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A RADICAL FEMINIST/SOCIALIST FEMINIST READING OF
WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OPPRESSION AS
REFLECTED IN THE LIVES OF THE WOMEN CHARACTERS
IN TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER'S
THE LOVE OF THE NIGHTINGALE, NEW ANATOMIES
AND THE GRACE OF MARY TRAVERSE

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by
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To my dearest family and my dearest friends.

APPROVAL PAGE

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AUTHOR DECLARATIONS

1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

2. The advanced study in the English Language and Literature graduate program of which this thesis is part has consisted of:

i) Research Methods course during the undergraduate and graduate programs.

ii) English literature as well as American literature including novel, poetry and drama studies, a comparative approach to world literatures, and examination of several literary theories as well as critical approaches which have contributed to this thesis in an effective way.

3. This thesis is composed of the main sources including several books by the major authors discussed in comparison; and the secondary sources including scholarly articles from academic journals concerning radical feminist and socialist feminist theory.

Ikiz TÜLEK

October, 2010

ABSTRACT

Ikiz TÜLEK

**A RADICAL FEMINIST/SOCIALIST FEMINIST READING OF WOMEN'S
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OPPRESSION AS REFLECTED IN THE LIVES
OF THE WOMEN CHARACTERS IN TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER'S
THE LOVE OF THE NIGHTINGALE, *NEW ANATOMIES* AND *THE GRACE
OF MARY TRAVERSE***

This study is about a radical/socialist feminist reading of women's social and economic oppression as reflected in the lives of the female characters in Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. It consists of seven main sections after an introduction. The first section consists of the dominant principles of radical feminism and theatre, socialist feminism and theatre. The second section examines different forms of women's oppression depicted in *The Love of the Nightingale* within the context of radical feminist theory. The third section discusses the deconstruction of socially prescribed gender roles in *New Anatomies* and from a socialist feminist perspective. The fourth section consists of a radical/socialist feminist critique of women's oppression as reflected in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. The fifth section discusses the comparisons of *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. The thesis ends with a conclusion which includes a summary of the arguments.

Key words: Radical feminism, socialist feminism, radical feminist theatre, socialist feminist theatre, women's oppression, patriarchal society.

KISA ÖZET

İkiz TÜLEK

TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER'IN *BÜLBÜLÜN A KI, YENİ ANATOMİLER* VE *MARY TRAVERSE'ÜN FAZİLETİ* OYUNLARINDAKİ KADIN KARAKTERLERİN HAYATLARINA YANSIYAN EKONOMİK VE SOSYAL BASKININ RADİKAL VE SOSYAL FEMİNİST AÇISINDAN İNCELENMESİ

Bu çalışmada Timberlake Wertenbaker'ın *Bülbül'ün A Kı*, *Yeni Anatomiler* ve *Mary Traverse'ün Fazileti* oyunlarındaki kadın karakterlerin yaşamlarında yansıtılan sosyalist ve ekonomik baskının radikal/feminist bakımdan incelenmesidir. İlk bölüm radikal feminist teorisinin ve radikal feminist tiyatrosunun, sosyalist feminist teorisinin ve sosyalist feminist tiyatrosunun belirgin ilkelerini içerir. İkinci bölüm radikal feminist açıdan kadınların maruz kaldığı farklı baskıları *Bülbül'ün A Kı* oyununda ele almaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm kadın karakterlerin toplum tarafından belirlenen cinsiyet rollerinin yapısal çözümlemesini *Yeni Anatomiler* oyununda sosyalist feminist açıdan ele almaktadır. Dördüncü bölüm kadınların yaşadığı baskı ve kısıtlanmaların *Mary Traverse'ün Fazileti* adlı oyunda radikal feminist ve sosyalist feminizm açısından incelemektedir. Beşinci bölümde *Bülbül'ün A Kı*, *Yeni Anatomiler* ve *Mary Traverse'ün Fazileti* isimli oyunların benzer yönlerini ele alır. Bu tez bütün bu tartışmaların özetinin yer aldığı son bölümle birlikte sona ermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Radikal feminizm, sosyal feminizm, radikal feminist tiyatrosu, sosyal feminist tiyatrosu, kadınların baskısı, ataerkil toplumlar.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication Page (optional)	iii
Approval Page	iv
Author Declarations	v
Abstract	vi
Kısa Özet	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Table of Contents	ix
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: Dominant Principles of Radical Feminism and Radical Feminist Theatre, Socialist Feminism and Socialist Feminist Theatre	10
1.1. Patriarchy as the Main Source of Women's Oppression According to Radical Feminism	13
1.2. Sexual Oppression and Sexual Assault According to Radical Feminism	17
1.3. Family Life and Marriage as a Trap for Women According to Radical Feminism	19
1.4. Radical Feminist Theatre: Circular/Cyclic Plot Structure, Direct Address to Audience, the Exploitation of Fourth-Wall Realism, Fragmented and Open-Ended Plays	22
1.5. Deconstruction of Socially Constructed Gender Roles, Identity Roles According to Socialist Feminism	25
1.6. Intra-Sexual Class Oppression and Paucity of Sisterhood According to Socialist Feminism	27
1.7. Socialist Feminist Theatre: Cross-Dressing, the Doubling and the Tripling of Gender Roles as Alienation Effects	29
1.8. A Compare and Contrast of the Main Principles of Radical Feminism and Radical Feminist Theatre, Socialist Feminism and Socialist Feminist Theatre	31

Chapter 2: Timberlake Wertenbaker's <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> from Radical Feminist Point of View	35
2.1. Procne's Oppression	40
2.2. Philomele's Oppression	47
2.3. Marriage as a Trap for Procne and Philomele	56
2.4. Direct Address to Audience, the Exploitation of Fourth-Wall Realism, Quick Scene Changes, and an Open-Ended and Fragmented Play as the Dominant Principles of Radical Feminist Theatre	62
Chapter 3: Timberlake Wertenbaker's <i>New Anatomies</i> from Socialist Feminist Point of View	65
3.1. Deconstruction of Socially Constructed Gender Roles, Identity Roles	69
3.2. Intra-Sexual Class Oppression and Paucity of Sisterhood between Jenny and Yasmina	76
3.3. Cross-Dressing and Doubling, Tripling of Gender Roles as Alienation Effects in Socialist Feminist Theatre	82
Chapter 4: Timberlake Wertenbaker's <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i> from Radical Feminist and Socialist Feminist Point of Views	86
4.1. Deconstruction of Socially Constructed Gender Roles through Mary Traverse	89
4.2. Mary: The Sexually Discriminated	100
4.3. Sophie: The Sexually Assaulted	103
4.4. Patriarchal Oppression on Mary Traverse	106

Chapter 5: A Comparison of Timberlake Wertenbaker's <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i>, <i>New Anatomies</i>, and <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i>	108
5.1. Metaphoric Deaths of the Female Characters in <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> , <i>New Anatomies</i> , and <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i>	109
5.2. Historical Times for the Settings of <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> , <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i> , and <i>New Anatomies</i>	112
5.3. Patriarchal Women versus Subversive Women in <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> , <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i> , and <i>New Anatomies</i>	113
5.4. Rape/Sexual Assault/Sexual Oppression in <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> and <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i>	120
5.5. Incest in <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> and <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i>	122
5.6. Anachronism in <i>The Love of the Nightingale</i> , and <i>The Grace of Mary Traverse</i>	124
Conclusion	127
Bibliography	130

INTRODUCTION

Feminism begins with an awareness of exclusion from male cultural, social, sexual, political, and intellectual discourses. The most recent resurgence of feminism occurs in the late 1960s with the rise of women's liberation movement surpassing "all earlier waves of feminism in the breadth of its concerns and the depth of its critiques" (Jaggar 4). In the 1970s 'feminism' gives way to 'feminisms' (Case 63). Correspondingly, "feminism has in fact given way more precisely to *feminisms* each of which implies distinct ideological interpretations and political strategies" (Dolan 3). In other saying, in this decade many distinct feminist positions emerge such as radical feminism (cultural feminism), liberal feminism, socialist feminism (materialist), Marxist feminism, black feminism, post-colonial feminism, post-structuralist feminism and post modern feminism. All these different kinds of feminism borrow from sociology, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism and post modernism. According to Jill Dolan, although there are different types of feminism in the 1970s radical feminism and socialist feminism are the most dominant feminism since both of them are "the most inclusive and most useful for clarifying the different feminist ways of seeing" (3). Both radical feminism and socialist feminism aim to change the social structure in which women are oppressed because of their genders by patriarchy. In other words, under patriarchal dominance women are oppressed and suppressed because of their gender, therefore, they aim to redress inequalities based on sexual differences in women's private and public lives.

Female playwrights are conspicuous by their absence from British theatre up until the late 1960s (Innes 233). In the mid 1960s feminist theatre evolves as a distinct form and wants to form a new social structure in which women are not the object but the subject of plays through reconstructing gender roles by subverting patriarchal order. Therefore, feminist theatre is defined as 'alternative' since it is created by women in the context of patriarchal culture. The Women's Theatre Group, the Monstrous Regiment, the Gay Sweatshop and the Siren are "the backbone of British feminist theatre" (Goodman 207). Feminist theatres start applying the principles of feminisms in their plays in 1968 and this is the reuniting of theory and theatre. Therefore, 1968 is the starting point for the reunion of feminism and theatre in the U.K. The reuniting of feminism and theatre is based on two events, the abolition of stage censorship in 1968 and the influences of second wave feminism in Britain. With the abolition of censorship "plays could now in theory address any subject, be topical, change from one performance to another, include improvisation, and have no restriction on language" (Wandor, *Women Playwrights and Feminism in the 1970s* 56). Second wave feminism aims to redress gender inequalities in social and cultural aspects of life and to advance the social roles of women in Britain. Radical feminism and socialist feminism are influenced by the thoughts of second wave feminism which are the issues of inequalities between genders, sexuality, family and family life.

In the 1960s radical feminism emerges as a strand of second wave feminism. Radical feminism, thus, summons up the spirit of second wave feminism. Radical feminism wants to change the social structure, which relies on patriarchy, since patriarchy is at the root of all kinds of women's oppression in both women's private and public domains. The dominance of the father in the family is the symbol of male supremacy and male dominance in all other institutions in society. Thus, patriarchy creates a male culture that oppresses and suppresses women. An important radical feminist group in the 1970s Redstockings declares in one of its manifestos that "we [radical feminists] identify the agent of our oppression as men. Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression are extensions of male supremacy" (Redstockings 223).

Based on the persistent discrimination between genders there are two opposing classes in patriarchal society, the male class and the female class. Namely, there is a clear distinction in society. The society is divided into classes based on gender. Male originates class and fosters terrible inequalities in society through the oppression of female by male (Mehrhof 482). The former one is associated with power, authority and is the oppressor whereas the female class is associated with loss of power, submission, docility and oppression. As a result, patriarchy creates male privilege that sustains the oppression of women as it is organised around an obsession with male control and power. The distinction between men and women causes sexual oppression since the female body is reified and objectified by male authority. In Case's words "male culture made women's bodies into objects of male desire" (66). As a result of sexual oppression, rape/sexual assault is inevitable when men think that they prove their power and manhood over women.

In their plays radical feminist playwrights deal with issues that pertain to radical feminism. Radical feminist theatre aims to form a female countercanon to provide female experiences and values that put an emphasis on the superiority of female attributes. For Jill Dolan, in radical feminist theatre “the notion of a female countercanon is a response to the suppression of women’s artistic achievements under millennia of male domination, and an effort to separate out female, or feminine, values from the male standard” (7). Radical feminist playwrights develop new dramatic styles designed as radical contrasts to the standard male dramatic forms while they deal with radical feminist’s views in their plays. Therefore, they refuse to adopt any kind of dramatic form that is associated with and used by male dramatists. Correspondingly, radical feminist theatres reject to employ “the sense of beginning, middle and end, or a central focus” since “it abandons the hierarchical organising-principles of traditional form that served to elide women from discourse” (Case 129-30). Instead of employing a linear plot, they use non-linear, circular plots that reflect female experience. Furthermore, radical feminist dramatic texts are fragmented, and open-ended. Radical feminist theatre also rejects the idea of fourth-wall realism that leads to the distinction between performers and spectators (Dolan 85; Case 65). In order to eliminate the distance between performers and spectators radical feminist theatre employs Brechtian alienation techniques such as cross-dressing, doubling and tripling of gender roles (Dolan 106,112; Reinelt 160; Brown 169).

Like radical feminism, socialist feminism is a powerful strand of second wave feminism in the 1960s and 1970s and it is prominent in the second half of the twentieth century in Britain. Socialist feminism is a synthesis of radical feminism and Marxist feminism. Socialist feminism advocates radical feminist's theory of the role of gender and patriarchy and advocates Marxist feminist's analysis of class with a focus on women's oppression. The main focus of socialist feminism is to eliminate gender roles and gender bias in patriarchal societies since women's oppressions in private and public spheres are the result of socially constructed gender roles. In patriarchal societies women have to fulfill socially prescribed roles; being dutiful wives, being mothers, bringing children up, serving their husbands' needs and performing household chores. In socialist feminist theatre these socially prescribed gender roles are deconstructed through female characters that are labelled unconventional, non-patriarchal women for they disrupt traditional gender roles.

Apart from the deconstruction of gender roles, socialist feminism and socialist feminist theatre deal with intra-sexual oppression and lack of sisterhood among women. Intra-sexual class oppression and paucity of sisterhood are interrelated to each other. Intra-sexual class oppression is women's oppression over women because of class differences. Upper class women oppress lower and working class women because of social class differences. Different social classes among women lead to intra-sexual class oppression among women. According to Michelene Wandor, solidarity among women cannot be established because of class differences (*Carry On, Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics* 136).

In *Feminism and Theatre* Sue Ellen Case summaries radical feminism and socialist feminism:

Radical feminism advocates that sexism is the root of all other antagonisms in society, envisages some kind of revolution of women (the oppressed) against the oppressor (men, or the patriarchy) to change things. Socialist feminism attempts to relate a class analysis to an analysis of sexism, and to decide on the best organisational and strategic way to change both economic exploitation based on class and oppression based on gender. But both strands of feminism agree on the need to challenge male dominance and female passivity wherever it is found. (15)

The common aim of these two strands of second wave feminism is to change the social structures in which women are oppressed because of gender and to put an end to inequalities between men and women.

In relation to radical feminist theatre and socialist feminist theatre, Timberlake Wertenbaker paves the way for the development of feminist drama since Timberlake Wertenbaker is in the first rank of feminist dramatists like Caryl Churchill, Pam Gems and Michelene Wandor. In her plays, the playwright depicts struggles and difficulties of her female characters in patriarchal societies as they try to survive in male dominated societies. According to Lutterbie, “most critics applaud Wertenbaker’s exploration of the lives of women and the positive ability of women to reconstruct their lives in the face of social and cultural resistance” (361). For Timberlake Wertenbaker’s female characters Lutterbie adds that “the meaning of her plays seem to lie in the values that determine choices the characters make,

whether they choose to fit into the outlines of an existing identity or locate a way of being that fits the contours of their own desires” (Lutterbie 363).

Timberlake Wertenbaker explores with feminist ideas in her plays and she questions gender roles and demonstrates how patriarchal society imposes gender roles on men and women in *The Love of the Nightingale* (1988), *New Anatomies* (1981) and *The Grace of Mary Traverse* (1985). Wertenbaker alludes to radical feminist’s ideas and principles in *The Love of the Nightingale*, socialist feminist’s ideas in *New Anatomies* and both the ideas of radical feminism and socialist feminism in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. As Timberlake Wertenbaker asserts her plays “often begin with a very ordinary question: If women had power, would they behave the same way as men? (qtd. in Chaillet 696). Therefore, in her plays the female characters are in search of power, knowledge, especially self-knowledge and experience like Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale*, Isabella Eberhardt in *New Anatomies* and Mary Traverse in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*.

The Love of the Nightingale is Wertenbaker’s radical feminist play in which she criticizes gender issues around the themes of the silencing and oppression of women by men in ancient Greece. In Aston’s words “*The Love of the Nightingale* situates the rape and silencing of Philomele in a Greek tragedy” (*Feminist Views on the English Stage* 150). In *New Anatomies* Isabella Eberhardt, a dramatisation of the nineteenth century traveller under the male disguise of a male Arab, and in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Mary Traverse, a fictional character in eighteenth-century London, are examples of women who “abandon the confines of the domestic; take on male disguises and embark on epic journeys of personal, social, sexual and cultural discovery, Isabella and Mary are women seeking adventures, and adventures,

Wertenbaker argues, are still difficult for women to have, even at the close of the twentieth century” (Aston, *Feminist Views on the English Stage* 150). Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale*, Isabella Eberhardt in *New Anatomies* and Mary Traverse in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* move into new worlds and cultures that are unfamiliar to them.

In *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Timberlake Worthenbaker highlights a continuous social oppression of women in their public and private spheres who exceed the boundaries of stereotypical patriarchal female behaviours and roles as reflected through the characters of Procne, Philomele, Isabella Eberhardt, and Mary Traverse. This study consists of a radical/socialist feminist reading of women’s social and economic oppression as reflected in the lives of the female characters in Timberlake Worthenbaker’s *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. It is divided into 5 main sections after an introduction. The first section examines the principles of radical feminist theory and radical feminist theatre, socialist feminist theory, and socialist feminist theatre. The second section is about ideas of radical feminism and theatrical methods of radical feminist theatre in relation to *The Love of the Nightingale* in which different kinds of women’s oppressions are examined. The third section consists of socialist feminist’s ideas and socialist feminist theatrical devices in relation to *New Anatomies* in which female characters are tired of socially constructed gender roles and they deconstruct socially prescribed gender roles through male disguise and male identity. The fourth section consists of a combination of radical feminism and socialist feminism and radical feminist theatre, and socialist feminist theatre in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* in

which women's oppressions and restrictions are examined. The fifth section discusses the comparisons of *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. In each section concrete examples from the plays are given to substantiate the argument. The last section includes a summary of the arguments.

1. Dominant Principles of Radical Feminism and Radical Feminist Theatre, Socialist Feminism and Socialist Feminist Theatre

Feminism has a long history, developing as a substantial force throughout the late eighteenth century, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Feminism is the ideology of the Women's Liberation Movement. The Women's Liberation Movement is the social struggle aiming to eliminate the inequalities based on gender, the forms of oppression and to gain for women equal social and economic rights. It is the result of an accumulation of patriarchal oppression on women throughout centuries. The Women's Liberation Movement has developed in three stages. The first stage starts in the eighteenth century with Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) and feminism has its origins in the struggle for women's rights in the eighteenth century with *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and it goes on with John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869). The second stage is at the beginning of the twentieth century with Women's Suffrage Movement, the right for women to vote. The last stage is the so-called "Second Wave" of Women's Liberation, the modern Women's Liberation movement.

Feminism is a social enterprise, a moral and political framework which is concerned with redressing social wrongs. It seeks to disturb the complacent certainties of patriarchy to assert a belief in sexual equality and to eradicate sexist domination. It challenges traditional male ideas about the nature of women and about how women are supposed to act, behave and feel and how in general they respond to life and living since it questions and criticizes the long standing, dominant male, phallogocentric ideologies, and patriarchal attitudes. Feminism tries to redress

social wrongs because of the inequalities between men and women since it is the women's movement and women's liberation. Therefore, feminists' focus is mainly on women and themes explored in feminist theory include discrimination, stereotyping, objectification, especially sexual objectification, oppression, and patriarchy. According to feminism, it is women who are harmed, oppressed and subordinated in society by patriarchy. In feminist terms, therefore, "what women want is a human status where rights, benefits and dignities are gained at no expense, where duties and obligations do not fall disproportionately on the shoulders of women" (Thompson 8).

In the 1960s and the 1970s different kinds of feminism emerge and radical feminism(cultural),liberal feminism, socialist feminism(materialist), psychoanalytical feminism, post-colonial feminism, black feminism, post-structuralist feminism and post modern feminism are the different types of feminism of the decades. These different kinds of feminism borrow from sociology, psychology, psychoanalysis and post-structuralism. Radical (cultural) feminism and socialist (materialist) feminism are the most dominant feminisms in the 1970s since they are "the most inclusive and most useful for clarifying the different feminist ways of seeing" (Dolan 3). Apart from radical and socialist feminisms, other types of feminism can be accepted as the braches of radical and socialist feminisms since they overlap with each other and with these two major types. During the 1970s, the feminist movement seeks to "uncover the influences of patriarchy not only in politics, in the public life, and in the economy but also in all aspects of social, personal and sexual existences" and that movement is developed by radical feminists (Heywood 257). Radical feminism is introduced to Britain in the early 1970s. Women are exposed to the gender

differences so they feel gender hierarchy in every aspect of their lives. Therefore, radical feminists want to abolish all forms of gender hierarchy and they want to establish an all-women culture with its own values that excludes any kind of male interventions (Jaggar 254; Wandor, *Carry On, Understudies: Theatre & Sexual Politics* 133).

1.1. Patriarchy as the Main Source of Women's Oppression According to Radical Feminism

Male dominated, male identified, male-centred, and control-obsessed characters are patriarchy's defining elements. According to Allan G. Johnson, patriarchal culture includes ideas about the nature of things, including women, men, humanity, with manhood and masculinity most closely associated with being human and womanhood and femininity relegated to the marginal position of "other" (38-9). Therefore, patriarchy is all about defining men and women as opposites and it is about "the 'naturalness' of male aggression [...] and dominance and of female caring [...] and subordination" (Johnson 39).

In *Consciousness-Raising: A Radical Weapon* Kathie Sarachild as a radical feminist gives the definition of radical; "radical is a word that is often used to suggest extremist, but actually it doesn't mean that. The dictionary says radical means 'root', coming from the Latin word for root. And that is what we [radical feminists] meant by calling ourselves radicals. [Therefore,] We were interested in getting to the roots of problems in society" (144). In other words, the ultimate aim of radical feminism is to concentrate on the problems coming from the root of society and sought to "put an end to the barriers of segregation and discrimination based on sex" (Sarachild 144). As the name suggests, radical feminism aims to go to the roots of women's oppression, and patriarchy, patriarchal thinking or patriarchal authority is the main cause of women's oppression in all aspects of women's lives.

In *Carry On, Understudies: Theatre & Sexual Politics* (1986) Michelene Wandor highlights that “radical feminism politicises the details of oppression. It challenges very directly the notion that men are biologically superior to women, and it does so by claiming that what women do and think and feel is socially valuable and important” (132). Radical feminism demands a radical change in the social structure since radical feminism is based on the belief that patriarchy is the primary cause of all kinds of women’s oppression (Case 63). In other words, according to radical feminism, patriarchy is at the root of all forms of women’s oppression. Radical feminism, thus, tries to abolish patriarchy and its values and beliefs and wants to form a social structure by deconstructing patriarchal oppression over women. In addition, for radical feminists “ ‘men’ (i.e. biological and social maleness) are seen as the primary enemy, and everything that is ‘bad’ in the world (i.e. war, aggression) is seen as ‘male’, and everything ‘good’, (caring, nurturing) is seen as ‘female’” (Wandor, *Carry On, Understudies: Theatre & Sexual Politics* 132).

Similar to this view, the radical feminist organization *Redstockings*, an important radical feminist group in the 1970s, states in one of its manifestos that “we [women] identify the agents of our oppression as men. Male supremacy [patriarchy] is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression are extensions of male supremacy: male dominate women [...] All power structures throughout history have been male dominated and male-oriented” (223). Furthermore, radical feminism is an approach to feminist thinking and action which maintains that the sex/gender system is the fundamental cause of women’s oppression. Correspondingly, Alison Jaggar asserts that “the most important insights of radical feminism [...] springs from women’s [...] experience of oppression”, and

women's oppression is most probably the longest existing, most widespread and worst form of human oppression in history (Jaggar 84, 186). Similarly, radical feminists advocate that patriarchy is the primary cause of the oppression of women within society. In Bryson's words, radical feminism "saw the oppression of women as the most fundamental and universal form of domination, and its aim was to understand and end this; here 'patriarchy' was a key term" (163).

Ti-Grace Atkinson is a leading figure in radical feminism and a founder of *The Feminist*, a radical feminist group active in the 1970s. Although Atkinson is an important name for radical feminism, Atkinson does not use the term 'patriarchy'. Yet, in *Amazon Odyssey* (1974) Atkinson identifies the problem addressed by feminism as the domination of women by men. Instead of patriarchy, she prefers 'the sex-class system':

The radical feminist analysis of the persecution of women [...] begins with the [...] *raison d'être* that women are a class, that this class is political in nature, and that this political class is oppressed. [...] If women are a political class and women are being oppressed, it must be that some other political class is oppressing the class of women. Since the very definition of women entails that only one other class could possibly be relevant to it, only one other class could be possibly oppressing women: the class of men. [...] Women exist as the corollaries of men, and exist as human beings only insofar they are those corollaries. (qtd in Thompson 60)

Correspondingly, Barbara Mehrhof, an important name for radical feminists, argues that patriarchy creates a class division in society, there are two classes and these two classes do not face each other on equal terms. Class is the way that a society is divided into different social groups and class is a central concept in identifying systems of oppression and in providing the way to overthrow such systems (Code 93). In feminist terms, class is one of the reasons of women's oppression and class divides the society into two different groups, the female class and the male class. In Mehrhof's words "these two classes [the male class and the female class] don't face each other on an equal footing. [...] In this division the male class is the oppressor, powerful class; the female class is the oppressed, powerless class" (482). Similar to Atkinson's and Mehrhof's views, another radical feminist Lynn O'Connor states that "we [radical feminists] have interpreted the condition of women as the result of an erroneous and unfair idea system or male chauvinism" (171). Therefore, according to radical feminism, the primary cause of women's oppression and suppression is patriarchy in all aspects of life and their ultimate aim is to unhinge the overwhelming structure of repressive patriarchy. The task of radical feminism is to "recognize the importance, worth, human dignity of women, and to create (or maintain) possibilities for genuinely human choices for women however and wherever we [women] are placed" (Thompson 70). The underlying male-dominated, male-centred, control-obsessed patriarchal system produces male privilege and male supremacy and the oppression of women. As a result all kinds of women's oppressions are the inevitable consequences of patriarchy.

1.2. Sexual Oppression and Sexual Assault According to Radical Feminism

Redstockings, an important radical feminist group in the 1970s, agree that men are the main cause of women's pain and subjection. Correspondingly, they claim that men are the oppressors and women are the oppressed. In one of its manifestos declare that:

Women are an oppressed class. Our oppression is total; affecting every facet of our lives. [...] We are considered as inferior human beings, whose only purpose is to enhance men's lives. Our humanity is denied. [...] We identify the agents of our oppression as men. Male supremacy is the oldest, most basic form of domination. All other forms of exploitation and oppression are extensions of male supremacy: men dominate women. [...] All power structures throughout history have been male-dominated and male-oriented. [...] They have used their power to keep women in an inferior position. *All men* receive economic, sexual, and psychological benefits from male supremacy. *All men* have oppressed women (223).

This distinction between men and women results in another type of oppression for women, sexual oppression and sexual assault. To put it in Case's words, "one of the major discoveries of radical feminism that raised women's consciousness of their experiences was that the oppression of women was a sexual oppression. Male culture made women's bodies into objects of male desire, converting them into sites of beauty and sexuality for men to gaze" (66). Therefore,

radical feminists' primary focus is on women's sexual oppression as they claim that sexual oppression [rape/sexual assault] is the fundamental form of oppression and it is the primary oppression for women. Rape/sexual assault, therefore, is an important issue for radical feminists. Rape/sexual assault, furthermore, is an exercise of male power on the female body. In 1975, Susan Brownmiller publishes a scholarly article about rape, *Against Your Will*. In that article Brownmiller points out that rape is a "man's basic weapon of force against women, the principal agent of his will and her fear. His forcible entry into her body despite her physical protestations and struggle, became the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood" (qtd in Jaggar 90).

Rape/sexual assault, therefore, is an act of violence exercised by members of a powerful class (men) over members of the powerless class (women). Therefore, rape/sexual assault is "the patriarchal weapon" that is used as a way of threat and violence against women by men (Case 66). In other words, radical feminists argue that rape is a patriarchal weapon used as a means of violence and threat against women by men. To put it in Kate Millett's words, "patriarchal force also relies on a form of violence particularly sexual in character and realized most completely in the act of rape" (44). As a result, patriarchy relies upon sexual violence and rape/sexual assault.

1.3. Family Life and Marriage as a Trap for Women According to Radical Feminism

Radical feminists use the term 'patriarchy' to describe the power relationships between men and women. The literal meaning of 'patriarchy' is "rule by the father", it can refer narrowly to the supremacy of the husband/father within the family, and therefore to the subordination of his wife and his children" (qtd in Heywood 243). Radical feminists believe that the dominance of the father and/or husband within the family symbolizes male supremacy in all other institutions in society. Patriarchy represents all kinds of male dominance and is regarded as the root of all inequalities between men and women. In other words, patriarchy has formed a male culture that wherever it has predominated has oppressed women in society. According to radical feminists, "patriarchy is the system which elevates men to positions of power through the notion of pater or father[husband], placing men in an economic and social executive position within the family unit [...] and the state" (Case 64). Rosalind Coward argues that the term patriarchy is used by radical feminists as the most forceful and powerful element of women's oppression because "for the term 'patriarchal' implies a model of power as interpersonal domination, a model where all men have forms of literal, legal and political power over all women" (272).

A different perspective is added to the debate of women's oppression within the private (family) and public (society) spheres with Karl Marx's *Capital [Das Capital]* (1867) in which Marx discusses his ideas against inequalities and oppression. Marx illustrates that "within a family [...] there springs up naturally a division of labour, caused by differences of sex" (471). Karl Marx also explicates

that the division of labour creates “the first form of ownership of one person by another, displaying the enslavement of the wife and children by the husband as the first form of private property” (qtd. in Donovan 70). Thus, Karl Marx puts an emphasis on women’s enslavement by their husbands within the family unit. In 1884 Frederick Engels develops the Marxist discussion and states that “he [the husband] is the bourgeoisie and the wife represents the proletariat” within the class system where the bourgeoisie stands for the ruling class whereas the proletariat stands for the ruled class (qtd. in Donovan 79, 67). Thus, married women belong to the ruled class in which they are suppressed by the ruling class, their husbands.

Likewise, Kate Millett’s *Sexual Politics* (1972) is one of the main primary texts of radical feminist theory in which she demonstrates her views about ‘patriarchy’. According to Millett, patriarchy and patriarchal family structure subordinate the female to the male or treat the female as inferior, and this power constrains women in society and in domestic life. Millett argues that “patriarchy’s chief institution is the family. It [family] is both a mirror of and a connection between with the larger society; a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole. [...] Traditionally, patriarchy granted the father [and/or husband] nearly total ownership over wife or wives and children” (Millett, 33). In other words, the family is a kind of micro society in which the male is powerful and superior and the female is weak and submissive. Although the family is the smallest unit of society, it is the most influential component of society. As Millett points out the family is the basic unit of patriarchy, women who are oppressed within their families by their fathers and/or their husbands are also oppressed in society by patriarchy. Therefore, women’s oppression is deeply rooted in the patriarchal system. Correspondingly, breaking the

ties between the father and the child especially the son means putting an end to male domination/patriarchy, and an end to all kinds of oppression since male oppression is at the root of all forms of oppression in society, this leads to the display of female supremacy (Banks 232). Patriarchy is a system based upon male supremacy and domination and “patriarchy is difficult to change because it is complex and its roots run deep. It is like a tree rooted in core principles of control, male dominance, male identification and male centeredness” (Johnson 18). When that patriarchal tree is collapsed down, it means the collapse of male supremacy and the display of female supremacy.

Correspondingly, Cellestine Ware summarizes the notion of marriage from a radical feminist point of view; “marriage and the family [family life] are the roots of women’s oppression” both in the family and the society since in both cases women are under pressure and oppression of men because of their sex (100). According to a radical feminist point of view, marriage is a trap since women are materialized through marriage. Women become a medium of exchange from their fathers to their husbands. What is more, marriage means “to loan” in Greek, through marriage women are loaned to their husbands by their fathers (8). Radical feminists believe that the dominance of the father within the family then the dominance of the husband in conjugal life symbolizes male supremacy in all other institutions in society. Father, husband and then patriarchy represent all kinds of male dominance and women’s suppression in private and public life because of women’s submission is the result of continual and daily pressure from men (*Redstockings Manifesto* 224).

1.4. Radical Feminist Theatre: Circular/Cyclic Plot Structure, Direct Address to Audience, the Exploitation of Fourth-Wall Realism, Fragmented and Open-Ended Plays

Radical feminist theatre is one of the major branches of feminist theatre. Its aim is “to contest the patriarchal organisation of society” and it strives for subverting the patriarchal tradition in the theatre (Aston, *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* 9, 127). Radical feminist theatre wants to create a female counter-canon promoting female experiences and values and putting an emphasis on the superiority of female attributes. For Jill Dolan, the notion of female counter-canon “is a response to the suppression of women’s artistic achievements under millennia of male domination, and an effort to separate out female, or feminine, values from the male standard” (7).

Radical feminists in theatre put a distance from the realistic tradition, which is associated with male. In other words, radical feminist playwrights refuse to adopt the realistic tradition and they adopt the “female form” of technical and thematic devices (Case 130). Radical feminist playwrights reject to adopt the realistic tradition which has a beginning, middle, an ending with an exposition, climax and resolution since, according to radical feminist playwrights, these dramatic forms reflect male experience (Schroeder 23).

Radical feminist theatres, therefore, abandon the realistic tradition that embodies a beginning, middle and an end. Instead of it, they adopt the circular/cyclic plot structure. They think circular/cyclic plot structure reflects the female experience (Schroeder 21). As Gillian Hanna explains, the refusal of the realistic tradition is in fact a refusal of male experience viewing life as linear with a beginning, middle and an end. “For a woman, life is not like that. It doesn’t have that pattern. For a woman life and experience is broken backed” and the best way to reflect this experience is circular/cyclic plot structure (Aston, *An Introduction* 55; Case 129). In other words, it refuses linearity which for feminist playwrights is not a female perception and experiences of life. Moreover, the plays of radical feminist playwrights are fragmented and open-ended. Hanna also observes that “men are born into a world where they can map out life, and order their lives in a linear manner, whereas for women life is experienced as fragments, which put together make up a whole” (qtd. in Çi 4). In Sue Ellen Case’s words, their plays are “fragmentary rather than whole, ambiguous rather than clear, and interrupted rather than complete” (129). In their plays feminist playwrights use quick scene changes, scene divisions to disrupt the unity of the plays that characterizes the conventions of traditional theatre.

Radical feminist theatre challenges the idea of fourth-wall, leading to an aesthetic distance between actors and audiences. In Jill Dolan’s words, “clamoring over the fourth-wall into the laps of spectators, they challenged the distinction between performers and spectators so rigidly imposed in traditional theatre” (85). Radical feminist theatre also uses Brechtian alienation methods, such as direct address to the audience and cross-dressing. The use of direct address to audience is to eliminate the barrier between actors and audiences and through cross-dressing “the

actors are detached from their characters [...]; they demonstrate but do not ‘become’ their roles” (Brown 165, 169).

Socialist feminism is prominent in the second half of the twentieth century and it is a powerful strand of second wave feminism of the late 1960s and 1970s, especially in Britain. In the introduction part of *Capitalist Theory and the Case for Socialist Feminism* (1979) Zillah Eisenstein, a well-known socialist feminist, points out that socialist feminism proposes a synthesis between Marxist feminism and radical feminism and a synthesis of the Marxist and feminist traditions must be formed to understand women’s oppression in the public and private spheres of women’s lives (1). In a review of Zillah Eisenstein’s *Capitalist Theory and the Case for Socialist Feminism*, Liz Kennedy and June Lapidus observe that “using Marxism as the thesis and radical feminism as the antithesis, she [Zillah Eisenstein] cogently explores the limitations and potential of each tradition for understanding women’s condition and [Zillah Eisenstein] argues that socialist feminism is the synthesis of the two theoretical models” (572). Moreover, it broadens radical feminism’s theory of the role of gender and patriarchy and it extends a Marxist analysis of class with a focus on the history of women’s oppression. Therefore, the main focuses of socialist feminism are on gender roles and on women’s oppression in the public and private spheres of women’s lives. Deconstruction of socially constructed gender roles, intra-sexual class oppression and the lack of sisterhood among women are the central features of socialist feminist critiques.

1.5. Deconstruction of Socially Constructed Gender Roles, Identity Roles According to Socialist Feminism

During the 1970s, feminism scrutinizes the theory and practice of socialist feminism based on gender bias (Aston, *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* 75). 1970s is the decade in which major changes take place in British drama since feminist drama emerges in the early 1970s. Feminist theatre wants to create a new social structure in which traditional patriarchal gender roles are deconstructed and gender roles are reconstructed through subverting the dominant patriarchal structure. Therefore, female playwrights represent women's oppression, experiences and issues in their plays. To put in another way, feminist theatre puts women's public and private experiences on the stage from a radical, socialist or liberal point of view to create social changes in patriarchal societies (Goodman 20).

“The primary concern is to produce a new kind of cultural analysis which undermines the male created woman of patriarchal culture an artificial woman who suppresses the experiences, feelings” (çi 3). So, in the 1970s by the interaction between the theory and practice in Britain feminist theatre combine to create a viable tradition of playwriting and theatre production, in which women voices are visible. Therefore, the reunion of feminism and theatre occurs in the 1970s when second wave feminism takes place in Britain. As Sue Ellen Case elaborates:

For the theatre, the basic project theoretical for feminism could be formed a ‘new poetics’, borrowing the notion from Aristotle’s *Poetics*. New feminist theory would abandon the traditional patriarchal values embedded in prior notion of the form, practice and audience response

in order to construct new critical modes and methodologies for the drama that would accommodate the presence of women in art, support their liberation from the cultural fiction of the female gender and deconstruct the valorisation of the male gender. (Case 114-5)

Through the new dramatic form feminist theory and feminist theatre come together to depict feminist issues in their feminist plays. The new dramatic theory is a refusal of the conventions that women on stage are perceived as the object, rather than the subject of the action. The new dramatic theory, therefore, want to achieve female narrative by locating women as the subject of the action, not the object of the action. Feminist theatre is influenced by socialist feminism. The aim of socialist feminists is to deconstruct socially constructed gender roles to eradicate gender bias. As Jill Dolan covers, the socialist feminism “becomes to disrupt the narrative of gender ideology, to denaturalize gender as representation, and to demystify the workings of the genderized apparatus itself. It necessitates stepping outside the representation of sexual difference [...] it is to reveal the complicity of the representational apparatus in maintaining sexual difference” (101). Gender is socially constructed, therefore, society, especially patriarchal society, imposes roles on individuals. In *Women's Estate* (1971) Juliet Mitchell makes a list of the duties of a traditional patriarchal woman which she criticizes. The main and ultimate duties of a conventional woman in male-dominated societies are the following; bearing children, bringing them up, serving her husband's needs and keeping her home (302). In socialist feminist drama these socially constructed female roles are deconstructed through female characters that are labelled unconventional, non-patriarchal women since they disrupt traditional gender roles.

1.6. Intra-Sexual Class Oppression and Paucity of Sisterhood According to Socialist Feminism

According to socialist feminist theory, class and race are the main causes of women's oppression within patriarchal society. This kind of oppression is women's oppression over women because of their class and race, which is referred to as intra-sexual class oppression. Accordingly, socialist feminist theatres emphasize the differences between women that lead to an analysis of intra-sexual class oppression. According to Zillah Eisenstein, "recognizing differences, particularly the racial and economic differences between women, can assist in uncovering of the way power is distributed among and between women. It allows an understanding of power and oppression, discrimination, inequality, and domination among women themselves" (484). Accordingly, Caroline Ramazanoglu asserts that, there are class differences among women and women are divided by:

consequences of racism as historically specific systems of domination, discrimination, and exploitation. Racism identifies specific group as racial groups within a hierarchy of racial superiority and inferiority. Within this hierarchy, the dominant racial group exercises power in order to discriminate against subordinate groups. (121)

Socialist feminists, relying on a Marxist feminist point of view, advocate that women could not unite together because of the class distinctions between women. In other words, socialist feminism and socialist feminist drama are more interested in the inequalities among women brought about by class oppression which leads to intra-sexual class oppression. Socialist feminist theatre, therefore, represents that

solidarity and sisterhood among women cannot be established as a result of class differences among women.

Socialist feminists take class divisions among women seriously rather than claiming that all women form part of an oppressed underclass. There is not a sisterhood among women as a result of class differences among women. In *Carry On; Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics*, Michelene Wandor asserts that solidarity and sisterhood among women cut across class differences (136). Women's common sisterhood is subverted by class differences among women. Class differences among women prevent them from forming a unity and sisterhood since "once the class relations between women are taken into account 'women's dream of unity' is almost certainly illusory" (Ramazanoglu 96). Therefore, sisterhood cannot be formed among women because of class differences among women. Correspondingly, "there are crucial differences between upper-middle class women and working class women - not only are all women not sisters, but women in the privileged class actually oppress women in the working class" (Case 83).

For socialist feminist theatre intra-sexual class oppression and the lack of sisterhood among women are interrelated. In their plays socialist feminist playwrights represent the experiences of women who are oppressed by other women because of their social classes and racial differences. Sisterhood cannot be formed when there is no solidarity among women.

1.7. Socialist Feminist Theatre: Cross-Dressing, the Doubling and the Tripling of Gender Roles as Alienation Effects

In their plays, socialist feminist playwrights make use of Brecht's theories of alienation by using cross-dressing and the doubling and/or the tripling of gender roles. According to Dolan, Brecht's theory of alienation serves as a precedent for socialist feminist theatre practice and criticism (106). Furthermore, Dolan adds that "Brechtian alienation techniques that denaturalize social arrangements can be fruitfully employed in [socialist] feminist practice to demystify compulsory heterosexuality and the construction of gender as the founding representation of representation" (112).

Accordingly, Gillian Hanna is an important name for socialist feminist theatre since she is a founding member of the Monstrous Regiment Theatre Company. The Monstrous Regiment Theatre Company is one of the earliest British feminist theatre companies that "set up as permanent collective committed to both feminist and socialist ideals" (Goodman 69). Like the Women's Theatre Group, the Monstrous Regiment Theatre Company stages plays about women's experience. In other words, the company stages socialist feminist plays. Hanna explains her view of women's condition as one of alienation: "I [Gillian Hanna] think most men are unaware how alienated women feel. You are born into a world which belongs to somebody else, it doesn't belong to you. It belongs to men" (qtd. in Aston, *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* 74). It is women's experiences of alienation that informs socialist feminist drama. To put in another way, Hanna explores the connection between the staging of feminist plays and the use of Brechtian techniques. Brecht's

alienation techniques such as, cross-dressing the doubling and/or the tripling of gender roles, take their places in socialist feminist dramas. Likewise:

gender refers to the words, gestures, appearances, ideas, and behaviour that the dominant culture understands as indices of feminine or masculine identity. [...] Gender in fact provides a perfect illustration of ideology at work since ‘feminine’ or ‘masculine’ behaviour usually appears to be a ‘natural’ – and thus fixed and unalterable – extension of biological sex. (Diamond 84)

In socialist feminist plays this “fixed and unalterable” gender is deconstructed through cross-dressing, and the doubling and/or the tripling of gender roles.

Socialist feminist theatre focuses on the deconstruction of socially constructed gender roles, intra-sexual class oppression and the non-solidarity among women because of their class and/or racial differences through Brecht’s alienation effects; cross-dressing, the doubling and/or the tripling of gender roles.

1.8. A Compare and Contrast of the Main Principles of Radical Feminism and Radical Feminist Theatre, Socialist Feminism and Socialist Feminist Theatre

Different types of feminism emerge after the early 1970s such as; radical (cultural) feminism, socialist (materialist) feminism, liberal feminism, black feminism, psychoanalytical feminism, post-colonial feminism, post-structuralist feminism and post modern feminism. Different kinds of feminism show that feminism is not one sided but it is many sided. These different types of feminism borrow from sociology, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, and deconstructive strategies and all of them propose various ideological perspectives (Dolan 3; Case 63). According to Dolan, although there are different types of feminism radical feminism and socialist feminism are the most dominant feminist criticisms and they are “the most inclusive and most useful for clarifying the different feminist ways of seeing” (3). Therefore, radical and socialist feminist criticisms have distinctive characteristics.

The reunion of feminism and theatre occurs after 1968 when the second wave feminism is seen in Britain as an extension of the political and social upheavals of the late 1960s (Goodman 24). Feminist theatre wants to create a new social structure in which gender roles are reconstructed by subverting patriarchal order. In the 1960s theatre industry is dominated by men in the U.K and feminists like Michelene Wandor puts emphasis on the feminist drama. In the late 1960s radical feminism emerges from second wave feminism, so radical feminism is highly affected by second wave feminism.

Radical feminism is based on “a theoretical struggle to abolish gender as a defining category between men and women” (Dolan 5). According to radical feminist’s view, patriarchy is at the root of all forms of women’s oppression. Thus, they want to establish a structure which deconstructs patriarchal dominance and advocates the primacy of women’s position (Aston, *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* 66). Radical feminists argue that male extend over their traditional roles in every aspects of life, carrying patriarchal domination into family and sexuality. In male dominated societies there are socially and culturally prescribed gender roles that individuals are supposed to fulfill them that are taught by parents in the family. Therefore, boys and girls first encounter patriarchal power and the sexual division, and it is through the admonitions of the parents that they are first taught the appropriate roles, temperament and status according to their sex (Millet 220-2). Women, therefore, are oppressed both in private and public spheres.

In relation to radical feminism, radical feminist theatre is to deconstruct patriarchal dominance of society and to subvert patriarchal tradition in theatre. Therefore, radical feminist theatre aims to create female-canons that representing female experiences and values. According to Dolan, in radical feminist theatre the female canon is a “response to the suppression of women’s artistic achievements under millennia of male domination and an effort to separate out female, or feminine, values from the male standard” (7). Radical feminists and radical feminist drama want to establish an all women culture with their own values and standards that excludes any kinds of male intervention.

In relation to patriarchal oppression, Barbara Mehrhof advocates that male domination of society creates a class division in the society. There are two distinct classes, the male class and the female class in the society, as a result of the class distinction. These social classes are never on equal terms with each other both in private and public spheres (482). The male class is powerful, oppressive and female class is powerless, submissive. Accordingly, Shulamith Firestone asserts “we [radical feminists] can no longer justify the maintenance of a discriminatory sex class system” (94). Class distinction also means sexual discrimination. As a result of sexual discrimination, women are restricted throughout their lives. Based upon the class division and sexual discrimination men are the ultimate cause of women’s misery and oppression.

Based on the radical feminism, the class distinction between men and women brings another kind of oppression for women, sexual oppression, and sexual assault. Patriarchy is perceived sexual oppression/rape as an exercise of male power on women. Thus, women’s bodies are turned into objects for male desire and power. As a result of sexual oppression men display their power on female bodies and men become powerful and oppressive and women become powerless and victim (Case 66).

Socialist feminism is prominent in the 1970s and it is an extension of second wave feminism. In the 1970s feminist drama wants to overthrow traditional patriarchal gender roles through subverting patriarchal structure. The reunion of feminism and drama takes place in the 1970s. Socialist feminism is both influenced by Marxist feminism and radical feminism. In Zillah Eisenstein’s words, it is a synthesis of Marxist feminism and radical feminism (Eisenstein 1). Socialist

feminism adopts the Marxist analysis of class with the focus on women's oppression and it also adopts the radical feminist analysis of the role of gender and patriarchy. Therefore, socialist feminism and socialist feminist drama emphasize female roles that are oppressed, suppressed and restricted women both in their private and public domains and they have to fulfill socially imposed gender roles such as; getting married, being a good wife and a mother, being responsible for their husbands', children's need and care, the household chorus. If they do not fulfill socially constructed roles they become outcasts and are labelled unconventional, non-patriarchal women. Their aim is to deconstruct female roles that are prescribed and imposed on women by patriarchal society and culture. They deconstruct socially and culturally gender roles through depiction of female characters that are labelled unconventional, non-patriarchal women for they break traditional female roles.

Radical feminism and socialist feminism emerge at the same decades. Although they advocate some different views on feminism, their aim is to change the social structure in which women are oppressed and suppressed because of their sex/gender and patriarchal social structure is to be eliminated to do it. As a feminist playwright Wertebaker believes through theatre playwrights can make people change by forcing them to question or by intriguing them about the social conditions of women in patriarchal societies. Wertebaker states "little change can lead to bigger changes" since when people start questioning social structure and conditions get better (Chaillet 554).

2. Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale* from Radical Feminist Point of View

Timberlake Wertenbaker is a successful female playwright of twentieth century British drama as she has had a long, productive and successful career. She has written more than a dozen plays and most of her plays have been successfully performed. "Timberlake Wertenbaker is one of the most exciting playwrights to have emerged in Britain in the past decade" (Dymkowski 121). Wertenbaker's career as a dramatist has been centred in London, where she has worked with a range of small theatres - most notably the Royal Court Theatre. Ann Wilson argues that Wertenbaker is one of the few playwrights who is a major force in contemporary British theatre (*Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 145). Caryl Churchill, and Pam Gems, followed by Michelene Wandor, Timberlake Wertenbaker, and Sarah Daniels are in the first rank of feminist dramatists. Timberlake Wertenbaker, thus, is a leading figure for feminist drama.

Timberlake Wertenbaker paves the way for the development of feminist drama. "Feminist drama arose in alternative theatrical venues in the 1970s" (Strenlicht 15). Its emergence was made possible by the abolition of stage censorship in 1968. In *Women Playwrights and the Challenge of Feminism in the 1970s* Michelene Wandor makes a list of improvements after the abolition of stage censorship in 1968 in the United Kingdom. According to Wandor, "plays could now in theory address any subject, be topical, change from one performance to another, include improvisation, and have no restriction on language [...] Many of the

new theatres built during the 1960s” (56). Wandor also adds that “a genuine explosion of new groups produced the range of work which was variously categorized as ‘fringe’, ‘alternative’, and ‘political’ theatre. With such a vital interchange between politics and culture, the voices of women began to be heard in a new way” (Wandor 56-7). Until the late 1970s the theatre industry in the U.K was dominated by men; most directors, playwrights and even stagehands were male. Moreover, most of the casts consisted of more men than women. Wandor identifies the reasons for the emergence of feminist drama because of the male dominance in the theatre:

The ‘classical canon’ of plays were written from a male point of view, unthinkingly considered ‘universal’ and the ‘norm’. The stage world was generally male-dominated-the action driven by, and seen from, the perspective of the male protagonists-as was journalistic reviewing and academic criticism. Given this gender imbalance, it was not surprising that it was women who first expressed dissatisfaction with the status quo. The time was right for a new critical approach to the understanding of the function of gender in the theatrical imagination.

(53)

As a result of these inequalities in the theatre industry, the women’s movement continues in the 1970s, and women’s drama organizations, such as the Women’s Theatre Group (WTG) and the Women’s Company, flourished. The Women’s Theatre Group was an all female company and the Women’s Company was run by women. In addition to these groups, in the late 1970s a number of other small all-female groups were formed such as, Clapperclaw, Beryl and the Perils, and

Cunning Stunts. These groups wrote and performed their own plays and “they were responding to a climate in which women were beginning to take greater control of the stage [theatre]” (Wandor, *Women Playwrights and the Challenge of Feminism in the 1970s* 61).

Modern British feminist drama wanted to create an alternative canon of women’s plays. The ultimate aim of Modern British feminist drama, therefore, is to empower women in a traditional male-dominated society. In addition, contemporary British female playwrights offer a different perspective about patriarchal society. Timberlake Wertenbaker takes her part in The Women’s Theatre Group and develops her feminist’s view while writing her feminist plays.

Timberlake Wertenbaker is a leader of the second wave of feminist writers who came after Pam Gems and Caryl Churchill. As a second wave feminist Timberlake Wertenbaker’s plays exhibit most of the characteristics of second wave feminism. Second wave feminism is mainly concerned with the issues of inequalities between genders, sexuality and family and family life. During second-wave feminism, a new kind of feminism emerged as a powerful oppositional discourse in the late 1960s and it was radical feminism. In other words, radical feminism arose within the second-wave feminism of the 1960s. Therefore, “radical feminism summons up the spirit of the second wave, symbolizing the rage of women against the shackles of male power, a rage which became action against patriarchy” (Whelehan 67). Thus, the ideas of second wave feminism and of radical feminism are closely related to each other. In relation to these, “the radical feminist ideas thrown up by the Women’s Liberation Movement (WLM) from the late 1960s produced a challenge to accepted values and life styles that often seemed both

extreme and shocking” (Bryson 163). Therefore, most of Wertebaker’s plays reflect the principles of both second-wave feminism and of radical feminism.

From a radical feminist point of view Wertebaker’s “playwriting encompasses both the historic and domestic sphere” (Sternlicht 229). By referring to the historic sphere Wertebaker depicts her characters’ lives that live in patriarchal societies and by referring to the domestic sphere Wertebaker depicts women’s oppressive lives within the family itself. In both, patriarchy is the main and ultimate source of arbitrary authoritarian control against which Wertebaker’s female protagonists struggle. Sternlicht also adds that Wertebaker’s plays reveal two different worlds. The first one is the public, men’s world and that is often depicted as violent, powerful and brutal. The second one is the indoor, private, intimate and passionate world of women in which women are oppressed and are under the control of men (229). Wertebaker denotes that the treatment of women in society is not based on biological attributes but on male prejudices towards women. In other words, it is patriarchal ideology that oppresses and suppresses women within society.

Timberlake Wertebaker’s plays reflect her “tendency to draw upon history, legend, and myth throughout her career” (McDonough 406). Her interests in myths, legends and history, the three of which are related to each other, make Wertebaker a contemporary woman playwright who “favours Greek tragedy because of the extraordinary repertoire of powerful and subtle female roles” (Foley 4). In relation to this, Wertebaker “has always been attracted to the idea of tackling ‘big subjects’, frequently turning to classics myths or plays and given them a contemporary twist, as, for example, in *The Love of the Nightingale* (1988)” (Aston, *Feminist Views on the English Stage-Women Playwrights, 1990-2000* 150).

The Love of the Nightingale, Timberlake Wertenbaker's acclaimed play, premiered at the Royal Shakespeare Company's The Other Place in Stratford-upon-Avon on October 28th, 1988. Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale* is a radical feminist play signifying women's struggle to abolish patriarchal norms. Wertenbaker dramatizes a classical myth in *The Love of the Nightingale* due to her special interest in Greek myths. Instead of adapting or rewriting a classical Greek play, Wertenbaker turns the Philomele and Procne myth of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* into a play. According to Maya E. Roth:

Wertenbaker's depth knowledge of ancient works makes *The Love of the Nightingale* one of the most erudite and intertextual of modern adaptations of myth in recent decades, as exemplified by her placing the Philomele myth in constellation with the ancient tragedies of *Hippolytus* and *The Bacchae*. [...] *The Love of the Nightingale* intricately layers myth and feminism" together. (*The Philomele Myth as Postcolonial Feminist Theatre* 42-3)

Wertenbaker structures the play on a reinterpretation of the myth of Philomele with the aim of showing the barbarism and brutality of patriarchy. Although the play is set in Ancient Greece, the playwright tries to show the conditions of women living in patriarchal societies in contemporary times with the help of anachronism. From a radical feminist point of view Timberlake Wertenbaker depicts women's oppression, pain, struggle and depression in *The Love of the Nightingale* and the main cause is patriarchy.

2.1. Procne's Oppression

Now, by myself, I am nothing; yea, full oft
I have regarded woman's fortunes thus,
That we are nothing; who in our fathers' house
Live, I suppose, the happiest, while young,
Of all mankind; for ever pleasantly
Does Folly nurture all. Then, when we come
To full discretion and maturity,
We are thrust out and marketed abroad,
Far from our parents and ancestral gods,
Some to strange husbands, some to barbarous,
One to a rude, one to a wrangling home;
And these, after the yoking of a night;
We are bound to like, and deem it well with us.

(The Love of the Nightingale 288).

At the beginning of *The Love of the Nightingale* Timberlake Wertenbaker places a fragment from a lost play by Sophocles entitled *Tereus*. This is Procne's speech and it reflects and describes the misery of a young woman forced to leave home, and to marry a man in a patriarchal society (Wagner 230). *The Love of the Nightingale* consists of twenty-one short scenes in which the myth of Philomele and Procne is retold by Timberlake Wertenbaker from a radical feminist point of view. For *The Love of the Nightingale*, Wertenbaker "gravitated toward Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and then found herself 'caught up' in the myth of Philomele and Procne" (Roth, *The Philomele Myth as Postcolonial Feminist Theatre* 43). *The Love*

of the Nightingale is, therefore, based on the myths of two Athenian sisters, Philomele and Procne, who face different futures.

Procne, who is schooled in the teachings of the Athenian philosophers, is given in marriage to Tereus as his reward for having defeated the Spartan forces which have threatened her father's kingdom and she goes to live in Tereus' homeland, Thrace. In Athens Philomele lives with her parents who are the King and Queen of Athens. After having left Athens Procne and Tereus have a son named Itys. Procne has not seen Philomele, her parents and her homeland for five years. As a result of her homesickness and loneliness Procne has her husband travel to Athens to ask her parents to allow Philomele to visit her. When Tereus sees his sister-in-law he falls in love with her. During the voyage Tereus professes his love for his sister-in-law but Philomele resists his love and says that he cannot love her as he is married to her sister. Then Tereus makes up a story about the death of his wife and Philomele mourns for her sister. He also kills the ship's captain, rapes Philomele and then cuts out Philomele's tongue to silence her. Tereus returns to Thrace without Philomele and he fabricates a story about the death of his sister-in-law, claiming she died at sea during their trip from Athens. Procne mourns for her sister for five years. During these five years Philomele has to live in seclusion by Tereus' order. Five years later Procne attends the Bacchean festival and during the festival Procne pays her attention to a woman who uses three enormous puppets to enact the story of her separation from her sister, rape and mutilation. Procne realizes that the woman with the puppets is her own sister. Philomele kills Tereus' son for revenge. As soon as Tereus is informed about his son's murder he decides to kill both Procne and Philomele. At the end Procne, Philomele, and Tereus are turned into birds; Procne is

turned into a swallow, Philomele is turned into a nightingale and Tereus is turned into a hoopoe.

The Love of the Nightingale is set in “three distinct places; in a civilized Athens with its theatres and philosophy and philosophers, in the darker northern kingdom of Thrace, with its Dionysic rituals and secrecy, and on the sea voyage between the two” (Winston 512). Like in her other plays, in *The Love of the Nightingale* Wertebaker’s writing encompasses both the historic and domestic spheres. In both, patriarchy is the source of arbitrary authoritarian control against which her female protagonists struggle and in *The Love of the Nightingale* Philomele and Procne, struggle against the oppressive nature of patriarchy. In other words, in her play Wertebaker, based on a radical feminist point of view, shows that patriarchy is the main cause of the female protagonists, Procne’s and Philomele’s oppression.

Wertebaker’s play reveals two different places, Athens and Thrace, and in each there are two worlds, the public and the private worlds. The public sphere is the life within the society and the private sphere is the life within the family; in both women are oppressed and suppressed by patriarchal power and patriarchal authority. In the play, while Athens is represented as the land of civilisation, philosophy and theatre, Thrace is depicted as a barbaric and uncivilised land. Although Athens and Thrace seem to be contrasting places and seem to have contrasting cultures, both of them are male dominated societies in which “male domination is a social system, a matter of meanings, values, practices and institutions” (Thompson 8). To put it another way, the only thing that brings these two different and contrasting cultures

and cities close to each other is the fact that women are oppressed by and suffer from male authority both in the family and in their societies.

Both in Athens and Thrace Procne is oppressed and ruled by patriarchal norms. Furthermore, Procne submits to the decisions of male power. As a daughter in Athens she obeys the rules of her father and as a wife in Thrace she obeys the rules of her husband; “I obeyed all the rules: the rules of parents, the rule of marriage” says Procne (*The Love of the Nightingale* 351). For the most part of the play Procne is, therefore, portrayed as an obedient daughter in Athens and wife in Thrace. Males both in the family and in society are sure that females are under their absolute control and women have to obey their rules and submit to their decisions; “I only meant Procne would accept any decision you [Procne’s father/ King Pandion] made” says Tereus to King Pandion when he comes to Athens to take Philomele to visit her sister in Thrace (*The Love of the Nightingale* 301). As it is clearly stated by Tereus, Procne is supposed to accept and obey every decision made by her father and to be under the control of her father and husband; for the most part of the play Procne is portrayed as an obedient daughter and wife. Therefore, patriarchy is not organized around simply an obsession with control, but it is organized around an obsession with ‘male control’.

Johnson clearly summarizes this attitude by claiming that women’s lives “involve control [...]. But the idea and practice of control as a core principle of social life is part of what defines patriarchal *manhood*, not *womanhood*” because men controlling women is a core aspect of patriarchy (15). Correspondingly, as women are to accept most decisions made by their fathers and/or husbands they are supposed to behave like patriarchal women in patriarchal cultures. Patriarchal

woman “has internalized the norms and values of patriarchy, which can be defined, in short, as any culture that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles. Traditional gender roles cast men as rational, strong, productive, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive” (Tyson 85). As a patriarchal woman Procne has to adopt these roles for the most part of the play.

In Wertebaker’s play, King Pandion and his family, Queen, Procne, and Philomele, is the smallest unit of Athenian society and it is “a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole,” as the family is a patriarchal unit in which King Pandion oppresses his wife and his two daughters (Millett 33). According to radical feminists, the dominance of the father within the family symbolizes male supremacy in all other institutions in society. Patriarchy represents all kinds of male dominance and it is regarded as the root of all inequalities between men and women. Radical feminists agree that “family is indeed a central part of society’s power structure; as such it both sustains patriarchal power in the ‘public’ world and is itself a source of women’s oppression” (Bryson 175-6).

In Wertebaker’s play, patriarchy is portrayed as a powerful structure that has all kinds of power over women. In *Patriarchal Attitudes: Women in Society* Eva Figs draws attention to the fact that patriarchal values and beliefs pervade all aspects of life. In all walks of life and learning, women are portrayed as inferior and subordinate to men, a stereotype of ‘femininity’ being imposed upon women by men (qtd. in Heywood 257). In her hometown Procne submits to her father by getting married to a man according to her father’s decision. In relation to this, Procne has to live a life that her father has decided for her.

According to radical feminist theory, breaking the ties between the father and the child especially the son means putting an end to male domination/patriarchy, and an end to all kinds of oppression as male oppression is at the root of all forms of oppression in society, this leads to the display of female supremacy (Banks 232). The ties between Tereus and his son, Itys, are broken by Philomele and Procne by killing Itys. Yet, the murder scene, as in Greek theatre, takes place offstage and is depicted through stage directions: “*Itys goes for Philomele. Procne holds him. [...] The body of Itys revealed*” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 349-50). Itys is a part of male dominance and he is going to be an active participant of patriarchy.

Patriarchy is a system based upon male supremacy and domination and “patriarchy is difficult to change because it is complex and its roots run deep. It is like a tree rooted in core principles of control, male dominance, male identification and male centeredness” (Johnson 18). Although it is difficult to change the patriarchal order in the society and to overthrow the patriarchal tree, Procne and Philomele are able to overthrow the patriarchal tree by killing Itys. When Itys becomes an adult, he automatically has the rights, the authority, the power, the supremacy that his father has. According to patriarchal values, these privileges belong to only males. In addition, these privileges descend from father to the son due to their gender. Itys, therefore, is a future active member of patriarchal domination and male supremacy. In other words, he is going to be a potential oppressor. By killing Itys, Philomele and Procne are able to break the chain of patriarchal order and authority. When they kill Itys, they break the ties between the father and the son.

For radical feminism, breaking the ties between the father and the child(ren) especially the son means to put an end to male supremacy which is at the root of female's oppression. Radical feminism also adds that "men's absence is necessary for women to heal their male-inflicted wounds, to strength their bonds with other women and to develop a distinctively female perspective on the world" (Jaggar 276). Therefore, in a way Philomele and Procne are able to put an end to male dominance and this suggests the collapse of male supremacy and the display of female supremacy. Procne simply announces the collapse of male dominance by saying: "There are no more rules" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 351). She and her sister are not under the control of patriarchy and there will be no patriarchal rules for them to obey any more.

2.2. Philomele's Oppression

In *The Love of the Nightingale* Wertenbaker depicts the violation of women who refuse to yield to patriarchal power and authority. Philomele is one of them who refuses to obey patriarchal power. Therefore, she does not conform to traditional gender roles assigned by patriarchal society. Thus, she is depicted as an unconventional young woman suffering from both psychological and physical pains. The ultimate and main cause of her pains is patriarchy and male supremacy as she refuses to obey the rules and values of patriarchy and she does not submit to male supremacy and male dominance. As Carla McDonough claims that Wertenbaker's feminist play "portrays the brutality of patriarchy in its attempt to possess and silence women" since Philomele does not accept the dominance of male power (410). As radical feminists states that men are the agents of women's oppression (*Redstockings Manifesto* 223). In other words, women suffer from pain and oppression because of men. In the play an important reason behind Philomele's pains and oppression is a male, Tereus, her brother-in-law. It is Tereus who rapes Philomele and then cuts out her tongue so she can not reveal his crime, an act of violence and brutality.

Philomele's disobedient and rebellious manners and behaviours cause her to suffer from both psychological and physical pains. She suffers from physical pain as Tereus rapes her. Then Tereus commits a second act of physical violence: he cuts out her tongue, thereby denying her ability to speak. She suffers psychologically as she is not able to speak after her mutilation and she is kept alone in a cave for five years. Thus, the play displays the brutality of Tereus in his attempts to both possess and silence Philomele. Therefore, patriarchy is the main cause of Philomele's suffering and pain because "men and society are in effect synonymous" (Atkinson,

Radical Feminism 82). Moreover, “patriarchy’s roots are the roots of women’s misery and injustice” and “an inevitable consequence of patriarchy is the oppression of women” (Johnson 15, 76).

According to radical feminist theory, patriarchy is the primary cause of women’s oppression and pain in society. Philomele expresses that it is not herself but it is Tereus who is the cause of her pain and oppression:

My body bleeding, my spirit ripped open, and I am the cause? No, this cannot be right, why would I cause my own pain? That’s not reasonable. What was it then, tell me, Tereus, if I was not the cause? You must know, it was your act, you must know, tell me, why, say. It was your act. It was you. I caused nothing. (*The Love of the Nightingale* 335)

In a way, as a male Tereus takes the role of an oppressor and Philomele as a female has to become the oppressed. In Johnson’s words, “the oppression of women is taken to mean that all men-each and every one of them- are oppressive people” (27).

Being oppressed by Tereus, Philomele is a member of the oppressed and powerless class whereas Tereus is the oppressor and the part of powerful class in his society. In patriarchal societies like Athens or Thrace, women must struggle and confront patriarchy and its norms because they are the oppressed whereas men can ignore women as they are the oppressors. Likewise, in *Radical Feminism* (1969) Ti-Grace Atkinson declares that “the male-female distinction was the beginning of the role system. [...] This primary distinction [class distinction] should properly be referred to as the Oppressor (male)-Oppressed (female) distinction” (Atkinson, *Radical Feminism* 88). As a result of this class division in patriarchal societies

women are always oppressed by men. Based on men's oppression of women, men are the main and ultimate causes of women's oppression and misery.

Based on radical feminist ideology, entering Philomele's body by force (rape), Tereus becomes the oppressor whereas Philomele becomes the oppressed and the victim. Niobe, Philomele's servant during the voyage to Thrace, agrees that Philomele becomes a victim after rape; "Don't be so mighty, Philomele. You're nothing now. Another victim. Grovel. Like rest of us" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 334). Niobe also wants her to understand 'rape' as a reality of patriarchy. In addition to this, Niobe reminds Philomele that she becomes a victim of rape and her status as a princess will not give her any privileges any more as she becomes "Another victim. Grovel. Like rest of us" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 334). Like Susan Brownmiller, Ann Wilson highlights that Philomele is raped by Tereus for whom the violence of the act is empowering and consequently heightens his sense of manliness. "Indeed, the penis [rape] is, in effect, a weapon which is used violently against women" (*Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 156).

Tereus rapes Philomele as she does not love him in the way Tereus loves her. Tereus falls in love with his sister-in-law on the voyage to Thrace. His obsession with Philomele consumes Tereus and Philomele becomes his only reality. He tells Philomele of his desire and his passionate love that she refuses. "I love you" says Tereus. "I love you too, brother Tereus, you are my sister's husband" goes on Philomele. "No, no. The play. I am Phaedra. I love you. That way" exclaims Tereus (*The Love of the Nightingale* 228). The reference to Phaedra is a meta-theatrical device since there is a play within Wertenbaker's play. The play is

Euripides' *Hippolytus*. It is the story of Phaedra and her passionate love for her stepson, Hippolytus. In the play Phaedra attempts to seduce her stepson, Hippolytus (McDonald 105-8).

Like Phaedra, Tereus, in Wertebaker's play, tries to seduce Philomele in order to possess her. When Tereus is rejected by Philomele he does not give up loving her; "Then my love will be for both. I will love you and love myself for you. Philomele, I will have you" says Tereus (*The Love of the Nightingale* 329). Having been rejected by Philomele the only way for Tereus to possess her is to rape her. Niobe has already known that Tereus is going to rape Philomele. However, she did not warn Philomele about this. Niobe is a patriarchal woman who is very submissive, loyal to her master, Tereus, and to patriarchal norms. She cannot resist patriarchy as she knows that men have the ultimate power and "Power is something you can't resist. That I know" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 330). As a patriarchal woman Niobe internalizes that there is nowhere to go for Philomele, and in a general sense nowhere to go for most women in a patriarchal society. Thus, she does not even warn Philomele about the coming danger:

NIOBE. So it's happened. I've seen it coming for weeks. I could have warned her, but what's the point? Nowhere to go. [...] I know these things. She should have contested. Easier that way. Now it will be all pain. Well I know. [...] Power is something you can't resist. That I know. She'll [Philomele] accept it in the end. Have to. We do. (*The Love of the Nightingale* 330)

Tereus' rape of Philomele is not only an act of violence but also an act and display of his power and authority. In a general sense, rape is an exercise of power by men over women.

By raping Philomele, Tereus uses his sexual power in a destructive way over her, he also uses his physical power in a destructive and brutal way over her. As a man of authority, violence and power Tereus exercises another act of violence on Philomele which is mutilation. He has no tolerance for Philomele who is threatening his power and authority within the society as she "pledges to publicly shame him" (Winston 514). Tereus finds a brutal way to eliminate Philomele's threat. He cuts off Philomele's tongue to silence her and not to reveal the fact that he has raped his sister-in-law. Before the mutilation Niobe tries to warn Philomele; "Be careful. Worse things can happen. Keep low. [...] Keep silent. [...] Hold back your tongue, Philomele" but Philomele rejects her warnings; "Never" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 334). To keep Philomele silent Tereus' act of violence is inevitable:

PHILOMELE. You lied. And you. 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 she tell her what a coward you are and that you could not, cannot bear to look at me? [...] There's nothing inside you. You're only full when you're filled with violence. [...] I will talk.

TEREUS. Quiet, woman.

PHILOMELE. No, I will say more. They will know what you are.

TEREUS. I warn you.

PHILOMELE. Men and women of Thrace, come and listen to the truth about this man.

TEREUS. I will keep you quiet.

PHILOMELE. Never, as long as I have the words to expose you. The truth, men and women of Thrace, the truth- *Tereus cuts out Philomele's tongue.* (*The Love of the Nightingale* 335-7)

According to Winston, Philomele's mutilation is "the most shocking scene in the play, more shocking even than rape" since after the mutilation "*Philomele crouched in a pool of blood*" (515). After the mutilation Tereus states that he is not sorry for his act since he has to do it to preserve his status, power and authority as a King in his society. As Tereus declares, "You [Philomele] should have kept quiet. I did what I had to. You threatened the order of my rule. How could I allow rebellion? I had to keep you quiet. I am not sorry" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 337-8). Philomele is a threat for Tereus, his power and also Philomele's rape and mutilation by Tereus is a "part of a larger cycle of violence" perpetuated by a patriarchal society (Roth, *The Philomele Myth as Postcolonial Feminist Theatre* 50). Philomele is silenced as soon as she threatens Tereus' place in patriarchy. Winston also adds that "sexually motivated violence and incestuous abuse are largely perpetrated by males against females through the act of rape. Wertenbaker's play [...] identifies the destructive forces within society as emanating [...] from acts of male violence and the warped sexuality it engenders" (Winston 513). As illustrated in Wertenbaker's play, patriarchy is a system of male domination and female subordination and oppression and the oppression of women is an inevitable consequence of patriarchy.

Philomele also suffers psychologically since she is not able to speak after the mutilation. “Philomele’s body and spirit is pillaged, her tongue ripped out by Tereus to silence her testimony, and so, after years of domination. [...] Tereus’s cutting out of Philomele’s tongue is a climatic brutality, a violation worse than rape. (Roth, *The Philomele Myth as Postcolonial Feminist Theatre* 49-50). Likewise, the rape by Tereus is the only and main cause of her psychological pain. Yet, she is able to overcome this pain. In addition, she has been kept in seclusion for five years and “she’s only seen us [Niobe and the Servant] and the King [Tereus] for five years” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 341). In Roth’s words, “*The Love of the Nightingale* stages the psychic and embodied violence of Philomele’s loss of voice” (*The Philomele Myth as Postcolonial Feminist Theatre* 44). During those years “she’s been sewing, making them [three big dolls], painting faces” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 341). After five years Tereus wants to get rid of Philomele so the feast of Bacchus is a good opportunity for him to do as Tereus said “get her out, quickly into the city. She’ll be lost there. Another madwoman, no one will notice” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 341). The feast of Bacchus is the only time when all Thracian women gather without patriarchal authority. As a Thracian woman, after her marriage to Tereus, Philomele also attends the feast.

After Philomele’s mutilation Tereus hopes to gain his manliness, power, status and authority, however, Philomele finds a way to overcome her silence and to reveal the truth about Tereus. Thus, she is able to get rid of her psychological pain. In the feast of Bacchus, Philomele enacts her rape and mutilation with the help of three life-size dolls that she has made during her seclusion years. Niobe tries to grab Philomele and the dolls but she is not able to handle three life-size dolls. “*Since the*

dolls are huge, the struggle seems to be between the two dolls. One is male, one is female and the male one has a king's crown" (The Love of the Nightingale 342).

The rape and mutilation scenes are told through stage directions:

The rape scene is re-enacted in a gross and comic way, partly because Niobe's resistance and attempt to catch Philomele. Philomele does most of the work with both dolls. The crowd laughs. Philomele then stages a brutal illustration of the cutting of the female doll's tongue. Blood cloth on the floor. The crowd is very silent. Niobe still. Then the Servant comes inside the circle, holding a third doll, a queen. At that moment, Procne also appears in front of the crowd's circle. She has been watching. The Procne dolls weeps. The two female dolls embrace. Procne approaches Philomele, looks at her and takes her away. The dolls are picked up by the crowd and they move off. A bare stage for a second. Then Procne and Philomele appear, Procne holding on to Philomele, almost dragging her. Then she lets go. Philomele stands still. Procne circles her, touches her. [...] The sisters look at each other. (The Love of the Nightingale 342-3)

After Procne sees the doll performance, she realizes that her sister has been raped and then mutilated by her husband. Tereus lies to Philomele and Procne about the deaths of both sisters. Through his lies Tereus has broken the ties between the sisters for five years. His lies are revealed in the feast of Bacchus through the puppet show by Philomele. When all the facts are revealed the sisters want to take revenge on Tereus because of their sufferings and pains for years. With the help of her sister,

Philomele kills Itys, Tereus and Procne's son. In conclusion, in *Dianeira, Anger, and History* (2008) Ann Wilson highlights that Wertebaker in her feminist play depicts especially the lives of Philomele and Procne as marked by pain and anger in patriarchal society (Wilson 212).

2.3. Marriage as a Trap for Procne and Philomele

In *The Love of the Nightingale* patriarchal ideology determines women's marital life. According to radical feminists, marriage is a trap for women because women are reified through marriage. In Wertebaker's play *King Pandion, King of Athens* and father of Procne, presents his daughter, Procne, as a war prize to Tereus, King of Thrace, because "Athens won the war with the help of an ally from the north [Tereus]" says the Male Chorus (*The Love of the Nightingale* 295). In return for his help during the war King Pandion offers Tereus to take whatever he likes in his country by saying: "No liberated country is ungrateful. That is a rule. You will take what you want from our country. It will be given with gratitude. We are ready" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 295). As a reward for his help Tereus wants Procne as his wife and King Pandion has to give or loan his daughter to Tereus:

TEREUS. [...] What I want is to bring some of your country to mine, its manners, its ease, its civilized discourse.

QUEEN. (*to King Pandion*) I knew it: he wants Procne.

KING PANDION. I can send you some of our tutors. [...]

TEREUS. I have always believed that culture was kept by the women.

KING PANDION. Ours are not encouraged to go abroad.

TEREUS. But they have a reputation for wisdom. Is that false?

QUEEN. Be careful, he's crafty.

KING PANDION. It's true. Our women are the best.

TEREUS. So.

QUEEN. I knew it.

KING PANDION. She's yours, Tereus. Procne —

PROCNE. But, Father —

KING PANDION. Your husband.

PROCNE. Mother —

QUEEN. What can I say? (*The Love of the Nightingale* 296-7)

Tereus' speech implies that he wants to take one of King Pandion's daughters as a wife and Tereus is awarded Procne as a result of his wartime allegiance to King Pandion. King Pandion chooses Procne for Tereus most probably because she is the eldest. To put it into Wilson's words, being given by her father as a reward to Tereus for his support of Athens during the war, Procne "serves as a currency in a transaction between two men [King Pandion and Tereus]" (Wilson *Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 157). Procne is given to Tereus as a commodity with her father's blessing so Procne is moved from under her father's authority to her husband's.

In a broader sense, in patriarchal societies "women became a medium of exchange and marriage became an institution of ownership" (Case 8). In Procne's case, Tereus becomes the owner of Procne and Procne becomes the property of Tereus through marriage. The only thing that changes for Procne is that in Athens Procne has obeyed her father's rules, while in Thrace she has to obey her husband's rules. Moreover, Procne's life is under the control of patriarchal power. When Philomele wants her not to go to Thrace, Procne's response reflects the authority of patriarchy over her; "It's our parents will. They know best" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 295).

Procne's homesickness, loneliness and depression are the results of her marriage. "For Procne, married life with Tereus is experienced as exile" (Cousin 116). In Thrace Procne feels homesick as she is away from her hometown, her parents, and her precious sister. She also feels herself lonely since her only friend, Philomele, is not with her. According to Procne, her maids, Iris, Echo, Helen, Hero, June, Aphrodite [the Female Chorus] cannot accompany her. Although they speak the same language, there are crucial differences between the language that Procne and the Female Chorus speak:

PROCNE. Where have the words gone?

ECHO. Gone, Procne, the words?

PROCNE. There were so many. Everything that was had a word and every word was something. None of these meanings half in the shade, unclear.

IRIS. We speak the same language, Procne.

PROCNE. The words are the same, but point to different things. We [Athenians] aspire to clarity in sound, you [Thracians] like the silences in between. (*The Love of the Nightingale* 298-9)

The Female Chorus try to understand Procne's loneliness, homesickness and alienation and they retreat Procne's hostility despite of the language problem. The problem is not only linguistic clarity but it is the conflicting conceptions of which language is supposed to use for communication. The language that Procne has learned, internalizes and speaks is:

The language of Athens, her fatherland ideologically as well as emotionally. She and Philomele have been taught by the philosophers, and their models for comprehending the nature of Truth and Beauty prove fatally inadequate either for understanding actual human behaviour or learning alternate ways of comprehending the world.
(Wagner 240)

According to Female Chorus, Procne and the Female Chorus and Thracian women speak the same language in a literal sense. However, Procne's Athenian assumption of clarity in language makes comprehension of the Female Chorus impossible. The Female Chorus describes Procne's loneliness, alienation and homesickness she suffers from in Thrace:

HERO. She sits alone, hours after hours, turns her head way and laments.

IRIS. We don't know how to act, we don't know what to say.

HERO. She turns from us in grief.

JUNE. Boredom.

ECHO. Homesick.

HERO. It is difficult to come to a strange land.

HELEN. You will always be a quest there, you never call it your own, never rest in the kindness of history.

[.....]

IRIS. And if it is the land of your husband can you even say you have chosen it?

JUNE. She is not one of us. (*The Love of the Nightingale* 297-8)

Procne's homesickness, loneliness, alienation and depression are the result of her marriage to Tereus as she has to leave her family and her hometown to move to her husband's hometown, Thrace.

Furthermore, her marriage affects her sister in a very destructive way. Philomele is raped and mutilated because of her sister's marriage so Philomele's pains and destruction is a consequent of her sister's marriage. Philomele experiences not only sexual and psychological violence and oppression but also physical violence. Thus, her resistance to male authority results in her own destruction. Philomele cannot escape from Tereus' sexual attack. Tereus rapes her though she continuously rejects his advances. After the rape Philomele still does not submit to Tereus and his wishes and she starts questioning why he has raped her: "Why? The cause? I want to understand" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 334). Yet, Tereus cannot make any explanation about his brutal act. Philomele threatens Tereus to reveal his brutal act with suggestions of sexual fallibility:

PHILOMELE. They [Thracians] will all know what you [Tereus] are.
[...] Men and women of Thrace, come and listen to the truth about this man.

TEREUS. I will keep you quiet.

PHILOMELE. Never, as long as I have the words to expose you. The truth, men and women of Thrace, the truth —

Tereus cuts out Philomele's tongue. (The Love of the Nightingale 337)

Philomele's disobedient and rebellious nature causes her to suffer and her tongue is mutilated by Tereus before Philomele reveals his crime verbally to the Thracians. Her resistance to male authority ends in her psychological and physical destruction exercised by a member of patriarchy, Tereus.

Procne's passive and submissive attitude especially towards her father reveals her submissive and obedient nature. As a result of her submissive nature she yields to male authority and thus has a passive and subjugated life in her private sphere both under the control of her father and her husband. As a result, in patriarchal societies women are regarded as objects and they are presented to men by their fathers. In those societies women are not supposed to resist their fathers' wishes.

2.4. Direct Address to Audience, the Exploitation of Fourth-Wall Realism, Quick Scene Changes, and an Open-Ended and Fragmented Play as the Dominant Principles of Radical Feminist Theatre

Radical feminist theatre wants to abandon all traditional dramatic forms that are used by male playwrights in their plays. Thus, radical feminist theatre adopts new dramatic forms that establish “female form” (Case 130). By rejecting male-dominated traditional dramatic forms, the radical feminist theatre means “to create ‘women-identified’ productions. This work, created by women for women, focused on women’s experience and their connections to each other through gender and sex” (Dolan 85). *The Love of the Nightingale* is written by a female playwright, Timberlake Wertenbaker, for women who suffer from oppression because of patriarchy and the play is about the experiences of female characters, especially Philomele and Procne, and their relationships among them.

Direct address to audience, the exploitation of fourth-wall realism, quick scene changes, open-ended and fragmented plays are the dominant characteristics of radical feminist theatre. Timberlake Wertenbaker applies these techniques and methods in *The Love of the Nightingale*. Therefore, *The Love of the Nightingale* embodies most of the characteristics of radical feminist theatre.

Towards the end of the play the Female Chorus “drop their personae as the woman of the Thracian Court” and addresses to the audience directly (Wilson 158):

IRIS. There are some questions that have no answers. We might ask you no 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? (*The Love of the Nightingale* 348-9)

Through the direct address to the audience, the playwright not only creates an alienation effect on the audience but also prevents the audience from identifying themselves with the characters. Wertebaker eliminates the fourth wall, the barrier between performers and spectators, to lead the audience to think critically the things that they see and hear on the stage. Thus, as Jennifer A. Wagner observes that *The Love of the Nightingale* is about “personal responsibility and its slightly distorted mirroring of an ancient myth of sexual violence and of an ancient dramatic form as well, the play explores the responsibility an audience has for the real existence of the kind of sexual violence the ancient myth portrays” (228-9).

Fragmented and open-ended plays are peculiar to radical feminist theatre. *The Love of the Nightingale* is an open-ended play as nothing is resolved at the end of the play. The play ends with Itys' questions to Philomele: "What does wrong mean?" and "What is right?" (*The Love of the Nightingale* 354). Moreover, the playwright uses quick scene changes to collapse the idea of unity of time, place, and action which is used by and associated with male playwrights. *The Love of the Nightingale* covers a period of ten years and it is set in three different places; Athens, Thrace, and on the sea voyage between Athens and Thrace (Winston 512). Thus, the play embodies quick scene changes and scene divisions.

All in all, Wertebaker's *The Love of the Nightingale* carries both the characteristic of radical feminism and radical feminist theatre. The play is an embodiment of radical feminist theory. Radical feminism emphasises the patriarchal oppression of women and marriage as a trap for women, protests sexual assault as an act of men's violence over women, underlines the inequality between men and women based on sexual discrimination. Wertebaker's covers all these characteristics of radical feminism in *The Love of the Nightingale*. Wertebaker's dramatic style is peculiar to radical feminist theatre. The exploitation of fourth-wall realism, the collapse of unity of time, place, and action, episodic structure and quick scene changes are employed in radical feminist theatre. Wertebaker employs these dramatic styles in her play. Therefore, *The Love of the Nightingale* is an example of radical feminist theory and radical feminist theatre.

3. Timberlake Wertenbaker's *New Anatomies* from Socialist Feminist Point of View

New Anatomies (1981), Wertenbaker's first original script to be published, is Timberlake Wertenbaker's first feminist play and performed at the Edinburgh Festival in 1981, written for the Women's Theatre Group (WTG). Timberlake Wertenbaker is one of the commissioned playwrights of the Women's Theatre Group and commissioning plays mean that the subject matter is pre-defined by the theatre company. Like feminist theatre companies, the Women's Theatre Group provides "spaces" for its female playwrights to deal with women's experiences and issues through their plays (Aston, *Feminist Theatre* 6). Accordingly, the Women's Theatre Group maintains that its works are "directed towards exploration of the female situation from a feminist view. It aims also at increasing understanding of the political and social context in which women operate" (Wandor, *Carry On, Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics* 51). In *New Anatomies* Wertenbaker illustrates one of her feminist points of view through her female characters from a socialist feminist point of view. In her first feminist play Wertenbaker examines socialist feminists' issues through two contrasting female characters, those that are patriarchal and conventional and those that are non-patriarchal and unconventional women (Aston, *Feminist Views on the English Stage* 150).

In *New Anatomies* Wertenbaker depicts the adventurous life of a European traveller woman in the nineteenth century, Isabella Eberhardt, who impersonates an Arab man and spends her life travelling through the deserts of Algeria in her quest of a sexual identity and freedom. Isabella Eberhardt, born in Geneva in 1877, is the

daughter of a Russian anarchist and his wife, Anna. In her twenties she travels from France to North Africa, and the Algeria desert dressed as an Arab man, to the dismay of the French authorities. At the end of the play she dies in a flash-flood in the desert village of Ain-Sefra in 1904. As Carlson puts it, “the play ends with Isabella’s ironic death by drowning in the desert—a bleak commentary on her frenetic efforts to move outside the gender, race, and culture to which she was born” (*Language and Identity in Wertebaker’s Plays* 141). According to Susan Carlson, *New Anatomies* tells the Victorian story of Isabella and her brother Antoine. When they are children they “share an indulgence in games that deny and transcend gender” when they are adults they “follow opposite courses. Antoine rejects his ‘feminine’ nature, joins the legion, marries, and has children” while Isabella “embraces her ‘masculine’ tendencies to pursue adventure” (*Women and Comedy* 218).

As Wertebaker explains in the introduction part of the play, the play is designed “for a cast of five women and a musician” and four women play a parallel trio of roles; each woman plays a Western woman, an Arab man, and a Western man (Wertebaker 4). The fifth woman, Isabella, spends much of the play passing for an Arab man. In *Engaging Cultural Translations of History* Maya E. Roth makes a comment on Wertebaker’s unusual choice of characters:

Developed for the Women’s Theatre Group, Wertebaker’s script identifies *New Anatomies* as a ‘Full Length Play for Five Women and a Musician’. What is particularly striking about this choice is that the cast of seventeen characters is large and exceptionally diverse. Her staging notes specify that ‘except for the actress playing Isabelle, each actress plays a Western woman, an Arab man, and a Western man.

Changes should take place in such a way as to be visible to the audience and all five actresses should be on stage at all times'. This staging requires performers to translate across cultures of difference – of gender, ethnicity and language communities. [...] Wertebaker draws audience attention [...] to historic and cultural limitations of women in theatrical and political spaces. (Roth, *Engaging Cultural Translations of History* 159)

Likewise, Carlson explains the reasons of Wertebaker's choice of the characters: "clearly then, the play rivets audience [readers] attention to issues of gender roles through its cross-casting [cross-dressing] as well as its content (*Women and Comedy* 219). Correspondingly, although there are a number of male characters in the play, those roles are played with the help of cross-dressing by the female characters. According to Peacock, the female characters make "the audience constantly aware of the play's central concern, that of sexual stereotyping" (164). Wertebaker "offers a sophisticated analysis of sexuality and its institutional and cultural context" (Carlson, *Women and Comedy* 263). In other words, Wertebaker deconstructs traditional and patriarchal paradigms of gender and identity in *New Anatomies* through her female characters.

In an interview with John L. DiGaetani, Wertebaker expresses the starting point of the play; *New Anatomies* "developed out of my interest in three women who dressed as men: George Stand, Isabella Eberhardt, and the Japanese courtesan Komachi. I was interested in these women because, by dressing as men, they managed to break the conventions. I think what I'm most interested in is what limits a person imaginatively and intellectually" (273). In her play Wertebaker's main

interest is on women who are labelled unconventional, non-patriarchal women as they are able to disrupt “conventional” female roles both in the public and private spheres. In relation to this, and according to Peacock, the title of the play is significant since it implies that women try to design their “new anatomies” which means “new structures of their gender” to be able to survive in male dominated societies (Peacock 166). For her each plays, Wertebaker:

offers forceful investigations of the constructed nature of identity, and offers various glosses on the ways social and political institutions as well as their hierarchies of difference play into individual lives. [...]in *New Anatomies* she offers her most exotic exploration of these issues, depicting her main character’s subversive attempts to create her own racial and sexual identity. (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertebaker’s Plays* 139)

Patriarchal oppression of women within the family and society, the deconstruction of socially constructed gender roles, intra-sexual class oppression and no sisterhood among women are significant principles of socialist feminism. Wertebaker explores these socialist feminist’s principles through her female characters in *New Anatomies*.

3.1. Deconstruction of Socially Constructed Gender Roles, Identity Roles

New Anatomies is a socialist feminist play in which Wertebaker questions and criticises socially constructed gender roles in patriarchal societies. “*New Anatomies* demonstrates how the power of casting against traditional gender expectations has become a central tool in women’s remapping of comedy” (Carlson *Women and Comedy* 219). The playwright presents two different types of women, conventional, patriarchal and unconventional, non-patriarchal women to question and to criticise socially constructed gender roles. The play takes place in late nineteenth century France and the society is patriarchal and male dominated in which women have to fulfill certain roles of being wives and being mothers and “the stability of the social order [...] depend on the maintenance of differences between sexes and the avoidance of any confusion of sexual roles” (McMillan 42). The social order, therefore, is stabilized through certain roles that men and women have to fulfill in both the private and public spheres. Moreover, in nineteenth century France, there is a widespread consensus that education should not only reflect but also reinforce sexual differences. Therefore, boys are raised to be “dutiful sons and good workers” whereas girls are raised to be “devoted daughters and dedicated mothers who knew how to run a clean, orderly household. [...] Girls continued to be expected to acquire quintessentially feminine virtues such as modesty, a pleasing disposition and, above all, a sense of order” (McMillan 99). Thus, in nineteenth century France socially constructed gender roles are imposed on individuals at early ages.

Wertenbaker criticises the socially constructed notion that men and women in their private and public spheres form a clear binary opposition placing women in pre-determined roles. In the play Wertenbaker deals with the issues women have to face and struggle against patriarchal conflicts because of their desires to act in ways contrary to their socially constructed gender roles. In *Sexual/Textual Politics* (2002) Toril Moi elaborates on imposed gender norms as the source of women's oppression in patriarchal societies:

'Femininity' is a cultural construct. [...] Patriarchal oppression consists of imposing certain social standards of femininity on all biological women, in order, precisely to make us believe that chosen standards for 'femininity' are natural. Thus a woman who refuses to conform can be labelled both unfeminine and unnatural [unconventional, patriarchal]. (Moi 65)

Virtues and norms of femininity are formed by society so femininity is socially and culturally constructed. In patriarchal societies there are certain roles that every woman has to fulfill without questioning them. Women are oppressed by patriarchal society's norms if they do not accept the roles that society imposes on them.

In *New Anatomies* Isabella and her Parisian friends are considered unconventional women. Based on the definitions of femininity of the nineteenth century these characters are able to subvert the conventions of patriarchal society. In nineteenth century France a woman is supposed to get married, have children, serve her husband's needs, satisfy her husband sexually, and to be responsible for the household. Neither of these characters fulfills these conventions of French society as they "live their lives outside the boundaries of traditional womanhood" (Carlson,

Language and Identity in Wertebaker's Plays 140). They dismantle patriarchal conventions of womanhood by dressing as men. First of all, Isabella and her Parisian friends are considered unconventional women by their society since all of them conceal their feminine identities through cross-dressing. In other words, they all conceal their gender through male disguises. They, therefore, subvert patriarchal conventions of socially constructed female gender roles. They not only subvert traditional patriarchal gender roles but they also create their “new anatomies”, “new selves” (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertebaker's Plays* 140). Moi asserts that “the goal of the [socialist] feminist struggle must precisely be to deconstruct the death-dealing binary oppositions of masculinity and femininity” (13). Wertebaker deconstructs the binary oppositions of masculinity and femininity mainly through Isabelle. Isabella subverts patriarchal conventions of socially constructed gender identities:

ISABELLA. If, down an obscure alleyway, a voice shouts at me: hey you, shopkeeper – I'll not turn around. If the voice pursues me: foreigner, European- I'll not turn around. If the voice says: you, woman, yes, woman – I'll not turn around, no, I'll not even turn my head. Even when it whispers, Isabella, Isabella Eberhardt – even then I won't turn around. But it hails me: you, you there, who need vast spaces and ask for nothing but to move, you alone, free seeking peace and a home in the desert, who wish only to obey the strange ciphers of your fate – yes, then I will turn around, I'll answer: I am here: Si Mahmoud. (*New Anatomies* 26)

Isabella's monologue is a clear rejection of the roles and labels limiting her desires, gender and identity. In Carlson's words, Isabella's search is "to re-define desire and sexuality without to accept the stereotypes of European female behaviour" and "to understand Arab culture" (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertebaker's Plays* 140). Isabella rejects all the impositions of gender prescription and she also rejects a culture trying to force those impositions. Furthermore, with her new anatomy Isabella reveals her new cultural and racial identities, she rejects her European culture and identity, and she defines herself as a male and as Arab. In Maya E. Roth's words, "*New Anatomies* transforms the biography of a radical non-conformist [Isabella Eberhardt] who cross-dressed in both gender and cultural terms" (*Engaging Cultural Translations of History* 157). With the help of stage directions, Isabella rejects her gender and culture at the beginning of the play through her physical appearance. When Isabella first appears in the play, she looks like a man. According to Palmer, both her physical appearance and her behaviours are designed "to offend [deconstruct/dismantle] conventional ideas of appropriate feminine behaviour" (Palmer 152). "*She is dressed in a tattered Arab cloak, has no teeth and almost no hair. She is 27*" (*New Anatomies* 5). Thus, she has no conventional attributes of a woman living in 19th century France.

In contrast to Isabella, Natalie and Jenny are stereotypes of conventional patriarchal women in nineteenth century France accepting socially and culturally constructed roles of being dutiful wives and mothers. In other words, Natalie and Jenny conform to patriarchal ideology as aspiring wives, housewives and mothers because in nineteenth century France a woman's vocation is "to be a good wife and a good mother" (McMillan 155). Natalie has very distinct characteristics of a

conventional patriarchal woman and she adheres strictly to socially and culturally constructed gender roles.

As Natalie adheres strictly to socially and culturally constructed roles, she believes that each member of her family has to fulfill their roles. According to Natalie, in a family the mother “looks after her children, protects them, teaches them. [...] A mother teaches her children how to behave and looks after the house, cooks meals, doesn’t let her children eat out of a slop bucket” (*New Anatomies* 12). As a conventional patriarchal woman Natalie internalizes traditional female roles. According to Natalie, a man has to behave like a man; a man has to be masculine, not feminine; “a brother is a brother, a boy then a man, not this snivelling, delicate half girl” asserts Natalie (*New Anatomies* 12). Furthermore, in nineteenth century France reading books, especially novels is regarded as not appropriate for girls since novels “led only to an overworked imagination, a distaste for duty and a preoccupation with the frivolous” (McMillan 97). Accordingly, for Natalie, Isabella’s reading habit is like a disease as she remarks: “I’m afraid reading is a hereditary disease in our family. I would keep books well away from your children when they’re young, otherwise it’s very hard to wean them from all that nonsense when they’re older. If only we could get her married, she [Isabella]’d forget all those books (*New Anatomies* 24-5). Through Natalie, Wertenbaker questions and criticises socially and culturally constructed gender roles and illustrates how society imposes certain roles both on women and on men.

As a conventional patriarchal woman Natalie tries to impose the value of marriage on Isabella by asserting that marriage is a woman's "natural goal" and "by the same token, prejudice against unmarried women remain[s] strong" and marriage is "the proper goal of a woman's existence" (McMillan 155, 157). In other words, according to nineteenth century French society, every woman is supposed to get married and Natalie tries to impose this on Isabella:

NATALIE. The thought of marriage frightened me too, but I'll help you make a good choice. You'll need a roof over your head.

ISABELLA. No rain in the desert, no need for a roof.

NATALIE. We're in Geneva and I'm here to protect you until you're safely married. (*New Anatomies* 17)

Whenever Natalie tries to impose socially and culturally constructed gender roles, like getting married, on Isabella, Isabella simply rejects them. As a patriarchal woman Natalie firmly believes in the regulations and rules that society imposes on women. "A woman can't go out by herself at this time of night" says Natalie to Isabella. Isabella refuses to accept both impositions and society's norms and disobeys them by saying; "I'm not a woman" (*New Anatomies* 26).

Like Natalie, Antoine's wife Jenny is another traditional patriarchal woman in the play who is very strict about socially and culturally imposed gender roles. In Algiers, Jenny, Antoine, and Isabella live together. As a patriarchal woman of the nineteenth century Jenny thinks that women are responsible for all the domestic work and she expects Isabella to help her with household chores. As Isabella rejects imposed gender roles she does not help her and Jenny complains to her husband about Isabella's lack of interest in housework. "She hasn't lifted a finger since she's

been here” and “she hasn’t even offered to knit something for the baby” complains Jenny to Antoine (*New Anatomies* 19, 20). Accordingly, like Natalie, Jenny tries to impose the roles of womanhood on Isabella. In other words, Jenny tries to teach them how to behave like women when Isabella wants to smoke. “Women shouldn’t smoke. It makes them vulgar, doesn’t it, Antoine?” replies Jenny. Isabella simply ignores her by saying “Matches” (*New Anatomies* 19-20).

By the time Antoine, Isabella and Jenny are in Algiers Jenny is pregnant and she is going to be a mother. First she accomplishes the role of a wife by marrying Antoine; as a dutiful wife she is responsible for all the domestic work and then by becoming pregnant she is going to accomplish the role of mother both in the public and private spheres. Jenny, thus, behaves and lives according to imposed gender roles of the culture and society in which she lies. Like Natalie, Jenny is a conventional patriarchal subordinated woman in contrast to Isabella.

3.2. Intra-Sexual Class Oppression and Paucity of Sisterhood between Jenny and Yasmina

Socialist feminist theatres emphasize the differences between women that lead to an analysis of intra-sexual class oppression. In Elaine Aston's words, "analysis of intra-sexual class oppression became a dominant feature of socialist-feminist playwriting of the 1980s. [...] Foregrounding the working-class woman's oppression as different to that of women from the upper and middle classes was also a feature of socialist-feminist drama in the 1980s" (*An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* 76).

In *New Anatomies*, intra-sexual class oppression is mainly presented through the relationship between Yasmina and Jenny as class division among women is one of the main reasons for the oppression of women within patriarchal society. In the play Yasmina is oppressed by another woman, Jenny, for two reasons. First of all, Yasmina is oppressed by Jenny because of her class. Yasmina is the servant at Jenny's house who never speaks throughout the play and Jenny is her mistress. Yasmina becomes a servant because "they tried to marry her to a cousin she [Yasmina] hates. It was the death or degradation of becoming a servant" (*New Anatomies* 19). Secondly, she is oppressed because of her race as she is a native Algerian. Yasmina, thus, experiences oppression first because of her class and then because of her racial identity. Jenny's intra sexual class oppression of Yasmina is revealed through the dialogue between Jenny and Isabella:

JENNY. Why doesn't your sister [Isabella] ever help? She hasn't lifted a finger since she has been here. She talks too much to the servant [Yasmina]. I have enough trouble making that woman [Yasmina] work. They[Algerians]'re so lazy, these people. Please remember that Fatma [Yasmina] is a native and a servant. They don't respect you if you treat them.

ISABELLA. Her name isn't Fatma.

JENNY. Their names are unpronounceable. We call them all Fatma.

(New Anatomies 19)

Jenny does not even know Yasmina's name for she calls her Fatma because of her colonial prejudices for Yasmina. That is to say, Jenny refuses to accept Yasmina/Fatma as an individual since she denies learning Yasmina's real name. Jenny thinks that she is superior to Yasima and to other native Algerians based upon her colonial way of thinking. Jenny clearly shows her prejudice against Yasmina because Yasmina is a working class woman and in addition she is a native Algerian. That is to say, Yasmina is oppressed by Jenny because of her race and class: she "is a native and a servant" (*New Anatomies 19*). In the play Jenny, belonging to the upper-middle class, dominates and controls Yasmina, belonging to the working class. Furthermore, Yasmina is oppressed, humiliated and exploited by Jenny. Jenny is one of the privileged women as she and her husband's needs are met by a servant, Yasmina. Through Yasmina, who experiences oppression first because of gender and then because of her social status, and her racial identity, Wertebaker illustrates one of the socialist feminist arguments that women are exposed to not only patriarchal oppression but also intra-sexual class oppression.

As Zillah Eisenstein asserts that the racial, social and economic differences among women cause oppression, discrimination and inequality among women (*Imagining Feminism* 484). Based on the reasons that Eisenstein points out, there is an obvious inequality between Jenny and Yasmina. Jenny is a European, upper-middle class woman. In contrast to Jenny, Yasmina is a native Algerian, lower class, working class woman. These differences between them create inequalities in their lives. As Ramazanoglu illustrates those racial differences create a hierarchy of racial superiority and inferiority (121). In the play, Jenny who is part of a dominant racial group exercises her power over Yasmina who is considered a subordinate because of her race and social status. Therefore, Yasmina is an instrumental character in presenting Wertebaker's socialist feminist view. Jenny reveals her discriminating manner towards Yasmina, the natives and the working class when she complains about Yasmina's performance for the household chores. She says "I have enough trouble making that woman [Yasmina] work. They [native Algerians]'re so lazy, these people" (*New Anatomies* 19). As a result of her race and her social status in society Yasmina is seen as a member of the labour force to be exploited by another woman, Jenny. According to Jenny, she has a privileged position because of her European identity and her upper-middle class status. As Case highlights "there are crucial differences between upper-middle class women and working class women-not only are all women not sisters, but women in the privileged class actually oppress women in the working class" (83). As a member of a privileged class Jenny oppresses the member of a working class, Yasmina.

In the play Wertebaker examines the socialist feminist's claim that there can be no sisterhood among women because of class differences. Women have different interests due to differences between classes and races. Yasmina and Jenny do not have common or similar interests since they have different interests based on their social status and their classes. Moreover, Yasmina never speaks throughout the play so it is almost impossible for them to share something in common. Those differences impede forming a unity among them. Sisterhood and solidarity between Jenny and Yasmina cannot be established because of their class and racial differences. While Yasmina comes from a working class, Jenny comes from an upper-middle class. Throughout the play Jenny looks down on Yasmina because of the class and racial differences between them:

JENNY: She [Isabella] hasn't even offered to knit something for the baby.

ISABELLA: (*bored*) Yasmina will help me find something.

JENNY: I'm not going to put some horrible native cloth around my beautiful new baby. (*New Anatomies 20*)

Jenny's colonial way of thinking hinders to form a sisterhood between Jenny and Yasmina. Hence, intra-sexual class oppression and the lack of sisterhood between Yasmina and Jenny are directly related to Jenny's colonial mind.

Additionally, the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer is represented through the relationship between Yasmina and Jenny. Algeria is under the rule of French government. In other words, Algeria is the colonized society, France is the colonizer. As a part of the colonizer Jenny reminds Isabella about Yasmina's/Fatma's social status and her colonial background. According to

Jenny's colonial thinking, Isabella should not treat Yasmina in a friendly manner: "Please remember that Fatma is a native and a servant. They don't respect you if you treat them" (*New Anatomies* 19). Therefore, Wertenbaker uses Victorian colonialism as a metaphor for intra-sexual oppression. "*New Anatomies* is a colonial history that uses contact between an empowered power [France] and oppressed culture [Algeria] to call into question the European hegemony" (Palmer 152). By rejecting to learn and to pronounce Yasmina's true name, Jenny in a way rejects to accept Yasmina as an individual. Correspondingly, it is not possible to have sisterhood between Jenny and Yasmina since "I [Jenny] wouldn't believe anything she [Yasmina] says" says Jenny. For Jenny, Yasmina is an unreliable person; "I [Jenny] can't trust Fatma" (*New Anatomies* 19). Therefore, in *New Anatomies* sisterhood among the female characters cannot be established because of class and racial differences. According to socialist feminist thinking, women are far from being sisters as they are very much divided.

Due to her colonial thinking Jenny has prejudices not only for Yasmina but also for the indigenous people of Algeria. Hence, Wertenbaker presents two different cultures, the Western and the Eastern cultures. The first one is the superior, empowered culture, and the latter is the inferior, oppressed culture. Namely Algeria is colonized and humiliated by France. According to Jenny, as a colonial power French have the right to speak to native Algerians in French since they have colonial power over Algerians. Jenny feels herself in a privileged position because of her cultural identity, and thinks that she has the right to impose her own language to Algerians being under the power and rule of French government: "You've been heard talking to the natives in their own language. There's no reason not to talk to

them in French” (*New Anatomies* 21). As a result, Jenny creates a distinction between herself and Yasmina due to her colonial mind. In a general sense, the French government denies Algeria’s national and cultural identities because of their colonial prejudices.

3.3. Cross-Dressing and Doubling, Tripling of Gender Roles as Alienation Effects in Socialist Feminist Theatre

In *New Anatomies*, Wertebaker makes use of Brecht's alienation effects by using cross-dressing and the doubling and/or tripling of gender roles. In the play cross-dressing, in which female bodies can be seen in male attires, provides the deconstruction of socially and culturally constructed gender roles.

According to Carlson, "the play's succession of scenes is marked by a Brechtian presentational quality as four of the five women in the cast take on at least three roles (*Language and Identity in Timberlake Wertebaker's Plays* 139). Carlson also adds that "for Wertebaker, the multiple-role casting of four characters allowed her to scramble cultural as well as sexual types" (*Women and Comedy* 219). In her play, cross-dressing and the doubling and/or tripling of gender roles are interrelated to each other. "Except for the actress Isabella, each actress plays a Western woman, an Arab man and a Western man" (Wertebaker, *New Anatomies* 4). Through cross-dressing, Isabella Eberhardt plays double gender roles, Séverine, Natalie, Jenny and Verda Miles play triple gender roles. Isabella Eberhardt has two different identities, one of them is a daughter of Anna Eberhardt and her male persona is an Arab man named Si Mahmoud. Verda Miles wears men's attire as she is singing, Séverine, a lesbian, wears men's clothes to have relationships with her girlfriends, and Lydia prefers men's clothes while she is writing. The women characters offer the following reasons for their attire:

VERDA. [...] But then, one night, I noticed by chance [...] my father's hat and cape hanging over the back of a chair. [...] As I was saying, I saw the hat and cape and put them on. I went to the mirror and when I saw myself I suddenly had hundreds of exciting roles before me. I've been male impersonator ever since. It is, how shall I say, much more interesting, much more challenging to play men. There is more variety.

LYDIA. [...] Do you know that in order to write seriously I must dress as a man? I finally understood why: when I am dressed as a woman, like this, I find I am most concerned with the silky sound of my skirt rustling on the floor, or I spend hours watching the lace fall over my wrist, white against white. But when I dressed as a man, I simply begin to think, I get ideas. I'm sure that's why Séverine is such a brilliant journalist, she always dresses as a man.

SEVERINE. My dear Lydia, you know perfectly well I wear male clothes so I can take my girlfriends to coffee bars without having men pester us. (*New Anatomies* 38)

For Verda she wears men's clothes so that she can extend her singing repertoire, for Lydia it is so that she can think and write more seriously, for Severine it is so that she can go to public places with her women lovers freely. Although all the female characters have different reasons for cross-dressing, their ultimate aim is to achieve their own goals in a male dominated society where "man is the measure of all things" (*New Anatomies* 34).

The cross-dressing points out the constructions of “womanhood” which these women strive to overcome. Through cross-dressing Isabella and her Parisian friends get rid of constraints, which are put on them by patriarchal ideology, to achieve their various desires. Like Isabella, Eugénie develops a masculine character and she never adopts the female behaviour imposed by patriarchal society as she rejects imposed gender roles by saying: “no amount of hours spent practising in front of empty chairs taught me how to engage a young man in conversation” (*New Anatomies* 39). Lydia concludes their situation, “here we are, five women and four of us are dressed as men” (*New Anatomies* 39). All of the women characters live their lives “outside the boundaries of traditional womanhood” (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Timberlake Wertenbaker’s Plays* 140). In the consequences of cross-dressing Wertenbaker’s aim is to make audiences aware of sexual stereotyping which is a central concern of the play. As Peacock puts it, “Wertenbaker questions assumptions concerning the roles allocated to men and women in Western Europe society” (164). Accordingly, “most critics applaud Wertenbaker’s exploration of the lives of women and the positive ability of women to reconstruct their lives in the face of social and cultural resistance” (Lutterbie 361). The multiple casting of the female characters allows the playwright to scramble both cultural and sexual stereotypes.

In her play Wertenbaker through Isabelle Eberhardt exemplifies women’s situations, struggles and challenges in male dominated societies in which she wants to live her life not according to patriarchal norms and conventions but according to her own desires. Isabella Eberhardt is based on a real person who is a writer and a traveller living from 1877 to 1904. She rejects her European culture and her gender

as a female. She dresses as an Arab man, converts to Islam, assumes a male identity and roams the Sahara, untrammelled by the constraints of her sex and youth (Jaouad 93). Wertebaker dramatises Isabella Eberhardt's life in her play to depict women's conditions under patriarchy and to illustrate the deconstruction of patriarchal norms.

4. Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Grace of Mary Traverse* from Radical Feminist and Socialist Feminist Point of Views

The Grace of Mary Traverse (1985), premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in 1985, and wins *Plays and Players'* award for most promising playwright. It is Wertenbaker's other feminist play in which she deals with the intertwined issues of power, gender and sexuality. In Carlson's words, "with *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, Wertenbaker revisits the issues of identity [...] this time in England of the 1780s. In a play often described as a woman's 'rake's progress', Wertenbaker shows how Mary's hunger for knowledge and experience forces her to confront restrictive institutional structures of family, class, and gender" (*Language and Identity in Wertenbaker's Plays* 141-2). It is about a young woman's desire to learn how to offend her patriarchal father's sense of her social utility so she decides to rebel against the orders and laws of her father and patriarchy. In *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Timberlake Wertenbaker alludes to her two feminist points of views: radical feminism and socialist feminism. In other words, *The Grace of Mary Traverse* exhibits principles of both radical feminism and socialist feminism.

The play is set in the eighteenth century, but as in the introduction Wertenbaker explains it is not a historical play. All of the characters are her "own invention", and where she uses historical events such as the Gordon Riots she has taken "great freedom with reported fact" (Wertenbaker 66). Mary Traverse is a fictional character but the playwright places the play in eighteenth century London since the century acts as a "valid metaphor", and the playwright is concerned "to free the people of the play from contemporary preconceptions" (Wertenbaker 66). In other words, *The*

Grace of Mary Traverse is a fiction but it is placed in a historical setting which allows Wertebaker to select historical and contemporary elements to reinterpret the past and comment on the present. According to Özden Sözalán, “Wertebaker’s use of historical material and the liberty she takes with historical time and events serve to draw attention to the history of women’s oppression as well as its continuation in the present in different forms” (25). She also adds that “the eighteenth century is a ‘valid metaphor’ because the male dominated symbolic structure are still responsible today for the constant repression of women who cut down to size to fit into the constructed images of femininity” (25). Wertebaker presents women’s social, economic and political situations in eighteenth century London and at the same time she depicts women’s oppression from the past to the present.

The play follows a young upper-class girl, Mary Traverse, “on a Faustian quest for knowledge and experience in eighteenth century London” (Gipson-King 224). Her ambition for knowledge and experience leads Mary Traverse to leave her private sphere or her father’s house since she is curious about the outside world: “Wouldn’t I do better if I saw a little more of the world?” expresses her desire to her father to see and to experience the world outside their house. Her father simply rejects her wish “I’m afraid that’s not possible (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 70). According to Peter Buse, in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Wertebaker’s “interest in unruly women” is depicted through the experiences of Mary Traverse breaking the conventional norms of her society and following her own desire for knowledge and experience of the external world. “The meaning of Wertebaker’s plays “seems to lie in the values that determine the choices the characters make, whether they choose to fit into the outlines of an existing identity or located a way of being that fits the

contours of their own desires” (Lutterbie 363). Mary refuses to fit into the outlines of an existing identity and she chooses to follow her desires. Mary, therefore, breaks conventional, traditional norms and she adopts male behaviour for the sake of knowledge and experience. According to Sözalan, Mary’s surname is also significant and symbolic since she “traverses the Law-of-the-Father” and the law-of-patriarchy (25). Correspondingly, in his interview with Timberlake Wertenbaker, Michael Billington asserts that *The Grace of Mary Traverse* “is a fascinating play. It’s about an eighteenth-century politician’s daughter who crosses the accepted sexual frontiers—hence her name—and learns that if you play by masculine rules in a patriarchal world” (56).

4.1. Deconstruction of Socially Constructed Gender Roles through Mary Traverse

The Grace of Mary Traverse examines an important socialist feminist principle by which Wertebaker questions and criticises socially constructed gender roles in patriarchal societies. Through *Mary Traverse* Wertebaker “charts a woman’s progress through male dominated territories” (Carlson, *Women and Comedy* 323-4). The playwright presents Mary Traverse, who traverses social constructed norms, to deconstruct socially constructed gender and identity. Through *Mary Traverse* the playwright presents two different types of women patriarchal and conventional and non-patriarchal and unconventional to question and criticize socially constructed female roles (Aston, *Feminist Views on the English Stage*150; Dahl 156).

In the play *Mary Traverse* assumes the roles of two different kinds of women. At the beginning of the play she is a patriarchal, conventional daughter of her father but then she deconstructs patriarchal, conventional female roles by traversing the law of her father and of patriarchy to be labelled a non-patriarchal, unconventional woman. These categories are based upon the social background of the play.

The opening scene of the play is an adaptation of a true story that Wertebaker hears from one of her friends: “a friend of mine once told me his mother had been taught how to be a good hostess by being made to talk to an empty chair. I used that as the opening scene of *The Grace of Mary Traverse*” (qtd. Chaillet 696). Adopting this true story into her play, the play opens in “*the drawing room of*

a house in the City of London during the late eighteenth century. **Mary Traverse** sits elegantly, facing an empty chair. She talks to the chair with animation. **Giles Traverse** [Mary's father] stands behind and away from her" and she practices the art of graceful conversation (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 67). The drawing room symbolises the domestic sphere allocated to women like Mary who is denied by her father, the right to see "a little bit of more of the world" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 70).

Mary learns "conversational etiquette for women" under the tutelage of her father, Giles Traverse (Varty 76). Accordingly, Esther Beth Sullivan points out that under her father's supervision, Mary Traverse practices and learns "her gentlewomanly skills" (145). These gentlewomanly skills include the art of eliciting conversation without saying much of anything and walking, as if on air, in order not to leave a trace of one's presence. She is learning to become and to act the part of her gendered social standing to be accepted by society. Her father teaches Mary to acquire female roles since he wants "to be proud of" his "brightest adornment" in his society (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 70). Accordingly, "well-played, 'the daughter' is essential to perpetuation of the ruling order Giles stands within", as he is a prosperous merchant who then becomes a politician in his society (Dahl 153).

From the beginning of the play Mary is presented as a young upper-class woman who learns to speak and act in front of a man according to her socially and culturally prescribed female roles. The play is set in eighteenth century London and the society is patriarchal, male dominated in which females are restricted and limited both in the private and the public spheres. Women are not allowed to express their opinions and desires so they are restricted in their speech. They are expected to

fulfill female roles, to have a passive life devoted to the care of their husbands, children and household chores. Thus, girls are trained to be good wives and mothers (Hill, *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* 260). Additionally, they cannot go into the places men can go such as coffeehouses. As a result, men and women are not on equal terms both in the private and the public spheres where men are dominant, oppressive, authoritarian and women are supposed to be submissive, silent, passive and obedient. Therefore, in eighteenth century English society women's lives are under the control of patriarchal authority and power in the private and the public spheres.

As an eighteenth century lady Mary tries to conform to eighteenth century ideals of womanhood as she is expected to be silent, submissive and passive by her father and her society. Accordingly, her society is a patriarchal society in which the "amiable" – the socially conformable– "young woman" is silent, passive, invisible, leaves no trace" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 71). In Mary Karen Dahl's words, "Giles effectively constructs Mary as a subject who will perform as society dictates" (153). Therefore, Mary learns and practices ideals of womanhood under her father's tutelage at their house. To be an agreeable woman in society Mary is restricted in speech by the male authority that is her father. Her father explains:

GILES. You are here not to express your desires but to make conversation.

MARY. Can desire not be part of a conversation?

GILES. No. To be agreeable, a young woman must take the other person say [the man to whom she is speaking] interesting things.

[.....]

Now move on to another subject. This is difficult: leave no gap, you must glide into it. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 68-9)

This scene establishes the male-centred social context by showing Mary being taught by her father how to carry on a conversation with a man. Likewise, her father imposes conversational etiquette on Mary. Under her father's tutelage Mary learns to speak and to act in accordance with her gender roles prescribed by society. In *Constructing the Subject: Timberlake Wertenbaker's The Grace of Mary Traverse* Mary Karen Dahl argues that Mary's "self-censorship reveals the rules: 'a young woman' poses no direct questions; makes no mention of sensitive body parts (bowels or breast); and admits to no 'unwomanly' emotions" (152). Mary is restricted in speech, so she is confined to the territory of her father's house. Giles teaches appropriate behaviour and Mary internalizes the rules. The home, therefore, is the site of training and monitoring. When Mary learns to acquire the conversational etiquette of gender, she "acquire[s] one form of grace: the elegant, decorous nullity of an agreeable woman" (Cousin 160). Then, Mary is taught to become an appropriate daughter by her father and to become an appropriate woman according to patriarchal norms.

When the lesson on "agreeable woman" finishes her father leaves Mary alone in her room where she practices to acquire another grace: walking as if she is on air without leaving a trace on the floor. Mary's models for the perfect graceful woman are the dolls that she plays with as a child: "silk-limbed, satin clothed", leaving no imprint (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 71). In the drawing room Mary "walks back and forth across the carpet" and she stops to examine the area on which she has just

stepped. While she is practicing she is giving instructions to herself: “I’ve done it. See the invisible passage of an amiable woman. [...] Air. You must become like air. Weightless. Still. Invisible. Learn to drop a fan and wait. When that is perfected, you may move, slightly, from the waist only. Later, dare to walk, but leave no trace. [...] I am complete: unruffled landscape (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 71). The ideal of woman of the century criticized by the play through Mary is that she is “self-effacing, virtually invisible, weightless” and when she walks on the carpet she leaves no imprint “–either on the carpet or on history–because she is removed from society, sequestered in her father’s home” (Wilson 148). Patriarchy does not want women to take part actively in society or in history as they are excluded from both.

Mary thinks she is ready for marriage since she completes all gentlewomanly skills for marriage which is the ultimate aim of a woman in patriarchal society. According to Susan Carlson, the opening scene of the play “quickly establish[es] that Mary’s life as an eighteenth-century young woman is dictated by the goal of remaining an ‘unruffled landscape’ of value in the marriage market” (*Language and Identity in Wertenbaker’s Plays* 143). In other words, from the very beginning of the play Mary Traverse conforms to the eighteenth century ideals of womanhood that socialist feminist drama tries to deconstruct (Dolan 101, 106). Hence, Mary is framed as a subject of patriarchal male domination.

Mary is restricted in speech and she is confined to the territory of her father’s house as she conforms to patriarchal conventions of her gender by learning and practicing “gently women skills”. As a result of these restrictions she gets tired of the gentlewomanly activities and becomes curious about the world outside her father’s house. Mary’s propensity to divert from her conventional roles and identity

is implied in her repeated expressions for curiosity and desire to see the male dominated external world since she does not know anything about it. Encouraged and provoked by Mrs Temptwell, the governess, Mary wants to learn what lies in the streets of London, and asks “What’ so different out there? When I ride in my carriage I see nothing of interest” (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 74). Increasing Mary’s curiosity for the outer world, “that’s because the streets have to be emptied to make way for your carriage. It’s different on foot. Very different” replies Mrs Temptwell. Upon Mrs Temptwell’s words Mary’s curiosity for the outer world increases and she decides to see the real world. As Mary remarks “You’ll take me out there. Yes. Into the streets. I’ll glitter with knowledge (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 74). To put it in Dahl’s words, “Mary wants out of the house. She escapes into the world, searching for knowledge through experience” (154).

Through Mrs Temptwell Mary also learns that her dead mother has been an ideal woman for society, who “went in and out of rooms with no one knowing she’d been there. She was so quiet, your mother, it took the master [Mary’s father] a week to notice she was dead” (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 73). Therefore, Mary’s mother is reified for patriarchal women who are condemned to a life of isolation, reclusion and silence by patriarchy. Hence, Mary’s mother has lived her life according to the ideals of femininity determined by patriarchal norms and its values. Wilson asserts “epitomising the feminine ideal” Mary’s mother is confined to the domestic sphere (149). Mary’s mother is an ideal woman for her husband and for the society but she “wanted to go out once in her life, she died before she could manage it [...] she missed that one little pleasure” (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 74). That increases Mary’s curiosity about the world outside their house, too; unlike her

mother she does not want to miss the chance to experience the outer world. Mrs Temptwell obviously aims to provoke Mary's curiosity for the outer world when she tells Mary about her dead mother. During their conversation Mary also learns from Mrs Temptwell that the "girl in number fourteen [their neighbour] "asked one of the servants to take her out on the street" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 74). Upon hearing this, Mary becomes extremely curious about the world outside her father's house. Therefore, Mrs Temptwell is the embodiment of women's desire to know and to experience. In Özalan's words, Mrs Temptwell "plays the serpent of Mary's Eve, who yields, out of curiosity to 'traverse' the world in which men live, to the 'temptation' suggested by governess's name" (27). Mrs Temptwell wants to separate Mary from her father since she is motivated by a class hatred of Giles Traverse based upon her family's experience. Her hatred for the Traverses is revealed in her dialogue with Giles:

MRS TEMPTWELL. Do you remember my father? He was a farmer when you were a farmer. His land was next to yours.

GILES. I must have bought it.

MRS TEMPTWELL. He trusted you to leave him his cottage. When you landscaped your garden, you needed a lake. The cottage was drowned in the lake.

GILES. I gave those people work.

MRS TEMPTWELL. He went to one of your potteries. He died.

GILES. And it's because of your father's misfortune that you've killed my daughter?

MRS TEMPTWELL. You daughter's only dead for you. That's your misfortune. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 88)

Then Giles "made his younger brother a magistrate. It was that magistrate who hanged" Mrs Temptwell's grandmother for witchcraft (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 120). That's why Mrs Temptwell "curse[s] the whole family [the Traverses]" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 137). As a result Mrs Temptwell takes revenge on Giles by stealing and ruining his brightest adornment, his daughter.

Mrs Temptwell offers Mary an alternative education and experience outside her domestic confines. Mary will either choose to become like one of her dolls "weightless", "still", "invisible" like her dead mother or she "will glitter with interest" like the neighbour girl in number fourteen who has already experienced the streets of London with the help of a servant (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 71, 74). Mary transgresses "the bounds of her homey existence and sees what lies in the streets of London" (Sullivan 145). "We [Mary and Mrs Temptwell]'ll go disguised, as you suggested. [...] I've decided, Mrs Temptwell, we're going out" awkward her decision to see the outer world (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 75). Mary, therefore, "traverses" from upper class respectability to life on the streets of London. Her desire to see and to experience the outer world is the rejection of social impositions of her gender, therefore, she deconstructs patriarchal conventional values of femininity. Correspondingly, "Mary rebels against the rigidities of gender difference in eighteenth-century England by leaving her father's home in favour of the streets of London" for the sake of knowledge through experience (Lutterbie 362).

As Michelene Wandor illustrates socialist feminist's aim is to overthrow patriarchal feminine stereotypes (*Carry On, Understudies: Theatre and Sexual Politics* 133). Like Wandor, Shulamith Firestone argues that women should be freed from the burden of feminine stereotypes since they are oppressed and enslaved by patriarchal conventions of femininity within the private and public domain (90-7). Mary is thirsty for the experience of the 'real' world that her father wants to protect her from (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 118). "I want to the world as it is, no limitations, no illusions, I want to know it all" states Mary (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 84). By rejecting patriarchal impositions Mary overthrows patriarchal feminine stereotypes.

When Mary traverses the law of her father it means she also traverses the laws and orders of her society and she becomes an outcast of her society and the century who contradicts patriarchal conventions. In eighteenth century Britain chastity is "seen as the most essential virtue in women" (Hill, *Eighteenth-Century Women* 138). After leaving her father's house Mary does not support herself economically and she becomes a whore to be able to survive in the streets of London. Mary's financial resources provide her with the means to avoid the forces of patriarchy. When Mary consumes all her financial resources and is no longer able to support herself financially, according to Sullivan, "whoring becomes her [Mary's] only means of support" (147). Mary shares the same fate of women who are forced to become prostitutes to be able to survive in a male dominated world. Mary deconstructs the concept of ideal woman whose chastity is "seen as the most essential virtue in women" and she loses her chastity by becoming a prostitute (Hill,

Eighteenth-Century Women 138). Patriarchy is responsible for Mary's prostitution and sexual exploitation.

Women's lives are also limited and confined to the private sphere where they are supposed to lead passive and docile lives dedicated to their husbands and their children in eighteenth century England (Hill, *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England* 260). Therefore, in their private and public spheres women are under the control of patriarchal authority. In the eighteenth century there are books by male authors on women's appropriate behaviours or how women are supposed to behave in their private and public domains. The books include impositions of patriarchal society on women. In the play Mary rejects to read *The Young Ladies' Conduct*, remarking "some books are dull" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 73). *The Young Ladies' Conduct*, written by John Essex in 1722, is a book designed on female etiquette to form "strict standards of conduct" with an emphasis on "modesty, restraints, passivity, compliance, submission, decency, and chastity" and all these features are imposed on and attributed to women (Hill, *Eighteenth-Century Women* 17). In *Women's Estate* Juliet Mitchell criticizes patriarchal society for its conventional fixed roles on women (302). Patriarchal society tries to impose the socially constructed roles through books. By rejecting to read the book Mary traverses and deconstructs socially and culturally prescribed gender impositions. Mary does not conform to traditional female roles assigned by patriarchal society. Thus, she is depicted as an outcast and unconventional woman. She refuses to obey the rules and the values of patriarchy and she does not submit to male supremacy. For Dahl, Mary rejects the image of herself presented to her by her father and society, therefore, she rejects the values that society tries to impose on her

(156). By rejecting socially and culturally imposed gender roles she becomes a “resisting reader”, the term is made famous by Judith Fetterley in her 1978 book of the same name. “The ‘resisting reader’ is diametrically opposed to ‘male-identified woman’” who refuses to adopt social impositions of her gender and the interests and norms of patriarchal authority (qtd. in Madsen 186). Hence, Mary refuses to become a patriarchal conventional woman, she becomes a resisting reader.

4.2. Mary: The Sexually Discriminated

Radical feminism and radical feminist theatre aim to focus on the problems that have existed at the root of society and to “put an end to the barriers of segregation and discrimination based on sex” (Sarachild 144). Likewise, in *The Dialectic of Sex* Shulamith Firestone emphasizes the idea of “the elimination of the sex distinction” (95). In Wertebaker’s play *Mrs Temptwell and Mary* cannot go into the Universal Coffee House in Fleet Street because they are women. London is a host to hundreds of coffeehouses and they are important and popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in which politicians, writers and intellectuals assemble for conversations, debates and social interactions (Pincus 807-12). Therefore, coffeehouses become an alternative space for intellectual thought for men where women are not allowed. “Coffeehouse society was [is] gender specific: women were [are] specifically excluded” from coffeehouses (Pincus 809).

In the play the patriarchal domain of the coffeehouse is emphasized when Mary and Mrs Tempwell are denied entry into the Universal Coffee House because of their sex. The conversation between Mary and the boy outside the coffeehouse reveals sexual discrimination in London in the eighteenth century:

BOY. You can’t come in.

MARY. We’re following them.

BOY. Ladies wait outside.

MRS TEMPTWELL. Ask him why.

BOY. They don’t like to be disturbed

MARY. I know how to talk.

BOY. They don’t like ladies’ talk.

MARY. What is sex wit?

MRS. TEMPTWELL. Ask him who's in there.

BOY. Mr. Fielding, Mr Goldsmith, Mr Hume, Mr Boswell, Mr Garrick, the Doctor, Mr Sheridan, Mr Hogarth ... You have to stay out. Orders.

MRS TEMPTWELL. Ask him why they [the men in the coffee house] let him in.

BOY. I'm the boy. I go everywhere.

MARY. I don't understand.

BOY. I'll let you see through the window.

MARY. I've spent my life looking through the window panes. I want to face them. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 82)

This scene reveals the eighteenth century's notions of women based on sex discrimination women are excluded from social and intellectual areas such as theatres and coffeehouses. The reason behind women's exclusion from intellectual spaces is that in eighteenth century the development of female's intellectual skills is seen unnecessary (Hill, *Eighteenth-Century Women* 17). Women are excluded from participation in the discursive practices. According to Carlson, "Mary's journey toward feminist consciousness leads her to realize the confinement of traditional female roles" (*Women and Comedy* 201). Carlson also adds that:

Mary is lured out of this facile world of manners by her Faustian desire for knowledge and experience, and, through a series of crude encounters, learns that her womanhood is not a refined essence but a

construction of cultural and political forces. (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertenbaker's Plays* 143)

An attempt to get into a male territory means deconstruction of conventional norms of women. Mary's attempt to get into the coffeehouse deconstructs her socially prescribed gender roles. Sexual discrimination and conventional female roles overlap each other since conventional roles are designed according to genders. There are certain things that only men do and there are certain things that only women have to do and only women cannot do. For instance, only men can go into coffeehouses but women cannot go into these places, women have to be responsible for the care of their husbands, children and households. These form conventional gender roles which are based on sexual segregation. As a result sexual discrimination, men and women do not face each other on equal terms (Mehfhof 482). When Mary attempts to enter into a male dominated area she is not allowed as she is a female, she breaks the conventions of her gender roles. Accordingly, for radical feminism, the underlying male-dominated and male-centred patriarchal system produces male privileges that suppress women.

4.3. Sophie: The Sexually Assaulted

As Barbara Mehrhof argues patriarchy forms a class division in society, a male class and a female class, and these classes are never on equal terms (482). This distinction causes sexual oppression for women since men make women's bodies into objects of male desire (Case 66). Radical feminists want to overthrow sexual objectification and exploitation by men. Sexual oppression/sexual assault/rape are fundamental forms of oppression which are exercises of male power over female bodies. Entering Sophie's body by force (rape), the power-thirsty Lord Gordon becomes the oppressor whereas Sophie becomes the oppressed and the victim. As Susan Brownmiller highlights that rape is a man's "basic weapon of force against women" and "his forcible entry into her body despite her physical protestations and struggle became [becomes] the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood" (qtd. in Jaggar 90). Mary describes the scene when Lord Gordon feels himself powerful and then becomes the oppressor and Sophie becomes the victim:

MARY. What will he go to her?

MRS TEMPTWELL. Rape her. [...] Watch and you'll learn something.

MARY. Rape? What the Greek gods did? Will he turn himself into a swan, bull, a shower of golden rain? Is he a god?

MRS TEPTWELL. He'll feel like one.

MARY. He stands her against the lamp-post, sword gleaming at her neck, she's quiet. Now the sword lifts up her skirts, no words between

them, the sword is his voice and his will. He thrusts himself against her, sword in the air. He goes on and on. She has no expression on her face, he shudders. She's still. He turns away from her, tucks the sword away. I couldn't stop looking. (*Pause.*) It's not like the books. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse 80*)

The playwright "alludes to the very origin of women's oppression as the prerequisite of phallocracy and draws attention to its continuity" (Sözialan 28). The rape scene ends with Sophie coming towards Mary, "walking with pain. They look at each other. Then Sophie moves off. (Looking at the ground) "Blood" says Mary (*The Grace of Mary Traverse 81*). Sophie's rape is Mary's first knowledge and experience of the outer world. As Mary remarks "I don't like this world. It's nasty. [...] I do wish these people weren't so ugly" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse 77*). Like Brownmiller, Wilson highlights that in the play rape is represented as an act of violence articulated through sexuality: "his genitals are a weapon used against the victims" and "Lord Gordon achieves his power by employing sex as a weapon of physical aggression" (150). Wilson also adds the penis is a weapon used violently against Sophie. Lord Gordon seems to idealise Sophie who is metaphorically dead, reduced to silence (156). He is proud of his act of violence since he proves his power and manhood over Sophie:

LORD GORDON. Mr. Manners, I'm a different man.

MR. MANNERS. What's happened? A legacy?

LORD GORDON. (Quietly) Power.

MR. MANNERS. Ah. Power. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse 80*)

Lord Gordon imposes his physical power and strength over Sophie through the act of rape.

As a result, patriarchy relies on sexual violence and sexual assault. Wertenbaker prescribes how women are reified and objectified for the male gaze and how they are turned into sexual victims by male authorities through Sophie. Wertenbaker criticises patriarchal power and male dominance being manifested and maintained through the sexual oppression over women. Thus, Wertenbaker makes a radical feminist critique of patriarchy. At the same time the playwright makes a socialist feminist critique of patriarchy since “socialist feminist represents not only female oppression but also the entire oppressive patriarchal power structure by exposing relationships of male domination” (Madsen 186).

4.4. Patriarchal Oppression on Mary Traverse

Mary Traverse rejects to yield to patriarchal power and she does not conform to traditional female roles imposed by patriarchal authority. The main cause of her oppression is her father who has patriarchal power and authority both over Mary and in society. Mary suffers from male cruelty in the streets of London because of her lack of knowledge and experience of it. Her paucity of knowledge and experience of the male dominated external world is because of her patriarchal father. Based upon her father's patriarchal power and authority Mary is confined to the domestic sphere and she is not allowed to go out of their house.

Mary suggests to her father going out to the theatre or into the outer world to gain knowledge and experience that will assist in her conversations with men but her father forbids this. As her father remarks "given you [Mary] so much to see in the house" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 69). Hence, she is distanced from the world outside her father's house that belongs to only males according to the patriarchy. As Wilson states Mary is "forced into a metaphoric death by her father" when her desire to see the outer world is blocked by her father (Wilson 148). As Kate Millet illustrates that the family is the basic of patriarchy in which females are oppressed by their fathers (Millet 33). Mary is oppressed by her father since he is a member of the patriarchal system.

After spending some time in the streets of London as a prostitute and gaining experience Mary wants to face her father to ask the reasons for being kept in isolation at home for years:

GILES. I gave you everything.

MARY. Except experience.

GILES. You could have married a lord.

MARY. I said experience, not a pose. The world outside, all of it.
This.

GILES. This! I did everything to keep you from this! [...] I wanted you to protect from what I had experienced, the slights, the filth, protect you even from the knowledge I had experienced it.

MARY. It wasn't what I wanted. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 118)

Mary accuses her father as he has isolated her from real life outside their house and in a way her father is the cause of her oppression and inexperience of the real world. By isolating his daughter from the world outside he thinks that he could protect his daughter from "the filth". Yet, he does not give any chances to Mary to face the real world, she suffers in the streets of London because of her inexperience. As a result, Mary has had difficulties in the outer world because of her lack of knowledge and inexperience of it. Therefore, her father is the cause of her oppression. This also shows that women are kept ignorant of real life because of their genders.

5. A Comparison of Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies*, and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*

Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies*, and *The Grace of Mary Traverse* are similar to each other in terms of their feminist recurring themes and in terms of their feminist writing style. Each play is set in historical times to use "the past to explore the present" (Stephenson and Langridge 143). In her each plays Wertenbaker displays how patriarchy announces the metaphorical deaths of the female characters that refuse to yield patriarchal authority. In relation to the theme of metaphorical deaths of the female characters, two different kinds of women are presented; patriarchal, conventional women and non-patriarchal, unconventional women. Sexual oppression, incest, and the use of anachronism are common in *The Love of the Nightingale* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*.

5.1. Metaphoric Deaths of the Female Characters in *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies*, and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*

Metaphoric death is a recurring theme in *The Love of the Nightingale*, *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, and *New Anatomies*. In each play, the female characters are metaphorically dead for different reasons. In *The Love of the Nightingale* Philomele, Procne, in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Mary Traverse, and in *New Anatomies* Isabella Eberhardt are forced into metaphoric deaths.

In *The Love of the Nightingale* on the way to Thrace Tereus tells Philomele that while Procne was waiting for the arrivals of her sister and her husband she “fell, down the rock, down the cliff, into the river swollen now because of the winter rains. They are still looking for her body, it was carried with the torrent” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 322-3). Tereus tells a lie to Philomele about the death of Procne. In return, Tereus tells a lie to his wife about the death of Philomele. Procne sends Tereus to Athens to take Philomele to Thrace and she has been waiting for their arrivals for months. Thus, she is worried about the lives of her sister and her husband. Suddenly Tereus enters with blood on his hands and tells that he has fought with “a wild beast. Or a god in disguise. Unnameable” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 332-3). When Procne wonder what has happened to her sister he does not give any explanation about her and remains silent. When Procne asks Tereus if she has drowned once again he remains silent. Procne thinks that Philomele has died upon her husband’s silence. Thus, Tereus announces the metaphorically deaths of Philomele and Procne. Tereus lies to the sisters to break the ties, and the bond between the sisters. In other words, he tries to break the sisterhood between the

sisters but he is not able to do it. Although both sisters mourn for each other for five years, in the Bacchean feast Philomele exposes Tereus' lies by the help of the puppets. Then Procne and Philomele embrace and take revenge on Tereus since he is the main cause of each sister's sufferings. Although Procne and Philomele do not die actually, their metaphorically deaths are announced by a member of the patriarchy, Tereus, it is Tereus who is the responsible for both Procne's and Philomele's oppressions and pains.

In *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Giles Traverse announces his precious sister's metaphorically death. Giles is worried about his missing daughter and he states that she lefts the house leaving him a letter: "she'd gone to investigate the very underside of nature" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 85). Giles asks Mr Manner for help but Mr Manners advises Giles to "forget her" as it will harm Giles' reputation and political career as a future member of the Cabinet and it will create a scandal if the truth about Mary is publicised (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 86). Mr Manner, thus, advises Giles to keep his daughter's elopement as a secret and to announce that his daughter "died yesterday, of a bad chill" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 87). Giles accepts his daughter's metaphorically death to preserve his political reputation. Giles accepts his daughter's metaphorically death when he encounters his daughter in her guise of a prostitute. Mary uses her conversation skills upon her father so that he recognizes her. Giles denies having a daughter: "I have no daughter" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 117). In addition, according to Giles, a whore cannot be his daughter: "You're a whore" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 117). In other words, "the woman who stands before him is a whore: she cannot therefore be his daughter. Mary

Traverse is dead” (Cousin 164). Giles denies having a daughter twice since, according to him, Mary disgraces him as his daughter.

In contrast to *The Love of the Nightingale* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, in *New Anatomies* Isabella Eberhardt announces the metaphorically death of herself and denies her nationality, gender, and identity [name]: “If the voice pursues me: foreigner, European- I’ll not turn around. If the voice says: you, woman, yes, woman -I’ll not turn around, no, I’ll not event turn my head. Even when it whispers, Isabella, Isabella Eberhardt- even then I won’t turn around. [...] I will turn around. [...] I am here: Si Mahmoud” (*New Anatomies* 26). In addition, Isabella tries to “re-define desire and sexuality without having to accept the stereotypes of European female behaviour” (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertebaker’s Plays* 140). Isabella creates herself a new identity, a new anatomy to live the life she dreams of, and she does not live the life the society imposes on her.

5.2. Historical Times for the Settings of *The Love of the Nightingale*, *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, and *New Anatomies*

Timberlake Wertenbaker sets *The Love of the Nightingale*, *The Grace of Mary Traverse* and *New Anatomies* in historical times for their settings of each play. *The Love of the Nightingale* is set in Athens and Thrace in ancient times, *The Grace of Mary Traverse* is set in London in the eighteenth century, and *New Anatomies* is set in France and Algeria in the nineteenth century. Wertenbaker sets her plays in the past since she “uses the past to explore [comment] the present (Stephenson and Langridge 143). Although Wertenbaker sets her plays in the past, she deals with contemporary issues in her plays. In Sullivan’s words, “even when her plays are set in the past, they focus on contemporary social issues” (140). Although each play is set in different time and places, in each play women are oppressed by the patriarchy, and women have to struggle and fight against the socially constructed gender roles and the patriarchal norms to live the life they would like to. Therefore, it shows that throughout history women are oppressed and their lives are restricted and limited by the patriarchy. Wertenbaker depicts the women’s conditions in different times and places and the oppression of women who refuse to yield to patriarchal power. In other words, in each era women are oppressed by the male domination. By using this method the playwright allows both her readers and audiences to see the fact that women’s patriarchal oppression is rooted in history.

5.3. Patriarchal Women versus Subversive Women in *The Love of the Nightingale*, *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, and *New Anatomies*

In each play Wertenbaker depicts two different kinds of women: patriarchal, conventional women and non-patriarchal, unconventional women. Non-patriarchal, unconventional women do not conform to traditional gender roles assigned by society. On the other hand, patriarchal women conform and internalize traditional roles described by society. In other words, Wertenbaker questions and criticizes gender roles and displays how patriarchal society imposes certain roles on gender. Through her subversive female character Wertenbaker deconstructs the traditional female roles. Women are called unconventional and non-patriarchal by society when they do not fit into the limits of patriarchal values and norms. In other words, according to the patriarchal norms, unconventional and non-patriarchal women exceed the boundaries of “appropriate” female behaviours in male dominated societies.

In *The Love of the Nightingale*, Niobe is the stereotype of the submissive to male domination and authority. In other words, Niobe is the representation of patriarchal woman who “has internalized the norms and values of patriarchy ... that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles” (Tyson 85). Niobe, thus, is the representation of conventional woman. She is submissive to the male authority because of her “self-preservation” (Wagner 243). Niobe was born in and was brought up in a patriarchal society, therefore, she internalizes all the patriarchal norms and she is “well aware of power structures and the implications of yielding to it” (Wagner 243). In all conditions she prefers to be silent and to keep silent and to

yield to patriarchal authority to secure and keep her survival in a safety way in the society since she knows that “silence is the only viable strategy for survival in the face of power” (Wilson, *Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker’s Recent Drama* 157). After Philomele is raped by Tereus Niobe advises Philomele not to “be so mighty, Philomele. You’re nothing now. Another victim. Grovel. Like the rest of us. [...] Be careful. Worse things can happen. Believe me. [...] Keep silent” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 334). Niobe’s silence is the silence of subjugation. In other words, her silence is an indicative of a culture of women living under patriarchal authority. Accordingly, she internalizes that men have the ultimate power and “Power is something you can’t resist. That I know” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 330). Therefore, she is aware of the patriarchal norms that women are oppressed and violated by men when women refuse to yield the patriarchal power. In addition, she is also aware of the socially constructed gender roles that assign men to the powerful position and powerful gender and assign women to the powerless and submissive gender. According to patriarchal norms Niobe fulfills all the requirements of the “appropriate” female roles and behaviours in the patriarchal society.

In contrast to Niobe, Philomele is not a patriarchal woman, she is the stereotype of the subversive woman who refuses to remain silent, to obey patriarchal rules, and to yield to patriarchal authority in *The Love of the Nightingale*. Philomele, therefore, is called unconventional woman. In other words, she is unconventional as she does not internalize the norms and values of patriarchy, and she does not conform to the roles of traditional woman. Moreover, She refuses obedience which is associated with females in patriarchal societies: “I never understood obedience”

(*The Love of the Nightingale* 324). Although she is raised in a patriarchal society according to patriarchal norms, she refuses to adopt the roles of an obedient daughter to her father and subservient wife to her future husband. Her rejection of her gender roles is the rejection of male authority.

According to patriarchal ideology, females are not supposed to ask questions, and they have to accept patriarchal norms, values, and their roles without questioning them. Philomele does not limit herself both in speech and thought. She talks about men, sexuality, and sexual intercourse all of which are regarded as inappropriate for a woman to talk about and to ask questions about them. In other words, throughout the play Philomele is asking questions to Procne, Tereus, Niobe, and the Captain. As Geraldine Cousin states Philomele is “the chief asker of the questions ... she clearly delights in words though Tereus tears out the tongue” (115). In fact her tongue is mutilated by Tereus since she refuses to remain silent, by explaining his act of violence (rape) to the Thracians she threatens Tereus’ power, status and authority in Thrace: “as long as I have the words to expose you. The truth, men and women of Thrace, the truth” (*The Love of the Nightingale* 337). According to Tereus, Philomele “should have keep quiet” since she “threatened the order of” Tereus’ roles in Thrace (*The Love of the Nightingale* 337). Her feelings and behaviours make a gap between the women yielding to male authority. Philomele, therefore, is different from conventional, patriarchal women. All in all, Niobe and Philomele are represented as the two contrasting female characters in the play, the first one is the stereotype of patriarchal woman and the latter is the stereotype of submissive woman.

In *New Anatomies* Isabella Eberhardt's attitudes and behaviours contrast with Natalie's (her sister) and Jenny's (her sister-in-law) since Natalie and Jenny advocate and follow Victorian norms of femininity. Isabella Eberhardt, thus, deconstructs traditional conventional ideas of "appropriate" feminine behaviour throughout the play. By rejecting patriarchal norms and values Isabella rejects male supremacy and dominance. When she appears for the first time in the play both her physical appearance and her behaviours disrupt conventional feminine behaviours since she looks like an Arab man: "*She is dressed in a tattered Arab cloak, has no teeth and almost no hair*" (*New Anatomies* 5). From the very beginning of the play to the end Isabella bears none of the attributes of a conventional female. In Palmer's words, "the audience's first exposure to Isabella Eberhardt is designed to offend [disrupt] conventional ideas of appropriate feminine behaviour (152).

Isabella lives her life outside the boundaries of traditional womanhood since she does not fit into the conventions of patriarchal society (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertenbaker's Plays* 140). Therefore, she is the unconventional and non-patriarchal woman in the play. According to conventions of patriarchal society, a woman is supposed to get married, become a mother, take care of households, serve her husband's needs and satisfy him sexually but Isabella does not fulfill any of these gender roles. Isabella rejects all these gender roles imposed by the society. Moreover, she dismantles all of these patriarchal conventions by dressing as a man.

Contrary to Isabella, Natalie and Jenny accept male supremacy and authority and accept all the gender roles imposed by the society. Both conform to patriarchal female roles as aspiring dutiful wives, mothers, and housewives. In other words, Natalie and Jenny have the very distinct characteristics of traditional women and they are devoted to socially and culturally constructed gender roles. According to Natalie, “in a family you have first a mother who look after her children, protects them, teaches them. [...] A mother who teaches her children how to behave and looks after the house, cooks meals” (*New Anatomies* 12). As a patriarchal woman Natalie believes that in her married life with Stéphane his happiness is more important than her happiness: “I’ll make a wonderful home for him” (*New Anatomies* 14). For this reason, Natalie is the stereotype of traditional woman believing that her ultimate roles are being a wife and mother. Natalie internalizes all the female roles prescribed by the patriarchal society.

Similar to Natalie, Jenny is another patriarchal woman in the play. Like Natalie, Jenny accepts male dominance and supremacy. In contrast to Isabella, Jenny conforms to all gender roles. For Jenny, a woman has to behave both in private and public spheres according to prescribed her gender roles. To put it another way, Jenny internalizes that a woman has to fulfil her roles as a wife and a mother, and a woman has to accept her husband’s supremacy and dominance. She complains about Isabella’s lack of interest of her expected gender roles. Jenny expects Isabella to do housework, and to knit something for her nephew/niece: “she hasn’t lifted a finger since she’s been here” and “she hasn’t even offered to knit something for the baby” (*New Anatomies* 19, 20). Therefore, Jenny is a patriarchal woman who lives her life according to her gender roles assigned by the society.

In *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, Mary Traverse assumes the roles of two different kinds of women; the conventional, patriarchal daughter of her father then the non-patriarchal, unconventional woman. Mary traverses socially constructed values and norms when she leaves her father's house to experience the outer world like a male does. By leaving her father's house for the sake of having a direct contact with the outer world Mary rebels against not only the laws of her father but also the laws of patriarchy. Mary, therefore, is stigmatized as a non-patriarchal, unconventional woman. Under her father's tutelage Mary learns to acquire ideals of womanhood prescribed by the society "to be an agreeable [...] young woman in the society (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 68). She lives in a patriarchal society in which females are to be silent, passive, and obedient to patriarchal norms and values.

Until Mary decides to escape from her father's house to roam the streets of London the only role she has assumed is the submissive daughter of her father as expected by society. Yet, her social role in society is not her choice, she is compelled by society. Like the window pane she looks out of to see the world her life is restricted the frames of which are drawn by patriarchal law. The window pane symbolizes her destiny—as an exchange value in the male economy, from her father to her potential husband—the limits of which are constructed by culture. She complains about her restricted and limited life: "I've spent my life looking through window panes. I want to face them. I want to world as it is" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 82, 84).

In *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, the ideal woman, according to patriarchal norms, is someone like Mary's dead mother. The ideal woman "is self-effacing, virtually invisible, [and] weightless. When she walks on the carpet, she leaves no imprint—either on the carpet or on history—because she is removed from society, sequestered in either her father's house or husband's" (Wilson, *Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 148). She is never allowed to express her own feelings and desires, must devote herself and her life to her husband's. Mary's mother has shaped and lived her whole life exactly according to patriarchal rules and values and as result of her devotion to patriarchy she has fulfilled all these roles assigned by society. In other words, Mary's mother has accepted all her social roles in her patriarchal society. Through Mary's mother, Wertenbaker illustrates women's isolated lives silenced by patriarchy. Therefore, Mary's mother has lived her life according to the ideals of femininity decided by her patriarchal society. In Wilson's words, she has been "epitomising the feminine ideal" (*Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 149).

5.4. Rape/Sexual Assault/Sexual Oppression in *The Love of the Nightingale* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*

Rape/ sexual assault/ sexual oppression is a recurring theme in *The Love of the Nightingale* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. In Wilson's words, "the thematic parallels between *The Grace of Mary Traverse* and *The Love of the Nightingale* are striking: in both, women [Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale* and Sophie in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*] are raped by men [Tereus in *The Love of the Nightingale* and Lord Gordon in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*] for whom the violence of act is empowering and consequently heightens their sense of manliness" (156). In each play rape is represented as an act of violence and an exercise of power by men over women. In other words, rape is a display of male domination and oppression over women. In each plays, "the penis is, in effect, a weapon which is used violently against women" (Wilson, *Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 156). In *The Love of the Nightingale* Tereus rapes his sister-in-law, Philomele, as she does not love him in the same way as he does:

TEREUS. I love you.

PHILOMELE. I love you too, brother Tereus, you are my sister's husband.

TEREUS. No, no. The play. I am Phaedra. I love you. That way.

PHILOMELE. It is against law ... I don't love you.

TEREUS. Love me.

PHILOMELE. No.

TEREUS. Then my love will be both. I will love you and love myself for you. Philomele, I will have you. (*The Love of the Nightingale* 328-9)

Indeed, in both plays, the penis is, in effect, a weapon which is used violently against women. In both, men seem to idealise women who are metaphorically dead, reduced to silence. Men effect the 'deaths' of women by announcing that they have died, thereby removing them from the action; but the women refuse to remain 'dead' and stage their return. In both plays, mothers contemplate killing their own children because this is the only way they can envision that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated. And, in both plays silence- a consequence of the limitations of language-is a major thematic preoccupation" (Wilson, *Forgiving History and Making New Worlds: Timberlake Wertenbaker's Recent Drama* 156).

5.5. Incest in *The Love of the Nightingale* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*

Both in *The Love of the Nightingale* and in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* the act of incest takes place. Incest is the sexual intercourse between close family members. In other words, incest is sexual relations between persons who, because of the nature of their kin relationships, are prohibited by law or custom from intermarrying (Britannica). Tereus in *The Love of the Nightingale* and Mary Traverse in *The Grace of Mary Traverse* have incestuous relationships with their family members. Tereus has incestuous relationship with his sister-in-law, Philomele, and Mary Traverse has incestuous relationship with her own father, Giles Traverse. Tereus' incestuous relationship results in the act of rape. The coming act of incest is implied through the conversation between Tereus and Philomele:

TEREUS. Philomele, I am telling you. I love you.

PHILOMELE. I love you too, brother Tereus, you are my sister's husband.

TEREUS. No. No. The play. I am Phaedra. I love you. That way.

PHILOMELE. It is against the law.

TEREUS. My wife is dead.

PHILOMELE. It is still against the law. [...] I do not love you. I do not want you. (*The Love of the Nightingale* 328)

Philomele tries to resist Tereus to have an incestuous relationship but she is not able to prevent it. Tereus' attempt for an incestuous relationship results in his act of rape. Mary Traverse has her incestuous relationship with her father as a prostitute to take

revenge from her father. Mary has not experienced the outer world because of her father's restrictions. "I gave you everything" says Giles, "except experience" replies Mary. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 118). Giles Traverse disinherits his daughter since she becomes a prostitute:

GILES. I have no daughter.

MARY. My name is Mary Traverse. Your wife had little chance of fathering me elsewhere.

GILES. You are a whore.

MARY. Is a daughter not a daughter when she is a whore? Or can she not be a daughter? [...] I am a daughter but not yours, I am your whore but not your daughter. (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 117)

As a merchant Giles Traverse is a distinguished member of the society, and as a politician Giles Traverse has reputation in London and he is going to become a member of the Cabinet (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 86). If somebody learns that his daughter becomes a prostitute all his reputation will collapse: "No one in politics can afford the cost of a secret [...] not even you [Giles]. No. There's nothing you can do. Forget her [Mary]" (*The Grace of Mary Traverse* 85). He is ashamed of his daughter as she becomes a prostitute. In both plays an incestuous relationship occurs among the characters.

5.6. Anachronism in *The Love of the Nightingale*, and *The Grace of Mary Traverse*

Anachronism is a chronological misplacing of events, persons or objects. In other words, it is the misplacing of any person, thing, event, or custom outside its proper historical time and it “upset[s] chronological order and the possibility of causation (Palmer 177). Wertenbaker applies anachronism in *The Love of the Nightingale*, and *The Grace of Mary Traverse* to disrupt the linearity of her plays and to comment on the women’s situations from past to present.

In *The Love of the Nightingale* the Female Chorus functions as a link between the past and the present. The Female Chorus “consists of the women [Hero, Echo, Iris, June, and Helen] from the northern city of Thrace” (Green 19). The Female Chorus “bridges the gap between a distant mythical past and our present by means of anachronistic choral commentaries” (Pankratz 189). The Female Chorus asks questions from the past and the present that have no answers for centuries. The anachronism occurs towards the end of the play through the Female Chorus’ questions:

IRIS. There are some questions that have no answers. We might ask you no 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? (*The Love of the Nightingale* 348-9)

The anachronism of the Female Chorus disrupts the linear time of the play and it also disrupts “the narrative by breaking the theatrical frame and evoking the present of the audience” (Gipson-King 227).

For the most part of *The Grace of Mary Traverse* the characters and events are bound by their time and setting. Yet, the most explicit anachronism occurs when Mrs Temptwell foreshadows the Holocaust during the World War II:

MRS. TEPTWELL. I [...] looked up to see all coated in flames, [...] houses, people, clothes, all burning. [...] Arms, arms waved underneath bodies. Faces, shouting, mouths black, teeth chattering: dogs snapping at the edge of hell. A woman grabbed me. ‘I was just looking,’ she said, ‘why me?’ Her cindered scalp peeled off. [...] The smell. It was the smell. I fainted, slept. All quiet, the fire on to other houses. Moved a leg, shoved a body off me, crawled on cushion of corpses, soft, nothing much left.

MARY. It’s not true. It didn’t happen.

Mrs Temptwell opens a bundle of she’s been carrying, ashes and bones, and throws them over Mary.

MRS TEMPTWELL. Look carefully through the teeth and you’ll find some gold. (*The Grace of Marty Traverse* 148-9)

Holocaust is the genocide of approximately six million European Jews during World War II by Nazi Germany. During the Holocaust the Nazi soldiers looted the city, plundered the Jewish houses, they set the houses on fire, killed and burnt them. In her conversation with Mary Mrs Temptwell describes what Nazi soldiers did to the Jewish people during the holocaust. Although the play is set in London in 1780s, through anachronism the time and setting of the play change. As in *The Love of the Nightingale* anachronism disrupt the narrative, time and setting of the play. Wertebaker makes use of anachronism to break the linearity of the play since feminist playwrights argue that linearity reflects male experience so it is associated with male playwrights, it does not reflect female experiences.

All in all, in her plays Wertebaker has a feminist concern in which she focuses on similar themes and issues to criticize and question male authority. Different types of patriarchal sexual oppression such as rape and incest, metaphoric deaths of female characters, the application of historical times and settings for the plays, and the method of anachronism, patriarchal construction and deconstruction of gender and identity are the common issues in the plays of Timberlake Wertebaker.

Conclusion

In 1968 the abolition of censorship and the influences of second wave feminism lead to the reunion of feminism and theatre in Britain. Female playwrights write their feminist plays and feminist theatre companies put them on stage in feminist theatres. In 1970s feminism gives way to different kinds of feminism but radical feminism and socialist feminism are two major strands of second wave feminism in Britain. Feminist drama in Britain has been under the influence of radical feminism and socialist feminism in the twentieth century. Although radical feminism and socialist feminism differ from each other, they overlap each other in terms of their themes and dramatic techniques. The ultimate aim of these strands of feminism is to put an end to the inequalities caused by gender differences and to redress the existing social structures in which women are always oppressed because of their gender.

Timberlake Wertenbaker is a feminist dramatist who explicitly deals with feminist issues in her plays from different feminist perspectives. Her plays, therefore, can be analysed in the feminist theatre framework. As the playwright declares most of her feminist plays “often begin with a very ordinary question: If women had power, would they behave the same as men?” (qtd. in Chaillet 696). Therefore, Wertenbaker’s plays depict female characters in search of power, knowledge and self-knowledge like Philomele in *The Love of the Nightingale*, Isabella Eberhardt in *New Anatomies* and Mary Traverse in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. In these plays female characters are on quests and question male authority that reifies women and hinders them from creating their own identities as they desire.

Wertenbaker explores themes of radical feminism in *The Love of the Nightingale*, depicts themes of socialist feminism and the dramatic techniques of socialist feminist theatre in *New Anatomies*. The playwright examines issues of radical feminism and socialist feminism in *The Grace of Mary Traverse*. In each play, the female characters are oppressed by and struggle against patriarchal authority in their private and public spheres since they refuse to yield to patriarchal power and to conform to traditional female roles.

In *The Love of the Nightingale* Wertenbaker dramatizes the Greek myth of Philomele and Procne. In other words, the playwright interprets the Philomele and Procne myth from a radical feminist perspective. In the play the dramatist depicts patriarchy as the root of all kinds of women's oppression both in the private and public domains. Throughout the play patriarchy is the ultimate reason for Philomele's and Procne's oppression. The brutality, tyranny and phallogocentrism of patriarchal power is represented by Tereus, Procne's husband and Philomele's brother-in-law, through his violent acts of killing the Captain, mutilating and raping Philomele. Like radical feminists, in *The Love of the Nightingale* Wertenbaker denounces patriarchy as the root of women's oppression in male dominated societies.

In *New Anatomies* Wertenbaker addresses themes of socialist feminism and dramatic techniques of socialist feminist theatre through two contrasting female characters, those that are patriarchal and conventional and those that are non-patriarchal and unconventional. The playwright examines the socialist feminist's themes such as the deconstruction of socially constructed gender roles, intra-sexual class oppression and the paucity of sisterhood. Wertenbaker addresses these issues through dramatic techniques of socialist feminist drama. Socialist

feminist drama adopts Brecht's alienation effects; cross-dressing, the doubling and the tripling of gender roles. The play is about the adventurous life of a European traveller in the nineteenth century, Isabella Eberhardt. Isabella Eberhardt creates a "new anatomy" by impersonating as an Arab man, Si Mahmoud. Isabella subverts patriarchal conventions of socially constructed gender roles. In other words, Isabella rejects all socially imposed roles limiting her desires, gender and identity.

In *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Wertebaker puts socialist feminism and radical feminism together. From a socialist feminist perspective she questions and criticizes socially constructed female roles and patriarchal authority that restricts women's lives to the domestic sphere. From a radical feminist perspective male dominated society is the major cause of women's oppression and misery. The playwright illustrates how Mary Traverse's "hunger for knowledge and experience for the external world forces her to subvert and confront restrictive institutional structure of family, class and gender" (Carlson, *Language and Identity in Wertebaker's Plays* 141-2). By leaving her father's house she traverses the law of her father and by adopting male behaviours she also traverses the laws and norms of her society.

All in all, in her each play Timberlake Wertebaker deals with gender issues from radical and socialist feminist perspectives and criticizes the values of patriarchy for its inequality between genders, and its hypocrisy. Through her female characters in *The Love of the Nightingale*, *New Anatomies* and *The Grace of Mary Traverse* Timberlake Wertebaker deconstructs patriarchal conventional women stereotypes that are in opposition to the norms and expectations of male-centred societies.

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