SHAKESPEAREAN SURROGATIONS: MODERN DRAMATISTS REWRITE

RENAISSANCE DRAMA

by

SONYA FREEMAN LOFTIS

(Under the Direction of Frances Teague)

ABSTRACT

This study uses performance theory to examine modern dramatic adaptations of

Renaissance plays, arguing that modern and postmodern dramatists rewrite the literary past in an

act of cultural and theatrical surrogation. The first chapter addresses modern playwrights' need to

destroy and replace their Renaissance forbearers. Presenting the human body, especially the body

of the actor or playwright as an **"effigy of flesh"** that contains cultural memory and embodies the

literary canon, these playwrights work metaphorical violence on corpses that represent the

literary corpus. The second chapter focuses on Bernard Shaw's life-long struggle to present

himself as a cultural surrogate for Shakespeare, through the performance of his public persona as

G.B.S., through his Shakespearean criticism, and through his appropriation of *King Lear* in

Heartbreak House. Shaw's need to destroy Shakespeare's corpse and corpus leads to a battle

against aestheticism and pessimistic passivity. The third chapter examines Brecht's adaptation of

Marlowe's *Edward II* and argues that the alienation effect can be understood as a "surrogation

effect," focusing on images of violent skinning in Brecht's play, as his characters enact

surrogation by tearing the flesh from both corpse and corpus. The fourth chapter explores

surrogation as cannibalism in Müller's *Hamletmachine* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, interpreting

the father's corpse and the mother's womb as symbols for literary adaptation in Müller's play.

The fifth chapter deals with Beckett's *Endgame* and *Happy Days*, reading *Endgame* as an adaptation of *The Tempest* and arguing that the disembodied characters in *Happy Days* represent the erasure of the Shakespearean past. The final chapter focuses on Stoppard's *Shakespeare in Love* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, concluding that Stoppard's screenplay appropriates Shakespeare in the style of Shaw, constructing Stoppard's persona as Shakespeare's surrogate, while Stoppard's adaptation of *Hamlet* draws the audience into an encounter with the theater's role as haunted "memory machine." Ultimately, this dissertation explores the central role that responding to Renaissance drama played in the creation of individual modern dramatists' canons and theories of theater, and the ways that the theater, as a vessel for cultural memory, engages the ghosts of previous plays and playwrights.

INDEX WORDS: Surrogation, Surrogate, Shakespeare, Shakespearean adaptation, Performance theory, Memory, Body, Shaw, Brecht, Müller, Beckett, Stoppard

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SONYA FREEMAN LOFTIS

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SONYA FREEMAN LOFTIS

Major Professor: Frances Teague

Committee: Christy Desmet
                    Hugh Ruppersburg
                    John Vance

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
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DEDICATION

For Matt

who shares in everything I do

and who stood beside me every step of the way

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Chapter One

Attacking the Canon through the Corpse: The Grave Robbers of Modern Drama

Our work is raising the dead; the theater troupe is recruited from ghosts.
-Heiner Müller, "Raising the Dead"

What is remembered in the body is well remembered.
-Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain*

Modern drama is overrun with ghosts, an era and an art in special need of ritual exorcisms. Embodying the remembered dead in the body of the living actor, the theater is a particularly haunted cultural space, the drama an especially haunted art form.[1] The modern is so peculiarly bound up in reliving its own past that some theorists have found the obsessive return to its own monuments a hallmark of the movement. At the crossroads between a ghostly art and an era obsessed with the past, playwrights central to the evolution of modern and postmodern drama often found themselves cast in the role of the grave robber, returning at key moments in their writing careers to the remains of the Renaissance. For playwrights such as Bernard Shaw, Bertolt Brecht, Heiner Müller, Samuel Beckett, and Tom Stoppard, Shakespearean appropriation was central both to the creation of their public personas as playwrights and to the development of their own dramatic canons. Using metaphors of bodily violence to interrogate their relationship with their Renaissance forerunners, cannibalizing Shakespeare's corpse and corpus in order to present themselves and their texts as potential surrogates, they frequently refashioned the major plays of the Renaissance. Recognizing the body of the actor as a vessel for cultural memory and yet figuratively attacking that body in an attempt to destroy, to dismember, and to forget, their adaptations of Renaissance plays often presented physical violence as a figure for history and a

metaphor for literary adaptation. Examining modern and postmodern drama, this study focuses

on the intersections between performance theory and Shakespearean appropriation, between

cultural memory and the human body that remembers and embodies it.[2] Using performance

theory to examine modern dramatic adaptations of Renaissance plays, this dissertation argues

that modern and postmodern dramatists rewrite the literary past in an act of cultural and

theatrical surrogation. The chapters that follow explore the central role that responding to

Renaissance drama played in the creation of individual modern dramatists' canons and examines

how their violent reactions to Shakespeare and his contemporaries worked to create their public

personas and to inform their theoretical writings.

Recently, performance theorists such as Joseph Roach, Marvin Carlson, and Alice Rayner

have focused on the haunted nature of live performance, the way in which living actors embody

the dead, evoke cultural memory, and haunt future performances and performers. Although the

idea of "surrogation" has not commonly been applied to Shakespearean adaptations, theorizing

the haunted nature of theatrical performance explains why modern dramatists became obsessed

with Shakespearean remains and illuminates the nature of the adaptations they produced.[3] Roach

defines performance as an ongoing process of "surrogation," "the enactment of cultural memory

by substitution" (Roach, 80). In performance, both performer and audience practice surrogation:

"the process of trying out various candidates in different situations—the doomed search for

originals by continuously auditioning stand-ins" (Roach, 3). While each appearance of a play is

an act of repetition, in that it will use the same actors, props, and text that appeared on stage the

night before, it is simultaneously a unique event that cannot be repeated: the performance can

never be identical to the now lost performance that preceded it. Roach explains that in

performance, "no action or sequence of actions may be performed exactly the same way twice;

they must be reinvented or recreated at each appearance. In this improvisatorial behavioral space, memory reveals itself as imagination" (Roach, 29). On a larger scale, Marvin Carlson has termed the paradox of performance in which "repetition is change" as "ghosting," a term that he applies to all elements of dramatic performance that commonly repeat themselves: the recycled script, the reappearance of the actor's body, and the re-use of props, costumes, and scenery, as well as the powerfully haunting effect, the eerie sensation of repetition that occurs when an audience sees such recycled elements in a new performance context (Roach 30, Carlson 1-16). In a space where repetition is also always change, memory takes on a unique role. Carlson notes that, "Within the theatre . . . memory operates in a manner distinct from, or at least in a more central way than in, the other arts" (6).

Many theorists have recognized the intimate connection between drama and the past, and some have proposed that the body of the actor is an especially important vessel for cultural memory. According to Roach,

> The social processes of memory and forgetting, familiarly known as culture, may
>
> be carried out by a variety of performance events, from stage plays to sacred rites
>
> . . . to perform in this sense means to bring forth, to make manifest, and to
>
> transmit. To perform also means, though often more secretly, to reinvent. (xi)

Roach goes on to note that "the body of the actor serves as a medium . . . in the secular rituals through which a modernizing society communicates with its past" (78). Jeanette Malkin agrees that "theater is found foremost in the memory of the body."[4] While the body of the actor stands in as a surrogate for actors who came before, as well as a surrogate for the person represented by the role itself (be it a king or a courtier), the actor's body also reenacts a play that has been put on in other contexts. Carlson argues that drama's penchant for retelling familiar stories is one

indication among many of the powerful role that drama has played in the maintenance and transmission of cultural memory (8). Responding to the work of Roach and Carlson, Alice Rayner theorizes that theater acts as a space where cultures encounter ghosts and memories:

> the actors are in some sense unconcealing and making visible what otherwise is invisible. They are unforgetting the presence of something absent, whether that be called a text or a character, history or the past. The living energy of the actors measures an absence, in work that is specifically not trying to imitate life but to engage with life in its fullest aspect, which requires contact with death.[5]

Noting that powerful cultural forces converge in the performing body, Rayner, like many other performance theorists, argues for a strong connection between theater, memory, and death.

Like the body of the actor, the body of the famous poet or playwright can also accumulate power as an "effigy of flesh." Roach explains that "performed effigies—those fabricated from human bodies and the associations they evoke—provide communities with a method of perpetuating themselves through specially nominated mediums or surrogates: among them actors, dancers, priests . . . corpses" (36). Like the actor, "the playwright shows how the voices of the dead may speak through the bodies of the living" (Roach, 34). Examining the struggle among Shakespearean scholars for a little piece of the Bard's "corpse/corpus," Ivo Kamps points out that "In the current debate over critical appropriations of Shakespeare, the connection between the poet's body and the reception of his verses is quite suggestive because the anxiety over the mutilation and destruction of the literal body has its corollary in today's anxiety over the appropriation of the literary body."[6] Like Shakespearean scholars, modern and postmodern dramatists also found themselves engaged in a struggle for possession of Shakespeare's canon, but for very different reasons: the destruction of a cultural effigy leaves

room for a new surrogate. As Gary Taylor remarks, "The struggle for cultural supremacy is a war fought to the death, a war fought over the dead."[7] Filling the role of the cultural effigy with a new surrogate, however, does not mean that the memory of that which is surrogated is ever completely erased or replaced (Roach, 2). Although Roach implies that surrogation, both in culture and in performance, is a process of which participants are usually unaware, the modern stage created a space in which major dramatists became intensely self-conscious of the process: their violence against Shakespeare's canon and corpse often suggests an impulse to destroy and displace in order to replace.

While drama has always been a peculiarly haunted form, modern and postmodern drama is especially obsessed with theatrical and literary history. Although in some ways "modern drama has been excluded from the received canons of modernism," it still contains "one of modernity's key features—its way of inventing/thinking about historical time."[8] With the advent of modern drama, plays became increasingly obsessed with the past, even more intensely so than the ghostly traditions that proceeded them.[9] According to David Savran, modernist plays "interrogate and deconstruct the oppositions between past and present, here and there . . . the real and the hallucinatory, the living and the dead" (125). Even more so than their modern counterparts, postmodern plays are bound up in retelling their own past. Malkin agrees that memory is central to drama, but notes that postmodern plays, through both topic and structure, "exhibit an exceptional preoccupation with questions of memory" (1). Not surprisingly, modern and postmodern dramatists became both intensely aware of and remarkably obsessed with the act of surrogating theatrical history.

Although adapting Shakespearean plays had been an important aspect of English playwriting from the Restoration forward, Shakespeareans have given increasing attention to the

field often termed Shakespearean "appropriation" or "adaptation" in recent decades, expanding their topics far beyond the dramatic origin of Shakespearean adaptations and into diverse areas such as pop culture and film studies. The field's struggle over terminology reflects larger debates about issues of fidelity and the relationship between source text and adapted text.[10] For example, Ruby Cohn recommends the term "Shakespearean offshoots," while Diana Henderson employs "collaborations with the past," and others have settled for the blanket term of "intertextuality."[11] Some scholars argue that the label "Shakespearean appropriation" may misleadingly suggest an inherently hostile act of usurpation, while others point out that "adaptation" and "offshoot" may seem to indicate artistic inferiority or a lack of originality on the part of the later text.[12] Although some critics address the problem of equating Shakespearean plays and Shakespearean films, others apply the same notions of adaptation to the two mediums, as in the case of W. B. Worthen, who applies Roach's theory of surrogation to a film of *Romeo and Juliet* (1103). The idea could be more profitably applied to dramatic adaptations such as those written by Bernard Shaw, Heiner Müller, or Tom Stoppard. The idea of surrogation as it has been used by performance theorists has powerful implications for dramatic rewritings. In focusing on dramatic adaptations, the place of the "source text" becomes more complex and contested. The text written for performance is as ghostly, as incorporeal, as the fleeting stage performance itself. It is a text in constant need of surrogation, a text with an innate hunger for bodies. Thus, dramatic adaptations are not simply about source text or adapted text, but form part of a larger genealogy of stage performance.[13]

For example, Müller's *Hamletmachine* cites not just the text of *Hamlet*, but also the long tradition of performing *Hamlet* on stage. It refers to the stage surrogates that came before it. The "source" of modern productions of a text such as *Hamlet,* written first to be performed, and only

perhaps later to be published, is a lost Elizabethan performance. Savran points out that "if performance is an act of remembering, it must also remember what, in effect, was never there. For in bringing a written text to life, performance always reveals that the text is incomplete" (119). Savran goes on to note that "Theatre, in short, is always about the impossibility of representing what was never fully there in the first place" (119). In the case of dramatic adaptations of Shakespeare, the stage adaptation is "authorized" by a long legacy of stage performance: it is one more surrogation among many. W. B. Worthen explains: "As a citational practice, dramatic performance—like all other performance—is engaged not so much in citing texts as in reiterating its own regimes" (1098). In other words, sometimes a text responds to and remakes a performance tradition just as much as it rewrites an older text. In the genealogy of *Hamlet's* performance, Müller's *Hamletmachine* is as "Shakespearean" as any other performance of *Hamlet*: Müller's play represents the latest performance in the ongoing stage surrogation of Shakespeare's work.

Although the human hunger to surrogate, to ritually replace the dead, is one reason that adapting Shakespearean plays has been particularly central to the canons of modern drama's major figures, there are other reasons why the stage creates an especially charged space for literary adaptation. As Daniel Fischlin notes, "The twentieth century, especially its second half, has been, like the Restoration, a highpoint in the theatrical adaptation of Shakespeare" (2). The explosion of dramatic adaptations that appeared in the twentieth century responded to multiple factors. One literary impetus for such adaptations is the mythic status of Shakespeare as he looms over the English canon. Although other literary genres have their own giants, none hold quite the same cultural capital, and while it is true that novelists and poets also frequently adapt and allude to Shakespearean works, it makes sense that his memory on the stage might seem particularly

imposing to other dramatists. Shakespeare is "one of the privileged sites around which Western culture has struggled to authenticate and sustain itself" and "the rewriting of Shakespeare can be seen as a key location for the exploration of culture and its transmission," thus making Shakespeare a popular choice for adaptation in any genre (Fischlin, 8, 1). Furthermore, Shakespeare's plays, endlessly reborn in performance, become even more immediate and threatening to the emerging playwright. Each dramatist must battle with the Bard for the stages and audiences of his own time. For every Shakespeare play that was put on during Shaw's era (and there were plenty of them), someone was not putting on a Shaw play. For the most part, Shakespeare's plays remained popular, cheap, and uncontroversial dramatic fare. In some cases, the fight for stage space and audiences inspired economic competition with a dead man. This economic competition not only fosters anxiety, but also encourages literary adaptation. Carlson argues that the competitive nature of Greek drama naturally created adaptation, as direct competition among playwrights promoted "the repeated use of the same basic set of stories, since each recycling almost inevitably encouraged audiences to be alert to the particular features of the new version and to experience it in part as a contribution to an ongoing comparative process" (26). Carlson's commentary on Greek drama applies equally well to modern Shakespearean adaptations: "Thus, in a kind of paradox the author uses a familiar story to emphasize the originality of his contribution" (27). Another likely reason why modern dramatists are so self-conscious about the act of surrogation and so intensely interested in writing about bodies is that the very nature of dramatic performance brings both subjects to the center of attention. Drama needs bodies. As Herbert Blau describes the role of the theater: "The past always needs blood donors. The theater is a means of transfusion."[14] At the same time, all theatrical representations resemble acts of literary adaptation. As Fischlin describes the process, "Adaptation is . . . only an

extreme version of the reworking that takes pace in any theatrical production" (7). In other words, Shakespeare's texts have always invited adaptation, particularly the kind of adaptation intended for performance. In playwriting and other genres, modern and postmodern aesthetics, as well as increasing challenges to Victorian bardolatry, also encouraged the type of adaptation that flourished during the twentieth century. Techniques and topics common to modern and postmodern art, such as fragmentation, the focus on memory, the deliberate recycling of pastiche, and the melding of high and low culture encouraged the re-use of old material in striking ways. While early modernists such as Shaw and Brecht found themselves battling against bardolatry (a battle that became an important part of their responses to Renaissance drama), later modernists and postmodernists such as Beckett, Müller, and Stoppard were inspired by the statements of the earlier challengers and took advantage of the irreverent attitude encouraged by postmodern tactics.[15] Thus, among modern and postmodern dramatists, responding to Shakespeare through literary adaptation was both particularly popular and powerfully charged.

While many critics have examined Shakespearean appropriation by focusing on modern dramatic adaptations, none has used Roach's theory to examine these adaptations, applying performance theorists' conception of the haunted stage to the act of literary adaptation. In this dissertation, I apply the concept of surrogation in two different ways: I use surrogation as a model to describe and analyze works of Shakespearean appropriation, and I use it to explain modern dramatists' performance of "Shakespearean" identity in the form of public persona. Although other theoretical paradigms have been proposed for examining Shakespearean appropriation, the surrogation model places theatrical performance at the center of the act of adaptation, thus opening new avenues of inquiry into the rewriting and performance of older

plays. Other models prioritize the text, limiting their applicability in the field of drama. For example, Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*, an influential (though dated) model for adaptation studies, is a theory of poetry arguing that "great writing is always at work strongly (or weakly) misreading previous writing" (xix). Although Bloom addresses Shakespeare in his preface, his theory of poetry focuses on reading and "misreading" older texts: thus, it is not a model intended for analyzing a genealogy of stage performance, and does not account, for example, for the way that cultural traditions of playing *Hamlet* influence later rewritings of *Hamlet*. Surrogation provides a model specific to drama, while performance theory, eager to embrace the cultural performances that create and sustain identity, allows for the analysis not just of a text, but for an entire tradition of collaborative performance, as well as for the creation of a writer's public persona. Bloom focuses on the individual poet and argues that misreadings are always "ultimately defensive in their nature" (xxiii). Surrogation, on the other hand, suggests that the rewriting of dramatic texts is part of a larger, collaborative cultural process, one that may instigate conflict and anxiety or that may simply lead to a failed act of memory or replacement. Other paradigms of appropriation also often fail to take account of bodies, perhaps because other literary genres are less immediately concerned with the human form. Surrogation views the body of the actor as a vessel for the literary canon (Roach, 25). Finally, surrogation takes its model not from the family romance, as Bloom's model of literary influence does, but from the larger dynamic of cultural memory, a particularly important topic for the stage. This is not to say that *The Anxiety of Influence* asserts no influence on this study of Shakespeare's surrogates: Shaw's Shakespearean criticism frequently engages in what Bloom would describe as poetic misreading, and Freud's family romance serves as a backdrop for my analysis of *Hamletmachine*. In contrast to textually based models that emphasize the adaptor's personal response, the surrogation model

brings texts into a dialogue with collective memory and cultural ritual and illuminates ways in which adaptation functions as performance and forms part of performances. Applying Roach's concept to appropriations emphasizes the paradoxical nature of the act of adaptation, in which appropriation manifests itself not only as anxiety, as an impulse to destroy, but also as veneration, as an impulse to preserve the past.

Shakespeare Surrogates: Robbing the Graves of the Renaissance

This study focuses on dramatists who were key to the evolution of modern and postmodern drama. The aesthetic innovations of the modern stage often originated in a return to the theatrical past: the looming figures of the modern and postmodern theater are also those playwrights who were most deeply concerned with adapting Renaissance drama. Many of them wrote extensively about Renaissance drama in their poetry, prose, and critical work and gave their opinions about Shakespeare in letters and interviews. One of my goals is to use those writings to illuminate their dramatic appropriations. For Shaw, Brecht, Müller, and Stoppard the engagement with Renaissance drama was life-long.

All four of these dramatists wrote adaptations of Renaissance drama during key points in their own writing careers; their adaptations of Shakespearean works often marked important turning points in the development of their dramaturgy, and Renaissance plays sometimes served as sources for their most innovative and influential works. One notices that even Shaw's famous obsession with Shakespeare manifested itself strongly at particularly powerful moments during his writing career. Shaw wrote many plays that could be classified as works of Shakespearean adaptation: *Caesar and Cleopatra, The Dark Lady of the Sonnets, Heartbreak House, Cymbeline Refinished*, and *Shakes versus Shav*. Shaw repeatedly claimed that his adaptation of *King Lear*,

Heartbreak House, was his best play, and although he was disappointed with the poor reception it received during his lifetime, since his death Shavians have generally recognized it as one of his finest and most complex works.[16] Shaw also intended for his farewell to the stage to be a work of Shakespearean appropriation. Although he would go on to write one more play, Shaw confided in the preface to his puppet play *Shakes versus Shav* that he expected for it to be his final play. In light of Shaw's life-long battle with the Bard, it is surprising that the play ends not with a line from Shaw but with a line from Shakespeare. Shaw intended the last words he wrote for the stage to be: "out, out brief candle."[17] While Shaw ended his career with a final yielding to Shakespeare, Brecht began his career as an epic dramatist by adapting the work of Christopher Marlowe. Many Brecht scholars have argued that Brecht's 1924 adaptation of Marlowe's *Edward II* was the first epic play, and some scholars have argued that Brecht's interaction with Shakespearean works was central to his development of the concept and style of epic theater.[18] Throughout his career, Brecht wrote about Shakespeare in his theoretical writings and continued to adapt the work of Renaissance playwrights in plays such as *Hamlet*, *Roundheads and Peakheads, The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, Coriolanus,* and *The Duchess of Malfi.* The powerful influence of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in the development of epic theater would filter the plays of the Renaissance into theoretical ideas and influential plays that would shape the future of the stage. Müller also rewrote Shakespearean plays throughout his career, including adaptations of *Hamlet, Macbeth,* and *Titus Andronicus*, as well as writing about Shakespeare in his poetry and essays and discussing him in interviews. His most famous and influential work, *Hamletmachine,* would center on his violent response to Shakespeare. Critics would later hail the influential *Hamletmachine* as the quintessential postmodern play. As with the epic theater, it would seem that a new movement in modern and postmodern drama could

only get underway by first doing homage to the Elizabethan. Stoppard, like his predecessors, would discuss Shakespeare in his interviews and essays, and would adapt Shakespeare's works (and Shakespeare's life in *Shakespeare in Love*) throughout his career, but it was his response to a Shakespearean work, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead,* which would first bring the playwright international fame and would become his most popular play.

Like Brecht, Beckett had a revolutionary style that would work a powerful change on the modern and postmodern stage, but unlike the other dramatists considered here, he related to Shakespeare in a significantly different way. Oddly, Beckett has been associated with Shakespeare more consistently than any other modern or postmodern playwright.[19] Although scholars, directors, and actors have constantly connected Beckett with the Bard, he is the only playwright included in this dissertation who did not write plays that have been traditionally recognized as works of Shakespearean appropriation. Beckett's plays relate to the past (literary, cultural, and personal) in a manner substantially different from that of the other dramatists. The fragmented Shakespearean allusions that appear in plays such as *Waiting for Godot, Endgame,* and *Happy Days* frequently evoke Shakespeare, although in a different manner and to a strikingly different purpose than the evocations of the other playwrights. The dynamics of Shakespearean surrogation strongly affected the cultural reception of Beckett's plays, and the Shakespearean echoes that appear in his dramas help illuminate Beckett's relationship to the literary past.

Not only were these dramatists all frequent adaptors of Shakespeare's work, but their reactions to and rewritings of the literary past also worked to influence the Shakespearean adaptations of the dramatists who came after them. Although previously overlooked by critics, a direct critical genealogy in these dramatists' various reactions to Renaissance texts can be traced

from Shaw to Brecht and on to Müller. Inspired by the wit of Shaw and his contemporary Wilde, Stoppard would later cultivate a rather Shavian public persona, and his dramatic work shows the strong influence of both Beckett and Shaw. As I will argue in chapter six, Stoppard's style of adapting Shakespeare directly imitates Shaw's appropriation of Shakespeare's drama. Thus, this particular group of dramatists is not only in constant dialogue with the work of Elizabethan playwrights, but their dramatic canons and Shakespearean criticism are in a constant dialogue with one another. Although each dramatist attacks the Bard in his own way, his violence against the corpse and corpus of the past often betrays the influence of the Shakespearean adaptors who came before him.

Among these diverse dramatists, Bernard Shaw was the first "grave robber" in modern drama. At least, he was the first of these dramatists to threaten to defile Shakespeare's corpse and one of the most vocal early modernists to lay siege to Shakespeare's canon. Shaw, in some important ways, was the most influential modern adaptor of this kind, as he would shape the style and attitude of later appropriators of Renaissance works. These dramatists' fixation on the English Renaissance often played itself out through metaphors of bodily violence. Shaw's hyperbolic and hilarious attempts to get the upper-hand on the Bard have become legendary, but as Stanley Weintraub notes, Shaw sometimes wrote about Shakespeare "as though he meant his line that every jest was an earnest in the womb of time" (176). If every Shavian joke has some truth underlying it, Shaw's treatment of Shakespeare's corpus and corpse gain eerie overtones. In "Blaming the Bard," Shaw attacked Shakespeare's plays and expressed a desire "to dig him up and throw stones at him, knowing as I do how incapable he and his worshippers are of understanding any less obvious form of indignity."[20] Cultural surrogation focuses on the bodies of the dead and the rituals by which they are laid to rest, fixating on bodies that are not properly

buried, and on how the living confront, remember, and reconfigure those bodies (Roach, 94).

Shaw's real object is bardolatry and not the Bard himself, but the fight against Shakespeare-

worship leads him directly to Shakespeare's grave. Shaw finds that an attack on the Bard's body

is the most direct and violent way to describe his attack on Shakespearean drama.

Like Shaw, Brecht conceived of the act of adaptation as one of violent desecration. In

fact, Shaw's confrontational attitude toward Shakespeare influenced Brecht's violent

refashionings of Renaissance dramas. Shaw's famous persona and controversial Shakespearean

criticism influenced Brecht's stance toward the Bard, as well as his own dramatic adaptations.

Brecht studied Shaw in his youth, directed *St. Joan* early in his career, and later based his own

adaptation of the Joan of Arc myth, *St. Joan of the Stockyards,* on Shaw's *Major Barbara*. Doc

Rossi describes the appeal that Shaw's confrontational stance held for the young Brecht: in

Shaw's dramatic criticism, "the effect is more important than the criticism, and it is this nearly

insane contempt for established icons that attracted Brecht . . . Brecht admired this posture of

Shaw's and regularly assumed it himself."[21] In his own Shakespearean criticism, Brecht would

adopt "a pose which can be described as Shavian" (Rossi, 164). Brecht later lauded Shaw's

violent attack on cultural icons in the essay "Three Cheers for Shaw," in which the German

playwright dubbed the Shavian grave robber a "comic terrorist."[22] Bernard Shaw was a "comic

terrorist" in the sense that many of his humorous attacks "cause outrage through violence"

(Rossi, 165). His famous threat to rob Shakespeare's grave is an excellent example of the kind of

"comic terrorism" Brecht so admired: Shaw's threat to defile Shakespeare's body outraged many

readers of *The Saturday Review*. Taking his cue from Shaw, Brecht also adopted a

confrontational attitude in rewriting the work of previous playwrights. Certainly, Brecht was

equally unabashed in his desecration of Renaissance monuments, and he used the term

"vandalism" to describe the act of literary adaptation in his critical works.[23] His preferred object

for vandalism was the work of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Throughout his adaptation

of Marlowe's *Edward II*, Brecht uses violence on the human form as a metaphor for rewriting

the literary and historical past. Images of skinning, and of characters dressing themselves in the

skins of other characters, appear throughout the text. Some cultures have represented and

performed cultural surrogation through the literal act of skinning, and wearing the skin, of

sacrificial victims (Roach, 148). Wearing the skin of the dead is a way of destroying and yet

preserving the dead, a way of consuming the corpse of the past and yet reanimating it with the

bodies of the living. Brecht's metaphorical violence on the body of the actor, a desecration of

the effigy of flesh that serves as a vessel for cultural memory, shows the same urge to defile the

canon and corpse of the past exemplified by Shaw's outrageous threat to dig up Shakespeare's

remains. Both attacks recognize the body as a representation of cultural memory and the literary

canon.

Brecht's heir, Müller, would later use the metaphor of cannibalism to attack both

Shakespeare and *Hamlet.* Like Shaw's commentary in "Blaming the Bard," Müller's critique of

Shakespeare would center on the image of destroying Shakespeare's physical body as a symbol

of his canon. As a matter of fact, Müller's public persona, which presented an individual known

for his paradoxical statements and outrageous attacks on established icons, recalls the persona so

carefully cultivated by Shaw. Jonathan Kalb describes Müller as "Bernard Shaw in a different

culture."[24] Of course, Müller deliberately copied Brecht's style, in both his persona and his

writings. As Lawrence Guntner explains, "Müller became the executor of Brecht's literary

testament of Shakespeare rewritings."[25] Müller conceived of the body as a vessel for cultural

memory and the literary past, viewing the act of adaptation as an attack on a physical body. He

once stated that the actor's "body is [that] in which the text inscribes itself and loses itself in the same gesture, a substitute for other bodies."[26] For Müller, the physical body contains and represents the text: the human corpse always already contains the literary corpus. Through the symbolic stand-ins Claudius and Stalin, *Hamletmachine* digs up Shakespeare's body, cuts it to pieces, and feeds it to the populace. Guntner describes the opening illustration of Müller's collection *Shakespeare Factory* as a symbol of the playwright's violence on Shakespeare's canon: "Appropriately, on the title page of the first volume there is a picture of a dead moose being dressed by a butcher, the butchered animal a metaphor for what Müller does to Shakespeare's text" (186). Müller uses a corpse as a symbol of the canon, through both the body of the butchered animal and the cannibalized corpse/corpus of Shakespeare. *Hamletmacine* makes extensive use of the motif of cannibalism, another cultural performance that Roach identifies with surrogation. Like Shaw and Brecht, Müller displays an intense awareness of the on-going process of Shakespearean surrogation, and his conflation of corpse and canon mirrors that of his dramatic predecessors.

Unlike these other playwrights, Beckett and Stoppard handle both corpus and corpse in a different manner. Beckett is not without literary influences, though his use of sharply truncated allusions often renders the source text nearly unrecognizable. Beckett's drama frequently deals with dismembered bodies and disembodied voices, and critics have long identified a struggle with memory as a recurring topic in his work, with some scholars arguing that the increasing immobility of Beckett's characters corresponds to their dwindling personal, cultural, and literary memory.[27] Beckett's drama struggles toward disembodiment, a seemingly incongruous aesthetic in an art form that centers on the human form in motion. Yet this struggle for disembodiment is paired with the struggle to forget, so that the immobility and disappearance of the human body is

tied to the erasure of the past. The truncated, "dismembered" Shakespearean quotations that appear in many of Beckett's plays are associated with this deliberate act of erasure. In this way, Beckett's bodies represent and embody the literary canon and cultural memory. Stoppard, always eager to attack the canon, seems less eager to defile the corpse. Stoppard makes fun of tragedy's reliance on bodily violence, mocking a stage on which "blood is compulsory." His comic rewritings of Shakespearean tragedy (in works such as *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and *Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's Macbeth*) mock the cultural tradition of the stage as a space for violence, ghosts, and corpses.

Embodying Cultural Memory: Attacking the Canon through the Corpse

Chapter two focuses on Bernard Shaw's *Heartbreak House* as a rewriting of Shakespeare's *King Lear* and examines connections between Shaw's Shakespearean criticism and his dramatic appropriation. The Shavian adaptation complements Shaw's performance of his public persona, in which he works to cast himself as a cultural replacement for the Bard. Shaw's rewriting of *King Lear* also complements his Shakespearean criticism, in which he struggles to show that his own artistic achievements complete Shakespeare's plays. In *Heartbreak House*, Shaw wields his power as comic terrorist, attacking Shakespeare's position as a cultural and artistic icon, representing the Bard as a figure for the old art that is preventing artistic evolution. The young Ellie is associated with art throughout the play, and her passion for Shakespearean drama comes to represent a kind of artistic incest, as the aesthetic future doubles back on the dramatic past.

Chapter three examines Bertolt Brecht's adaptation of Marlowe's *Edward II,* addressing the role that surrogating Elizabethan texts played in the development of epic theater. Although

Brecht wrote Shakespearean adaptations, I have chosen to examine Brecht's rewriting of

Marlowe's work in this chapter because Elizabethan playwrights as a group, and not just

Shakespeare, influenced Brecht's conception of epic theater. *Edward II* is also a particularly

good example of the body of the actor being used as a symbol for the process of literary

adaptation, and the play is deeply concerned with the issue of cultural and literary surrogation.

Focusing on the decaying body, the disjointed family, and the breakdown in language in Brecht's

Edward II, this chapter explores the connections between these image patterns and the play's

attitude toward history and its Renaissance source text. Throughout the play, Brecht presents the

actor's body as an "effigy of flesh" that is continually stripped of its flesh: the body of the actor,

as a vessel for cultural memory that contains the literary canon, is the constant object of

metaphorical violence. By conflating history and blood, Brecht's Anne suggests the metaphor of

decaying flesh as a representation of the breakdown in a teleological vision of history that the

rest of the play depicts.

Chapter four deals with Heiner Müller's *Hamletmachine*, exploring how cannibalism

represents cultural surrogation in both Müller's play and its Shakespearean source text. Müller's

Hamlet violently attacks his father and his mother, figures whose bodies represent history and

art. Intent on destroying its own origins and on sewing up the Shakespearean womb/wound, the

text doubles back on itself, relentlessly attacking its own primal scene. As Shakespeare is

superimposed over the other father figures of the text, he is cannibalized by his own dramatic

progeny. Unable to separate himself from the womb, or even to distinguish the mother from the

father, Hamlet attacks the body of the mother in an effort to render himself self-begotten, the text

attacks Müller's image in an attempt to erase the role of the author, and Müller's rewriting

attacks the Shakespearean original. In its final failure as revolutionary drama, *Hamletmachine* finds all three wombs all-devouring.

Chapter five focuses on two of Samuel Beckett's early plays, addressing *Endgame*'s allusions to *The Tempest* and *Happy Days*' echoes of diverse Shakespearean works such as *Hamlet*, *Cymbeline*, *Romeo and Juliet,* and *Twelfth Night*. Attempting to place these two plays and their struggle toward disembodiment in the context of Beckett's larger canon, this chapter argues that these works represent part of a movement in Beckett's drama from embodiment to disembodiment, from remembering the literary past to forgetting it. Thus, the immobility and disembodiment of Beckett's characters comes to represent forgetting and erasure, the loss of the body inextricably bound to the loss of memory. The fragmented Shakespearean allusions that appear in *Endgame* and *Happy Days* represent a struggle to forget the literary past, a struggle that ultimately meets with failure. Beckett struggles toward the erasure of literary surrogation, only to discover that it cannot be erased.

The final chapter examines Tom Stoppard's *Shakespeare in Love* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead.* Focusing on Shaw's influence on the construction of *Shakespeare in Love*'s screenplay, I argue that Shaw's depiction of Shakespeare in *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* served as an important source for Stoppard's imaginative vision of the Bard's backstage romance. Stoppard's style of presenting himself as a cultural surrogate for Shakespeare takes on a Shavian cast, as Stoppard employs many of the same tactics discussed in chapter one. My examination of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, on the other hand, is concerned not so much with the surrogation of Shakespeare as it is with the process of cultural and theatrical surrogation in general. As Stoppard's comedy mocks the conventions of the stage and the traditional role of tragedy, it also calls into question the purpose and possibility of performing

death. In Stoppard's play, the body of the player serves as both the humorous embodiment of the canon and as an object for comic carnage.

Although the works I have chosen to examine are diverse, ranging from epic theater to the theater of the absurd, moving from the modern to the postmodern, incorporating various kinds of performance, from tragedy to comedy, from puppet play to film adaptation, these appropriations of Renaissance plays are tied together by two important factors: all of these works focus on the body and all are adaptations about the act of adaptation, works of surrogation that reflect on the process of theatrical or cultural surrogation. Often these two motifs are connected, as the playwrights use the body as a symbol of the canon and represent the act of rewriting the Renaissance through images of bodily violence. Roach's theory illuminates the metaphorical conflation of body and text that appears throughout these plays. Through the process of surrogation, the human body serves as a vessel for cultural and literary memory, so that the destruction or preservation of the corpse represents the destruction or preservation of the canon. Roach's work, like that of many other performance theorists, points to drama's concern with memory, ghosts, and death, and addresses how these issues intersect in the form of the performing body. Ultimately, this study explores the power that Renaissance ghosts held over five major figures of modern and postmodern drama and how the movements and trends these dramatists brought to the stage were in turn haunted by the presence of Elizabethan playwrights.

Chapter Two

Shakespeare, Shotover, Surrogation: "Blaming the Bard" in *Heartbreak House*

> If one has the capacity always to see before one a vivid play and to live
> continually surrounded by crowds of ghosts, then one is a poet; if one feels the
> drive to transform oneself and to speak out of other bodies and souls, then one is a
> dramatist.
> -Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*

> Echoes: nothing but echoes. The last shot was fired years ago.
> -Shotover, *Heartbreak House*

The halls of *Heartbreak House* reverberate with dead men's words. Shaw's most haunted

play, *Heartbreak House* represents a cultural space in which the past attempts to destroy the

present. The play's constant tension between what is remembered and what is forgotten, between

the old generation and the new, between the past and the present, gives special resonance to the

voices of the cultural and literary dead. Though echoes from Chekhov and Wilde reverberate, it

is the voice of Shakespeare that looms over all.[1] Indeed, the Shakespearean echoes in

Heartbreak House would later haunt the ninety-three year old Shaw, who in his antagonistic

puppet play, *Shakes versus Shav,* would point to *Heartbreak House* as his rewriting of *King

Lear*; a rewriting that the puppet representing Shaw uses as the climax of his assault against the

puppet representing Shakespeare. Rewriting the past, it would seem, is a superior Shavian

weapon. Indeed, *Heartbreak House* represents the climax in a life-time spent speaking for the

literary dead, a culmination in Shaw's ongoing attempts to present himself, both in his criticism

and in his drama, as a cultural surrogate for Shakespeare. Although Shaw's battles with the Bard

have long been the focus of scholarly scrutiny, critics have yet to point out that Shaw's life-long

struggle with Shakespeare's ghost enacts Joseph Roach's theory of surrogation. Shaw performed his role as Shakespeare surrogate through his public persona, in which he attempted to associate himself with Shakespeare, through his Shakespearean criticism, in which he tries to attack Shakespeare, and through his dramatic adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, in which he struggles to alter and replace elements of Shakespeare's greatest work. Throughout his life, Shaw presented his G.B.S. persona as a challenger to Shakespeare's canonical status. In his Shakespearean criticism, Shaw employs musical metaphors and builds on Nietzschean binaries to suggest that his drama is the complementary missing half of Shakespeare's canon. In his adaptations of Shakespearean works, Shaw attacks Shakespeare's status as a cultural icon, as he does in *Heartbreak House* when he depicts Shakespeare as a representative of the old art that smothers the new and of the older generation that destroys the younger.

Speaking for the Dead: G.B.S. as Shakespeare Surrogate

In many ways, Shaw's performance of the G.B.S. persona is an example of dramatic surrogation in the sense forwarded by Joseph Roach's *Cities of the Dead.* Surrogation is a process in which "repetition is change": the society remembers its cultural and artistic past through the surrogate, while the change in figures leads cultural evolution in a new direction.[2] Roach explains that celebrities and other cultural figures are in special need of surrogates: "celebrity . . . holds open a space in collective memory while the process of surrogation nominates and eventually crowns successors."[3] Shakespeare maintains his celebrity as chief dramatist, a title to which Shaw continually aspired. Throughout his life, G.B.S.'s attacks on Shakespeare became so famous that one of his defining attributes in the mind of the public was that he understood himself and his drama in opposition to Shakespeare. In the pages of *The*

Saturday Review, Shaw presented the authorial G.B.S. as a writer filled with shocking pronouncements about his dramatic forerunner. Shaw was eager to admit that this witty, outrageous, and egotistical persona was a fiction, making comments such as "The celebrated G.B.S. is about as real as a pantomime ostrich . . . I have never pretended that G.B.S. was real: I have over and over again taken him to pieces before the audience to shew the trick of him."[4] G.B.S. is not a person, but a public performance, a pantomime of false identity.[5] In fact, a key element in the complex performance of G.B.S. is the act of destroying Shakespeare and replacing him with Shaw. Surrogation often focuses on the bodies of the dead, sometimes making use of "the folkloric tradition that regards with special awe and dread a corpse that has been dismembered, disturbed, or improperly laid to rest" (Roach, 94). In "Blaming the Bard," Shaw attacks both *Cymbeline* and Shakespeare, threatening to defile Shakespeare's body, "to dig him up and throw stones at him, knowing as I do how incapable he and his worshippers are of understanding any less obvious form of indignity."[6] The focus on symbolically destroying a physical body has powerful significance for surrogation, in which the human body is a vessel for cultural memory. Shakespeare's body is an effigy, and the destruction of a cultural effigy leaves room for a new surrogate. Filling the role of the cultural effigy with a new surrogate, however, does not mean that the memory of that which is surrogated is ever completely erased (Roach, 2).

Naturally, the public often responded with outrage to Shaw's attacks on Shakespeare, which frequently hinted at his superiority over his dramatic predecessor. As Roach points out "the surrogate-elect . . . may tap deep motives of prejudice and fear," noting that "at these times, improvised narratives of authenticity and priority may congeal into full-blown myths of legitimacy and origin" (5). Throughout his dramatic career, Shaw manufactured and spread myths of Shakespearean origin with impunity. One way that Shaw aligned himself with

Shakespeare was by frequently making statements that suggested biographical similarities

between his life and the Bard's, comments that often seemed to suggest that G.B.S. was the

reincarnation of William Shakespeare.[7] For example, Shaw claimed that "Like Shakespear again,

I was a born dramatist."[8] Sally Peters points out that this quote demonstrates "the theme of

reincarnating Shakespeare" that would appear throughout Shaw's letters, prose, and plays (306).

In the preface to *Immaturity*, Shaw claimed to be descended from Macduff, a lineage "as good as

being descended from Shakespear, whom I had been unconsciously resolved to reincarnate from

my cradle."[9] In *Shakes versus Shav*, the Shakespeare puppet claims that the Shaw puppet is an

"imposter" who is trying to "reincarnate my very self."[10] Shaw even claimed that he "came to

regard [Stratford-upon-Avon] almost as a supplementary birthplace of my own."[11] Shaw shows

that G.B.S. is Shakespeare "reincarnated" not just by claiming it, but by frequently pointing out

parallels between his life and Shakespeare's.[12] For example, in the preface to *Shakes versus*

Shav, Shaw claims that Shakespeare's "circumstances interest me because they are just like my

own."[13] In the preface to *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, Shaw says "I am convinced that he

[Shakespear] was very like myself: in fact, if I had been born in 1556 instead of in 1856, I should

have taken to blank verse and given Shakespear a harder run for his money than all the other

Elizabethans put together."[14] In constructing a "Shakespearean" origin for himself and by

comparing his own past to Shakespeare's, Shaw is performing an act of cultural surrogation.

W. B. Worthen explains Roach's concept: "Surrogation involves not the replaying of . . . a

grounding origin, but the potential to construct that origin as a rhetorically powerful effect of

performance."[15] As part of his performance as Shakespeare surrogate, Shaw created myths of

Shakespearean origin at every turn. Specifically, Shaw's writings demonstrate a contradictory

impulse in which Shaw attempts to legitimate himself as cultural surrogate for Shakespeare by

simultaneously suggesting both that Shakespeare gave birth to Shaw and that Shaw gave birth to

Shakespeare. Strangely, both claims are somewhat true. Shaw claimed that "Shakespeare was

like mother's milk to me."[16] Shaw suggests that Shakespeare nourished him in an intimate and

parental manner. He also claimed that "When I began to write William was a divinity and a bore.

Now he is a fellow creature."[17] Ruby Cohn interprets the latter remark as suggesting that Shaw

gave birth to the modern conception of Shakespeare.[18] Thus, Shaw asserts that his criticism

worked to popularize the Bard even as he argues that his own work is legitimated by

Shakespeare's.

When it came to literary adaptation, Shaw justified his right to rewrite Shakespeare's

plays by reminding readers that Shakespeare had appropriated the works of others, thus drawing

yet another point of comparison between the two dramatists. When Frank Harris accused Shaw

of plagiarizing a Harris play when writing *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, Shaw responded that

> He [Frank Harris] accuses me flatly of cribbing from him, which I do not deny, as
>
> I possess in a marked degree that characteristic of Shakespear, Moliere and
>
> Handel, which is described as picking up a good thing where you find it . . . The
>
> mischief of such literary ethics is shewn in Mr Harris's own work. It is
>
> impoverished by his determination not to crib from me, just as my work is
>
> enriched by my determination to crib from him.[19]

Throughout his Shakespearean criticism, Shaw reiterated the point that Shakespeare did not write

original plots. Shaw claimed that "Plot has always been the curse of serious drama . . . it is so

out-of-place there that Shakespear never could write one."[20] In the preface to *Cymbeline*

Refinished, Shaw defended his right to craft a new fifth act for *Cymbeline* by addressing what he

believed was Shakespeare's attitude toward literary adaptation. The Shakespearean precedent

defends Shaw from accusations of plagiarism:

> And now consider the practice of Shakespear himself. Tolstoy declared that the
>
> original Lear is superior to Shakespear's rehandling, which he abhorred as
>
> immoral. Nobody has ever agreed with him. Will it be contended that Shakespear
>
> had no right to refashion Hamlet? If he had spoiled both plays, that would be a
>
> reason for reviving them without Shakespear's transfigurations, but not for
>
> challenging Shakespear's right to make them.[21]

Jerry Lutz explains Shaw's decision to rewrite older plays: Shaw "maintains that a playwright

with a different moral viewpoint has the prerogative to reinterpret the past" (32). Again, Shaw

suggests that he is like Shakespeare (an unashamed adaptor of other people's works).

Shakespeare improved the works he adapted, and the implication is that Shaw will improve

Shakespeare.

Yet Shaw's writings about Shakespeare often display the paradox central to surrogation:

repetition as change. While Shaw attempts to associate himself with Shakespeare thorough

legitimizing myths, he simultaneously attempts to distinguish himself from Shakespeare and to

show that his plays are different in style and purpose from those of his dramatic predecessor. As

Roach points out people "could not perform themselves, however, unless they also performed

what and who they thought they were not" (5). Not only did Shaw attempt to set G.B.S. up as a

potential Shakespeare surrogate, but he also wrote extensively about Shakespeare in his prose

criticism and adapted Shakespearean plays throughout his life. In some ways, Shaw's

Shakespearean criticism and dramatic adaptations mirror his public performance as Shakespeare

surrogate. Shaw's writings show G.B.S. simultaneously performing Shakespeare and yet performing what Shakespeare is not.

Shaw versus Shakespeare: Music and *The Birth of Tragedy*

One way that Shaw attempted to align himself with Shakespeare and yet differentiate himself from him was through a theoretical fusion of drama and music. Examining Shaw's Shakespearean criticism shows that Shaw understood the process of surrogation primarily through musical metaphors. Significantly, Shaw consistently uses musical terms to describe the act of rewriting a Shakespearean play, both to connect himself to and to do battle with Shakespeare. As many critics have noted, in the preface to his new fifth act for *Cymbeline*, Shaw compares himself to composers: "But what of the many successful and avowed variations? What about the additions made by Mozart to the score of Handel's Messiah?"[22] He describes his appropriation of *Cymbeline* as "indulging in a variation on the last act of Cymbeline."[23] Daniel Leary claims that Shaw uses musical terminology to suggest that no great dramatist stands between Shakespeare and himself, thus allowing him to overlook the contributions of earlier adaptors such as Cibber and Garrick.[24] Indeed, Shaw is denying any relationship with dramatic forerunners, yet he also uses a musical term to describe his appropriation in *Heartbreak House* by subtitling the play "a fantasia." In his discussion of Shaw's form, Martin Meisel defines "fantasia" as "a piece of instrumental music owning no restriction of formal construction" and notes that "the term is also applied to works built on already existing musical themes" (315).[25] *Heartbreak House* contains fragments of *King Lear*: elements of the older drama have become the "existing musical themes" upon which Shaw improvises. Not only does Shaw's use of musical metaphors suggest his method of adapting and responding to a Shakespearean play, but

it also points to a recurring motif in Shaw's Shakespearean criticism: his belief that music was essential to the appreciation of Shakespeare's drama.

As Jerry Lutz has pointed out, Shaw frequently connected Shakespeare with music in his theater reviews, letters, and prose criticism (14). For example, he claimed in a review of *All's Well that Ends Well* that "only musical critics should be allowed to meddle with Shakespear."[26] What Shaw loved most about *Othello* was its "word-music," claiming of this tragedy that "Tested by the brain, it is ridiculous: tested by the ear, it is sublime."[27] Shaw claimed in his preface to *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* that Shakespeare loved music, and he constantly associates music with the Shakespeare character throughout this short play. Again, music is the theme that Shaw uses to connect himself to his illustrious predecessor, as Shaw supposes that Shakespeare must have loved music as much as he himself did: in this case, music is a means of embracing the Bard rather than struggling against him. Shaw's use of musical metaphors to describe the act of appropriation not only serves to establish a connection between Shaw and the historical Shakespeare as Shaw imagined him, but also forges a clear connection between the two dramatic canons: Shaw constructed his appropriations to build on existing themes and on existing plays. Both *Heartbreak House* and *Cymbeline Refinished* rely on the audience's knowledge of Shakespeare. Stanley Weintraub has argued that Shaw's "refinished" plays are not competing with Shakespeare's originals but reinterpreting them (173). Cultural surrogations do both at the same time. Their attempts to replace always reinscribe. Shaw may be in competition with Shakespeare, but his adaptations lose meaning without the presence of the Shakespearean texts. Shavian variations on Shakespearean works not only build on Shakespearean plays, but also build on other Shavian writings, forming an artistic extension of Shaw's Shakespearean criticism.

Although some critics have addressed Shaw's frequent connection of Shakespeare with "word-music," Nietzsche's influence on Shaw's understanding of Shakespearean word-music has gone completely unnoticed: examining Nietzsche's influence on Shaw's Shakespearean criticism reveals that Shaw understood his drama as the missing half (and ultimate completion) of Shakespeare's canon. [28] Shaw's interpretation of Nietzsche illuminates his response to Shakespeare: applying concepts from *The Birth of Tragedy* to his relationship with the Bard, Shaw constructs himself as Shakespeare's complementary opposite. That Nietzsche's work had an influence on Shaw cannot be denied, although critics have long debated the extent of that influence. Reinhold Grimm argues that Shaw was one of the many modern playwrights who "was touched, wittingly or unwittingly, by the ever-growing, ever-spreading 'shadow' cast by *The Birth of Tragedy*."[29] Though G.B.S. frequently claimed that he had anticipated the philosophy of Nietzsche, he did confess that Nietzsche was "among the writers whose peculiar sense of the world I recognize as more or less akin to my own."[30] In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche explores the relationship between dramatic forerunners and their artistic successors, explaining the relationship between two generations of dramatists through metaphors of music. Nietzsche claims that "every artist is an 'imitator,' that is, either Apollonian dream-artist or Dionysian artist of intoxication."[31] In his Shakespearean criticism, Shaw consistently associates Shakespeare with elements that Nietzsche describes as Dionysian, while meanwhile casting himself as the opposing Apollonian—the inferior twin and successor who nonetheless completes the wilder counterpart. Casting Shakespeare as Nietzsche's Dionysian dramatist and himself as the Dionysian's successor, the Apollonian, shows that Shaw views his Shakespearean appropriations not simply as responding to Shakespeare's plays or commenting on them, but as completing them, offering Shakespeare's unharnessed musical power the organizing principles

of Nietzsche's Apollonian form. In Nietzsche's analysis, Apollo comes after Dionysus, but their fusion creates the most advanced form of drama (59).

Throughout his writings about Shakespeare, Shaw frequently connected Shakespeare and Shakespearean plays to music, pessimism, and passivity. All are qualities that Nietzsche associated with the Dionysian in *The Birth of Tragedy.* [32] According to Nietzsche, the Dionysian is "the imageless . . . art of music" (19). Dionysus represents a "profound and pessimistic view of the world," for the Dionysian man "sees all around him only the horrific or the absurd aspects of existence" (Nietzsche, 46, 60). The Dionysian is "the glory of passivity" while the Apollonian is "the glory of activity" (Nietzsche, 55). As my later discussion of the storm scene in *Heartbreak House* will show, Shaw saw his rewriting of *King Lear* as counteracting Shakespearean passivity and pessimism. Shaw's Shakespearean criticism often argued that Shakespearean plays are divorced from moral and intellectual issues, while he felt that his own plays took advantage of the stage as pulpit and church, forcing audiences to take responsibility for their own destinies and to acknowledge their own power to change the world through creative evolution. Nietzsche describes Apollo's "demands for self-knowledge and moderation" which "impress upon us again and again the most sacred laws of the world" (58). Perhaps it was Nietzsche's own description of Hamlet that encouraged Shaw to graft Nietzsche's binaries onto the figures of himself and Shakespeare. For Nietzsche,

> the Dionysian man is similar to Hamlet: both have at one time cast a true glance into the essence of things, they have acquired knowledge, and action is repugnant to them; for their action can change nothing in the eternal essence of things, they feel that it is laughable or shameful that they are expected to repair a world which is out of joint (46).

For Shaw, inaction was the ultimate sin against the forces of creative evolution—a sin he frequently accused Shakespeare of committing. Other critics have pointed out that as a dramatist, Shaw's style seems to resemble that of Nietzsche's Apollonian artist. Robert Brustein argues that "had Nietzsche known Shaw's works . . . he would have included him, along with Euripides, in his gallery of 'Socratic' writers—those overintellectualized enemies of the lofty Dionysian art."[33] David Thatcher agrees, "Shaw's partiality for Bunyan suggests he, too, would have incurred the censure Nietzsche meted out to Socrates" (211). Surprisingly, Shaw casts himself as the inferior twin. Nietzsche constantly reiterates that the Apollonian is less original than the Dionysian: "the Dionysian shows itself, in comparison with the Apollonian, as the eternal and original power of art" (130). Although the application of these binaries suggests that Shaw viewed his own dramatic style as being complementary to Shakespeare's, the paradigm still suggests Shaw's "anxiety of influence"—his perceived inferiority to the ultimate word-musician.

Furthermore, Nietzsche's conception of music as the artistic force that gives birth to drama seems to have a wider influence on the critical writings of the music critic turned dramatist. Nietzsche views all drama as originating in music: "the whole linguistic capacity is stimulated by the new principle of the imitation of music" (41). Part of Shaw's admiration for Wagner was in his fusion of drama and music, two arts Shaw often described as inseparable. Shaw explains that "a Beethoven symphony . . . expresses noble feeling, but not thought: it has moods, but no ideas. Wagner added thought and produced the music-drama."[34] Wisenthal explains Shaw's imitation of Wagner: "This is what Shaw saw himself doing fifty years later to the theatre of the late nineteenth century: adding thought and producing music-drama . . . Shaw, working from the side of theatre rather than music, continues Wagner's campaign to create a genuine music-drama."[35] In *The Birth of Tragedy*, music is the vessel for rewriting the past: "it

was the Herculean power of music" that "was able to interpret myth with a new and profound significance" (61). For Nietszche, music is a powerful form of cultural appropriation as well as a source of cultural renewal. Significantly, Shaw claimed that *Heartbreak House*, a play in which he attempts to rewrite the Shakespearean past, was "by far the most musical work" he had ever written.[36]

In his dramatic responses to Shakespeare, Shaw both attempts to employ his own brand of "word-music" and to dismiss the power of Shakespeare's, using the Bard's old themes as the basis for his own variations. In the case of *Heartbreak House*, Shaw simultaneously constructs his fantasia around existing Shakespearean themes, while making it clear through his commentary on *Othello* and *King Lear* that young Ellie has heeded the Shakespearean song too closely and has fallen into artistic and spiritual lethargy as a direct result. The act of appropriating and responding to Shakespeare's works simultaneously becomes one of both preservation and defiance: Shakespeare's old theme lives on in the new variation, but Shaw's new creation constantly foregrounds the dangers of purely aesthetic indulgence and artistic decay he so frequently associated with Shakespeare in his lively criticism. The use of Nietzsche's binaries to represent his struggle with his dramatic predecessor draws attention to what is essentially a generational conflict: the old dramatist will smother the creativity of the new, the new dramatist will rewrite the canon of the old, or the two must join elements to create a new drama. The analysis of how one generation succeeds another, of a duplication that strives to fill a vacant space from the past and yet simultaneously attempts to move forward into the future, is central to surrogation as a cultural process. Ultimately, the battle between two generations over the future of culture and art lies at the heart of Shaw's attack on Shakespeare in *Heartbreak House*.

Shaw, Shakespeare, Shotover: Returning to the Body of the Father

Shaw's repeated attacks on his predecessor's canon attempt to erase elements of the Bard's works with which the later playwright disagreed. When the surrogate erases, he also replaces. In Shaw's case, the erasure involved a sustained attack in his theatrical reviews on Shakespeare's style, followed by a dramatic rewriting that attempted to rectify the troubles that Shaw found in *King Lear*. Under the thin veneer of provocative hyperbole, undeniable egoism, and outrageous metaphor, Shaw's Shakespearean criticism consistently attacks what he saw as the primary problems of Shakespeare's canon: unadulterated aestheticism, fixed morality, and passive pessimism.[37] All are woes that Shaw would also attack in his Shakespearean rewriting, *Heartbreak House*.

One way that Shaw differentiates himself from Shakespeare is by accusing his dramatic predecessor of what he considered to be the ultimate artistic sin: unadulterated aestheticism. In his theater reviews, Shaw constantly dismisses pure "word-music" and argues for purposeful drama. Shaw wrote to *The Daily News* that "Shakespear's power lies in his enormous command of word-music, which gives fascination to his most blackguardly repartees and sublimity to his hollowest platitudes," but that "Shakespear's weakness lies in his complete deficiency in that highest sphere of thought, in which poetry embraces religion, philosophy, morality, and the bearing of these on communities . . ."[38] Playing on a line from *Hamlet*, and subverting not only Hamlet's meaning, but also critiquing Shakespeare simultaneously, Shaw remarked that "the play is not the thing, but its thought, its purpose, its feeling, its execution."[39] In a typical Shavian diatribe against the worship of style, G.B.S. claimed that ". . . the man of letters, when he is more than a mere confectioner is a prophet or nothing. But to listen for a writer's message, even when the fellow is a fool, is one thing: to worship his tools and his tricks, his prose and his style, is an

abomination."[40] Shaw claims that Shakespeare wrote drama for the purposes of entertainment rather than instruction; because Shakespeare does not address concrete social and political problems, Shaw finds what he considers to be Shakespeare's favoring of manner over matter artistically repugnant. Albert Silverman claims that Shaw viewed Shakespeare as representing technique and style: "Shaw's attack on Shakespeare is one manifestation of his general attack on the emphasis upon form, the worship of technique and style, even the worship of art" (729). Edwin Wilson explains Shaw's criticism as follows:

> When he speaks of Shakespeare's lack of philosophy he is not referring to philosophy in a general sense but to something far more restricted; a concern for contemporary social, political, and moral problems. Shaw felt it was the business of the dramatist to deal with such problems, using his plays as a forum. (xiii)

Comparing Shakespeare to Ibsen, Shaw argued: "*A Doll House* will be flat as ditch water when *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be fresh as paint; but it will still have done more work in the world; and that is enough for the highest genius, which is always intensely utilitarian."[41] Again and again, Shaw's dramatic criticism associates Shakespeare with aestheticism, which Shaw dismisses on moral grounds.[42]

In addition, Shaw's Shakespearean criticism frequently represents the Bard as a symbol of cultural stagnation, which Shaw suggests is the artistic and moral death of the human race. Shaw argues that drama should present morality: specifically, he suggests that drama presents morality by subverting or questioning the preconceived notions of the audience. In his preface to *The Irrational Knot*, Shaw distinguishes between what he considers to be art of the first order and art of the second order. Art of the first order is that in which "the morality is original and not readymade." He declares Shakespeare to be of the second order because his "morality is a mere

reach-me-down . . . ."[43] Lise Pedersen argues that this position represents a major philosophical

rift between the two playwrights:

> Because of his belief in creative evolution, Shaw did not believe in absolute truths, but
>
> instead felt that since both spirit and matter are evolving toward some desirable
>
> perfection in the far distant future, it is the responsibility of every age to make some
>
> advance in that direction by evaluating afresh all the beliefs it has received from the
>
> preceding age.[44]

Wilson would agree, suggesting that Shaw's criticism reveals that he thought "Shakespeare was

a symbol of old outworn ideas" (xii). Because of Shakespeare's position as an artistic icon and

his connection with "ready-made" morality, Shaw viewed him as representing a sterile and

repetitive culture. The trouble with Shakespeare's plays is that they are all music—but to present

the kind of purposeful drama that Shaw envisions one needs to combine music with persuasive

content.

Another area for Shavian assault on Shakespeare is the pessimism that Shaw connects

with passivism, Shaw arguing that Shakespeare's tragedies are pessimistic plays that suggest the

futility of human action. From the viewpoint of a creative evolutionist, a pessimistic world in

which people believe events are controlled by gods instead of men is one on the brink of

stagnation and destruction. Creative evolution suggests that human beings must work with the

life force to create a better world; pessimism and despair, waiting for providence to act instead of

taking action oneself, then become the surest way to slow the evolutionary process. This critique

of Shakespearean pessimism, which Shaw connects with the passive attitude of his upper-class

characters, appears in the preface to *Heartbreak House*, where Shaw explains that "Only those

who have lived through a first-rate war, not in the field, but at home, and kept their heads, can

possibly understand the bitterness of Shakespear and Swift, who both went through the experience" (16). Shaw deflects his own despair about the war onto Shakespeare, insisting that Shakespeare, not Shaw, is the pessimist. In the preface to *Three Plays by Brieux,* Shaw complains of Shakespeare that his "quarrel is really a quarrel with God for not making men better."[45] Shaw sees futility in a quarrel with God, but productivity in a quarrel with men: a quarrel with men may encourage change. Shaw wants to goad the audience into action by forcing them to face their inactivity: he deplores the lack of a similar motive in Shakespeare's works. In his preface to *Saint Joan*, Shaw describes Shakespeare's characters as

> beings in the air, without public responsibilities of any kind. All Shakespear's characters are so: that is why they seem natural to our middle classes, who are comfortable and irresponsible at other people's expense, and are neither ashamed of that condition nor even conscious of it. Nature abhors this vacuum in Shakespear . . . .[46]

This comment about Shakespeare's characters echoes his description of *Heartbreak House'*s inhabitants in the play's preface: "They took the only part of our society in which there was leisure for high culture, and made it an economic, political, and, as far as practicable, a moral vacuum; and as Nature abhorring the vacuum, immediately filled it up with sex and with all sorts of refined pleasures, it was a very delightful place . . ." (8). For Shaw, this connection between Shakespeare's characters, the class represented in *Heartbreak House*, and a moral vacuum was significant enough to bear repeating. Shaw described Shakespeare's characters as "futile pessimists who imagine they are confronting a barren and unmeaning world when they are only contemplating their own worthlessness."[47] Rather than having his audience wonder about an abstract cause of ills, Shaw wishes them to consider themselves as a possible source. Ultimately, Shaw argues that because Shakespeare's characters do not feel responsibility for the state of the

world, they encourage audiences to sit back and wait for providence to act. Shaw's major quarrel

with *King Lear* is that it presents a world in which men seem helpless. According to Weintraub,

Shaw believed that Shakespeare shows "a sense of helplessness and futility in the play" (175).

Shaw explains:

> To me the sole hope of human salvation lies in teaching man to regard himself as an
>
> experiment in the realization of God, to regard his hands as God's hand, his brain as
>
> God's brain, his purpose as God's purpose . . . . You will find it all in Man & Superman .
>
> . . take it out of my play, and the play becomes nothing but the old cry of despair—
>
> Shakespear's 'As flies to wanton boys so we are to the gods: they kill us for their
>
> sport'—the most frightful blasphemy ever uttered, and the one from which it is my
>
> mission to deliver the world.[48]

Again, Shaw insists that *King Lear* is blasphemous: "That Shakespeare's soul was damned (I

really know no other way of expressing it) by a barren pessimism is undeniable; but even when it

drove him to the blasphemous despair of Lear and the Nihilism of Macbeth, it did not break

him."[49] Thus, Shaw finds some of Shakespeare's plays, particularly *King Lear*, to be

unnecessarily pessimistic, and he condemns Shakespeare for placing the control of the action of

his play in the hands of providence rather than those of his characters. Shaw's attack on

Shakespeare's aestheticism, pessimism, and second-hand morality is an attempt to destroy an

artistic heritage. In rewriting *King Lear*, he would attempt to surrogate the parts of Shakespeare

he had attempted to destroy.

   Roach's theory can be used to connect Shaw's public attacks on Shakespeare through his

G.B.S. persona and his adaptation of a Shakespearean play in *Heartbreak House*. *Heartbreak

House* represents the fully developed expression of Shaw's conflict with Shakespeare. As a

rewriting of *King Lear*, *Heartbreak House* participates in, yet interrupts and attempts to usurp, *King Lear's* genealogy of performance. The paradox inherent in genealogies of performance is that every performance both preserves an artistic lineage and yet attempts to disrupt it. Roach explains that "genealogies of performance document—and suspect—the historical transmission and dissemination of cultural practices through collective representations" (25). By reenacting an older story, a story so well known that it has attained the status of canonized cultural myth, Shaw's rewriting attempts to change *King Lear*'s genealogy of performance, and thus alter a nation's cultural memory, combining the shell of a Shakespearean play with the spirit of a Shavian message. In a play haunted by the war-time sacrifice of the younger generation for the older, Shaw uses Ellie's obsession with father figures as a metaphor for modern culture's engagement with the art of the past. Shakespeare is only one more father figure for Ellie, and the Shakespearean reverberations in *Heartbreak House* construct a commentary on "father" Shakespeare as a symbol of worn-out ideals and a dying culture. As a representative reader of Shakespeare, Ellie's constant association with the Bard shows that Shakespeare's present genealogy of performance is offering her, and the audience she represents, a poor moral and artistic education. Ultimately, *Heartbreak House*, a play deeply concerned with questions of spiritual regeneration, cultural surrogation, and artistic succession, proves the proper battle ground for exorcising literary ghosts.

In a play in which the young are overwhelmed by the old, Ellie's relationship to various father figures is central to Shaw's depiction of "cultured, leisured Europe before the war" as well as to his attack on Shakespeare as a representative of a stale, dead culture (7).[50] Shaw's critique of the older generation presented in *Heartbreak House,* the generation that he holds responsible for World War I, begins in the preface.[51] According to Shaw, the irresponsibility of this

generation creates the kind of situation in which "the innocent young have paid for the guilty old" (11). Shaw claims that in sending the younger generation off to war "it became necessary . . . to proclaim the young life worthily and gloriously sacrificed to redeem the liberty of mankind, instead of to expiate the heedlessness and folly of their fathers . . ." (23). He notes that during the war this went on "until at last the comic papers were driven to satirize old men, sitting comfortably in club chairs, and boasting of the sons they had 'given' to their country" (23). The youngest character in *Heartbreak House*, Ellie represents this younger generation that has been carelessly sacrificed to war, but she is asked to make a different kind of sacrifice. As Hesione remarks, "Ellie is going to marry a perfect hog of a millionaire for the sake of her father, who is as poor as a church mouse" (59). For her father's sake, Ellie must marry Mangan, a man old enough to be her father. In fact, Ellie finds herself surrounded by father figures: Mazzini, Mangan, Hector, and Shotover. The last three are also prospective husbands.[52] The question of who Ellie will marry is the play's central question: the plot of *Heartbreak House* centers on Ellie's choice of husband, and the other characters become involved in helping her choose. They also place powerful symbolic significance on Ellie's selection of spouse. Shotover claims that the matter of Ellie's proposed union with Mangan "is everybody's business. The stars in their courses are shaken when such things happen" (74). The attack on the older generation throughout the play explains the great significance attached to young Ellie's choice of mate. Throughout *Heartbreak House*, Shakespeare is another father figure who looms over Ellie, who participates in her ongoing education, and who even proves to have an influence in her choice of spouse.

As the voice of warning and prophecy in the play, Shotover finds that it is his responsibility to educate young Ellie: indeed, he spends much of the play warning Ellie against the dangers of

trusting old men like himself. Shotover tells Ellie, "Old men are dangerous: it doesnt matter to them what is going to happen to the world" (128). The older generation, bound to the past, is unconcerned about the future. When Ellie says to Shotover, "your own spirit is not dead" he responds by reminding her that it is: he lives only to reiterate the voices of the past. According to his own account, Shotover's soul consists only of "Echoes: nothing but echoes. The last shot was fired years ago" (156). *Heartbreak House* is inhabited by ghosts, characters who are politically and spiritually atrophied by their own sense of ennui. As Hector explains it, "We have been too long here. We do not live in this house: we haunt it" (151). Shotover, however, is the most ghostly of all, for he has a soul that consists only of the echoes of others. Although Shotover has some wisdom, Ellie discovers that much of his prophetic power is rum-induced. The old Captain tells Ellie what he has to offer her: "I can give you the memories of my ancient wisdom: mere scraps and leavings" (128). Echoes, scraps, and leavings will not help young Ellie to move into the future. Hesione, who is thinking of the future, tells Ellie that the purpose in life "for a young woman of your age is a baby" (154). Yet Ellie's marriage to the eighty-eight year old Shotover (whose name suggests a lack of virility) is a "spiritual" union "made in heaven" (149). It seems that there will be no children for Ellie, and as she sits beside her fatherly spouse and faces the end of the world, bombs falling all around, it seems that if the fate of the human race is in her hands, the population is in trouble. In spite of her youth and fertility, Shaw constantly emphasizes that Ellie is physically and spiritually sterile. The youthful Ellie is willing to wither and die for the father figure. In the end, Ellie's choice of spouse is a triumph, in that Shotover's echoes are better than Mangan's corruption or Hector's lies, but they are echoes all the same, and her choice is also a failure for her generation. Her incestuous union with Shotover, the marriage of the father and adopted daughter, suggests the inability of the present to disentangle itself from

the ghosts of the past. Another ghost Ellie remains entangled with is that of a dead dramatist. Through Ellie's characterization as "Shakespeare's daughter," Shaw attacks many of the same issues he associated with Shakespeare in his prose criticism.

Although some have argued that Ellie's association with Shakespeare is a sign of strength, Shaw actually uses this connection to showcase the character's weaknesses. In *Heartbreak House*, Ellie is the character who has the strongest attachment to Shakespeare's works. Even before the play begins, she is associated with Shakespeare as she sits on stage reading *The Temple Shakespeare* (50). Early in the play, Ellie confesses, "My father taught me to love Shakespear" (66). Mazzini says, "You know, Ellie has a remarkable strength of character. I think it is because I taught her to like Shakespear when she was very young" (101). Frederick P. W. McDowell argues that Shaw associates Ellie with Shakespeare to reveal the power and forcefulness in her character: "So consistently is her name linked with Shakespeare's that some of the virginal strength of his heroines gathers about her."[53] Many critics have been quick to identify Ellie as the play's "Cordelia figure." The idealistic and romantic Ellie, however, seems to have little of Cordelia's strength. On the contrary, Ellie's constant association with Shakespeare points to her naïve and trusting approach to established culture and the art of the past. When Ellie and Mrs. Hushabye begin to discuss *Othello* in the first act, the audience finds that Ellie is not only a lover of Shakespeare, but also a poor interpreter of his works. Far from being a critical reader, Ellie not only believes everything that she reads, but her interpretation of *Othello* is far enough off the mark that she actually wishes to take Desdemona's place. Shaw draws attention to *Heartbreak House*'s critique of poor reading and its power over society in the play's preface. Shaw claims that "revolution" is "on the shelf": for in Heartbreak House, "you found on the shelf in your bedroom not only the books of poets and novelists, but of

revolutionary biologists and even economists" (9). On the shelf you would find Shaw's own plays along with "all the literary implements for forming the mind of the perfect modern Socialist and Creative Evolutionist" (9-10). As the play which follows makes clear, what is off the shelf is Shakespeare. His plays, if accepted uncritically, make for poor reading, and Shaw goes on, though Ellie, to showcase the dangers of reading romantic fictions. Shaw describes the readers and reading of cultured Europe: "They did not wish to realize Utopia for the common people: they wished to realize their favorite fictions and poems in their own lives" (8).

  Shakespeare's fiction of *Othello*, which Ellie hopes will be realized in her own life, is leading the impressionable ingénue to contemplate Hector, the character whose romantic lies are connected to Othello's, as a husband. When Mrs. Hushabye points out Othello's nature, Ellie quickly dismisses the tragic hero's flaw: "Oh, not that. I think all the part about jealousy is horrible. But don't you think it must have been a wonderful experience for Desdemona, brought up so quietly at home, to meet a man who had been out in the world doing all sorts of brave things . . ." (66). When Mrs. Hushabye asks Ellie if this is her definition of romance, Ellie responds that the elements of the tale that she finds appealing, "might really happen" (66). Not only could the adventures described in Othello's courtship of Desdemona "really happen" but in Ellie's mind, both Shakespeare and his hero are absolutely trustworthy. A.M. Gibbs points out that "Ellie displays a naïve faith in both Othello and Shakespeare as truth-tellers . . . ," going on to note that "Mrs. Hushaby's dominance over the as yet innocent Ellie in this scene is partly defined by her obviously more intelligent, skeptical approach to the reading of Shakespeare."[54] Mrs. Hushabye, with her ability to interpret the art of the past critically, and to evaluate the cultural worth of artistic achievements, realizes that Ellie is caught up in a romantic fiction. Richard Hornby claims that "Ellie has been fed the stuff of romance instead of the stuff of life . .

. .".[55] Hornby, however, claims that it is Hector who is guilty of feeding the impressionable girl romantic nonsense: actually, as Shaw makes clear, Shakespeare is the real culprit. It is also significant that reading Shakespeare is what first lulls Ellie to sleep in the opening of the play (49). The sleeping-dreaming motif of *Heartbreak House* is constantly associated with danger: sleep is the symbolic passivity, the inaction that leaves the ship of state smashed on the rocks. Throughout the play, Shaw emphasizes the danger of this metaphorical sleep (Hornby, 15). Shotover suggests that the skippers of England are drunk and asleep at the wheel, trusting to an indifferent or nonexistent providence (156). In the case of the younger generation, however, it is not rum that is inducing political passivity and moral slumber. Ellie falls asleep because she is reading Shakespeare: she is put to sleep by the symbol of aesthetic art and traditional culture. Ellie's name is connected with Shakespeare's in order to highlight her weaknesses as a character; her naïve interpretation reveals her willingness to accept romance in place of reality, and it is Shakespeare's "word-music" that lulls her into metaphorical passivity.

Not only does Shaw connect Ellie to Shakespeare, but he also consistently associates her with empty artistry. As Margery Morgan has noted, Shaw characterizes Ellie through her connection with art (213). This connection, however, is more than a passing tidbit of characterization. Ellie seems to be art embodied. Her grandparents "were both poets, like the Brownings . . ." (60). As is natural for the progeny of poets, she sings and paints, often performing at concerts (65). The young woman has a habit of falling in love with artists: her infatuation for Hector begins when she mistakes him for an artist (68). Ellie claims that her soul eats "music and pictures and books" (126). In addition to being associated with poetry, singing, and painting, Ellie is ever talking about Shakespeare.

Yet if Ellie is constantly associated with art, her artistry, like much of the art in *Heartbreak House*, is worldly and tarnished: it would appear that the aestheticism of Shakespeare makes for poor art indeed. Not only does Ellie paint and sing for profit, but she is also trapped in a cycle of art, as she paints the same painting repeatedly (68). Ellie confesses, "I can't paint much; but as it's always the same picture I can do it pretty quickly and get two or three pounds for it" (68). Ellie is unable to "develop on her own as an artist. She is reduced to blindly copying the past. She even has to stick to the same picture" (Hornby, 10). Furthermore, even the innocent Ellie knows that "music and pictures and books" cost money. She says that "in this country you cant have them without lots of money: that is why our souls are so horribly starved" (126). While Ellie is trapped in art that repeats itself, the other characters seem to suggest that art itself is dangerous. Shotover connects poets and singers with demons: "And when we are tempted to seek their destruction they bring forth demons to delude us, disguised as pretty daughters, and singers and poets and the like, for whose sake we spare them" (87). When Shotover turns his inventive mind toward the task of producing weapons, his creative abilities transform into a marketable evil. In the end, art itself seems to be the destructive force that comes down out of the sky. The characters believe that the approaching bombs sound like music: "And the sound in the sky: it's splendid: it's like an orchestra: it's like Beethoven" (158). Overall, art in *Heartbreak House* is presented either as a tarnished commercial commodity or a potentially dangerous and destructive force; the play's many allusions to Shakespeare are, in this context, less than flattering.

Throughout *Heartbreak House*, Ellie's obsession with father figures becomes a sign of her spiritual, physical, and artistic entrapment, of her suffocating alliance with "second order art," Shakespeare, and aestheticism. Ellie's artistic union with Shakespeare parallels her love for

her father and her marriage to Shotover. It is significant that Ellie's father is the one who has

instilled in Ellie a love for Shakespeare. Morgan describes the role of Mazzini in *Heartbreak House*,

> Benevolent paternalism cannot go unquestioned. Potentially, there is no more tyrannical
>
> form of authority, none more difficult to judge truly, find out in its errors and rebel
>
> against. By association, Shaw has identified it with the authority of cultural tradition,
>
> which continues to determine values, the terms of men's thinking, and—more than they
>
> realize—the conclusions they are able to reach. (215)

Indeed, Ellie seems obsessed with the father figure. Mazzini, Shakespeare, and Shotover—all are

patriarchs that Ellie seems unable to escape as they prescribe her philosophical, artistic, and

spiritual life. Ellie obviously associates Shakespeare with her own father, for she says "There

seems to be nothing real in the world except my father and Shakespear" (146). Ellie's obsession

with her father both foreshadows her marriage to her "spiritual father" Shotover, and also points

to her love for her cultural and artistic father, Shakespeare. It seems as though Ellie cannot stop

talking about fathers, often making statements such as "my own father is all the world to me"

and "I think my father is the best man I have ever known" (56, 52). Other characters also notice

Ellie's interest in older men. Mazzini says, "I'm afraid Ellie is not interested in young men, Mrs.

Hushabye. Her taste is on the graver, solider side," and Hesione tells Ellie that "Girls of your age

fall in love with all sorts of impossible people, especially old people" (61, 66). Ellie loves a

number of older men in the play, including her father, Hector, Shotover, and Shakespeare. When

Mrs. Hushabye teases Ellie with "Quite sure you are not in love with an actor?" the statement has

multiple meanings (66). Ellie loves Hector, who is playing a role to get her; she loves Othello,

whom she regards as someone who could be real (and who in reality is never anything more than

an actor), and she loves Shakespeare, a long dead actor. Ellie's love for Shakespeare, the artistic

and cultural father, represents the younger generation's willingness to sacrifice for the older one,

and the willingness to choose the old art, with its ready-made morality, over the new. Ellie's

incest with Shakespeare, her love for the cultural and poetic father of western drama, is only one

more Shavian attack against the danger of being obsessed with the art of the past: it can prevent

one from embracing the new art, the new morals, the new ideas that would lead to human

evolution. Hornby explains that for Shaw, as a creative evolutionist, "The worst thing was to die

unfulfilled, without having contributed to evolution; to die without purpose, or to die for old

mistakes, old ideas, old fantasies" (11). This is the death that Ellie and the other characters must

struggle to avoid in *Heartbreak House*.

Although some have found despair in *Heartbreak House*, its positive reworking of motifs

from *King Lear* are a dramatic continuation of Shaw's critique in his prose criticism of

Shakespeare's masterpiece: the hopeful message of *Heartbreak House* in both the rewriting of

the Shakespearean storm scene and the apocalyptic ending of *King Lear* fight the passive

pessimism Shaw attacks in his dramatic criticism. Examining the parallels between the two

plays, Weintraub points out that *Heartbreak House* contains multiple storm scenes that mimic

King Lear (242). Indeed, one could argue that each of *Heartbreak House*'s three acts ends with a

metaphorical storm. The first act ends with four characters on a darkened stage "weirdly

chanting" (90). Instead of communicating with each other, they cry out to heaven in despair. In

the face of this verbal storm, Captain Shotover shouts "Is there no thunder in heaven?" (90). The

second act ends with Hector's cry, "Fall. Fall and crush" also aimed toward the sky (138). Martin

Meisel points out the Shakespearean parallel in this storm scene: Hector's wail mirrors Albany's

cry of "fall and cease" from *King Lear* (317). The third act of the play ends with the most

obvious storm scene, the one in which bombs fall on Heartbreak House. The storms in the play,

however, appear not just in the present, but also in the past. Shaw does not directly present

Captain Shotover's engagement with a *Lear*-like storm, but rather has the Captain describe a

storm that is already past. The storm scene that is narrated, instead of directly experienced,

places the storm of Shakespeare's *King Lear* in the dramatic past and suggests that Captain

Shotover is the new Lear, the King Lear reincarnated after the storm. This emblem of man's

battle with nature, however, is radically transformed: in *Heartbreak House*, Captain Shotover's

storm is a symbol primarily of discovery, activity, and rebirth, rather than despair or futile

struggle. Weintraub finds Shaw's rewriting of the storm more positive in outlook than its

Shakespearean counterpart: "Shotover's nostalgic savoring of the typhoon is in obvious contrast

to Lear's noble, yet pathetic defiance of the storm" (179). Instead of being associated with age,

the storm images in *Heartbreak House* are associated with youth, as Shotover recalls the storms

he battled when he was young. As Weintraub points out, "A sense of purpose—of using one's

self up in finding and fulfilling that purpose—is the Shotover antidote to happiness. Thus he

longs in his old age for the tests and trials of youth and is given by Shaw a grateful apostrophe to

the sea storms that compelled him to savor his vigor" (179). Much of the storm imagery in

Heartbreak House comes from Shotover's fond memories of his youth: the aging captain refers

to the storm repeatedly as a symbol for mankind's capacity to struggle with and overcome

adversity: "Ive stood on the bridge for eighteen hours in a typhoon. Life here is stormier; but I

can stand it" (124). In other words, surviving the storm at sea has taught Shotover how to survive

the pain and alienation of Heartbreak House. Unlike its symbolic predecessor, this storm is a

constructive struggle for the protagonist. Shotover instructs Ellie:

I was ten times happier on the bridge in the typhoon, or frozen into Artic ice for months

in darkness, than you or they have ever been . . . . At your age I looked for hardship,

danger, horror, and death that I might feel the life in me more intensely. I did not let the

fear of death govern my life; and my reward was, I had my life. (128)

Shotover recommends that Ellie actively seek storms to face. The storm here becomes a way of

testing or trying oneself: it is an adventure for the young that strengthens them to face the

difficulties of the future. Shaw depicts his characters' struggles with the metaphorical storm as

potentially fruitful rather than futile.

Furthermore, Shotover argues that the moral man fights the storm through navigation

rather than turning himself over to its forces in despair, thus suggesting activism rather than

helplessness: the storms in *Heartbreak House* emphasize the primacy of man. Significantly, the

climatic storm scene in *Heartbreak House* is man-made. Mazzini dismisses Shotover's warning

about a storm, "Very true, no doubt, at sea. But in politics, I assure you, they only run into

jellyfish. Nothing happens" (155). Whatever Mazzini may say, something political is about to

happen. "The storm" is not brought on by providence (like the storm in *King Lear*) but by

idealists like Mazzini who sit back believing that nothing will happen when the skipper sleeps at

the political wheel. Shotover suggests that even if providence sends the storm, the skipper still

has primary responsibility for himself if he wants to survive it. Shotover warns the other

characters, "Every drunken skipper trusts to Providence. But one of the ways of Providence with

drunken skippers is to run them on the rocks" (155). Shotover also condemns trusting blindly in

religion rather than struggling actively in the face of conflict: "It is the man who lies drinking in

his bunk and trusts to Providence that I call the drunken skipper, though he drank nothing but the

waters of the River Jordan" (156). Shotover's words are a direct command to the other characters

as well as to the audience: "Navigation. Learn it and live; or leave it and be damned" (156). Once again, the storm of *Heartbreak House* is one to struggle with and resist actively. This resistance, unlike Lear's resistance of the storm, is not futile, but can have a positive outcome: the skipper is not helpless in the face of nature, but rather he is faced with the opportunity to choose his own fate through his reaction to trial and suffering. Lear's rage in the face of the storm, while heroic, emphasizes only his helplessness, the small size of man in the face of larger forces.

Unlike Shakespeare's, Shaw's storm is associated with rebirth. While some critics have seen Ellie's hope that the bombs will come again as a suggestion of violence and depravity, the play's final lines also suggest that Ellie has recognized the characters' need for the storm, for a cleansing and regeneration, and for an active struggle that prepares them to face heartbreak. The storms in *Heartbreak House*, like heartbreak itself, are a trial that leads to new life. Shotover's reminiscences of the storm suggest that its aftermath is resurrection. Shotover recalls that "After the typhoon, the flying-fish glitter in the sunshine like birds" (155). This image of flight, freedom, and light is a sign of the potential for new life after the storm. Likewise, the climatic storm of *Heartbreak House*, the unexpected bombing, also suggests a potential rebirth for the characters. Some critics have found the ending of *Heartbreak House* to be a dark one.[56] Many, however, have been able to find hope in the play, especially in the play's apocalyptic ending. Weintraub compares the endings of *King Lear* and *Heartbreak House*: "Shaw's equivalent is less despairing—by its close even prophetic and almost hopeful" (180). Morgan also feels that the bleak ending of *Heartbreak House* contains a seed of hope: "The characters respond to the threat of destruction by bombs as an awakening and regeneration of spirit" (207). Hornby agrees: "The play ends optimistically . . . ." (19). The characters' desire to burn down the house and the sudden proliferation of fire imagery in the play's final moments seem to suggest the possibility

of a phoenix-like resurrection after the destruction.[57] Not only do the play's final lines suggest

hope for the characters, but they also suggest hope for the society ridiculed in the play. This

ending is meant to call the audience to action. The storms of *Heartbreak House*, unlike the storm

of *King Lear,* suggest the positive possibility of spiritual and social regeneration. As a work of

surrogation, *Heartbreak House* struggles to change *King Lear's* dark genealogy of performance.

Surrogation, both in theatrical performances and in human cultures, is a never ending

process. Once, Shaw needed to surrogate Shakespeare, but now, it appears that directors, actors,

and audiences need to surrogate Shaw. As Peters notes, theater audiences have long associated

the elderly Shotover with G.B.S. (312). Indeed, some performances capitalize on this tradition by

making the Shotover character resemble Bernard Shaw as much as possible (Peters, 313).

Always issuing paradoxical and prophetic statements, Shotover usually appears complete with

bushy Shavian beard. As an image of the aging playwright, the actor playing Shotover becomes a

surrogate within a surrogation. Roach points out that

> canon formation serves the function that 'ancestor worship' once did. Like
>
> voodoo and hoodoo, the English classics help control the dead to serve the
>
> interests of the living. The public performance of canonical works ritualizes these
>
> devotions under the guise of the aesthetic, reconfiguring the spirit world into a
>
> secular mystery. (77)

For an audience familiar with the persona of G.B.S., a performance of the play becomes a ritual

not just of watching a new staging of *King Lear*, but also of communicating with a dead

playwright. The transposition of the G.B.S. figure over the figure of Shotover, as well as Shaw's

use of Shakespeare as a cultural icon throughout *Heartbreak House,* both fulfill the role that

Roach assigns to a cultural effigy. Through the practice of surrogation, "The effigy summons the

dead to enable the living to get a bearing on what they are becoming" (Roach, 88). The effigy, a symbol of the past, is used to help move a society into the future. This is the function that Shotover serves both in his capacity as the reincarnated King Lear as well as through his presence as Shavian surrogate. In the preface to *Back to Methuselah*, Shaw described the place in history that he would wish for his own dramatic canon: "It is my hope that a hundred parables by younger hands will soon leave mine as far behind as the religious pictures of the XV century left behind the first attempts of the early Christians at iconography."[58] For Shaw, human evolution stops when the past is valued over the present, even when he himself becomes the symbol of that past. Hopefully, Shotover/Shaw is an effigy of flesh that helps drama remember its history, while simultaneously leading it forward into the future. Ultimately, *Heartbreak House* explores these tensions between preserving the past and performing the present, showing that before the new drama can progress artistically, before the new artist can speak prophetically, before an immature society can grow morally, they must first examine and respond to the past—they must listen to and comment upon dead men's words.

Chapter Three

History Smells like Blood: Tearing the Skin off of *Edward II*

> The tradition of the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the minds of the
> living. And, just when they appear to be engaged in the revolutionary
> transformation of themselves and their material surroundings, in the creation of
> something which does not yet exist, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary
> crisis they timidly conjure up the spirits of the past to help them.
> -Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

Flesh, family, language, literature: all are symbolically intertwined, all are rapidly

disintegrating, and each becomes a metaphor for the movement of history as Brecht's adaptation

of Marlowe's *Edward II* progresses toward the play's promised apocalypse. Obsessed with

history, time, and evolution, *Edward II* is an adaptation about the act of adaptation, as the play

examines a moment of historical, literary, and familial transition.[1] As the father gives way to the

son, the old literature gives way to the new, and the human body, itself used as a figure for a

linear conception of history, finds itself in a state of rapid decay. The parallel disintegration of

these interwoven images comments on the relationship between Brecht's play and his Marlovian

source text and represents the frustrated vision of teleological history that the rest of the play

depicts. History, which Brecht's characters believe to be progressing in a linear fashion, merely

proves to be collapsing in on itself. Just as the characters' hope for a progressive historical

teleology is failing, their bodies, their language, and their cultural history itself seem to be

disintegrating. The play points to the inevitable ways in which the past permeates the present, the

ways in which new art is old art, and the body of the son is the body of the father. Yet it also

simultaneously points to the social and aesthetic need for innovation and regeneration: the need

to tear off the dead skin of history. Ultimately, tearing the skin off of the body becomes a violent

metaphor for the act of literary adaptation. As the play increasingly penetrates the recesses of the corpse and the canon, Brecht's characters struggle with both the need for innovation in the face of despair as well as the final realization that innovation—both artistic and social—is impossible without first moving backward into the past.

Indeed, Brecht's rewriting of a Renaissance history play would self-consciously return to the literary past in search of the theatrical future, proving to be one of the most powerful acts of surrogation in modern theater: the birth of epic theater from the grave of Elizabethan stage practice. As many critics have pointed out, Brecht would first create epic theater and theorize his famous alienation effect by using the remains of the Elizabethan canon. Critics have yet to explore, however, the important intersections between Roach's surrogation and Brecht's alienation, nor has it been pointed out that Brecht's first play that joins surrogation and alienation uses complex image patterns to comment on its own creative process. In a distinctly epic ploy, the play self-reflexively exposes its own inner-workings, as its image patterns point to the process of literary adaptation, the act of theatrical surrogation, and the manner in which the past is reborn in the canon/corpse of the present. In his writings about the Elizabethan theater, Brecht reveals his struggle to create a new theater through a return to the theatrical past, and he contextualizes his struggle with the past as the first step in adaptation and historization, intertwined processes that create epic theater, but that also inherently rely on surrogation. The confrontational attitude toward the past that Brecht reveals in his Shakespearean criticism reappears in *Edward II*. Brecht's dialectic in his dramatic theory should work toward a synthesis, and the characters' vision of linear time suggests that history should work toward progress, but in *Edward II* all sense of resolution is denied. Instead, the play's linguistic and presentational imagery creates a complex set of interconnected metaphors that constantly struggle to align the

human body with both history and the literary text. The effect is epic: the play attempts to alienate the audience from the seemingly natural processes of social and artistic change and growth that surround them.

Although many critics use *Edward II* to mark an important turning point in Brecht's career, scholars of both English and German literature have rarely chosen this early play as a subject of study, often dismissing it as an immature, coarse, and violent work.[2] Indeed, *Edward II* is an act of artistic desecration. Brecht's adaptation deliberately destroys Marlowe's mighty line even as it tears the flesh from his tortured characters.[3] Throughout the play, the image of tearing skin is superimposed over the image of tearing paper, as *Edward II* presents bodies that ask to be read as texts and texts that ask to be read as bodies. The play casts the human body as a figure for a rapidly collapsing vision of history, a symbol of a past—literary, cultural, historical—that is permanently bound to the present. Through violence on the human form, *Edward II* reminds the audience that the act of transforming history into literature is a painful one and that the act of adaptation is inherently a violent act that rips the surface from older literature. Ultimately, Brecht's violent imagery depicts the practice of literary adaptation and theatrical surrogation, both of which are explored throughout *Edward II* in terms of violence and historical return: one element that contributes to the epic effect in *Edward II* is the play's reflection on the violent politics of its own artistic creation, as the drama's extreme violence works to alienate the audience from the process of cultural evolution.

New Life in the Graves of the Renaissance: The Elizabethan Epic Theater

Like Shaw, Brecht was obsessed with ransacking the remains of the Elizabethan stage: unlike the Shavian grave robber who influenced him, however, Brecht regarded the Elizabethan

theater not as an outdated force that threatened the growth of a new political theater, but as an

essential ingredient in the creation of the new theater, a symbol of the past with the power to

reinvigorate the present. When the young Brecht adapted Marlowe's history play in 1924, his

adaptation responded to a larger international movement that had begun in the theatrical fin de

siècle.[4] The drama of Shakespeare's contemporaries had been largely left out of the repertoire in

the 1800s, and the turn of the century marked a sudden revival for many Early Modern plays that

had been long neglected (Womack, 75). Peter Womack describes the early modernist obsession

with the Early Modern: "the origins of this movement of rediscovery are effectively the same as

the origins of European theatrical modernism . . . Doing Marlowe, Webster, and Ford was part of

the same project, the same subculture, as doing Strindberg, Maeterlinck, and Wedekind" (75). As

Bruce Gaston points out, this theatrical revolution was directly opposed to nineteenth-century

practice: "If the nineteenth century had adapted Shakespeare to fit its dramatic conventions and

traditions, then the twentieth century invented its own dramatic traditions at least in part by doing

the opposite."[5] In adapting *Edward II*, Brecht was participating in this movement of reclaiming

Renaissance drama and of recasting the early modernist theater in the form of Early Modern

drama. Yet his work of appropriation would prove to be a particularly influential one: critics

have commonly hailed Brecht's *Edward II* as the first epic play.[6] While Shaw was intent on

setting "the old drama" (represented by Shakespeare) in opposition to "the new drama" (of which

Ibsen was the quintessence), Brecht was interested in creating a new drama out of the dialectical

approach to history that Heiner Müller would later describe as a "dialogue with the dead." Brecht

would create the future of modern drama from the old mold of its Elizabethan past.

In fact, many critics have noted that Brecht's conception of the epic theater would be

bound to his reading of Elizabethan plays, just as his interpretation of Shakespeare and his

contemporaries would be understood through the lens of the epic theater. Brecht's dialectical conversation with the dead is a paradoxical two-way traffic. As Margot Heinemann explains, Brecht "consciously drew from Shakespeare and the Elizabethans much of what was new and innovative in his own dramatic methods and attitudes to the theater."[7] John Rouse agrees, "Brecht considered Shakespeare and, one rung below him, the Elizabethans in general as the great forerunners of the new theatre he was attempting to create."[8] Indeed, Brecht once described *Richard III* as "a theater full of A-effects!" and the elements of Elizabethan playwriting and stage practice that Brecht admired were those that he would incorporate into epic theater.[9] Brecht explained that

> Some of the epic traits in Shakespeare probably originate in the two circumstances that he was adapting already existing works . . . and that . . . a collective of theater experts was working together. In the historical dramas, where the epic is strongest, the existing subject matter is opposed to synchronization most vehemently. Certain historical characters had to appear because they would have been missed otherwise. Certain events had to happen for the same "external" reasons. The thus incumbent movement of montage makes the play epic.[10]

In this passage, Brecht claims the Elizabethan theater as the source for many of the techniques of epic theory. For example, he connects literary adaptation with both Shakespeare and epic theater. Literary adaptation was central to Brecht's artistic practice throughout his career. Significantly, he claimed to find the inspiration for adaptation as an epic principle in the Elizabethan drama. Furthermore, Brecht was a strong believer in collaboration, frequently working with other playwrights (such as Lion Feuchtwanger) or revising plays based on the suggestions of actors during rehearsal, and he often adapted historical material. Rouse argues that "on a larger level of

dramaturgic device, Brecht was strongly influenced by the structure of the Elizabethan history play" because "a Shakespearean history . . . is structured through the juxtaposition of single scenes . . . further this structure frequently mixes serious and comic, high characters and low. And the play's dramatic progression can at any time be interrupted by a monologue to the audience or by a song" (273, 274). In his epic plays, Brecht would also imitate the Renaissance practice of inserting songs at unexpected points in the narrative, the use of episodic structure, and the use of juxtaposed scenes that he found in Elizabethan plays. In mimicry of Elizabethan stage practice, the epic theater was also non-illusionistic and called for minimal scenery and props (Rouse, 274). Like Elizabethan dramaturgy, epic theater called for short rehearsal time, needed no unifying aesthetic, was not built on a star system, and did not call for the overarching artistic vision of a director. John Fuegi points out that the Epic resembles the Elizabethan:

> Rehearsal time would be minimal, as the material itself was to reflect daily events and to respond rapidly to emerging political developments on the world scene. There would be, of course, in this communal enterprise no formal aesthetic, no hierarchy of stars, and no cult of the individual director ordering people to conform to his particular idiosyncratic style.[11]

Thus, Brecht not only imitated elements that he found in the texts of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Heywood, and Webster, but rather appropriated an entire mode of theatrical practice.

Again and again, Brecht would praise the episodic structure and juxtaposed scenes that he saw in Elizabethan history plays as an epic effect that he wished to recreate in his own theater: he argued that this kind of juxtaposition was central to creating dialectical drama. Brecht explains:

> Because his [Shakespeare's] acts are without connections, one recognizes the chaotic nature of human fate, when it is reported by someone who has no interest

in ordering in order to give life to an idea which can only be a prejudice, an

argument which cannot be taken from life. There is nothing more stupid than to

perform Shakespeare in such a way as to make him clear. He is by nature unclear.

He is absolute matter.[12]

This passage reveals Brecht's idea of dialectal drama: drama is created not through linear

narrative, but from a conflict between opposing viewpoints, a dialogue created through montage.

According to Brecht, to make a story out of the "chaotic nature of human fate" does not reflect

the true chaos of existence as a montage effect would. Throughout his writings, Brecht would

often claim that Shakespeare was "absolute matter," that his canon represented "raw material"

waiting to be re-formed by a later hand (Guntner, 182). Reducing the Bard to source material is

one way to minimize the power of his influence, but at the same time the description of

Shakespeare's works as "absolute matter" or "pure material" suggests that the plays were

deliberately left incomplete. The purpose of a good performance, in Brecht's view, is not to

homogenize the story and characters under the artistic influence of a director, but to leave the

naturally conflicting elements of the dramatic montage to work against each other. Rossi

explains Brecht's belief that the unresolved elements in dialectical drama hold political power:

"The orthodox theater supports the smoothing over of contradiction which makes the cause of

human suffering invisible, for it blames an unseen fate or 'eternally human' traits rather than

examining and considering the interaction of diverse factors" (Rossi, 177). Thus, the Elizabethan

drama, like the epic theater is "by nature unclear." For Brecht, this lack of coherence is not an

aesthetic weakness, but the strength of a powerful play: the tension between the unresolved

elements in the montage offers the power to alienate the spectator from his or her own

experiences, to call into question the methods by which art and culture perpetuate themselves.

While Brecht's epic drama was imitating the turn of the century theaters that attempted to recapture "authentic" Renaissance-style staging of Elizabethan plays, his writings made it clear that his main objection to the established "classics" was not the Elizabethan canon itself, but the extravagant productions and romantic interpretations popular in nineteenth-century performances of these plays. [13] Rossi describes this important distinction in Brecht's Shakespearean criticism: "Brecht saw his own goals attained in Shakespeare's drama, but not in the average Shakespearean production" (160). Brecht's rebellion against orthodox theatrical practices called for a return to the theatrical past: in rewriting *Edward II*, Brecht was putting into practice his argument that the modern theater must make "the hardest advance of all: backwards . . ."[14] Rossi notes that for Brecht, "Shakespeare is seen as an example to be imitated, as an ally in the battle to change the theater, not only in terms of dramatic form but in content and its treatment" (172). Brecht argued that audience empathy, which he saw as an important ingredient in successful nineteenth-century productions, was rarely called for in Renaissance plays, thus allowing the Elizabethan classics to employ a distancing technique resembling his own alienation effect. As Brecht explains, "Take the element of conflict in Elizabethan plays, complicated, shifting, largely impersonal, and then see what has been made of it today, whether in contemporary plays or in contemporary renderings of the Elizabethans. Compare the part played by empathy then and now."[15] Brecht repeatedly claimed that "We grasp the old works by a comparatively new method—empathy—on which they rely little."[16] While he was writing new epic plays of his own (and refashioning old plays to draw attention to what he saw as their epic elements), he was also championing the epic theater as the only method for properly capturing the effect of an Elizabethan play: "There is only one style for the contemporary theater which brings out the true, namely the philosophic content of Shakespeare, and that is the epic style."[17]

In short, Brecht rebelled against the orthodox theater of his time by returning to the Elizabethan past.

Certainly, Brecht's motives in recasting Marlowe's play were iconoclastic. Brecht wrote in "On Looking through my First Plays" that one of his goals in rewriting and directing Marlowe's play was "to make possible a production which would break with the Shakespearean tradition common to German theaters: that lumpy monumental style beloved of middle-class Philistines."[18] Although the Munich Kammerspiele had hired the twenty-five year old playwright to adapt and direct Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Brecht abandoned the Shakespearean tragedy he'd been contracted to work on and turned to Marlowe's history play instead.[19] As Brecht himself reveals, his violent adaptation of Marlowe's text was a deliberate "break with the Shakespearean tradition common to German theaters." For Brecht, an attack on the staging of Marlowe was an attack on the staging of Shakespeare: rewriting either play would attempt to rescue the Early Modern text from the assaults of the orthodox theater. Some critics have argued that the young playwright found *Macbeth* too great a challenge, claiming that Brecht chose to adapt a lesser-known play so that he would not be accused of attacking Shakespeare. Brecht had already completed three plays when he began drafting *Edward II* in 1923 (*Baal*, *In the Jungle of Cities*, and *Drums in the Night*), all of which had received high acclaim, and his reputation as a playwright was quickly growing. It seems more likely not that the award-winning German playwright (he had received the Kleist prize in 1922) was afraid to take on Shakespeare, but rather that the thematic content of *Edward II* appealed to him more than that of *Macbeth*. Both *Baal* and *In the Jungle of Cities* feature characters who struggle with same-sex desire and some critics have argued that *Edward II* marks the last of Brecht's early "homosexual" plays.[20] In the shadow of World War I, Brecht was attracted to both the text's status as a history play and to its

bleak depiction of kingship and war. Deborah Willis argues that Brecht chose to rewrite Marlowe's play because he was "reacting against recent German writing which glorified historical personages, often turning problematic leaders of past ages into whitewashed heroic figures" (610). Most importantly, the rewriting of a history play naturally allows for the exploration of surrogation, historization, and alienation that Brecht would make use of in his adaptation.

Not only was *Edward II* the first epic play, but it was also Brecht's first attempt at adapting a classic play, a practice that would be central to his conception of the epic theater, and that he would often use to create the effects of historization and alienation. Rossi describes Brecht's attempts to defamiliarize the audience from their own social experiences and to reveal through this feeling of alienation the invisible ideologies that oppress them:

> For Brecht a theatrical production must historicize and make remarkable all human emotions, actions, and events; nothing should be presented as being natural, self-evident, or fated; the production should engage the social, historical, and personal reasons for the events represented and allow them to be assessed critically and creatively. (176)

Brecht often worked to create a sense of alienation in his productions through the process of "historization." Historization involved setting characters and events in the proper historical context, but it also often called for a powerful juxtaposition between past and present. Keith Dickson explains the challenges historization presents: "Brecht's particular problem as an adapter and producer of the classics was how to teach his audiences historical perspective, not by reproducing authentic detail of costume and locale . . . but by disclosing the historical process of which both the play and its audience are a part."[21] For Brecht, historization was a process with

three contradictory layers. First, historization worked to create awareness in the audience that all human actions are socially constructed, part of a specific historical moment that must be clearly contextualized. Second, this contextualization called for an awareness in the audience that the "history" they were watching was different from their own era. Finally (and paradoxically) an awareness of this tension between juxtaposed eras was intended to cause the audience to reflect on the similarities between the past and the present: seeing that historical events are socially constructed should cause the audience to contemplate the social construction of the events that surround them in the present. Heinemann describes Brecht's conception of historization: "In Brecht's view one must play these old works historically, which means setting them in powerful contrast to our own time. He criticizes modern directors who slur over what divides us from the past" (239). Yet the effect of this historical distancing is actually to make the epic effect of the work more immediate for the alienated audience. Brecht argues,

> We need to develop the historical sense (needed also for the appreciation of the new plays) into a real sensuous delight. When our theaters perform plays of other periods they like to annihilate distance, fill in the gap, gloss over the differences. But what becomes then of our delight in comparisons, in distance, in dissimilarity—which is at the same time a delight in what is close and proper to ourselves?[22]

That the act of adaptation itself, the creative space between one work and another, was the most alienating space of all, is implied by many of Brecht's comments on historization and adaptation. For example, Brecht once remarked that "Courses on drama should begin with a comparison of, for instance, *King John* with the chronicle from which it is supposedly drawn."[23] Few would choose a study of *King John* and its sources to open a drama course, but Brecht's ideal choice

points out that the transformation of history into art, and of one literary work into another,

provides the best example for discussing dialectical drama, in which the power lies not in

internal coherence, but in contradictions between one work and another. Again, Brecht claims

that when it comes to Shakespeare "the whole weight of this kind of drama comes from the

piling up of resistances. The material is not yet arranged in accordance with any wish for an easy

formula . . . the individual himself still has flesh and bones and resists the formula's demands."[24]

That later rules and expectations for playwriting and staging would create formulas that would

eliminate resistances and the effect of montage was one of Brecht's major objections to the

orthodox theater of the late 1800s and early 1900s. The conflicts inherent in the Shakespearean

text provide its richness, just as Brecht's conflict with the classical text as well as the established

theater of his time would create the sense of thought-provoking alienation that he strove for in

his works. Rossi points out that "Shakespeare's drama demonstrated to Brecht how historization

could be put into practice" (158). In turn, Brecht would put what he learned from Shakespeare

and his contemporaries into practice by adapting the works of Shakespeare and other

Renaissance playwrights. Brecht discovered historization at work in Elizabethan texts and

rewrote them in ways that made use of historization, and he also theorized an intimate

connection between the act of literary adaptation and the process of historizing. As past and

present collide, the tension between two eras, two histories, two plays, challenges the audience to

re-envision both the past and the present.

　　　Indeed, adaptation and surrogation are a natural part of historization, and both can be

used to help create the alienation effect. Both adaptation and surrogation are often "alienating" in

the way Brecht wished his alienation effect to be: by rewriting history, surrogation and alienation

both work to make what is old hauntingly familiar and what is present strangely unfamiliar. As

Rossi explains, one purpose of the alienation effect is to "open plays up, making possible the representation of a socially justifiable dialogue between the drama as a historical document and its present audience" (176) The act of rewriting a history play implies overlapping dialogues on multiple levels with different kinds of historical documents. Nothing could be more alienating than revealing cultural surrogation at work and constantly reminding the audience of the anxieties and problems that arise when people become aware of the often violent process through which one human being or work of art replaces another. An audience that is aware that they are watching an act of theatrical surrogation that represents the larger process of cultural surrogation is the ideally alienated epic audience. Through surrogation, the past, which is distant and dead, is understood as both distant and irretrievable and yet as simultaneously ongoing and present: exactly the paradoxical tension that Brecht believed would lead the spectator to better understand the process of history and thus to change the present. An adaptation also offers the distinctly epic possibility of revealing a play's inner-workings, an opportunity to reflect on its own process of creation, as the audience contrasts source and surrogation. One important element of an epic play is that it should be self-reflexive. Brecht called for the epic theater to reveal "the making of art, the active creative element in it."[25] The epic theater "emphasizes the presentation of illusion as illusion," while the alienation effect is the process of "making what convention has rendered familiar appear unfamiliar" (Rossi, 182, Rouse, 273). The interlocking processes of theatrical adaptation and cultural surrogation naturally encourage spectators to reflect on the process of artistic and cultural creation, as the former often exposes the inner-workings of the latter. Surrogation, the filling of a cultural void with a replacement, creates a fusion of past and present that is both uncannily familiar and yet oddly unfamiliar. Although people are usually unaware of the process of cultural surrogation, when faced with the awareness of surrogation in action (as an

audience often is in a theater) the ability of the dead to live on in the bodies of the living often has an effect (intentional or not) that is distinctly alienating in the Brechtian sense. This sense of alienation raises the specter of history, asking the audience to question their relationship to the past and to think about the manner in which they are currently constructing the present.

Yet Brecht's obsession with reviving the theatrical past was part of a larger movement in which modernist writers reevaluated their understanding of history and their relationship to older literature. Hugh Grady notes that it was during the early 1900s that "the revolt against time in the arts was a deeply felt revolt against history—the Hegelian sense of history that had become the West's mythology and self-justification: history as progress, the present as the desired outcome of all that had come before."[26] It was during this "aesthetic revolution" that "narrative, character, teleology, and time as an orderly linear experience—became recorded as aesthetically passé."[27] Gaston points out that it is this vision of history that infects Brecht's *Edward II*, for in Brecht's dark version of London, linear time is a hope unrealized:

> *Edward II* does not offer any hope of progress. Instead, through the trope of the Wheel of Fortune the play brings forward the opposing view of time as cyclical. This fatalistic attitude is symptomatic both of the young Brecht's nihilism and of the Modernist rejection of time conceived as a linear progression. (351)

The vision of history as cyclical in Brecht's *Edward II* differs radically from that in Brecht's later plays, many of which reflect his Marxist beliefs: "The use of history . . . in later works was most likely influenced by Brecht's post-1929 commitment to Marxism, which as a political philosophy is founded on the distinctiveness of historical epochs and the inevitability of progression" (Gaston, 351).[28] One of Brecht's darkest plays, *Edward II* conveys its vision of frustrated teleology through images of skin and flesh marked by repetitive violence.

History is Violent Repetition: Tearing the Skin off of Brecht's Characters

Although *Edward II*, as the first epic play, can claim an influential place in the canon of modern drama, this early play is often overlooked in studies of Brecht's works, and critics have yet to examine the drastic changes in imagery between Brecht's play and Marlowe's. While Marlowe's play is notably violent, Brecht heightens that violence by adding images of skin and flesh that have no source in Marlowe's *Edward II*.[29] As Brecht works rhetorical violence on Marlowe's text, he also peels the outer layer from his characters. Throughout *Edward II*, references to human flesh, torn, flayed, and falling off the body, represent a struggle for change that only reiterates past violence. In *Cities of the Dead,* Roach focuses on rituals of human sacrifice to address the literal wearing of another human being's skin as a performance of cultural surrogation.[30] Wearing the sacrificial victim's skin signals surrogation and repetition, as it is both the destruction and replacement of the other or double (Roach, 148). Roach explains, "as the wearing of the flayed skins of sacrificial victims demonstrates, carnage and costume converge in the 'requickening' performance of waste" (148). "The performance of waste" (Roach's term for violence as a cultural performance) is part of the "sacrificial violence" that is central to surrogation (Roach, 140). The death of the double represents destruction, yet the wearing of the victim's skin is a performance of rebirth that is never actually new life. Although "wearing the second skin" seems to represent a change in identity, it actually represents the continuity (and defines the outer limits) of a community by performing the integration of defeated enemies into that community (Roach, 149). The skinning of a king has even more powerful implications for the future of a culture. As Roach goes on to point out, the metaphor of wearing a monarch's skin represents "the ritual whereby destiny prepares him to be replaced" (150). Throughout *Edward II*, Brecht uses images of skinning and "wearing the second skin" to

represent a culture that is doomed to repeat its own violence. Like Shaw's *Heartbreak House* or Müller's *Hamletmachine*, Brecht's *Edward II* is a theatrical surrogation about the act of surrogation. The play dramatizes a family's conflict between father and son and a nation's fight to find a new leader. The characters struggle to answer the question that is central to surrogation as a cultural process: "by whom shall they (or we) be replaced?" (Roach, 140). Ultimately, the king's skin must come off so that someone else may wear it, but as Roach's theory of surrogation dictates, tearing the skin off of Edward II only leads to further violence.

In Brecht's play, references to violent skinning often represent an exchange in identity between two characters, thus symbolizing a struggle for change that results in continuity. First, Brecht uses the image of skinning to represent Mortimer's changing character. Lancaster's orders to have Gaveston killed call for a brutal death: "kill him, skin him" (190).[31] After Gaveston is led away, Mortimer claims that, "as circumspectly as one burned / I'll wrap myself in someone else's skin / To wit: the skin of Gaveston, the butcher's son" (191). After Gaveston's death, Mortimer begins to take his place, figuratively wearing the skin of his conquered enemy. Once the rational foil for the passionate Edward, Mortimer becomes increasingly passionate and irrational after Gaveston's death (Laboulle, 217). Although Marlowe's Gaveston is a gentleman, Brecht's is the son of a butcher. Throughout the first half of the play, characters constantly describe Gaveston as a "butcher's son," emphasizing both his class status and his association with violence and cruelty. After Mortimer threatens to wear the skin of the butcher's son, other characters begin to refer to Mortimer as "the butcher," and Mortimer's war crimes become increasingly cruel and irrational (232). The metaphor of wearing Gaveston's skin points directly to a change in Mortimer's character. Since the new Mortimer only replaces the dead Gaveston,

however, this change in identity does not change the cast of characters, their original dynamic, or the world of the play. Mortimer's violent change only heralds repetition.

Not only do the play's multiple violent skinnings highlight the idea of history as a series of repetitive acts of violence, but they also suggest the possibility of the outer skin as a mask or disguise. Later in the play Edward tells the Bishop, "years ago I had one face / Of yours cut off, but faces of that kind / Have an annoying way of multiplying" (224). Edward finds that the murder of the peers does not end the war. Faces multiply, as one Bishop replaces another. The end of the play, which shows Edward III taking the throne after the murder of his father, also fixates on repetition, blood, and "disposable" faces, a connection that is highlighted by the pronouncements of Brecht's troubled Queen. Brecht changes the name of the historical Queen Isabella who appears in Marlowe's text to that of Queen Anne.[32] In Brecht's play, Anne takes on the role of a central character, and unlike Marlowe's ambiguous and mysterious Queen Isabella, Queen Anne clearly changes during the course of the play from a victimized wife to a feral "She-wolf." Although Brecht's Anne increasingly succumbs to alcoholism as the play progresses, her garbled messages often prove central to understanding the power struggle between Edward and Mortimer. At the end of the play, Anne addresses her son and describes her husband's death, "You tell me a man has died today, someone / Of whom your face reminds me dimly . . . I forgot him . . . dismissed his voice, his face entirely" (255). In Anne's mind, the face of the son seems to replace the face of the father. Yet Mortimer, like Anne, recognizes that the replacement of one Edward with another is really only the repetition of history. "If your hands aren't stained with blood / It only means they're not stained yet" Mortimer tells the young king. Brecht's ending shows the audience that what seems to herald radical change only foretells violent repetition.[33] In a world in which dead faces multiply and the living dress themselves in the skin of the dead, the

future can only be reached (if it can be reached) by cannibalizing the broken bodies of the past. In Brecht's play, history repeats itself, wearing the same disposable face over and over again.

While this cyclical vision of repeated faces and events suggests that true innovation may be impossible, it also points to the frustrated vision of teleological history that tortures Brecht's characters: Queen Anne connects the loss of the King's flesh to the end of time. Following the history play tradition of the cursing queen, Anne employs the image of repellent flesh to lay a curse on her husband that the rest of the play will work to fulfill:

> I pray that flayed of skin you'll roam, imploring
>
> The end that doesn't come
>
> I pray that when you need a human hand
>
> That hand may be skinless with leprosy
>
> And when you try to run from them and die
>
> They'll hold you and not let you go. (197)

Because the death of the King creates disorder in the royal family as well as the realm, the curse Anne inflicts on Edward's physical body proves to be a curse on the body politic. The body natural is destined for death, and when that death is deferred, history cannot progress. The curse is threefold: it forbids the death of Edward's physical body (in order to prolong his suffering), it foretells the shedding of the King's skin, representing the loss of his royal identity, and it predicts war, disease, and disorder for the country that will hold its King prisoner. Anne also connects the loss of the King's skin to "the end that doesn't come," which is both Edward's death and the apocalypse that the characters constantly anticipate but never experience (197). Throughout the play, Brecht continues to connect images of the apocalypse with images of

melting and decaying flesh. Many of the characters in the play who predict an apocalyptic event

also express a desire for death: a desire that often remains unfulfilled in the play.

Indeed, many of the characters in Brecht's *Edward II* long for, predict, and foresee the

end of time. Again and again, the image of drowning reoccurs as England is imagined as sinking

into the sea.[34] Mortimer observes that "The men of England are preparing / To hurl their island

into the abyss" (176). The archbishop believes that "This island will break and sink into the

ocean" (190). Anne blames the nation's coming apocalyptic destruction on the war: "A war is set

in motion / That will plunge this island into the ocean" (207). The play's plot consists of a war

that the characters are certain will end all wars (if not time itself), and the specter of WWI

continually haunts the stage (Willis, 612). Opposed to the fear that the end of the world is

imminent is the fear that it might not be: a prospect that Brecht's characters find far more

horrifying. Anne responds to Edward's argument that "the world is about to end" with the

observation that the nation is "convulsed with war which . . . will never end" (196). Anne is not

alone in her fear that the world may last entirely too long. Gaveston observes that "A good many

people in London are saying the war will never end" (186).[35] When pursued by his enemies,

Gaveston surrenders himself and chooses to "simply lie down on the ground / To keep from

living to the end of time" (187). In her drunken despair, Anne tells the story of Jonah: "Jonah sat

down and waited / For Nineveh to pass away as promised / Only God was busy somewhere else

and / Nineveh didn't pass away" (229). Like the other literary stories that Brecht's adaptation

references and adapts, the biblical story of Jonah is relevant to Anne's present moment, but takes

on a new twist. Instead of focusing on the prophet in the belly of the whale, Anne focuses on the

plight of Nineveh, a city whose tragedy, in Anne's opinion, is that God forgot to destroy it.[36]

These characters, like the Jonah of Anne's story, sit and wait for the end of the world—but their

world does not pass away. The tragedy of *Edward II* is that the promised apocalypse never arrives. Lying under the curse Anne has placed on their king, Edward's subjects are longing for an "end that doesn't come" (197).

While the loss of skin represents characters' attempts to change themselves in a world that seems to lack the possibility for real innovation, the loss of skin is also associated with the end of time: as the body becomes a figure for history, the break-down of the body is associated with a break-down in linear time. Anne, who sinks deeper into alcoholism and despair as the play progresses, is in some scenes seemingly incoherent. Yet her curse on Edward eventually comes true, and her other speeches, which at first glance seem to carry little meaning, are metaphorically loaded. As the play builds toward its climax, the Queen gathers a kind of prophetic fury about her. The scene in which Anne has the most lines is entitled "The Queen laughs at the emptiness of the world." The title of this pivotal scene suggests that Anne has the power to see to the center of what is troubling the powerful men around her. The Queen already knows what Brecht's other characters increasingly learn—that the world is empty and worthy of nothing but laughter. In this scene, Anne observes that history smells like blood, first stating that "Here in Westminster, amid these tapestries / It reeks of butchered roosters" (229). As Mortimer enlists the help of the Gurneys in murdering Edward, Anne immediately follows her observation about roosters' blood with the following accusation against Mortimer:

> Business! Business! The smell of too much
>
> History within the walls of
>
> Westminster. Won't the skin of your hands
>
> Peel in the lye of London? They are the hands
>
> Of a scribe (228).

For this prophetic Queen, Westminster simultaneously smells of both history and blood. By conflating history and blood, Anne herself suggests the metaphor of decaying flesh as a representation of the frustrated vision of teleological history that the rest of the play depicts. Specifically, the blood Anne smells is the blood of the slaughtered peers, who are compared to roosters elsewhere in the play.[37] History smells like blood, and although Anne uses an animal as a stand-in, the scene implies that this blood is that of those unjustly slaughtered by men in power. Yet the "business" Anne exclaims against is the plotting of her husband's murder: he will be the one unjustly slaughtered now that Mortimer has taken power. In this play, history is merely a story of repetitive violence. Anne's understanding of history is also specifically nonlinear: the blood of the dead lingers—their smell haunts households and monuments. These dead are not forgotten: their bodies make up history, and their presence remains, particularly in the political and personal realm. Brecht's characters increasingly find that their violence does not lead to rebirth, but only to repetition.

In addition to conflating history and blood, this central speech also directly connects history with the play's other major motifs: the loss of skin and the figure of the scribe who records history. The hands of a scribe, Anne says, are those that are dipped in lye. The scribe, someone who records, also uses lye, a corrosive substance used to wash or bleach. In this passage, writing is a kind of violent cleaning. The lye attempts to cover the blood as Mortimer's lies attempt to cover the bloody acts that make up history. The act of recording, which often reduces history to its most superficial appearance, attempting to combine complex causes, effects, and events into a coherent narrative, is an act of violent erasure—an attempt to bleach out the smell of blood. As elsewhere in Brecht's play, Mortimer is the scribe associated with history, and in his attempt to scrub London (and history) with lye, Anne predicts that he should

be worried about losing his skin. In this powerful speech, Anne also predicts that Mortimer's attempts to cover-up his crimes will be futile. Like her other predictions, this one also comes true. The young Edward III has no difficulty in seeing through Mortimer's outer layer and in punishing the murderer for the crimes he tried to conceal and erase.

Not only does the play's plenitude of rotting flesh represent a break-down in the expected movement of history, but the decay of the flesh is also intimately connected to the decay of the realm and the royal family, as Brecht blurs the boundary between the king's two bodies. In Edward's mind, the necessary separation between the king and state is destroyed, and Edward's flayed body as the representation of his broken nation suggests that his unburied corpse will haunt his young son, who must assume power over the state. Ultimately, Anne's curse comes true when Edward tries to remove his crown and finds that this symbol of his royal identity has become a part of his body: "I cannot get it off, my hair comes with it / They have grown together" (222). The Bishop, eager to take the crown at any cost, tries to force the mad King to see reality: "Tear it off! It's not your flesh!" (223). Yet when Edward removes the crown, he imagines that his skin and blood still cling to it, "better hold it in a cloth. It's wet" (223). In order to remove the crown, Edward feels that he must tear his skin off as well. Louise Laboulle explains that for Edward "to surrender the crown would be like losing a vital organ" (216). Ronald Speirs agrees, "Edward feels the crown to be an organic part of his person, his kingship an attitude which he cannot give up without damaging himself" (104).[38] Anne's curse manifests itself not only as a loss of skin, but as a loss of identity: the loss of the crown represents Edward's transformation from prince to prisoner. In this scene, Brecht casts the king's two bodies as one: the crown, representing the body politic, cannot be separated from the King's physical body. This deliberate confusion between the king's two bodies is inspired by a parallel

scene in Marlowe's play. Once Mortimer gains power, he attempts to convince the King to abdicate the throne. While imprisoned by Mortimer and his other political enemies, Marlowe's King, like Brecht's, contemplates the nature of kingship in a moving soliloquy: this scene, in which Edward is deposed, forms the "climax" of Marlowe's critique of the king's two bodies.[39] In his discussion of this central speech, Mitali Pati has argued that "Marlowe's *Edward II* exposes the contradictions inherent in the Tudor paradigm of the sovereign's two bodies, a theory which viewed monarchy as transcendent" (157). The primary conflict in the soliloquy arises when Marlowe's Edward refuses to imagine a monarchy that transcends his physical body. Throughout this scene, Marlowe's "Edward equates his surrender of the crown with death" (Pati, 167). Marlowe's poetry makes the parallel clear: "Here, take my crown—the life of Edward too!" (5.1.57). Crown and life, set parallel to one another in this line, are one in the mind of Edward. Marlowe's Edward believes that he is one king, and that his physical person encompasses both the physical body of the king and the body politic. In some ways, he is right. After he gives up the crown, he will be killed. The loss of the crown is the loss of his life. The physical death of the king often heralds violence and disruption in the state, a temporary loss of "transcendent monarchy." Building on this passage from Marlowe, Brecht makes the king's two bodies one. The inability to separate the crown from Edward's corpse means that the body physical can never really die, and Edward III can never truly be separated from his father.

Because the crown is a part of King Edward's corpse, Edward II cannot be properly buried, and Edward's young son must dress himself in his father's flesh. Although both Marlowe's play and Brecht's are framed by the interrupted funeral of a king, Brecht adds more references to mothers and fathers in his adaptation.[40] In a play obsessed with disjointed families, everyone seems to be talking about their parents: particularly the ones who will not stay buried.

The play opens with Edward II in rebellion against his dead father's wishes, as he brings his banished lover Gaveston back into the country. Speirs points out that "Edward's revolt is much more than a rebellion against the authority of his own father. It is a revolt against all father-figures, against all authorities and all conventions. . ." (93). In this opening scene, Gaveston and Edward work together to humiliate the Bishop, who is also an authoritative father figure.[41] Edward and Gaveston even interrupt the Bishop and Archbishop as the two men are on their way to bury Edward's father, and they prevent the religious leaders from attending the funeral. Gaveston and Edward are not only flagrantly rebellious, but they are also determined to keep Edward's father from being properly laid to rest. This interruption of tradition and order in Marlowe's play becomes a reoccurring motif in Brecht's, as numerous characters recall their parents and admit their inability to separate themselves from the memory of this older generation. Brecht adds speeches in which Gaveston reflects on his parents' disappointment in him. During his first appearance on stage, Gaveston remembers his parents: "My father often said to me: 'Only eighteen / And already fat from drinking . . .' and my mother said: 'when you are buried / Those who mourn you will be scarcer / than a hen's teeth'" (167). Conversing with a peasant also reminds Gaveston of his father (168). Gaveston remembers his mother's attitude toward her own progeny: "For my own mother never found in me / anything out of the ordinary" (179). Baldock also talks a great deal about his mother and claims that his betrayal of Edward is ultimately motivated out of devotion to her: "My mother in Ireland wants bread to eat / Forgive me, my lord" (213, 217). Both Gaveston and Baldock are in some ways unable to separate themselves from their parents. Edward III suffers from a similar problem. At the end of the play, Edward II's burial rites are delayed to allow for the punishment of Anne and Mortimer. Although the play ends with Edward III taking the throne, his father is not yet buried. Young Edward's

final line, "And may God grant to Us / That Our line shall not have drawn corruption / From our mother's womb" fixates on the power of the parents as emblems of the personal and political past, and on his need as a new monarch to separate himself from the troubled reign of his parents (255). Unfortunately, this desired separation proves impossible.

Through the metaphor of the crown as skin, Brecht highlights the inseparable connection between father and son and the violence inherent in usurping political power and in the repetition of history. Edward II's story is one that immediately invokes the memory of violent political usurpation, as his neglect of the nation's needs and his violence against the Peers results in Mortimer forcing him to renounce the crown. Although his young son later seizes power by claiming the crown and ordering Mortimer's execution, the royal genealogy only moves forward through violence. As Edward II reluctantly relinquishes the crown, he warns the Bishop, "now thin blood and scraps of skin, the black / Blood of Edward . . . will stick to it forever" (222). Just as Mortimer donned Gaveston's skin, Edward III will wear that of his father when he places the crown, a part of his father's flesh, on his own head. Kent begs the young Prince, "don't let them persuade you / To take the crown from your father's head" (237). It is a plea against literal and metaphorical violence, as well as a hope for tradition, familial accord, and linear progress. The father should give way to the son: not envelop the future in his old skin. The inability of the son to move on without the father represents a repetition in history. Young Edward, in an attempt to straighten progress out into a linear course, insists that he wants to see his father properly buried before he takes the crown (236). The play, however, ends with a new king, but without a consummating funeral for the old one. Throughout *Edward II*, the old authority is dead but never properly buried. The father's body, its flesh still clinging to the crown, imposes itself on his son, in the same way that old literature continues to impose itself on the new: Brecht's play never

fully extricates itself from Marlowe's canon anymore than Edward III can separate himself from his father's corpse.

Adaptation is Violent Repetition: Tearing the Surface off of Marlowe's Play

Although critical discussions of *Edward II* often focus on the play as a work of literary adaptation, comparing the play with its Marlovian source text, critics have seemed unaware that the play itself constantly comments on its own status as an adaptation. An epigone overwhelmed by its own sense of belatedness, Brecht's play exposes its own internal workings, drawing attention to the process of its own creation and to its status as an adaptation. In an epic ploy, the play draws attention to the violent artistic usurpation involved in its own creation. Throughout Brecht's play, the image of tearing skin is connected to the image of tearing paper: in this motif, the canon is the corpse, and the corpse is the canon, as Brecht consistently presents bodies that represent texts and texts that represent bodies. When Berkley brings a letter from Mortimer, Edward "tears up the letter" and says "may his body be torn like this paper" (225).[42] For Edward, the shredded paper represents the torn flesh of his enemy. As the Archbishop watches the king rip up the proclamation that calls for Gaveston's banishment, he observes, "There's England torn in two" (184). For the Archbishop, as the document is torn, so is the kingdom. Edward is able to read Gaveston's death in Anne's face: "Your face is like a tombstone" (195). Anne's body, which attempts to replace Gaveston's in Edward's bed, is instead only read by Edward as a memorial to Gaveston and a reminder of his death. Edward is also obsessed with having Spencer repeatedly read the list of dead peers' names aloud (209). The recording of their names memorializes them, but also makes their deaths official, and preserves their murders as an experience that Edward can continue to relive. The list of bodies preserves history, and reading

the list is like murdering the peers again. In short, images of the body, text, and history are interwoven, and all three are both the source and the subject of seemingly endless violence.

In addition, Brecht uses constant references to literature, language, and documentation to suggest the intertwined acts of recording history and adapting literature: Brecht's play, like Marlowe's, is overrun with powerful papers, significant letters, and references to the written word. Brecht augments this Marlovian motif, placing even more emphasis on writing and documents in his adaptation. Specifically, Brecht's Mortimer is obsessed with maintaining documentation (and classical literature), while Edward is determined to destroy both: Brecht presents Mortimer as a lover of rhetoric and the written word, while Edward tears up every piece of paper he encounters in the play. As in Anne's speech, the acts of recording and erasing remain contested issues, and the power to write words or to destroy the words written by others determines who holds power throughout the play. Mortimer first appears in a scene in his study, surrounded by books, and the other characters constantly associate him with scholarly pursuits.[43] Laboulle points out that "Mortimer is a foil to Edward, who despises him as a mere book-worm" (217). Edward views Mortimer's scholarship as one of the primary differences between them:

> You Mortimers are bleary-eyed with reckoning.
>
> You are at home in books. Like worms. But books
>
> Say nothing about Edward, who neither reads
>
> Nor reckons, who knows nothing, but is one
>
> With nature and feeds on other food. (204)

While Edward works hard to distance himself from the written word, the play displays an obsessive need for documentation and constantly foregrounds the power of writing and recording. The plot hinges on the peers' desire to force Edward to sign a document that will

banish Gaveston, and the play is filled with letters and proclamations of life-threatening significance, a motif that culminates in the ambiguous Marlovian letter that calls for Edward's death. The characters are intensely aware of the power that written documents hold over them. Gaveston claims that he has "not forgotten that paper on which they wrote / That I am Edward's whore and therefore banished" (168). Characters are judged and punished based on what they write. Gaveston tells the Bishop, "For setting hand to that petition, priest / I'll dip you in the gutter" (171). The key scenes that Brecht adds to Marlowe's play often use writing as the central action to unify the scene (for example, the scene of Mortimer in his study and the scene in which Gaveston writes his will). When he fears the loss of royal power and identity, Brecht's Edward even tries to identify himself by his "baptismal records" (223). In a world full of papers and paper work, Edward is eager to destroy written documents. When he receives a message from a herald saying that Anne has returned to England, Edward rips it up (208). When Berkley brings a letter from Mortimer, Edward "tears up the letter" (225). When ordered to banish his favorite, Edward "tears the document" he has been asked to sign and refuses to banish Gaveston (183). The letter that brings about Edward's death is not the only documentation that is valued as though it were a human life. Lancaster says of the letter Edward writes begging for Gaveston's life, "This paper, my lords, is as good as a battle won" (189). The characters also discuss the power that documents have to change the perception of reality. Mortimer admits that "The things we do will have a different look / Once a king's name is signed to them" (232). In a play filled with powerful documents, Mortimer consistently attempts to preserve and Edward constantly tries to destroy: the two characters act out the conflict of the adaptor of older texts, the author who simultaneously preserves and destroys older art in order to create the artistic future.

As W. E. Yuill points out, Brecht's personal metaphor for the act of adapting an older play was one of violent destruction: Brecht frequently compared the act of literary adaptation to "vandalism" in his critical writings (6). According to Yuill, Brecht argued that a vandal was "more interested in the material value of cultural objects than in their aesthetic appeal. Wood, even when inconveniently carved and gilded, is, after all, a fuel" (6). In other words, the vandal sees past the surface and recognizes the deep structure: by defacing and destroying the surface, the vandal/artist is able to access the interior. Brecht imagined literary adaptation as an act of rebellious violence that ripped the surface from the original aesthetic object. Yet Brecht's vandalism is simultaneously both an act of desecration and one of preservation. As Heinemann explains, Brecht's adaptations of earlier literary works always show that "sacrilege sanctifies" (243). According to Womack, Brecht "used the theatrical past as a crack in the present through which one could grab at a future" (81). The old literature must be preserved in order to create a dialectical effect: "The point of adapting plays from earlier times—and Brecht's models are almost always chosen from the classical repertoire—is to illustrate the historical dialectic by creating an instructive contrast between the original in its historical context and the contemporary version" (Yuill, 7). Speirs agrees, writing of Brecht's later adaptations that these plays are "mainly concerned with developing in the audience a dialectical-historical understanding of social processes by presenting it with pictures of life in past ages and inviting it to perceive critically both the parallels and the contrasts between the past and present" (89). The artist/vandal needs raw material to destroy, yet only the preservation of old art will allow for the creation of new.

In a play filled with books, letters, and other documentation, and in which the characters frequently discuss, manipulate, and struggle against written language, the act of writing is also

inevitably bound up with the act of recording (and creating) history. Many of the characters are worried about how future generations will interpret the events of the play. In a reflexive move, Brecht creates characters in his history play who are concerned about how historical documents will either guide or mislead future readers. Edward accuses the Bishop of acting simply "Because you want England's royal vine to perish / And Edward's name to be missing from the chronicles" (222). The Archbishop tells Edward: "You have destroyed / All evidence and so confused the issue / Between us, you and Gaveston, that all / Eternity will never sort it out. / Your version, Edward, will not long have credit" (203). One of the play's major topics is the documentation of history: even when that documentation proves to be imaginary. As Juris Svendsen points out, "Everything about this play indicates the plaguing mood of history" (164). Intensely aware of its own status as a history play, this text carries documentation to its absurd outer limit: each scene is headed by a fictionalized date and time (Laboulle, 215). Laboulle observes of Brecht's structure, "Not only does he repudiate historical facts, he perverts them, deliberately inventing a series of dates for which there is no evidence in Holinshed, Marlowe or anyone else" (215). Womack points out that "the point is not to tighten up on Marlowe's facts, but to stress the play's formal character—that it is not an autonomous work of art but 'a report on events'" (80). While the play self-referentially asserts its own status as historical record, it simultaneously reminds the audience of the importance of heeding history. Mortimer deliberately chooses assassins who are not familiar with the history of their own nation. "Have you ever read a chronicle?" he asks the Gurneys before assigning them the job of assisting Lightborn in murdering Edward (229). Because the play later implies that the Gurneys are murdered for the role they played in Edward's death, their negative response to Mortimer's question about chronicles signs their own death warrants. A history play that adapts an older history play,

Brecht's work is concerned both with the importance of writing and remembering history as well as the act of literary adaptation itself.

Throughout the play, the need to record and rewrite history is connected to the urge to adapt older literature: Brecht's characters consistently return to the literature of the past in order to understand their present historical moment. The scholarly Mortimer first appears in the play "at home with his books, alone" (174). According to Deborah Willis, "Brecht's Mortimer, not a military figure but an intellectual nihilist whose reading of the classics has given him 'insight into the futility of human affairs,' is at first reluctant to come out of his study and take sides with the other nobles" (612). Indeed, Mortimer is strongly associated with literature and history throughout the play. Both his association with literature and documentation, as well as the level of manipulative control he wields over the other characters, suggest that in some ways Mortimer is the play's author/historian who is rewriting/revising history. Certainly, he is the character who most often adapts the literature of the past into a metaphor for his present historical moment. In the early scene set in Mortimer's study, the Archbishop accuses Mortimer of choosing history over the present: "While in seclusion Mortimer, you wallow / in classical literature and meditate / on bygone times" (174). The Archbishop seeks to turn the scholarly Mortimer into a soldier, and he attempts to lure the disaffected noble away from his books with the argument that "it's time to let the classics be classics" (175). Implied in this statement is the notion both that the past ("the classics") exist, already constructed, without any help from present readers, as well as the idea that the classics (and the past) cannot inform or alter the present and that they should remain inviolate in their "classic" state. What Mortimer and the other characters in the play find again and again is that the historical, familial, and literary past cannot be separated from their present moment. Mortimer's response to the Archbishop contextualizes Edward's affair with Gaveston

in terms of other famous affairs in literature. Mortimer's answer is also drawn directly from a

passage in Marlowe's play: "The classics tell us that Alexander the Great / Loved his

Hephaestion, that wise Socrates / Loved Alcibiades, that Achilles sickened / for Patroclus"

(175).[44] There are two levels of commentary in this exchange. First, Mortimer's response to the

Archbishop's claim is the counter argument that Mortimer's books, as records of the literary and

historical past, represent the political unrest of the present. Mortimer shows that the past in

Edward II remains present: the "classics" do not remain in the past. On another level, a reader

familiar with Marlowe's play recognizes the paraphrase of Marlowe in this passage. When the

Archbishop tells Mortimer that it is time to "let the classics be classics," the scholarly Mortimer

responds by quoting Marlowe's classic play. In this reflexive moment, Brecht's adaptation

engages in the same theoretical conversation his characters are having: Brecht does not leave

Marlowe's "classic" in its original style or context, but insists on bringing the older text forward

into the present.

Another work of literature that cannot remain in the past is the *Iliad*. References to Troy

appear throughout the play, but Mortimer gives the longest discourse on the subject in his speech

to the peers. As he attempts to convince Edward to banish his favorite, Mortimer relies on Troy

as a metaphor for the present political conflict. The speech is filled with the images of drowning

that haunt Brecht's play. In Mortimer's recounting of the Trojan war, "From shattered ships men

speared the drowning / Like tuna fish," and "The crabs / Grew fat that year in the Skamander

River / But no one ate them" (181). This imagery, associated with the apocalypse in Brecht's

play, is in Mortimer's speech associated with the Trojan War. The use of the word "whore" to

describe both Gaveston and Helen creates another clear parallel. Mortimer goes on to compare

the two situations directly, "if reason, by and large were not inhuman / And human ears not

plugged . . . Troy, which was four times bigger than our London / would still be standing" (182). Yet the speech concludes with the observation that if humans had behaved like humans and been capable of communicating with each other, "We would not have had the Iliad" (182). Great suffering makes for great art, Mortimer argues sarcastically. Reflexively turning back on itself, Brecht's violent play reveals the act of its own creation, just as its violent imagery reminds the reader that the transformation of history into literature is a painful process and that adaptation is a violent act that strives to tear the surface from the source text.

In the end, *Edward II* is an adaptation about the act of adaptation, and the play's interconnected image patterns—the tearing of human skin, the ripping of written pages, the dissolution of the family, and the break-down in the linear progress of history—comment on each other and on the creative process. Brecht is himself adapting an adaptation: his work builds on Marlowe's play, which is itself an adaptation of events recorded in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, a record that is one culture's attempt to make sense of its own history. Indeed, writing history is an act of adaptation, or sometimes, as Brecht's prophetic Queen suggests, an act of erasure. Like Brecht's literary vandalism, however, the act of recording history both preserves and destroys: recording history on the page reduces history to its surfaces, to its skin, and while that simple surface is preserved, the actual details are sometimes destroyed or lost. If the need to tear off the dead skin of history is an attempt at regeneration, the same could be said for the kind of literary vandalism that rips the surface from the older work of art in an attempt to get at its underlying structure. The human form is less malleable, however, and there seems to be no hope for rebirth among Brecht's tortured characters, who lose kingdom, identity, and skin. In Brecht's Westminster, no amount of lye ever really bleaches out the smell of their blood. The spirits of the past—the fathers, the dead kings, the old playwrights—remain, and there will be no revolution

without first reclaiming those ancestors, without first taking a walk in their skin. In Brecht's

Edward II, history only moves forward in the company of ghosts.

Chapter Four

"A MOTHER'S WOMB IS NOT A ONE-WAY STREET": Reentering the Shakespearean

Womb of *Hamletmachine*

> . . . About her middle round
> A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing barked
> With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
> A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
> If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
> And kennel there, yet there still barked and howled,
> Within unseen . . .
>   *-Paradise Lost,* 2.653-659.

> What's your corpse to me?
>   -Hamlet to his father's ghost, *Hamletmachine*

Urged on to acts of violence by various ghosts, Müller's characters are obsessed with the origins they cannot stop regretting, the wounds they cannot stop reopening, and the wombs they cannot stop reentering. *Hamletmachine* is a text that constantly comments on its own primal scene, relentlessly reminding the reader of its Shakespearean genesis. As many critics have pointed out, the cannibalization to which the play subjects its Shakespearean source is every bit as violent as the fury the play turns against the human form.[1] Indeed, the cannibalization of the text and the dismemberment of the body bear a strong symbolic connection in Müller's play. Ultimately, both represent violent acts of surrogation, ways of destroying yet preserving the cultural and literary dead. *Hamlet* is a play deeply concerned with the act of cultural surrogation, and *Hamletmachine*, itself a theatrical surrogate for the original *Hamlet*, amplifies its source play's fears of the dangers inherent in genealogies, duplications, and replacements, and projects them obsessively onto the play's tortured landscape. While Müller's style of violent

appropriation has received a great deal of critical attention, scholars have yet to note the illuminating intersections between Müller's thought and that of Joseph Roach or to explore the implications of Müller's use of the human body as a symbol of theatrical, historical, and literary surrogation. Many of Müller's works, particularly the haunting *Hamletmachine*, would multiply surrogation upon surrogation, engaging the dynamics of memory, destruction, and replacement on many complex and interconnected levels. Throughout his writings and interviews, Müller's exploration of surrogation in theater, culture, and literature employs metaphors of the human body as a figure for history and literary adaptation. These symbols become central to his rewriting of *Hamlet*, as Müller's Hamlet violently attacks his father and his mother, figures whose bodies represent history and art. Müller's Hamlet oscillates between attacks on his mother, whose womb serves as a central symbol of past traumas: physical, literary, historical, and cultural, and attacks on his father, who represents the authority of patriarchal culture and the power of an author-centered literary canon.[2] Ultimately, both figures symbolize a past against which the young Hamlet struggles, just as Müller's text struggles against its Shakespearean source. In *Hamletmachine*, Müller's violence against his predecessor's canon and Hamlet's violence against the body of both father and mother suggest the anxieties of cultural and artistic surrogation, a fear of eternal reoccurrence, and a struggle to destroy and yet to preserve the corpse/corpus of the past.

"A king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar": Surrogation is Cannibalism

Heiner Müller is the postmodern dramatist who was most thoroughly obsessed with theatrical surrogation, the writer who would take Bernard Shaw's threat to dig up the corpse representing the old canon to its metaphorical and aesthetic fulfillment. Müller's writing shows a

life-long engagement with theatrical, literary, and cultural surrogation. Although the playwright died shortly before theorists such as Joseph Roach and Marvin Carlson began to theorize the haunted theater, he deliberately presented himself as a grave robber through his public persona, and he explained his approach to drama and literary adaptation through metaphors of raising the dead, cannibalism, and haunting.[3] Carlson points to Müller's drama as a place of particularly powerful ghosts, and Müller scholars have adopted the term 'Theater der Erinnerung' (Theater of Memory) to describe his canon.[4] This sense of overwhelming memory is literary as well as cultural and historical. Following in the footsteps of Brecht, Müller made a career of adapting other playwright's works.[5] Carl Weber describes Müller's method of literary adaptation: "Müller deconstructs classic narratives to quite 'elementary' particles, and then reconstructs from them a text for our age. His radical surgery on revered epics or tragedies goes far beyond mere adaptation; it dynamites their narrative to get at the roots of their meaning."[6] Jeanette Malkin views Müller's theater as particularly intertwined with cultural memory, for his work "explores both the massive traces left by a ruinous past upon the collective memory and the continued eruptions of that past in the present" (71). Jonathan Kalb agrees that "Every text Müller wrote was, in some fashion, dialogue with the dead" because he created "most of his texts in direct response to other literary works" (15). Kalb explains Müller's method of handling the plays and playwrights of the past as "occupying the corpus like a vampire or virus in order to explode it from within" (15). Müller was a writer who worked primarily in adaptation, and his method of rewriting older plays suggests the violent destruction of the old canon.

In fact, his plays, interviews, and other writings show that Müller frequently used the metaphor of the grave robber to explain modern drama's engagement with the art of the past. His language suggests an intimate connection between history, literary canon, performance, and

corpse, as he uses metaphors of the human body to explain his approach to history and adaptation. Müller conceived of theater as an act of surrogation, a performance of the dead for the dead. The playwright repeatedly explained the nature of theatrical performance as that which empties the grave: "If we do have a theater, it will be a theater of resurrection . . . our work is raising the dead; the theater troupe is recruited from ghosts who must return to their graves after the performance."[7] He goes on to say that the set is "a travel guide through the landscapes beyond death."[8] Müller's conception of theater mirrors the work of recent performance theorists. David Savran points out that "If the playtext is indeed a kind of memorial, then the theatrical performance must be akin to awakening the dead."[9] One might take Roach's ideas one step further with Müller, who claims that he writes for the dead, because "the dead ones are the majority. There are many more dead people than living ones, and you have to write for a majority."[10] Rebecca Kastleman explains that "Müller imagines his theatre as a vast cemetery" and that this aesthetic works toward "opening the eyes of the audience to the hidden presence of the dead."[11] For Müller, it was a point worth repeating, as he said elsewhere that "The dead are in an overwhelming majority when compared with the living. And Europe has a wealth of dead stored up on that side of the ledger."[12] This statement suggests the heavy weight of the dead generations bearing down on the living. Metaphorically, a performance of the dead for the dead is cultural surrogation in its purest form. A performance that evokes ghosts to speak directly to history is a cultural ritual akin to ancestor worship: this is drama at its fullest cultural power as envisioned by Roach and Carlson. For Müller, the living performers represent ghosts who communicate with the past, leaving the living in the audience to look on, as they are silently surrounded by the ancestors that the performance summons for them. Roach explains that through surrogation, "audiences may come to regard the performer as . . . a medium for speaking

with the dead" (78). For Müller, drama is about the dead, about preserving and speaking to history. Müller explains that "There is always theatre time and there is theatre space," but the stage "doesn't pretend to depict things. It's something with its own scale of values."[13] The stage does not "pretend to depict" the past, it directly invokes it: it engages the audience in what Müller calls a "dialogue with the dead." The playwright explains, "We have to dig up the dead again and again, because only from them can we obtain a future. Necrophilia is love of the future. One has to accept the presence of the dead as dialogue partners or dialogue-disturbers— the future will emerge only out of dialogue with the dead."[14] Only through surrogation can "necrophilia" be the "love of the future." Müller understood the human corpse as an "effigy of flesh" that represents the past and yet simultaneously moves society into the future. It is impossible to move into the future without first dealing with the past, a past that for Müller was constantly cast in the language of corpses and of grave robbers—the language of surrogation. Yet for Müller the human body was a metaphor not just for theater, but also for history itself. According to Müller, the problem with history is "that it's covered with flesh and skin, surface. The main impulse is to get through the surface in order to see the structure."[15] Like Brecht, Müller suggested that one must tear the skin off of history in order to see the deep structure lying beneath.

Throughout Müller's writing, the metaphor of the grave robber represents not only theatrical performance and history itself, but also the act of literary adaptation. Müller described the process of writing *Hamletmachine* as an act of destruction and desecration:

> The first preoccupation I have when I write drama is to destroy things. For thirty
> years Hamlet was a real obsession for me, so I tried to destroy him by writing a
> short text, *Hamletmachine.* German history was another obsession, and I tried to

destroy this obsession, this whole complex. I think the main impulse is to strip

things to their skeleton, to rid things of their flesh and surface. Then you are

finished with them.[16]

For Müller, the act of composition is one of stripping the canon of its skin, the same metaphor

through which he explains theatrical performance and human history itself. The writing of

Hamletmachine is intended to destroy both literary and cultural history, and throughout the play

Müller presents both destructions as an act of violence against the human body. Through the act

of surrogation, all three are connected: the human body that remembers and embodies the past,

the drama that awakens motion and memory in the body of both the living and the dead, and the

history that the body relives through dramatic adaptation and performance. Again, Müller

explains that writing drama is the act of robbing the grave: "I believe that the function of

literature at this point is something like the liberation of the dead. *Der Lohndrucker* [*The Scab*,

1957], my first published play, was very much an archaeological work. I wanted to dig up things

that had been covered by dirt and history and lies. Digging up the dead and showing them in the

open."[17] Müller's plays frequently display his attitude toward literary adaptation as the violation

of a corpse, as well as his conception of literature as the frightening and dangerous "liberation of

the dead." Weber describes Müller's *Explosion of a Memory* as a play that "conjures an uprising

of the multitudes that were slaughtered and dumped into the pit of human history," its

performance revealing a motif common to many of Müller's works, that of "the resurrection of

the dead as a violent, revolutionary act."[18] For Müller, however, robbing the grave and tearing

off the surface is only the first step in surrogating the old corpse/canon.

Müller himself began the common trend in Müller criticism of referring to his works as

acts of literary cannibalism. Müller once said that "To know [the dead], you have to eat them.

And then you spit out the living particles . . . [Reading is] an absolute luxury. Eating literature is faster."[19] Again, the canon is the corpse and the corpse is the canon: both must be eaten in order to truly internalize the past and to make it a part of the future. Kirk Williams explains Müller's use of the motif of cannibalism: "Eating is a kind of memorialization, at least according to Freud, who exerts his own influence on Müller's text. To take the lost object into oneself cannibalizing and consuming it through ritual or metaphor, is one way that the subject masters the potentially paralyzing ambivalence of loss" (188-189). The process of surrogation maintains a constant tension between the desire to properly bury the past and yet keep the past alive in the bodies of the living: with this concern over bodies, both living and dead, comes attendant anxieties about cannibalism. According to Roach there is "a deeper terror that lurks at the heart of surrogation as a cultural process: the fear of being replaced, a fear that plays itself out in tropes of monstrosity and especially cannibalism."[20] In *Cities of the Dead*, Roach examines cultures in which ritual cannibalism performed the role of cultural surrogation (140). The mythology of cannibalism, which suggests that the cannibal gains the power and knowledge of the dead by consuming their bodies, also suggests the paradox central to surrogation as a cultural process: cannibalism represents destruction and yet repetition. By eating the victim, the cannibal both destroys and yet preserves, making the body of the surrogated into a literal part of the surrogate's body. Williams explains, "The dead live on, but they do not return; eating the dead, to paraphrase Müller, allows us to know them and to be finished with them at the same time" (189).

In both *Hamlet* and *Hamletmachine*, cultural surrogation is equated with cannibalism, a metaphorical motif in *Hamlet* that finds fulfillment on stage in Müller's rewriting. Considering *Hamlet's* central canonical status and its central interest in surrogation, it is not surprising that this particular play became the source of a long-lasting fixation for Müller, nor that he chose it as

the source text for the most celebrated of his many works of theatrical surrogation, a play that

many critics consider to be his greatest work. A failure in surrogation is central to *Hamlet's* plot:

King Hamlet's murder and Claudius's usurpation show the failure of the son to adequately

replace the father. In Shakespeare's play, murder, incest, and political intrigue all represent a

broken genealogy. This failure in surrogation produces a replacement King who is inadequate

and leads to a duplication in father figures that requires a haunting to reestablish the past's proper

hold on the present. Surrogation includes any kind of cultural reproduction, one of its most

common forms being the replacement of the parent with the child. As Roach points out, children

are "both the auguries of surrogation and its realization in the fullness of time" (125). Although

surrogation often involves parents and children, it plays a doubly powerful role when that parent

is also a king. Leaders, like celebrities, are in particular need of cultural surrogates (Roach, 37).

The death of a king is an important event for a community's sense of cultural stability and the

disposal of the King's remains and memory can become a source of particular anxiety: "It seems

that the most powerful natural symbol for the continuity of any community, large or small,

simple or complex, is, by a strange and dynamic paradox, to be found in the death of its leader,

and in the representation of that striking event" (Roach, 37). For Hamlet, the question of how the

King's body should be remembered, transformed, and preserved into the future is bound up in

the continuity of a community whose genealogy of security and memory has been permanently

disrupted by violence.

Throughout Shakespeare's play, the Prince is obsessed not only with dead fathers and

kings, but also with images of the human body transformed in death, and with how the bodies of

the past, the corpse of the father/king, can find life in new bodies. Specifically, he repeatedly

suggests that the body of the dead king is a cultural effigy that the populace consumes through

cannibalism, a motif that serves as a central point of inspiration for Müller's violent rewriting. The metaphor of the king's body as a source of nourishment for the people appears throughout *Hamlet*. In the graveyard, the Prince contemplates the remains of great men, and he imagines that "Imperious Caesar dead and turned to clay / Might stop a hole to keep the wind away" (5.1.213-14, 203-204).[21] Caesar's transformed body becomes a dwelling place for the people. Discussing the dead Polonius, the father figure mistaken for Claudius behind the arras, leads Hamlet to contemplate not just the dead body of the father figure, but surrogation as cannibalism. The text of *Hamlet*, like the text of *Hamletmachine,* presents overlapping father figures who are killed and cannibalized. As Janet Adelman explains, "The fathers Hamlet tries so strenuously to keep separated keep threatening to collapse into one another; even when he wants to kill one to avenge the other he cannot quite tell them apart."[22] According to Hamlet, the body of Polonius, the father figure who stands in at various points in the play for both King Hamlet and Claudius, is "At supper . . . Not where he eats, but where 'a is eaten; a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him" (4.4.19-20). This line clearly refers not just to Polonius, but also to Hamlet's father, for the Prince goes on to say that "A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm" (4.4.27-28). When Claudius interrogates Hamlet, the prince claims that he speaks only to "show you how a King may go / a progress through the guts of a beggar" (4.3.27). Throughout *Hamlet*, the Prince represents his father's decaying corpse as being simultaneously a symbol of the past and yet a source of social continuity: the king/father, as consumed effigy of flesh, lives on in the bodies of his people. In the case of Polonius, the cannibalized dead live on in the bodies of the living, while in the case of Caesar, the living dwell in the cannibalized body of the dead. Adelman describes Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as a "grotesquely oral world" in which "everything is ultimately meat for a single table" (27).

Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt explain the cannibalistic concerns of Shakespeare's Hamlet:

> By insisting on the vulnerability of matter and its grotesque metamorphoses, by dwelling upon the transformation of the dead into endlessly recycled food, by dragging a king through the guts of a beggar, Hamlet bitterly protests against the ghostly transmission of patriarchal memory and against the whole sacrificial plot in which the son is fatally appointed to do his father's bidding.[23]

Not only does Hamlet's mockery of the King's decaying body object to the imposition of patriarchal memory, but it also explores the dark implications of preserving that memory within the living, and of preserving the living through the dead whose bodies nourish them. Ultimately, Hamlet's riddles about cannibalism point to the larger breakdown in cultural surrogation and memory that lies at the center of the conflict in Denmark. Even more importantly for Müller's work, *Hamlet's* motif of metaphorical cannibalism hints at an overturn in established hierarchies of power. As Gallagher and Greenblatt explain, in Hamlet's cannibalistic metaphors "revulsion is mingled with a sense of drastic leveling, the collapse of order and distinction into polymorphous, endlessly recycled materiality" (161).

In these lines, Hamlet represents the king as being cannibalized by the people, and on one level it is a thought of political subversion to imagine the body of the king devoured by a beggar, to claim that "your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table—that's the end" (4.4.23-25). This equation reduces the king's physical body to the status of a beggar's corpse, thus stripping him of his royal power. In Hamlet's lines the beggar appears to hold power over the body of the king because death transforms the king into the sacrificial victim that feeds the beggar. At the same time, the king maintains his power over the beggar: the death

of the leader and his internalization as cannibalized effigy of flesh suggests the continuity of the

consumed surrogate and his power to feed the future. As in Shakespeare's play, the cannibalized

King represents multiple father figures in Müller's text: King Hamlet, Stalin, Shakespeare, and

even Müller himself. The use of these overlapping father figures allows Müller to explore

complex interchanges of memory and power between those who eat and those who are eaten.

 "What's your corpse to me?": Dealing with the Corpse/Corpus of the Father

Through the metaphor of cannibalism, both *Hamlet* and *Hamletmachine* interrogate the

cultural role of the dead and their pervasive presence in the land of the living. What is internal

and metaphorical in *Hamlet*, however, becomes external and actual in *Hamletmachine*.[24] Thus,

Müller's Hamlet participates in the actual cannibalization of his father: "I stopped the funeral

procession, I pried open the coffin . . . and I dispensed my dead procreator FLESH LIKES TO

KEEP THE COMPANY OF FLESH among the bums around me. The mourning turned into

rejoicing, the rejoicing into lip-smacking . . ." (53).[25] It is significant that the eating of the king

interrupts his funeral procession, because as Roach points out, processions often represent

genealogies and can function as performances that preserve cultural memory (138). Specifically,

the funeral procession, that which is meant to simultaneously preserve the memory of Hamlet's

father and to lay his ghost to rest, is interrupted by the act of cannibalism, which represents

another way of remembering and internalizing the dead king. Hamlet's belief that "FLESH

LIKES TO KEEP THE COMPANY OF FLESH" reflects the importance of keeping the father's

flesh alive in the flesh of the living. As in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, cannibalization is an act of

surrogation that gives a false perception of overturned social hierarchies. At first glance, the

"bums" who eat the king now appear to have power over their dead leader, but the fact remains

that the hungry cannibals not only need the memory of their leader to nourish them, but they also keep the leader's flesh alive through the act of dismembering and consuming his body. This false appearance of revolutionary social action works on multiple levels, because the cannibalized body of this particular father proves to represent not just one father figure, but many.

Throughout *Hamletmachine*, Müller's text represents Shakespeare as a fallen cultural icon, a figure whose corpse/corpus is cannibalized by his offspring. As the father of drama is superimposed over the other father figures of the text, he becomes one of four patriarchs in the play (Stalin, King Hamlet, Shakespeare, and Müller) who are cannibalized by their own progeny. Critics have long concurred that King Hamlet is associated throughout the text with the dead Stalin.[26] Both Arlene Teraoka and Richard Halpern recognize the first scene of *Hamletmachine* as the state funeral of both Stalin and King Hamlet, with the bodies and identities of the two dead leaders metaphorically overlapping (97, 271). Müller makes it clear, however, that in this multilayered and complex text, the figure of Shakespeare is equally present as literary father and dramatic forerunner. Perhaps Müller's decision to conflate Shakespeare with King Hamlet was influenced by the theatrical tradition claiming that Shakespeare played the role of the father's ghost in the original production of *Hamlet*. In any case, the king on a progress through the guts of a beggar in *Hamletmachine* turns out to be Shakespeare himself.

Again and again, Müller associates King Hamlet and Stalin with the central symbol of the suit of armor, armor that Müller would associate elsewhere in his writings with Shakespeare. This armor, which Hamlet's father wears when he appears as a ghost in Shakespeare's text, is interpreted by the men on the battlements as a sign of political unrest in the state of Denmark. After seeing the ghost of the dead king armed for battle, Horatio interprets the war-like apparition: "This bodes some strange eruption to our state" (1.1.68). The image of the patriarch

as an armored ghost making his way among the living is one that Müller also uses to suggest the "eruption" of the state, as the appearance of the ghost precedes the Hungarian revolution alluded to later in *Hamletmachine*. As Teraoka points out the armor also "symbolizes the traditional role prescribed for Hamlet the son" (100). Halpern agrees that the donning of the armor marks a change in Hamlet's character: "Hamlet assumes his counterrevolutionary role by donning the armor of his father" (274). At the end of the play, when Hamlet puts on the armor of his father and kills Marx, Lenin, and Mao, he finally adopts the role of the patriarchal figure who opposes the revolutionary Ophelia and her followers (Teraoka, 104). In essence, the end of the play shows Hamlet's failure as a revolutionary, as through donning the armor of the father, he is transformed into the father, continuing the cycle of violence passed down to him (Teraoka, 108). Although these interpretations of the armor's significance have been well documented, no one has yet noted that the armored figure of Stalin/King Hamlet is also Shakespeare. The final section of *Hamletmachine* is titled, "FIERCELY ENDURING MILLENIUMS IN THE / FEARFUL ARMOUR." In a speech delivered at the Shakespeare Festival in Weimar, "Shakespeare a Departure," Müller associates this Friedrich Hölderlin quotation with the historical Shakespeare: "A Hölderlin fragment describes the still-incarcerated Shakespeare: MADDENING ENDURANCE / IN THE DREADED ARMOUR / MILLENNIA. The Shakespeare Wilderness. What is he waiting for, why inside armor, and for how long."[27] Müller thinks of Shakespeare as the figure who endures millennia trapped within the patriarchal armor. Shakespeare, imprisoned in the armor associated with Stalin and Hamlet Senior in the text of *Hamletmachine*, becomes yet another patriarchal figure that the play attempts to subvert but can only re-inscribe upon itself. These same anxieties are evident in the text's struggle with the Shakespearean womb that gave it genesis: in rewriting the original *Hamlet*, Müller

simultaneously preserves the Shakespearean past and yet creates the dramatic future, working both to "erase" the original Hamlet character and to suggest the need for a postmodern revision of Shakespeare's text.

Indeed, the text of *Hamletmachine* represents the anxieties of the adaptor through the metaphor of cannibalism: the act of rewriting Shakespeare both destroys the old text and yet simultaneously uses the old text as nourishment for the new (Williams, 188). Hamlet describes the set of *Hamletmachine*, "The set is a monument. It presents a man who made history . . . his name is interchangeable" (56). It isn't clear which history-making father figure this section of the text addresses, but Hamlet points out that their names all represent the same cultural force. Hamlet continues, "The monument is toppled into the dust, razed by those who succeeded him in power three years after the state funeral of the hated and most honored leader" (56). The reference to the fall of Stalin's statue, which was dismembered and decapitated by rioters during the failed Hungarian revolution of 1956, is unmistakable (Teraoka, 98). The monument, however, simultaneously represents the other father figures in the armor: King Hamlet and Shakespeare. In this case, the toppling of the monument by "those who succeeded him in power" is the rise of other powerful dramatists (like Müller himself) who push Shakespeare's canon, and the dramatic tradition he represents, aside. After the monument falls, Hamlet tells the audience that "the stone is inhabited. In the spacy nostrils and auditory canals, in the creases of skin and uniform of the demolished monument, the poorer inhabitants of the capital are dwelling" (56). The image of the people living in the body of the dead dictator is clearly inspired by Shakespeare's image of Caesar's body stopping "a hole to keep the wind away." As a form of surrogation that inverts cannibalism, the idea of the living dwelling in the body of the dead suggests the same false inversion of power dynamics implied by eating the king's body. The

people destroy the statue in an act of rebellion, yet when the statue of the dead leader is destroyed, they find that they must make their homes from the remains of the old regime. As the people feed off of the dead dictator, dwelling in his body, the text of *Hamletmachine* feeds off of the body of the Shakespearean *Hamlet*, living in its text. The fallen "monument" of Shakespeare represents both the "original" text of Hamlet and the "dead" literary tradition it represents. Savran points out that through the body of the actor, "the theatre sometimes becomes a site for *re-membering,* literally piecing together what has been lost" (123). In this case, the dismemberment of the father becomes a source of remembering and re-membering, a way of reconfiguring the past through the human body in performance. According to Brian Walsh, Müller "preserves and annuls Shakespeare's text in presenting us with a *Hamlet* play that both reiterates and remakes the classic story."[28] Helen Fehervary agrees that "Müller's Hamlet survives by destroying the ghosts of his political fathers and the inspirational ghost of Shakespeare as well."[29] Yet the "inspirational ghost" of *Hamlet* can never be truly absent from Müller's work, as its dismembered parts litter the landscape of *Hamletmachine*. Through the use of the Hölderlin quotation, Müller suggests that the rioting crowds not only bring down and dismember Stalin's monument, but also the monument of Shakespeare—the very text of *Hamlet*. Like the destruction of Stalin's monument, however, the destruction/cannibalization of *Hamlet* also suggests a false revolution, a false change in established hierarchies. The new text seems to gain power through the destruction of a symbol of power, but it is unable to fully separate itself from the old text that it has internalized. As long as *Hamletmachine* and adaptations like it continue to be performed and remembered, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* will never truly represent a "dead" literary tradition. In this way, *Hamletmachine* is indeed the theater of raising the dead.

Yet Shakespeare is not the only dramatist who is destroyed in effigy during the course of *Hamletmachine's* performance. Hamlet's tearing of Müller's photograph is a gesture that destroys the image of the dramatist, thus depriving the text of its literary parent, an act that subjects Muller to the same metaphorical violence he has worked on his dramatic predecessor. Mark Fortier explains, "White, male, European, privileged, authorial, Müller uses his talent in working toward his own expropriation" (13). In a speech on postmodernism, Müller stated

> As long as freedom is based on brutal force and the creation of art on privileges, artistic creations will tend to be prisons and masterpieces will be the accomplices of power. The truly great texts of our century work towards the liquidation of their autonomy . . . they work towards the expropriation and, finally, the disappearance of the author. Working towards the disappearance of the author means resistance against the disappearance of man.[30]

This passage reveals an author intensely aware of his own cultural and social power as an artist. Fehervary explains Müller's anxiety, "In East German literature the question of authorship is inherently linked to the notion of art as a form of societal production and the identity of the artist as producer" (41). Müller's postmodern philosophy recognizes the dangerous cultural power of the educationally, economically, and politically privileged author, who though he may attempt to represent the struggle of marginalized groups is doomed to failure because he will inevitably be an outsider to their discourse. When one individual attempts to speak for a large number of people, voices will inevitably be lost. In attempting to represent those voices, Müller argues, the canonized masterpiece inadvertently participates in their silencing. As Fortier points out, Müller's drama attempts to stage "a giving way of the author function before collective creation" (12). Teraoka agrees that the destruction of the author's photograph, "points to the privileged

author's paradoxical endeavor to eliminate all privilege in art" (102). Ironically, the destruction

of the author's image is a gesture that is itself doomed to contradict the artistic statement it

attempts to convey. Walsh notes that through the tearing of his photograph Müller both

"preserves and annuls his own authority" (26). Though the destruction of the photograph

suggests Müller's attempt to eliminate his presence from his own drama, it simultaneously re-

inscribes his image on the play, as productions that follow the stage directions will display his

face as a part of the performance. If Müller has given birth to *Hamletmachine*, he will never be

separated from his own literary progeny.

Like the people feasting on the flesh of the dead dictator, the new author attempts to

devour and destroy the old text: through distorted echoes of Shakespeare's play, Müller attacks

canonized literature that he feels no longer speaks to the modern audience. As Walsh observes

"Müller's play . . . challenges *Hamlet's* capacity to offer us meaningful answers" (26). Müller's

Hamlet says, "My drama doesn't happen anymore. Behind me the set is put up. By people who

aren't interested in my drama, for people to whom it means nothing. I won't play along

anymore" (56). Although *Hamlet* continues to be performed, its performance, Müller's Hamlet

claims, is irrelevant to the modern audience. The play is created for an audience, "to whom it

means nothing" (56). Müller's Hamlet character believes that he is no longer significant in a

culture that no longer relates to him. Performances of *Hamlet* continue, Müller's Hamlet claims,

but they are without genuine "drama," without meaningful action. Müller argues elsewhere that

new generations call for new Shakespeares: "Shakespeare is a mirror through the ages, our hope

a world he does not reflect any more. We have not arrived at ourselves as long as Shakespeare is

writing our plays for us."[31] When he claims that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is now put on for

audiences to whom it means nothing, Hamlet expresses Müller's belief in the need for a post-modern revision of the quintessential tragedy of Western drama.

In keeping with this motif of mocking the "meaninglessness" of Shakespeare's text in a modern context, Müller literally renders Hamlet's dialogue meaningless. In the opening lines of the play, Hamlet addresses the sea, and says profoundly, "BLABLA" (53). Famed for being a long-winded play with a verbose protagonist, Müller plays on the audience's memory of a *Hamlet* overrun with "words, words, words" (2.2.192). Later, Hamlet describes his dialogue as "oozing wordslime in my soundproof blurb over and above the battle" (56). The "oozing wordslime" like "BLABLA" has no meaning. In addition, it has no audience (the "soundproof blurb" cannot be heard) and even if Hamlet's lines had recognizable linguistic form or sound he delivers them "over and above the battle" (56). As Teraoka has shown, the fourth section of the play is firmly historically grounded: "the monument of a hated and honored man . . . refers to Stalin's death in 1953 and De-Stalinization in 1956; the October 1956 uprising in Hungary is alluded to in the scene title 'PEST IN BUDA'" (98). As Hamlet addresses the crowd of revolutionaries in the fourth section of the play, he speaks "above the battle" of the failed Hungarian Revolution (Teraoka, 98). The people are busy with their present battle and not interested in words that are "over and above" them—both out of their reach and too philosophically abstract to be of immediate use to them. Thus, Hamlet's words are rendered meaningless throughout *Hamletmachine*—like an old drama that no longer speaks to the present generation, Müller's Hamlet speaks without real communication.

In addition to rendering Hamlet's words and drama meaningless, Müller alludes to lines in the Shakespearean text, twisting them to suggest that Hamlet's original lines lack meaning for a modern audience. For example, playing off of the famous, "O that this too too sallied flesh

would melt / Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew," Müller creates, "I force open my sealed flesh. I want to dwell in my veins, in the marrow of my bones, in the maze of my skull. I retreat into my entrails. I take my seat in my shit, in my blood" (1.2.129-130, 57). Instead of wishing for the destruction of his outer shell, this Hamlet wishes to retreat into his inner recesses. Shakespeare's Hamlet only wishes that his flesh would melt off, while Müller's is willing to rip open his own body. Within the context of *Hamlet*, the prince expresses his deep melancholy through this metaphor (1.2.131-132). This self-loathing is self-indulgent, as the prince internalizes his pain over his father's death and his mother's "o'erhasty marriage." Müller's rewriting emphasizes the prince's internalization by literalizing it, as Hamlet's trek through his own innards ends with him sitting in his own refuse. In the context of the larger passage, Müller uses these lines to emphasize that Hamlet's self-indulgent self-loathing is a privileged position: because of his status as an aristocrat, intellectual, and scholar, he can tear himself apart while other men die in the revolution. Hamlet's melancholy contemplation of the destruction of his own anatomy ends with Hamlet's acknowledgment that "Somewhere bodies are torn apart so I can dwell in my shit" (57). Thus, Müller takes the Shakespearean line, an indicator of Hamlet's inner woe, and expands it into a broader social commentary; Shakespeare's Hamlet can afford to spend time in melancholy contemplation because he is a prince. He can afford to despise his own body because he is not busy trying to preserve it. Once again, Müller makes his concerns seem meaningless, selfish, and irrelevant in the current political context.

Müller makes similar use of Hamlet's contemplation of Alexander's and Caesar's bodies in the Shakespearean graveyard scene. Shakespeare's Hamlet wonders, "why may not imagination trace the noble dust of / Alexander, till 'a find it stopping a bunghole?" and observes that Caesar "Might stop a hole" (5.1.203-204, 213-214). In *Hamletmachine* Müller renders these

lines, "HAMLET THE DANE PRINCE AND MAGGOT'S FODDER STUMBLING FROM

HOLE TO HOLE TOWARDS THE FINAL HOLE LISTLESS IN HIS BACK" (58). Hamlet

takes the place of Alexander and Caesar in the original lines. Hamlet has himself become the

Shakespearean "earth which kept the world in awe" (5.1.215). Hamlet becomes the "great man"

of history who is reduced to dust, harkening back to Müller's repeated attempts to destroy the

Hamlet text/character. Hence, this passage, a humorous yet dark contemplation on the nature of

death in the Shakespearean text, becomes the erasure of Hamlet himself in Müller's text. Yet the

reduction of Hamlet to dust simultaneously foregrounds him, offering the Shakespearean

character the powerful status of a man who had the same kind of historical impact as Alexander

and Caesar. Just as the act of cannibalism will not truly eliminate the power of the old king, even

the reduction of Shakespeare's Hamlet to dust will not destroy him.

In the end, Müller's postmodern aesthetics dictate that the creation of *Hamletmachine*, an

attempt to create revolutionary theater, is one that is doomed to produce a deformed artistic

product. Williams explains Müller's aesthetic of failure, "The 'Actor playing Hamlet' destroys

the image of the dramatist immediately prior to announcing his desire to become a machine,

suggesting that Müller sees the 'death' of the author as the prerequisite of a true revolutionary

theatre and of a structure of subjectivity that exists outside of history" (197). The displaying and

tearing of the author's photograph also immediately follows a speech in which Hamlet

recognizes his own culturally privileged position. The author who works toward his own

disappearance resembles the divided self of Müller's Hamlet, who is tortured by the realization

that his social status as prince separates him from the revolutionaries with whom he sympathizes

(Halpern, 270). "I am / a privileged person," Hamlet says, "My nausea / Is a privilege / Protected

by torture / Barbed wire Prisons" (57). The prince is also divided in that he imagines himself on

both sides of the battle that the play describes in its fourth section: Hamlet sees himself as both

revolutionary and oppressor (56, Teraoka, 107). Teraoka argues that in this fourth section,

"Hamlet brings to light the dilemma of the privileged intellectual who is committed to the

abolition of privilege" (108). The text that attempts to be truly revolutionary is also a divided

text. The text of the author, with its competing voices and allusions, is permanently bound to the

literary past. In the end, the art of the future is only the art of the past, a "deeply flawed social

script" from which *Hamletmachine* cannot escape (Williams, 195). Williams finds that

Hamletmachine makes a larger statement about the failure of revolutionary drama: "Since

theatrical history, like old kings, will not stay buried, *Hamletmachine* concludes in the only way

Müller believes an authentic, pre-revolutionary drama can, namely by thematizing its own failure

to be revolutionary drama . . ." (198). Unable to escape from the image of the father/king/author

the play fails to fulfill the revolutionary agenda it proclaims. In a play overrun with surrogates

and surrogations, duplications and endlessly replicated horrors, Müller's Hamlet is in constant

search of origins, a journey that proves to be about violence and erasure rather than discovery.

Roach explains that within the larger historical network of ongoing surrogations, "the relentless

search for . . . origins is a voyage not of discovery but of erasure. The anxiety generated by the

process of substitution justifies the complicity of memory and forgetting (6). As both characters

and text attempt to discover and destroy their own origins, the erasure of the author/father

(whose art preserves the cultural past and yet creates the artistic future) becomes inextricably

bound to the obliteration of the mother (whose womb is both the past and future of humanity).

Cyclical Time, Monstrous Mothers: "A MOTHER'S WOMB IS NOT A ONE-WAY STREET"

Hamlet's father is not the only figure in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* who raises the specter of unspeakable surrogations. One way that Hamlet's anxiety about surrogation manifests itself is through his fixation on his mother and her womb. Sex and reproduction are clearly connected to surrogation, as children provide the most obvious way for the dead to live on in the bodies of the living. For Hamlet, contemplating the transformation of the father's dead body is just as horrifying as facing the fecundity of his mother's living one. Both kinds of surrogation (cannibalism and sexual reproduction) are bound to the flesh, and both are connected to duplication, reproduction, and genealogies. Adelman describes the imagery in Shakespeare's play as a "fusion of eating and death and sex: in *Hamlet*, the turn toward the woman's body is always felt as the return to the devouring maternal womb, with all the potential not only for incestuous nightmare, but for total annihilation implied by that return" (28). Gallagher and Greenblatt agree that Hamlet's obsession with female sexuality focuses on the role of motherhood: "Generativity—the capacity for bodies, and specifically for women's bodies, to engender more and more flesh—comes to obsess Hamlet, as if it were the source of contamination . . ." (158). Hamlet's horror at the thought of human reproduction manifests itself in statements such as "it were better my mother had not borne me" and "I say we will have no more marriages" (3.2.122-123, 3.2.147). While the first line alludes to Hamlet's self-loathing, the second alludes to an attack on Claudius, yet both simultaneously attack his mother and specifically focus on her sexuality. This disgust at reproduction also appears in Hamlet's attitude toward Ophelia. For example, the anger in "Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners?" or the revulsion of "if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion—have you a daughter?" (3.2.120-121, 2.2.182-85). Gallagher and Greenblatt explain Hamlet's conflation of

sex and death: "The association of ideas here links Ophelia to the carcass of a dog, lovemaking

to the kissing of rotting flesh, and conception to the breeding of maggots" (159). Hamlet's

struggle with the image of his mother's body in childbirth mirrors his struggle with the image of

his father's body in death. Both processes, which could ultimately lead to various forms of

duplication, replacement, and surrogation, disgust him. This horror of the devouring womb,

which represents the fear of perpetuating the past into the future, is multiplied and actualized on

stage in Müller's *Hamletmachine*.

The ultimate symbol of a painful genesis, the mother's womb in *Hamletmachine* is a

source of monstrosity and horror, the fearful origin that simultaneously draws and repulses the

characters. Yet while the womb in *Hamletmachine* represents humanity's past, it also represents

humanity's future. As the play oscillates between the revolt against history and the repulsion of

the future, *Hamletmachine* explores the cultural and philosophical tension of the artist as

preserver of that past and creator of that future, and the text's rage against procreation, attacks on

the female body, and images of monstrous mothers come to represent both the anxieties of

authorship and the horrors of a violence-ridden history that continually repeats itself.

Although the male body in *Hamletmachine* cannot avoid cannibalism, castration, and

dismemberment, the female body, in particular the womb, becomes a focal point for the play's

fierce rage against surrogation and reproduction. Unlike the violence worked on the male figures

in the text, Hamlet's rage toward his mother is always aimed at her sexuality and reproductive

capacity. Gertrude's womb, in Hamlet's mind, becomes the source of violence among men.[32]

The play opens as Hamlet encounters his own primal scene, and Müller's prince uses this

meeting with his own origins to express his disgust with physical reproduction. Sympathizing

with his new stepfather, Hamlet encourages Claudius to sleep with his mother, "LET ME HELP

YOU UP UNCLE, OPEN YOUR LEGS, MAMA" (53). From the play's beginning, Hamlet is

obsessed with the notion of re-entering his mother's womb, and he first penetrates her through

his symbolic stand-in, Claudius. While mother and stand-in father consummate their incestuous

union, Hamlet lays abjectly on the ground and listens "to the world doing its turns in step with

the putrefaction" (53). Hamlet associates Gertrude's reproductive capacity with death and decay,

a product of female sexuality that Hamlet believes is as inevitable as the turning of the world.

Yet this line also suggests causality: the world turns because Gertrude sleeps with Claudius, and

the mother's womb gives birth to the decay of the world. Echoing this earlier line in which the

world continues its spinning because of the unleashing of female sexuality, Hamlet later claims

that the spinning of the world (the continuance of mankind) only leads to further acts of violence

and depravity. Hamlet asks his father's ghost, "SHALL I / AS IS THE CUSTOM STICK A

PIECE OF IRON INTO / THE NEAREST FLESH . . . SINCE THE WORLD IS SPINNING"

(54). The logic of these parallel lines, when taken together, is that the world spins because

women make more men, and that the making of men and the continuance of the world makes

more violence. Teraoka explains that Hamlet rages against sex because without "the process of

birth which guarantees the continuity of life, the human history of continual murder and violence

must necessarily come to an end" (95). Hamlet views the womb as the source of humanity, and

in *Hamletmachine*, humanity can do nothing but endless violence. On an even more basic level,

the play insinuates that Hamlet's violence is the direct product of Gertrude's womb. When

Hamlet rapes his mother, he asks her, "Do you recognize the fruit of your womb?" (54). The fruit

of Gertrude's womb is Hamlet himself, and more specifically in that moment, the violence of

Hamlet as rapist. Again, the womb is claimed as the source of male violence.

In an attempt to save the future from the reenactment of past violence, Hamlet seeks to destroy and erase the mothers in the text. Hamlet calls for "a world without mothers" saying that "women should be sewed up" (53). As Teraoka points out, the play displays a "programmatic rejection of conception, of birth, and consequently, of womanhood in general" (95). The sewing up of the womb is an attempt to sever the present and future from its origins in the past, a way to ensure that history cannot repeat itself. Williams recognizes one of *Hamletmachine's* major topics as the destruction of literary and theatrical history, pointing out that "*Hamletmachine* represents a struggle with the past, an effort to lay the ghosts to rest so that art can begin again . . ." (189). Walsh observes that the play demonstrates a simultaneous attraction to and repulsion from history: "Like its parent text, Müller's play provokes the question of what debts the living owe the dead, to what extent the past can be revisited and remade . . ." (26). Hamlet's desire to sew up the womb, to create a physical barrier between origin and outcome, is underpinned by his fear of a nonlinear vision of history: his fantasy/nightmare of reentering his mother represents his fear of returning to the trauma of his personal past, and in a larger sense, the fear of a past that devours the present.

The fear of nonlinear history in *Hamletmachine* is represented through the play's images of devouring wombs, the structure of the text itself, with its montage of competing historical references, allusions, and quotations, as well as through Hamlet's encounter with Walter Benjamin's angel of history. Like his rage against his mother's womb, Hamlet's symbolic connection with the angel of history suggests his struggle with a past that overcomes the present. In the third section of *Hamletmachine*, the prince dances with Horatio, who appears as "an angel, his face at the back of his head" (55). Because his face is backwards, critics have frequently identified Horatio with Benjamin's angel of history (Teraoka, 96, Halpern, 272). *In Theses on the*

Philosophy of History, Benjamin describes his angel, a symbolic representation of how humans create history out of past events:

> His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise . . . this storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned . . . this storm is what we call progress.[33]

Benjamin's description of the angel suggests the pain of a past that is inescapable. The angel can never look forward, because his face is always "turned toward the past." There is no present to see, only a past that continues to build into one large catastrophe that subsumes the myth of chronological time. Malkin explains that through this image, "Benjamin opposes a historicist view of historical time—developmental, causal, linear, 'a chain of events'—to a composite view in which all times coexist within the eyes of the angelic viewer" (88). Connecting Benjamin's angel with Hamlet's conception of the past, Teraoka sees *Hamletmachine* as acting out "the opposition of two views of history: one the essentially Hegelian model of continuity and ineluctable progress; the other, the Benjaminian understanding of a radically discontinuous time in which the present can be charged with, and can avenge and redeem at any moment, the catastrophic suffering of the past" (Teraoka, 120). It is this struggle between the Hegelian and Benjaminian models of history that Hamlet acts out as he first desires to return to his mother's womb and then desires to sew her up. Like Müller's Hamlet, the angel wants to return to the past, yet finds itself pushed continuously into the future. Malkin argues that "For Benjamin the past is a formless potential that is chosen and reclaimed by the needs of the present. History does

not precede us; it comes into being only through us: through the act of memory that recalls and inscribes/narrates it" (88). For the angel of history, however, the past is not always chosen, but is rather thrust upon him—memory is compulsive, destructive, unbidden. History is a storm and a catastrophe. Walsh points out that in *Hamletmachine* the "move toward effacing a linear progression toward some kind of confrontation or conclusion is at heart a desire to sever any sense of duty to the future or the past . . ." (27). Hence, as Hamlet struggles to conquer the past, he can only do so by attempting to unravel the "catastrophe" that represents all time at the same time. For a moment, Hamlet dances with the angel and finds himself embracing the nonlinear history the angel represents. For a moment, history is inescapable and violence against the body of the past is impossible. Yet in the end, Hamlet finds himself drawn toward this non-linear version of history, at the same time that he attempts to destroy it—just as he is drawn into his mother's womb, yet desires to seal up the womb that attracts him.

Not only does the sewing up of the womb symbolically separate past from present, but it also severs the present from the future by ensuring that the history of human violence cannot perpetuate itself. Hamlet concludes his monologue about Gertrude with the observation that "Tomorrow morning has been cancelled" (54). To cancel tomorrow morning, to end human history, would be to stop procreation and to bring an end to motherhood. Hamlet threatens Gertrude before the rape, "I'll change you back into a virgin mother, so your king will have a blood wedding" (54). By re-enacting his own conception, Hamlet erases both father and mother, rendering himself self-begotten. Gertrude is a mother figure whose swallowing womb threatens to devour her son: Hamlet feels an urge to destroy her because she is an emblem of the past that devours the present.

While Hamlet attacks the mother's body through rape, the text expresses its own metaphorical horror of motherhood through the image of the Madonna with breast cancer. As many critics have noted, *Hamletmachine* has a five act structure that parallels the five acts of the original *Hamlet* (Williams, 190). Teraoka points out that the third scene of this five movement piece fills the structural space of a more traditional play's climax (114). The Madonna with breast cancer, who appears at the finale of this climatic scene, is literally and figuratively placed at the center of Müller's text. This image of motherhood mingled with death is the play's thematic axis. The stage direction explains that the Madonna's "breast cancer radiates like a sun" (55). She is a mother whose femininity destroys her. Yet the cancer that destroys her sexual organs is simultaneously the force that lights the world. A femininity that destroys itself becomes the center of life for the human world. The Madonna becomes the center of gravity and nexus of planetary motion that keeps the human segment of the universe in order. Thus, the destruction of the mother, and more specifically, the submissive female who destroys herself, becomes the central life-giving force for human civilization. Hamlet has already explained earlier in the play that in his mind, Gertrude's sexuality makes the world spin. These metaphors of female sexuality as planetary motion connect Gertrude to the Madonna with breast cancer. Both mother figures are sources of life and death. While Gertrude gives birth to rape and violence, the Madonna gives birth to a cancer mistaken for light, and Ophelia gives birth to the apocalypse.

Although Ophelia is not a mother, the text is fixated on her womb as both the source and the conclusion of terror and violence: Ophelia's womb both begins and ends the action of *Hamletmachine,* thus suggesting the cyclical nature of the play's never-ending violence. At the end of the play, Ophelia is bound in "the deep sea" where "fish, debris, and dead bodies and limbs drift by" (58). As she sits entombed at the bottom of the ocean, Ophelia cries out, "I take

back the world I gave birth to. I choke between my thighs the world I gave birth to. I bury it in

my womb" (58). In the context of a speech in which the womb swallows everything, the waters

in which lifeless bodies float are those of the womb itself. The sea in which Ophelia lies

entombed becomes the symbol of Ophelia's devouring womb. Critics have frequently

commented on the cyclical structure of *Hamletmachine*. According to Williams, the world of the

play "marches on—not on a linear or teleological path toward history's end, but in a festering

circle" (189). Indeed, the play's cyclical structure suggests the play's failure as a text to extricate

itself from the literary, historical, and cultural past (Williams, 197). The image of the sea as

womb/tomb that frames the play is further evidence for arguments that its action is repetitive.

Hamlet opens the play by addressing the sea, "I stood at the shore and talked with the surf

BLABLA, the ruins of Europe in back of me" (53). Teraoka interprets this image as a sign that

"Hamlet, facing forward, is an emblem of historical continuity and progress" (86). Likewise,

Malkin finds Hamlet to be opposed to the angel of history, because the prince is facing the

opposite direction (88). Yet Hamlet is not facing forward at all. Like the angel of history, his face

is eternally fixed toward the past. Hamlet begins the play by facing the sea in which Ophelia lies

entombed. He looks toward the past, in which the Shakespearean Ophelia was drowned, yet

simultaneously looks forward to the future, the play's ending in which Ophelia is bound in her

underwater wheelchair. Ophelia is a vengeful ghost who has risen from the waters of the play's

opening. She is "the one the river didn't keep" (54).Yet at the end of the play, Ophelia is

reclaimed by her watery grave, her final speech promising a world baptized through the

destruction of an apocalyptic flood. This haunting final scene lacks closure, for the sea's waters

seem themselves a womb filled with unborn life, promising the rebirth of the play and the

repetition of the violent action of *Hamletmachine*. Ophelia becomes a victimized mother figure

who dies repeatedly only to be continuously resurrected; the play's unsettling ending promises that Ophelia's revolutionary impulses will rise to the social surface once again. Ultimately, Ophelia's womb becomes "a deadly weapon for revenge" (Teraoka, 111). Her womb is the symbol of the devouring origin, of a history that cyclical repeats itself, of a past from which the present can never fully be separated. As the prince returns to his mother's womb by raping her, the world is subsumed in Ophelia's womb, just as the text itself fails to fully extricate itself from the Shakespearean womb of the original *Hamlet*.

In the end, *Hamletmachine's* horror of motherhood represents the horror of repeating history, and the fear of reproduction acts out the fear of artistic production. As Hamlet attacks the body of the mother in an effort to render himself self-begotten, the text attacks Müller's image in an attempt to erase the role of the culturally privileged author, and Müller's rewriting attacks the Shakespearean original. Ultimately, the play's attempted destruction fails. Filled with a cacophony of voices and competing allusions, *Hamletmachine* can never extricate itself from the voices of past authors, anymore than Hamlet can truly separate himself from his mother, or *Hamletmachine* as cultural product can disentangle itself from the legacy and reputation of its world-renowned author. As the metaphor of the monument demonstrates, *Hamletmachine* is unable to destroy or dismember its source text, as the very act of cannibalizing the old text simultaneously acknowledges the cultural primacy of *Hamlet* and calls it to the forefront of the audience's memory (Walsh, 68, Williams, 197). The past maintains its hold on the present, the mother sustains her power over the son, and the figure of Shakespeare continues to loom over modern drama. Ever cyclical, the play is doomed to endlessly repeat its own bloodshed and to destroy the future by constantly cannibalizing the past—just as the violence of the world, like a pack of braying hounds, moves in and out of Ophelia's womb.

Chapter Five

"Some remains": Forgetting Shakespeare in *Endgame* and *Happy Days*

Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney sweepers, come to dust.
                    -*Cymbeline* 4.2.262-263

The smell of rotting corpses fills the world of *Endgame*, just as the image of burning

flesh haunts the landscape of *Happy Days*. As in many of Beckett's works, the human body in

these early plays seems to be under an inexplicable attack, its form imprisoned, its parts

dismembered. Just as the human form in *Endgame* is imprisoned by immobility and blindness,

repetition and sterility, *Happy Days* dramatizes the human body in its slow and agonizing return

to dust. In Winnie's case, this display of the human form is first a presence, and then increasingly

an absence, as her body is gradually transformed into earth. Beckett forces the viewer to

acknowledge corporeality so that he can push toward its ultimate disappearance, for the smell of

rotting and burning flesh in the early plays points to the ultimate destruction of that flesh in the

late plays. As many critics have noted, the human body is slowly erased and dismembered, part

by part, as his canon progresses.[1] As Beckett stated in an interview, "My people seem to be

falling to bits."[2] The early plays *Endgame* (1957) and *Happy Days* (1961), which follow the

completion of seven of his eight novels and mark his first decade of playwriting, serve as a

starting point for a movement toward bodily disintegration in Beckett's dramatic canon. His

plays as a group move from the futile and limited mobility of Didi and Gogo, to the monologue

of a solitary and tortured Mouth, and the recorded cries of *Breath* (1969), a play in which there

are no characters, no human bodies, on stage at all. This obsession with the body in pain, with

the body dismembered, with the body erased and forgotten, is mirrored by a deep concern with

memory, especially the loss and erasure of memory, a topic that has become a major focus of

Beckett studies.[3] Many Beckett critics have pointed to memory as a special concern in his drama,

with some arguing that the mutilated bodies in his late plays represent the loss of memory and

deliberate forgetting.[4] As their bodies are increasingly tortured, painfully dismembered, and

ultimately eliminated, Beckett's characters also increasingly forget: they no longer remember

what they are waiting for, they forget what they did and said yesterday, they misquote and

misremember the literary and cultural past. Shakespeare, a symbol of the dramatic past, appears

in Beckett's plays as an icon to be rebelled against, forgotten, and debased. In *Endgame* and

Happy Days, however, the performance of forgetting proves to be closely related to the

performance of memory. The inability to forget the literary past haunts Beckett's plays and

characters: Hamm and Winnie are themselves artists, and their struggle to create, like that of the

playwright, demonstrates an aesthetic of failure. While these early plays dramatize the act (and

art) of forgetting, they also show that the struggle to forget the literary canon is always

incomplete.

Although Beckett never wrote an adaptation of a Shakespearean text, directors, actors,

and critics have long connected Beckett with the Bard. Like Müller's later *Hamletmachine*, many

of Beckett's plays are about aesthetic failure: they dramatize the failure of art to be truly

revolutionary, its inability to triumph over the weight of history, its struggle to communicate. In

Hamletmachine's case the failure is that of political and aesthetic revolution, the inability to

erase history. Beckett's dramatization of failed forgetting is perhaps more fundamental: his

characters fail to forget history, but they also act out the futility of the artist who must speak even

when his message cannot be understood. In Beckett's struggle to forget, eliminate, and separate

himself from Shakespeare, his works show that even in a post-apocalyptic setting, the memory of the literary classics is never completely erased. The ability to forget or dismember first requires the invocation of a memory, the summoning of a canon or a corpse. Although Beckett himself would write about "man and his memory machine" in *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958), the strong connection between Beckett's plays, with their complex interplay of memory and forgetting, and Marvin Carlson's work on the theater as memory machine has gone unnoticed. Furthermore, critics have yet to explore the interplay between Roach's work on the theater as a space for the demonstration of surrogation in action and Beckett's theater, which relies so much on the "kinesthetic imagination" to evoke (and to attempt to destroy) memory. Beckett works toward erasing the act of cultural and artistic surrogation, as he attempts to reduce, debase, or eliminate his influences, including Shakespeare. His acts of forgetting, however, are always incomplete. For as Roach's work on theatrical surrogation shows, the struggle to escape from surrogation, much like the struggle to escape from one's own memory, is an art already intertwined with failure. *Endgame*'s powerful invocation of *The Tempest*, through a series of parallels, echoes, and allusions, suggests the author's struggle to "forget" and turn away from Shakespeare's influence. While a few critics have focused on Winnie's use of Shakespearean quotations in *Happy Days*, critics have yet to note that *Endgame* and *Happy Days* are connected through their acts of forgetting and erasure. In both of these plays, Beckett dramatizes the struggle to forget and the ultimate failure of the characters to free themselves from the ghosts of the past. Their interwoven commentary on Shakespeare, surrogation, and the body leave both plays with the haunting realization that the literary and cultural past is never completely erased or forgotten.

"All the dead voices": Beckett's Memory Machines

Unlike Shaw, Brecht, or Müller, Beckett did not write works of Shakespearean adaptation or appropriation, and he produced no body of Shakespearean criticism. Yet ever since the publication of Jan Kott's *Shakespeare our Contemporary* in 1964, a wealth of studies have appeared comparing Shakespeare and Beckett, with the vast majority of them focusing on *Endgame* and *King Lear*, while a few critics have established parallels between *Waiting for Godot* and *The Tempest*. Meanwhile, Beckett's absurdist plays were influencing new stagings of Shakespeare, changing the way that new generations read and interpreted *King Lear*. Even more so than the literary critics, it was the directors and actors who would insist again and again that the two writers were connected. Actors have often said that playing Hamm reminds one of playing King Lear, the mirroring of movements and images on stage evoking the Shakespearean mode. Herbert Blau describes his experience directing *King Lear*: "to many of our actors, the world [of *King Lear*] seemed like rather familiar terrain. There was a resemblance, for instance, between Edgar leading his blinded father around the stage to the cliffs of Dover and Clov pushing Hamm to the hollow wall."[5] Charles Marowitz, describing another production, explains that this scene at the cliff is central to understanding the connection between Shakespeare and Beckett: "In discussing the work of rehearsals, our frame of reference was always Beckettian. The world of this *Lear*, like Beckett's world, is in a constant state of decomposition."[6] Roger Blin, who played Hamm in the play's first London production, interpreted Hamm as a Lear-like figure, seeing the play as being about "the death of kings": "Perhaps unduly but nevertheless deliberately I slanted Hamm toward King Lear . . . whatever was regal in the text, imperious in the character, was taken as Shakespearian. Beckett was not opposed to it."[7] Marguerite Tassi

evaluates the connection established by Kott's work, reiterating the point that the link between the two authors is essentially a kinesthetic one:

> Kott had emphasized not only a similar philosophy underlying Beckett's *Endgame* and Shakespeare's *Lear* but also a continuity in phenomenal expressions of this philosophy through the actors' bodies, their use of stage space, and their ability to provoke particular perceptions and emotional responses in the watching audience. He reflected a phenomenological awareness of how the material condition of bodies and objects can take on a "self-given" quality that strikes spectators viscerally rather than intellectually.[8]

Indeed, Beckett's echoing of *King Lear* in *Endgame* seems to rely primarily on what Roach terms the "kinesthetic imagination." The kinesthetic imagination is "the transmission (and transformation) of memory through movement" and is an "incorporating practice of memory, which is sedimented, or amassed, in the body."[9] In other words, Beckett constructs the role of Hamm to remind the actor of playing Lear, not through verbal allusion, but through the movements and attitudes implied or required by both texts. Beckett knew that memory could be held in the body, transmitted kinesthetically, a motif that reappears throughout his writings about memory, and in plays such as *Happy Days*. The connection between Beckett and Shakespeare is not just transmitted kinesthetically, however, but also appears through fragmented allusions. These broken echoes often seem to suggest the desire to forget or erase Shakespeare rather than to remember him.

Although Beckett wrote little about Shakespeare, he wrote a great deal about the topic of memory: Beckett believed that involuntary memory was more powerful than voluntary memory, and he would closely associate these two types of memory with the human body in his theater. In

his essay on Proust, Beckett focused primarily on involuntary memory as the only kind of

memory that could truly reclaim what remained of the past. In *Proust*, Beckett argues that

voluntary memory, that which is memorized or deliberately recalled, actually offers a false

image of the past.[10] Habit, according to Beckett, is that which inhibits involuntary memory, by

keeping the body and mind chained to the present through meaningless and repetitive everyday

rituals.[11] Beckett explains that involuntary memory is an "instrument of discovery" and the past

it represents has "been registered by our extreme inattention and stored in that ultimate and

inaccessible dungeon of our being to which Habit does not possess the key."[12] Roach and other

theorists of memory have noted the connection between kinesthetic memory, which is ingrained

in the body, and habit: the kinesthetic memory "operates in the performance of everyday life,

consolidated by deeply ingrained habits" (Roach, 27). In other words, the body can contain

memory, but it can also contain habit, "the great deadener," that which prevents the true rush of

involuntary memory. These various ways of remembering appear obsessively in Beckett's

theater, often symbolized by the bodies of his tortured figures. Antonia Rodriguez-Gago explains

the tension Beckett's work presents between voluntary and involuntary memory: "These two

ways of remembering, which are evident in all Beckett's works, are physically embodied in his

theatre . . . these characters [in the late plays] are visual and aural embodiments of obsessive

memories" (114). On Beckett's stage, the suffering, disordered, and gradually disappearing

human body often reflects the loss of memory. Rodriguez-Gago explores the relationship

between Beckett's physical stage figures and the internal process of memory:

> It is in the nature of theatrical performance to incarnate the dead—people and
>
> places—through acts of imagination and of remembrance, to embody ghosts of
>
> the past which are still alive in memory, or which are partially forgotten and have

> to be reinvented and made visible on stage. Beckett's late plays embody these
>
> ghosts of memory (and of forgetting) in fantastic body images, turning, thus, the
>
> metaphysical into the physical . . . (115).

That Beckett's bodies are sometimes more representative of the act of forgetting, as opposed to

the act of remembering, is an inversion of the typical role of the theater as "memory machine":

his theater, however, constantly points to the intimate connection and overlap between the two

mental processes. Beckett keeps the viewer constantly aware that forgetting is an act of memory

and that memory is sometimes created primarily through acts of forgetting.

Not only are voluntary memory, involuntary memory, and habit major topics of Beckett's

essay on Proust, but all three are also major topics in his drama, a concern that clearly aligns

Beckett's theater with the work of Carlson and Roach. Indeed, Graley Herren argues that Beckett

was one of the artists "instrumental in placing memory at the center of modernism."[13] With this

emphasis on memory, however, comes an equally important emphasis on forgetting. In Beckett's

drama, the act of forgetting is both public and powerful. Julie Campbell points out that in

Beckett's plays "forgetting loses some of its negative connotations and becomes a positive and

subversive force" (133). For Campbell, Beckett's "forgetting" is subversive through its

seemingly total rejection of (and erasure of) the past (133). Katharine Worth agrees that

forgetting is a rich presence for Beckett rather than an empty absence, a concept that should, at

least theoretically, allow the ghosts of the dead to be put to rest, thus representing the possibility

for growth in a new direction: "forgetting is a fact of life that Beckett turns into a treasure hoard,

connecting it by fine threads to acts of remembering."[14] This notion of memory and forgetting as

central to drama reappears in the work of Carlson and Roach: both theorists explore the

connections between the performance of memory and the performance of forgetting. As many

theorists of memory have noted, "memory is a process that depends crucially on forgetting," and Roach points out that "collective memory requires public enactments of forgetting" (2, 4).

In many ways, modern drama, which struggles to define itself in contrast with the drama that came before it, is just such a "public enactment of forgetting." David Savran finds that modern drama never fully extricates itself from older theatrical traditions:

> From its beginnings, the modernist theatre—understood as a self-consciously revolutionary insurgency—has set itself apart from the dramas of the past. Yet time and again it has been haunted by that which it believes it has displaced . . . for by defining itself in relation to the past, it betrays a secret link to history.[15]

The need to "be new" inevitably led to the reminder of the old, the deliberate rebellion against the past only pointing backward to and reinscribing that which it rebelled against. Modern drama is an example of what Roach describes as "the most persistent mode of forgetting," a form of forgetting that proves to be only "memory imperfectly deferred" (4). Some critics have expressed surprise that Beckett turned to drama, arguing that the medium is unsuitable for the convoluted, internalized voices of memory one finds in his earlier novels.[16] Drama, however, as the genre for memory, proved to be a powerful space for these ghostly voices. In a play such as *Krapp's Last Tape,* Beckett dramatizes a mechanical receptacle for memory (Krapp's tape recorder, famously described as "man's memory machine"). Such plays remind the viewer that Beckett's work was successful partially because of its interest in matters of memory, because of its ability to put memory in the "memory machine" of the theater. Marvin Carlson's book *The Haunted Stage: the Theater as Memory Machine*, uses these same terms, exploring the stage as a space for the "mechanical," repetitive, and formalized reproduction of cultural memory. Carlson describes the theater as a "machine" that both produces and preserves memory:

> Without disputing the more global view of every text existing in and built upon a
> network of other texts . . . the dramatic text is distinguished in part by the extent
> and specificity of its relationship to previous texts, literary and nonliterary.
> Among all literary forms it is the drama preeminently that has always been
> centrally concerned not simply with the telling of stories but with the retelling of
> stories already known to its public.[17]

This repetitive, mechanical reproduction lends the stage "its ghostliness, its sense of return" (Carlson, 1). The very essence of Beckett's theater, however, is that he is intent on a radical break with the theatrical past: critics praise his drama for the ability to show viewers what they have not seen before, as in the famous *Waiting for Godot*, a play without plot, climax, or resolution.

Yet the voices of the dead find their way into Beckett's plays no matter how revolutionary his dramaturgy may appear. Their echoes filter in partly through fractured and broken allusions, but also through Beckett's attempt to break radically with theatrical tradition, a break with theater history that ultimately reveals itself to be an impossibility. Tassi argues that Beckett's work represents a radical break with the Shakespearean past: "In Beckett's plays, characters are dispossessed from a former repertoire of roles that bestowed dignity, meaning, and tragic awareness."[18] Theodor Adorno finds *Endgame* so radical that he describes it as a drama for an age without drama: "*Endgame* studies (as if in a test-tube) the drama of the age, the age that no longer tolerates what constitutes drama" (20). Campbell agrees with Adorno's assessment, for Beckett "refus[es] to allow the audience to bring into play their cultural memories of what drama 'should be,' or to use such memories to 'place the action'" (129). Supposedly cut off from the theatrical and cultural past, Beckett's characters fail to fill the roles

expected by the audience. Beckett has also been accused of murdering the memory play. Jeanette

Malkin defines a memory play as "theater that imitates conflicted and sometimes repressed or

erased memories . . . and as a theater that initiates processes of remembrance."[19] Yasunari

Takahashi argues that *Krapp's Last Tape* "announce[s] the death of drama-about-memory":

> it is tempting to think that, by exposing the vanity of human intellect in the person
>
> of Krapp, Beckett has dealt an unsparing quietus to the whole western thought and
>
> drama about the problematics of time/memory/body, including Descartes and
>
> Proust, Sophocles and Ibsen."[20]

To claim that *Krapp's Last Tape* is a play that destroys the genre of the memory play, however,

is a difficult case to make: this play has itself often been examined as a postmodern memory

play.[21] If *Krapp's Last Tape* is not a "memory play" in *The Glass Menagerie* sense of the term, it

is certainly a drama-about-memory, a drama about memory that itself attacks the tradition of the

memory play, and that questions the validity of memory itself. In the end, *Krapp's Last Tape*

may attack the tradition of memory-theater, but it is only able to attack that tradition by

continuing it.

The determination of scholars, actors, and directors to read *Endgame* in light of *King

Lear* seems odd in a world in which the old Shakespearean "repertoire of roles" and the old

mode of memory plays are deliberately rejected. Ultimately, the fragments of Shakespeare that

remain in Beckett prove that even absurdist dramas have their ghosts.[22] The sense of being

weighed down with the spirits of the past infiltrates even the seemingly "empty" dialogue of a

play like *Waiting for Godot:*

> Estragon: All the dead voices . . .
>
> Vladimir: They all speak together . . .

> Vladimir: To have lived is not enough for them.

> Estragon: They have to talk about it.[23]

The weight of "all the dead voices" infiltrates Beckett's memory machines even as his characters struggle to free themselves from it. Drama proves to be an ideal artistic medium for Beckett because his plays so often engage what the playwright, the audience, and the characters have failed to forget.

Indeed, Beckett's belief in art as an act of reduction or erasure suggests the attempt to eliminate the literary past that so many critics have seen in his work. Comparing his aesthetic with that of James Joyce, Beckett explained that "The more Joyce knew the more he could. He is tending toward omniscience and omnipotence as an artist. I am working with impotence and ignorance."[24] In *Proust*, Beckett explained that art is "a contraction" for "the artist is active, but negatively . . ."[25] He describes the artist as "shrinking."[26] Beckett believed that art should be "the expression that there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express."[27] In other words, Beckett saw his art as working toward the site of its own disappearance. The tension in his work is between the compulsion to create and the belief that the object of art is unable to communicate. As Thomas Postlewait explains, "the central dilemma" in Beckett's work "is the desire for silence joined to an inability to be silent" (489). This is a paradox: Beckett's development as an artist works toward "absence . . . silence (themselves impossible traits for an artist)" (Gontarski, 33). Daniel Albright explains Beckett's struggle for artistic silence:

> Beckett's repeated assertions that his art is the art of impotence . . . are, I believe, veiled ways of saying that the true failure lies not with Beckett the particular artist

but with art itself, always at the mercy of decomposing and perverse media.

Beckett saw himself as an artist who was unusually honest about art's inability to

carry out the artists' goals.[28]

This "Beckettian attitude of creation through disintegration" suggests the act of cultural erasure

critics have frequently identified in his canon.[29] The presence that fills the artistic medium,

however, can never be reduced to an absolute absence, can never be rendered in total silence.

Thus, the less often noted, but natural conclusion to Beckett's aesthetic, is that it dooms

his drama to a failed or incomplete act of forgetting. Herren states a common critical view of

Beckett's work: "Though Beckett's art is overtly an 'art of failure,' he has at least been credited

with success in freeing that art from the nightmare of history . . ." (7). Richard Gillman agrees

that Beckett's 'imagination functions almost entirely outside history."[30] The question becomes

whether any act of forgetting is ever really the complete erasure of the past, whether any artist

could ever really be free of "the nightmare of history." Postlewait's work shows the typical

approach to Joyce and Beckett as aesthetic opposites: "unlike Joyce or T.S. Eliot, Beckett does

not load the cultural past into his work. Instead he empties his work of the traditional literary

lines of continuity and correspondence, causing his language (and that of his characters) to echo

in a void" (483). Adorno has explained Beckett's engagement with the literary past as the act of

creating "culture-trash," because Beckett's work "obliterates the meaning that was culture, along

with its rudiments" and claims that in Beckett's work "the poetic process shows itself as worn

out (9, 11). Yet as long as Beckett creates meaningful drama, the poetic process is not

completely "worn out," nor can culture be completely destroyed in his work, for one cannot

exorcise the ghost of older drama without first summoning it. Ultimately, Beckett's aesthetic

becomes unachievable. As with Müller's failed attempt to "destroy history" in *Hamletmachine*,

Beckett's attempt to rid drama of its traditional ghosts invokes its own failure.[31] More

importantly, *Endgame* and *Happy Days* not only fail to forget the cultural and literary past, but

both also obsessively enact their own inability to forget it.

"The whole place stinks of corpses": Burying the Father in *Endgame*

Far from forgetting history, *Endgame's* characters forget and remember the literary,

cultural, and personal past fitfully, alternating between acts of forgetting and acts of

remembering. As *Endgame* struggles to rebel against its literary influences, the figure of

Shakespeare becomes one in a sequence of unburied fathers, figures that the text tries to erase

and forget, yet whose ghostly figures it never quite escapes. Although it has long been common

to understand *Endgame* as a play about "the death of kings," it has yet to be noted that the play

specifically fixates on the king's burial rites, on what to do with the father's physical and literary

remains. Through allusions to *The Tempest*, Beckett presents three father figures in *Endgame*

(Hamm, Prospero, and Shakespeare) who control their sons by teaching them language and by

constructing their past and future through narrative. Meanwhile, the figure of the son (Clov,

Caliban, Beckett) struggles to reject the father and his language, the very cultural and literary

history he represents, through acts of deliberate forgetting.

The belief that something of Shakespeare remains in Beckett's plays has long tantalized

literary critics. Ruby Cohn points out that Hamm's name is a shortened version of Hamlet, and

she notes that the King Lear-like aspects of Hamm's character suggest a conglomeration of

Shakespearean kings (Hamm also quotes Richard III).[32] Although it is more common to view

Endgame as a rewriting of *King Lear*, a few critics have also noted resonances of *The Tempest* in

this dark play.[33] Hamm directly quotes Prospero: "our revels now are ended" (120). Clov tells

Hamm, "I use the words you taught me. If they don't mean anything any more, teach me others.

Or let me be silent," clearly echoing Caliban's indictment against the controlling discourse he

learned from Prospero and his daughter: "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is, I

know how to curse. The red-plague rid you / For learning me your language!" (113, 1.2.363-

364).[34] Images of the sea predominate in both plays: *The Tempest* takes place on an island and

Endgame takes place on the seashore, with one window facing the land and the other facing the

sea.[35] Hamm says that he wants to smell the sea, and the ashbins are filled with sand from the

shore. Both Ruby Cohn and Sidney Homan note in passing that Clov has some characteristics in

common with Caliban and Ariel, while pointing out that Hamm is in some ways similar to

Prospero.[36] Hamm is "a word-giver, both father and teacher to Clov" much as Prospero is for

Miranda and Caliban, while Clov is a "not always obedient Ariel—who like his Shakespearean

prototype yearns for freedom" (Homan, 127). That Beckett had *The Tempest* in mind as he was

writing *Endgame* is clear from the direct quotation and allusions, clues that point to further

connections between the two texts. These allusions have yet to receive any in-depth examination,

and many parallels between the two plays have gone unnoticed. *The Tempest* proves to be the

primary source text for *Endgame*, as Beckett builds on characters and scenarios from

Shakespeare's romance throughout his play.

   Both plays focus on the relationship between a parent and a child in a secluded sea-side

location. While Hamm stands in for Prospero, ruling his isolated home by the sea with tyranny,

lording it over his adopted son and servant, Clov stands in at various points in the narrative for

Ariel, Caliban, and Miranda. Certainly, the mysterious locations in both plays seem to be equally

cut off from the outside world, closed sites inaccessible to other human beings. Prospero and

Miranda arrive on their island because of political usurpation, Hamm and Clov through some

unknown catastrophe that appears to have eliminated all human life in the area. Indeed, when

Hamm looks for a shipwreck early in the play, he seems to evoke the shipwreck that begins

Shakespeare's romance. Hamm hopes for an arriving ship (or an arriving shipwreck): "What? A

sail? A fin? Smoke?" (106). In these isolated sea-side locations, the father figure wields absolute

power, a power he demonstrates partly through his ability to construct the past of the other

characters through storytelling. Prospero opens *The Tempest* with the lengthy story of his

daughter's arrival on the island, a tale to which he fears she will not attentively listen. Early in

Endgame, Hamm tells the lengthy story of his adopted son's arrival at their isolated home by the

sea, a tale to which Clov refuses to listen. Prospero asks Miranda if she remembers anything of

her own story:

> Canst thou remember
>
> A time before we came unto this cell?
>
> I do not think thou canst, for then thou wast not
>
> Out three years old" (1.2.38-41).[37]

Hamm asks his adopted son Clov the same question:

> Hamm: Do you remember when you came here?
>
> Clov: No. Too small, you told me.
>
> Hamm: Do you remember your father?
>
> Clov: Same answer . . . (110)

Prospero struggles to maintain Miranda's attention during his lengthy tale, interspersing the story

of the family history with lines such as "Dost thou attend me?" and "Thou attend'st not!"

(1.2.77, 1.2.87). Father Hamm also wants a willing audience for his story, but struggles to find

one:

> Hamm: It's time for my story. Do you want to listen to my story?
>
> Clov: No.
>
> Hamm: Ask my father if he wants to listen to my story.
>
> Clov: He's asleep. (115)

The story itself tells of a starving man who asks Hamm to take in his young son. Many critics believe that the hungry boy mentioned in the story is Clov. Thus, Hamm's narrative, like Prospero's, is the tale of his child's origins, a story to which the child is inattentive.

While the plots of both plays focus on parents and children, they also examine the relationship between masters and servants. That Hamm tells Clov's adoption narrative frequently is reminiscent of Prospero's relationship with one of his servants, for he tells Ariel that "I must, / Once in a month recount what thou hast been, Which thou forget'st" (1.2.261-263). Just as Prospero tells the story of Ariel's origin repeatedly in order to keep him loyal, Hamm repeats the story of Clov's childhood to remind him of the need for obedience: both masters remind the servant that he was saved from torture and thus owes the master service. Prospero asks Ariel, "Dost thou forget / From what a torment I did free thee?" (1.2.250-251). Hamm also saved Clov from a terrible torment (starvation) and as a result gained him as a servant. One powerful parallel between the two plays is that both present servants who wish to leave their masters. Ariel makes constant demands for his "liberty," and spends the play waiting for Prospero to set him free.[38] Clov's repeated threat "I'll leave you" becomes a refrain in *Endgame*, and Clov's promises to leave his abusive master/father provide the only suspense in a plot of frustrated stasis. In the context of the other allusions, Clov's threats to leave his master recall Ariel and Caliban, who both long for freedom. Another refrain that runs through the play is

Clov's own confusion about why he continues to serve Hamm, in the often repeated lines: "There's one thing I'll never understand. Why I always obey you. Can you explain that to me?" (129). Caliban, too, questions why he must serve one master or another, and wonders why he cannot rightfully lay claim to the island himself.

Both Prospero and Hamm wield great power, but both give up their power by the end of their respective plays. Both hold symbols of authority that they ultimately turn away from and discard. Prospero has a staff. Hamm has a gaff. Both serve as phallic symbols of kingship and power (actors have often described Hamm's gaff as a scepter that indicates his "royal" status), nor is it a coincidence, considering Beckett's love for word-play, that the symbolic props rhyme. Prospero's offer to break his staff and drown his book is parallel to Hamm's discarding of gaff and dog.[39] Prospero gives up his magic art: "I'll break my staff, / Bury it certain fadoms in the earth, / And deeper than did ever plummet sound / I'll drown my book" (5.1.54-57). In his final speech, Hamm throws away his gaff: "Good. [Pause.] Discard. [He throws away the gaff, makes to throw away the dog, thinks better of it.]" (133). Later in the same speech he rids himself of dog and whistle as well: "Discard. [He throws away the dog, He tears the whistle from his neck]" (133). The parallel here is humorous, mocking, unsettling. Perhaps even more unsettling is the realization that *Endgame's* title, the symbol of a game of chess that controls the action, has also been drawn from *The Tempest*. In the final act of Shakespeare's play, the culmination of its revelations finds Miranda and Ferdinand playing chess, by all indications enjoying a flirtatious endgame. Beckett's chess game, however, does not reveal a happy resolution. In fact, it is in every way the opposite of the youthful union and the promise of procreation that is represented by Ferdinand and Miranda's marriage in *The Tempest*. Instead, Beckett's play resolves by

focusing on the continuing plight of the enslaved servant and on the cruelty and ultimate

impotence of the island's ruler.[40]

Indeed, Beckett takes lines, characters, and images from Shakespeare and develops them

into extended motifs that ironically invert the tone and meaning of the source text. Hamm's

actions oppose Prospero's, for he is not forgiving and neither is he willing to release his

servant.[41] Prospero has mercy on all of his enemies, and willingly releases Ariel, thus bringing

about his own happy ending: "At this hour / Lies at my mercy all mine enemies / Shortly shall all

my labors end, and thou / Shalt have the air at freedom" (4.1.262-265). Prospero has pity on

those who have wronged him, and offers forgiveness because he believes that "The rarer action

is / in virtue than in vengeance" (5.1.27-28). Hamm offers no forgiveness, no mercy, no pity.

Knowing that he has denied succor to others in need, Hamm himself feels that he is the one in

need of forgiveness. Twice Hamm says to Clov: "Forgive me. I said, Forgive me" (95, 98).

Hamm remembers "All those I might have helped. Helped! Saved. Saved! The place was

crawling with them!" (125). Hamm predicts Clov's future, "Yes, one day you'll know what it is,

you'll be like me, except that you won't have anyone with you, because you won't have had pity

on anyone and because there won't be anyone left to have pity on" (109). Unlike the endgame of

The Tempest, in which the pieces, controlled by Prospero, come together to reveal alive those

who were thought lost at sea, Beckett's *Endgame* reveals only stagnation and despair, Clov the

pawn controlled by Hamm the tyrant king. The hope for new life that ends *The Tempest* is

mocked in the oppressive stasis of *Endgame*, which constantly reiterates the point that the world

is dead: there can no longer be procreation of any kind. The mysterious boy who appears at the

end of the play is described by Clov as "a potential procreator," although Hamm is determined to

believe that Clov has imagined the child (131). Clov himself best expresses the belief that

procreation in *Endgame* has been reduced to dust, for Clov's world will not be re-lit: "I am so bowed I only see my feet, if I open my eyes, and between my legs a little trail of black dust. I say to myself that the earth is extinguished, though I never saw it lit" (132). While Prospero finally releases his servant/son Ariel, Hamm struggles to keep his servant/son Clov from leaving. Although Clov has threatened to leave, he remains on stage during Hamm's final speech, and it is never clear whether he actually escapes from his oppressive father. Beckett's play only looks darker when compared to Shakespeare's romance, and the mocking parallels between the two plays serve only to augment that darkness.

While Prospero offers forgiveness and Hamm begs for it, the two still share the power of the playwright. Critics have frequently read both master/father figures as representatives of the author, viewing their "art" as the very work of the playwright himself. The tradition of reading Prospero as a figure for Shakespeare dates back to the nineteenth century, with Prospero's farewell to his magic art representing Shakespeare's farewell to the stage.[42] Beckett critics have also frequently viewed Hamm as a figure for the playwright. Homan describes Hamm as "the playwright himself, the creative force behind the stage world" because "Hamm's specialty is creation itself, however bleak the created world of this play may seem" (123, 124). S. E. Gontarski agrees that Beckett's characters are "often artists themselves, struggling with the problems of creativity. The reader or viewer eavesdrops on the creative process as he watches (or overhears) Hamm, the Unnamable, Henry, Mouth, Sam, and Winnie write, revise, shape and reshape their tales" (1). Not only does Hamm repeatedly tell a story, but he also talks frequently about the act of creating the story itself: "Perhaps I would go on with my story, end it and begin another" (126). Specifically, Hamm uses his story to "create" and control Clov, much as Prospero, though his own stories, "creates" and controls Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban. The

repeated story of Clov's "adoption," which offers Hamm's interpretation of how Clov came to be a servant, is a discourse that both creates and imprisons Clov. Both Prospero and Hamm are also artists who divest themselves of their art. Hamm, like Prospero, finally discards the symbols of his power and creation. Ultimately, Hamm is the artist working toward silence, discarding everything that represents his past. Even as Hamm and Prospero discard their art, Beckett tries to be rid of the cultural past.

Indeed, *Endgame* is an appropriate play for facing questions of cultural and theatrical surrogation, since it is a play about fathers and sons, specifically a play about fathers who remain unburied and about sons who refuse to bury them. Perhaps the play takes some cues from Ariel's song, which also describes the unnerving transformation of the father's body in death:

> Full fathom five thy father lies,
>
> Of his bones are coral made:
>
> Those are pearls that were his eyes:
>
> Nothing of him that doth fade,
>
> But doth suffer a sea-change
>
> Into something rich and strange. (1.2.397-403)

The father's body in *The Tempest* can be imagined as transforming into something "rich and strange," as a body that finds new life in the sea, a body that as it fades gives rise to coral and pearls. The body of the father in *Endgame*, completely incapable of resting in peace (full fathom five or otherwise) is darkly humorous and quietly horrifying. That the landscape in *Endgame* smells of corpses is clear:

> Hamm: You stink already. The whole place stinks of corpses.
>
> Clov: The whole universe. (114)

The landscape surrounding the troubled pair smells like a body and looks like a body, for Clov describes the earth as "Corpsed" (106). What is clear, however, is that while the earth may smell of bodies it is not full of them. In *Endgame*, there is no need to bury your father or the past he represents. You can keep him in an ashbin downstage. This is, apparently, the future fate that worries Hamm: "But you'll bury me" he begs his son, who responds coldly, "No I shan't bury you" (112). Hamm wants to know that his aging body will not rest in an ashbin, that Clov will take better care of him than he has taken of Nagg. Just as Hamm refuses to pay proper homage to his father, Clov refuses to promise Hamm a proper burial. Again, Hamm implores, "Put me in my coffin" (130). Clov responds with the simple denial, "There are no more coffins" (130). Mothers must also rest without their funeral rites, like Nell in her ashbin. When Hamm asks if Mother Pegg was buried, Clov responds with surprise, "Buried! Who would have buried her?" (112). Hamm's placement of his own parents in ashbins is a clear indication that the older generation is being treated with a lack of respect, as is Clov's insistence that he will not bury Hamm. Yet Clov confesses that he dreams of putting Hamm (and the past he represents) to rest: "I love order. It's my dream. A world where all would be silent and still and each thing in its last place, under the last dust" (120). This dream of order and silence has obviously been denied to Hamm, whose "accursed progenitor" often springs up unexpectedly from his resting place in the dust, full of stories about the past that no one wants to hear. Rodriguez-Gago explains Nagg's role: "In Beckett's early plays, past memories are kept in various containers, dustbins in *Endgame*, tapes in *Krapp's Last Tape*, a mound in *Happy Days*, jars in *Play . . .*" (116). Nagg is not just the father, but also the embodiment of past memories, of cultural history. Keeping the father in an ashbin, refusing to bury him, is not just a rejection of the father, but a rejection of the

heritage he represents. Simultaneously, it means that this past, these unburied fathers, remain

present on stage, and that they will continue to haunt the present and the future.

Perhaps Hamm is named for Hamlet not just because he hesitates, "I hesitate, I hesitate to

. . . to end" but also because, like Shakespeare's King Hamlet, he is a father who calls for

remembrance. He also calls for obedience, and the play's final tableau shows the son ready to

reject the father, but uncertain of his decision. This question of whether the son will accept or

reject the playwright/father is clearly the play's central one, for both Nagg and Hamm tell stories

about the tie between fathers and sons. Nagg forces Hamm to remember his own helpless state as

an infant, claiming that his son will return to a state of dependence on his father:

> Whom did you call when you were a tiny boy, and were frightened, in the dark?
>
> Your mother? No. Me. We let you cry. Then we moved you out of earshot, so that
>
> we might sleep in peace . . . I hope the day will come when you'll really need to
>
> have me listen to you, and need to hear my voice, any voice. (119)

The play ends with Hamm concluding the tale of Clov's adoption. After Clov leaves, Hamm is

left to finish his repetitive story about fathers and sons, asking Clov's long-dead biological

father: "You don't want to abandon him? You want him to bloom while you are withering? Be

there to solace your last million last moments?" (133). After concluding his story, Hamm "first

calls to his father . . . and then, reversing roles, becomes the father calling to his son . . . There is

no answer from either side . . ." (Homan, 139). The broken genealogy implied here, this rupture

between father and son, is a break-down in surrogation. Julie Campbell argues that Hamm's use

of storytelling to dominate Clov "can be seen to demonstrate, and also debunk, the invention or

appropriation of the past, and thus cultural memory, by those in power" (129). Although Hamm

struggles to control Clov through the power of memory, just as Nagg attempts to control Hamm

through his own memory-narratives, Clov declares throughout the play that he will turn away

from his master, his father, and his past. Campbell, like many Beckett critics, believes that Clov

(and Beckett) are successful in rejecting their fathers, for the play "disturbs and undermines the

power of tradition and conformity to inherited ways of seeing" because "it is an 'endgame'

which plays with existing cultural memories by challenging them and even erasing them" (128,

129). Yet Beckett keeps Clov on stage in those final moments, and as the curtain comes down on

Endgame, the audience sees the son forever posed to go, forever doomed to stay. The play as a

whole, like the later *Happy Days*, does not erase the past: it only dramatizes the failed struggle to

do so. The final words of *Endgame*, "You . . . remain," seem to suggest that something always

remains, and as Hamm places his handkerchief over his face, the audience is invited to see the

play as starting all over again, to imagine Clov removing the handkerchief at the end of the play

just as he removed the sheet at its beginning, thus restarting the dramatic action (134).[43] Yet

though the final line is aimed at the handkerchief, it reverberates with other meanings, pointing

as well to the silent Clov and Nagg, who also remain on stage. The struggle to forget the literary

father, Shakespeare, proves a failure, as *The Tempest* weaves its way in and out of *Endgame's*

dark mockery, the contrast with Shakespeare's romance only adding to Beckett's unsettling

depiction of a hopeless and sterile world. Nor can Clov, frozen on stage, completely forget or

reject his own playwright/father.

 "A part remains": Forgetting the Literary Classics in *Happy Days*

   Happy Days echoes the haunting final line of *Endgame*, using the word "remains"

throughout the play to connect Shakespeare, memory, literature, and the body. As Winnie

struggles through her "happy day" she quotes (and misquotes) fragments of literary classics.

Critics have been eager to recognize in *Happy Days* the struggle to forget history and the literary

past that is so prevalent in Beckett's other plays. Gontarski finds that Winnie's failing memory of

the literary classics presents "the backdrop of western thought in jagged fragments, like a collage

of found objects, the draff of Winnie's education" (61). Anthony Brennan argues that Winnie

forgets Shakespeare and other "classics" because in *Happy Days* "Beckett sees himself as

writing a kind of coda to the whole western tradition."[44] It is important to note, however, that

Winnie's act of forgetting is simultaneously an act of remembrance. As she increasingly forgets

and misquotes Shakespearean plays, she also brings these same plays into the memory of the

audience. Winnie herself, as the "artist" who creates and calls up the literary past, is aware that

no matter how much she forgets "a part remains." Her act of forgetting, like Beckett's, remains

incomplete.

Throughout the play, Beckett presents the act of reading and remembering Shakespeare

as a debased enterprise: Shakespearean plays and Winnie's other "classics" are compared to

advertisements and pornography. Reading and quoting from literature are two activities that

Winnie uses to pass the time as she transforms slowly into dust, although she has little to read,

frozen as she is waist-deep in the earth. Her options for reading include a dirty toothbrush and a

medicine bottle, while Willie has a pornographic postcard and a yellowed newspaper, from

which he reads only the obituaries and the wanted ads. Platitudes and clichés mix freely in

Winnie's dialogue with her "wonderful lines," thus placing what she reads on the side of a

toothbrush on the same level as what little she remembers of Shakespeare. Winnie struggles first

to clean the corrupting dirt off of the toothbrush handle, and then to read it with her failing

eyesight: "[examines handle, reads]—pure . . . what?" (139). Winnie struggles to make out the

print on the toothbrush, repeating mechanically the first three words that appear on the brush

"guaranteed genuine pure" seven times. The bestial conclusion to the phrase she labors so long to read shows that reading is an empty enterprise: when she finally manages to read the toothbrush's entire message on the seventh try, she finds that the words she longed to make out read, "fully guaranteed genuine pure hog's setae" (159). Although the audience is not expecting any grand conclusions, Winnie is surprised by these words: the bathos of this unexpected ending mocks the act of reading. Nothing in Winnie's world is ever fully guaranteed, genuine, or pure. Winnie uses the same terms to describe Willie's pornographic postcard: "but this is just genuine pure filth!" thus connecting the two forms of reading/viewing. Shakespeare, in *Happy Days*, is only one more habit used to keep death at bay, one more way to keep involuntary (and true) memory from entering the mind. Brushing her hair, filing her nails, reciting the Bard, all are habits that remain, but that are increasingly devoid of meaning in Winnie's present plight. Brennan notes that for Winnie, the literary classics are like any other trinket in her bag: "Beckett never allows the fact to escape our attention that she draws as much comfort from toothbrush, mirror, and lipstick as she does from Shakespeare, Milton, and Keats" (225). When language fails, Winnie turns to habit and focuses on her physical body: "Words fail, there are times when even they fail . . . what is one to do then, until they come again? Brush and comb the hair, if it has not been done, or if there is some doubt, trim the nails if they are in need of trimming, these things tide one over" (147). Gontarski notes that for Winnie, language and literature are gradually losing their value and meaning: "The language she herself uses is also little more than noise. It is redolent with banalities, clichés, half-remembered literary quotations and misquotations . . . Language generally in Beckett's world is not a means of conveying meaning, but a balm for the sores of existence" (18). In her current plight, whether she remembers *Hamlet* is not any more important or useful than what her hair looks like.

Yet Winnie does remember *Hamlet*, although she recalls only bits of it: she also remembers parts of *Twelfth Night*, *Cymbeline*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, though she is increasingly forgetting what she remembers. Beckett carefully noted all of the play's allusions for its first director, Alan Schneider, telling Schneider that as Winnie weakens, the value of the "classics" she references decreases as well (Gontarski, 63). It is significant, therefore, that Winnie's literary memory begins with *Hamlet*. As the play progresses and Winnie is increasingly interred in the earth, slowly losing her body and mobility, her memory, both personal and literary, weakens: the Shakespearean quotations she employs become shorter and increasingly fragmented. Even in the beginning of the play, she remembers only parts of the "classics" she recalls. She remembers a bit of *Paradise Lost* in the first act: "What is that wonderful line? Oh fleeting joys—oh something lasting woe" (141). Increasingly statements such as "What is that unforgettable line?" do not proceed actual lines (160). Her early allusions to Shakespeare are complete enough to be recognizable: "what are those wonderful lines—woe woe is me—to see what I see" (140). Later quotations to Shakespeare are more enigmatic: "cheek . . . no . . . no . . . even if I puff them out . . . . no . . . no damask" (162). By this point in the second act, Winnie can remember only two words from the passage she references in *Twelfth Night*: "She never told her love, / But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud / Feed on her damask cheek" (2.4.111-112). By the end of *Happy Days*, the words of Shakespeare's plays that Winnie remembers have been reduced to silence, transformed into an absence rather than a presence. Her customary cue "What is that immortal line?" is followed only by silence.

Yet even as Winnie increasingly forgets Shakespeare, his words still reflect on her present situation, although often with painful irony. The most significant of all Winnie's quotations in *Happy Days* comes from *Cymbeline*: "Fear no more the heat o' the sun" (148).

Tortured as she is by the heat of the sun, the line seems at first a cry for mercy: "Shall I myself

not melt perhaps in the end, or burn, oh I do not mean necessarily burst into flames, no, just little

by little be charred to black cinder, all this—visible flesh" (154). The image of melting flesh is

clearly taken from *Hamlet*.[45] The conglomeration of the two plays, the reading of the brothers'

song of comfort for the "dead" Imogen in *Cymbeline* over the image of melting flesh from

Hamlet, suggests horror rather than comfort. For even burning will not kill Winnie: "Winnie

never realizes that being charred to a black cinder may not be an end. For the audience, her

parasol is a reminder. It was consumed by flames in the first act, but appears unscarred in the

second" (Gontarski, 27). Winnie recognizes that her props cannot be destroyed: "I take up this

little glass, I shiver it on a stone—I throw it away—it will be in the bag again tomorrow, without

a scratch, to help me through the day. No, one can do nothing. This is what I find so wonderful,

the way things . . . things . . . so wonderful" (154). The way that nothing in her world can be

destroyed is "wonderful," yet it is the horror of her world that nothing, including herself, can be

destroyed. Cohn notes the irony in this Shakespearean line: "Only death enables one to 'fear no

more'—a meaningless trisyllable for Winnie and Willie." (239). Indeed, Beckett describes

Winnie in the opening stage directions as "Blonde for preference" and Winnie remembers when

a suitor admired her hair, "Golden you called it, that day . . ." (146). The remainder of the

Shakespearean verse is immediately applicable to Winnie's situation: "'Golden lads and girls all

must, / As chimney sweepers, come to dust" (4.2.262-263). Winnie, however, is dramatized in

the act of "coming to dust," but without its finale. She is frozen in the act of dying but never

dead. The repetitive loop of her world, as symbolized by her indestructible props, reminds

Winnie, and the audience, that nothing is new under the sun (Gontarski, 27). For in this play,

"the change is as superficial and circular as the apparent change in the book of Ecclesiastes, in

which the sun dominates as an image as it does throughout *Happy Days*" (Gontarski, 27). Winnie wonders at the fact that there is nothing new in her world: "Yes, what ever occurred that did not occur before . . ." (154). Ultimately, the comforting words from *Cymbeline* point only to images of torture and repetition.

Of course, these images of torturous repetition suggest that nothing is ever really eliminated, forgotten, or erased. Referring to the knowledge she has forgotten, Winnie says "it will come back, that is what I find so wonderful, all comes back. All? No, not all. No no. Not quite. A part. Floats up, one fine day, out of the blue. That is what I find so wonderful" (144). Later she describes her mind, which she feels she is gradually losing: "There always remains something. Of everything. Some remains. If the mind were to go. It won't of course. Not quite" (161). And again: "I have not lost my reason. Not yet. Not all. Some remains. Sounds. Like little . . . sunderings, little falls . . . apart." (162). Finally, she describes her loss of Shakespeare in the same terms: "One loses one's classics. Oh not all. A part. A part remains. That is what I find so wonderful, a part remains, of one's classics, to help one through the day" (164). At the end of the play, she uses the same term "remains" to describe her physical body. When Willie looks at her in the play's final moments, Winnie is buried up to her neck in her mound. She cries out, "Does anything remain? Any remains?" (167). The question that Winnie asks of her own mind and body, "Does anything remain?" is the same question that she asks of the literary classics and of language itself. Winnie knows that no matter how much you forget "There always remains something. Of everything. Some remains" (161). Winnie's act of forgetting, like Beckett's, is flawed, too intricately entwined with the act of remembering.

Ultimately, Winnie is an image of the author who struggles to forget the literary past, but who fails in her attempt. Her compulsion to speak, and to create, even when she knows that her

creation is meaningless makes her an embodiment of Beckett's artistic philosophy: "I can do no more. Say no more. But I must say more. Problem here. No, something must move, in the world, I can't any more. A zephyr. A breath. What are those immortal lines?" (166). When she feels that she can speak no more, she looks for someone else's words to create life, to create a breath: she looks for an "immortal line" to fill the space. Gontarski identifies Winnie with the artist who struggles to impose order where there can be none: "Winnie's adaptation depends on her distorting her circumstances and patterning her existence with everyday ritual, itself an attempt to impose order on the chaos, the void, the mess. As such, her plight is not radically different from the artist's; both order the chaos . . ." (Gontarski, 17). Winnie knows that she can never be silent: "What would I do without them, when words fail? Gaze before me with compressed lips. I cannot" (162). Winnie must speak. She must create, even if her creation proves futile. She is the artist who fails and who recognizes and embraces that failure. She fails to forget the past, literary, cultural, and personal, and she is compelled to create even when she knows that her words lack the power to communicate her meaning.

In the end, Beckett's theater struggles to represent the reduction of corpse and corpus to its final dust. Beckett's artistic failure, his inability to extricate himself from his own learning, his own cultural and literary past, is evident as the failure to forget Shakespeare, a failure that also haunts his characters. *Endgame* and *Happy Days* link body, memory, and literature, but all three prove to be working slowly toward stillness and silence. Ultimately, the characters demonstrate not the triumph of erasing history, but the sorrow and horror of failing to forget it. Their acts of forgetting and erasure, no matter what they struggle to erase or forget, are always incomplete. Beckett's early plays, such as *Happy Days* and *Endgame,* need bodies and voices, but they struggle toward disembodiment, erasure, silence. Hamm and Winnie, trapped in worlds

filled with the voices of the past, in worlds overwhelmed by the smell of corpses, struggle to

forget, but find that they never escape from the nagging voice of the aging father implanted in

the ashbin or the remembered words of a dead playwright embedded in the mind. Later plays

hint at destruction and erasure, but their absences inevitably remind the viewer of what is

missing, pointing to the place where a body once was or should be, a place where an older play

has crossed the same stage with the same series of steps. Even in a drama such as *Breath*, trapped

in the recorded screams that open and close the play, when it comes to the memory of the body,

something remains.

Chapter Six

"A bit of Shakespeare": The Playwright and the Player in Stoppard's Shakespearean Adaptations

> Shakespeare calls spirits up from the vasty deep . . . and when he calls them up
> they come.
>   -Tom Stoppard, "Is It True What They Say About Shakespeare?"

Hamlet is the quintessential haunted play, and Stoppard's comic response is an equally

haunted adaptation, a play that explores the theater's obsession with fathers' ghosts, lost

memories, and bodily violence in a comic light. Indeed, much of the play's laughter depends on

the audience's familiarity with the cultural tradition of the stage as a haunted and violent space.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead breaks down the traditional boundaries between

performer and spectator, a rupture that suggests not only that "all the world's a stage," but

perhaps more importantly that the stage performs a vision of death and continuity that is needed

by the world.[1] A self-reflexive adaptation that mocks both its own derivative status and its

Shakespearean source, Stoppard's comedy constantly foregrounds its status as Shakespearean

adaptation and comments on the process of rewriting an older literary work. Stoppard has been

deeply engaged with the Bard throughout his career, exploring his place as playwright in relation

to Shakespeare through works such as *Shakespeare in Love* and *Dogg's Hamlet, Cahoot's*

Macbeth. Although critics have yet to draw connections between Roach's theory of surrogation

and Stoppard's works of Shakespearean adaptation, Stoppard casts himself as a Shakespeare

surrogate through his commentary on Shakespeare in essays and interviews as well as through

his comic adaptation of Shakespeare's biography in *Shakespeare in Love*.[2] *Rosencrantz and*

Guildenstern are Dead offers a different vision of surrogation in action, giving a humorous look

at both the possibilities and the limitations of theatrical surrogation. As Stoppard's play focuses on the body of the player in his phantom death, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* questions both the intellectual possibility and the cultural purpose of performing death. While Stoppard's comedy laughs at stage violence, the play remains keenly aware of the human body's potential to serve as a vessel for cultural and canonical memory. Although Stoppard explores the limits of the theater as ghost-haunted memory machine, interrogating the confines of theatrical surrogation, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* ends by reaffirming the theater's traditional role as a repository for cultural memory.

"A bit of Shakespeare . . . a bit of me": The Image of the Playwright in *Shakespeare in Love*

Lacking the terrible violence, the horror of the weight of history, that overruns the appropriations of Brecht or Müller, Stoppard's use of Shakespeare resembles Beckett's in that both kinds of adaptation show a strong sense of separation from the source text: Beckett's work distances itself from Shakespeare through the struggle to forget or erase, through disembodiment, while Stoppard distances his work from Shakespeare's through comedy and parody. Strongly influenced by both Shaw and Beckett, Stoppard deliberately appropriated their styles of responding to the Bard, using Shaw's *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* as one of the many sources for the screenplay of *Shakespeare in Love* and deliberately mimicking the style of Beckett in works such as *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.[3] Although Beckett's influence on Stoppard has long been a topic of critical inquiry, *Shakespeare in Love*'s reliance on a Shavian source has been completely overlooked. As a matter of fact, critics have been eager to view Stoppard's life-long engagement with Shakespeare as a unique attribute, failing to note the strong influence that Shaw's famous battle with the Bard held for Stoppard's own Shakespearean

adaptations.[4] Stoppard's construction of himself as a Shakespeare surrogate, both through his commentary in interviews and essays and through his depiction of the playwright Will in *Shakespeare in Love* as a double for himself at a younger age, presents an attempt to usurp Shakespeare's canonical and cultural place that is decidedly Shavian.[5] Like Shaw, Stoppard struggles to align himself with Shakespeare, creating legitimizing myths of origin for himself and his drama, thus casting himself as a reincarnated Shakespeare. Like Shaw, Stoppard justifies his right to adapt Shakespeare's plays by reminding viewers that Shakespeare appropriated the works of others. Like Shaw, Stoppard playfully implies that because Shakespeare improved the works he adapted, perhaps Stoppard will also improve Shakespeare. The screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love* simultaneously points to biographical similarities between Stoppard's life and Shakespeare's, while also reducing Shakespeare to the status of a less-than-original and less-than-threatening dramatic predecessor.

Both Stoppard's commentary on Shakespeare and his Shakespearean adaptations suggest that Stoppard views the process of Shakespearean adaptation as one that requires a fusion of personalities and an overlap in identities between himself and Shakespeare. Stoppard describes the process of adapting *Hamlet*: "in my innocence I just wrote along, a bit of Shakespeare, off they went, a bit of me, a bit more of that, off with me, on with some Shakespeare."[6] Jill Levenson describes Stoppard's engagement with Shakespeare as one that required that his own life be read as superimposed over that of the dead playwright, for Stoppard's Shakespearean adaptations "incorporated a nonliterary text that would remain an identifiable part of Stoppard's work: the playwright's own life, specifically his experience as an artist."[7] Stoppard combined himself most fully with Shakespeare, however, not in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, but in the later screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love*, a film that depicts the young Will

Shakespeare as a struggling playwright whose early career overlaps in significant ways with

Stoppard's.[8] Joseph Roach argues that even comic performances such as parody can suggest

cultural surrogations: "even as parody, performances propose possible candidates for succession.

They raise the possibility of the replacement of the authors of the representations by those whom

they imagined into existence as their definitive opposites."[9] As Levenson points out, Stoppard

essentially casts Shakespeare as a version of himself: "With the callow and frantic Will of

Shakespeare in Love, he seems to refashion Shakespeare . . . as a double for his earlier self."[10] In

an Elizabethan London that bears a strong resemblance to modern day Hollywood, Will deceives

two rival theater owners, convincing both that the script for *Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's*

Daughter is well underway, when in fact his conversation with Christopher Marlowe reveals that

he has not begun writing the piece at all.[11] When the anxious Henslowe inquires after the play,

"Is it done?" Will responds with the "strong" assurance Hamlet offers Ophelia, "Doubt that the

stars have fire . . ."[12] In 1963, Stoppard wrote a letter to a friend confessing his own deception of

his editor: "Kenneth keeps on me about the play . . . which (I lie) I am progressing with."[13] Early

in his career, Stoppard's composition process usually involved multiple title changes, and he

often borrowed plot, characters, and ideas from other playwrights.[14] Will changes the title of

Romeo and Juliet three times in the course of the film, and he gets most of his plot ideas from a

conversation with Marlowe.[15] In fact, Will's anxiety about writing in the shadow of Marlowe

parallels Stoppard's anxiety about writing in the shadow of Shakespeare. Jane Kingsley-Smith

notes that Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* leaves its mark on the film: for in

Shakespeare in Love, "Marlowe's death is represented as Shakespeare's subconscious wish and

the precondition of his greatness."[16] At the audition for *Romeo and Juliet*, Will groans to a

repeated monologue taken from *Doctor Faustus* ("Is this the face that launched a thousand

ships?") and many of the film's characters repeatedly remind Will that he cannot compare to

Marlowe. Part of the viewer's pleasure in this string of Marlowe jokes is the knowledge that

Will's fame will eventually surpass that of his dramatic predecessor. Thus, the implied parallel

between Shakespeare's indebtedness to Marlowe and Stoppard's indebtedness to Shakespeare

predicts triumph for Stoppard, suggesting that he may eventually surpass the playwright who

preceded and inspired him. Shakespeare provided the inspiration and background plot for

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, the work that first brought Stoppard fame and

international acclaim. *Romeo and Juliet*, largely inspired by the helpful plot and characterization

that Marlowe provides, also proves to be a work that will bring the playwright to the attention of

the theater-going public in London. Ultimately, Stoppard's depiction of Shakespeare as a double

for his younger self suggests that Stoppard will surpass Shakespeare just as Shakespeare

surpassed Marlowe.

Yet Shakespeare is not the only ghostly playwright behind *Shakespeare in Love*, for the

play's depiction of Will also takes inspiration from Bernard Shaw's own depiction of

Shakespeare in love: indeed, Stoppard's style of adapting and responding to Shakespearean

works is partly inspired by that arch-enemy of bardolatry, Bernard Shaw. While the film's

reliance on sources such as Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon's novel *No Bed for Bacon* and

Clemence Dane's play *Will Shakespeare—An Invention* have been frequently noted, many of the

jokes and much of the characterization in *Shakespeare in Love* mirrors that in Shaw's one-act

play of 1910, *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*. Stoppard's strong familiarity with Shaw's canon

suggests that this play may actually be one of the primary sources for *Shakespeare in Love*. Like

Stoppard's Will, Shaw's Shakespear appropriates poetic lines he hears from other characters and

puts them into his plays. Both Shakespeare characters also associate the poetry they learn from

other characters with music. For example, as Stoppard's Will runs through the crowded streets of London, he hears a ranting Puritan cry "A plague on both your houses!" When he hears the line, he pauses in the street and waves his hands in the air as though conducting music. Will adapts his romance with Viola into the text of *Romeo and Juliet*, as when an encounter with his mistress on her balcony makes its way into the text of his new play. The combined tactic of borrowing lines from other characters and using events from his own life makes Will appear "fallible, easily distracted, and unimaginative" (Kingsley-Smith, 159). Likewise, Shaw's Shakespear borrows lines for *Hamlet* from the guard he encounters at Whitehall. "A ghost!" the guard exclaims, "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"[17] Shakespear responds, "Well said, Master Warder. With your leave I will set that down in writing; for I have a very poor and unhappy brain for remembrance. Methinks this is a good scene, with you on your lonely watch, and I approaching like a ghost in the moonlight" (123). Later, when the guard claims that "you may say of frailty that its name is woman," Shakespear responds "Prithee say that again: that about frailty: the strain of music" (124).[18] Shakespear causes trouble when he plagiarizes too many lines from Queen Elizabeth. The angry Queen chastises the unimaginative playwright, "I am not here to write your plays for you" (132). Both Will and Shakespear pick up bits of poetry from the people around them, thus calling into question Shakespeare's "genius" and taking a laughing glance at anti-Stratfordian conspiracy theories. Both works comically reduce Shakespeare's originality, thus making the two authors appropriating Shakespeare appear to be following in the Bard's footsteps when they also appropriate the work of others.

While Will and Shakespear steal their "musical" lines from the characters around them, both also worry about being caught in the shadow of other playwrights, and both are filled with a bombastic sense of self-importance: in combination, these characteristics show that both

Shakespear and Will struggle with a powerful anxiety of influence. As the two characters

oscillate between worries about what other playwrights think of their work and an inflated sense

of self-worth, they appear comically vulnerable, and their pompous claims to fame are revealed

to be mere acts of over-compensation. Stoppard depicts Will as emasculated when faced with the

works of Marlowe. As Will confesses to the apothecary in the beginning of the film, "My quill is

broken!" The opening sequence of the film shows Will struggling with writer's block, and

although he claims that he needs a female muse, it is not until he gets advice from the great

dramatist who influenced him that his new play begins to take shape. After Marlowe's death,

Will confesses, ""I would exchange all my plays to come, for all of his that will never come" and

he admits that "Marlowe's touch was in my *Titus Andronicus*. My *Henry VI* was a house built on

his foundation." While Stoppard's Will worries about the looming shadow of Christopher

Marlowe, Shaw's Shakespear remembers Ben Jonson chastising his writing style:

> The Lady: You are extravagant. Observe some measure in your speech.
>
> Shakespear: You speak now as Ben does
>
> The Lady: And who, pray, is Ben?
>
> Shakespear: A learned bricklayer . . . (127)

Furthermore, Shakespear admits that his plays are not as popular as those written by his

contemporaries. He offers the palace guard a free ticket to see one of his plays, confessing

ashamedly that his drama fails to draw a large audience: "present this tablet, and you will be

welcomed at any time when the plays of Will Shakespear are in hand. Bring your wife. Bring

your friends. Bring the whole garrison. There is ever plenty of room" (123). The guard responds,

"I care not for these new fangled plays . . . Will you not give me a pass for The Spanish

Tragedy?" (123). Shakespear is left feeling that he cannot compete with Kyd, and in fact, that he cannot even give away tickets to his plays.

Not only do both Shakespeare characters worry about being compared to other playwrights, but both have enormous egos: their pompous claims of importance humorously over-compensate for their lack of self-evident artistic talent. Will falls in love neither with Viola, nor with the young man she pretends to be, but with his own image. He first meets the crossed-dressed Viola in the Rose, where she auditions for *Romeo and Juliet* by giving a monologue from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. When Will hears his own words parroted back to him in the passionate tones of Viola/Kempe, he leaps up and chases the cross-dressed woman across town with every sign of comic love at first sight. What Will is chasing is actually his own artistic vision. He is not yet in love with Viola, but he is passionate about finding the perfect Romeo for his play. This is Shakespeare in love—with himself. Later, as he completes the first act of *Romeo and Ethel, the Pirate's Daughter*, Will kisses the manuscript and says with rapture, "God, I'm good!" Shaw's Shakespear is just as egotistical as Stoppard's. When Shakespear finds that his mistress has interrupted his late night meeting with Queen Elizabeth by striking them both in a fit of jealous rage, he is far more worried about his own dignity than he is about the enraged virgin Queen. The Dark Lady is shocked and worried about keeping her head: "Will: I am lost: I have struck the Queen" (128). Shakespear responds with comic egoism: "Woman: you have struck William Shakespear!!!!!!" (128). When Queen Elizabeth accuses him of dealing coldly with the Dark Lady, Shakespear responds by comparing himself to a god, "I am not cruel, madam; but you know the fable of Jupiter and Semele. I could not help my lightings scorching her" (131). Shakespear even ridiculously lauds his own parentage at the expense of the Queen's royal genealogy:

> Elizabeth: The son of your father shall learn his place in the presence of the
>
> daughter of Harry the Eighth.
>
> Shakespear: Name not that inordinate man in the same breath with Stratford's
>
> worthiest alderman. John Shakespear wedded but once: Harry Tudor was married
>
> six times. You should blush to utter his name. (129)

Both Will and Shakespear alternate between anxieties about their own lack of originality and moments of hyperbolic egoism: through these comic depictions, Stoppard and Shaw suggest that Shakespeare, like themselves, struggled with the strong influence of an earlier playwright. Thus, both playwrights validate their own anxieties about Shakespeare's influence.

Although both works depict Shakespeare in love, they ultimately show him more in love with the written word than he is with any man or woman: both works validate the power of dramatic poetry above all else and use the regal presence of Queen Elizabeth to prove the point. Viola first falls in love with Will's work and not with Will himself. The rapture on her face as she watches a performance of *Two Gentlemen of Verona* shows that her interest, at least at first, is in Will's plays. The montage later in the film that cuts between a sex scene and rehearsals for *Romeo and Juliet* clearly shows that this couple's sex life is improved by reciting lines of poetry. When Viola is angry with Will, she confesses, "I loved the writer and gave up the prize for a sonnet." Viola loves Will for his poetry, and Will loves Viola for loving his poetry: they are more in love with the idea of art than they are invested in any serious emotional attachment to each other. Not only does Will and Viola's romantic relationship suggest the primacy of art, but the film uses the figure of Queen Elizabethan as the final "proof" that poetry reigns over all. Will's encounter with the Queen leads to a wager that she will judge: "Can a play show us the very truth and nature of love?" The unexpected success of *Romeo and Juliet*'s opening night

both wins the wager for Will and affirms the power of the theater and its poetry. Shaw's

Shakespear also uses an encounter with Queen Elizabeth to affirm the power of the written word

and the central cultural place of the theater. Shakespear confides in the Queen: "I tell you there is

no word yet coined and no melody yet sung that is extravagant and majestical enough for the

glory that lovely words can reveal. It is heresy to deny it: have you not been taught that in the

beginning was the Word? that the Word was with God? nay, that the Word was God?" (128).

The Queen affirms Shakespear's belief in the power of poetry by foretelling a day when his

nation will appreciate the true worth of his plays and the true value of the theater (134).

Ultimately, both playwrights are interested in depicting Shakespeare in love, but that love turns

out to be one that affirms their own social role as authors of dramatic art.

Finally, the most important similarity between the two works is that both depict

Shakespeare as a double for the modern author, thus suggesting that Shaw and Stoppard are

Shakespeare reincarnated. As he did elsewhere in his plays and prose, Shaw used *The Dark Lady*

of the Sonnets to draw connections between himself and Shakespeare: Shakespear loves music,

he is the champion of the national theater, he believes that art has moral purpose. Shakespear

complains about the plays Shaw revealed a particular dislike for in his Shakespearean criticism

(*As You Like It* and *Much Ado about Nothing*) and complains, as Shaw often did, that these

comedies are performed at the expense of the more complex and socially-aware problem plays.

The Guard even explains that he doesn't like Shakespear's plays because "No man can

understand a word of them. They are all talk," a complaint frequently made against Shaw's own

dramatic canon (123). *Shakespeare in Love* adopts a similar tactic, showing Shakespeare

attending auditions and rehearsals for his first big hit, *Romeo and Juliet*, just as Stoppard

attended auditions and rehearsals for his first hit, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*.[19] As

Stoppard puts his own lines in the Bard's mouth, young Will uses Stoppardian wit at every turn. The postmodern anachronisms in the film, which make Elizabethan London look more like Stoppard's own modern day one, close the space between the two writers, suggesting that their career paths and identities, though separated by hundreds of years, could overlap. Stoppard's re-creation of Shakespeare in his own image, an attempt to cast himself as a stand-in for Shakespeare, manifests Roach's point about the powers of surrogation, a cultural performance that demonstrates "the psychological paradox that masquerade is the most powerful form of self-expression" (28).Ultimately, Stoppard's Shavian manner of rewriting Shakespeare's biography suggests that Stoppard, like Shaw, presents himself as a reincarnated Shakespeare. Yet these works of Shakespearean parody simultaneously show surrogation's penchant for what Roach explains as the "custom of self-definition by staging contrasts . . ." (6). The two authors mock Shakespeare, reducing his status in order to magnify their own.

Thus, the image of the playwright in *Shakespeare in Love* is Shakespearean, Shavian, and Stoppardian. The overlapping figures that converge in Stoppard's Will remind the viewer that Stoppard's attempt to rewrite Shakespeare's biography is an effort to alter cultural memory. Even as a comedy with little basis in historical fact, the popular film's reconstruction of the Bard adds the image of William Shakespeare as a young Tom Stoppard to the ever growing collection of Shakespeare apocrypha. Both Shaw and Stoppard use the act of remembering Shakespeare to make themselves more memorable, rewriting Shakespeare in their own image. Bringing Shakespeare back to life in the form of Stoppard or Shaw is an act of cultural surrogation. The living remember the dead by playing them or recasting them in the form of the living. Thus, the Shakespearean past is only reclaimed in the image of the dramatic (and filmic) present.

"Blood is Compulsory": The Body of the Player in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*

   While *Shakespeare in Love* and *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* are comedies about love in which conflated identity and overlapping biographies can be seen as acts of surrogation, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, a comedy that examines the possibility of performing death, explores surrogation in a different way. *Shakespeare in Love* and *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* reveal authors who cast themselves in a Shakespearean role, as they attempt to stand in for a previous dramatist. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, instead of proposing a possible Shakespearean surrogate, interrogates the process of theatrical surrogation itself. As Stoppard's two characters question the possibility and purpose of performing death, the play examines surrogation as it often appears on stage. Guildenstern questions the role of the theater as culture's vessel for the memory of loss, death, and replacement, only to discover that the players serve as a living *memento mori*. As the play progresses, Stoppard reveals that the body of the player is central to the preservation of memory and that these effigies of flesh present a necessary cultural and artistic reconstruction of the cycle of absence and replacement created by death.

   While critics have been eager to note that death is a central topic for this witty comedy, it is significant that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are more interested in the cultural and artistic representation of death than they are worried about their own deaths.[20] Indeed, their lack of concern about their impending doom is an ongoing joke, for the play is filled with puns that foreshadow the protagonists' demise. For example, Rosencrantz confusedly tells Guildenstern, "I tell you it's all stopping to a death, it's boding to a depth, stepping to a head, it's all heading to a dead stop--."[21] The Player, as a tragedian, is always more aware of the ever-present threat of death than Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and he mocks the two lords with his foreknowledge:

"Do you call that an ending?—with practically everyone on his feet? My goodness no—over your dead body" (79). Guildenstern struggles to explain and conceptualize actual death outside of the theater, and repeatedly insists that the theater cannot offer a true picture of death. Yet Rosencrantz and Guildenstern become increasingly aware of death and gain a new understanding of it primarily through their encounter with the traveling group of tragedians. As Lia Hotchkiss points out, Stoppard's comedy creates an "equation of theater with death."[22] It is their encounters with the players and the theater that raises the characters' awareness of their own mortality.

In fact, reacting to, understanding, and portraying death is one of the play's major topics, and a source of both hilarious confusion and verbal play throughout the comedy:

>Guil: Of course he's dead!

>Ros: Properly.

>Guil: Death's death, isn't it? (89-90)

What the two lost and confounded Elizabethans discover is that there are many ways in which human culture attempts to describe, encounter, and represent an absence that cannot be represented. Throughout the play, Guildenstern constantly focuses on death as being beyond artistic representation or human understanding. He struggles to convince the other characters that

>You can't act death. The fact of it is nothing to do with seeing it happen—it's not gasps and blood and falling about—that isn't what makes it death. It's just a man failing to reappear, that's all—now you see him now you don't. That's the only thing that's real: here one minute and gone the next and never coming back—an exit, unobtrusive and unannounced, a disappearance gathering weight as it goes on, until, finally, it is heavy with death. (84)

Yet even as Guildenstern makes this speech, his belief that death cannot be acted is undercut. As Hotchkiss points out, Stoppard

> juxtaposes his definition with a blackout during which we hear Claudius
> disrupting the performance which portrays his crime. The two-fold irony that
> belies Guildenstern's denial lies in the success with which *Gonzago* did elicit an
> emotional response to enacted death and in the means by which Hamlet learns of
> the nature of his father's death: Old Hamlet is terrifyingly dead precisely because
> he is a ghostly presence, not an absence. (178)

This juxtaposition between dialogue and action calls Guildenstern's conception of death as a "simple exit" into question. The slow-witted Rosencrantz also finds the idea of a simple exit, of death being represented by absence alone, extremely difficult to grasp:

> Ros: Do you think death could possibly be a boat?
> Guil: No, no, no . . . Death is . . . not. Death isn't. You take my meaning. Death is
> the ultimate negative. Not-being. You can't not be on a boat.
> Ros: I've often not been on boats. (108)

Because Rosencrantz needs a way to conceptualize death, he imagines it as a form of sleep, a metaphor taken from *Hamlet*. Rosencrantz morbidly asks his fellow attendant lord: "Do you ever think of yourself as actually dead, lying in a box with a lid on it?" (70). His convoluted answer to his own question brings him back to Guildenstern's earlier point that death cannot be represented by the living, or even easily conceptualized by them:

> Nor do I really . . . It's silly to be depressed by it. I mean one thinks of it like
> being alive in a box, one keeps forgetting to take into account the fact that one is
> dead . . . which should make all the difference . . . shouldn't it? I mean, you'd

never know you were in a box, would you? It would be just like being asleep in a

box. Not that I'd like to sleep in a box, mind you, not without any air—you'd

wake up dead, for a start, and then where would you be? (70)

This dialogue about the possibility of imagining and representing death becomes an ongoing

source of debate between Guildenstern and the Player. Ultimately, their conversations focus on

the theater's ancient role as a space where cultures perform death.

Because the players are tragedians trapped in a comedy, they immediately bring

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's ongoing argument about representing death into the realm of

theatrical surrogation. As a parody of the quintessential Western tragedy, Stoppard's play

delights in deriding the classic attributes of tragedy: its hyperbolic humor also draws attention to

the theater's traditional role in representing violence, death, and surrogation.[23] The Player

promises his audience "a selection of gory romances, full of fine cadence and corpses, pirated

from the Italian" (22). This description ridicules the type of play Elizabethan players might have

offered, but it also promises a performance that focuses on gore and corpses. The "gory"

Elizabethan play offered by the Player has a long heritage: "You're familiar with the tragedies of

antiquity, are you? The great homicidal classics? Matri, patri, fratri, sorori, uxori" (32). It is an

appropriate interpretation of theater history for a player who claims to be of "the blood, love and

rhetoric school" (33). What the Player reveals, however, is that the one quality he feels plays

cannot do without is blood: "I can do you blood and love without the rhetoric, and I can do you

blood and rhetoric without the love, and I can do you all three concurrent or consecutive, but I

can't do you love and rhetoric without the blood. Blood is compulsory—they're all blood, you

see" (33). The suggestion that plays are "all blood," all about bodies, violence, and death, is a

point that Stoppard returns to repeatedly in order to mock the tragic tradition. He also

sardonically addresses theater's history of valuing tragedy over comedy, humorously questioning the cultural commonplace that tragedy is high art:

> Player: Are you familiar with this play?
>
> Guil: No
>
> Player: A slaughterhouse—eight corpses all told. It brings out the best in us. (83)

The Player's argument that the corpse count is what makes for high art mocks Shakespearean tragedy, but it also reiterates the connection between theater and death so central to this particular comedy. Again, the Player insists that the tragedians' art is driven by death: "They're a bit out of practice, but they always pick up wonderfully for the deaths—it brings out the poetry in them" (77). According to the Player, tragedies always end in the same way: "It never varies— we aim at the point where everyone who is marked for death dies" (79). This constant equation of the theater with death, a depiction of the stage as a specifically haunted space, neatly aligns with the work of performance theorists such as Joseph Roach and Marvin Carlson. Hotchkiss explains Stoppard's depiction of the theater as a vessel for a culture's remembered encounters with death:

> in the stage plays to which Guildenstern has been exposed--both the classical tragedy that he claims to prefer and the "love, blood, and rhetoric" school that the players perform—all plots tend towards death. The Player would argue that containing death—both in the sense of holding and controlling—is precisely the stage's function. (168)

That the stage attempts to "hold and control" death is central to Roach's theory of theater. The body of the actor, which has the power to metaphorically reanimate the bodies of the dead, is always a replacement body, a figure that stands in for or imitates someone else. For Roach,

theatrical performances reenact surrogation, the process through which a culture remembers and replaces the dead, a process that leads both to memory and to reinvention. Hotchkiss explains that *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* self-reflexively shows how "Theater gives audiences a death in which they can believe and at the same time distances them from it" (168). More importantly, the play questions the cultural need for such a representation and examines the very possibility of performing death.

Early in the play, Guildenstern argues that the players cannot truly represent death: he rejects the traditional role of the ghost-haunted stage as a vessel for cultural memory and as a means of reawakening the dead. As Hotchkiss points out, many of the play's speeches "center on whether death can or cannot be acted" (168). Guildenstern's attacks on the Player interrogate the theater's ability to enact cultural surrogation, challenging the stage's place and purpose as memory machine. Guildenstern confronts the Player, questioning his ability to understand and enact death:

> Guil: You!—What do you know about death?
>
> Player: It's what the actors do best. They have to exploit whatever talent is given to them, and their talent is dying. They can die heroically, comically, ironically, slowly, suddenly. Disgustingly, charmingly, or from a great height . . .
>
> Ros: Is that all they can do—die?
>
> Player: No, no—they kill beautifully. In fact some of them kill even better than they die. The rest die better than they kill. They're a team. (83)

That the primary function of the tragedians is to represent killing and dying is comically evident to the Player, but Guildenstern continues to insist that the stage cannot represent death. Guildenstern explains that deaths on stage create neither a true sense of awareness nor catharsis:

Guil (fear, derision): Actors! The mechanics of cheap melodrama! That isn't

death! You scream and choke and sink to your knees, but it doesn't bring death

home to anyone—it doesn't catch them unawares and start the whisper in their

skulls that says –"one day you are going to die." You die so many times: how can

you expect them to believe in your death? (83)

The player responds, "On the contrary, it's the only kind they do believe" (83). According to the

Player, audiences believe in the kind of surrogation they see in the theater, because the audience

can only understand the kind of death they can see performed by someone else. This exchange in

the first act foreshadows the play's finale. As the play builds to its climax, Guildenstern's

accusations build in intensity. After reading the letter commanding his own death, his anger with

the player becomes intensely personal. Suddenly, the Player's jokes about death no longer seem

funny to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. The Player promises that his troupe can perform "Deaths

for all ages and occasions! Deaths by suspension, convulsion, consumption, incision, execution,

asphyxiation and malnutrition—! Climatic carnage, by poison and by steel—! Double deaths by

duel—! Show!—So there's an end to that—it's commonplace" (124). The echo of *Hamlet*

alludes to the opening exchange between mother and son. Gertrude tells the Prince: "Thou

know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die / Passing through nature to eternity" (1.2.72-73).

When Hamlet agrees that death is "common" to all, the Queen responds, "If it be, / Why seems it

so particular with thee?" (1.2.74-75). The angry exchange that ensues between the Player and

Guildenstern handles the same topic, as the Player asks why these theatrical deaths, which never

bothered Guildenstern in the first or second acts, should seem so intensely personal now that he

realizes he will die.

As Guildenstern's anger builds, he demands an explanation for his own death, an exchange that leads to a performance of death that "fools" the actual audience. The resulting alienation effect asks the viewer to reexamine the relation between actor and audience. The Player responds simply to Guildenstern's demands for reasons: "in our experience, most things end in death" (123). This final comparison between stage and life is too much for Guildenstern:

> Your experience!—Actors! I'm talking about death—and you've never
>
> experienced that. And you cannot act it. You die a thousand casual deaths—with
>
> none of that intensity which squeezes out life . . . and no blood runs cold
>
> anywhere. Because even as you die you know that you will come back in a
>
> different hat. (123)

This conflict over the potential power of staged deaths reaches its climax when Guildenstern stabs the player with what he believes to be a real dagger. The Player's elaborate performance of death fools Rosencrantz and Guildenstern as well as the audience: only the troupe of tragedians is unsurprised by the Player's sudden resurrection. Margarete Holubetz explains that the player's fake death serves as an alienation effect: "the audience is emotionally confused and discomfited by the unexpected 'resurrection,' which changes the tone from the tragic to the farcical," a sudden change in tone which causes "an abrupt deflation of audience expectation" (427). Manfred Draudt explains Stoppard's use of this alienation effect:

> The mood of complacent detachment in which we have been watching the
>
> ridiculously confident bearing and the childish games of the two protagonists will
>
> gradually give way to a feeling of unease, for we cannot but see a parallel
>
> between ourselves and these petty actors who stumble through the unknown
>
> towards death. (352)

As Guildenstern explains earlier in the play, "The only beginning is birth and the only end is death—if you can't count on that, what can you count on?" (39). The Player's convincing performance of death can hardly be counted on as an ending point when it is followed by his immediate resurrection. Thus, the Player's "death" confronts Guildenstern with the impermanence of death in the theater and with the theater's uncanny ability to reanimate the dead. Ultimately, the theater's failed struggle to represent death accurately leads to a representation of cultural surrogation—death followed by new life. When Guildenstern insists that stage deaths are not believable, the Player proves him wrong, explaining that his own performance of death is the only kind the audience will accept: "You see, it is the kind they do believe in—it's what is expected" (123). In this comedy, the only kind of personal death humans can "believe" is either Rosencrantz's image of lying alive in a box or the Player's performance of death, which is immediately followed by resurrection. The way most people imagine death, Guildenstern insists, is not what death really is, even to the point that some do not recognize actual death even when they see it. For example, the player tells the story of an actor sentenced with the death penalty who was hanged on stage: "you wouldn't believe it, he just wasn't convincing! It was impossible to suspend one's disbelief—and what with the audience jeering and throwing peanuts, the whole thing was a disaster!" (84). As Hotchkiss explains, the fake deaths staged by the players meet the expectations and needs of the audience: "The Player claims that audiences demand deaths in which they can believe. By that, he means deaths that follow theatrical convention, for real deaths on stage are never convincing" (168). In the Player's parable, actual death is booed by the audience as a poor performance. In spite of Guildenstern's insistence that death cannot be represented in the theater, Stoppard's comedy consistently reiterates society's need for the *memento mori* of the stage.

"Remember me": The Play within the Play as a Vessel for Memory

While the play presents theater, memory, and death as inextricably linked, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern constantly forget that they must be mindful of death: it is the body of the player, and the canon carried inside of his body, that insistently works to remind them. Although Guildenstern argues that theater is not able to "start the whisper in [the spectators'] skulls that says –'one day you are going to die,'" it is the players who begin to give Rosencrantz and Guildenstern an intimation of their own mortality. That theater is linked to cultural memory has been a persistent argument of performance theory, and Roach's work in particular points out a strong connection between theater, memory, death, and replacement. These concepts are also linked throughout Stoppard's play. The protagonists' complete loss of memory is a repeating jest. "What's the last thing you remember?" becomes a repeating refrain throughout the play, and the question always solicits a different answer about the nature of forgetting:

> Guil: What's the last thing you remember?
>
> Ros: I don't wish to be reminded of it. (61)

This repeating question game about the nature of memory naturally reminds the audience of *Hamlet*, for the question of memory, and of the appropriate response to memory, is a shared motif for Shakespeare's tragedy and Stoppard's comedy.

Indeed, there is a connection between the motif of death and the play within the play: the play within the play serves as a reminder of death and the dead in both source text and appropriation. The lack of memory in *Hamlet* calls for an act of theatrical surrogation. In Shakespeare's play, the prince writes lines for *The Murder of Gonzago*, using a theatrical performance, and the body of the players, to contain the memories of his father's death. His response to the ghost's final command, "Remember me," is to turn to playwriting. The Prince

specifically requests *The Murder of Gonzago*, asking that the Player add lines into the performance that he has written himself: "You could for need study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?" (2.2.540-543). Hamlet believes that the play will also serve Claudius as an uncomfortable reminder of his crime ("the play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King"), and he interprets his uncle's reaction as a sign that the theatrical performance has made him feel convicted of his crime (2.2.604-605). The ghost insinuates that only a failure of memory could delay Hamlet from his revenge:

> I find thee apt,
>
> And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
>
> That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
>
> Wouldst thou not stir in this (1.5.32-35).

Although it is not clear which lines for the "Mouse-trap" play Hamlet composes, the Player King speaks accusing words about memory that mirror those of the ghost: "Purpose is but the slave to memory, / Of violent birth, but poor validity" (3.2.188-189). Whichever lines Hamlet has contributed, his answer to the dead father's call for memory is to have the father played, to have him re-animated by the body of an actor.[24] Hamlet uses a play to preserve the memory of the dead and to remind the living (both himself and Claudius) of what is owed to the dead. The son in Hamlet is accused of a lack of memory and his hesitancy to take action is mirrored and mocked in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's total lack of memory and complete inability for meaningful action. Unlike Hamlet, they seem unable to grasp the powerful significance of the play within the play.

Like the Mouse-trap of *Hamlet*, the play within the play in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

are Dead accuses the characters of a lack of memory and self-awareness. The play within the

play is a performance of *Hamlet* that clearly displays the deaths of Rosencrantz and

Guildenstern. Of course, the two lords have demonstrated their ignorance of *Hamlet's* plot

throughout the play. Their lapse of memory includes not just what happened yesterday, but also

incorporates the literary past. They have forgotten Shakespeare. Unlike the comic pair, the

Players seem to know the plot of the Shakespearean play that is taking place around them.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, on the other hand, spend most of the play comically trying to

circumvent the inevitably tragic conclusion of *Hamlet*. Even when they are faced with the

representation of their own deaths in the form of the play within the play, they fail to recognize

either themselves or their fate. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern "insist on being spectators,

ironically even clapping at the performance that anticipates their own tragic destiny" (Draudt,

351). Clapping at their own deaths, as staged by the players, shows how easily these characters

forget their own mortality. Earlier in the play, Guildenstern wonders: "Whatever became of the

moment when one first knew about death? There must have been one, a moment, in childhood

when it first occurred to you that you don't go on for ever. It must have been shattering—

stamped into one's memory. And yet I can't remember it" (72). The play within the play works

to serve as a reminder of this "shattering" moment, though in the case of Rosencrantz and

Guildenstern, it proves ineffective.

Yet the play constantly reiterates the connection between the body of the player and

literary and cultural memory, reminding the viewer that the body of the actor contains and

transmits memory. For example, blood and rhetoric are repeatedly connected through the

description of the player's repertoire: the two represent each other. Though the Player jokes that

it is acceptable to do a play without love or rhetoric, one cannot do it without the blood, which represents both. Blood, the player would argue, is central to drama, because it focuses on bodies, and because blood serves as a symbol of both bodily violence and death. Elsewhere the bodies of the players are symbolically connected to their cart, a traveling stage that holds props and costumes (and which in the film adaptation of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* actually unfolds into a stage on which the play is performed). The Player describes the surprise of the traveling troupe when they realized that they had been abandoned by their audience: "even then, habit and a stubborn trust that our audience spied upon us from behind the nearest bush, forced our bodies to blunder on long after they had emptied of meaning, until like runaway carts they dragged to a halt" (64). In this description, the body of the player is compared to the player's cart. Both the cart and the body work to contain cultural memory and the literary canon. Both in the play within the play and in their performances of "love, blood, and rhetoric" the players use their bodies as a vessel for both memory and violence.

In the end, both *Shakespeare in Love* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* are works of Shakespearean appropriation that explore the possibilities of theatrical surrogation. These two works approach the process, however, from different perspectives. *Shakespeare in Love* imitates the Shakespearean adaptations of Shaw, using many of the same techniques Shaw employed when rewriting Shakespeare. The screenplay for the film seems to construct Stoppard as a reincarnated Shakespeare, a ploy Shaw developed extensively in his Shakespearean criticism. *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, on the other hand, examines the role of surrogation in the theater, questioning the possibility and purpose of enacting death on stage. Although Guildenstern argues that death cannot be represented on stage, Stoppard's players prove him wrong, showing that the stage enacts a vision of cultural surrogation that represents

one way of confronting death. Alice Rayner explains the role that performance plays in representing death: "For as that which is most utterly unrepresentable, death is known only by its fake double, the effigy that stands at a portal to identify what death is like but not what death is" (175). Through the theater, Guildenstern encounters "not what death is" but "what death is like." In one of Stoppard's metatheatrical ploys, however, the audience is reminded, even in the moment of the character's death, that Guildenstern will appear again, resurrected, at tomorrow night's performance. Guildenstern tells Rosencrantz before his final disappearance, "we'll know better next time" (126). The final joke, of course, is that the "death" the players have been preparing Guildenstern for proves to be merely an act of theatrical surrogation after all.

Afterword

> This machine works like a kind of undertaker, recording things and archiving moments about which we know a priori that, no matter how soon after their recording we die, and even if we were to die while recording, voilà, this will be and will remain "live," a simulacrum of life.
> -Jacques Derrida, *Echographies of Television*

Heiner Müller once described theater as "the memory of the future."[1] This conflation of remembered past with future vision encapsulates surrogation as a cultural and theatrical practice. In drama, as in life, the past is always created in the present, and the dead are reconfigured to suit the needs of the living. This dissertation has examined some possibilities for understanding adaptations of Renaissance plays as a form of cultural and theatrical surrogation, arguing that performance theory, especially the conception of the haunted theater forwarded by theorists such as Roach and Carlson, offers a model for exploring modern dramatic appropriations of Shakespeare. When these five modern and postmodern dramatists rewrite the literary past, their adaptations of Elizabethan classics serve as cultural and theatrical surrogations. In their return to Renaissance monuments, they become grave robbers, their labors simultaneously representing both preservation and desecration. Presenting the human body, especially the body of the actor or playwright as an "effigy of flesh" that contains cultural memory and embodies the literary canon, these playwrights frequently work metaphorical violence on corpses that represent the literary corpus.

In this study, surrogation has appeared as grave robbery, cannibalism, skinning, and even disembodiment. It has worn the guise of epic theater and theater of the absurd, of modern comedy and postmodern pastiche. It has been represented by both acts of memory and acts of

forgetting. These dramatists handle the work of adaptation and surrogation in diverse ways. I have concluded that Shaw and Stoppard perform the act of Shakespearean appropriation partially through public persona, Shaw by creating a vision of himself that resembles Shakespeare and Stoppard by creating a vision of Shakespeare that resembles himself. Shaw's adaptation of *King Lear* leads to a battle against aestheticism and pessimistic passivity, while Stoppard's appropriation of *Hamlet* draws the audience into an encounter with the theater's role as haunted memory machine. Brecht's theory of theater shows that one can understand the alienation effect as a "surrogation effect," and in *Edward II* Brecht's characters enact surrogation by tearing the flesh from both corpse and corpus. Cannibalism represents surrogation in Müller's *Hamletmachine* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, and the father's corpse and the mother's womb become symbols for literary adaptation in Müller's play. In an attempt to erase surrogation, Beckett's disembodied characters struggle to forget Shakespeare. Ultimately, these dramatists' struggles with Elizabethan ghosts suggest the central role that responding to Renaissance drama played in the creation of individual modern dramatists' canons, theories of theater, and styles of writing, and the ways in which the theater, as a vessel for cultural memory, engages the ghosts of previous plays and playwrights.

Although I have applied Roach's theory to a diverse group of dramatists and an even more varied assortment of plays and performances, many other directions remain for the study of cultural and theatrical surrogation in the fields of drama and performance studies. Surrogation need not be about Shakespeare. The work of American playwrights such as Arthur Miller, August Wilson, Tony Kushner, and Suzan-Lori Parks are deeply engaged with cultural surrogation and with the exploration of the personal, cultural, and political past. Surrogation has obvious implications for *Topdog/Underdog*, in which the battling brothers, surrogates for mother

and father, for the historical Lincoln and Booth, hold American history in their bodies. *Angels in America* stages encounters with political and personal ghosts, as well as wrestling with Walter Benjamin's angel of history, a figure that represents both the movement of time and the history of sexual desire, raising spectral surrogations on multiple levels. This study also omits many dramatists that it might have included. In the field of Shakespeare and appropriation, playwrights such as Eugene O'Neill, Edward Bond, Charles Marowitz, and Djanet Sears are all haunted by Shakespeare's ghost, and each of them could have been included in this dissertation. I must leave the portrait of Shakespeare that watches over the action of *Long Day's Journey into Night* for another study, and Sears's rewriting of *Othello* in *Harlem Duet* for another day, or perhaps even another scholar.

While performance theory has taken a primary role in this work, stage practice has remained in the background, and a fascinating study is waiting to be done on what happens in production when a work of cultural surrogation is performed on the haunted stage itself. When the plays examined in the previous chapters are performed, unexpected substitutions can be made in the Shakespearean genealogy of performance. For example, in Müller's famous seven-and-a-half hour production of *Hamlet*, in which *Hamletmachine* was performed between acts four and five of Shakespeare's tragedy, the unusual union of source and adaptation changed the way that the audience viewed both plays.[2] In this acclaimed performance, the postmodern playwright Müller serves as a surrogate both for Shakespeare and for a literary character, as he takes the place of Shakespeare's Prince by crafting a play within the play. This conflation of Müller with the reluctant avenger gives new meaning to Müller's nickname of "father killer," as Müller/Hamlet seeks revenge on Shakespeare/Claudius through the act of playwriting.[3]

Yet Müller's statement that theater serves as "the memory of the future" could also be taken to mean that theater preserves the memory of the cultural past for future generations. Perhaps the future of surrogation lies not with theater, but with film. While I believe that society will always need drama, its ancient vessel for memory, it is possible that film and television are increasingly becoming our cultural "memory of the future." More work needs to be done applying the concepts of performance studies to film performance. Film, of course, is the medium in which the dead walk. Many of the observations made by performance theorists such as Roach and Carlson could be also be applied to film performance, although there has been little work done in this area.[4] While performance theorists have been constructing the theater as the haunted stage, film scholars have been constructing the big screen as the haunted medium. Strangely, these two groups of scholars often seem unaware of each other. There are many important differences, however, between live and recorded performance that should not be overlooked. The haunted quality of film is substantially different from that of live theatrical performance. For example, in the re-viewing of a film, repetition is repetition, not invention masquerading as repetition. Furthermore, when the act of "going to the movies" or going to the theater, is replaced by the individual viewing of recorded performances at home on television, video, or DVD, the collective and social nature of performance as cultural ritual becomes an increasingly private, as opposed to public, event.

Yet I would argue that these two fields of study, so often separated by their differences, could benefit from breaking down the boundaries between live and recorded performance. Graley Herren argues that radio, film, and television "serve as memory machines: sites for recollecting and reinventing personal, philosophical, and artistic pasts," claiming that the film medium "is uniquely suited to serve as a vehicle for memory" and that television can function

"as a private interface between the living and dead."[5] Herren's work is much like Carlson's, but intended for the screen instead of the stage. Alice Rayner, who works primarily in theater studies, agrees that in film "Appearing, disappearing, and reappearing, disembodied by technology . . . filmic images . . . led to a confrontation with our own deaths in effigy."[6] If film does lead the viewer into an encounter with death, then perhaps this medium presents not an effigy of flesh but an effigy of technology. Herren explains that what the audience sees in the viewing of a film is the technological imprint of the actual dead: "all televisual images are essentially traces of the 'living dead' . . . All we see are shades of absent figures and echoes of extinguished voices" (Herren 5, 4). Instead of the actor's body, technology reanimates the dead. Thus, the technology itself becomes a new kind of vessel for cultural memory. Performance, however, rarely dispenses with bodies altogether, as many films tend to focus on the human body within the machine, on the imprint of the 'living dead' left by recorded performance.

Body or machine, the ghosts of the past remain, leaving their mark on stage, page, and screen. After all, Carlson's choice of the term "memory machine" suggests that there is something mechanical about the repetition in theatrical performance. Perhaps there is a mechanical element in literary adaptation as well: the title *Hamletmachine* suggests that society is mechanically reproducing Shakespeare, and the name of Müller's collection of Shakespearean rewritings, *Shakespeare Factory*, accuses the stage of endlessly replicating the old canon.[7] Shakespearean adaptations are always reproducing the spectral image of the Bard, re-constructing the audience's memory of the literary past night after night. Whenever the curtain rises, the body of the actor holds both past and future, and the figure that changes role, costume, and identity serves simultaneously as both undertaker and giver of life.

Works Cited

Chapter One

[1] See Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 78; Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 1.

[2] I use the terms "modern" and "postmodern" to refer to literary movements, but also more loosely to denote a certain span of time in the history of the stage: this study examines plays and other writing ranging from the 1890s through the 1990s.

[3] See W.B. Worthen's discussion in "Drama, Performativity, Performance," *PMLA* 113 (1998): 1103. Worthen comes closest to my approach by applying the conception of surrogation to Baz Luhrmann's *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*. His interest is not in a rewriting of an older play, however, but in a film that uses Shakespearean language juxtaposed with pop culture references. Worthen is interested in Luhrmann's film as one more cultural "iteration" of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, not in an appropriation of *Romeo and Juliet* that uses a completely new script. In this sense, the plays I discuss present a radically different kind of surrogation in that they are entirely new works built on older dramas.

[4] Jeanette Malkin, *Memory-Theater and Postmodern Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 4.

[5] Alice Rayner, *Ghosts: Death's Double and the Phenomena of Theater* (Minneapolis: University of Minesota Press, 2006), xvi.

[6] Ivo Kamps, "Alas, poor Shakespeare! I knew him well," in *Shakespeare and Appropriation,* ed. Christy Desmet and Robert Sawyer (London: Routledge, 1999), 16.

[7] Gary Taylor, *Cultural Selection* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 9.

[8] Elin Diamond, "Modernity's Drama," in *Modern Drama: Defining the Field,* ed. Ric Knowles, Joanne Tompkins, W.B. Worthen (Toronto: Toronto Press, 2003), 5.

[9] David Savran, "Modernity's Haunted Houses," in *Modern Drama: Defining the Field,* ed. Ric Knowles, Joanne Tompkins, W.B. Worthen (Toronto: Toronto Press, 2003), 125.

[10] See the introduction to Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier, *Adaptations of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 2000) for a lengthy discussion of the various terms that have been proposed.

[11] Ruby Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Diana E. Henderson, *Collaborations with the Past: Reshaping Shakespeare across Time and Media* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[12] The suggestion of hostile usurpation is not always misleading: for some of these confrontational "grave robbers" a violent attack is part of the point. For example, based on his critical writings about literary adaptation, it seems likely that Brecht would have embraced the term "appropriation." This is not the case, however, for all of the dramatists addressed here. Based on his Shakespearean criticism, it seems equally probable that Shaw would have been highly offended by it.

[13] For a further discussion of Roach's term "genealogy of performance" see Roach, 25.

[14] Herbert Blau, *Take up the Bodies: Theater at the Vanishing Point* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 9.

[15] I use the term "Early Modern" to indicate the Early Modern period. I use the term "early modernist" to designate those writers who were early participants in the literary movement known as modernism. The first two chapters of this dissertation will focus on the obsession of the early modernists with the Early Modern.

[16] Stanley Weintraub, *The Unexpected Shaw: Biographical Approaches to G.B.S. and His Work* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1982), 174.

[17] Bernard Shaw, *Shakes versus Shav,* in *Last Plays*, ed. Dan H. Laurence (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1985), 190.

[18] John Fuegi, *Bertolt Brecht: Chaos, According to Plan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 25; Tony Meech, "Brecht's Early Plays," in *The Cambridge Companion to Brecht,* eds. Peter Thomson and Glendyr Sacks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 54.

[19] Michael Scott, *Shakespeare and the Modern Dramatist* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 60.

[20] See "Blaming the Bard," *The Saturday Review*, 26 September 1896, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, ed. Bernard F. Dukore, vol. 2 (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 660. I

do not know if Shaw was aware of the final fate of Milton's corpse, which was literally dug up and pulled apart by grave robbers in the 1700s (Kamps, 15). William Cowper immortalized the event in poetry and described it as an act of casting stones at the body (Kamps, 15). In any case, the disrespect implied in defiling a corpse is clear, and the act of digging up a famous poet was not unheard of in the history of English literature.

[21] Doc Rossi, "Brecht on Shakespeare: A Revaluation," *Comparative Drama* 30 (1996): 165.

[22] Bertolt Brecht, "Three Cheers for Shaw" in *Brecht on Theatre*, ed. and trans. John Willett (London: Methuen, 1964), 10.

[23] W. E. Yuill, "The Art of Vandalism: Bertolt Brecht and the English Drama" (London: Bedford College, 1977), 6.

[24] Jonathan Kalb, *The Theater of Heiner Müller* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 4.

[25] Lawrence Guntner, "Rewriting Shakespeare: Bertolt Brecht, Heiner Müller, and the Politics of Performance," in *Shakespeare and European Politics*, ed. Dirk Delabastita, Jozef De Vos, and Paul Franssen (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 180.

[26] Heiner Müller, *Herzstück* (Berlin: Rotbuch, 1983), 103 translated in Guntner, 179-180.

[27] See Antonia Rodriguez-Gago, "The Embodiment of Memory (and Forgetting) in Beckett's Late Women's Plays," in *Drawing on Beckett*, ed. Linda Ben-Zvi Herren (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2003), 113-126.

Chapter Two

[1] Critics such as Stanley Weintraub, Martin Meisel, and Margery Morgan have noted a profusion of parallels between *Heartbreak House* and *King Lear*. See Weintraub (see chap. 1, n. 16); Martin Meisel, *Shaw and the Nineteenth-Century Theater* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); J.I.M. Stewart, *Eight Modern Writers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963); Margery Morgan, *The Shavian Playground* (London: Methuen, 1972). To give only a few examples, characters in *Heartbreak House* often echo lines from *Lear*, the plays contain similar imagery, corresponding characters and plot situations appear within the two plays, and the texts share some thematic content (Weintraub, 176-180). Like *Lear*, *Heartbreak House* centers on an aging father with fiendish daughters and

both plays have apocalyptic overtones (Stewart, 171). The bombing of the play's final pages is reminiscent of the

storm scene in *Lear*, and "Even the title of the play recalls Kent's 'Break, heart, I prithee break'" (Weintraub, 176).

[2] Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 30 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

[3] Ibid., 76.

[4] Bernard Shaw, "The Chesterbelloc," *The New Age*, 15 February 1908, reprinted in *Pen Portraits and Reviews* (London: Constable, 1932), 73.

[5] Sally Peters, "Shaw's Double Dethroned: *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, *Cymbeline Refinished,* and *Shakes versus Shav,*" *SHAW: The Annual of Bernard Shaw Studies* 7 (1987): 309.

[6] Shaw, "Blaming the Bard," 660 (see chap. 1, n. 20).

[7] See Peters, 304. Peters uses the term "surrogate" to describe Shaw's relationship with Shakespeare, although not in the specialized sense that I will use here.

[8] Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, in *The Bodley Head Bernard Shaw: Collected Plays with their Prefaces*, vol. 5, ed. Dan H. Laurence (London: Max Reinhardt, 1974), , 690-91.

[9] Preface to *Immaturity,* reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, ed. Dan H. Laurence and Daniel J. Leary, vol. 3 (London: Penguin Press, 1997), 7.

[10] Shaw, *Shakes versus Shav,* 187 (see chap. 1, n. 17).

[11] Ibid., 186.

[12] See Peters, 302 and Jerry Lutz, *Pitchman's Melody: Shaw about 'Shakespear'* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1974), 18.

[13] Shaw, *Shakes versus Shav*, 186.

[14] Preface to *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 2, 96.

[15] Worthen, "Drama, Performativity, Performance," 1101 (see chap. 1, n. 3).

[16] Bernard Shaw, "G.B.S. on Shakespeare," *The Star*, March 31, 1939, quoted in Archibald Henderson, *George Bernard Shaw: Man of the Century* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1956), 30.

[17] quoted in Henderson, 715-716.

[18] Ruby Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, 322 (see chap. 1, n. 11).

[19] "Mr. Frank Harris's Shakespear," *The Nation*, 24 December 1910, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, ed. Bernard F. Dukore, vol. 3 (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 1228.

[20] Preface to *Cymbeline Refinished*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 3, 316.

[21] Ibid., 318.

[22] Ibid., 317.

[23] Ibid., 318.

[24] Daniel Leary, "Shaw versus Shakespeare: The Refinishing of *Cymbeline*," *Educational Theatre Journal* 30 (1978): 20.

[25] For further discussion of Shaw's use of the term "fantasia," see Frederick P. W. McDowell, "Technique, Symbol, and Theme in *Heartbreak House*," *PMLA* 68 (1953): 337; Daniel Leary, "*Heartbreak House*: A Dramatic Epic," *Independent Shavian* 37 (1999): 8; Richard Nickson "*Heartbreak House*: Play and Ernest," *Independent Shavian* 41 (2003): 14.

[26] "Poor Shakespear!" *The Saturday Review*, 2 February 1895, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 1, 253.

[27] "Mainly about Shakespear," *The Saturday Review*, 29 May 1897, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 3, 862.

[28] See Reinhold Grimm, "Shaw versus Supershaw: Shavian Nietzscheanism Reconsidered," *Studi Germanici* 21 (1983): 237. In passing, Grimm remarks that Shaw's "image of Shakespeare" is "Dionysian," although he offers no development of this idea.

[29] Reinhold Grimm, "The Hidden Heritage: Repercussions of Nietzsche in Modern Theater and its Theory," *Nietzsche Studien: Internationales Jahrbuch fur die Nietzsche-Forschung* 12 (1983): 358.

[30] Preface to *Man and Superman*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 1, 159.

[31] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy,* trans. Douglas Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 23-24.

[32] It is difficult to establish exactly when Shaw read *The Birth of Tragedy.* It was not published in English until 1909 (the collected works of Nietzsche that Shaw reviewed for *The Saturday Review* in 1896 did not include *The Birth of Tragedy*). Shaw said that he first heard of Nietzsche in 1891. Although some have argued that Shaw never read Nietzsche in the original German, considering his strong interest in Wagner it seems likely that he read *The Birth of Tragedy* in German before writing *The Perfect Wagnerite*, which was published in 1889. Even if he did not, he probably read *Richard Wagner and the Music of the Future* (1874) as well as *Richard Wagner: His*

Tendencies and Theories (1873) both of which engage Nietzsche's theories as presented in *The Birth of Tragedy* (Thatcher, 178). Certainly, Nietzsche's ideas would have been under discussion in Fabian circles. For further discussion of Nietzsche's influence on Shaw see David S. Thatcher, *Nietzsche in England 1890-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 175-217.

[33] Robert Brustein, *The Theatre of Revolt* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1964), 202.

[34] Bernard Shaw, *Shaw's Music,* ed. Dan H. Laurence, vol. 3 (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1981), 531.

[35] J. L. Wisenthal, "Shaw's plays as music-drama," in *The Cambridge Companion to George Bernard Shaw*, ed. Christopher Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 287.

[36] Michael Holroyd, *Bernard Shaw: A Biography*, vol. 3 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1988-92), 14 reports that this is a comment that Shaw made to Edward Elgar.

[37] Many critics have detected these kinds of trends in Shaw's Shakespearean criticism. For further discussion, see Cohn, 322; Edwin Wilson, introduction to *Shaw on Shakespeare* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1961), xii-xix; Albert Silverman, "Bernard Shaw's Shakespeare Criticism," *PMLA* 72 (1957): 722-736.

[38] "Bernard Shaw Abashed," *The Daily News*, 17 April 1905, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 3, 1106.

[39] "Mr. William Archer's Criticisms" *The Saturday Review*, 13 April 1895, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 1, 311.

[40] "The Artstruck Englishman," *The Nation*, 17 February 1917, reprinted in *Pen Portraits and Reviews*, 232.

[41] "The Problem Play: A Symposium," *The Humanitarian,* May 1895 reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 1, 328.

[42] Regardless of his critical diatribe against aestheticism, Shaw remained an unparalleled music critic: the dramatist was well equipped to appreciate art for its own sake. As Jerry Lutz points out, if music is essentially the adoration of the aesthetic, then in some ways Shaw was a devoted fan of his favorite rhetorical target (64). Shaw appreciated aesthetic beauty. He argues, however, that drama needs an additional element in order to be great: artistry alone is not enough to sustain it.

[43] Preface to *The Irrational Knot*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 1, 182.

[44]Lise Pedersen, "From Shakespearean Villain to Shavian Original Moralist: Shaw's Transformation of Shakespeare's Richard III and Edmund the Bastard," *McNeese Review* 22 (1975): 45.

[45] Preface to *Three Plays by Brieux*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 1, 538.

[46] Preface to *Saint Joan*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 2, 542.

[47] "Better than Shakespear," *The Saturday Review*, 2 January 1897, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 2, 735.

[48] Shaw to Lady Gregory, 19 August 1909, in *Bernard Shaw: Collected Letters 1898-1910,* ed. Dan H. Laurence (New York: Viking, 1985), 858-859. See Weintraub's discussion, 257.

[49] Mr. Frank Harris's Shakespear," *The Nation*, 24 December 1910, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Drama Observed*, vol. 3, 1230.

[50] All quotations from *Heartbreak House* are taken form Bernard Shaw, *Heartbreak House,* ed. Dan H. Laurence, (London: Penguin Books, 2000). Shaw wrote *Heartbreak House* between 1916 and 1917. The play was published in 1919 and first performed in 1920.

[51] The use of the father figure in *King Lear* to represent the political state of the nation has a long history to which Shaw is no doubt responding. For a discussion of how earlier adaptors used Shakespeare's tragedy to comment on the state of the nation, see Diane Long Hoeveler, "Gothic Cordelias: The After-Life of *King Lear* and the Construction of Femininity," forthcoming in *Shakespearean Gothic,* ed. Christy Desmet and Anne Williams.

[52] See Lagretta Tallent Lenker, *Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare and Shaw* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 67-68 for a discussion of Ellie's incestuous relationship with her father figure and husband, Shotover.

[53] McDowell, "Technique," 346.

[54] A.M Gibbs, *Heartbreak House: Preludes of Apocalypse* (New York: Twayne, 1994), 48.

[55] Richard Hornby, "The Symbolic Action of *Heartbreak House*," *Drama Survey* 7 (1969): 10.

[56] See D. C. Coleman, "Fun and Games: Two Pictures of *Heartbreak House*," *Drama Survey* 5 (1967): 236. Leary also finds the ending of *Heartbreak House* to be bleak, ". . . without even the concluding promise of continuity standard in Shakespearean tragedy" ("A Dramatic Epic" 19).

[57] Frederick P. W. McDowell, "Apocalypse and After: Recent Interpretations of *Heartbreak House*," *The Independent Shavian* 25 (1987): 6. Morgan, 206.

[58] Preface to *Back to Methuselah*, reprinted in Bernard Shaw, *The Complete Prefaces*, vol. 2, 430.

Chapter Three

[1] The play was written in collaboration with Lion Feuchtwanger. Critics such as Louise Laboulle have argued that the guiding hand is clearly Brecht's. See Lousie J. Laboulle, "A Note on Bertolt Brecht's Adaptation of Marlowe's *Edward II*," *The Modern Language Review* 54 (1959): 214. For a discussion of Feuchtwanger's contribution see Ulrich Weisstein, "Marlowe's Homecoming or *Edward II* Crosses the Atlantic," *Monatshefte* 60, no. 3 (1968): 237. Adaptation and collaboration were integral to Brecht's style throughout his career, and in some ways, it is antithetical to Brecht's philosophy of theater to separate Feuchtwanger's contributions from Brecht's. For further details about Brecht's life-long use of artistic collaboration see Ronald Speirs, *Brecht's Early Plays* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1982), 88.

[2] Deborah Willis, "Marlowe our Contemporary: *Edward II* on Stage and Screen," *Criticism* 40, no. 4 (1998): 621. See also Meech, "Brecht's Early Plays," 44, (see chap. 1, n. 18) and Laboulle, 216.

[3] Brecht made a deliberate effort to desecrate Marlowe's poetry. Feuchtwanger later stated that he had to "roughen everything properly in order to make it hobble; for Brecht likes things to hobble" (quoted in Weisstein, 237). See John Willett, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht* (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1968), 95. Brecht later said that the play's language was meant "to show human dealings as contradictory, fiercely fought over, full of violence" (quoted in Willett, 95).

[4] Peter Womack, "Notes on the 'Elizabethan' Avant-Garde," in *Shakespeare and the Twentieth Century,* eds. Jonathan Bate, Jill L. Levenson, and Dieter Mehl (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 75-84.

[5] Bruce Gaston, "Brecht's Pastiche History Play: Renaissance Drama and Modernist Theatre in *Leben Eduards des Zweiten von England*," *German Life and Letters* 56, no. 4 (2003): 348.

[6] John Fuegi, *Bertolt Brecht: Chaos, According to Plan*, 25 (see chap. 1, n. 18). See also Gunter, 181, and Meech, 54.

[7] Margot Heinemann, "How Brecht read Shakespeare," in *Political Shakespeare*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (London: Cornell University Press, 1994), 228.

[8] John Rouse, "Shakespeare and Brecht: The Perils and Pleasures of Inheritance," *Comparative Drama* 17 (1983): 267.

[9] Bertolt Brecht, *The Messingkauf Dialogues*, trans. John Willett (London: Methuen, 1965), 61.

[10] Bertolt Brecht, *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Suhrkamp, 1967), XV, 335, translated in Rossi, "Brecht on Shakespeare," 163 (See chap. 1, n. 21).

[11] John Fuegi, "The Form and the Pressure: Shakespeare's Haunting of Bertolt Brecht," *Modern Drama* 15 (1972): 294.

[12] Brecht, *Gesammelte Werke*, XV, 119, translated in Rossi, 172.

[13] See Lawrence Guntner, "Rewriting Shakespeare," 182 (see chap. 1, n. 25); Rossi, 160, and Heinemann, 229.

[14] Brecht, *The Messingkauf Dialogues*, 52.

[15] Bertolt Brecht, "A little Private Tuition for My Friend Max Gorelik," in *Brecht on Theatre*, 161 (See chap. 1, n. 22).

[16] Ibid., "A Short Organum for the Theatre," 183.

[17] Brecht, *Gesammelte Werke*, XV, 119, translated in Rossi, 172.

[18] Bertolt Brecht, "On Looking through my First Plays" in *Collected Plays,* vol. 1. eds. Ralph Manheim and John Willett, (New York: Pantheon, 1970), 439.

[19] See Speirs, 88.

[20] See Willis, 609-610.

[21] Keith A. Dickson, *Towards Utopia: A Study of Brecht* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 193.

[22] Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, "Appendices to the Short Organum," 276.

[23] Bertolt Brecht, *Arbeitsjournal 1938-55* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Suhrkamp, 1973), I, 306 entry dated 26 Oct 1941 translated in Rossi, 178.

[24] Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, "The Literarization of the Theatre," 47.

[25] Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, 164-166.

[26] Hugh Grady, *The Modernist Shakespeare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 111.

[27] Hugh Grady, "Modernity, Modernism, and Postmodernism in the twentieth-century's Shakespeare," in *Shakespeare and Modern Theatre: The Performance of Modernity,* eds. Michael Bristol, Kathleen McLuskie, and Christopher Holmes (London: Routledge, 2001), 23.

[28] It is tempting to read the promised apocalypse as revolution and to apply a Marxist reading to this early play. Brecht first encountered the works of Marx in 1926, two years after this play was completed (Speirs, 4). There are certainly seeds of developing political thought in *Edward II*. Although some scholars, such as John Willet and Ralph Manheim, have argued that Brecht's pre-1926 plays should not be understood as Marxist works, other critics (such as W. E. Yuill) have viewed Brecht's early plays as proto-Marxist. See Willet, xv; Speirs, 2; and Yuill, "The Art of Vandalism," 12 (See chap. 1, n. 23). In some ways, this play shows the young Brecht struggling with ideas he would embrace later in life in the form of Marxism.

[29] It is possible that this adaptation's violent obsession with skinning finds some inspiration in the famous murder of Edward II, which leaves the reader/audience with an image of torturous death and burning flesh. There is some debate, however, as to whether Brecht even knew the real ending of Marlowe's play in 1924, since he was working primarily with German translations that omitted the details of the King's brutal murder. For a discussion of this controversy, see Gaston.

[30] Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 148 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

[31] All quotations from Brecht's *Edward II* are taken from Bertolt Brecht, *The Life of Edward the Second of England,* in *Collected Plays,* vol. 1 eds. Ralph Manheim and John Willett, trans. William E Smith and Ralph Manheim (New York: Pantheon, 1970), 164-255.

[32] R .J. Beckley has argued that the change in name is made to create parallels between Marlowe's Mortimer and Isabella and Shakespeare's Richard III and Anne. For a discussion of the connections between Brecht's *Edward II* and Shakespeare's *Richard III* see R. J. Beckley, "Adaptation as a Feature of Brecht's Dramatic Technique," *German Life and Letters* 15 (1961): 274-93.

[33] Brecht's ending is clearly meant to comment on Marlowe's. Marlowe's play ends with the young king proclaiming, "And let these tears distilling from mine eyes / Be witness of my grief and innocency" (5.6.102-3). All quotations from Marlowe's text are taken from Christopher Marlowe, *Edward II*, in *English Renaissance Drama*, ed. David Bevington, et al (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 357-420. The final word of the play is "innocency," but Marlowe's Edward III, who has just had Mortimer executed and his mother sent to the tower, is decidedly less-than-innocent. Brecht's comment on Marlowe's ending is even more pointed in its irony, as he tells the audience directly that, in this play, everyone's hands are blood-stained.

[34] This image pattern is similar to the one Shaw employs in *Heartbreak House*: the political ship of state is sinking.

[35] Brecht's apocalyptic imagery is probably inspired by Marlowe's. Marlowe's Edward says of Gaveston that "sooner shall the sea o'erwhelm my land / Than bear the ship that shall transport thee hence" (1.1.150-151). For Gaveston, Edward will "Make England's civil towns huge heaps of stones" (3.2.30). Such imagery, however, is sparse in Marlowe's play and is always employed by Edward in a hyperbolic attempt to explain the dramatic action he will take for his lover. In Brecht's work, the apocalyptic imagery is multiplied, intensified, and spread evenly among the characters. Brecht's promised apocalypse is not the Marlovian hyperbolic language of love, but the threat of actual death and destruction.

[36] Brecht parallels the destruction of Troy, Nineveh, and London throughout the play.

[37] Brecht derives this animal imagery directly from Marlowe, whose Edward compares the peers to "cockerels" (2.2.202).

[38] Critics working with Brecht's original German text use the spelling "Eduard." I have changed the spelling to "Edward" throughout for the sake of consistency.

[39] Mitali Pati, "The Deranged Metaphor of the King's Body Politic in Marlowe's *Edward II*." *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 20 (1994): 165.

[40] Müller's *Hamletmachine* also opens with a scene in which the son rudely interrupts the funeral procession of his father and king. For a discussion of interrupted interments as a performance of broken chains of surrogation, see chapter 3.

[41] Juris Svendsen, "The Queen is Dead: Brecht's *Eduard II*." *Tulane Drama Review* 10 (1966): 166.

[42] This line is taken directly from Marlowe. Marjorie Garber offers a thorough overview of the power of the written word in Marlowe's play in "'Here's Nothing Writ': Scribe, Script and Circumspection in Marlowe's Plays" *Theatre Journal* 36, no. 3 (1984): 301-320. Although Garber does not connect the human body with written documents, this motif occasionally appears in Marlowe's play. See 1.4.85, 5.1.139-140, and 5.1.142.

[43] Brecht clearly alludes to Faustus in his characterization of Mortimer, and no doubt this characterization is haunted by the memory of both Marlowe's work and Goethe's.

[44] See Marlowe 1.4.390-393.

Chapter Four

[1] See for example, Kirk Williams, "The Ghost in the Machine: Heiner Müller's Devouring Melancholy," *Modern Drama* 49 (2006): 188, and Mark Fortier, "Shakespeare as 'Minor Theater': Deleuze and Guattari and the Aims of Adaptation," *Mosaic* 29 (1996): 1-18.

[2] It has become customary to read the father figure in *Hamletmachine* as a representative of an oppressive patriarchal culture. See for example, Arlene Akiko Teraoka, *The Silence of Entropy or Universal Discourse: The Postmodernist Poetics of Heiner Müller* (New York: Peter Lang, 1985).

[3] Müller's plays clearly influenced Carlson's thinking about the haunted nature of theater, and it is possible that his work may have influenced Roach's theory of theater as well.

[4] Malkin, *Memory-Theater and Postmodern Drama*, 71 (see chap. 1, n. 4); See also Norbert Otto Eke, *Heiner Müller: Apokalypse und Utopie* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoningh, 1989) and Andreas Keller, *Drama und Dramaturgie Heiner Müllers zwischen 1956 und 1988* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992) for further discussion of Müller's work as 'Theater der Erinnerung.'

[5] Kalb, *The Theater of Heiner Müller*, 16 (see chap. 1, n. 24).

[6] Heiner Müller, interviewed by Elinor Fuchs "PAJ Casebook on *Alcestis,*" ed Bonnie Marranca *Performing Arts Journal* 10 (1986): 105.

[7] Heiner Müller, "Raising the Dead," in *Germania,* trans. Bernard and Caroline Schütze, ed. Sylvere Lotringer (New York: Semiotext[e], 1990), 225.

[8] Ibid., 225.

[9] David Savran, "Modernity's Haunted Houses," 119 (see chap. 1, n. 9).

[10] Müller, "PAJ Casebook on *Alcestis,*" 96-97.

[11] Rebecca Kastleman, "Games with Ghosts in Müller's *Explosion of a Memory*: a study of pre-ideology in the Müller-Wilson Collaboration," *Theatre History Studies Annual* (2008): 10.

[12] Müller, "PAJ Casebook on *Alcestis,*" 165.

[13] Ibid., 97.

[14] quoted in Kalb, 15.

[15] Heiner Müller, "Walls," in *Germania,* trans. Bernard and Caroline Schütze, ed. Sylvere Lotringer (New York: Semiotext[e], 1990), 57.

[16] Ibid., 55-56.

[17] Heiner Müller, "Wars," in *Germania,* trans. Bernard and Caroline Schütze, ed. Sylvere Lotringer (New York: Semiotext[e], 1990), 67.

[18] Müller, "PAJ Casebook on *Alcestis,*" 105.

[19] Müller, "Wars," 67.

[20] Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 112 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

[21] All quotations from Shakespeare's text are taken from *The Riverside Shakespeare,* 2nd ed., ed. G. Blakemore Evans and J. J. M. Tobin (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

[22] Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of maternal origin in Shakespeare's plays, Hamlet to the Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 18.

[23] Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt, *Practicing New Historicism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 154.

[24] See Williams, who calls *Hamletmachine* the "political and sexual unconscious of Hamlet" (202).

[25] All quotations from *Hamletmachine* are taken from *Hamletmachine and Other Texts for the Stage,* ed. and trans. Carl Weber (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1984), 49-58. Müller worked on *Hamletmachine* for many years, beginning in the 1950s. The play was completed and published in 1977, and it was first staged in 1979.

[26] See Teraoka, 97 and Richard Halpern, *Shakespeare among the Moderns* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 271.

[27] Heiner Müller, *Theatremachine,* trans. Marc von Henning (London: Faber and Faber, 1995), 101.

[28] Brian Walsh, "The Rest is Violence: Müller Contra Shakespeare," *Performing Arts Journal* 69 (2001): 68.

[29] Helen Fehervary, "The Gender of Authorship: Heiner Müller and Christa Wolf," *Studies in Twentieth Century Literature* 5 (1980): 49.

[30] Heiner Müller, speech delivered at a conference, New York, 1978, quoted in Carl Weber, "Heiner Müller: The Despair and the Hope," *Performing Arts Journal* 4 (1980): 140.

[31] Müller, *Theatremachine,* 101.

[32] Adelman claims that the same is true for *Hamlet.*

[33] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations,* trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, 1955), 259-260.

Chapter Five

[1] See Marguerite Tassi, "Shakespeare and Beckett Revisited: A Phenomenology of Theater," *Comparative Drama* 31 (1997): 253.

[2] Israel Shenker, "Moody Man of Letters," *New York Times*, 6 May 1956, Sec. 2, p. 3.

[3] For example, see Antonia Rodriguez-Gago, "The Embodiment of Memory (and Forgetting) in Beckett's Late Women's Plays," in *Drawing on Beckett*, ed. Linda Ben-Zvi Herren (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2003), 113-126; Julie Campbell, "There is no more . . . ": Cultural Memory in *Endgame*" " in *Drawing on Beckett*; S. E. Gontarski, *Beckett's Happy Days: A Manuscript Study* (Columbus: Ohio State University Libraries, 1977); Theodor Adorno, "Trying to Understand *Endgame*," in *Endgame,* ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988).

[4] See Rodriguez-Gago, 120.

[5]Herbert Blau, "A Subtext based on Nothing," *Tulane Drama Review* 8 (1963): 125.

[6] Charles Marowitz, "Lear Log," *Tulane Drama Review* 8 (1963): 104.

[7] Dougald McMillan and Martha Fehsenfield, *Beckett in the Theatre* (London: Riverrun Press, 1988), 171.

[8] Tassi, 249.

[9] Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 26 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

[10] Samuel Beckett, *Proust* (New York: Grove Press, 1931), 4.

[11] Ibid., 8.

[12] Ibid., 17-18.

[13] Graley Herren, *Samuel Beckett's Plays on Film and Television* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 7.

[14] Katharine Worth, *Samuel Beckett's Theatre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 98.

[15] David Savran, "Modernity's Haunted Houses," 118 (See chap. 1, n. 9).

[16] See for example, Thomas Postlewait, "Self-Performing Voices: Mind, Memory, and Time in Beckett's Drama," *Twentieth Century Literature* 24 (1978): 476.

[17] Carlson, *The Haunted Stage*, 17 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

[18] Tassi, 256.

[19] Malkin, *Memory-Theater and Postmodern Drama*, 8 (see chap. 1, n. 4).

[20] Yasunari Takahashi, "Memory Inscribed in the Body: Krapp's Last Tape and the Noh Play Izutsu," in *The Theatrical Gamut: Notes for a Post-Beckettian Stage*, ed. Enoch Brater (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 61, 63.

[21] See Malkin, 36-47.

[22] David Savran goes so far as to argue that the theater of the absurd represents a "collection of ghost plays" (126).

[23] All quotations from Beckett's plays are taken from Samuel Beckett, *The Complete Dramatic Works* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986).

[24] Israel Shenker, "An Interview with Beckett," in *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Lawrence Graver and Raymond Federman (London: Routledge, 1979), 148.

[25] Beckett, *Proust,* 48.

[26] Ibid., 48.

[27] Samuel Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1970), 103.

[28] Daniel Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8.

[29] Antonia Rodriguez-Gago, "Molly's 'Happy Nights' and Winnie's 'Happy Days,'" in *The Theatrical Gamut: Notes for a Post-Beckettian Stage*, ed. Enoch Brater (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 39.

[30] Richard Gilman, "Beckett," in *Samuel Beckett's Endgame: Modern Critical Interpretations*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988), 83.

[31] The comparison with *Hamletmachine* is suggested by interviews in which Müller claimed to have "destroyed history" in the act of writing *Hamletmachine.* According to Müller, all of his plays written after *Hamletmachine* are about "post-history." While Müller critics have been eager to embrace this aesthetic of failure, Beckett critics have been less willing to do so, often claiming that Beckett is successful in ridding his work of the weight of history.

[32] See Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, 378-381 (chap. 1, n. 11).

[33] See Ruby Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*; Michael Scott, *Shakespeare and the Modern Dramatist* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).

[34] Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots,* 382.

[35] Scott, 67.

[36] Sidney Homan, "*Endgame*: The Playwright Completes Himself," in *Endgame*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988), 127. Cohn, *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, 382.

[37] All quotations from Shakespeare's plays are taken from *The Riverside Shakespeare* (see chap. 4, n. 21).

[38] See for example 1.2.245.

[39] Cohn also notes this allusion, see *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, 382.

[40] In this sense, Beckett's adaptation of *The Tempest* intersects with postcolonial interpretations that prioritize Caliban.

[41] See Cohn's discussion in *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*, 380.

[42] For a further discussion of the interpretative tradition that equates Prospero with the playwright, see Douglas Bruster, "Local *Tempest*: Shakespeare and the Work of the Early Modern Playhouse," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 25 (1995): 33-53.

[43] See Homan, 146.

[44] Anthony Brennan, "Winnie's Golden Treasury: The use of Quotation in *Happy Days*," *Arizona Quarterly* 25 (1979): 224.

[45] See S. E. Gontarski's discussion, 65.

Chapter Six

[1] The play's preoccupation with destroying traditional boundaries between audience and spectator has been frequently noted. See for example, Peter N. Chetta, "Multiplicities of Illusion in Tom Stoppard's Plays," in *Staging the Impossible: The Fantastic Mode in Modern Drama*, ed. Patrick D. Murphy (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1992), 131; Manfred Draudt, "'Two Sides of the Same Coin, or . . . The Same Side of Two Coins': An Analysis of Tom

Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*," *English Studies: A Journal of English Language and Literature* 62 (1981): 348-357; Margarete Holubetz, "A Mocking of Theatrical Conventions: The Fake Death Scenes in *The White Devil* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*," *English Studies: A Journal of English Language and Literature* 63 (1982): 426-429.

[2] Alice Rayner offers a very brief discussion of Roach's work in relation to Stoppard's, interpreting Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's final disappearance as an effigy of death. See Rayner, *Ghosts*, 155-156 (chap. 1, n. 5).

[3] The screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love* was a collaborative effort, written with Marc Norman. The debate about which parts of the screenplay should be attributed to Stoppard is ongoing. Beckett's influence on Stoppard has received a great deal of critical attention. See, for example, Jill L. Levenson, "*Hamlet* Andante/*Hamlet* Allegro: Tom Stoppard's Two Versions," *Shakespeare Survey* 36 (1983): 22-23.

[4] Chetta argues that "Stoppard distinguished himself from Beckett and other absurdist playwrights by making this connection with Shakespeare" (127). See also Jill L. Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," in *The Cambridge Companion to Stoppard*, ed. Katherine E. Kelly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 166-167. Levenson remarks, "What makes this Shakespeare different from the rest is the persistence with which the dramatist [Stoppard] reproduces him, the originality of each new conception, and the continuity of influence over more than three decades" (156).

[5] Levenson points out many similarities between *Shakespeare in Love*'s Will character and the young Stoppard. See "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 166-167.

[6] Tom Stoppard, "Is it true what they say about Shakespeare?," International Shakespeare Association Occasional Paper no. 2 (Oxford: International Shakespeare Association, 1982), 11 quoted in Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 156.

[7] Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 156.

[8] Ibid., 166.

[9] Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, 6 (see chap. 1, n. 1).

[10] Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 167

[11] Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack note the film's correlation between London and Hollywood in "Reading (and Writing) the Ethics of Authorship: *Shakespeare in Love* as Postmodern Metanarrative," *Literature Film Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (1994): 154.

[12] *Shakespeare in Love*, dir. John Madden, perf. Gwyneth Paltrow, Joseph Fienns, Geoffrey Rush, Colin Firth, DVD, Miramax Films/Universal Pictures/The Bedford Falls Company, 1999.

[13] Stoppard in a letter to Smith, January 1964, quoted in Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 166-167. Levenson notes this parallel between Will and Stoppard: "Both young playwrights, under pressure, evade their obligations" (166).

[14] See Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 166-167

[15] Ibid., 166-167

[16] Jane E Kingsley-Smith, "Shakespearean Authorship in Popular British Cinema," *Literature Film Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2002): 160.

[17] All quotations from *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* are taken form Bernard Shaw, *Selected Short Plays*, ed. Dan H. Laurence (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 123.

[18] Shaw also alludes to the opening of *Twelfth Night* in this line.

[19] Levenson, "Stoppard's Shakespeare: textual re-visions," 167.

[20] For example, see Draudt's discussion: "In Stoppard's 'comedy,' just as in Shakespeare's tragedy, death is the central problem, appearing in almost every conversation until its final physical impact is felt with the disappearance of Rosencratnz and Guildenstern" (Draudt 353).

[21] All quotations from *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* are taken from Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 38.

[22] Lia M. Hotchkiss, "The Cinematic Appropriation of Theater: Introjection and Incorporation in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*," *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 17, no. 2 (2000): 167.

[23] *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* is not a parody in the traditional sense of the term, since it abandons the style of Shakespeare's play, and parodies usually put ridiculous content into the style of the source play. This comedy functions more like a burlesque, since it derives its humor from presenting the plot of *Hamlet* in a new style. A survey of critical articles on *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead,* however, shows that the vast majority of Stoppard critics use the term "parody" to describe the play.

[24] See Carlson, *The Haunted Stage*, 4 (chap. 1, n. 1) for a discussion of *Hamlet*'s play within the play and the "embodied memory of the theatre."

Afterword

[1] Heiner Müller, *Gesammelte Irrtümer 2* (Frankfurt/Main, 1990), 148-149, translated in Hans-Thies Lehmann, "Heiner Müller's Spectres," in *Heiner Müller: ConTEXTS and HISTORY*, ed. Gerhard Fischer (Stauffenburg Verlag, 1995), 87-96.

[2] For a further discussion of *Hamlet* as directed by Müller, see Andreas Höfele, "A Theater of Exhaustion? 'Posthistoire' in Recent German Shakespeare Productions," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43 (1992): 80-86.

[3] This name for Müller originated with Brecht's daughter Barbara, although the postmodern playwright is as likely to turn parricide on Shakespeare as on Brecht. See Eric Bentley, *Bentley on Brecht* (Evanston, Il: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 136-137.

[4] For examples of this type of analysis see Worthen and Rayner.

[5] Herren, *Samuel Beckett's Plays on Film and Television*, 1, 3, 4 (see chap. 5, n. 13)

[6] Rayner, *Ghosts*, 156 (see chap. 1, n. 5)

[7] See Halpern's chapter on "Hamletmachines" in *Shakespeare among the Moderns* (chap. 4, n. 26).