardır.

Bununla birlikte altı oyunda da erkekler ile eşit şartlarda bir gelecek için kadınların birbirlerine destek olmalarının önemi vurgulanmıştır. Lochhead, Goldemberg ve Erenus'un oyunlarındaki karakterler (Mary Shelley, Sylvia Plath ve Halide Edip), hayatlarında destek alabilecekleri kadın figürlerinden yoksun olarak işlenmişlerdir. Mary Shelley'nin annesi onu doğururken ölmüştür ve babasının ikinci eşinden olan üvey kızkardeşi Claire'in tek amacı Byron'ın gönlünü kazanmaktır. Hayatında destek alabileceği hiçbir kadın olmadığı için Percy Shelley'den destek bekleyen Mary, kocasından bu desteği bulamaz. Aynı şekilde Sylvia Plath kendi kimliğini arama aşamasında annesinden destek istemez ve kendini Ted Hughes'a

teslim eder. Halide Edip'in annesinin yokluğu da onun etrafındaki erkelerden destek aramasına sebep olur ve diğer karakterler gibi Halide Edip de bu desteği bulamaz. Wertenbaker'ın oyununda, Procne'nin Tereus'un ülkesindeki kadınları aşağı görerek, onlarla görüşmek istememesi Philomele'yi yanına çağırmasına, bu sayede de kız kardeşinin tecavüze uğramasına neden olur. Lavery'nin Ophelia'sı oyundaki diğer kadınlardan istediği desteği bulamaz çünkü tüm kadınlar ataerkil toplumun esiri olmuşlardır. Ancak kadın olan Oyuncu Kral'ın yanında oyuculara katılarak aradığı desteği bulur ve oyunun sonunda geleceğe doğru güvenle ilerler. Zeynep Avcı kadınların birbirlerine vereceği desteğin öneminden çok, bu desteğe bir erkeği elde etmek uğruna ihtiyaç duyulmasının tehlikelerini ön plana çıkarır. Zeynep Avcı'ya göre kadınlar ayakta kalabilmek için birbirlerine destek olmalıdır; bir erkeğin aşkını elde ederek ataerkil topluma katılmak için değil. Yosma'nın İhtar'dan istediği destek sonuçsuz kalır, çünkü bir araya gelmelerinin sebebi Enkidu'yu Yosma'ya geri döndürmek ve Gılgamış'ın İhtar ile birlikte olmasını sağlamaktır. Bu nedenle, gelecekte erkekler ile eşit şartlarda yaşayabilmek için kadınların birbirlerinden uzak durmak yerine, birbirlerine bağlanmaları ve destek vermeleri şarttır.

Altı yazar da aşık olmanın kadınlar için yarattığı tehlikeleri tekrar eden bir motif olarak oyunlarında işlerler. Kadının aşık olması bu yazarlar için onun bir erkeğe kendini adayarak kendi kimliğini kaybetmesi demektir. Örneğin Mary Shelley kendini Percy Shelley'e ve Sylvia Plath ise Ted Hughes'a adayarak, kendi benliklerini kaybeder ve bunalıma sürüklenirler. Halide Edip, sorularına sadece bir erkeğin cevap verebileceğini düşünür ve kendine olan güvenini yitirir. Wertenbaker'ın Procne'si Tereus'a olan güveni ve aşkı yüzünden kardeşinin hayatını mahveder. Sadece Ophelia aşktan kurtularak bir gelecek kurar kendisine. Yosma, Enkidu'nun kendisi yerine Gılgamış'ı seçmiş ve Enkidu'yu kahramanlık uğruna kaybetmiş olmanın verdiği acı ile yaşar. Bu nedenle altı yazar da kadınların benliklerini kaybetmesinin ve ataerkil düzene boyun eğmesinin en büyük sebebi olarak aşkı gösterir.

Son olarak Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertenbaker, Lavery ve Avcı ataerkil toplumun kendi kendini güçsüzleştirdiğini, tekrar eden bir motif olarak inceler. Lochhead, ataerkil toplumun çizdiği sınırlardan dolayı bir çok bireyin acı çektiğini gözler önüne serer. Örneğin, Mary Shelley, Percy Shelley'nin ona dayattığı özgürlük düşüncesi ile yaşamaya çalışır, ancak özgür aşk ona göre değildir. Lochhead'e göre özgürlük sadece bireyin tanımlayabileceği bir kavramdır: Bir bireyin

özgürlüğü diğer bir bireyin esaretidir. Buna ek olarak Goldemberg, ataerkil toplumun başarıya çok fazla önem vermesinin kadınları bunalıma sürüklediğini öne sürer. Ataerkil toplumda bir kadının başarının zirvesine ulaşmasının engelleneceği düşünülünce, ataerkil toplumun kadınların potansiyelinden yeteri kadar yararlanamayacağı anlaşılacaktır. Bu nedenle Goldemberg'e göre ataerkil toplum kadınları merkezden iterek güçsüzleşecektir. Bilgesu Erenus da aynı düşünceye yer verir, çünkü ataerkil düşünce kadınların kendilerine olan güvenlerini sarsarak toplumun ilerlemesini engellemektedir. Halide Edip sorularına sadece bir erkeğin cevap bulabileceği düşüncesiyle oyunda kendi gelişimini engeller ve dolayısıyla yaşadığı toplumun daha hızlı ilerlemesine katkıda bulunamaz. Wertenbaker, ataerkil toplumun kendi gelişimini engellediğini oyunundaki erkek korusu ile örneklendirir. Tereus'un gücünden korkan erkek korusu yaşadıkları ortamda yaşanan haksızlıklara, bu korkularından dolayı, sessiz kalmayı yeğler. Ancak Wertenbaker'a göre şiddete karşı sessiz kalmak o şiddetin büyümesine ve çok daha kötü sonuçlar doğurmasına yol açar. Bryony Lavery, ataerkil toplumun kurallarına uyan kadınların o toplumu güçsüz bırakacağını savunur. Judith Fetterley'in de belirttiği gibi erkek gibi düşünmeyi öğrenen, erkek bakış açısı ile olayları değerlendiren ve ataerkil değerlerin doğru olduğunu kabul eden kadınlar (xx) sonuç olarak kendi isteklerini kabul ettirmek için erkekleri kullanacaklardır. Örneğin, ataerkil toplumun düzenine ayak uydurmuş olan Gertrude, Claudius'u kullanarak kocasını öldürtür. Ancak, oyunun sonunda sadece kendisi değil tüm krallığın yok olmasına neden olur. Bundan dolayı, kadınları kendi kurallarına göre eğiten ataerkil toplum, aslında kendi sonunu yavaş yavaş hazırlamaktadır. Zeynep Avcı da ataerkil toplumun kahramanlığı övmesi nedeniyle kendini güçsüz bıraktığı düşüncesindedir. Gılgamış Enkidu'yu kahramanlığa zorlar ve onun ölümüne sebep olur. Avcı'ya göre kahramanlığı bu şekilde destekleyen bir sistem birçok erkeğin ölümüne sebep olmakta ve bu nedenle kendini güçsüz bırakmaktadır. Bu nedenle Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertenbaker, Lavery ve Avcı ataerkil toplumun çeşitli nedenlerden dolayı bütün gücünü ve etkisini kaybedeceğini öngörmektedirler.

Bu yazarların paylaştıkları ortak motiflerin yanısıra, paylaştıkları tiyatro teknikleri de onların mesajlarını daha güçlü bir şekilde duyurmalarını sağlamaktadır. Janelle Reinelt'in belirttiği gibi feminist yazarlar Brecht'in epik tiyatro tekniklerinden çok fazla yararlanmaktadırlar (46). Brecht'in yabancılaştırma tekniklerini kullanarak

seyirciyi tarafsız bir şekilde oyunu izleyerek oyun olaylarını sorgulamalarını sağlarlar. Bu tezde incelenen oyun yazarları özellikle oyun içinde oyun tekniğini kullanarak tiyatronun toplumları nasıl etkilediğini vurgulamışlardır. Lochhead, Mary Shelley'nin kendi romanı olan *Frankenstein*'i okuyarak hayatını yeniden gözden geçirmesini sağlarken bunu oyun içinde oyun tekniğini kullanarak yapar. Aynı şekilde Goldemberg, Aurelia Plath'ın kızı Sylvia'nın mektuplarını okuyarak onun hayatını tekrardan canlandırmasını sağlar. Erenus, Halide'nin hayatını yeniden gözden geçirmesi için Cüce ile birlikte hayatından kesitleri canlandırarak oyun içinde oyun tekniğini kullanır. Wertenbaker, *The Love of the Nightingale* adlı oyununda Philomele ve Procne mitinin yanı sıra Phaedra ve Hippolytus mitini oyun içinde oyun tekniği sayesinde sahneye taşır. Bununla birlikte Philomele, Tereus'un yaptıklarını diğer kadınlara anlatmak için oyun içinde oyun tekniğine başvurur. Lavery'nin oyununun içinde "Ophelia'nın Trajedisi" adlı oyunu izleme şansı elde ederiz. Son olarak da Zeynep Avcı, Yosma ve Yılan karakterlerini kullanarak onların Gılgamış'ın destanını anlatmalarını sağlar ve böylece oyun içinde oyun tekniğine başvurur. Bu nedenle, bu yazarlar sadece kendi mitlerini değil kendi tekniklerini de yaratma çabası içindedirler. Kullandıkları teknikler sayesinde tarafsız bir seyircinin toplumu iyi yönde değiştirebileceğine inanırlar. Bu nedenle tiyatro kadınlar için seslerini duyurabilecekleri bir ortam sağlamaktadır.

Estella Lauter'ın da ileri sürdüğü gibi, kadınlar toplumda hak ettikleri yere sahip olabilmek için kendi mitlerini yaratmalıdırlar (1984: 18). Eğer mit yaratma süreci kelimeleri kullanma gücü ve deneyimleri isimlendirme çabası olarak tanımlanırsa, Lochhead, Goldemberg, Erenus, Wertenbaker, Lavery ve Avcı gerçekleri kontrol eden kaynaklar olacaklardır, çünkü kadın deneyimlerini dile getirerek onları kendi seslerini kullanarak isimlendireceklerdir. Bu nedenle, kadın yaşantılarını işleyen motifler ne kadar çok belirlenirse, kadınlar kendi hikayelerini toplumsal mitlere o kadar taşıyabileceklerdir.

## APPENDIX II

### CURRICULUM VITAE

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Uçar-Özbirinci, Purnur  
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#### EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Başkent Uni. American Culture and Literature	2002
BA	Hacettepe Uni. American Culture and Literature	1998
High School	Atatürk Anadolu High School, Ankara	1994

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollement
2002- Present	Başkent Uni. American Culture and Literature	Instructor
2000-2002	Başkent Uni. American Culture and Literature	Research Assistant
1998-2000	ASELSAN MGEO	Purchasing Executive

#### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Beginner French

#### PUBLICATIONS

1. Uçar, P. "John Barth's Play with the Reader in Lost in the Funhouse: Fiction for Print, Tape, Live Voice." *Interactions*. 14.2. Bornova: Ege UP, 2005. 201-212.
2. Uçar, P. "As We Still Wait For Godot, Ferhan Sensoy Has Already Bid Him Farewell" published in *InterCulture* – online journal Volume 2, May 2005 ISSN 1552-5910, Florida State University.

#### HOBBIES

Theatre, Mythology, Art, Poetry, Movies