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Bridging *The Gap of Time*: Jeanette Winterson's Adaptation of William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

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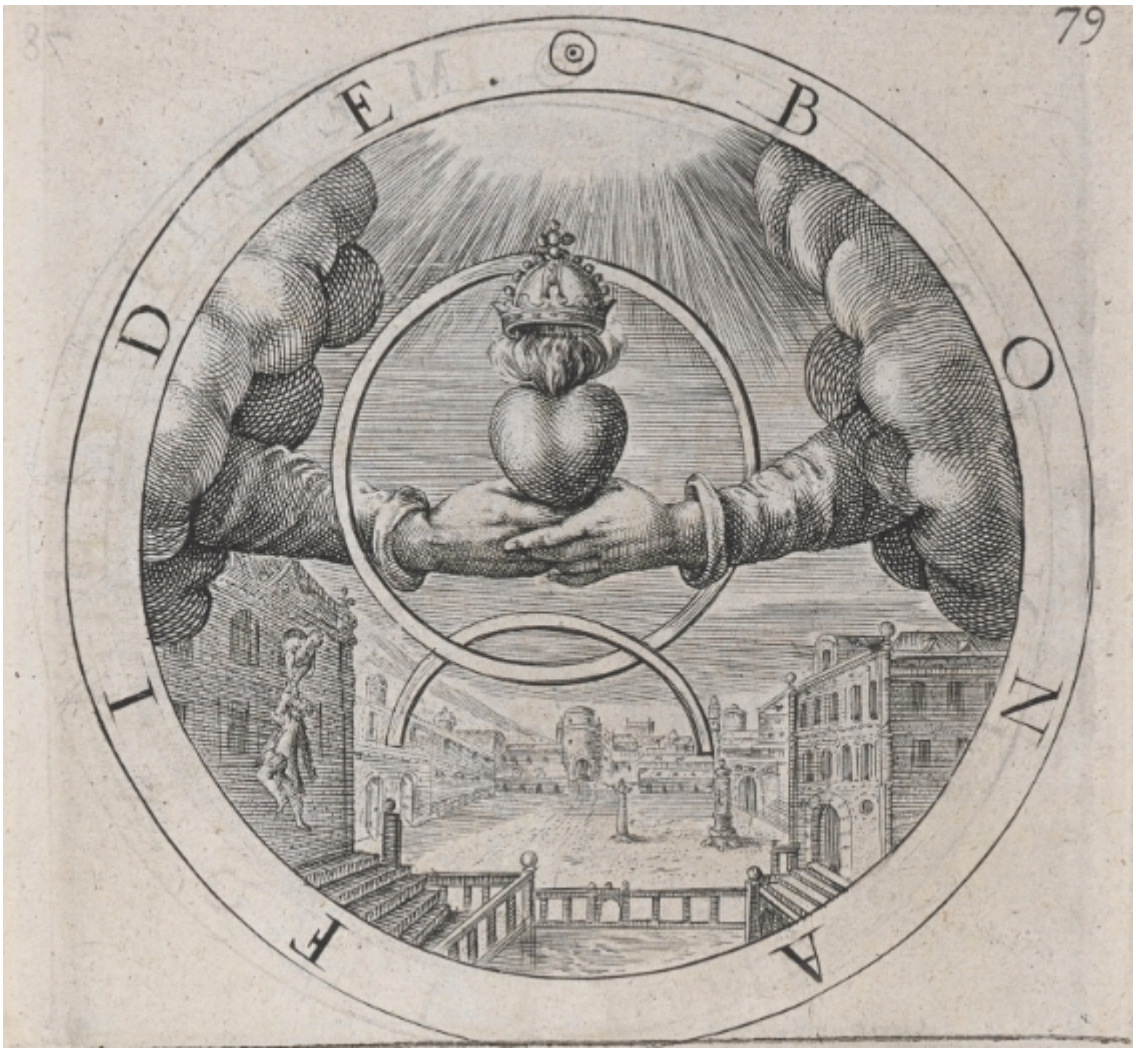

Graphic taken from the book *Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* by George Withers, published 1635, p. 237

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Bibliographical Note

The following is a list of abbreviated titles used in this thesis:

TWT: The Winter's Tale

TGOT: The Gap of Time

WBH: Why be happy when you could be normal?

Web sources will be denoted by the following device and specified in the list of bibliographical reference:

WS 1, 2, 3 ...

"It has become clear that this entire imprudent project must be taken up anew."[1]

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

(Sonnet 116)

[1] Genette, Gérard. *Palimpsests – Literature in the Second Degree, Translated by Channa Newman & Claude Doubinsky*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997, p. 1.

1. Introduction

The following master thesis seeks to explore literature's ability to update and rework a given text in a sense that the new text reflects the condition humana in relation to current social and cultural milieus thereby demonstrating the actuality of the original text and constituting a genuinely new work of art in its own right at the same time.

Being successive to Winterson's autobiography *Why be happy when you could be normal? The Gap of Time* reverberates undoubtedly with the former. Both texts deal rather critically with the reunion of adoptee and biological parents which can be seen as advancement in relation to *The Winter's Tale*. The more recent texts withhold what is described in post-modernism as closure and which literary criticism has sometimes deemed as accomplished in the over four hundred year old text.

However, as Winterson reads *The Winter's Tale,* it has left blank spaces, or gaps, which can be filled with stories that could be constitutive for the actual story. Interestingly, Shakespeare named his play *The Winter's Tale* which already could be read as a metafictional framing for what happens on the stage: the staging of a tale. As to Winterson, she uses the freedom the form of the novel offers to expound and explore her versions of "all those backstories"[2]. The metafictional framing found in *The Gap of Time* adds to the impression that the cover story neither does present a closure but an opening to further stories and backstories to come since the novel does not exhaustively illuminate each and every gap invested in the play. The biggest gap the story leaves open is not filled in the cover version either which is what happens after end the story has ended. Winterson discerns in that a feature of Shakespeare's plays in which "endings

[2] WS 1

are not really endings--simply they regroup everyone--almost as though another play could now begin."[3]

Here, the novel represents a certain ethics of literature, in which texts offer a "common ground"[4] to deal with human experience and to (re-) gain a language for it.[5] When that common ground is treated on (or when the writer falls on it) it can be said that literature is intertext. As Winterson states: "By working with the text I can reveal some of what I believe is concealed in it, and I can offer clues about its significance to me. But the creative process is discovery, not imposition. Working with this text is like laying tracing paper over it and drawing something new on the tracing paper while letting the original show through."[6] What she describes is the manufacturing of a palimpsest. *The Gap of Time* would then be a certain version of palimpsest, its intertextuality a "congratulatory gesture"[7]. As Winterson declared, one of her premises was "to honour the text. I was working with it, not against it, and crucially, not instead of it. The play is here."[8]

1.1 The Literary Genre of *The Winter's Tale*

The Winter's Tale as well as other texts of his oeuvre has aroused controversies about its literary genre at all times. Critics relating to and basing their judgement on the Aristotelian paradigm of the antique drama, have mourned the many deviations Shakespeare was free to build his plays upon. Especially his 'late works' (itself a post-imposed label) were difficult to grasp in the sense of associating them with a definite literary genre, often that of tragicomedy. One reason for that was "the mixture of comic and serious modes in which

[3] Ibid.
[4] WBH, p. 144.
[5] Cf. WS 2: "We get our language back through the language of others. We can turn to the poem. We can open the book. Somebody has been there for us and deep-dived the words. I needed words because unhappy families are conspiracies of silence."
[6] WS 1
[7] Mullan, John. *How Novels Work*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 289.
[8] WS 1

Johnson discerned 'much incongruity'." [9] That mixture, because it was necessary for the unfolding of the story, required deviations from the Aristotelian principle of the unity of space and time. Knight considers the introduction of a time span of several years as valuable element of style which "not merely fits, it explores and exposes, the anguish depicted."[10] Likewise, Tillyard comments favourably on the text's structure: "All growth implies destruction and re-creation. (...) Tragedy symbolizes this process (...)."[11]

Furthermore, plays with intervals came into fashion when roofed theatres such as the Blackfriars Theatre in London opened and scenic devices such as lightning as well as music could be employed. This was valuable in the case of *The Winter's Tale* because of his setting in different seasons of the year as well as the music used in the play. However, Alexander wrote: "Shakespeare's Romances have been raised by the genius of their author far above any contemporary conditions that may have suggested them, for they are clearly the expression of something he had very much at heart."[12]

On the contrary Dustagheer from the University of Kent claims that "*The Winter's Tale* was written specifically with the Blackfriars Theatre in mind"[13] for the "Blackfriars refectory hall was the location of Catherine of Aragon's trial in 1529"[14] thereby its audience would decidedly experience the play in a "natural environment for 'exploring the female condition'"[15] just because of its venue.

As it may be, both aspects might be reconcilable in Winterson's claim that "an interval – really the world's first advertising break – meant that Shakespeare could pace his plays differently. For him, everything was an opportunity."[16]

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[9] Abartis, Caesarea. *The Tragicomic Construction of Cymbeline and The Winter's Tale*. Universität Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1977, p. 2.

[10] Knight, G. Wilson. The Crown of Life – Essays in Interpretation of Shakespeare's Final Plays. London: Methuen & Co., 1948, p. 83.
[11] Tillyard, E.M.W. *Shakespeare's Last Plays*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1951, p. 17.
[12] Alexander, Peter. *Shakespeare's Life and Art* (1939), New York: New York University Press, 1961, p. 201.
[13] WS
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.
[16] WS 3

Critics of the nineteenth-century were preoccupied with dwelling on the psychology of the author thereby producing biographistic readings that led away from the text as the producer of meaning. Caesarea Abartis, for instance, mentions Raleigh, Furnivall and Dowden, who depicted the late Shakespeare as "a man who was calm, sage, and nearly divine at the end of his life, and (...) read this back into the meaning of the late plays."[17] A different light can be shed on the dramatic genre by quoting Bloom who claims "*The Winter's Tale* is a romantic comedy, if we adopt the perspective of Autolycus"[18].

2. Adaptation

The term "adaptation" can actually not be found in Winterson's text, except for once[19]. The words that are used instead are "The Winter's Tale retold"[20] and mainly "Cover Story". The missing of this characterization as adaptation stresses on the text's properties of being something new, a work of creation, invention and imagination, rather than a repetition in another form of art or genre of something already existing. With this the different meaning of the words "adaptation" and "adoption" come into view. While both words, having the same stem, of course are closely related, they are marked word-internally with a difference that nonetheless still bears the trace of the other's meaning.

So when neither the author speaks of adaptation nor the semantic content of the text gives itself easily to a classification as adaptation, the question arises if the term so akin may not serve as a better one: adoption.

A definition of the term 'adaptation' reads as follows: "In reworking a familiar story according to existing social, cultural, and aesthetic norms, the adaptor

[17] Abartis, p. 3.
[18] Bloom, Harold. *Shakespeare – The Invention of the Human*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1998, p. 649.
[19] Cf. TGOT, p. 42: "MiMi made her acting debut in 2002 on stage at Théâtre national de Chaillot in Deborah Warner's adaptation of The Power Book – a novel by the British writer Jeanette Winterson.",
[20] The description "William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* Retold" is printed on the backside of the paperback edition, Hogarth Shakespeare, 2015

ensures its 'subsequent life' in a new context."[21] This definition delineates a usage of the term that would perceives adaptation as a "free" reworking of a text rather than the transformation into another genre or medium that stays "close" to the original.

Nonetheless, in the etymological sense the verbs to adapt and to adopt have the same prefix –ad, meaning 'to'. Since 'apt' is defined as 'fit' and 'opt' as 'choose' the Oxford English Dictionary teaches us that 'adapt' means to "fit (a person or thing to another, to or for a purpose), to suit, or make suitable"[22] whereas 'adopt' bears the meaning of "to choose for oneself, esp. a child"[23].

Compared to the many different stage production *The Winter's Tale* has seen, *The Gap of Time* of course is quite a different rendering of a story about a lost daughter. Whereas the latter is a prose text intended for an audience of readers, the tragicomedy is designed for a theatre audience. However, both texts are representations of the world through language and therefore share the trait of being approximative.

The division into tragic and comic may also be at work in the novel for a novel can have both sinister and gleeful parts. Simply put, novels do have turning points as do tragicomedies. On the other hand the subsumption of Shakespeare's text into the genre of tragic-comedy or romance is lead astray by Bloom who claims that "Shakespeare (...) writ no genre."[24]

This concluded, the present examination explores both works in their textual availability, rather than scrutinizing differences that result from the genre label they have been awarded. Since Shakespeare's text already is a rendering of a text that is a rendering of a text, etc., *The Gap of Time* is the latest element in a

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[21] Collington, Tara: "The Chronotype and the Study of Literary Adaptation: The Case of *Robinson Crusoe*" in Bemong, Nele and Borghart, Pieter, et.al. (eds.). *Bakhtin's Theory of the Literary Chronotype – Reflections, Applications, Perspectives*. Gent: Academia Press, 2010, p. 179.
[22] Simpson, J. A. and Weiner, E. S. C (eds.). *The Oxford English Dictionary – Second Edition. Volume I / A – Bazouki*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 139.
[23] Ibid, p. 171.
[24] Bloom, p. 639.

chain that potentially can go on infinitely. By the same token the abundance of possibilities for intertextual references or transpositions into other social or cultural nexuses will not decrease either. That shows the approximate character of any work of art towards reality in any given period of time that is an approximation of understanding the world and others ad infinitum. The same holds for the work of the hermeneut who creates a certain understanding of a text rather than finds a meaning that is simply waiting to be found. As Hamacher incisively propounds:

„If understanding is not to rigidify to a mechanism of identifications and projections, it must be moved by that which is not absorbed by identification and which escapes assimilation. The speech of an other can only be understood by means of an interpretation that gives place to its alterity in understanding itself: that of falling silent, discontinuation, methodical self-criticism, or insatiable capacity for revision of interpretation. (…) Thus, understanding offers itself as infinite historical approximation to the text which it must never reach, if its singularity is to be preserved."[25]

The adaptation or re-telling of a story thereby pointedly shows the problem of language and as will be seen the adaptation of an adoption story adds another level to it. As made up of language an adaptation or cover story can literally never 'be' the original story since the words used, or briefly put its language, differs. In the same vein, a text can never reproduce reality absolutely truthful but must forever remain an approximation towards reality. As Hamacher put

[25] Hamacher, Werner. Entferntes Verstehen – Studien zu Philosophie und Literatur von Celan bis Kant. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998, p. 51 (all translations into English by me): "Soll Verstehen nicht zu einem Mechanismus von Identifizierungen und Projektionen erstarren, so muss es sich von dem bewegen lassen, was in keiner Identität aufgeht und sich jeder Assimilation entzieht. Die Rede eines andern kann nur in einer Deutung verstanden werden, die ihrer Alterität im Verstehen selber einen Platz einräumt: den des Verstummens, des Abbruchs, der methodischen Selbstkritik oder der unendlichen und also unsaturierbaren Revisionsfähigkeit der Deutung. (…) So bietet sich Verstehen als unendliche historische Approximation an den einen Text dar, den es doch niemals erreichen darf, wenn anders das an ihm schlechthin Singuläre gewahrt werden soll."

it in *Entferntes Verstehen*: "Language is departure—from every deeper or hidden meaning, from the subject that intends to express itself in it."[26]

This dilemma however is met with the ever new creation of textual worlds. The adaptation of an adoption story thereby can serve as a paradigm for creating a life story, respectively a life composed of textuality which has lost the connection to its origin and must be rewritten as soon as it has been written: It "must be done better".

The quote at the very beginning of Winterson's book in that sense surely does not mean that Shakespeare's text should be made better, but that the writing of one's own story or about a subject-matter one attaches importance to can be subject to re-evaluation and rewriting.

Past fifty, we learn with surprise and a sense
Of suicidal absolution
That what we intended and failed
Could never have happened –
And must be done better.[27]

The quotation of the last passage of Robert Lowell's poem 'For Sheridan' depicts this paradoxical movement, since it speaks of something "intended and failed" which means that something that had been intended had been carried out otherwise it could not have failed. At the same time, because it failed, it bears the attribute of only being intended still. As follows that what is and still is not "must be done better."

That little elucidation concerning the relationship between the two friends (among other examples, this is only one) is found in literary criticism, be it merely regarding its homo-social character, hints towards the bounds that are inscribed by and in the ruling discursive present in that discipline at a given

[26] Hamacher, p. 142: "Sprache ist Abschied: von jedem tieferen und verborgenen Sinn, von dem Subjekt, das sich in ihr auszusprechen meint."
[27] TGOT, p. xii.

time. Maybe literary imagination is sometimes needed as an act of a kind of literary criticism itself or simply to point to further levels of meaning because it is not constrained stylistically and maybe even ideologically to a certain mode of discursivity. Both texts then, as well as the excerpt from Lowell's poem, point to a future that is engaged in activities and projects (in the literal sense of the word) to reform and improve on what is extant: "(...) what we intended and failed could never have happened – and must be done better."

Interestingly enough, the word 'better' as comparative of good itself marks the problematic definition of good as a status quo. There always remains something that can be honed and made better as the stipulation of progress. That missing of a comparative deriving from the word stem of the positive conspicuously marks the uncertain status of the latter.

2.1 Ad*o*pting a Story

Adaptations are often judged for their faithfulness towards the original. Yet, as we have seen adaption is a term broadly used and covers a wide spectrum of dealing with a reference text. From the perspective that every text posited as original already is an inter-text, the foundation of that category crumbles. Winterson herself writes that she "wasn't interested in copying Shakespeare", (as if that were feasable), "this isn't a retelling. I wanted to track Shakespeare in the same way that he tracked other people's ideas, innovations, solutions, follies, even failures (…)"[28] Neither is The *Gap of Time* a pastiche in the sense that Genette delineates as the emulation of an author's style. Above all, the cover version which is *The Gap of Time* would not be unintelligible without having read the hypotext *The Winter's Tale*. So for the time being we adhere to Genette that "by hypertextuality I mean any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call t the *hypotext)*, upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of

[28] WS 3

commentary."[29] Notably, this relationship which is constituted of disjunctive and linking elements in our case rests on a conjoint structure. The rough depiction of *The Winter's Tale* by Knight demonstrates this for it might as well account for *The Gap of Time*:

"The play is in three main sections. The first is tragic; the second pastoral; the third must for the present be left undefined. There is a strong suggestion throughout of season-myth, with a balance of summer against winter. Evil passions, storm, and shipwreck are contrasted with young love and humour. Maturity and death are set against birth and resurrection."[30]

That some critics discern two parts, others three, demonstrates the text's refusal to become utilized for the purpose of a definite interpretation.[31]

The common feature of origin and cover version then can be seen in the deviation from the original, that never was an original itself in the first place but already a cover story. The story of an adoption story then becomes the allegory for every piece of writing. In that sense, Winterson's text is true to Shakespeare in that she created her own piece of writing. Original therefore should be put in inverted commas, but here I will resign from doing so for the sake of an easier reading under the presumption of the above stated.

The question then is how both pieces of writing are to be treated when put under the scrutiny of literary criticism. One answer that would be given under the supposition that Shakespeare's text undergoes a modernization in the cover version, which is the explicit task of the series of which Winterson's text is part of, could be to identify these differences for the sake of finding out how they constitute a modernization while still bearing the traces of the original. In this examination, however adaptation and cover version will be used

[29] Genette, p. 5.
[30] Knight, p. 76.
[31] Winterson does not conclusively decide on the number of parts in *The Winter's Tale* either, although her own text has two intervals, resulting in three parts: "*The Winter's Tale*, first performed at the Globe in 1611, divides neatly around one interval, or two – take your pick (…)" in WS 3.

synonymously under the premise that an adaptation rather is read synonymously with the adoption of a story.

Of course, a text that so explicitly refers to another cannot be read without taking into account its original. What an adaptation then automatically does, is to evoke the original at all times of its reception which conjointly eventuates a demand for an engagement with it.

The original story could be understood as the baby that is abandoned by its father and the writer of the cover story becomes the one who adopts that baby, but only in as much as the cover story itself will be abandoned to wait for someone to adopt it. That happens by means of a passion or rather an affective impact the text has on the reader. Unlike the fathers in the story who did not have to abandon the baby, the text has no other choice than to be exposed respectively to expose itself: "Furthermore, 'distant understanding' can mean that understanding itself has become displaced from its erstwhile proximity of a text or word – even the word 'understanding' – has become deferred, shifted or carried off. (…) La poésie ne s'impose plus, elle s'expose. In like manner, understanding. It exposes itself."[32] As something that is being understood which is always an understanding that is understood in a certain way, the text willingly lets itself be carried off from its source of meaning to attain a meaning at all.

One who doesn't lose their name in the cover story is Perdita, the lost one. In her being lost, she is preserved. And so is the text, it gets lost and shipwrecked, but adopted through interpreting and understanding it.

Each story, then, waits to be adopted. This process happens when a text prompts an affective, or otherwise motivated, response in the reader. As Atwood explains in her Tanner Lecture from 2015:

[32] Hamacher: "Weiter kann 'entferntes Verstehen' heißen, dass das Verstehen selber entfernt, aus seiner vormaligen Position in der Nähe zu einem Text oder Wort – auch dem Wort 'Verstehen' – verschoben, verrückt oder verschleppt worden ist. (…) La poésie ne s'impose plus, elle s'expose. Und so das Verstehen. Es setzt sich aus."

"What interests us relates to what kind of creature we are. Our interests and our values are inextricably tied to that, and all our stories and all our arts and technologies are utterings (or outerings) of those interests and values."[33]

Hence, whether or not we deem a text to be worth working with depends upon our preoccupations and interests that relate to past and current experiences as well as our social situation. Another explanation of the affective character of understanding is offered by Barthes:

"The 'me in 'What is that for me?' is the subject of writing; and the evaluation is the writer's response to what he sees as the (ethical and political) challenge of the here-and-now."[34]

But what's more and decisive for the productive character of reading and understanding is that the received text will not remain unchanged by it, for we learn that "understanding never is a relation between two predetermined, immovable static entities, which would remain untouched by this relation."[35] Not even the text at hand would constitute the one part unalterable juxtaposed to a stirred reader, but rather understanding "is the one relation in which its elements are constituted in the first place – in which the reader will become the reader of this sentence, the sentence will become the sentence of this reader – and thereby a process of mutual affection and alteration."[36] In this context the word stand (German: stehen) comes into view which is constitutive of the term understanding (verstehen), whereas the German term by its prefix –ver already points at the derivative character of understanding. On the other hand the English term stresses the approximative stance understanding[37] has in relation to what is being understood considering –under here derives from or is akin to Latin 'inter' meaning 'between, among' or Greek 'entera'. In this

[33] Atwood, Margaret. "Human Values in an Age of Change". The Tanner Lectures in Human Values, Speech delivered at the University of Utah, 25/03/2015, p. 128.
[34] Moriarty, Michael. *Roland Barthes.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991, p. 118
[35] Hamacher, p. 7: „Verstehen ist niemals eine Relation zwischen zwei vorgegeben, unverrückbar statischen Entitäten, die von dieser Relation unberührt blieben."
[36] Hamacher, p. 7: „Vielmehr ist es diejenige Relation, in der sich ihre Relata allererst konstituieren – in der der Leser zum Leser dieses Satzes, der Satz zum Satz dieses Lesers wird – und also ein Vorgang der wechselseitigen Affektion und Alteration."
[37] Cf. WS 4

vein, it does not surprise that in situations where mutual understanding vanishes, the figures in the cover story experience the metaphysical loss of firm ground beneath their feet: they not only fall from grace, they literally fall. Xeno falls, as does MiMi.

On the contrary, Perdita is literally lifted up by Shep and has not yet been let down[38], thereby she is a figure of hope for the ones fallen.

2.2 Readerly/Writerly Text

Winterson shows that a so-called classic text consequently does not have to be a 'readerly' text, in a Barthesian sense, implying it can only lead to preconceived or 'fixed' interpretations. Barthes sees the reader "plunged into a kind of idleness -- he is intransitive; he is, in short, serious: instead of functioning himself, instead of gaining access to the magic of the signifier, to the pleasure of writing, he is left with no more than the poor freedom either to accept or reject the text: reading is nothing more than a referendum."[39]

The division of texts into 'readerly' and 'writerly' becomes, if not extraneous, at least subject to change. Would not the claim that certain texts or text genres preclude their 'writerliness' from the outset be as deprecating to new interpretations as when this dichotomous categorization was assumed to be true? Barthes' objection then seems to be more of an objection towards the literary criticism of his time and the way it deals with texts and their authors which he wants to criticize and change. In relation to *The Winter's Tale* that would mean a critique of the uniform reading as a story basically as one of reconciliation. Not solely Barthes, but of course many others have stressed the absoluteness of the plurality of a text's meaning.

[38] Cf. TGOT, p. 137: "In the beginning Shep had done most of the work himself; restoring the long shutters, finding lengths of iron balustrade to rebuild the balcony that ran all the way round the building. He had worked with Perdita strapped to his back. She had been put down once and he was never going to let her be put down again." The balustrade, of course, is evocative of a ship's railing, thereby emphasizing Shep's will to save Perdita from the experience of Shipwreck, in a metaphysical sense. Also 'be put down' can signify the terms metaphorical meaning.

[39] Barthes, Roland. *S/Z – Translated by Richard Miller*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1990, p. 4

2.3 From Drama to Novel

While the adaptation of a novel as a stage play is termed dramatization, here the adaptation that is a 'novelization' goes from stage play to novel does not lead to a de-dramatization. The form of the novel does allow for a many-voiced text, thereby it is able to retain the idiosyncratic productions of meaning of its protagonists. However, the term 'adaptation' is used in a broad sense, so that it could still remain applicable, denoting not only faithful transpositions of a text into other literary genres or forms of art but also works of art that are shaped quite differently albeit inspired by a given text. The inspiration can be drawn from certain texts is due to the fact that "masterpieces in a genre, powerful conceptualizations of a certain sort of time and space, always contain more than a given epoch can absorb. When these works are built upon in later times, different aspects (...) encourage different patterns of response (...)."[40]

It is the objective of the novel writer, and besides probably of all writers involved in the "Shakespeare Retold" series, to provide it with actuality through the transformation into in a different literary genre which in these days turns out to be more commonly consumed. If Genette is right that narrativization "seems to be less common, in spite of the (...) textual assets inherent in the narrative mode"[41], an inducement such as issuing the "Shakespeare Retold" series was necessary to offer the occasion. Of course, the assertion that "it is commercially more profitable to transfer a narrative to the stage (or screen) than the reverse"[42] would not hold in light of the authors participating in that project.

For instance, John Mullan, author of *The Guardian's* column 'Elements of Fiction' writes: "A novel absorbs us, I would say, not because of what it is about, but because of how it is written."[43] Thus, no matter how seasonable the

[40] Emerson, Caryl. *Boris Godunov: Transpositions of a Russian Theme*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986. p. 9.
[41] Genette, p. 282.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Mullan, p. 6.

manifold themes of a text are, it is the just as well the shape in which they emerge that bestows them with relevance to the readers.

Mullan's assessment that "novels do have recurrent preoccupations, and that even innovations and experiments often have their precedents" [44] can be broadened to include different literary genres and, as a matter of fact, the whole of arts. Artistic pursuit in this sense in this sense is never ahistorical which means for novelists that they are "often sharply aware of literary tradition and have been influenced by the novels they have read – or, indeed, studied for a number of the novelists (...) turn out to have degrees in English Literature"[45] as does Winterson. It is then not farfetched to link the writer's work to that of the literary critic respectively literary theorist as related preoccupations. With Barthes and his dictum of the productive reader these terms even come close to interchangeability.

2.4 *The Gap of Time* in the context of Winterson's preceding works

The body of her works can be understood as a project to deconstruct the cultural and historical givens by shifting and redefining the spatio-temporal coordinates. A critique of official history, patriarchy, and all those boundaries that limit human beings' potentials, Winterson's fiction is a gesture towards demolishing the conventional notions of time and space as the first filters of socio-cultural knowledge, and setting new standards to replace that confining knowledge. In brief, Winterson's work questions the validity of norms and everyday practices based on these norms.[46]

Based on that general assessment of Winterson's oeuvre, one could claim that *The Gap of Time* is a continuation of the project outlined above. The devices of

[44] Mullan, p. 7.
[45] Mullan, p. 6
[46] Sönmez, Margaret J-M, and Mine Özyurt Kılıç. *Winterson Narrating Time and Space*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009, p. Xii.

historic metafiction and intertextuality have always been prominent features of the author's writing. However, the critique of patriarchy is performed differently in the most recent text. This, for some part, is surely owed to the Shakespearean original and its character of a tragic-comedy. Because the cover version sticks to the concept of a jealous villain, the women's lives are deeply affected and far from being liberated from an oppressing patriarchy. Since the story takes place nowadays, and beside the improbabilities its semantic construction may contain, the depictions of the villain's deeds are probably more stirring to the reader than those of Shakespeare's tyrant king. Accountable for this surely is the contemporariness of Winterson's text. Here again, in that the cover story is different from the original it is only able to be more true to it, for it takes social and cultural differences into account and thereby transposes the original into nowadays, putting the story into a position to be able to affect contemporary readers. In that respect the text is a renewed exploration of gender relations that in comparison to earlier texts of Winterson and their heroines bears conspicuous traces of disillusionment. A grotesque female heroine is missing in the story. Nonetheless, the theme of reconciliation that is rooted in the original asks for a reconciliation to take place in the cover version as well, however differently natured that might be.

3. Adoption

3.1 Adoption in the Scripture

Doubtlessly, the theme of adoption is manifold in character. It is worthwhile taking into account how it is dealt with in the Bible. Firstly, the adoptees in the Old Testament are growing to become important figures, even leaders, for the Hebrew people. That is foremost, Moses, whose mother Jochebed evades his death by putting him into a basket and sending him down the river Nile, where he is adopted by the Pharao's daughter.[47]

[47] Cf. *The Holy Bible*, Philadelphia: National Publishing Company, 1978, Exodus 2, p. 63

In the New Testament, however, a spiritual dimension is added to the theme of adoption insofar as people who assume Jesus Christ as their saviour are adopted by God:

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."[48]

Presumably it is no coincidence that Shep is depicted as a religious man (at least in the first half of the book), neither is Shakespeare's usage of a shepherd adopting Perdita. As the Scripture indicates, Jesus describes himself as a good shepherd:

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep."[49]

Likewise, the adoption motive is inherent in Joseph who is told to raise the son begotten by the Holy Spirit and to be his foster-father. "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto the Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."[50]

These excerpts demonstrate that those who were adopted are privileged by God and destined for greatness as far as the Bible is concerned which still is one of the books Western culture resides upon.

[48] Ibid., Ephesians 1, 4-6, p. 1215.
[49] Ibid, John 10, 11-12, p. 1112.
[50] Ibid, Matthew 1, 20, p. 991.

3.2 Adoption and Race

As in The Winter's Tale, the cover version sets Perdita's adoptive family in modest circumstances before her arrival. What is added as a completely new element is the aspect of race. Winterson thereby incorporates Shakespeare's criticism of racism in works such as *The Tempest* or *Othello* with a critique of contemporary racism in the guise of Perdita's adoptive family. Furthermore, the categories race and gender are prominent topics in nowadays Humanities Studies. Winterson's latest text in this respect resonates with academic critics especially with those who challenge these categories with deconstructive readings. They will find in *The Gap of Time*, compared to earlier texts of Winterson, a more recalcitrant object of scrutiny at first glance. As Mihan writes:

"Scholars of both fields have pointed to the ontological gulf between contemporary academic discourse on the constructedness of race and gender and the deep-rooted folk beliefs in essential, biologically grounded racial and gender differences." [51]

In this respect, earlier Winterson texts have been a welcoming source for students of, for instance, comparative literature and gender studies. The questions her latest piece of work, which is set in the present, then poses demand a reassessment of the cultural progress concerning the project of feminism, racial equity if not social justice in general. While it seems that progress has come to a halt and even setback in these areas, it seems appropriate for the producers of realistic literature, a genre to which The *Gap of Time* belongs, and critics to adapt [sic!] to these changing circumstances. Although it at the same time remains true that race and gender are social constructs[52], that definition is nevertheless not utterly satisfactory.

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[51] Mihan, Anne. *Undoing Difference?* Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2012, p. 1.

[52] Cf. Adams, Maurianne et. al. (eds.). Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice – A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge, 1997, p. xx: „Race - A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social,

To be fair, scholars do have acknowledged that "individuals are so deeply invested in gender and, at least in the US, race categories"[53] that it "remains of crucial importance to be and to be"[54] associated with a certain race and gender. However, the point that Perdita's foster family is 'black' is made clear in the first chapter of the book, while later in the book, when Perdita reappears as grown, no character relates to their racial difference, thereby rendering it "normal" without the necessity to mark it language-wise.[55] That, of course, puts emphasis on the value the foster family is has within the text. Again, the adoption theme offers a model for re-thinking differences that were taken into service to create social chasms, in our case especially in American society. The simple answer, of course, is love, revealed in Shep's story. Novels then, as Mihan puts it "can work to bridge this gap between folk conceptions and academic discourses of race and gender, as they are capable of illustrating complex theoretical insights, developing them further, and contributing valuable ideas to the race and gender debates."

It is thus important to note, that Barthes discerned the mutual dependency of literature and semiology (which is read here as synonymous to the Humanities): "Literature and semiology (...) combine to correct each other. (...) Writing (since writing operates with ready-made signs), forces semiology to work on differences, and keeps it from dogmatizing, from 'taking' – from taking itself for the universal discourse which it is not."[56]

In this vein, a remarkable twist in the Perdita - Shep adoption story is that the common adoption scheme of white, rich people adopting a poor baby from a poor country is turned upside down. Also the Shepherd in *The Winter's Tale* is

economic and political needs of a society at a given period of time. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups."

[53] Mihan, p. 2.

[54] Ibid.

[55] For instance when Clo meets Autolycus for the first time, he won't mention his sister's different skin color, but that she sometimes unnerves him as siblings often do: Cf. TGOT, p. 136: "'(…) Dad always says my little sister was sent by God, even if she's a pain in the ass.''

[56] Barthes, Roland. "Lecture in Inauguration of the Chair of Literary Semiology, Collège de France, January 7, 1977", translated by Richard Howard, in: The MIT Press, Vol. 8 (Spring 1979), p. 3-16, p. 12.

poor in comparison to Leontes, a fact resonating in the more modest circumstances existing in the kingdom of Bohemia:

"Archidamus:
If you shall chance, Camillo, to visit
Bohemia on the like occasion whereon my services
Are now on foot, you shall see, as I have said, great
Difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia."[57]

As for Shakespeare, the propagated family model, at least in part, is an anticipation of how family notions changed beginning with the Enlightenment, a time when "theoretical and figural shifts" took place, where "moral, emotional or contractual bonds[58] were privileged over blood family.

3.3 The Abandoned Baby

But we shall go back to the beginning of the book:

A man called Shep of Afro-American origin witnesses the scene of a crime after he leaves a bar where he played the piano. He thinks of his wife who died a year ago. During that time a BabyHatch had been installed at the hospital. Shortly after his son Clo stops by to pick him up, they both witness the scene of a crime in which two men beat down another man. One of the aggressors shot at Clo's front tyre. Since they hear the police coming, Shep decides to leave the scene to get the tyre replaced on the parking lot of the hospital. It is then that Shep notices that a baby has been put into the BabyHatch, so he uses the tyre lever to open the hatch and "lift out the baby."

Subsequently, Shep reminisces the moment when he let his wife die by stifling his wife to end her pain. He feels sorry and guilty for he concedes: "I didn't do it to end my wife's pain; I did it to end my own."[59]

[57] TWT, p. 145.
[58] Still, Judith. *Enlightenment Hospitality – Cannibals, Harems and Adoption*. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2011, p. 214.
[59] TGOT, p. 12.

The famous verses of Leontes' whimsical denouncement reverberate in Shep's wife's renouncement of the severity of her terminal illness and Shep's thoughts about this pretension: "'It's nothing,' she said, when she knew she was dying. Nothing? Then the sky is nothing and the earth is nothing and the earth is nothing and your body is nothing and our lovemaking is nothing…"[60]

What happens here, then, is a shifting of the meaning of the word nothing from declaring something unsubstantial to be real towards claiming that something grave and has no grounds whatsoever. Each speaker bestows the words with a different meaning.

When Perdita is abandoned in the forest by Antigonus and shortly afterwards found by Shepherd, stormy weather governs the scene. In the cover story Toni Gonzales, Shep and his son encounter an equal meteorological situation.[61] The thunderous scenery that is thereby created, adds to the drama in both texts. What's more, "thunder in Shakespeare has supernatural meanings"[62] and may account for "Apollo's displeasure"[63] with what is going on. Knight discerns in it a "recurrent poetic symbol of tragedy in Shakespeare"[64].

But while Antigonus is witnessing the scene of a hunt and, to his bad luck, gets in between the object of the hunt and the hunters, Toni Gonzales becomes the object of the hunt. His desire for money, is what actually kills him in the end, his own and that of his pursuers. While the bear hunt might take place for amusement, Toni Gonzales' pursuers are clearly only after his money. In Shakespeare's text, it is the loyalty towards the king or rather Antigonus' enslavement (because Leontes turns it into a compulsory assignment) which seals his fate. Moreover, Antigonus and his wife Paulina are threatened with death, if he does not comply.

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[60] TGOT, p. 14.
[61] Cf. TGOT, p. 122: "As he came out of the hospital the sky spilt and the rain started. The baby was crying. He took off his suit jacket and wrapped her up. This was crazy. The water was so thick it was splashing up to his knees."
[62] TWT, commentary, p. 238.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Knight, p. 23.

"Leontes
Mark, and perform it, seest thou? For the fail
Of any point in't shall not only be
Death to thyself but to thy lewd-tongued wife,
Whom for this time we pardon. (...)"[65]

Leo in the cover story, of course, could not inflict a penalty upon his gardener, except firing him. Antigonus' and Toni Gonzales' different motives for getting the job done then demonstrate the shift in of those elements that govern people.

One could therefore claim that nowadays is direr. But that's an impression that could be misleading for the graveness of the tragedy for today readers is soothed by the temporal distance of the older text and independence from the benevolence of an absolutist royal ruler in today's time. At the same time, the transference of the tyrant into modern times, albeit the narrative constructions that are necessary, demonstrates the relevance of the old text, for tyrants such as Leontes are still inhabiting the earth even though they nowadays come in a different disguise. So maybe the reader of the contemporary text will be affected differently, yet at the same time in a possibly most similar way as were Shakespeare's contemporaries.

3.4 The Stranded Immigrant

The second chapter "Spider in the Cup" begins with Leo and his nine year old son Milo having a conversation in Leo's office.

Similarly to Mamillius, Milo is preoccupied with story-telling for he has to write a text for school. Here real events intertextually enter the story by evoking the story of an Iranian refugee who lived at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris for 18 years. This intermingling of fictional story and real life event picks up main

[65] TWT, p. 217

themes of *The Winter's Tale*. Firstly, the said immigrant is, in opposition to both Perditas, "unwanted" where he is stranded, for he has no proper papers and what's more is poor, meaning nobody did "adopt" him. The foster parents of the Perditas, however, decided to adopt her before they knew what riches belonged to her. However, what connects all three, and what the man's story stresses and his being trapped not only in a certain place, is their being held back over a long period of time, being trapped in a "gap of time", before being able to reach their destiny, not only in terms of spatial meaning, but in being able to conceive who they are for which they have to go back and move forward at the same time. When juxtaposed to the following passage about how Leo lost his job, the story of the immigrant, especially his destitution, illustrates here, that people who earn a lot of money will not really be sued for their iniquities for they are the modern royalty, that is, the money nobility. Winterson in this manner creates the terms for a transition of an absolutist tyrant into contemporary times. His hedge fund, named Sicilia, which he starts after getting laid off and overcoming his drinking problem, is his kingdom made of money. The trial furthermore highlights his choleric and imprudent character.

The airport man's story alludes, albeit in an extreme way, to the situation of refugees not only in recent times, but throughout all times (for refugees often do not belong to those that are most "wanted"). Their sense of belonging is shattered and undoubtedly requires an adaption to new cultural mores as well as the adoption of a new lifestyle to some extent on their side. Since they are, at first, inferior to non-refugees and in need of help, they have to outgrow their state of inferiority, similar to a baby that cannot care for itself. It is thus society's responsibility to enable them to care for themselves (getting a job, etc.) so they can divest themselves of labels such as "poor", "having lost everything", etc.

4. Images of Deceit

After Milo repeatedly starts to dedicate himself to writing his story, Leo orders his staff member Cameron to install a webcam in his wife's bedroom. He suspects his pregnant wife MiMi to have an affair with his best friend Xeno and tries to gain evidence from that measure. What's more, he believes the unborn child to be fathered by Xeno. Cameron, like his counterpart Camillo does with Leontes, tries to persuade Leo of the untenability of his accusations.

The cover story is at times exerted when it tries to establish a psychological reading that aims at explaining the protagonists behaviour, such as Leo's (His mother didn't love him, she left his father "for another woman"[66]). This is an aspect of the text which is missing in the original owed to the different genre and the missing narrator who is omnipresent in the cover story, focalizing and transfocalizing at will on different characters to adopt different points of view[67]:

"Such transfocalizations would inevitably entail profound alterations of the text and of narrative information; hitherto unknown chapters would crop up (...)"[68]

Thus, the novel can explore deeper into the history of its figures. This is surely tied to a general biographical interest in the figures that is present nowadays that is an important aspect of questioning people, their deeds, motivations and desires.

Winterson indeed bestows her characters with psyche. She offers a different reading from those Shakespeare critics that perceived in Leontes' jealousy an utterly irrational and inexplicable trait of character. For instance Knight stated that Leontes "evil is self-born and unmotivated."[69] He furthermore claims that "the poet is concerned not with trivialities, but with evil itself, whose cause remains as dark as theology: given a 'sufficient' motive, the thing to be studied vanishes."[70] That motivations are mere trivialities is, of course, a brusque

[66] TGOT, p. 27.
[67] Cf. Genette, p. 287
[68] Ibid.
[69] Knight, p. 84.
[70] Ibid.

assertion and no longer tenable in contemporary reception of literature. Knight even contradicts himself on previous pages stating that "great poetry seldom leaps direct at universal ideas for their own sake; its ideas are housed in flesh and blood (...)."[71]

Also Tillyard claims that "we should refrain from demanding any motive"[72] for Leontes' jealousy "which is terrifying in its intensity. It reminds us not of other Shakespearean tragic errors, but rather of the god-sent lunacies of Greek drama (...). It is as scantily motivated as these (...). Indeed, it is as much a surprise to the characters in the play as it is to the reader."[73]

That literary criticism has seen Leontes' rage as a mere device to produce a, at first, irreconcilable situation, seems to be an entrance into the text that has foreclosed other doors of interpretation of Leontes' character. Another or broader one has been opened by *The Gap of Time*.

Of course, the task Leo enjoins on "Web-Cameron"[74] has no counterpart in the original, where Leontes' suspicions first of all arise through witnessing Hermione's and Polixenes' intercourse like some kind of spectator would in a theatre, whereas in the cover version Leo already has a fixed opinion of what is going to happen in his bedroom.

The shift of emphasis that takes place here is that the Leontes figure of Winterson does not draw his conclusions from looking at the world or listening to it. He draws his conclusion from introspection. It probably wouldn't have changed things if he had been able to hear the words spoken in the bedroom. He has decided the verdict before watching the video broadcast and before MiMi talks to Xeno about prolonging his stay.

Both tyrants, however, share an imperturbable conviction in their interpretation of the things they hear respectively see. The cover story thereby critically responds to the contemporary digital age in which even a seemingly

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[71] Ibid., p. 79.
[72] Tillyard. p. 64.
[73] Ibid, Tillyard, E.M.W. *Shakespeare's Last Plays*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1951
[74] TGOT, p. 24.

superior method of transmission of reality (such as a video broadcast) will lead to wrong conclusions for it also is in need of interpretation. The superiority of the newsworthy medium is therefore exposed as illusionary. Also, there seems to have been no advancement in sophisticating the reliability of human estimation.

While Leontes can, of course, hear the words both are speaking to each other, he is not only upset by the words they speak but by the image they present to him, from which he is excluded.[75] An image of which Barthes writes: "The image is peremptory, it always has the last word; no knowledge can contradict it, 'arrange' it, refine it." [76] Shakespeare virtually anticipates Barthes' interpretation of the untrue love object and his aficionado as image which is impervious to the beholder. To add to that, Winterson's description of the scene entirely stays in the pictorial realm to further emphasize the incisiveness the image has on the subject that loves as well as the finite meaning he bestows the image with because he his view is already biased. The desired object is seen in its being "outside" of the "little cosmos inhabited only by 'the two of us.'"[77] This poses a shock to the beholder, for the "image is presented, pure and distinct as a letter: it is the letter what pains me. Precise, complete, definitive, it leaves no room for me."[78] This letter, or sign, is not decipherable in any way and it questions the lover's ability to know the other:

"I am caught in this contradiction: on the one hand; I believe I know the other better than anyone and triumphantly assert my knowledge to the other (...); and on the other hand, I am often struck by the obvious fact that the other is impenetrable, intractable, not to be found (...)."[79]

[75] Cf. TWT, p. 173, Leontes cannot stand the image he has in mind: "Is whispering nothing? Is leaning cheek to cheek? Is meeting noses? Kissing wit inside lip? Stopping the career of laughter with a sigh? (…)"
[76] Barthes, Roland. *A Lover's Discourse*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983, p. 132.
[77] Barthes (1983), p. 139.
[78] Barthes (1983), p. 132.
[79] Barthes (1983), p. 134.

To add to that, since Leo was amorously involved with Xeno in their youth, and the text indicates that he still is[80], he would even be humiliated twice. Here, passion is in its literal sense something befalls the lover which has to be endured.

As for Leontes, who becomes suspicious when Hermione talks to Polixenes, the following passage in Roland Barthes' *A Lover's Discourse* could in part explain his reaction: "Any general conversation which I am obliged to listen to (if not to take part in) appals me, paralyzes me. As for this language of the others from which I am excluded, it seems to me that the others overload it absurdly: they assert, object, argue, show off."[81]

The scene of seeming courtship between Hermione and Polixenes is carried out in a language of courtship of which, as Barthes rightly notices, the listener is excluded from. He is isolated language-wise and in the cover version, in addition, spatial-wise from the two. Furthermore, his own interventions did not suffice to make Polixenes stay, whereas in the cover version MiMi even knows about Xeno's plan to leave before Leo does. The intensity of his malevolent interpretation is nonetheless due to his being ridden by jealousy. The cover version stresses the undecidability of the reasons for his jealousy. With Barthes, the absolute masculinity which Leo engenders, could be questioned for, as he writes, "a man is not feminized because he is inverted but because he is in love."[82]

4.1 Masculinity and Misogony

Leo's exaggerated manliness ultimately rests on stereotypical thinking. His perception of women is essentially different than his perception of men based on suppositions of rather dichotomous characteristics inherent in both

[80] Cf. TGOT, p. 26: "Leo turned back into the room. 'It's not just women who have intuition, Cameron. I've known Xeno all my life.' *Xeno all my life*."
[81] Barthes, Roland. A Lover's Discourse, p. 88
[82] Barthes , p. 14 Lovers discourse

genders. There is a certain nihilistic trait to his character that not only shows up when he is certain that MiMi betrays him:

"A man needs understanding because he is existentially alone. He stares into the darkness. That was the difference between men and women, Leo thought. Men need groups and gangs and sport and clubs and institutions and women because men know that there is nothingness and self-doubt. Women were always trying to make a connection, build a relationship. As though one human being could know another."[83]

Therefore, Harold Bloom's observation that "the alliance of misogyny and nihilism is one of the greater Shakespearean insights into male nature"[84] is accommodated in the cover version through the misogynist figure of Leo.

With Xeno, however, these gender attributions can no longer serve to support his dichotomous world view because in Leo's view Xeno bears "feminine" traits. Yet, because of that, Leo does not need to perceive himself as bisexual or even gay although he feels attracted to him. At the same time his unequivocal and indisputable way of looking at things is getting blurred.

5. The Tyrant Figure

The inalienable requirement for Leontes' misinterpretation of Hermiones' and Polixenes' demeanour is the openness of interpretation at first: "Where there is nothing, everything is possible."[85] His conclusion, however, results in a closure to any further interpretation. Initially, his judgement is utterly dependent on the openness of interpretation. Thus, language when construed as Barthesian doxa, imposes power upon the reality language-wise. Doxa thereby is nothing original but a derivative and post-enforced order upon the chaos of the real and as Winterson's text poignantly demonstrates a reading of signs that is influenced by former experiences and opinions of the one that

[83] TGOT, p. 33
[84] Bloom, p. 644
[85] Bloom, p. 646.

reads and interprets signs. Hence, Leontes is a representative of doxa, for he imposes meaning upon his wife language-wise. Leo also holds this position and beyond corporealizes it through domestic violence that is rape. Cultural critic Amanda Vail points out that she does not know "why the rape scene was included. Leo's jealous brutal paranoia was already apparent, and therefore it seems gratuitous to let him rape MiMi. I can't help but feel that rape is so common in pop culture as to seem normalized, and I believe that if an author includes rape they better have a damn good reason." [86] To counter the impression that a good reason is missing for including a rape scene it might be useful to remember that marital rape had not been conceived of as a criminal offense throughout most of history. In England, for instance, it was not until 1991 that the law changed, which up to that date was determined by the assertion of "Lord Matthew Hale, a 17th-century jurist, that 'by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract, the wife hath given up herself in this kind to her husband, which she cannot retract.'" [87] This simply shows that the exemption from punishment is a very recent social accomplishment. What's more, the change in law does not mean that every marital rape gets punished neither does it mean that it does not exist anymore. That could be a 'good reason' to depict a marital rape in a realist novel. It surely does not represent a pleasant reading, but it can't be locked away by the so-called fourth wave feminists that consider female liberation to be achieved to such an extent that sexual submission can be chosen freely chosen as a means of living it out. This might be true for some, but surely not for all women, especially if one thinks outside the box of the so-called Western world. Furthermore, sexual practices are constitutive of producing gender. Consequently, while "normative sexuality fortifies normative gender," "non-normative sexual practices call into question the stability of gender as a category of analysis"[88]. Thus, rape is the instalment of fixed gender roles.

[86] WS 6
[87] WS 7
[88] Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble* (1990). Routledge: New York, 2006, p. xi

The mutilation of MiMi aligns with the death sentence Hermione is inflicted with. Beside the repudiation of the baby, its subsequent abandonment as well as the son's death, the targeted punishment constitutes the reason for Hermione's/MiMi's withdrawal because in turn it aims particularly at the respective husband. Surely, Leontes could marry again to preserve the royal lineage for as we read in Foucault in the early modern period a king "could exercise a direct power of life and death"[89] even though it "was not an absolute privilege: it was conditioned by the defense of the sovereign, and his own survival."[90] The execution of the right over life and death which is thus accepted as a means to secure the continuity of his kingdom turns out to be to the detriment of it. In that sense, Leontes' and Paulina's elaborate scene of repentance seals any option of remarriage:

Paulina "I am sorry for't.
All faults I make, when I shall come to know them,
I do repent. Alas, I have showed too much
The rashness of a woman. He is touched
To th' noble heart. What's gone and what's past help
Should be past grief. Do not receive
Affliction
At my petition; I beseech you, rather
Let me be punished, that have minded you
Of what you should forget. Now, good my liege,
Sir, royal sir, forgive a foolish woman.
The love I bore your queen – lo, fool again!
I'll speak of her no more, nor of your children.
I'll not remember you of my own lord,
Who is lost too. Take your patience to you,
And I'll say nothing."

Leontes "Thou didst speak but well
When most the truth, which I receive much better
Than to be pitied of thee. Prithee bring me
To the dead bodies of my queen and son.
One grave shall be for both. Upon them shall

[89] Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality – An Introduction.* New York: Vintage, 1990, p. 135.
[90] Ibid.

The causes of their death apper, unto
Our shame perpetual. Once a day I'll visit
The chapel where they lie, and tears shed there
Shall be my recreation. So long as nature
Will bear up with this exercise, so long
I daily vow to use it. Come, and lead me
To these sorrows."[91]

Foucault's assessment ties in with Shakespeare's implied critique of an absolutist monarchy, Shakespeare's time being itself a time of change, at the brink of the modern age, where, even if Leontes' verdict, had it been justifiable, could hardly be accepted by his fealty. The way how political power is perceived is about to change. It now longer suffices to assert self-interest: "How could power exercise its highest prerogatives by putting people to death, when its main role was to ensure, sustain, and multiply life, to put this life in order? For such a power, execution was at the same time a limit, a scandal, and a contradiction."[92]

Similarly, we live in a time at the verge of female liberation where so much has been achieved, yet so much is under the threat of suffering a setback. Another similarity of both texts is their being set during times of transition. Every progressive development entails reactionary rejoinders. In relation to the texts discussed, these transitional periods could also be characterized as "gaps of time" as they cannot be by-passed without alteration yet are the decisive element for facilitating social and cultural change.

5.1 MiMi's 'Death'

Considering Leontes' accusations had been grounded in the factual world, it would have been righteous to give Perdita away by the moral standards of his time. Hermione's feigned death is, notwithstanding that it is not a factual death in which the biological body ceases to exist, a death in terms of sociability. What

[91] TWT, p. 234.
[92] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, p. 138.

Blanchot writes of death can account for Hermione's "death": "(…) it is the abyss of the present, time without a present, with which I have no relationships."[93] One could especially say of the 16-year gap of time, that is 'time without a present' for Hermione and MiMi. Initially destined to lead a public life as royalty, respectively celebrity, they do not live in terms of being included by any social bounds. The same does apply to Leontes and Leo although in a different manner. They remain in the public sphere but refrain from any close relationships.

The resurrection of the mother in Winterson's version is not as spectacular as in Shakespeare's text. Where in the latter it is staged as the miraculous revivification of a statue , the former depicts, for the outside beholder, a rather unspectacular first step out of inner emigration. Yet Hermione's social petrifaction can serve as a metaphor for being unable to cope with his violence and the loss of her husband's trust in her faithfulness. While for the other protagonists speech remains vital for the ways the act, the speechlessness of the mothers becomes their means of communicating in a situation that is incommensurate with imparting meaning through words.

6. The Story of a Friendship

In the original, being jealous of Polixenes is of course stressed while in the cover version it's more likely to being jealous of Hermione. Again, the productive reading of the original creates a shifting in meaning in the adaptation.

Polixenes' evocations of their shared boyhood might remind Leontes of their necessity to part for the sake of fulfilling their obligations, which might arouse incriminating feelings in Leontes against Hermione which Leontes can only channel in the direction he does.

[93] Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition, Translated by Paul Patton (1968/1994).* London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015, p. 144

The commentary, interestingly, mentions the "growing sexual awareness"[94] that is expressed in Polixenes' words:"We were, fair queen, two lads that thought there was no more behind but such a day tomorrow as today, and to be boy eternal. (...) Had we pursued that life, and our weak spirits ne'er been higher reared with stronger blood, we should have answered heaven boldly, 'not guilty', the imposition cleared hereditary ours."[95] Here, also the advent of adult life is clearly connected with a metaphysical weight, i.e. in their case the burden of the office and a time to come where pledging "not guilty" will not clear the "imposition (...) hereditary ours"[96].

In this case, the cover story underlines that carelessness by intertextually alluding to elements of pop culture, for instance when Leo and Xeno are said to have listened to David Bowie's 'Space Oddity'. The evocation of the song about a spaceman surely is not only there to create a contemporary setting but indicates the weightlessness related to childhood or young adulthood. Moreover, weightlessness or the absence of gravity is a motive in Winterson's text *Weight*. Also it is tied to a metaphysical weightlessness that signifies an absence of the oppression by social norms.

6.1 Desire

A portrayal of Polixenes and Leontes shared childhood are much more elaborated in the novel than in the original. The avowals of affection between the kings are basically uttered by people other than Polixenes and Leontes themselves, such as Archidamus and Camillo: "Sicilia cannot show himself over-kind to Bohemia. They were trained together in their childhoods, and their rooted betwixt them then such an affection which cannot choose but branch now."[97]

[94] WT, p. 155
[95] WT, p. 154/155
[96] Ibid.
[97] TWT, p. 146

In the cover version, the text deals contrarily with this matter of homo-social let alone homo-erotic desire insofar as the protagonists explicitly remark upon their common history which is prolonged into adolescence. The thoughts of regret that are mixed with the memories the narrator shares of Leo's past with Xeno are surely in part due to a different kind of lifestyle Xeno adopted during adulthood. His bohemian lifestyle alludes to his counterparts' state as the king of Bohemia.

With the knowledge of some of their shared history one could claim that Leo is driven by the desire to take revenge on a lover that dismissed him a long time ago and is about to dismiss him again to look after his son Zel. Even in the original, it cannot fully be excluded that it was a ruse of Leontes, with a planned outcome (his hysteria) whatsoever Leontes' urging of Hermione to beg Polixenes to stay, could have been a ruse for taking revenge for something that happened a long time ago. At the same time, the original does not offer definite proof for the untenability of Leontes' accusation. Admittedly, Apollo's oracle confirms Hermione's righteousness, but is a detail not to remain unnoticed that Polixenes' arrival dates back nine months, about the length of a pregnancy: "Nine changes of the watery star hath been the shepherd's note since we have left our throne without a burden."[98]

6.2 Male and female Sociability

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick discerns distinctive features in female and male sociability. While she perceives a continuum in the female to female relationships, she testifies a deep breech in the male to male relationships:

"It is clear, then, that there is an asymmetry in our present society between, on the one hand, the relatively continuous relation of female homosocial and

[98] TWT, p. 149.

homosexual bonds, and, on the other hand, the radically discontinuous relation of male homosocial and homosexual bonds."[99]

The corollary to this is a dichotomous dealing with male bonds in which homosocial male bonds are given the semblance of homophobia to counteract any suspicion of homosexuality whereas "the adjective 'homosocial' as applied to women's bonds (...) need not be pointedly dichotomized as against 'homosexual'; it can intelligibly denominate the entire continuum."[100]

However, Leo does not openly express homophobia. First of all, he is Xeno's friend before he is carried away by his suspicions. Secondly, he would become assailable it he did for it is no secret that he and Xeno had been lovers.[101]

As follows, that when Leo denies harshly that the does not have a lady man, without anybody claiming that he does, it is exactly there that he gives himself away to inadvertently state that he has one indeed:

"'You are wanting to divorce your lady wife?' 'Why do you talk like that? Is it because you are Scottish? She's my wife, not my lady wife. I don't have a man wife.' And then Leo thought of Xeno. And he thought it in a bubble of insight that he burst."[102]

However, he does attribute 'female' traits to Xeno as if he could not acknowledge to himself that their past sexual intercourse would be characterized as homosexual. In relation to that, Sedgwick's study would suggest that Leo has internalised the obligatory dichotomy in normative sociability between homosocial and homosexual desire, although his relation to Xeno proves indeed, that there is a continuum as is in inter-female relationships.

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[99] Sedgwick, p. 4.
[100] Sedgwick, p. 2.
[101] Cf. TGOT, p. 105: "'Would you rather they disliked each other? Were indifferent to each other? Is it because you have slept with both of them?' 'Who told you that?' 'Xeno's quite open about it.' 'Well, I'm not. We were schoolboys.' 'Are you jealous of him or of her?'" 105
[102] TGOT, p. 25.

In the cover version the breach from youth to adulthood accomplished through Xeno's bike accident, which undoubtedly constitutes a caesura in the relationship of the boys and their personal progress, leading them onto different paths afterwards:

"Leo did badly in everything. It didn't matter. His father got him an entry-level job with Barclays Wealth Management. Xeno turned eighteen and bought a camper van with some of the insurance money (...)"[103]

As Leo is the perpetrator of Xeno's accident, Wilde's dictum of every man killing the thing he loves[104] is already evoked.[105] This is only one example of (Xeno's) falling, where physical downfall is a metaphor for metaphysical demise, a theme that is excessively negotiated in the book.

Much later the line of verse is explicitly cited by Xeno who relates his ubiquitous distrust of love to it, which is juxtaposed to the young lovers' faith in it:

"'I used to deal in other currencies,' said Xeno, 'love, friendship, trust, loyalty. And I felt good about myself. And then I discovered that it's all sentiment. Means nothing. We don't love others and others don't love us.'
'That's not true,' said Perdita.
'You're young,' said Xeno, 'you still believe in love.'
'That's because she is loved,' said Shep.
'And when she isn't? Read Oscar Wilde, my dear. Each man kills the thing he loves.'"[106]

As can be seen from the text's depiction of the relationship between Leo and Xeno, Winterson's text straddles the chasm between homo-social and homo-sexual bonds that Sedgwick discerns, conceptualizing a male to male relationship through literature that probably approaches the one extant in Shakespeare's time again nearer. The triangular love structure obviously offers points of contact in other works of art, where it is wrought into (i.e. such as

[103] TGOT, p. 31.
[104] Wilde, Oscar. *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*. Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1997, p. 748: "The Ballad of Reading Gaol": Yet each man kills the thing he loves,/
By each let this be heard,/ Some do it with a bitter look,/ Some with a flattering word,/ The coward does it with a kiss,/ The brave man with a sword!
[105] Cf. TGOT, p. 30: "He had almost killed his best friend."
[106] TGOT, p. 182.

Tristan and Isolde) as well as in theoretical texts. In that structure, impediments for love are tied to exchange, as is also explicitly demonstrated in Xeno's and MiMi's scene in Paris. In this vein, in the patriarchal heterosexuality or, instead let us use the term homosocial friendship, "it is the use of women as exchangeable, perhaps symbolic, property for the primary purpose of cementing the bonds of men with men."[107] To put it another way, a "man uses a woman as 'a conduit of a relationship' in which the true *partner* is a man."[108]

6.3 Homosexuality in Renaissance

A huge challenge to comparing two texts temporally separated by a chasm of four hundred years is of course posed by the different discursive systems by which the various themes covered are present. This means that the possibility remains existent for Leontes and Polixenes to have had a relationship that also stretched into the realm of the corporal. As Alan Bray stated in his book *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* the term homosexuality had not yet been invented, which means gay men could not be pathologized as they later were with the introduction of that term in the 1890s. The reigning discourse during Renaissance was determined by the term sodomy which designated a wide ranch of devious sexual practice that was socially intolerable.[109]

Although sexual intercourse between men was deemed sinful and strictly forbidden, it did not permeate the notion of identity as it later did from the end of the nineteenth century on until recent days as a sort of clinical discourse.

Taken this explanation of the connectedness between language and the manifold elements that understanding relies upon, homosexual desire and practice (of course) indeed existed in Renaissance while at the same 'homosexuality' did not exist language-wise. Bray even uses the word

[107] Sedgwick, p. 26.
[108] Sedgwick, p. 26.
[109] Cf. Bray, p. 13:"The term 'homosexual' did not exist in 1611 but (and surely this is the critical question) did its equivalent? Only two of the possible candidates, bugger and sodomite, were in general use and neither was synonymous with homosexuality alone."

"creatures"[110] to describe the different notions during the historical periods up until now of homosexuality and other deviant behaviours (where, of course, homosexuality is one of those creatures, too) such as "ganymede, pathic, cinaedus, catamite, bugger, ingle [and] sodomite"[111].

From a later perspective it was appraised as a practice of a "glittering"[112] community, a notion that became popular in the wake of the publication of Havelock Elli's book *Sexual Inversion* in 1897: "The dark constraints of the monkish Middle Ages were past: sexual and artistic freedom went hand in hand."[113]

An important point, however, Bray makes is that sexual intercourse between men was a life-threatening act standing under the penalty of death and that "the influential picture of the Renaissance painted by Ellis and the other early apologists for homosexuality is almost entirely a myth."[114]

The interpretation of Leontes' and Polixenes' relationship as homo-amorous might not be absolutely reprehensible at all. A small clue that is to be found in the text is the strong emphasis on the peccability of the heterosexually informed intercourse between both friends and their wives.[115] Provided, the author or any reader might proceed from the supposition that same-sex intercourse was not sinful[116], both men would indeed have sinned with their wives for the first time.

In short, as long as people did not denote certain behaviour as that of sodomites, the concept of the sodomite and the friend "tended to overlap."[117] As often is the case with humans, sometimes they are treacherous or malevolent, and this was also felt by friends (whether their relationship was

[110] Bray, p. 13
[111] Bray, p. 13
[112] Bray, p. 7
[113] Bray, p. 7
[114] Bray, p. 7
[115] Cf. The Winter's Tale, p. 156:"Grace to boot!/Of this make no conclusion, lest you say/your queen and I are devils. Yet go on. Th' offences we have made we'll answer,/If you first sinned with us, and that with us/ You did continue fault, and that you slipped not/With any but with us."
[116] For instance, as was the case in ancient Greece.
[117] Sinfield, Alan. *Shakespeare*, *Authority*, *Sexuality*. London: Routledge, 2006, p. 63.

sexual or not) that "where accusations of sodomy were aroused, very likely it was because of some hostility towards one or both parties, rather than because their behaviour was altogether different from that of others who were not so accused."[118]

6.4 Xeno, the Other

For Leo, Xeno is a figure of deviance, while the text rather suggests that Leo is at variance from what he desires:

"'Xeno! Go if you want to but don't make an excuse. That's all I'm saying. You can never put it like it is, can you? You slide sideways every time.'"[119]

At same time Xeno in a sense exerts a gravitational pull on Leo. Here, Shakespeare's naming of the figure as Polixenes could inspire further interpretations concerning their relationship. The English word pole, originating from the Latin term polus (as well from the Greek term πόλος [*pólos*]), holds the meaning of post as well as pole, depicting one end of Earth's axis of rotation. Metaphorically speaking, Polixenes in this reading would exert a constant pull on Leontes without the possibility of withdrawal for the latter. Additionally, magnetic attraction can only exist between contrary poles which, for instance, in the field of geomagnetics, means that Earth's South- and North Pole can never meet. They remain foreign to each other, yet inseparable at the same time. On the other hand, the meaning as post is reminiscent of Nietzsche and his second Untimely Meditations "On the Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life" where people can be impeded in living on by their own history like an animal tied to a post.

How these characters of the story then can be perceived reverses: Leo becomes a figure of deviance, always turning away from his destiny while Xeno truly is a figure of constancy. Worse still, his emotional dependency upon Xeno renders

[118] Ibid.
[119] TGOT, p. 37.

him effeminate as well as the virility he sees in himself and which he wants others to observe in him prone to crisis.

The name of Xeno is not of unambiguous meaning. Originating from the Greek ξένος (xenos) it can designate, among others, a stranger, as well as a guest.[120] No less than this double meaning, however, is elucidative for Leo's relation to Xeno. Xeno is, without a doubt, a guest in Leo's life and he is so literally in Shakespeare's text (as befriended king) as he is in Winterson's (as business partner) and maybe even more so the closest if not the only one metaphysically speaking.

In Heidegger's *Being and Time* there is only reference to the friend. Thus it cannot fail to be noticed that the friend has an important meaning for Being-in-the-world: "Dasein finds itself only because of its friend's call and as a result Dasein becomes responsible for its friend and itself. The friend's call points out faults and shortcomings that Dasein continues to ignore and avoid confronting thereby allowing Dasein to find itself."[121] But, since it is the friend's call one can infer that a certain distance defines that relationship. As follows, Xeno remains alien thereby epitomizing the 'Other' as characterized by twentieth century philosophy. This aligns with another interpretation of the word xenos as someone whose name was unknown, that is to say someone who cannot be known because he cannot be named and vice versa. At the same time this means that power cannot be exercised over him if naming means power. Thus, the incommensurability of Xeno is retained in his name and by having trimmed it the cover version lays bare that essential meaning.

6.5 Parenting

[120] WS 4

[121] Chelstrom, Eric (ed.). *Being Amongst Others: Phenomenological Reflections on the Life-world. Newcastle*: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006, p. 120

Xeno wanting to leave for the sake of seeing his son is another shift that can be perceived in comparison to the original:

"'Why are you leaving so suddenly?'
'I had a call from the school about Zel. He is not speaking in class again.'"[122]

Polixenes on the other hand does not put forward his child Florizel as a reason to leave Sicily:

"My affairs do even drag me homeward; which to hinder were, in your love, a whip to me; my stay, to you both charge and trouble. To save both, farewell, our brother."[123]

Even when Hermione literally imposes Polixenes' son as a due reason to part, he himself will not refer back to him:

"To tell he longs to see his son were strong; But let him say so then, and let him go; But let him swear so and he shall not stay, We'll thwack him hence with distaffs."[124]

It's only later when the decision is already taken that Polixenes will speak of his son to Hermione.

That Xeno does unmistakably relate to his son as a cause for his intended leaving is not only a concession to a modern attitude towards paternity meaning that fathers should be equally involved in raising children.

Firstly, due to his upbringing, Xeno might want to be a better parent for he didn't have very caring parents himself: "Xeno's mother was alcoholic and mentally unstable. The boarding school (...) allowed their fathers to believe that they were bringing up their sons when in fact their sons were barely at home."[125]

Secondly, Xeno's leaving for the sake of his son could originate in the different notions of childhood that are mediated by both texts. In Shakespeare's text

[122] TGOT, p. 35.
[123] TWT, p. 151.
[124] TWT, p. 152.
[125] TGOT, p. 27.

childhood is a marker for life, especially youth and its renewing power which is juxtaposed to the sin-stained life of the mature that will finally end in death. As Knight wrote in *The Crown of Life*: "The 'eternal' consciousness of childhood is distinguished from the sin-born time-consciousness of man."[126]

In *The Gap of Time*, as the quotation demonstrates, childhood is not as positively connoted as in the original. A notion of childhood as "golden-age existence free from that 'hereditary' taint of fallen humanity"[127] would not pay tribute to the contemporary concept of childhood that may not have lost all, but some of the insouciance still related to it nowadays. Childhood in Renaissance time may not have been as heavenly as depicted in the play anyway. After all, Leo and Xeno are no king's children with the amenities that might still implicit today.

Thirdly, his son is the offspring of an arrangement, implying he does not originate from a conventional family but from two people who do not necessarily love each other, but for whom parenthood is a desire whose fulfilment had to be planned and well-considered in order to be attained at all, meaning he cannot transfer responsibility to the mother alone.

"'We needed parents.'
'That's my point. I'm going home.'
'Where's his mother?'
'She's there – look, I know you find it odd that I had a child with a woman I don't live with or love, but we know what we're doing.'"[128]

Similarly, the original text does not provide detailed information about Polixenes' wife. Yet, being a king and father to the successor of his throne, it is quite clear that his family is a matter of conventional marriage. In the cover story the rift between Leo and Xeno is wider because they are not adhering to the same family model. However, what connects both pairs is a kind of timeless fellowship between men lasting up to the present day because even though, as Sinfield writes, "marriage was involved in alliances of property and influence,

[126] Knight, p. 77.
[127] Knight, p. 78.
[128] TGOT, p. 36.

male friendship informed, through complex obligations, networks of extended family, companions, clients, suitors and those influential in high places."[129]

In this vein, Xeno's and Leo's business partnership can be seen as a residue of their former amorous relationship which not only gets shattered by Xeno's plan to leave but also due to the nature of Xeno's video game project, which poses to become a disappointment for Leo's investors:

"'Dystopian bombed-out landscapes. Trolls. Testosterone. Stolen cars. There are no cars in the game.'
'No cars? Who's buying a game with no cars?'"[130]

Without much uncertainty it can be stated that the text here alludes to the video game series *Grand Theft Auto* which was launched in 1997 and achieved its largest successes in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The cover story, as will be explored in the course of this study, uses intertextuality in many guises for reasons of creating a contemporary setting. The frequently invoked assumption that Leo/Leontes privileges 'art over nature' is concisely epitomized in the car park scene, where Leo virtually stages a scene that could easily happen in the GTA video game. But, since his suspicions are ungrounded, his aggressive demeanour in the car park really is only a performance. In terms of the Saussurean theory of signs, Leo demonstrates a double depletion of the signifier. Firstly, his accusations signify a void, i.e. because there is no relation between signifier and signified (the wrathful car chase directed at and the relationship between Xeno and MiMi towards which it is directed and which is nonsexual). Secondly, 'naturalizing' the video game just exposes the car chase as even more artificial:

"There was a scream of rubber like a bad movie. Xeno looked up as Leo came racing towards him, leaning out of the low door of the Jeep. HERE'S WHAT YOUR GAME NEEDS. Xeno jumped sideways. Leo smashed into the Fiat."[131]

[129] Sinfield, p. 62.
[130] TGOT, p. 37.
[131] TGOT, p. 74.

This way, the signifier becomes self-sufficient (his wrath signifies his wrath), thus overwhelming reality, i.e. the signified.

7. Xeno's Video Game - Intermediality and Intertextuality

Xeno's conception of his video game foreshadows Perdita's loss and the quest to salvage her which not only is the subject of the story but which is essentially staged in terms of language through the book:

"'The story is this: the most important thing in the world is lost. The Dark Angels don't want you to find it. The only hope for the city is that the Resistance finds it before the Angels do – and destroy it forever.'
'What is it?'
Xeno shrugged. 'You have to find that out too. There are decoys, feints, herrings of every colour including red. But I think it's a baby.'"[132]

The theme of Xeno's video game thus (itself intertextually inspired by a story containing a dream from Gérard de Nerval) permeates the whole book from sketch to final product. As Vail stresses these two elements together with the Shakespearean template render the whole text a three-layered composition, in which these layers intertwine.[133] Given these features, the text can be defined by yet another term, i.e. bricolage:

"A result of bricolage – of making something new with something old – the massively hypertextual work shows how literary discourse plays with other discourses (...), how it uses them in surprising fashion, how it reads them in unforeseen ways."[134]

However, the readers' receptiveness for a work with a great number of intertextual references is not only dependent upon the readers' knowledge but also upon the individual experience of the readers that either does or doesn't

[132] TGOT, p. 38.
[133] Cf. WS 6
[134] Cf. Prince, Gerald in his foreword to Genette (1997). p. x.

resonate with the text. Thus, Plett's metaphor for the functioning of intertextuality does sound appealing: "(...) like a chameleon intertextuality constantly changes its aspect following the perspective chosen by the recipient."[135] However, it is questionable to what extent the perspective is actually chosen consciously by the recipient. Does not perspective chose the recipient? To use Leontes words:

"I am a feather for each wind that blows."[136]

Given that, in Shakespeare's time, writing was executed with a feather, the passage furthermore not only hints at how Leontes withdraws from his verdict to have the baby burned after Paulina and a lord entreat him to spare it, it is also a metaphor for writing and authorship. Although estranged from the text for others might understand it differently, the author is not going to burn his piece of work but will let it circulate for others to integrate into their life story, to adopt it, or even to write its own story.

But of course there are authors that burned some of their work, or forbid publication to forfeit its dissemination.

7.1 The 'red herring'

'Red herring' which presumably first entered the English language as metaphor and rhetoric device in the seventeenth century to describe the intentional utilization of something to mislead others[137], is here about to be transposed into the medium of a video game. Through using it, a video game as well as any literary work of art becomes more challenging and thereby appealing to the player, respectively, the reader. Regarding texts, 'red herrings' are another means to foreclose the possibility of closure and to escape the interpretation of the literary critic. Furthermore, a consumer of video games in the nineties

[135] Plett Heinrich F. (ed.) *Intertextuality*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991, p. 2.
[136] TGOT, p. 216.
[137] WS 4: "supposedly used by fugitives to put bloodhounds of their scent (1680s)"

might be familiar with another red herring. In this respective video game George Lucas, disguised as a troll, has a cameo-appearance; a red herring needs to be handed over to him ("I want something that distracts attention from what's really important.") for the protagonist to obtain permission to cross a bridge. [138] This example shows that references towards works of the same and other genres are not only common in literary works.

What is more, the red feather on the cover of the 2015 paperback edition of *The Gap of Time* might allude to the fallen angel depicted in Nerval's text "Aurélia, or Dream and Life", where in a dream the I-narrator encounters a

> "winged being of enormous proportions – man or woman, I do not know - [that] was fluttering painfully in the space overhead and seemed to be struggling amid thick clouds. (...) It was colored with shades of bright red, and its wings shimmered with a thousand changing reflections. Clothed in a long gown with classical folds, it resembled Albrecht Dürer's Angel of Melancholy."[139]

Does this reference then indicate that the text was written with a feather fallen from the plumage of a fallen angel of melancholy of which another one is to be found in Carter's *Nights at the Circus*, a bird-woman and foundling that dyes her feathers, probably red[140] [sic]?

Moreover, the colour red reappears, being the colour of Xeno's briefcase, probably containing a collection of documents dealing with his video game project. In sum, the motive of the angel as is used in the text and which is, especially in the case of Xeno's video game, a malevolent 'dark angel', rather connotes destruction and despair. In this vein, MiMi and Xeno are, albeit not dark but fallen angels which, metaphysically speaking, cannot spread their wings anymore because they have fallen, fallen from Leo's grace.

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[138] Cf. Gilbert, Ron. *The Secret of Monkey Island*. Lucasfilm Games, 1990

[139] de Nerval, Gérard. "Aurélia, or Dram and Life" in Kessler, Joan C. (ed.). *Demons of the Night – Tales of the Fantastic, Madness, and the Supernatural from Nineteenth-Century France*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995, p. 175

[140] Cf. Carter, Angela. *Nights at the Circus* (1984). London: Vintage, 2006. p. 24: "'I *dye*, sir! I dye them! Don't think I bore such gaudy colours from puberty!'"

Notwithstanding all the dark angels, it can be assumed that Perdita embodies an angel of hope metaphorically speaking.[141]

7.2 Bawdy Language

Transferring the Shakespearean impetus into the present, Winterson integrates neologisms in the guise of netspeak and slang into her text. A 'fifty-footer' according to *The Online Slang Dictionary* is someone who "looks appealing from a distance"[142], but will lose attractiveness in the eye of the beholder the closer they get. Certainly, it is questionable whether the use of neologisms in the cover version will enrich the English language as did Shakespeare's use of them. If they will, they will do so very differently and maybe even in an impoverishing kind of way. Ultimately, whether or not words will be adopted in the common use of language time will tell. However, the cover version does not blank out the coarseness of speech occurring today. Thus it can be juxtaposed to a poetical language whose traces are not yet entirely blurred. Even Leo, when being in a mellow state of mind, recalls a line of verse, unsurprisingly, from *The Winter's Tale*:"'I wish you a wave of the sea, that you might ever do nothing but that, move still, still so." What this shows is that society's use of language is inseparably tied to its state. The same applies to the individual. In other words, societies and individuals whose nature is essentially expressed through language are palimpsestuous.

8. Arrested Time

As stated before, neither love nor death are understandable as definite entities but obtain their status from their relation to one another, i.e. Shep smothering

[141] Cf. Ibid., p. 25: "'To think we've entertained an angel unawares!' she says. 'Oh, my little one, I think you must be the pure child of the century that just now is waiting in the wings, the New Age in which no women will be bound down to the ground.'"
[142] WS 8

his wife to end her/his pain[143] or MiMi's "death" after Perdita's loss. Although MiMi has not died, the text's delineates her being-in-the-world as solitary, even ghost-like:

"There were sightings of her, in dark glasses and a scruffy coat. (...) The woman notices her most mornings, walking with her head down as far as the mouth of the Canal Saint-Martin, where she stands like a statue, her hands in her pockets (...)"[144]

As Being in the world is colligated with care as related to Heidegger, one could assert that MiMi's care is gone after Perdita is lost and Milo is death. She forfeits Being-in-the-world as a recluse, because it entails a certain stepping out of the world she has known: "Dasein's involvement in the world is primarily not theoretical but issues from an 'activity' that changes the world. The latter fact is indicated by Dasein being *concerned with* things and *taking care of* its fellow human beings."[145]

Thus, the text delineates how being-in-the-world can end without being dead: By losing something that was constitutive for one's respective world, which inevitably leads to "'The end of the world.'"[146]

What is left then, for each of the fallen lovers is some kind of inner emigration that comes about in different guises for each character. Leo compensates the intimate loss of Heideggerian 'care' with getting involved in charitable work[147], while Xeno neglects his son and dedicates himself to his video game. Both men will not have serious relationship let alone marry (again). As is also the case in *The Winter's Tale* the tyrant figure does preserve a remembrance of his misdeeds by means of a certain symbolism. For Leontes' this is the pledge to visit Hermione's and Mamillius' grave daily:

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[143] Cf. TGOT, p. 11: "I lifted the face cone and put my hands over her mouth and nose, and asked Jesus to come and take her. He did."
[144] TGOT, p. 228.
[145] Hirsch, Elisabeth Feist. "The Problem of Speech in ‚Being and Time'" in Elliston, F. (ed.) *Heidegger's Existential Analytic*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1978, p. 346-365
[146] TGOT, p. 203.
[147] Cf. TGOT, p. 210:"'Does Leo live in London?' 'Yes. He's a reformed character. Quite the angel. He invests money for children's charities round the word."

"Leontes:
(...) One grave shall be for both. Upon them shall
the causes of their death appear, unto
our shame perpetual. Once a day I'll visit
the chapel where they lie, and tears shed there
shall be my recreation."[148]

Likewise, there's a cemetery scene of Leo at Milo's grave[149] in the cover version. However, it is placed at the end of the text to emphasize that Paulina's maxim "What's gone and what's past help should be past grief"[150] fails to be applicable towards reality. "The past was always in front of him like a river he couldn't cross."[151]

The scene of Milo's death occurs relatively late in the course of the story, not only as analepsis but in addition to it as exact repetition of Milo's and Leo's airport scene which took place at the beginning of the story completed with the sad end. Here the reader is literally placed before the past as Leo is, making time and the theme of resurrection a rather circular business compared to the stage play which inevitably moves forward.

In both texts, what is lost cannot be redeemed by these means rather they serve to keep open the wound.

8.1 Movement in Time

Different from the other characters in the cover version, the Perdita figure is not trapped in power relations of language. Those that are ensnared are the characters sticking to hetero-normativity (this is of course only one aspect) such as Leo and MiMi, as well as Xeno who cannot adapt to it or conceive of an

[148] TWT, p. 235.
[149] Cf. TGOT, p. 245: "And now Milo was in it. The bones of him by now, Leo thought. Nothing to know of him except the past."
[150] TWT, p. 234.
[151] TGOT, p. 245. This could be another evocation of Greek mythology, since the river Styx was believed to be the border between earth and the underworld. Furthermore, the river motive is inherent in the text as signifying the passage of time (the characters' strolling at the Themse, Seine and Mississippi)

alternative for himself. One could even go as far as denoting the sixteen-year-gap as a sort of imprisonment in time, especially for Leo since 'linear time' is connected with masculinity. Thus, in prison traits which are attributed to masculinity such as "'future orientation' and 'compulsive hyperactivity' [are] difficult for men to achieve"[152]. Be that a social construct or not, on the outside Leo is deeply invested in linear time due to his job, this however conceals the constitution of his inwardness and the remembrance of what he has lost.

This can also be related to the Wintersonian concept of time, which is a vast theoretical and literary territory of its own, in which time is experienced as allowing multi-directional movement and concurrency: "In our inner world, we can experience events that happened to us in time as happening simultaneously. Our non-linear self is uninterested in 'when', much more interested in 'wherefore'."[153]

Perdita, on the other hand is released into time span she can avail herself of. Thus, for some figures time turns out to be different than it does for others. For some it is a kind of (self-) confinement without knowing how long this will last, while for others it a part of life that bears an abundance of possibilities. In other words, for some, time comes to a halt where for others it elapses.

9. Conclusion

In light of this it seems appropriate to read Wintersonian literature with the help of French and German modernist and post-modernist thinkers who in their way all contributed to the project of deconstruction, which has been pronounced dead by so many, when it isn't, exactly because of its insistence on processuality and interminability. It then becomes clear that time always can and can only be perceived as a gap of time as a time span placed at one's disposal and which first and foremost render possible life and evolution. As

[152] Sloan, Jennifer Anne. *Masculinities and the Adult Male Prison Experience*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p.
[153] WBH, p. 153.

deconstruction cannot reach its end, neither can the interpretation of world as text.

Although *The Gap of Time* is a fragmented text in terms of chronological order, it nonetheless encompasses a lapse of time in which everything is more realistically connected, instead of virtually as in some of Winterson's previous works (e.g. *The Stone Gods*). For *The Gap of Time* this means that Winterson develops a new approach to story-telling that would be more personal and realistic, particularly under the impression of the cover version's preceding autobiographical text *Why be happy when you could be normal?* Winterson's general definition of the assignment for a writer remains valid: "Storytelling is a way of establishing connections, imaginative connections for ourselves, a way of joining up disparate material and making sense of the world." [154] To conclude, the assessment that "her novels may be described as 'historiographic metafictions'" [155] would be reductive in the light of her recent texts.

What can be held against the author's endeavours of a representation of "gay men" or "black people" surely is, in a solely biographical reading, that the author neither is black, nor a gay man. Thus an interpretation of the author's ostensive intentions might be misleading and wrong altogether. To react towards something through language, i.e. a grievance, unacceptable circumstances, etc. includes the possibility of being misunderstood or even wrong but at the same time it is the inalienable condition of drawing attention to something like, for instance, social inequities[156] at all. With reference to the depiction of the world in a text, Heidegger gives valuable hints to the historicity of truth: "Die Kunst ist Geschichte in dem wesentlichen Sinne, daß sie Geschichte gründet. Die Kunst lässt die Wahrheit entspringen." [157] Thus, only as

[154] Winterson (2005), p. 5.
[155] Grice, Helena and Woods, Tim (eds.). Postmodern Stories 25 – 'I'm telling you stories': Jeanette Winterson and the Politics of Reading. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998, p. 1
[156] What could serve as example here would be Clo's and Shep's fear of being discovered by the police after witnessing Toni Gonzales' murder and subsequent to it the fear of experiencing judgmental treatment by the state, which is the experience of black men. In turn, the text does not furnish particulars about the murderer's ethnicity.
[157] Heidegger, Martin. *Holzwege*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1994, p. 65, (translation into English by me): "Art is history in the crucial sense that it founds history. Truth arises from art."

being historical or as a product that is subjected to historicity, art can shrine truth.[158]

This ties in with the Wintersonian paradigm that truth can only be mediated through language which can fail in acquitting itself of the promise for truth: "Trust me, I'm telling stories." Thus, the representation of the world in an author's text is never the final but a historical one.

Another indicator for the "gap of time" bearing an openness rather than a lost time is Winterson's remark at the end of her summary of the play that characterizes the time that is about to come as "the gap of time"[159]. This openness is restored for the "older" figures of the story, not so much for Perdita and Florizel who never were trapped in "the gap of time" as the others were.

It is not entirely improbable that Winterson in her most recent novel addresses an often expressed critique towards her texts that the theme of love is "not something the novel [here: *Sexing the Cherry*] negotiates but rather something that it affirms."[160] Dimitrijevic justaposes Winterson's writing with that of A.S. Byatt and Angela Carter in which she finds a more adequate narratological effort to show how "lovers create a common basis for their relationship"[161] and how these are "acting as agents in their own right."[162] *The Gap of Time* thus can be seen as a renewed approach to storytelling that embodies themes, such as love, instead of affirming them.

[158] Cf. Heidegger, p. 65: „Die Kunst ist geschichtlich und ist als geschichtliche die schaffende Bewahrung der Wahrheit im Werk."
[159] TGOT, p. xvi: "The end of the play, without explanation or warning or psychological interpretation, throws all the characters forward into a new life. What they will make of it is left to 'the gap of time'."
[160] Dimitrijevic, Emilija. *Intimacy and Identity in the Postmodern Novel*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2008, p. 148.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid.

9.1 Reconciliation

Both texts try to generate a meaning out of the catastrophe of unwillingly have a child abandoned. “The gap of time” cannot only be understood as the sixteen-years of separation of Perdita and her mother, but also as a lapse of time which was at her disposal, in which she grew and was loved. Though seeming disparate, the last words in Winterson’s text cling together with a modernist perspective on a person’s life span that was introduced by Heidegger in which he describes life as being seen and thought of as something from its end. In this respect, a life that has not reached its end yet, offers possibilities and in from a Wintersonian point of view, that is foremost the possibility of love that relies on the impossibilty of it. “I am witness and evidence of what I know: this love. The atom and jot of my span.”

What adoption stories can depict beyond the already stated is the reconciliation of the self with itself after the process of alienation. That alienation caused by the compulsory adherence to social norms, results in the rupture of the self, which in Hegelian thinking is elementary to the genesis of subjectivity. The paradox of finding oneself lost in this world becomes the prerequisite for finding oneself at all. An adoption story resembles a becoming of man story, if not at all, more pointed in the sense that from the beginning it sustains the idea of being as something always different from its provenance, that is, for instance the detachment from parents in the trial of finding and creating identity for oneself. This is where there can be made mention of the concept of the productive readers, who themselves create meaning instead of allowing for any author intention while similarly the adolescent or young adult might realize own plans instead of following preconceived visions of their parents. Of course, there are many differences as well. As the “normal child” might move towards a distant direction, the adopted child who always and already is in a distant position might seek to move in the opposite direction. It misses that point of departure, but bestows the child with imagination to create an origin as well as an outline for its life to compensate for the boundaries an upbringing by biological parents could entail. Nonetheless, the adopted child,

since it simply is adopted, will have parents of some kind, e.g. foster parents or reference persons in an orphanage. The difference from the origin is however the initial condition of the adopted individual, with which the non-adopted individual is confronted, as explained above, at a later point in life.

Both stories share elements that could prove useful for that part of psychology that is interested in arts, and especially literature, for finding reasons for current conditions. What is not meant is a psychologist reading of literature in terms of creating a psychology of the author, but considering of the language-character of the psyche, meaning the story the psyche creates out of the real, to reconcile the irreconcilable with the life of the mind.

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Appendices

German Summary

Die vorliegende Magister-Arbeit widmet sich in vergleichender Manier Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* und dessen zeitgenössischer Version *The Gap of Time* von Jeanette Winterson aus dem Jahr 2015. Aufgezeigt werden sollen die Anknüpfungspunkte des älteren Textes, die eine thematisch vielfältige Neu-Belebung bieten. Die Zeitspanne von vierhundert Jahren, die beide Texte voneinander trennt, erweist sich dabei nicht als hinderlich für die Neu-Interpretation der im älteren Text angelegten Themen, sowie deren Befragung nach aktuellen Bedeutungen. Winterson's Text wird dabei als Ergebnis einer produktiven Rezeption betrachtet, welche polyvalente Transpositionen am Ausgangsstoff vornimmt, um gegenwärtige Bezüge herzustellen. Damit kann nicht nur für den Winterson-Text, sondern für alle Teile der Hogarth Shakespeare Reihe, gesagt werden, dass die Neubearbeitung der Shakespeare Vorlage gleichsam zur Neuentdeckung eben jener anregt. Das Gelingen dieses Unterfangens würde für die Universalität des Shakespeare'schen Werkes sprechen, welches als Welt im Werk die conditio humana sowie die Bedeutungen des Daseins aufzeigt.

Vorliegende Arbeit soll darüber hinaus erste Impulse liefern, die Neubearbeitung des Stoffes durch Winterson als entscheidende Weiterentwicklung im Schreiben der Autorin zu beachten, die in der Sekundärliteratur, freilich weil das Buch erst vor relativ kurzer Zeit erschienen ist, noch keinen Widerhall gefunden hat und bisherige Einschätzungen und Urteile über Winterson's Werk als unzureichend erscheinen lässt.

Im Besonderen wird die textliche Darstellung des Themas der Freundschaft untersucht, neben der Beleuchtung der Differenzen, die die Bearbeitung des einen in einem anderen Text im vorliegenden Fall prägen, um Verschiebungen und Akzentsetzungen auf einen heutigen Bezug deuten zu können.