

T.C.
UNIVERSITY OF GAZİANTEP
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

TEMPORALITY AND SPATIALITY IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH THEATRE

MASTER OF ARTS THESIS

GÖKÇE AKARIK

GAZİANTEP
AUGUST 2020

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Temporality and Spatiality in Contemporary British Theatre

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my precious mother, Şükran Akarık and my father, Remzi Akarık, who always stand by me.



ABSTRACT

TEMPORALITY AND SPATIALITY IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH THEATRE

AKARIK, Gökçe

M. A. Thesis, Department of English Language and Literature

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Enes KAVAK

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Space and time are two interconnected concepts that have a long philosophical background. They lie at the heart of identity construction and have a substantial impact on contemporary literary works. The sense of time and space changed with the emergence of postmodern theory, and its influence became observable in contemporary British theatre, which covers a period between the 1980s and today. Contemporary British playwrights have not only explored (historical or non-historical) identity quests, but also targeted collapsing or transforming conventional theatre concepts by experimenting with time and space with new theatrical techniques in their plays. In addition, the psychological and social reflections of spatial and temporal boundaries along with existential anxiety have become central issues in their plays. This thesis thus aims to shed light upon the use of theatrical time and space by analysing Caryl Churchill's *Icecream* and *Top Girls*, Roy Williams' *Sucker Punch* and *Joe Guy* and Mark Ravenhill's *Over There* and *Ten Plagues*. The use of these concepts in postmodernist, postcolonial and postdramatic plays will not only be examined textually and but also complemented with the details of theatrical performances. Since some of the selected plays present problematic representations of women and black people, special consideration will also be given to the constructions of female and black identities at spatio-temporal intersections.

Key Words: Temporality, spatiality, identity, theatrical time and space, Contemporary British Theatre.

ÖZET

ÇAĞDAĞ İNGİLİZ TİYATROSUNDA MEKANSALLIK VE ZAMANSALLIK

AKARIK, Gökçe

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Zaman ve mekan uzun bir felsefi tarihe sahip birbirine bağlı iki konsepttir. Bu konseptler kimlik oluşumunun temelinde yatarlar ve çağdaş edebi eserlerde önemli bir etkiye sahiptirler. Zaman ve mekan algısı postmodern teorinin ortaya çıkmasıyla değişmiştir ve bunun etkisi, 1980ler ve bugün arasını kapsayan çağdaş İngiliz tiyatrosunda gözlemlenebilir hale gelmiştir. Çağdaş İngiliz yazarlar sadece (tarihsel ve tarihsel olmayan) kimlik arayışlarını incelememişlerdir, aynı zamanda oyunlarında zaman ve mekanı yeni teatral tekniklerle deneyimleyerek, alışlagelmiş tiyatro konseptlerini yıkmayı veya dönüştürmeyi amaçlamışlardır. Buna ek olarak, oyunlarında, varoluşsal kaygıyla birlikte mekânsal ve zamansal sınırların psikolojik ve sosyal yansımaları ana meseleler olmuştur. Bu nedenle, bu tez, tiyatral zaman ve mekan kullanımına, Caryl Churchill'in *Icecream* ve *Top Girls*, Roy Williams'ın *Sucker Punch* ve *Joe Guy* ve Mark Ravenhill'in *Over There* ve *Ten Plagues* adlı eserlerini analiz ederek ışık tutmayı amaçlar. Bu konseptlerin postmodern, postkolonyal ve postdramatik oyunlardaki kullanımı sadece metinsel olarak incelenmeyecek, aynı zamanda teatral performansların detaylarıyla da tamamlanacaktır. Seçilen bazı oyunlar kadınların ve siyahilerin problemleri sahneye koyduğu için mekan-zamansal kesişimlerde kadın ve siyahi kimliklerin oluşumuna da özel bir önem verilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mekansallık, zamansallık, kimlik, teatral zaman ve mekan, Çağdaş İngiliz Tiyatrosu.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page no</u>
ABSTRACT.....	i
ÖZET.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
TABLE OF FIGURES.....	vi
1.INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.POSTMODERN TEMPORALITIES AND SPATIAL RELATIONS IN CARYL CHURCHILL’S POSTMODERN THEATRE.....	15
2.1.Postmodernism and Postmodern Temporalities and Spatialities.....	15
2.2.Postmodern Theatre and the Theatre of Caryl Churchill.....	21
2.3. <i>Icecream</i>	23
2.4. <i>Top Girls</i>	29
2.4.1.(De)Construction of Space and Time in <i>Top Girls</i>	33
2.5.Conclusion.....	39
3.THE SPATIO-TEMPORAL CONSTRUCTION OF BLACK IDENTITY IN ROY WILLIAMS’ POSTCOLONIAL THEATRE.....	42
3.1.Colonialism and Postcolonialism.....	42
3.2.The Theatre of Roy Williams.....	51
3.3. <i>Sucker Punch</i>	52

3.4. <i>Joe Guy</i>	62
3.5. Conclusion.....	72
4.THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF SPACE AND TIME IN MARK RAVENHILL'S POSTDRAMATIC THEATRE.....	74
4.1. Postdramatic Theatre and Its Spatial and Temporal Representations.....	74
4.2. Mark Ravenhill's Theatre.....	79
4.3. <i>Over There</i>	82
4.4. <i>Ten Plagues</i>	92
4.5. Conclusion.....	99
CONCLUSION.....	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	104
CIRRICULUM VITAE.....	114

TABLE OF FIGURES

	<u>Page no</u>
Figure 1. London and Berlin Reviews of Mark Ravenhill's <i>Over There</i>	88
Figure 2. Marc Almond in <i>Ten Plagues</i> at the Traverse Theatre.....	96



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Contemporary British Theatre, covering the time the 1980s and today, offers representations of the contemporary British society and philosophy in experimental plays which portray alienation, search for self, existential crisis and individual/society struggle at individual and universal levels, often characterised with simple and casual dialogues, interrupted communication and the loss of meaning in ordinary interactions. Though the plays are not always political, the politics and socio-cultural realities of contemporary life are contextually or circumstantially key parts of theatrical representations. As it is stated,

British playwriting has historically has a close affinity not only with its material base (the theatre system that stages the plays), but also with the structures of British society, and especially with a more general discussion of economic, social and political issues (Middeke et al., 2011: VII).

The policies of Margaret Thatcher, who was known as the Iron Lady due to her liberal economic model and confrontational discourse, had a huge impact on British culture and social life. Supporting the market economy, she was an ardent defender of market capitalism in England. Her policies caused economic and political problems as well as social disparities in the country. Theatre could not be indifferent to these problems and chaotic reforms. Therefore, contemporary playwrights touched upon crucial subjects such as unemployment, working-class problems, globalisation and capitalism. They tried to show how the political and economic policies influence the individuals and their private relations. Especially, the overwhelming consequences of the Iraq War on human psychology were a central concern along with gender, race and class-related issues. Contemporary British playwrights including Caryl Churchill, Terry Johnson, Sarah Daniels, Martin Crimp, Jim Cartwright, Kevin Elyot, April De Angelis, Winsome Pinnock, Jonathan Harvey, Philip Ridley, David Greig, Anthony Neilson, Joe Penhall, Sarah Kane, David Eldridge, Mark Ravenhill, Jez Butterworth, David

Harrower, Richard Bean, Debbie Tucker Green, Kwame Kwei-Armah have their own distinct way of narration and their plays made substantial contributions to the contemporary theatre.

In the plays of aforementioned playwrights, the text is not the only determining source to create meaning itself for the play, but a combination of the text, directions of the stage, performance and staging also constitute meaning. Rather than being just a text-based literary genre, the theatre has turned into an organic unity and (dis)harmony of various theatrical elements. A continuous space between text and performance is established and accommodates theatricality, liminality, and self-reflexivity.

With the corporeal and mental involvement of the audience to plays and ‘self’ meaning-making process, body and space enter in a close relationship in contemporary theatre. Audiences have become a part of the space of the theatre. They enter into the fictional space of the theatre and experience it as a real or virtual space through this bodily interaction with space. Audiences also need to question their existence in the play, in a broader sense, which fosters questions such as: What does it mean to exist? What is the function of the individual? What is the purpose of theatrical creations and interaction? How contemporary theatre addresses the issues of contemporary life? These and similar questions force audiences to contemplate on the matter of identity which is constantly recreated and deconstructed in the theatres of our age.

The involvement of audiences in plays has also shaped the space of the theatre. “The task of the theatre architecture is to find the most ideal combination of space, actor’s movement and speech, and the one area which must include the viewer” (Gavela cited in Dinulović, 2015: 4). Space must be produced in such a way that spectators and actors can be in contact easily. The ‘fourth wall’, which is a term to explain the distance between stage and spectators in theatre has collapsed, and actors and spectators are brought close contact by widening the space of auditorium which makes everything, animate or inanimate, a part of the theatricality of performance.

Wendell Cole notes that “since the final quarter of the nineteenth century it has been apparent that major efforts of theatre architects and designers have been

directed toward bringing audience and actors into more intimate contact with one another” (1955: 16). Audiences are encouraged to partake in the plays and become witnesses of action on the stage. Characters can address the audience or ask them questions to make them feel themselves as a part of the play. At this point, audiences become more aware of the events in plays and it makes audiences question themselves and their spatial existence. “The theatre, as space and cultural forum, ought to foster the debate – to feel not as a closed-up entity but as the flexible ground of intercommunication, to which it is always worth returning” (Angelaki, 2013: 60). Audiences feel that they are not fixed into being just an audience, as each time a play is shown, it creates different meanings since the audience change. Therefore, the coexistence and dismissal of fixed realities turn the theatre into a potent creative space for imagining possibilities and questioning established values, definitions and boundaries.

The way conventional theatre space is constructed has changed profoundly in the modern world and static spaces are not a defining element of contemporary theatre anymore. Radivoje Dinulović says that

Transformations of conventional spatial models in contemporary theatre architecture are primarily a result of development of technical and technological resources and systems, their impact on the size, character and structure of space – first and foremost the space of the stage, and the auditorium (2015: 2).

The development of technology has contributed to the changes in the theatre. The use of digital, multimedia or programmed devices on the stage, the theatre transform into a new sphere that can be defined as technological space/stage. Sound or visual effects can be created using technological devices and plays produce various meanings and portrayals with such effects. These help theatremakers intensify, (de)mystify, (de)construct, subvert or reinstate senses and perceptions of viewers and participants within a theatricalised reality.

In addition to the change in the production of space, the change in the sense of time demands more exploration in the new theatre. With the rise of postmodernity, the sense of time has transformed and has no longer offered a linear perception and chronology in the creations and causation of events in life. Flashbacks, flash-forwards, interrupted temporality and disordered sequences have been dominant in playmaking, which points at the collapse of our conception of time and our comprehension of the physical world.

Using flashbacks as a theatrical technique, “many plays have dealt with the problem of history and the relation of past and present” (Middeke et al., 2011: XVII). This is one of the prevalent effects of the postmodernism on contemporary plays since “postmodernism might almost be defined as ‘a way of having an attitude toward history’” (Strohm, 2000: 151). Some playwrights have taken events or characters from history and some have placed historical characters into the anachronistic or timeless contemporary settings. By doing this, ‘past’ and ‘present’ have been envisioned together and time has been presented as a flux within the continuity or collapse of temporal existences and their constructions. “Indeed, one of the striking features of new writing for British theatre over the past two decades is its arbitration of moments of dramatic intensity that ‘pause’, rupture or entirely reconfigure the flow of stage action” (Megson, 2013: 34). Irrelevant dialogues between characters can be considered as the reason of long pauses, and through long pauses or ruptures of the action, audiences are given a chance to reflect upon and question the actions on the stage. In other words, irrelevant speeches and long pauses are created for audiences to construct multiple and unrestricted meanings in the fictional space of the theatre. Therefore, contemporary plays use time and space purposefully to reveal the existential concerns and produce their portrayals.

Space is considered not only as a field in geography, but also “a social and cultural production” (Merriman et al., 2012: 19). Except for the material existence of a place, the non-material meaning, which one attributes to a place, makes it a social issue, and in time, this attributed meaning becomes a permanent code or symbol for that place in a certain culture. As long as it becomes a part of a culture, one is always in interaction with the place. Because of this close interaction of human with the environment, the place, in which one is born and brought up, has an undeniable impact on one’s characteristics and is a key factor which shapes up one’s life.

Just like place, the loss of time results in the feeling of getting lost and creates more or less the same feeling as not knowing the existing place. Thus, memory, history, perceptions, nostalgia, and related concepts critical to make sense of life and place in it. It is impossible to consider the experiences out of time. “Time is a key structure on which all our experiences seem built” (Tymieniecka, 2007: 212). If a human being does not forget and attributes non-material meaning to the

experiences in life, that time in which the experiences happen has also a meaning for him/her.

In philosophy, which influences literature substantially, time and place are much-debated but controversial subjects. Augustine emphasises the complexity of the concept of time stating that “What then is time? If no one asks me, I know: if I wish to explain it to one that asketh, I know not” (2005: 199). He, then, becomes a common voice for all the philosophers and thinkers who contemplate on the subject of time. He emphasises the present rather than the past and future because the present always stays as present. Giving a deeper explanation of time, Augustine says that “for the past, is not now; and the future, is not yet” (2005: 200). For him, “the present, should it always be present, and never pass into time past, verily it should not be time, but eternity” (2005: 199). Since the present never becomes the past, Augustine enunciates the infiniteness of the present. Now the movement, but the idea of present is underlined by Augustine.

Despite critical and definitional differences, philosophers approach to the time with a similar consciousness. West-Pavlov says that “from classical antiquity onwards, the conceptualization of time has taken the form of a confrontation with the notions of change and impermanence”. To exemplify the unstable feature of the concept of time, he mentions Heraclitus’ description of time: “the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus (c. 500 BC) imagined time by using ideas of water and fire. These images made time coeval with transformation and change” (2013: 30). The idea of transformation exists in the concept of time of Saint Augustine. For, Augustine, this transformation leads one towards his/her death. To some extent, Augustine's perception of time and Martin Heidegger’s explanation of time can be thought similar, which will be elaborated later in the introduction.

Plato theorises time by comparing it to eternity. Leyden states that “Plato defined time as an everlasting likeness (...), moving by number, of eternity (...) that abides in unity” (1964: 35). Thus, time is just an imitation of an eternal and ideal world which means that time has an inferior undertone for Plato. He believes that “the significance of time can only be grasped by observing its relationship to other beings in the universe. Time is relative - it is measured through motion” (McHugh,

2019: 175-176). This relativity of time brings the temporal feature of time into the discussion. Plato's argument, which can be summarised that time and universe are in mutual interaction, can be taken as a guideline to the relativity theory which supports the hypothesis about the integral relation of time and space. Plato adds up the motion to the discussion of time; time cannot be evaluated without considering the "motion".

Aristotle's argument about time is both similar to and different from Plato's conception of time. In terms of movement or motion, Aristotle shares Plato's perception of time. Whereas Plato makes a distinction between temporal and ideal world, Aristotle's definition of time does not include such a distinction. Aristotle says that

We recognise time too when we distinguish (...) movement, which we do by before and after. And it is then that we say that time has passed, when we perceive the before and after in movement. We distinguish it (time? or movement?) by grasping that they (the before and after) are different, and that there is something else between them. For when we think that the extremes (...) are different from the middle, and the soul says that the nows are two, one before and one after, then we say that there is time, and that that (viz. the middle) is time. For time is what is distinguished (...) by the now (cited in Bostock, 1980: 150).

What called as time is the process of numbering the movements, and numbering provides to categorize time as before and after. Thus, time can be speculated on in relation to the movement for Aristotle, too. In this respect, 'now', as a concept, perceived through movement, is a determiner in the perception of time and it can be interpreted that 'now' is in the centre of time. Perception of time as before, movement (now) and after brings up the discussion of the temporality of time which can be regarded as one of the key points of this study and as at the heart of Bergson's conception of time.

After ancient philosophies on time, the movement in physics became a key issue in other disciplines. For both scientific and industrial progress, Isaac Newton's absolute time lies at the heart of both scientific and industrial progress. Newton states that "absolute, true, and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature flows equably without regard to anything external" (1846: 77). What Newton suggests is that time and space are the two terms that should be handled independently from each other. This understanding of time and space gave birth to universal time and "established time as a place-independent system which erases differences between places and reduces friction in their articulation with one another" (West-Pavlov,

2013: 24). This universal time, which can be also used instead of global time, had an impact on the perception of the whole world and life was organized accordingly.

Regarding phenomenology, Immanuel Kant puts forth a totally different argument on time and space. As opposed to Newton, Kant explains time as a foundation of existence in relation to space. Kant points out that

For all the determining grounds of my existence which can be found in me are representations and, as such, do themselves require a permanent, distinct from them, which may determine my existence in relation to their changes, that is, my existence in time, wherein they change. (...) It is, in fact, the same as the empirical consciousness of my existence, which can only be determined in relation to something, which, while connected with my existence, is external to me. This consciousness of my existence in time is, therefore, identical with the consciousness of a relation to something external to me (2000: 14).

According to Kant, time is not something objective, as in the clock time, but a subjective matter standing for one's own conscious connection with time and individual existence. Time cannot be regarded as a fixed entity in the universe, but the interaction of one's internal world and external world plays an important role in the conception of time and existence. "By means of the external sense (a property of the mind), we represent to ourselves objects as without us, and these all in space" (Kant, 2000: 25). Explaining what he means by 'external' and relating it with space, Kant defends the integral relation of time, which takes place in the inner world, and space, which is the outer world, in terms of existence. To comprehend the concept of time, he suggests that one has to keep the undeniable relation of time and space in mind.

Obviously, if time is one of the key factors for the conception of existence, space, as a related term, is another factor, which sustains the discussion of existence. "We never can imagine or make a representation to ourselves of the non-existence of space" (Kant, 2000: 26). As mentioned earlier, ensuring the sense of belongingness, space contributes to the matter of existence which is essential for making sense of the world and creating one's own purpose in life. For Kant, "space and time are the ways that we must experience the outer and inner world" (Gennaro, 1994: 206). Experience is built up in the contexts of time and space. Associating time and space with the existence and meaning-making of life, these two concepts become vital issues for the construction of identity.

Emphasizing the clock time, and that time calculations of astronomers and inner time consciousness are different phenomena, Henri Bergson perceives time as ‘lived consciousness’. Bergson states that

We project time into space, we express duration in terms of extensity, and succession thus takes the form of a continuous line or chain, the parts of which touch without penetrating one another. Note that the mental image thus shaped implies the perception, no longer successive, but simultaneous, of a before and after (2001: 101).

Bergson underlines that time takes place in space or vice versa. Bergson evaluates time at the root of ‘now’ and continuum. Simultaneity takes place in this continuum, or what Bergson calls ‘continuous line’. This continuous line includes past, present and future, which means that one senses time as a whole mechanism, rather than distinct units. Bergson rejects the distinction of before and after, instead, he suggests that time is perceived in simultaneity, and every concept of time takes place in this continuous line (or in now).

Even though Kant reveals the relation between time and space, Bergson does not find his argument about time accurate. “It must be noted that almost all characteristics attributed to time are also attributed to space by Kant” (2011:36). However, compared to space, Kant gives a prior condition to time. “We can represent all spatial appearances in time; however, we cannot represent our mental states in space” (Çiftçi, 2011: 37). What Bergson is critical about Kant is this distinction between time and space. Bergson notes that

Kant’s great mistake was to take time as a homogenous medium. He did not notice that real duration is made up of moments inside one another, and that when it seems to assume the form of a homogeneous whole, it is because it gets expressed in space (2001: 232).

Bergson rejects Kant’s supposition of time as a homogenous medium (and also space), and suggests that time and space are heterogeneous mediums. Everything in time is interwoven, and so in space. Bergson claims that there is no such discreteness between time and space; whatever appears in time can be expressed or appears in the space and Kant’s assumption of homogenous time is actually the result of the fact that every appearance can be expressed in the space.

Twenty-seven years after Bergson’s book on time, a new and ground-breaking theory on time emerged in physics. Albert Einstein came up with “relativity theory” which influenced the postmodern perception of life. With Einstein, the view

of the place-independent time was replaced by the relativity theory and this theory is still being used today. What Einstein supports can be regarded as a kind of deconstruction of Newtonian absolute time. Einstein explains the relativity theory as such; “in order to have a complete description of the motion, we must specify how the body alters its position with time ; i.e. for every point on the trajectory it must be stated at what time the body is situated there” (1924: 8). According to the relativity theory, time and space are relevant concepts and events should be evaluated in relation to time and space together. West-Pavlov states that,

A perfectly empirical example demonstrated that there was no single time framework: time became matter of relations between different spaces, and these relations had to be established by a procedure which took into account differences in the space-time continuum rather than assuming they were irrelevant (2013: 25).

Under the influence of Einstein’s empirical work, space and time were put under the same roof with “spacetime” by physicists. The relativity theory thus started to be popular in other fields such as philosophy and literature. Martin Heidegger, for instance, presents time as a related concept with space. He handles the matter of time in relation with ‘being’ in his *Being and Time*. Calling ‘being-in-the-world’ as Da-sein, “human”, Heidegger touches upon the issue of existence in the world. Emphasizing the very essence of Da-sein as its existence, Heidegger points that “the understanding of being-in-the-world as an essential structure of Da-sein first makes possible the insight into its existential spatiality. (...) human being is initially a spiritual thing which is then subsequently placed ‘in’ a space” (1996: 52-53). As it is obvious from Heidegger’s definition of Da-sein as being-in-the-world, space partakes to the discussion of Da-sein and becomes a determining factor for Da-sein. In order to speak about the issue of Da-sein, one has to exist in the space since World and Da-sein are in an active relation.

Heidegger goes on to explain the relationship between Da-sein and World saying that “Da-sein can explicitly discover beings which it encounters in the environment, can know about them, can avail itself of them, can have ‘world’” (1996: 54). The possibility of having a world lies on the interaction of one with the environment and other beings. It also means that the personal world, which everyone has his/her own, is constituted by the social interaction with other beings and social practice create one’s own world. Therefore, human being is a dependent entity within

the environment and one shares his/her own world with others. In this way, one becomes aware of other entities and the world.

The interaction with the environment, from birth to death, is then, “a succession of experiences ‘in time’” (1996: 342). Experiences, which are composed of the interaction with the environment and partake in time, form one’s world and define who one is. The conclusion is that Da-sein exists in a particular time and a particular space. This particular time in which Da-sein exists, highlights the fact that “Da-sein is temporal” (Heidegger, 1996: 342). As soon as Da-sein is born, it goes to the ultimate end, death which Heidegger calls it ‘being-toward-death’ and the time comes to an end with death. In this respect, Heidegger emphasizes the finiteness of time or one can say worldliness of the time.

Heidegger also discusses how human being senses the time with the interaction of the world. Cooper says that “our understandings of time derive from our understandings of our own temporality” (1993: 304). Since Da-sein recognizes its temporality, it needs a sense of time to understand human nature and to make sense of life. “Heidegger maintains that it is because we are involved in the world that we can have a sense of time” (Cooper, 1993: 302). One’s involvement in the world and social interactions with the environment determine the sense of time. Cooper states that;

Da-sein's involvements with these objects are understood as happening earlier, later, or now. These obvious temporal dimensions that we find in carrying out our daily affairs are the means by which our involvements are "dated," says Heidegger, and we recognize this datability in the use of such terms as earlier, ago, later, before, then, and so on (Cooper, 1993: 302).

Human being recognises the social practices and interactions as before, now and after, and creates meaning for these practices and interactions, which constitutes one’s world, accordingly. Dating the social practices and interactions or calling them before, now and after shapes the whole life of human being. To illustrate, from the ancient times, time has been organised into day and night, and days are time for work and nights are the time for rest because of darkness. Having this consciousness, human being organises the whole life and develops a relationship with the outside world. In other words, time is measured to make life purposeful and easy to apprehend both the natural and social life.

Edmund Husserl is another influential philosopher who was influenced by Kant's argumentation of time. In *On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*, Husserl focuses on time in relation to "inner consciousness" rather than the world time just as Kant distinguishes clock time from the subjective time. Both Kant and Husserl mention the empirical time (world time or clock time), however, they are interested in an inner sense of time which is subjective in their discussions. For both Kant and Husserl, one's own experience is the tool which constitutes the perception of time. Rodemeyer suggests that "Husserl considered the question of inner time-consciousness to be among the most crucial in the area of phenomenology, primarily because it stands as the foundation of a consciousness that constitutes its world" (2006: 8). Inner time-consciousness functions as a significant tool to create one's own world and help meaning-making for every individual. Besides, Husserl explains how time is grasped in very close relation with the moment.

Edmund Husserl sees time as a concept having an intense relation with the moment. Edmund Husserl notes that "the intuition of an extent of time occurs in a now, in one time-point" (1991: 21). It may not be correct to say that Edmund Husserl puts the "now" at the centre since he does not see time as a concept which comes out with its units. On the contrary, Edmund Husserl perceives time as a whole which means past, present and future all co-exist in the present moment. Instead of disintegrating time as units, Edmund Husserl suggests that time should be assessed in the context of multiplicity which can be observed in the temporal structure of the contemporary plays.

Connecting with the 'now', Edmund Husserl explains the temporality as "the complicated relationship between past, present and future" (West-Pavlov, 2013: 45). Temporality may be regarded as both a general term referring to 'time', and an impermanent feature of time. Edmund Husserl's notes that;

We apprehend the moment of temporality along with the perceived reality; and consequently, we must say: When something is now or when the duration is now, if the duration is the duration of something immanently given, then the temporal moment itself is immanently given (1991: 284).

Husserl mentions the temporality of the present moment in this quotation. If something appears now, that thing is a temporal one which can also be called 'spatiotemporal'. It means that the appearance takes place 'here' and 'now'. If his

perception of time, which is actually surrounded by the 'now' and evaluating time as extended now, is also taken into account, Edmund Husserl's perception of 'now' can be evaluated under the concept of temporal time. Correlating time and consciousness, Husserl sees "the temporality of consciousness" (1991: 375) as a common feature of consciousness. If the time is conceived as a temporal flux, the consciousness by which time is perceived, is temporal, it is an ever-changing feature of human mind.

Through the change or process of both time and consciousness, Edmund Husserl implicates the matter of identity to the discussion of time. Husserl claims that "in the continuity of change we 'confirm' identity" (1991: 253). One's construction of identity is based on the continuous peculiarity of time. Time occupies an important place in the construction of identity. Correspond to the temporal continuity of time, identity also has a continuous consciousness. The construction of identity starts from birth, and with the lapsing of time, it takes its present shape, and it continues to take place in ever-changing process. Therefore, in the continuum of time, identity is always already open to the change, or in other words, to the progress.

Paul Ricoeur, among all these philosophers, who examine the very essence of time, elaborates the argumentation of the time within a literary context. Giving the background from Immanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, Paul Ricoeur evaluates time in relation to the 'narrative' in *'Time and Narrative'*. Paul Ricoeur highlights that "taking narrative as a guardian of time, insofar as there can be no thought about time without narrated time" (1990: 241). Including the historiography, narrative can be perceived as a tool to make the history still alive in the present time. To illustrate, placing the historical characters or historical events at the heart of the literary works, authors achieve to keep the history alive. In this respect, memory is added up to the narrative together with history. The narrative is also a way of keeping the memories new and makes them immortal.

A narrative can be viewed also an act of creating space as well as the time and this is a very common technique in postmodern literary works. The aim of the postmodern narrative can be explained as "an attempt to place postmodernist fiction in a historical and global context" (Ning, 2013: 266). Therefore, narrative appears as a technique for breaking the temporal and spatial limitations in the context of postmodernism. "The act of writing itself might be considered a form of mapping or

a cartographic activity” (Tally, 2013: 45). Like flashback, flash forward, writing a literary text in a linear or non-linear form are all techniques to create the sense of time of characters and readers. What writers do is similar to what mapmakers or cartographers do in the sense of creating space or place. Authors use words as a tool to produce a world for their stories. As a result, there occur multiple worlds from different perceptions of various authors. Therefore, literature is a valuable source for examining spatial and temporal relations.

Henri Lefebvre underlines the mutual relation of society/people and space in *‘The Production of Space’*. Henri Lefebvre states that “(Social) space is a (social) product” (1991: 26). Any society produces its own space and social relationship is built up in this space. People associate themselves with a particular place and then social relationship, which they construct in that particular place, becomes their reality.

Handling with space in relation with time and being affected at some respects by Kant, Husserl, and Heidegger, Massey touches upon the correlation between identity and space. For Massey, life and place are the two intertwined subject matters which can be also thought a substantial subject matter for meaning-making. “Place is space to which the meaning has been ascribed” (Carter et al., cited in Massey, 2005: 183). One attributes meaning to certain places and there happens an attachment between humans and that specific place. One creates meaning for life and sets a purpose for the life in the borders of that attached place.

What happens if one cannot attach himself/herself with a place? What are the causes of the detachment from a specific place? This detachment results in the lack of sense of belongingness, which is a crucial problem in the context of meaning-making. Georg Lukács calls this circumstance as “transcendental homelessness” (1971: 26), which can also be regarded as the homelessness of the soul. The soul loses the meaning and also the purpose of the life, and there arises the existential crisis.

Spatiality and temporality are two popular concepts examined in the recent research on literature by western academic circles. Especially in drama, these terms have a significant role, particularly considering the experimental and non-conventional trajectories and trials of European theatricals and theatre theoreticians

in the last couple of decades especially on postmodernist, postdramatic and postcolonial theatres. This thesis examines the (re)presentations or conceptions of time and space, the effects of these concepts on human psychology and their complex relationship with the portrayals of existence and identity in Contemporary British plays. Since some of the chosen plays are exclusively concerned with time, history, identity and (anti)theatricality, special consideration will be given to the construction, presentation and assemblage of these concepts.

Chapter II will enquire about how postmodern theories have shaped the sense of time and space. It will explore in what ways Caryl Churchill constructs the spatial (dis)connections of mental time and history in her *'Icecream'*. Caryl Churchill's *'Top Girls'* will also illustrate how time and space are deconstructed to present new female identities and their crises in a postmodern world.

Chapter III will examine the spatio-temporal constructions of black identities in Roy Williams' *'Sucker Punch'* and *'Joe Guy'*. This chapter will focus on the spatial and historical relations of individual and collective black identities. The contribution of theatrical space and time to the postcolonial overtone of the play will also be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter IV will look at how and in what ways the theatrical time and space are formulated in the Postdramatic theatre. The construction of identity in Mark Ravenhill's *'Over There'* will be examined from a spatio-temporal perspective, which will be followed by an exploration into the constructions of (theatrical) space and time in his *'Ten Plagues'*.

Through the analysis of the chosen plays, this study will show in what ways these plays coincide and differ in the constructions of temporalities and spatialities and what theatrical and dramatic techniques the playwrights employ in their plays. The impact of these concepts on contemporary identities will also be discussed and evaluated in the conclusion of the thesis.

CHAPTER II

POSTMODERN TEMPORALITIES AND SPATIAL RELATIONS IN CARYL CHURCHILL'S POSTMODERN THEATRE

2.1. Postmodernism and Postmodern Temporalities and Spatialities

Postmodernism avoids being labelled or being fitted into a normative, standard and adequate definitions. It would be easier to tackle it first by explaining what postmodernism is not or what the function of 'post' in postmodernism is. The reason why it is called postmodernism is that it has a contrarious or conflicting relation with modernism. Linda Hutcheon says that

The postmodernist is (...) less radical than the modernist; it is more willfully compromised, more ideologically ambivalent or contradictory. It at once exploits and subverts that which went before, that is, both the modernist and the traditionally realist (2002: 103).

Whereas the latter puts 'reason' at the centre to reach truth or knowledge, the former turns it upside down by offering a sceptical approach to them. It would be incorrect to say that postmodernism emerges in an effort to reject all the conventions of modernism, yet it rejects the logocentric, singular and accurate/certain definitions of modernism. Instead, various and personal definitions are welcomed to allude to postmodernism as Linda Hutcheon correlates it with 'doubleness', or 'duplicité' (2002: 1), and this is one of the key features that makes postmodernism a challenging term.

Hutcheon describes "postmodernism [as] a contradictory phenomenon, one that uses and abuses, installs and then subverts, the very concepts it challenges—be it in architecture, literature, painting, sculpture, film, video, dance, TV, music, philosophy, aesthetic theory, psychoanalysis, linguistics, or historiography" (1998: 3). Emerging in architecture initially, it spreads to other disciplines as a challenge to

the traditionalist way of thinking and belief in the power of history and scientific truth. Deconstruction, which was coined by Jacques Derrida and constitutes the very essence of postmodernism by way of multiplicity, is defined as “the relentless pursuit of the impossible, which means, of things whose possibility is sustained by their impossibility, of things which, instead of being wiped out by their impossibility, are actually nourished and fed by it” (Caputo, 1997: 32). Starting the process from the end and coming to the beginning at the end, deconstruction is the appreciation of ‘the other’ and ‘the opposite’. It emphasises a possibility of oppositions and unaccustomed ways of thinking. The term also provides a basis to the postmodern perception of truth, as Ihab Hassan puts it, “we no longer share an absolute, transcendent, or foundational Truth” (2003: 6). Through deconstruction, things are approached in a critical or sceptical way and can be thought in an opposite way. Truth digresses its stable space and enters a paradoxical one which makes it non-absolute. There emerged a disbelief of truth and true and they became meaningless, empty and senseless. Rather than being perceived objective, they became subjective concepts which make sense individually.

Similar to the disbelief of ‘true’ and ‘truth’, ‘real’ became an inquirable and confounding matter of fact. Jean Baudrillard gave a new impulse to the discussion of ‘real’ with his idiocratic definition of simulation asserting that “simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (1994: 1). What Fredric Jameson suggests is that the postmodern life and culture has no originality since signs and symbols have taken the place of reality in the time of postmodernism. The difference between reality and ‘simulation’ has become indistinguishable and ‘simulation’ has become the reality of the current culture with the help of technological advancements such as television and the internet. Hence, the reality of culture and the way of life have been shaped by mechanisms and instruments of capitalism as the dominant economic and political system of postmodern times.

The disbelief of truth and true, and ‘simulation’ led to approach knowledge and education sceptical in the postmodern world. Jean François Lyotard defines ‘postmodern condition’ as “incredulity toward metanarratives” (1984: XXIV) since all the grand narratives such as Enlightenment and Marxism, did not reach their aim,

they all became like a disappointing delusion. Knowledge and education are also no longer based on a reliable source in the postmodern age as postmodern knowledge's "principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy" (Lyotard, 1984: XXV). Knowledge is no longer produced for the sake of itself, but for the policy of legitimisation and delegitimisation of authorities. As Foucault says, "it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power" (1980: 52). Since knowledge and power have an intimate relation, knowledge is produced to hold or exercise power by authorities to justify themselves.

The social and cultural reflection of postmodernism is commonly associated with capitalism. Approaching postmodernism with a Marxist perspective, Fredric Jameson states that "we have been calling postmodernism is inseparable from, and unthinkable without the hypothesis of, some fundamental mutation of the sphere of culture in the world of late capitalism" (1991: 47-48). Giving examples of Vincent Van Gogh's *'Peasant Shoes'* and Andy Warhol's *'Diamond Dust Shoes'*, Jameson shows the impact of the capitalist ideology in art by elucidating how capitalist ideology has changed the way of life and culture. *'Peasant Shoes'* reflects the natural life and outcomes of being a peasant and is regarded as an original work. On the contrary, *'Diamond Dust Shoes'* represents how the authenticity of life has been replaced by the capitalist ideology through a variety of shoes and is no longer original. He emphasizes that art is no longer authentic, but it is a reflection of the consumerist society.

As a cultural and social outcome, literature has fallen under the influence of postmodernism in the late 20th century. Steven Connor points out that "postmodernism was not the invention of literary critics, but literature can certainly claim to be one of the most important laboratories of postmodernism" (2004: 62). There emerged new terms, new approaches and writing techniques such as parody, pastiche, intertextuality, historiographic metafiction, which are essential in order to engender the postmodern perception of time in relation with history. Correspondingly, the representations of capitalism and consumerism have become noticeable in literary works.

Postmodernism is commonly explained with negative prefixes as Hutcheon suggests that "it is usually accompanied by a grand flourish of negativised rhetoric:

we hear of discontinuity, disruption, dislocation, decentring, indeterminacy, and antitotalization” (1988: 3). Rather than dealing with totality in terms of time and centrality in terms of space, it deals with time in a fragmented, discontinuous and non-linear structure. This affirms that “postmodernism apprehends the unevenness of times” (Connor, 2004: 8). Multiple, heterogeneous and fragmented perceptions of temporality hamper the comprehension of the world as a harmonious whole, which, in turn, instigates individual crises.

Jameson emphasizes the complexity or non-traditional perception of time by claiming that “older habits of clock time are thereby eclipsed, the ‘signifier’ of the single day called into question; some new non-chronological and non-temporal pattern of immediacies comes into being” (2003: 707). When Jameson calls postmodernism ‘end of temporality’, he does not mean that time is no longer insignificant; on the contrary, he highlights how the sense of time is approached unconventionally or deconstructed radically in postmodernism. The deconstruction in the sense of time has also led to a sceptical approach to the concept of history and its centrality to our perception of linearity and temporal authenticity.

History, as both time and identity-related phenomenon, has become a debating subtopic for debate among postmodernists. Following Lyotard’s conception of the postmodern condition, postmodernist writers have approached history with incredulity since they thought that “History itself, the Grand Narrative” (Swift cited in Hutcheon, 2002: 53). History has been a concept that should be reread, reconsidered and rewritten, thus historiography, which is defined by Hayden White as “the representation of history in verbal images and written discourse” (1988: 1193), has achieved a respected status in the context of postmodern writings. Hutcheon states that

History is not made obsolete: it is, however, being rethought—as a human construct. And in arguing that history does not exist except as text, it does not stupidly and ‘gleefully’ deny that the past existed, but only that its accessibility to us now is entirely conditioned by textuality. We cannot know the past except through its texts: its documents, its evidence, even its eye-witness accounts are texts. Even the institutions of the past, its social structures and practices, could be seen, in one sense, as social texts (2002: 16).

The only way to know the past is to head for the history to understand how today in terms of culture, politics, ideologies etc. have been shaped. In this respect, any

historical writings/texts are a crucial source in the field of literature. “Taking narrative as a guardian of time” (Ricoeur, 1990: 241), postmodern writers have focused on narrative fiction. There emerged ‘historiographic metafiction’ as a postmodern form which can be briefly defined as “the mixing of historical and fictive representation” (Hutcheon, 2002: 33). On the use of historiographic metafiction and the relationship between past and present, Hutcheon says that

The issue of representation in both fiction and history has usually been dealt with in epistemological terms, in terms of how we know the past. The past is not something to be escaped, avoided, or controlled – as various forms of modernist art suggest through their implicit view of the ‘nightmare’ of history. The past is something with which we must come to terms and such a confrontation involves an acknowledgement of limitation as well as power. (...) In a very real sense, postmodernism reveals a desire to understand present culture as the product of previous representations. The representation of history becomes the history of representation. What this means is that postmodern art acknowledges and accepts the challenge of tradition: the history of representation cannot be escaped but it can be both exploited and commented on critically through irony and parody (2002: 55).

Rather than denying the existence of the past, postmodernists appreciate past or history conceptually in order to account for the present, but they assume a critical and challenging attitude towards past or history. For this reason, new writing techniques are devised such as ‘postmodern parody’ and ‘postmodern pastiche’. Whereas parody is defined as “a way of ironically revisiting the past, the dominant view of postmodern parody as trivial and trivializing” (Hutcheon, 2002:99), “pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask” (Jameson, 1991: 17). Hence, parody entails pastiche, but pastiche does not entail parody since pastiche does not need to be satirical. Moreover, what brings them together is that both can be classified as intertextual, and both are literary devices to assemble different time frames in different spatial contexts, as a time related concept, in literary works. To illustrate, Caryl Churchill’s *Top Girls*, which will be examined later in this chapter, brings different time frames and spaces together to portray a universal and critical sense of space.

Regarding the postmodern perception of postmodernism, the postmodern age is characterised by the ‘spatial turn’ which has given a new impulse to the concept of spatiality. Jameson notes that “time was the dominant of the modern (or of modernism) and space of the postmodern” (2003: 696). Time cannot be perceived and constructed in a traditional way in the postmodern age. The perception of space, as a vital source to shape culture and identities, has undergone change in parallel

with the modern world concerns. What distinguishes postmodern notion of space from the traditional understanding of space is the sovereignty of 'globalisation'. Juliet Murphet emphasises that "the history of the twentieth century was one of broadening horizons of global consciousness (...) space has gone global" (2004: 126-127). As Jameson puts it, cities are the representatives of this global consciousness of postmodern space. Correspondingly, high buildings, skyscrapers, shopping malls etc., which are the emblems of the modern life under the roof of 'globalisation', can be interpreted as the representations of the spatialised postmodern life in literary works. The modern life includes a complex plethora of spatiality which troubles either sense of belonging or triggers detachment from a familiar space. This leads to a quest to suppress or overcome the psychological breakdown that emerges as an outcome of physical and mental alienation.

In the literary context, 'cognitive mapping' suggested as a solution to overcome this physical breakdown. Having first been suggested by Edward Tolman, it was adopted later by Jameson in *'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism'*.

[Cognitive mapping] involves the practical reconquest of a sense of place and the construction or reconstruction of an articulated ensemble which can be retained in memory and which the individual subject can map and remap along the moments of mobile, alternative trajectories (1991: 51).

Known as 'mental map', 'cognitive mapping' can be explained as the mental representations of spatial relations. It gives a chance to experience multiple spatial choices except for the real environment. Thanks to this, one can escape from the real environment and relocate oneself to a utopic place, which lies at the heart of the psychological breakdown brought forth by spatial disengagement. In this respect, 'cognitive mapping' can also be regarded as "a crucial method by which to overcome the real anxiety of being lost, in the most urgent everyday sense as well as the more philosophical or existential sense" (Tally, 2013: 68). It can be used as a mental technique to overcome existential dilemma related to the alienation which is caused by the modern life.

Similar to the relation between narrative and time, narrative also lies on the ground of spatialisation process. "The act of writing itself might be considered a form of mapping or a cartographic activity. Like the mapmaker, the writer must

survey territory, determining which features of a given landscape to include, to emphasize, or to diminish” (Tally, 2013: 45). Space can be recreated or deconstructed depending upon writers’ purpose. Narrative can also be utilized to set a barrier against the corporeal space, create a mental space and attach oneself to that place. Hence, narrative can be considered as a solution for the identity crisis which derives from spatial alienation of the postmodern time.

2.2. Postmodern Theatre and the Theatre of Caryl Churchill

Postmodern theatre is a combination of all the aforementioned theories and techniques. It became a genre by which one could theorise and study time and space, in depth. As in other fields, the perception of space, and especially time, were considered to be concepts of wholeness.

It is only by breaking the ‘wholeness’ of the model of dramatic representation (and thus implicitly the ‘wholeness’ of the reality it represents) through the fragmentation, deconstruction or decontextualization of its parts, that theatre in the postmodern era can escape complicity with the discredited philosophical notion of a singular, objective and authoritative reality (Liz, 2013: IX).

Through the representation of multiple, subjective and different phases of realities; postmodern theatre deconstructs and reformulates the features present in traditional theatre. Instead of a complete wholeness, it welcomes the use of fragmented structures, which makes performances incoherent and difficult to follow, especially with an already complicated plot. Postmodern theatre deconstructs the boundaries associated with a historical and singular perception of time. “It elicited an awareness of the simultaneous existence of heterogeneous histories” (Bahun-Radunović, 2008: 447). Simultaneity is one of the key tools employed to destroy the traditional representation of time in theatre. To illustrate this concept, Caryl Churchill’s *‘Hotel’* is a play in which all the characters exist in a hotel room as couples; they speak at the same time, however they are unaware of the existence of the other. Throughout the play, the time is the same for everyone, however, the perception of time is understood differently by different characters. This play clearly illustrates the deconstruction of linearity and heterogeneity in terms of time and theatrical space.

Caryl Churchill has become a significant postmodern dramatist with her provocative writing and creative use of theatrical/dramatic techniques. “The plays of

Caryl Churchill link feminism with a socialist view on society. Her works ask questions rather than coming to conclusions and vary widely in terms of dramatic technique, using song, verse drama, dance and overlapping dialogue” (Yadav, 2018: 45). She is often sceptical to come to a conclusion because of the decentred logic of the postmodern era, her plays encourage the audience to question their realities. The use of unusual dramatic techniques makes her plays difficult to understand, especially since her plays are already fragmented. The use of overlapping and simultaneous speech patterns particularly contribute to the creation of a fragmented structure.

Having a critical approach to the modern capitalistic and globalised society, Churchill internalises a socialist-feminist attitude in her plays such as ‘*Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?*’ and ‘*Top Girls*’. What lies behind this interwoven approach is that “the fate of woman and that of socialism are intimately bound up together (...) Both are to be set free through the economic development consequent upon the social upheaval brought about by machinery” (Beauvoir, 1953: 81). What unites these two phenomena is that both aim to overcome economic oppression by either capitalism or patriarchy.

What Caryl Churchill is critical about in her plays can be revealed through dwelling on her way of characterisation since it plays a vital role as one of the techniques used to reinforce the socialist-feminist standpoint in Caryl Churchill’s plays, where she creates strong, determined and marginalised female figures. To illustrate, in ‘*Top Girls*’, all the female characters who sit around the dinner table make an impact through either criticising or resisting the oppressive patriarchy. One of the female characters in ‘*Icecream*’ is strong and brave enough to protect herself from the dangerous world of men. Fundamentally, Caryl Churchill frequently uses characterisation as a dramatic technique to portray individual standpoints against the patriarchy.

Furthermore, Caryl Churchill utilises characterisation in a distinctive way and this is what distinguishes her from her predecessors. With her unusual technique of characterisation, she creates completely metaphorical and composite characters. For instance, she gives characters names such as, ‘Businessman,’ ‘Birdbook Woman,’ ‘Gay 1,’ ‘Gay 2,’ in ‘*Hotel*’, ‘Dead Child,’ ‘Green Lady’ and

‘Rawheadhandbloodybones’ in *The Skriker*. One of the most extraordinary plays in terms of characterisation is arguably *‘Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?’* One of the characters in the play is called ‘Sam,’ who represents a country. In almost all her plays, the number of the characters who do not have proper names is higher than the number of the characters who do have proper names; and this leads to an identity quest which lies at the very heart of postmodern theatre. Rather than giving characters clear and typical identities, the plays first start with giving them names, often the ones denoting inanimation or animality.

Churchill has written identity-themed plays such as *‘A Number’* in which three brothers are stuck into an identity crisis caused by human cloning; *‘Cloud Nine’* in which characters are in search of identity under the oppression of colonialist ideology and Victorian ideals; *‘Icecream’* in which a couple begins searching the husband’s family tree and seeks to find his ancestors. What Caryl Churchill attempts to emphasise is how the human being yearns to be accepted and find their identity, and how this is especially difficult in the modern world. The reason why she is concerned with this idea of an identity quest; may be due to losing contact with previous generations, sexual preferences or gender identities and political attitudes.

In this chapter, Churchill’s *‘Icecream’* and *‘Top Girls’* will be analysed in the light of postmodern theatrical techniques, and how postmodern concepts such as deconstruction, historiography and capitalist economy are treated in relation to the constructions of time, space and identities will be the main concern of this analysis.

2.3. *Icecream*

‘Icecream’ consists of twenty scenes; the first ten are set in the UK and the second ten are set in the US. The scenes do not have a logical connection and sudden changes in the setting can be observed throughout the play. The play starts with the journey of an American couple, Lance and Vera, to the UK. The couple wish to learn more about Lance’s relatives and his family tree. In the UK, they meet Phil and Jaq, who are Lance’s low-life British cousins. During their meeting in Lance’s flat, they talk about their grandparents in order to determine their line of descent.

They go to a pub and have a contentious conversation about the UK and US. Phil has an offensive attitude towards America and glorifies Britain. He says “so much American filth here, I completely loathe the United States of America” (Churchill, 1998: 64). The reason why he has such a negative opinion of America might be that Britain has been replaced by America as the great power in the world. He seems to be obsessed with attacking and continuously criticising America and its policies. Lance and Vera, on the other hand, seek to defend their country, and Vera pressures Phil into critiquing his own country since Ireland was once England’s colony. Vera is constructed as an agreeable and realist character, who finds a common ground by saying that “they’re both terrible countries, I guess” (1998: 65). She neither glorifies nor denounces her own country’s policies. Lance loves America but has also an admiration for England, which is illustrated in his words “You can’t help loving England. The green fields. The accents. The pubs” (Churchill, 1998: 65) since his predecessors were once resided in England. When they discuss the British food, Phil identifies a man who drives him crazy without any good reason. He later proceeds to kill him, which is a representation of prevalent ‘insanity’ and suggests the loss of causality and predictability in such a world.

Vera and Phil come back to Phil’s flat, where Phil betrays Lance, and Vera expresses her shame for this betrayal. While they talk about Lance and their circumstances, Phil tells her that “I’ll probably kill him” (1998: 68). Even though she tries to dissuade him, Phil kills the man with a gun. Next, they are all in Phil’s flat with the dead body and are trying to find a way to conceal the crime. Phil suggests that the murder was in self-defence, and that Lance and Vera are the witnesses of the murder. Lance is afraid of getting arrested and has to be back in America. However, he tells Phil that “your going to prison isn’t going to bring him back” (Churchill, 1998: 71) and they all agree to bury the dead body in the Epping Forest. After that, Lance and Vera decide to go back to their country.

The second part of the play starts with Vera and her conversation with a shrink, discussing Vera’s nightmare and the dreadful consequences of World War II. She describes how human beings can be merciless by citing the war and how it has affected all the generations to come after it. After a while, she tells the shrink about the murder which she unfortunately became entangled with. The shrink takes this

murder metaphorically and says that “the man in the wood is your dead ancestors, your unborn children and the part of yourself you fear to have discovered” (Churchill, 1998: 80). The shrink tries to relive her and also helps her bring to light what she is afraid of facing: the inescapably painful history.

In one scene, Phil and one of his colleagues share their memories about cheating on the loved ones in a bar. In another, Phil and Jaq travel to America as tourists, where events take a drastic turn for the worst. Phil dies in a car accident and Jaq kills a professor who she goes to picnic with, as he tries to abuse her, and throws his dead body into a lake. Lance no longer welcomes his cousins and Vera suggests that Jaq should come back home. When she arrives at the airport, Jaq has a chat with a woman. The woman tells her that she is not going home and the woman understands why she is not happy with her circumstances and she then offers to pay her extra and convinces her to go back home.

As for the temporal construction of the play, there is no clear sense of time and a logical flow in the play except that the story takes place in the summer and is set in 1980 and 1981. *Icecream* employs a fragmented structure and unrelated scenes contribute to the loss of temporality. There is not a coherent relation between each of the scenes, which starts suddenly without any relation to the previous. Every scene appears as if it was a short play itself. Hence, the timings of each of the scenes or the flow of time, is left indeterminate, and time is only distinguished by the scenes which are set in different places. The play does not display timeframes or units of time separately. As a result, both the dramatic and theatrical time cannot be perceived in a cohesive and logical way. Jameson points out that:

Rather than a period style, therefore, it seems more desirable to stage the ‘end of temporality’ as a situation faced by postmodernity in general and to which its artists and subjects are obliged to respond in a variety of ways. This situation has been characterized as a dramatic and alarming shrinkage of existential time and the reduction to a present that hardly qualifies as such any longer (2003: 708).

Rejecting the temporal perception of modernism (units of time), postmodernism sets forth the ‘present’ which also builds the core of Edmund Husserl’s perception of time as ‘one time-point’. The units of time are all extended in ‘one time-point’, “the past appears to be included in the present, or at the present’s disposal” (Connor, 2004: 10). The past essentially exists as a unit to preface the present. This intertwined

relation of past and present is the very reason of Lance's obsession with the concept of history and his existential crisis.

When Vera and Lance visit a castle in England, they start to talk about history and the Indians. Thus, a specific space is attached to the historical context, Lance: "For them, history is this castle" (Churchill, 1998: 58). The castle appears as the embodiment of the collective history of a nation as well as a cultural heritage. After that, they discuss their own history:

Lance: Indians have their oral traditions. We can't claim a share in that.

Vera: Everyone has ancestors.

Lance: Yes indeed and this is where they came from. So to that extent this is our history.

Vera: Your history.

Lance: If it's mine it's yours. Like a joint bank account. They would all be our children's ancestors (Churchill, 1998: 58-59).

Lance has a very imposing attitude towards Vera's claim that her history is nothing more than what Lance's is. Lance interiorises being a world citizen by claiming, "my history's in Russia and Germany and god knows where" (Churchill, 1998: 59). Vera also feels empathy for those who died without cause or who were killed feloniously in World War II, and embraces those who suffered from the catastrophic consequences of the war. Lance rejects his wife's universal view of history that constructs her self-identity. His patriarchal views do not allow him to consider his wife as an individual who has the right to have her own choices and opinion; instead, he regards a woman as a sole dependent in the relationship.

Lance is obsessed with his history, which explains his search for a connection with his relatives and heritage. The reason why he is concerned is that he has no concrete evidence showing his roots. When they argue about Vera's history, Lance says "not in America anyhow because America's too damn recent (...) What nobody knows isn't history." (Churchill, 1998: 59). "Lance, [portrayed in the play as a typical American] whose existential anxiety is understood as his lack of 'history' as an American" (Gobert, 2009: 109). He starts this road trip in the name of self-discovery, which is inseparable from self-identity. What leads him to having an

identity crisis is that America left Britain no more than fifty hundred years ago, and Americans have been suffering from the absence of an acknowledged history since then. Joseph Francese explains this as follows: “The loss of a sense of living and participating in a historical continuity (delineated by traditional values and beliefs) and the collapse of future expectations define the continuous present installed in postmodernity” (1997: 3). Since Lance struggles with this absence, which hinders the realisation of an individual/communal identity, he cannot posit himself in a historical continuity. This act portrays Lance’s personal identity quest, which leads him to a paradoxical episode with an overt existential crisis. The failure of history, which also means the failure of Lance’s self-discovery and/or self-identity, is supported metaphorically with the death of a professor of history. When Jaq and the professor have a picnic in a field close to a lake, the professor attempts to abuse her. Jaq kills him and throws his dead body into the lake. The death of the history professor suggests Lance’s problematic bond and relentless struggle with history.

Within the context of temporal and spatial representations, the interconnected relation of space and mental time or history is unmistakably presented throughout the play. What the French historian Fernand Braudel called ‘geohistory’, which means “history of man in his relationship to his environment” (1972: 20), explains this state. The spatial relation of man is a determining factor for his place and meaning-making out of history in the play. The play portrays how human beings posit themselves in time in relation to specific places. Whereas Lance, and in some cases Vera, feel comfortable in the US, Phil strongly defends his own country. It is notable that British attitudes towards America can be regarded as an exercise of control, which means that Phil exerts a hegemonic power over Lance and Vera. The term ‘hegemony’ can be explained as the power “which the dominant group exercises throughout society and (...) ‘direct domination’ or command exercised through the State and ‘juridical’ government” (Gramsci, 1971: 12). Even though ‘hegemony’ was first used to explain the political or military dominance of state and citizens, it has become a term to show social dominance of one group on others; just as Phil, as an Englishman, does to Vera and Lance, the Americans. He uses an insulting tone on the topics related to America and its policies. Although Gramsci, with a Marxist perspective, used this term to describe the dominance of a ruling class over the working class, the play reduces these power relations to the characters

representing the problematic bond between Britain and America. Phil cannot face the consequences of Britain's loss of power and his aggression towards America originates from an inferiority complex, which reflected in his desire for violence and power struggle. Each character identifies themselves with their countries in a spatial and temporal construction of identity, which shapes their perception of self and the others. Both Americans and English, especially men, have a strong attachment to their homeland and this is a determining factor for constructing their sense of identity. Phil considers that he himself becomes meaningful in his own spatial borders. However, Lance's historical connections oscillate between America and England, which makes him stuck in a liminal space: he is both/neither from America and/nor in England. No matter how hard he desires to construct a sense of belonging to a certain place (especially England), his spatial liminality engenders an identity crisis, which accompanied by his pursuit of a temporal attachment to a meaningful existence.

Apart from corporeally being lost, the play presents the notion of getting mentally lost. When Lance and Vera decide to help Phil and Jaq bury the dead body of the man who Phil kills, in the forest, they find themselves in a completely unfamiliar place in which the experience and feeling of discomfort is doubled. Especially Lance, who "ends up more lost than ever (...) History fails along with his quest" (2014: 107). They are already far away from their homeland in a forest, a place which they were forced to come to and had no familiarity with. They are forced to leave their safe zone mentally and physically, which is represented by Lance's paradoxical dislocation. This dislocation is first implicated by beginning the play with a scene in the car singing the 'Road to the Isles' and a song from *Brigadoon* which "thematizes extreme temporal dislocation" (Gobert, 2014: 112). Since "*Icecream* burlesques the search for identity by employing the hoariest cliché of self-discovery: the road trip" (Gobert, 2009: 109), the play narrates the feeling of displacement. Even though Lance has a strong resonance with England, he feels uncomfortable there since he identifies himself with America (although he does not explicitly say this). Vera can overcome the outcomes of displacement as she does not attach herself to one specific place and welcomes the national diversities. Jaq, like Vera, does not have a strong attachment to England, however she suffers from

displacement, and this is a common characteristic of the relationship between Lance and Jaq.

After killing the professor, Jaq decides to leave America so as not to get the American couple into trouble, and to avoid being identified and arrested for murder. In the last scene, she goes to the airport, a transitional place, which represents her inner world. Her destination is uncertain, just as her complicated feelings are not settled. Jaq turns into a postmodern subject in the play, as in Francese's words, "the subject of postmodernity is spatially disoriented" (1997: 3). After Phil's death and the murder of the professor, Lance leaves her alone. Since she does not have anybody to stand with her, she is hesitant to make a decision at the airport. It seems that all she needs is someone to encourage her to decide on her destination. This person turns out to be an American woman whom Jaq meets in the departure lounge and who lends her a helping hand. The woman suggests that Jaq should change her destination to somewhere she feels completely happy and offers her to pay for her ticket. Jaq tells the American woman that: "I want to be at home and have a cup of tea" (Churchill, 1998: 102), as home is the place where she feels safe and a part of the whole. Jaq's spatial in-betweenness is a consequence of her displacement and being on the edge of a new decision. Here Churchill presents a play which "is a satire about family relations" (Gobert, 2009: 108) and sets forth the spatio-temporal and identity relations both mentally and corporeally. Using history and spatial associations as a means to construct identity or to cope with an existential crisis, Churchill collapses our perceptions of time and shakes the conception of a fixed spatial attachment through the physical spaces and mental borders of her characters.

2.4. *Top Girls*

'*Top Girls*' features a three-act structure, in which each act can be seen as a distinct play itself. It starts with a dinner party which is hosted by Marlene, who is the main character of the play, to celebrate her new position at a company. Marlene's life and character will be recollected extensively in the other acts. Some fictional and historical female characters are invited to the dinner, such as: Isabella Bird who is known as the traveller, Lady Nijo who is known as "an Emperor's courtesan and later a Buddhist nun, who travelled on foot through Japan" (1990: 52). Dull Gret who

is portrayed as a leading soldier in the Brueghel painting, Pope Joan who “disguised as a man, is thought to have been Pope” (Churchill, 1990: 52), and Patient Griselda who is a character in ‘The Clerk’s Tale’ of *The Canterbury Tales* told by Chaucer. At this point, the first act can be regarded as a postmodern re-enactment and deconstruction of history in the verbal dialogues among a group of celebrated women. The common traits of all these characters are their strong characters and resentful experiences in the patriarchal communities of various countries from different historical periods.

Each guest shares a sorrowful past experience during the dinner. They have all either lost their children or could not see their children for a long time, except for Isabella who prefers being a traveller instead of being a traditional woman saying that “I cannot and will not live the life of a lady” (1990: 80). Rejecting typical feminine lifestyle, Joan, who is known as a legendary mythical figure, discusses how she has to disguise herself to get access to libraries and to educate herself to become a pope. She is the representative of Neo-Platonic Ideals with her dedication the truth, and freewill: “I never obeyed anyone. They all obeyed me. (...) There was nothing in my life except my studies. I was obsessed with pursuit of the truth” (1990: 66-75). She does not even know she got pregnant, saying that “I wasn’t used to having a woman’s body” (1990: 70). Unfortunately, she is killed just after she gives birth and recognised during a procession, and does not know what happened to the child. Dull Gret is another character who embodies a masculine woman, who lost her children in war. She spills out hatred against the soldiers since one of them killed her baby and becomes a leading commander of an army of women. She encourages her neighbours to join her in the invasion of Hell and says “Come on, we’re going where the evil come from and pay the bastards out” (Churchill, 1990: 82), and the army of women gains a victory in Hell. Dull Gret is presented as a lamented character, and as a consequence, she appears to be a leading female figure revenging on a patriarchal institution for her murdered children.

Lady Nijo and Patient Griselda are more feminine characters compared to others. Lady Nijo was married off to a Japanese emperor at the age of 14, and is one of the women who suffers a lot from the patriarchy and is forced to accept the rules of a patriarchal monarchy. When Marlene asks her if the emperor raped her or not,

since she was too young to get married, Lady Nijo responds to her: “No, of course not, Marlene, I belonged to him, it was what I was brought up for from a baby” (1990: 57). She has four children; however, her children also are taken away from her, and she is left to lead a sorrowful life. Later on, she decides to become a nun to get rid of this suppressed life and she explains the reason of becoming a nun as “How else could I have left the court if I wasn’t a nun?” [She capitalises on religion and goes on,] “Religion is a kind of nothing” (Churchill, 1990: 61). In this respect, Lady Nijo corresponds to Joan as both of them have religious tone in their stories.

While the other women argue and attack on each other’s religious preferences, Patient Griselda remains silent. She can be considered the most obedient female figure in the play. She is chosen by a Marquis to get married, and leads a life under the control of her husband. She seems to accept and internalise to be a traditional female figure by declaring “of course a wife must obey her husband. / And of course I must obey the Marquis.* (...) I’d rather obey the Marquis than a boy from the village” (Churchill, 1990: 75). She believes that she has to obey a man and she can lead a high-quality life with the Marquis. However, when she gives birth to a girl, her baby is taken from her as a penalty, since she cannot give birth to a boy. She gives birth to ten children and she is not allowed to see them for a long time. She leads a completely dependent life to her husband, and this is what makes her story the most miserable and mournful.

The second act features two scenes, the first of which takes place in Marlene’s sister, Joyce’s, backyard. Angie, is Marlene’s daughter, but she is brought up by Joyce. Angie tells her friend Kit that she is going to kill her mother, and that her real mother is her aunt. She is rageful towards Marlene since she left her, but Kit remains careless about what Angie feels or tells her. The second scene takes place in the office of the Top Girls Employment Agency. The scene opens with two businesswomen, who work for the company, called Win and Nell. They praise Marlene and undermine a male manager, called Howard. They have an admiration towards Marlene, and they follow Marlene’s path in their life. They have interviews with women; however, they have a very reserved attitude towards them and remain indifferent to these women’s problem and expectations. During these interviews, Angie comes to the office unexpectedly, and it makes Marlene nervous. Angie

indicates her admiration towards Marlene; however, all Marlene wants to do is to get rid of Angie. Mrs. Kidd, Howard's wife, comes in and begs Marlene to refuse her new position so that Howard can take back his position. Mrs. Kidd explains how Howard feels about the situation saying "What's it going to do to him working for a woman? I think if it was a man, he'd get over it as something normal" (Churchill, 1990: 112). Marlene cannot stand what Mrs. Kidd says and dismisses her. After that, Nell's interview is presented and the act ends with Marlene's negative opinions about Angie.

The third act takes place in Joyce's kitchen a year earlier. Marlene comes to Joyce's home and brings some presents for Joyce and Angie. However, Joyce does not want to accept the present. These two sisters do not get on well because Marlene left Angie, and Joyce had to raise Angie. They talk about their parents and indicate their hatred for their father since he could not be a good husband and father, and explain how he is the very reason that their mother led a miserable and poor life. As they speak, the conversation starts to become more sensitive. Joyce talks about her husband, how he oppressed her and how she left him. They start talking about how they can lead their life independently. All of a sudden, Marlene turns the conversation to politics. She is an avid supporter of Ronald Reagan, an actor who later became the president of the UK, and who was against the socialist regime; and also Margaret Thatcher, the first female prime minister of the UK, the guardian of free market economy, and who practised a very strict and monetarist policy. Whereas Joyce is against her politics and so Marlene says "I suppose you'd have liked Hitler if he was a woman" (1990: 138). In this respect, Marlene appears as the representative of capitalism and Joyce appears as the representative of the working class. Marlene shows her hatred towards working class "I hate working class (...) I don't like the way they talk. I don't (...) like beer guts and football vomit and saucy tits / and brother and sister" and Joyce responds as "I hate the cows I work for / and their dirty dishes with blanquette of fucking veau" (Churchill, 1990: 139-140). Marlene believes that one should do whatever it takes to exist in a higher position in a capitalistic system, that is the reason why she left her child. Otherwise, Angie would have been an obstacle for her in becoming a successful businesswoman. After their quarrel comes to the end and they prepare to go to bed, Angie comes to Marlene

and calls her ‘mom’. Marlene thinks that she is asking for Joyce, however Angie knows her biological mom is actually Marlene, since she listened to their quarrel.

2.4.1. (De)Construction of Space and Time in *Top Girls*

In the first act, the restaurant appears as a transnational, transhistorical and transcultural place in which the legendary characters feast and celebrate the achievements of a businesswoman. The play “collapse[s] spatio-temporal boundaries, drawing guests from throughout history and across the globe” (Gobert, 2014: 12). All the characters come from different time periods and spaces; Isabella Bird comes from Edinburgh in the nineteenth century; Lady Nijo comes from Japan, in the thirteenth century; Dull Gret comes from a painting which represents the pillage to Hell, in the sixteenth century; Pope Joan comes from Greece in the ninth century; Patient Griselda comes from a story written by an English writer in the fourteenth century and Marlene appears as a modern time woman who was born in England, but now lives in America. This dinner table can be thought as a representation of Henri Bergson’s concept of spatio-temporal relations and simultaneity of time;

We project time into space, we express duration in terms of extensity, and succession thus takes the form of a continuous line or chain, the parts of which touch without penetrating one another. Note that the mental image thus shaped implies the perception, no longer successive, but simultaneous, of a before and after (2001: 101).

Bergson suggests that the units of time are no longer separated; instead, they all exist on the same line simultaneously. The continuous line may refer to the space in which all the time units are present. If the dinner table in ‘*Top Girls*’ can be seen as a continuous line of time, each woman from different time frames are the representatives of the simultaneously existing time units. Thus, the dinner table (restaurant) is a trans-historical space in which the heterogeneity of time, as Bergson suggests, can be constructed fictionally.

The guests have different cultural backgrounds; however, what they have in common is that they all suffered as a woman in a world which has been controlled by men, and have tried to resist against the patriarchy in their own ways. Bringing all these women together and making them tell their stories with their own words is a way of giving a platform to the multiple histories of women. It is also Caryl

Churchill's way to rewrite male works of art and history, which puts an emphasis on the narratability of history. These women were first introduced and told about in the history, in the Bruegel's painting or in '*Canterbury Tales*', by male authors. However, Caryl Churchill gives a new chance for these historical and fictional characters to tell their stories from the perspective of a woman in the play. Hence, she successfully creates a revolutionary platform that challenges the very conception of history and the accuracy of history, which coincides with the postmodern notion of history. She sets forth the uncertainty and multiplicity of the concept of history, including the implication that each history has its own variable perspectives depending on who narrates it, specifically with the dinner table scene.

Surrounding the dinner table with these women in a restaurant serves well for the purpose of creating a wholeness and unification of all women, irrespective of any physical obstacles. Feasts may function as a medium to "bring together people who do not normally eat together and who are often divided by status and other dimensions of social differences" (Joyce, 2010: 227). Creating a surreal dinner table, Caryl Churchill aims to bring together all these strong women, who do not share the same cultural, spatial and temporal background, regardless of their social class. The dinner table can be understood as the representation of sisterhood, and of all the suffering of strong women throughout history. It shows how women have come a long and agonising way to achieve their current position in the society, represented by Marlene, in the play.

Feasting in a restaurant is an important scene because the play could have started with a scene in which the women are having fun at one of the women's house while one of them are cooking for the dinner and talking about cooking etc. However, choosing a restaurant as the location for dinner is a way of shifting the women away from the domestic duties which are attributed to them: cooking and serving. Instead, they are drinking, rather than eating, and talking about serious issues and their success stories, as well as encouraging each other. They propose a toast to the accompaniment of Marlene's inspiring words: "We've all come a long way. To our courage and the way we changed our lives and our extraordinary achievements" (Churchill, 1990: 67). In this respect, the dinner table in a restaurant

not only stands for the celebration of their achievements, but also their spatial liberalisation from the attributed domestic duties.

The restaurant seems a utopic place or a site of utopia. Michel Foucault defines utopias as

sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. They [utopias] present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case, these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces (1986: 24).

The table is fictionally surrounded with strong and clever women, who are a spectacle of an exclusively female history, and are all living in different periods. They tell their life stories and how they all have to face their sorrowful memories and overcome the problems they have been forced to face. They all want to be supported, encouraged and congratulated for their achievements. Hence, the dinner table is first seen as a spectacular feminine utopia, which all women dream of at least once in their life; they are not here to be judged or commanded, but instead, to be listened and to share their personal life and personal choices.

As the act goes on, the obscurity of the dialogues becomes obvious, they are getting difficult to follow since the characters generally do not listen to each other, but interrupt each other's speech and talk about their own memories.

NIJO (to ISABELLA). I wasn't a nun, I was still at court, but he was a priest, and when he came to me he dedicated his whole life to hell. / He knew that when he died he would fall into one of the three lower realms. And he died, he did die.

JOAN (to MARLENE). I'd quarreled with him over the teachings of John the Scot, who held that our ignorance of God is the same as his ignorance of himself. He only knows what he creates because he creates everything, he knows but he himself is above being - do you follow?

MARLENE. No, but go on.

NIJO. I couldn't bear to think / in what shape would he be reborn. *

JOAN. St Augustine maintained that the Neo-Platonic Ideas are indivisible from God, but I agreed with John that the created

ISABELLA. *Buddhism is really most uncomfortable.

JOAN. World is essences derived from Ideas which derived from God (Churchill, 1990: 64).

When Nijo talks about her dead lover, Joan starts preaching to Marlene; however, Marlene remains careless about what Joan tells her. Both Nijo and Joan keep talking, and Isabella interrupts their speech to state her opinion about Nijo's religion. Similar to Isabella, Nijo is also critical about Christianity: "I had never heard of Christianity. Never / heard of it. Barbarians" and Isabella replies to Nijo, claiming that "there are some barbaric practices in the east" (Churchill, 1990: 60). They do not respect each other's differences in every sense. To illustrate, when Griselda shares her marriage story and expresses her obedience to her husband; Marlene becomes very critical about both her and her husband, and asked Griselda why she did not fight more to get her baby back after he took away her baby. Despite this, Griselda keeps defending her husband, which Marlene can't stand and so she leaves the table to go to the bathroom. The other women also ask questions and listen to Griselda's tragic marriage story; they are critical about Griselda's merciful attitude towards her husband. "The historical women 'remain locked in their own, singular perspectives' - perspectives which lead them to misunderstand or to judge others" (Kritzer cited in Cameron, 2009: 156). The reason why they all misjudge Griselda is because they do not take into consideration how Griselda was brought up, or the conditions she had to live in. They compare their own situations with Griselda's, rather than thinking about how society repressed her both physically and psychologically. These women, who do not welcome differences, even in themselves, suffocate in their own selfishness and ruthless judgement. Hence, they fail to create their own utopia, and the dinner table turns into a 'dystopia', and the play portrays the naivety of envisaging a female utopia in the contemporary capitalist societies, which are characterised by the self-help culture, ruthless competition, a patriarchal politic order and various forms of gender inequalities.

The second and third acts of '*Top Girls*' are set in Joyce's house (in the back yard and kitchen) and in the office of the Top Girls Employment Agency, in which Marlene works as a managing director. The acts portray the modern woman in both internal and external spaces, as a strong and independent figure. Joyce prefers, or is forced to be, a domestic woman for a while, and does not have the chance to lead a life she aspired as she had to take care of Angie. Despite the fact that she embodies a domestic figure, she also appears to be a strong and decisive woman who does not accept the oppression of her husband and who can earn money and take

responsibility of her child herself. Marlene prioritises becoming a successful businesswoman; thus abandoning her daughter in order to achieve her goals. She believes that one must do anything to exist and have the same opportunity as men in the capitalist system. Marlene is a representative of the shifting role of men and women in England in the 1980s and her character appears to have been created to deal with the question of gender equality and women's role in the changing world, which are woven in the dialogues among female characters.

Judith Butler contemplates on the nature of gender and how gender is created by the repeated actions in her seminal work *Gender Trouble*. Butler points out that gender identities are “a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (1999: 43-44). As opposed to the biological sex, gender identity is something created in time through repeated actions, which generates ‘performativity’. Hence, the temporality of gender becomes a matter of discussion, and defining gender as ‘temporal practise’ would offer a speculative medium for the subversive and transitionary gendered roles and social practices. If gender (identity) is something created or constructed temporally, it can also be deconstructed, as Caryl Churchill aims to achieve by creating Marlene, whose performativity is based on her professional achievements and constant competition with men and women in the public life. She is so dedicated to her job, that the office becomes a space for self-realisation and public recognition, in which she digresses domestic duties (including the abandonment of her child) and destroys all the stereotypical definitions produced to define women. It appears that the office becomes a performative space, in which she reconstructs her identity, by resituating women at the centre of business life.

Marlene is a successful businesswoman who sacrifices her child to reach her goal (debatably) and is able to rival against any competitor in the corporate realm. However, she also turns into a ruthless capitalist, who is careless about her peers and aspiring young women. “The play clearly argues that feminism without humanity and compassion is meaningless: that a world in which women simply ape male role models or adopt the values of corporate capitalism is no kind of advance” (Billington, 10 January 2002). As a play that has a critical attitude to Thatcherism (which refers to the economic and social style of Margaret Thatcher, who was

criticised due to her strict policies and capitalistic tendency), *Top Girls* suggests that unless economic and politic power is used for the benefit of all citizens; ideals will become the tools of corruption, humiliation and exploitation of the vulnerable by those in power. This is portrayed exclusively by Marlene, who turns into a ruthless capitalist, imitating the merciless and selfish patriarchal power of the liberal English society in the 80s.

The feminist approach is ruminated to be at the heart of the play, in terms of identification of space, characterisation, the character's lifestyles and personal choices. Apart from this, the sense of time is also another concept that contributes to the creation of the feminine time in the play, as opposed to masculine time. The play does not follow the chronological time, instead it promotes deconstruction of the present and past, which can be simultaneous, non-synchronical, self-regulating or utterly anachronistic in the postmodern world.

Act one takes place on a Saturday night, and the first scene of Act two is on a Saturday afternoon. The second scene of the same act narrates a Monday morning, and Act three takes place on a Sunday evening. Yet, in the chronological order, act three is set between act one and act two; act three is a flashback: going back to a year earlier. The time of day becomes harder to comprehend: the play starts at night, which is then followed by evening, afternoon and morning. Thus, Churchill deconstructs the course of the day through reversing the chronological order: starting the play at the end of the day and ending in the morning. In *Top Girls*, she directly challenges the masculine perception of time which is mostly defined as "not fragmentary, static, linear and dichotomising" (Adam, 1989: 462). Instead, following the feminine time, which is defined as: "cyclical, natural, task-oriented, relational and embedded, the time of reproduction, the family and personal relationships" (Bryson, 2007: 122).

Julia Kristeva comprehensively explains the rejection of linear time by women in *Women's Time*. She notes that:

linear temporality has been almost totally refused (...) Essentially interested in the specificity of female psychology and its symbolic realizations, these women seek to give a language to the intersubjective and corporeal experiences left mute by culture in the past. (...) by demanding recognition of an irreducible identity, without equal in the opposite sex and, as such, exploded, plural, fluid, in a certain way nonidentical, this

feminism situates itself outside the linear time of identities which communicate through projection and revindication (1981: 9-20).

Women were excluded by men from linear historical time for centuries. As a result of this, women have rebelled against the concept of linear time, through becoming self-aware, instead devising a cyclical time which opposes the traditional time sense. Rather than positing the masculine time, which is based on 'cause and effect' related progression, feminist writers have tended to create a natural and unstable sense of time. While constructing time that challenges clock time, it is suggested that women use their body as the foundational source. Therefore, the concept of feminine time coincides with the nature of the female body in various respects.

The feminine time is identified as fragmented and interrupted, that is the reason why the commonality of flashbacks or flash forwards is prevalent in women's works of art. The interrupted notion of time has a resemblance to the interruption of a woman's body. Emanuela Bianchi states that

We encounter interruption as an insistent trope at the level of female bodily experience. The woman's menstrual cycle is not experienced as continuous cycle, but as a punctuation that interrupts her daily activities with messy blood flow and sometimes painful cramping. If a woman becomes pregnant, her very being is further interrupted by the new presence. If she miscarries, that interruption is itself interrupted. If she breastfeeds a child, the hunger of another being interrupts her bodily integrity (2012: 39).

A woman's body is always exposed to intrinsic interruption. A female body experiences interruption in many ways, and this interferes with conceiving a female body as a whole. These physical interruptions also give birth to psychological outcomes, which mean that a woman's body is vulnerable to double the interruption. Being disrupted both physically and psychologically, the female body and mind experiences her daily life as fragmented. From this point of view, taking the natural female body as the guideline, female writers have created multiple and reversed senses of time in their literary works, rather than utilising clock time in their works. In this way, they have maintained a stance against men, who denied or undermined the existence of women in their male constructed history.

2.5. Conclusion

'Icecream' coincides with 'Top Girls' by means of the presented subjects; however, they differ in the way of presenting these subjects. The plays deal with the

problematic familial relations in the modern world. *Icecream* aims to mock familial relations whereas '*Top Girls*' presents disjointed familial relations of each female character including the women in the fantastic dinner table, which can be associated with the destroying effect of dominance of the patriarchy on the family structure, and the psychological outcomes of these problematic familial relations on the characters.

History is another complex subject, which lie at the heart of the plays. In '*Icecream*', history stands for the representation of identity quest and the anxiety of the protagonist. The history of nations has a propounding impact on individuals' identity. Due to the lack of history of America, the protagonist of the play suffers from the existential crisis. In '*Top Girls*', Caryl Churchill reveals the multiplicity of histories which depends on the perception of narrators and presents history from the feminist point of view. Her main aim is to deconstruct the women representations in male constructed history by giving women chance to raise their voice and tell their own story. It includes the divergent representations of women and their life story in historical and mythical texts and works of art.

Both of the plays succeed the loss of sense of time in different ways. Even though the years which '*Icecream*' is set are revealed, the lapses of time is not obviously presented during the play. The flow of time is provided with the transition of the scenes and places since different places are presented in almost each scene. The play is a good exemplification of the intertwined relation of space-time in terms of theatrical construction. Caryl Churchill collapses the linear and progressive perception of time in '*Top Girls*' by using flashbacks and deconstructing the course of the day. Especially the dinner party does not only refer to the timelessness, but also cracks the concept of 'reality'. Caryl Churchill challenges the masculine time by constructing the play with the feminine time, which puts forward the multiplicity of times and the loss of sense of time. Hence, Caryl Churchill uses feminine time as a medium to resist against the masculine way of writing and historical time.

The spatial construction of '*Icecream*' is related to the concept of 'geohistory' and reveals the hegemonic relation between the US and the UK. The play emphasis on the borderline between the two countries by setting all the scenes of act one in the UK and the scenes of act two in the US. This borderline refers to the mental border created in citizens' mind as well and is the very reason of the hostile

manners and prejudices of the citizens of the two countries towards each other. '*Top Girls*' exhibits space in relation with the construction of new female identity. First presenting the surreal dinner part, Churchill breaks the spatio-temporal limitations. She illustrates how women turns a female utopia into a dystopia. She also constructs the identity of modern world in outer world and non-domestic spaces like company. The company constructs the identity of the protagonist of the play as strong, strict and fearless to compete in male created world of business. In spite of the fact that the play includes domestic spaces like kitchen, the woman who is associated with this domestic space is no longer a traditional or domestic woman. In this respect, Caryl Churchill reveals how the traditional spatial boundaries and role of women has changed in the modern world.



CHAPTER III

THE SPATIO-TEMPORAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF BLACK IDENTITY IN ROY WILLIAMS' POSTCOLONIAL THEATRE

3.1. Colonialism and Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism is a cultural and socio-political theory that emerged as a counter critical theory to colonialism after the World War II. Colonialism can briefly be defined as “a form of domination and settlement in which one country politically dominates another” (Childers and Hentzi cited in Jackson, 2018: 51). Dating back to the Roman Empire period, this political domination over colonised countries brings economic and social benefits to the colonisers. Colonialism thus encompasses the practices of the Westerners on the colonised people’s land, and the consequent repercussions of these activities over these nations’ culture, religion, language, education and history. In critical response to this, postcolonial period can be defined as

the political constellation in the world after the Second World War in which virtually all former colonies had achieved independence, but in which various colonial and quasi-colonial relations continued to exist or to have their effects, like the use of English or French as an official language or the continuing economic, linguistic, or cultural dependence on the former colonial motherland (Leezenberg, 2018: 335).

Even though postcolonialism refers to the period after the colonised countries regained spatial and political independence, it would be wrong to define this as an absolute independence since social, economic and cultural effects of the colonisers have never disappeared entirely. Michiel Leezenberg, in this respect, states that “Postcolonialism [as a cultural theory] refers to a theoretical framework that systematically takes into account the fact of colonial domination and its enduring effects when studying political, social-economic, or cultural developments and relations in the contemporary world” (2018: 335). This systematical critique of the colonial activities has also fed into a vital critical theory to examine the

representations and discussions of colonialism in literature by the authors of colonizer and colonized.

Edward Said, one of the founding theorists of the (post)colonialism, wrote '*Orientalism*' to shed light on the relationship between these two sides and how they influence each other. Edward Said defines Orientalism as

corporate institution of dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient (1979: 3).

Edward Said names the 'Orient' as the spatial and cultural other (mostly eastern countries and Africa), and the 'Occident' as the European spatial identity and cultural subjectivities. He sees that the concept highlights the power on the 'Orient' by the 'Occident' by conquering their land, producing knowledge about them and restructuring their nature, economic, education and cultural systems and values. The 'Orient' is thus "almost a European invention" (Said, 1979: 1), and the domination over the "Orient" is defended by the colonial discourse to describe and label both sides.

Discourse is a very prominent weapon of the Europeans. Bill Ashcroft et al. declare that

the world is not simply 'there' to be talked about, rather, it is through discourse itself that the world is brought into being. It is also in such a discourse that speakers and hearers, writers and readers come to an understanding about themselves, their relationship to each other and their place in the world (the construction of subjectivity). It is the 'complex of signs and practices which organises social existence and social reproduction' (1998: 71).

Spatial and environmental relations and human interactions with the world is expressed through discourse. Hence, discourse is the prime importance for the existence of human in the world and the meaning making process. The colonial discourse and practices stand for the construction of identity and narrating history. Edward Said points out that "what gave the Oriental's world its intelligibility and identity was not the result of his own efforts but rather the whole complex series of knowledgeable manipulations by which the Orient was identified by the West" (1979: 40). West also stands for constructing and manipulating the 'Orient's identity in opposition to themselves to identify themselves. The colonial discourse is

benefited to define both the 'Orient' and the 'Occident'. Since the colonial discourse is based on binarism, "a development of that tendency of Western thought in general to see the world in terms of binary oppositions that establish a relation of dominance" (Ashcroft et al., 1998: 24), the West is defined as just the opposite of what colonised countries are attributed to. Edward Said continues his discussion noting that

men make their own history, that what they can know is what they have made, and extend it to geography: as both geographical and cultural entities-to say nothing of historical entities -such locales, regions, geographical sectors as 'Orient' and 'Occident' are man-made. Therefore as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West. The two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other (1979: 5).

Orientalism simply started as a spatial practice and gave birth to social, political and economic outcomes, and it has also shaped history. Considering the history as a subjective narrated social science, the history of the 'Orient' and the 'Occident' had already written by the West before conquering natives' land, then it was put into practice on natives in the colonised lands accordingly. Both the 'Orient' and the 'Occident' have a history of their own which are pre-determined and narrated by the West. What Edward Said emphasised is that the 'Orient' cannot be excluded from the history even if it is misrepresented. As the 'Orient' is the very determining entity which functions to define the West as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience, etc., the West needs an "other" for the self-identity. "The self-identity of the colonizing subject, indeed the identity of imperial culture, is inextricable from the alterity of colonized others, (...) a process of othering (Ashcroft et al., 1998: 12). Attributing negative stereotypes to natives and fixing their identity on these stereotypes such as "barbarism (...) savagery, cannibalism, lust and anarchy" (Bhabha, 1994: 41-72), the West identifies itself with positive connoted adjectives such as civilized and merciful. Thus, the 'Orient' and the 'Occident' are in a converse relation which displays the substantial existence of the 'Orient' for the West and gives the West its identity.

As one of the most influential postcolonial feminist critic, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak supports what Edward Said suggests and deciphers how the discourse power completely belongs to the West in her famous essay '*Can The Subaltern Speak?*'. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak discusses whether there is even a

possibility for the subaltern, which is first attributed to “non-hegemonic groups or classes” (1971: XIV) in a Marxist context by Gramsci, then referred to the oppressed and native people in the postcolonial context, to speak. She is mainly concerned with revealing the desperate situation of subaltern women in this essay. She accentuates the absence of texts and responses in the Colonial Literature. Claiming that subalterns remain silent, cannot write or speak, she underlines that they should find a way to make themselves heard, but it is impossible since they do not have the power to create a counter-discourse. Because they cannot get access to the institutionalised language, Spivak concludes that “the subaltern has no history and cannot speak” (1999: 274). They cannot also write their own history, they are told about and represented in the history from the standpoint of the West.

Like Edward Said and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Frantz Fanon, who is a psychiatrist and intellectual from the French colony of Martinique, tackles with the historical existence and representation of negroes in ‘*Black Skin, White Masks*’ and ‘*The Wretched of the Earth*’. As Frantz Fanon declares, “the colonist makes history” (2004: 14). As the one who has the opportunity to control history, the colonist aims to pass it down from the colonist point of view. “He [negro] has no culture, no civilization, no ‘long historical past’” (Fanon, 1968: 34). Taking the narration of history in their hand, the colonist can have the chance to exclude, misrepresent, or manipulate the colonial culture and historical subjects.

Frantz Fanon also analyzes the process of becoming a negro, the internalized inferiority of being a negro and the psychological outcomes of colonialism on colonised people. He reveals how the West succeeded alienating negroes, who lived in the Western countries, from their country and people by giving example a black Muslim;

Jean Veneuse is a Negro. Born in the Antilles, he has lived in Bordeaux for years; so he is a European. But he is black; so he is a Negro. There is the conflict. He does not understand his own race, and the whites do not understand him (1968: 64).

His sense of belongingness is destroyed as a liminal entity since he cannot be embraced by both sides. This cultural and psychological liminal space may be followed by the identity quest.

Frantz Fanon also touches upon how religion is benefited in the colonial period. “As times changed, one had seen the Catholic religion at first justify and then condemn slavery and prejudices” (1968: 119). “The Church in the colonies is a white man’s Church, a foreigners’ Church. It does not call the colonised to the God, but to the ways of the white man, to the ways of the master, the ways of the oppressor” (2004: 7). Religion and religious institutions were not used to teach the pure Christian doctrines but to attain the colonial purposes as religion is the easiest way to manipulate realities and to deceive people.

Whereas Edward Said just points up the realities of colonial perspective, Frantz Fanon presents his suggestion for the process of decolonization, too. He first emphasises the importance of territory since colonialism is a spatial act in its most basic logic. “To destroy the colonial world means nothing less than demolishing the colonist's sector, burying it deep within the earth or banishing it from the territory” (Fanon, 2004: 6). Reclaiming the territory is the first and the most significant step to decolonise the land, the culture and the people. He, then, explicates that the colonised only knows to react or resist against violently since the colonised exposes the coloniser’s violent actions. Frantz Fanon suggests that “violence can thus be understood to be the perfect mediation. The colonised man liberates himself in and through violence” (2004: 44). Frantz Fanon suggests violence for decolonization since it is the only way the colonised knows.

The postcolonial discourse also gave rise to non-violent methods and new terms in order to overcome this oppressive and dominating attitude of the West on colonised people. The non-violent ways of resistance of natives is called ‘sly civility’, which is defined by Homi Bhabha as “the native refusal to satisfy the coloniser's narrative demand” (1994: 99). Hybridity is one of them which is used to explain the cultural and racial mixture. “Cultures come to be represented by virtue of the processes of iteration and translation through which their meanings are very vicariously addressed to - through - an Other” (Bhabha, 1994: 58). The colonial entity is affected by the coloniser in a place of liminal hybridity and the hybrid entity undergoes to the process of mutation. As a result of this, the colonial entity is neither an absolute colonised subject nor a coloniser subject, but the combination of the two.

There emerges mimicry as a consequence of hybridity. Being explained by Jacques Lacan, and then transferred to the postcolonial discourse, mimicry is a “camouflage, in the strictly technical sense. It is not a question of harmonizing with the background but, against a mottled background, of becoming mottled—exactly like the technique of camouflage practised in human warfare” (1998: 99). Rather than the harmony of differences, mimicry for Jacques Lacan, is an act for resemblance. It is based on hiding the true identity, the essence. Homi Bhabha takes Jacques Lacan’s definition of mimicry and adapts it as colonial mimicry stating that “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (1994: 86). Mimicry is, then, the act of imitation of colonised to have resemblance with colonisers to attain the power of colonisers and also as a means of “a mask, a mockery” (Bhabha, 1994: 120). It leads to the colonial anxiety since it is a way of exercising power by mocking. It brings forth the multiplicity in the sense of identity so that a colonised identity experiences both the native’s and colonisers’ identity as the Other. It is never a slavish imitation, not assimilation but an exaggerated imitation. The Other never intends to be as exactly the same as colonisers. Mimicry, which creates the very feeling of in-betweenness, is an intention of destroying the stereotypes and destabilizing binary oppositions which are attributed by the West purposively. The colonised identity maintains the existence as a liminal entity in a liminal space.

As a result of the hybridity and the act of mimicry, there occurs the concept of third space, as an indication of liminal space, which is explained in the geographer Edward William Soja’s ‘Thirdspace’. He elucidates what the ‘thirling’ means in the third space. Based upon Henri Lefebvre’s *The Production of Space*, Edward William Soja explains ‘thirdspace’ as a cultural phenomenon. For Edward William Soja, ‘thirdspace’ is “‘thirling-as-Othering’: a voice simultaneously from the margins and the center, the future and the past, the infinite possibilities of space from all points and times simultaneously” (Aitken, 1998: 149). The third space infers the spatial and temporal simultaneity and co-existence of oppositions.

In the postcolonial discourse, the third space is referred to display the spatial and temporal co-existence of the Europeans and non-Europeans. The third space “quite properly challenges our sense of historical identity of culture as a

homogenizing, unifying force (...) constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity” (Bhabha, 1994: 37). The third space challenges the concept of fixity and drives at the interaction between the self/coloniser and the Other/colonised and results in the heterogeneity of culture, language, tradition and historical identity. “Cultural identity always emerges in this contradictory and ambivalent space” (Ashcroft et al., 1998: 118). Third space sets forth that culture is not a fixed phenomenon as the West claims since both the colonised and colonisers’ history, identity and culture are in a mutual interaction. It draws the conclusion that culture is transnational “because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement. [Thus,] the transnational dimensions of cultural transformation - migration, diaspora, relocation - makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification” (Bhabha, 1994: 172) This complexity may be followed by a problematic process of adaptation and (re)construction of black identity.

Homi Bhabha goes on his discussion with the temporal aspect of the concept of third space. “What is manifestly new about this version of international space and its social (in)visibility, is its temporal measure - ‘different moments in historical time ... jumps back and forth’” (1994: 218). The third space creates an ambiguous area in which the explicit line between the self and the other, and the past and the present disappears. This temporal aspect of third space also constitutes the non-synchronous postcolonial temporalities, and contributes to the examination of the temporal construction of the plays which will be analysed in this chapter. It can also be anticipated that the third space functions as a destruction of the labeling, fixing and stereotyping the Other as well as presenting a threat for the Europe.

The integration of different cultures, on the other hand, may either give rise to acculturation which occurs “when groups of individuals having different cultures come into direct and continuous contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (Redfield et al., 1935: 229-230), or transculturation, a “contact zone (...) where ‘disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of dominance and subordination” (Ashcroft et al., 1998: 233). These concepts include neither the

processes of culture-change nor assimilation, rather a process of adaptation in a harmonious way.

The Other in the third space has no longer an absolutely pure and unaffected history, identity and also geographical space as well as the self. The Westerns went to the natives' land for the aim of colonization, and non-Westerns went to the West to mimic them, to be educated like them and to lead their lives like them or as an act of sly civility. Mimicry and hybridization, which are mentioned in the previous pages, are means for the sly civility such as combining natives' and colonisers' language to create a hybrid language. It is a way to show a reaction against colonisers without aggression and violence and to challenge the narrative savage imagery created by the West.

The process of hybridization, mimicry and the concept of third space bring forth the discussion of what is called 'ambivalence' in the postcolonial discourse. The coloniser

acquires its meaning after the traumatic scenario of colonial difference, cultural or racial, returns the eye of power to some prior, archaic image or identity. Paradoxically, however, such an image can neither be 'original' – by virtue of the act of repetition that constructs it – nor 'identical' – by virtue of the difference that defines it (Bhabha, 1994: 107).

As it is demonstrated in the previous pages, the construction of both the colonial and the coloniser identities is based on their differences and binary oppositions. Their pure identities can maintain their existence in an oppositional relation. If this oppositional relation crackles and the exact line of differences disappears, their identities are also ruined since both entities become indiscernible. It causes anxiety on the coloniser as they never want exact replicas of themselves as it will create a threat for themselves. Apart from this, what the colonised entity does is no more than mockery under the name of mimicry. Under this circumstance, the coloniser cannot sustain the dominating and oppressive power on the colonised entities which is the very reason for the coloniser anxiety. Thus, ambivalence is never welcomed by the coloniser because it destroys the borderline which identifies and distinguishes them from the colonised entity.

Based on all these terms and methods which has been discussed above, postcolonialism, in itself,

names the activities by which new subaltern histories, new identities, new geographies, new conceptualizations of the world -, transnational rather than western - are fashioned and performed and seeks through them to redress current imbalances of power and resources in the pursuit of more just and equitable societies (Young, 2001: 66).

Postcolonialism appears as an encouraging idea, which offers 'subalterns' to create their own history and spatial relations which constitutes their new transnational identity by protecting their own culture and by challenging the Eurocentric worldview. Moreover, it gives a chance to 'subalterns' to exercise power or create a more equality-based world in which they are no longer oppressed.

3.2. The Theatre of Roy Williams

Roy Williams is a black British playwright who is best known for his awarded play '*Sucker Punch*', discovered his tendency to theatre at a young age and started working in theatre. Watching many theatre rehearsals, he decided writing plays with the help of the actors he worked with. His first play, '*No Boys Cricket Club*', Roy Williams says, is "about a middle-aged woman called Abigail, whom I loosely based on my mother" (2006: 115). Starting his writing career with a play in which he wrote about his mother's generation, Roy Williams' way of characterization plays a very significant role in his plays. He "allows his characters to illustrate the stark realities of a modern, urban multicultural Britain" (Lane, 2010: 113). He exhibits the subjects of multiculturalism, dynamic identity relations, white-black, black-white, and black-black relations in his plays through the transformed characters.

In '*Joe Guy*', '*Sucker Punch*' and '*Starstruck*', the aspiration of the black characters for celebrity life is exhibited. Presenting problematic father-son relations of black people who expose cultural assimilation, the plays uncover the struggle of the black identity in multicultural Britain. '*Clubland*' deals with the close friendship of white-black characters and abusing sexual black stereotypes. '*Lift Off*' also presents white-black friendship and aims to show whites are also vulnerable to assimilation as well as black in a multicultural environment.

Williams's plays aim at questioning the black identity in especially Britain in the postcolonial era. During an interview, he says that

How accepted are we? On the surface it's changed; we don't have signs saying 'No blacks, no Irish, no dogs.' Those days are gone. But what I'm asking in my plays, is: have they really? Is it just all on the surface? Are we really as safe and well as we say we are? (2006: 116)

Williams aspires to find answers to these questions in his play. He discusses how disputable to say that colonialism ended in a time and place in which the traces of it still exists. He questions the place of black identity and still evidently existing British marginalizing approach to blacks in Britain in the postcolonial era. Handling with these issues, Williams represents both the black and white (historical) identities and cultures objectively.

It would be accurate to manifest that the postcolonial theory in literature deals with the temporal and spatial relations which lie at the very heart of the new subaltern identity. In this chapter, Williams' '*Sucker Punch*' and '*Joe Guy*', in which two black characters seek for their new identity far away from their homeland and get a place in the society, will be analyzed in terms of spatial and temporal boundaries and its effect on their construction of multicultural identity. Besides, the theatrical space and time of the plays will be also elaborated to uncover the postcolonial time and space. It will be also focused on in what ways the postcolonial sense of time/space is distinguished from the European time.

3.3. *Sucker Punch*

'*Sucker Punch*', which is the most well-known play of Roy Williams, is a two-act play that is set in London in the 1980s when Margaret Thatcher was the prime minister of England. Two black guys' tough lives in Britain and their relation with white people are presented in the play. It focuses on the black people's search for new identities and how they have come so far culturally and politically. The play portrays the British colonialist attitude to the black, shifting the power relation between black and white people and how this shifting power relation has an influence on the black identity.

Act I is set in a gym which is run by Charlie, a white boxing trainer. Tommy, who is a young and promising white boxer, is doing pad work with Charlie. Two black guys, Leon and Troy, are cleaning the toilets. Troy appears to be a very self-confident and wise guy whereas Leon is more silent and humble. Beck, Charlie's daughter, comes to the gym and Troy tries to attract her. This leads to an argument between Tommy and Troy since Tommy cannot stand a black guy chatting up a white girl. They manifest their hatred and start arguing by attempting to control a woman's body. Tommy despises Troy saying "you lot are so busy with throwing petrol bombs, you wouldn't know what to do with a woman" (Williams, 2013: 211). While Leon tries to lighten the mood, Tommy does not tend to calm down and attack to Leon and Leon responds in the same way. Instead of breaking up the fight, Charlie remains silent and watches them. He sees the potential in Leon. He, then, gives a chance for Troy and Leon to get trained to be a boxer. Leon takes up this opportunity and addresses the audience by telling the story of his boxing career.

The scene continues with Leon's visit to father, Squid. He advises Leon against fighting off the ring. However, Leon remains careless about his father's advice. Leon pays more attention to Charlie's words than those of his father. When Leon talks in street English, Charlie warns him advising that "talk more better English, like me", and Leon responds "yes, Mr. Magss" (Williams, 2013: 222). Even though Charlie has a patronizing and condescending attitude towards Leon, Leon does not defy him as Leon admires Charlie deep inside. Things get changed with the sudden decision of Tommy about changing his trainer. Charlie does not want to break up with Tommy since Charlie sees a glorious future in Tommy. Nonetheless, Tommy is determined to leave Charlie. This results in pinning Charlie's faith upon Leon for his aspiration of being a trainer.

One day, at nighttime, Leon escapes from the police and comes to the gym since he thinks Charlie has already gone, however surprisingly, Charlie is still in the gym. Charlie sees the bruise on Leon's hand and wonders what has happened. Leon tells that the police have tried to nick himself and Troy although they haven't done anything wrong. This drives Troy crazy and there starts a scuffle between them and the police. While Leon tells what happened, Troy comes in the gym and complains Leon since Leon has left him alone. They start to argue and Charlie no longer wants

Troy in the gym. Troy decides to leave the gym, but Leon does not. This becomes the turning point of Troy and Leon's brotherhood, which affects Troy profoundly. After this, Troy decides to set off to America.

The lights are now on Leon and Tommy who are seen fighting on the ring. Tommy is about to lose the match and cannot accept it: "no way am I losing to a black man!" (2013: 247). The match ends with the victory of Leon. Tommy, who cannot stomach Leon's victory, tells Charlie that Leon and Becky are in love with each other. Charlie leaves the match after what he hears. Leon does not understand what happens and does not want Charlie to leave him saying that "no, no, no. Charlie Maggs is still my trainer, and I'm his boy" (Williams, 2013: 249). Leon cannot acknowledge being left by Charlie since he considers Charlie as a stand-in father.

Act II also starts in the gym with the conversation of Leon, Becky and Squid. Squid reminds Leon his professional career as a boxer and grumbles about Charlie. Charlie comes in the gym drunk and dismisses Becky and Squid from the gym and talks to Squid in a rude manner. Leon does not stop Charlie and Squid feels hurt and leaves the gym without saying a word. After that, Charlie expresses his regret because of their business partnership and expresses that he does not want to work with Leon anymore. Since Leon insists on working with Charlie, Charlie tells that only if Leon gives up Becky, he can work with him. Leon accepts Charlie's condition and gives up Becky.

In the next scene, lights are on Leon and he narrates how he gets the belt in 1987. He earns a lot of money and becomes a prominent boxer. After a while, Becky and Leon are back in the gym. Becky is in relationship with a white guy, however, Leon still has feelings for Becky. Charlie also sees Becky in the gym and wants to talk to her but Becky refuses to talk and leaves the gym.

Ray, Troy's trainer, appears in the gym and tells that Troy has become a renowned boxer and it surprises Charlie. When Troy scuffles with a policeman, Ray sees Troy's potential as a boxer, and Ray decides to support him. Ray and Charlie arrange a match for Troy and Leon and negotiate on the money which will be earned from the match. Charlie accepts the lower price since he wastes all the money in the stock market in the time of recession. Leon gets angry with him, but Charlie has still

hopes for the lost money: “Maggie (Margaret Thatcher) will sort it!”, and Leon responds: “Never mind bloody Maggie. The money!” (Williams, 2013: 269). Charlie is driven by material gain to such an extent that he supports the politics of Margaret Thatcher. Leon, on the contrary, is against Thatcher’s capitalist and racist ideology and he blames Charlie for financial failure.

The scene continues with the phone call of Troy and Leon before the match. Troy pretends as if he does not know Leon since his heart is broken. Leon reminds him of the old good days, but Troy is indifferent about what Leon says. The match ends with Charlie’s throwing the towel which Leon refuses and wants to keep fighting, yet, Charlie leaves the ring.

Leon is back in the gym alone. Troy comes into the gym and sees the gym is closed now. Because Charlie puts all the money into the stock market, they lose whatever they have and they have to close down the gym. Troy and Leon find a last chance to appreciate each other, but Troy has to go with Ray due to the next box match. Charlie appears to tell Leon that he shouldn’t give up and should find another trainer. However, Leon is determined to give up fighting and leaves the gym without knowing where to go and what to do.

By means of the spatial representations, the play is a very prevalent example of the identity construction of one’s with a spatial context. The rise and the downfalls of both white and black characters are all portrayed in the gym and rings which play an essential role in their lives. These places allow multiple interpretations in the context of space and identity and are also emblematic to represent the struggle of black people for possessing power. Especially the gym stands for the dynamic processes in which black identity is reconstructed in a place that is surrounded by the white public.

The play starts with a scene where Leon and Troy work as cleaners. The gym is a dynamic space where blacks and white co-exist in the postcolonial England. In this regard, the gym may be seen as a ‘third space’ in which

the split-space of enunciation may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the inscription and articulation of culture’s diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s hybridity. To that end we should

remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture (Bhabha, 1994: 38).

Rather than being based on the dissociation or limitations, the concept of third space is concerned with the integration of different races and cultures. The gym hosts both whites and blacks at the same time and takes the lead in the hybridisation process of culture, language and identity. However, there appears a white man in the position of the employer and two black guys who work under him. Whereas the whites are the ones who directly manage the gym, contribute to the gym financially and establish a space for recognition and self-actualisation, the black characters remain in the background and run errands for others. The gym, thus, testifies the cultural and political (and professional) superiority of the white over the black in contemporary urban life.

In time, the inferior position of black characters changes with Charlie's discovery of Leon's fighting ability. Leon rises in his career in the gym where he gets promoted from cleaning to boxing. He succeeds in becoming the UK and European champion and eventually dedicates his life to the gym and rings. The gym and rings appear to be the liminal space in which his construction of identity is linked to race and reveals the subjective struggle of a young black character in a country which has a long history of colonialism and racial subjugation. Even though Troy and Leon separate, Troy also becomes a very reputed boxer in America. They both seize a chance to achieve their 'self' in a space which is characterized by struggle, transformation and recognition.

There emerges the discussion of the collaboration of time and social space which shapes the perception and the construction of identity. Space and time do not have fixed or passive connotations, but, both conceptions, in their very essence, are active and open to transformation and reconstruction. Spatiality and temporality are ongoing processes that also set forth the unstable and continuous process of the (re)construction of identity. If spatial and temporal relations are transformable themselves, identity is also a concept which can be transformed and renewed, and it can be beheld in the spatio-temporal relation between Leon, Troy and the gym.

When Charlie tells Leon that Charlie wants him to leave the gym, Leon has a very moderate attitude towards Charlie saying that “You don’t want me to go, and I ain’t going. Yer like a dad to me.” (Williams, 2013: 256). This drives Charlie crazy;

Charlie (in a range) BUT I’M NOT YER FUCKING DAD, AM I? I’M NOT YER DAD, LEON, I NEVER FUCKING WAS, I DIDN’T ASK TO BE. How can I be yer dad? Have you ever heard the like? Well, have yer? You think cos you’ve got crowds cheering you on now, I call you son, that makes you one of us? Believe it, Leon, it cos its true. We hate you (Williams, 2013: 256).

Charlie never internalizes the presence of Leon as an equal so that he forces Leon to give up on Becky. To Charlie, a black man can never be a member of his family. Since Charlie has materialist and capitalist motives, he sees Leon as a product to commercialize and to be benefited from. Apart from the business relationship, Charlie has nothing to do with Leon. Charlie just takes advantage of Leon by using his money without his permission. When Charlie wastes all the money they have earned by putting into the stock market, Leon gets mad at and shouts at Charlie. Charlie cannot stand Leon’s aggressive attitude since he considers that he is the boss in the gym, however, Leon is aware that the balance has been shifted in the gym.

Leon Fuck you, telling me what to do any more. Just know, I took you with me, when no one else would. I got you onto the coaching team at the Olympics, even though everyone was telling me not to. You know why? Cos no one rates you! I’m all you’ve got. I’m gonna save you, gonna save this gym, and you’re gonna be on your knees thanking me for it (Williams, 2013: 269).

Leon makes clear that the current situation of the gym and their business partnership has been achieved through his hard work for fame and success. Charlie cannot acknowledge the fact that the future of himself and the gym depends on his recognition of Leon’s achievements and seeing him his equal. Charlie’s dilemma is both personal and cultural unwillingness to establish a mutually beneficial relationship. He therefore represents an ideology established and nurtured by Thatcherian liberal/nationalist economy and socio-cultural politics. The wrong choice of Charlie by putting all the money into the stock market at the time of Margaret Thatcher affects the future of the gym as well. Charlie is a blind supporter of Thatcher, who changed the economic system of England. These changes can be briefly summarized as “the reduction of the trade union [and] reduction of state economic power through the privatisation programme” (Brazier, 1991: 486). Charlie wants to take the advantage of this privatisation programme, however, things do not

go well for him and he loses all the money they have. As Charlie and Leon are now penniless and cannot afford to work the gym, they have to close the gym.

The gym occupies an important place not only for Leon but also for Charlie. Charlie has been dedicated his life to the gym. In the last scene of the play, when they talk about what they are going to do after closing the gym, Charlie tells Leon that he cannot stay in the gym anymore. Leon asks Charlie “Where am I supposed to go, Charles, tell me? (...) Just leave me here”. Charlie tells that “It’s over, boy! It’s all over. We lost. Are you receiving? Do you think I want this to happen? This was my gym, this was my home” (Williams, 2013: 283). Leon thinks they still have a chance to make things right and insists on working the gym together. However, it would be impossible for Charlie to work the gym anymore. This unfortunate event pulls at both Charlie and Leon’s heartstrings in such a way that they do not have any idea about what to do and where to go.

Leon becomes a successful boxer and takes revenge on Tommy, who stereotypes and humiliates black people on the ring. The ring is thus a symbolic grave to bury Leon and his reputation as a black boxer. Leon summarizes the circumstance at the beginning of their fight with these words,

Oh yes, this is a bandit country, without a shadow. All these crowds, all white, pale faces, It’s spot the darkie. They’re cheering Tommy, on telling him to bury me. That’s what they want, ever since the Brixton riots, Broadwater Farm, they wanna see a fucking wog buried, put in his place. I’m the main course and they are serving me up! (Williams, 2013: 247)

Leon is aware that the ring is the only way to show his resistance to whites’ oppressive and humiliating manners towards blacks. His response comes with the performativity of the victory. He says that “Does the Pope live in Rome? Of course, I am going for the world title! I can’t be touched, I won’t be touched” (Williams, 2013: 259). The gym and the ring function as a means to change his miserable life and low status and give him prestige and reputation so that he sublimates boxing as a way of self-realisation and resistance. The victory on the ring reverses the racist and colonial discourse on the inferiority of blackness in a white culture and its theatrical and performative display validates the struggle of an individual in front of a representative public and sends a wider message to the migrant communities about a potential space for self-realisation and public recognition.

Besides, the ring is presented as a space for power struggle between white and black people. Leon, as a representative of blacks and his life story as a representative of blacks' historical identity in both the colonial and postcolonial periods, displays the process of reclaiming blacks' dignity and identity. He upsides down his inferior position, gains self-confidence, and gets a place in the society by fighting and defeating, specifically whites, on the ring. As Frantz Fanon claims, Leon puts account of the ring, which is a sign of violence, as a weapon against whites to challenge their oppressive and dominating attitude. Leon does not have a chance to compete with white people as a black person. After becoming a prosperous boxer, Leon defeats most of the white opponents on the ring. The ring as a choice of setting also evokes what Frantz Fanon suggests in the decolonisation process. Frantz Fanon asserts that the colonised people tend to put to use violence as a well-known medium in order to resist against the colonial power and liberate themselves. "At the individual level, violence is a cleansing force. It rids the colonized of their inferiority complex, of their passive and despairing attitude. It emboldens them, and restores their self-confidence" (2004: 51).

Consequently, Leon has a cyclical spatial journey throughout the play. His journey starts from the gym, as a private place in which he achieves deconstructing the stereotypical black identity. He reaches the rings, a public space in which he introduces his new strong identity to the society. The ring is a passage from private space to public space. It is the ultimate stage for self-assertion and public recognition. It also denotes popular culture, fame, corruption, loss of values and identity crisis. The journey ends in coming back to the private space, the gym where he can no longer carry on his career and ends up losing his reputation. The gym is related to the individual struggles and also cultural prejudices.

The play copes with the spatial and temporal boundaries and demarcates the spatial extent of reconstruction of Leon's black identity in relation to the gym. Apart from the spatial extent, Williams reconstructs and represents black identity in the way of narrating history and historical identity via monologues.

The play includes two monologues which are told by Leon as an address to the audience. The first monologue is told at the very beginning of Leon's career as a boxer. In the first monologue, Leon tells his first fight with a white guy on the ring

rhapsodically. He narrates the enthusiastic atmosphere of the ring, his personal thoughts about the white opponents during the course of the match in this monologue. He ends the monologue with his defeat.

The second monologue is told when Leon starts advancing in his career as a professional boxer. He mentions a number of arranged matches in a few months with the names of his opponents.

Leon Charlie set up a fight for me against Paul Kieron from Leeds. Royal Albert Hall, thousands of seats, it was a seventy thirty split seeing as Kieron was a former world-title holder. I take Kieron out in five. Three months later, I'm there again, battering the hell out of Noah Hunter in the fourth. And all we got was a forty split. The nerve! Earls Court next, take on the UK champ, Shaun Callum, it was a fifty split, but it took me nine rounds to get that belt off him, and then six in the rematch, which is where the real money is and I ain't lying, we cleaned up! Spring of '87, Wembley Arena, fighting Paul Edwards, and, yes, finally, this time we are the ones calling the shots, setting the pace, walking away with the biggest purse. Seventy thirty in our favour and, I swear, I can almost smell that dinero. I get the drop on Edwards in the third, all too easy. Oh yes, without a doubt, I'm in my prime now. Money is rolling in. My face is on the front page of the Boxing News. Giving Chas his first European title belt after I gave that Kraut Werner a proper spanking. Oh yes! Now I have papers, magazines, telly interviewing me nearly every week now. Asking me if I'm ever going for the world title? Let me get this straight. Two title belts. Ten wins. Six knockouts (Williams, 2013: 258).

Leon's monologues are a reaffirmation and subjective construction of his success in professional career, which constitutes an important part of his public identity. Whereas Leon appears as a weak and amateur boxer in the first and more private monologue, he transforms into a popular and unbeatable boxer by winning the UK championship. In both of the monologues, Leon narrates his own experiences and feelings about himself, struggle and transformation. Therefore, the monologues are presented as a kind of autobiographical talk. However, a key difference between two monologues lies in spatio-temporal perception of this identity construction. Particularly, the latter shows that the places of popular culture and national legacy of modern England such as Royal Albert Hall, Earls Court and Wembley Arena are mentioned to measure the extent of his success which turns him from an ordinary boxer to a national hero and a sensation for sports enthusiasts on the front page of the news. This temporal ascent in his career is inscribed on the spatial emblems of national identity and British history such as Royal Albert Hall, which was constructed by Queen Victoria for the memory of his husband Albert, a venue representing national pride and cultural dominance of Great Britain in the 19th century. Leon's monologues, in which he, as a black entity, has the right to speak

about his own life, he does not exist as the object but the subject and narrates his life story from the first person, may be speculated as a challenging and resisting against the blacks historical identity which is attributed by the colonialists. Since he appears as the agent in the narration of his individual history, he precludes the manipulated representations of blacks' historical identity. In Frantz Fanon's words, "it is not I (...) who makes a meaning for myself, but it is the meaning that was already there, pre-existing, waiting for me" (1968: 134).

The representation of black identity from the colonial perspective is challenged in the monologues. This terrified, inferior, and bad connoted representations of blacks are vanished especially in the second monologue. By narrating his own history, Leon goes down in history as a strong, reputed and respectable black boxer refusing the predetermined historical identity attributed to blacks. As Fanon notes that "in the magazines the Wolf, the Devil, the Evil Spirit, the Bad Man, the Savage are always symbolized by Negroes or Indians" (1968: 146). In this way, Williams challenges what Spivak concludes in *Can the Subaltern Speak?* "historical silencing of the subaltern" (1999: 311) by utilising monologues to give voice to a black individual to re-present himself and reconstruct his public identity.

In a strategic manner, time is not indicated neither at the beginning of the first nor the second act. It is only told by Leon in the second monologue towards the midst of the act as 1987. This is the only remark on the time throughout the play (except for the Leon's visiting the gym at night). Williams does not include stage directions or background information of the play just like he does not indicate the time directly, but presents the time via the monologues. Monologues are especially instrumental and serves to different ends in the theatre. Williams uses monologues to provide a temporal space for his lead character to reveal the details of his life and discursive quality of the racial identity in a white culture where black body is both transgressive as a storyteller:

At the heart of the paradoxical quality of the monologue is its simultaneous focusing and interruption of stage action; it forces the spectators to imagine things they cannot see yet is accompanied by the invisible exhortation that they 'see' the speaker as a character in (or at least in the context of) the onstage action they have been witnessing up to that point. It inevitably involves, then, the redirection of the audience's attention (Geis cited in Sava, 2019: 168).

Leon's monologues are in this sense used to interrupt the action emphasize/detail the action, (they can be considered as breaks in plays) or transgressing the cultural discourse and perception of racial identity. Audiences are left with Leon's very personal thoughts on his life and the monologue is a theatrical device for the integration of audiences with a discussion of race and identity. Furthermore, monologues also function as a tool to provide the temporal flow like *Sucker Punch*, which throws the cultural and economic realities to the audiences' faces. Both monologues cover different temporal periods and the radical change in the public perception through time. Rather than just an interruption, they provide the transition between the scenes that aim to fill the gaps between the acts in the play and show how England is in constant cultural and political flux, where blackness is a new hybrid identity carrying both a nations' long and dark history of colonialism and new dynamics and opportunities for black individuals, who can influence the society with their personal accounts of struggle and change.

3.4. Joe Guy

In conjunction with *Sucker Punch*, *Joe Guy* tells the story of a black guy who is in search of identity in Britain. It also portrays the circumstances of a young black man's life and advancement in the career in the contemporary British Society and the public and personal attitude towards blacks in the postcolonial Britain. It touches upon the problematic relation between different racial and ethnic groups, and demands these groups to self-criticise and progress culturally and professionally.

The play starts with a scene in which Joe Boateng interviews a reporter called Juliet in a hotel lobby in 2007. Joe gives an account of his life story: he is born in Ghana and comes to England when he is six-year-old. He is first discovered by the City (a football team) and starts his career as a soccer player. Juliet asks Joe whether he knows that a woman called Naomi who asserts that Joe is the father of her child. This drives Joe crazy and Juliet is forced to stop the interview and leave the hotel lobby.

The second act goes back to 1997 when Joe's talent has not been discovered yet, and he works at a burger bar. There are customers in the burger bar called Monique, who humiliates Joe, and Naomi (black). Marcus enters in the burger bar.

He is a West Indian, a term to refer people “from the Caribbean region” (Jackson and Cothran, 2003:579). Joe and Marcus have known each other from the school years, but they cannot get on well with each other. Marcus mocks Joe saying that “so black, that when he goes to night school, the teacher mark him absent!” (Williams, 2013: 17). When Monique and Marcus leave, Naomi stays with Joe and consoles him.

The third and the fourth act are set one year later. The third takes place in a dugout during a football match portraying Carlton, a black soccer player who is jealous of Joe’s talent. The fourth act takes place in a burger bar with a conversation of Joe and Naomi who wants to attract Joe. They have a discussion on the black identity. Joe is proud of his pure black identity, and distancing hybrid racial identities by scolding that “Boys like him [Marcus] are all messed up inside, cos they have got white blood in them” (William, 2013: 33). Joe’s racial attitude can be best defined in the concept of “mimicry” of the dominant ideology and racial discourse with a twist: this time a black man classifies and racially profiles people according to their race as the white European did in the colonial era in Africa, India and the Caribbean Islands. The fifth scene is presented as a soliloquy in which Joe seems to practice a kind of conversation alone in the stage. He, then, addresses the audience and shares his hatred towards Marcus in the form of a monologue.

Rod, who is one of the white players in Joe’s team, and Joe are in the toilet in 1999. Rod shares his negative opinions about Carlton’s play, thinks Carlton is a slow player and no longer is favorable and popular among people, but Joe remains silent. After they leave the toilet, Carlton steps out of a cubicle.

The seventh scene is set in a park and a conversation between Joe and Naomi is presented in 2000. Joe is an arrogant womanizer guy who mostly desires white women and assumes that all the girls desire him. He displays an arrogant attitude towards Naomi, whose heart is left broken in turn. Just before Naomi leaves the park, she sends Joe a message that makes Joe blanch.

The first scene of Act II takes place in a hotel room in 2001. Joe and Lauren (white) have a conversation about the match that Joe’s team has just won. Rod (white) and Carlton enter the room. Carlton complains about the way Joe plays and they start to quarrel. Their quarrel is followed by Carlton’s hitting Lauren. They

decide to play a game to flirt with Lauren. Joe wins the game and Carlton has to leave the room angrily. Joe and Lauren leave the room to make love and Rod decides to join them.

The setting of scene two is a front door in 2002. Joe and Naomi have a child and Joe wants to see his child. Naomi keeps distance with Joe who is heavily drunk. Naomi does not want to show him the child. All of a sudden, “he turns to face Helen, seated in the restaurant” (Williams, 2013: 65). Helen is Joe’s agent and Joe tries to convince him to sleep with himself, however, she refuses his offer. Helen asks who raped the girl in the hotel room, Joe or Rod. Joe defends himself and Helen tells that she paid the girl to keep her silent. “Joe turns round to face Naomi” (2013: 73). Naomi witnesses their conversation and Joe tries to convince Naomi that he did not rape the girl. Naomi does not believe in his words.

Scene three is set in a police cell in 2004. Marcus and Sarge (white) carry drunk Joe into the cell. Marcus, now, is a policeman who now becomes a religious man. Joe does not know why he is in a police cell since he is always drunk and does not remember anything. In scene four, a living room is presented in 2005. Joe spends time with his father, Jude. Jude complains about Joe’s carelessness and shares his regret about bringing his family to England. Jude keeps talking about how he did his best to raise Joe and his sister, but Joe leaves the room quietly. When Jude realizes Joe has gone, Jude holds back his tears.

Scene five is again set in a burger bar in 2007. Joe and Naomi quarrel since she does not let him see the child. Naomi asks him about the raping accusation. Joe tells that he did not do anything, he just fell asleep and maybe Rod raped the girl. Naomi chooses believing him and lets him see the child. The play ends portraying Joe’s desperate and wretched circumstance in terms of familial and incorporeal relations.

Considering Joe’s pitiful state, it can be inferred that migration and its physical and psychological consequences on individuals and their communities lie at the very heart of *Joe Guy*. Joe and his family migrate to England when he is six-year-old to have better life conditions. Their emigration is presented as the turning point of their individual lives and family relationships. As a spatial act, migration has

temporal dimensions and this spatio-temporal change plays a critical role in construction of identities.

Sharifi explains that migration, in its very broad sense, “as a sociological term describes the process in which persons relocate their centre of life across national boundaries” (2017: 323). This relocation does not only refer to the physical spatial displacement, but also comprises a mental and psychological one. There lies a hope for a better future in the very essence of migration. However, it has inevitable outcomes for migrants since their identities and lives expose to an incessant change. Curtis C. Roseman points out that “for migrants who are entering an area dominated by a larger ethnic group, problems of assimilation in addition to adjustment can present themselves” (1971: 595). Joe, who is in a paradoxical identity quest, is a cultural and ideological embodiment of assimilation. Coming from Ghana, he tries to keep his black identity alive stating “I am pure, I’m all black” (2013: 33). When Carlton accuses Nigerians of having “some fucked-up names, blood”, Joe responds as “Ghanaian, not Nigerian” (Williams, 2013: 54). Joe seems to be sensitive about his racial identity and tends to protect his Ghanaian background. However, his assimilation is evident from his monologue at the beginning of the fifth scene of Act I. He practices a conversation on his own by struggling to get rid of his Ghanaian accent;

‘Joe, my man, what you say, bruv’ – not bruv, bro, say bro! ‘Joe, my man, was up, bruv.’ Bro, not bruv! ‘Wass up, blood.’ ‘Blood, man, blood, you get me, seen?! Yes, yes, Joseph, no, no, Joe, Joe Guy, me name’s Joe Guy. Yes, blood, yes, man, yes!’ (Williams, 2013: 35)

His Ghanaian accent hardly fades, and he manages to continue his speech with better English. He spills out his hatred against Marcus, who is another character exposed to assimilation and insults Joe due to his darker skin colour. The rough relation between Marcus and Joe reveals the historical and cultural discord between the African and Caribbean ethnic communities living in metropolitan centres of modern Britain. Joe starts the second part of the monologue as if Marcus was on the stage;

‘Move from me wid yer batty hole, Marcus, and yer stink breath, move, step! Is who you looking at? You scoping me? You want try summin? I don’t see no one else here, Marcus, it’s you one, looking at me!’ Bout you eyeballing me? You tink I go ‘low dat, you dizzy or what? What do I look like you, what do I sound like, some booboo big rubber-lips monkey-faced African bin bag? Dat ian’t me no more, nosir! I’m oneyer you, I’m better dan you! I’m the new and improved model. Come now, dread, bring yerself, or is you a pussy? You pussy? I’ll spark you in the fucking face, you nuh! From

now until kingdom come, I go mash you up! Then I go sex yer woman, ca' she looking tit! Go ride her, bareback, Then I go dash it, and go laugh in yer face, tell you about yer batty hole! When I call, you best come, that's the way it is now! That's the way it's gone stay. I'm running things now – you get fresh, you get cut. You come reach for me now, I go school you now, you pussy hole, rass clart, boomba hole, batty bwai! Seen? Aiiiiiieeee! You is the African one now (Williams, 2013: 35-36).

Joe's identity transformation is revealed through his language. The monologue elicits the fact that Joe is willing to get rid of his Ghanaian background and he has a strong desire to imitate the national characteristics of the dominant white culture. This confirms his process of appropriation which is defined as "tak[ing] over those aspects of the imperial culture –language (...) even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis" (Ashcroft et al., 1998: 19). As opposed to what Jacques Lacan and Homi Bhabha admit, Joe's appropriation can be best explained as slavish imitation. He believes that his new identity and mastery of English are the only ways to get over his ethnic inferiority. Williams utters that "[he] thought that was a nice contradiction, and nice complexity to put on stage – seeing that black character acting like a white fool" (2006: 120). Joe appears to be a character in the play who blindly accepts the stereotypification of non-British as a racial other as fashioned by arrogant and corrupted nationality and race based political discourse. Even though he pretends to have a strong attachment to his racial identity (expressing his affinity with his homeland and pride in his pure blackness), his shift of attitude represents the process of assimilation of black identity under the hegemony of colonial dominance of Britishness over other racial identities.

Joe's father also recognizes Joe's assimilation. After the rape accusations, Joe visits his father. Jude expresses his regret about migrating to England saying "I should have never brought you to England. They have you all mixed up over here. All of them with their bling bling!" (Williams, 2013: 88). Jude realizes that coming to England was a wrong decision for the family. Rather than protecting his black identity, Joe "got lost in their nasty world" (Williams, 2013: 88-89), but Joe remains indifferent to his father's words, solely caring about himself and his reputation.

During their quarrel, Jude discloses the circumstances in which black migrants live in England. He asks Joe "why do think so much of those idiots now are growing lock, changing their names, wanting to take the first plane back to their 'spiritual home'" (Williams, 2013: 88). He suggests that the ones who are ashamed

of their racial and cultural background (just as Joe does not use his second name, Adusa, as it reminds him of his Ghanaian background) are in exile, which represents “a psychological, philosophical, and existential condition that defines this experience of migration as displacement, loss, and homelessness” (Meerzon, 2017: 19). So as to be accepted by the society in England, black migrants are forced to alienate their blackness (their names, language, culture etc.). Jude is conscious of their current situation however, Joe is not. As Jude suggests, Joe is alienated from his self and racial ethnicity by being captivated in material gain and popular culture of a foreign society. This leads to the loss of his connection with home and creates a life led in exile.

The literal absence of home is spatially represented through temporary and transitory experiences in hotels, burger bars, the football dugout, the toilet, the park, the front door, the restaurant, the police cell and the living room. There is only one place which can be affiliated with home, the living room. However, this place is not even Joe’s home, but it belongs to his father. When he gets bored of his father’s harangue, he longs for leaving his father’s home. Joe has no place to attach to such as home and, instead his life is constructed through temporal transitions and spatial settings, which suggests his sense of alienation and rootlessness in his new environment. The absence of home also supports Jude’s criticism of Joe. When Joe visits his father, Jude expresses his expostulation;

I have not seen you for eighteen months, and all of a sudden, whoosh, you show up. You have gotten yourself into trouble again, and all of a sudden you remember who you are. And that’s when I see you (Williams, 2013: 87).

Joe’s first and the last visit to his father is just after his imprisonment because of the rape scandal. Their problematic familial relationship can be interpreted as loss of their past and cultural roots.

Another implication that shows Joe’s life in exile is presented via the police cell. Presenting a black body in the police cell also reveals the spatio-temporal position of the black body. Young admits that

On a certain level, the body is the futured history—the future made past—of a prior body. My body is the futured body of my great-great-grandmother, my great-grandmother, my grandmother, and my mother. It is the future manifestation of my

ancestors' bodies viewed from a past perspective in which the future past, the future, is the then-present that is now (2010: 138).

This quotation reveals the interconnectedness of different temporal representations of the body. It is suggested that the concept of body exists in the temporal continuum. The present body can be regarded as the carrier of the past, and at the same time the past of the future body. Joe's body in the police cell is the representation of his ancestors' body. Young goes on his discussion stating that "we can think of black bodies, throughout history, (...) placed in jails and prisons at disproportionate rates in the postemancipation period to the present day" (2010: 118). Presenting a black in the police cell, Williams demonstrates the historical and the present spatial representations of black bodies which is expected to affect the future representations of black bodies.

Regarding the theatrical time, the play includes two starting points since it was written in the form of flashbacks; in a hotel lobby in 2007, when the play was written, and 1997, the scene in a burger bar. Flashbacks may be benefited in order to shed light upon the present circumstances in which characters live in or a specific occasion or as Deamer puts it, "flashbacks may be triggered by an event in the present" (2016: 127).

In the hotel lobby scene in 2007, there rises a scandalous incident (from the point of Joe) affecting both Joe's social life and his reputation. Without having been introduced yet, Naomi is involved to the play with her claim that she is the mother of Joe's child. The relationship between Naomi and Joe is revealed through a flashback. Going back to ten years, 1997, the year when they first meet, the scene describes the scandal, when Joe is at the beginning of his soccer career. This ten-year flashback also unravels how Joe's arrogance and spoiled nature has built up in time. As Edmund Husserl points out "an identity runs throughout the temporal continuity" (1991: 250). These ten years in the play displays Joe's acquisition of a corrupted and selfish character. Therefore, it is shown that time spent as an immigrant in England damages his sense of concept of morality to attain a place in a respected circle of the British society.

The use of flashbacks entails a non-sequential time order which signifies postcolonial temporality for ethnic others. As it is discussed in the previous chapter,

European temporality is scheduled in a linear, chronological and sequential way. Just like the feminist theory's rejection of European (which is also called masculine) time, the postcolonial theory also aspires after collapsing the European temporality as a literary way of rebellion. Instead, the postcolonial theory supports the fact that the conception of time is "a plurality of times existing together, a disjuncture of the present with itself" (Chakrabarty, 2000: 109). Rejection of chronological historical order is evident in the postcolonial temporality. By means of the perception of temporality, the traces of postmodernism are obvious in postcolonial theory since both of the theories regard time as multiple, non-chronological/non-linear, and set forth diversive ways of temporal representations. Hence, flashback can be put to use to challenge the Eurocentric sense of temporality in the postcolonial context. Rather than Europe's homogeneous temporality, postcolonialist writers embrace heterogeneous temporality. Thus, Williams makes use of flashbacks in the play so as to present past and present co-existing together; past in the light of present or vice versa.

The play also includes radio sections in which generally white speakers' conversations are presented. They function as a theatrical device for the spatial and temporal construction of the play. The play includes five radio sections for the aim of transition of scenes which are set in different time and different places which link scene one and scene two, scene six and scene seven, scene seven and scene eight, scene eight and scene nine, and scene four and scene five of act two. The play is set in various places and many temporal intersections so that the radio parts are used to reduce the confusion created by quick temporal and spatial transitions. They provide audiences some time to follow the play as they can be regarded as interludes to the acts of play.

The radio sections constitute short conversations on the British attitude towards Africans. The play objectively includes both the white-black and black-black attitudes and relations. The black/black relationship is narrated through the events and dialogues whereas white-black attitudes are represented via the radio sections except for the last one which will be discussed later in this chapter. There also given voice to blacks to respond stereotypes attributed by whites and to defend their culture and country.

The radio sections, which lie at the heart of the theatrical temporality verbally represents the British society in the Postcolonial era. The first radio section is all about whites' ridiculing blacks' dresses and names;

James There's this church near me, full of Africans, every Sunday, all dressed up in their whatchacallit?

Angie Kente?

James Yeah, wid their head ties and robes, like it's Carnival or summin? Would it kill them to wear summin normal?

(...)

Eddie All dem Africans need to do is juss change their names. Especially the men. Then that'll be it, problem over. (Laughs.) Honestly, if you see a girl that you like and yer checking her, the last thing she wants to hear is some long-arse mashed-up African name like Babaloodoo Oku Daiye summin summin (Williams, 2013: 20).

This quotation is the exemplification of modernity from the European point of view. "Europe constructed itself as 'modern' and constructed the non-European as 'traditional', 'static', 'prehistorical'" (Ashcroft et al., 1998: 145). Europeans do not have tolerance for the cultural diversities. They wish to impose their way of life and cultural values to non-Europeans due to their Eurocentric approach. As a reaction to whites' ugly attack on the black culture, a black guy called Badru praises African women and culture;

Africa has a lot to offer, namely our women. You will not find anywhere else on this earth women who are more beautiful, sensual and graceful. That is why for years those awful skinny white models on the front cover of Vogue have tried to copy my Nubian (an indigenous group who is present in Egypt and Sudan) sister. And every one of them to copy my Nubian sisters. And every one of them is as black as coal, and I am not embarrassed to say that. There is nothing wrong with black. The darker the berry, the sweeter the juice (Williams, 2013: 21).

The first radio section is concerned with the whites' humiliating attitude to blacks' culture and lifestyles, and a black man's defense of blackness. Including physical differences, "their [Nubian] women are continually perfecting" (Strouhal, 2010: 57) and they are fashionable. Badru underlines white women's admiration of black women through Nubian women since the black women body deserves credit for their color and shape. He means that white women want to have a bronze skin color because of their desire to look like black women. It is also an example of the ambivalent relation of whites and blacks in the play. This radio section foreshadows the quarrel of Carlton and Joe on African names.

The second radio section tackles the love relation between black and white individuals. A white man called Yinka tells that “why is it that nearly every black man I know and don’t know happens to love a white woman?” (Williams, 2013: 39) His claim uncovers the prejudice of whites for black men. This claim leads to the idea that black men tend to harass or rape white women. Whenever a white woman is abused or raped, whites can put the blame on black men easily. This claim sets forward in the second radio section can be regarded as the justification of whites for raping issue in the first scene of act two. Even though there is Rod (white) except for Joe in the hotel room, the law and the society put the blame on Joe. Putting the blame on a black man is the easiest way for a white man to wash his hands of raping accusation as nobody works through it.

The fourth radio section is included to the play so as to exert how Europe has treated the colonised people throughout the colonial history. It functions as a reminder of the colonial history from the West Indian point of view;

Jason I’m West Indian, yeah, an’ we didn’t ask for any of this, yes? In fact, if you want to take a step back, my-great-great-great-grandparents didn’t ask for it, either. They didn’t ask to be kidnapped, shackled in chains, get piled on a boat, so they can be raped, beaten, whipped until they get on their knees to pick cotton for the rest of their days and sleep on floors, move! It was their so-called brother and sisters who sold them out, they decided who stayed and went. Imagine what kind of a nation Africa would have been if my ancestors were allowed to stay, if they all did. Imagine. Now see Africa for what it is now, a mess! They brought it on themselves, man. And they look down their noses on us cos a few West Indians are getting ahead, step! (Williams, 2013: 62-63)

This expostulation uncovers the pathetic practices on colonised people applied by colonisers. Jason touches upon black slave trade led by England, which is a crime against humanity in the history of colonialism. The Royal African Company of England is known as the organization which reached the highest number of enslaved African shipping to the Americas. “From its foundation in 1672 to the early 1720s, the African Company transported close to 150,000 enslaved Africans, mostly to the British Caribbean” (Pettigrew, 2013: 11). These colonised slaves were being transported under atrocious conditions to be employed in very low prices. Besides, they were also struggling to overcome the psychological outcomes of displacement which resulted in maintaining their lives in exile. Considering colonialism as an economic practice, these people were forced to spend their lives under adverse circumstances for British economic interest. Thus, this radio section can be regarded

as a historical manifestation of colonial practice from the viewpoint of an indigenous entity.

The radio sections in the play point up the general approach of the colonisers to colonised people both in the colonial and postcolonial periods. It is fathomed out that the traces and effects of colonialism is still present in the postcolonial era. They also reveal how years passed in ten years and concluded that not many things have changed in the society's perception of skin color for centuries. However, the last radio section is included to the play for the hope of reconciliation between Africans and Caribbean communities with following lines: "black is pride, black is wisdom, black is power, black is freedom, black is strength, black is knowledge, black is achievement, black is intelligence, black is royal, black is love, black is beauty" (Williams, 2013: 90). Angie's (a West Indian) message underlines the long-needed solidarity and unity of all black communities in order to show the authenticity of their cultures and solidify the power and resistance of individuals against a hegemonic culture of their countries.

3.5. Conclusion

Both '*Sucker Punch*' and '*Joe Guy*' are written to demonstrate the black people's journey of gaining new hybrid identities in a new country. Putting young black guys at the centre of the plays, Roy Williams portrays two sportsmen, Leon as a boxer and Joe as a soccer player, who long for celebrity life to exert power on others emulating the hegemonic power of the white culture in Britain. At the end of their journey, both characters are vulnerable to assimilation and/or identity crisis.

Williams exhibits the different experiences of Leon and Joe. Whereas Joe is an ethnic victim of migration and dislocation, Leon's glorious career as a boxer opens up new opportunities for asserting his agency and actualises a dream of being popular and accepted by the society. Compared to Joe, Leon embraces a more humble journey to fame and acceptance, but he comes across various forms of prejudice and discrimination from people surrounding him such as his trainer. '*Sucker Punch*' is simply concerned with the white/black and black/black binaries. In '*Joe Guy*', a specific emphasis is put on the litigious relation between distinct black communities and reflected through the hostile manner of the characters.

The theatrical time of the plays are constructed in such ways that it can be regarded as a challenging act of Roy Williams against the European sense of time. Starting not indicating the time and providing very few temporal expressions, '*Sucker Punch*' is a considerable play in term of loss of sense of time. On the other hand, '*Joe Guy*' presents all the temporal details of each scene. However, it still challenges and collapses the traditional perception of theatrical time like the other examined plays in this thesis as it is written in the form of flashback. Other than this, both of the plays deal with narrating the history from black point of view.

The plays handle the concept of diaspora, "voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions" (Ashcroft et al., 1998:68) in relation to the concept of liminal and hybrid third space and dislocation, sense of exile and assimilation. Roy Williams realistically puts forward the problematic disintegrated cultural and social relations rather than the processes of acculturation or transculturation. The plays target uncovering the psychological and social impacts of the spatial relations of the black entities through the Black diaspora which causes the identity crisis of the protagonists. Hence, both of the plays successfully achieve reflecting the stereotypes, prejudices and victimized black identities who maintain their lives in a multicultural British society in a time period that bears the traces and impact of a colonial history.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF SPACE AND TIME IN MARK RAVENHILL'S POSTDRAMATIC THEATRE

4.1. Postdramatic Theatre and Spatial and Temporal Representations

Postdramatic theatre can be best understood in the light of the previous theatre movements such as the symbolist theatre, in which the theatre “loses much in human characterization, dramatic action, and realistic stage-settings” (Tisdell, 1920: 240) in the sense of mixture of visual staging and performing acts. By creating illusionary characters and non-realistic dramatic atmosphere, symbolic drama aims to symbolise certain emotions, values and ideas, which can also be observed in postdramatic theatre.

Besides the symbolic theatre, the impact of Bertolt Brecht, a Marxist German poet, director and theatre practitioner who theorizes Epic Theatre, and his dramatic techniques on Postdramatic Theatre is undeniable. Bertolt Brecht identifies his dramaturgy as ‘non-Aristotlean drama’ for many reasons. Even though plot occupies a fundamental place in both Aristotlean drama and Brecht’s Epic Theatre, “for Aristotle “plot” meant a single action of a certain magnitude, for Brecht it consisted of a multiplicity of actions within a discontinuous epic construct” (White, 2004, 226). Whereas the plays of Aristotle are constructed chronologically and the stories have continuity, Bertolt Brecht’s plays are “stereometric in [their] construction, moving on many simultaneous space, time and narration” (O’Connor, 1961: 687) and stands out their theatrical aspects.

Epic Theatre also differs from Aristotlean drama by means of content. Whereas Aristotle sees the aim of drama is to create “pity and fear [and] the cleansing of these states of feelings” (Aristotle, 2006: 26), Brecht’s theatrical method “aims to situate both artist and viewer within and in conscious relation to the historical present in order to illuminate a position of active, critical involvement in

the knowing and making of the world” (Glahn, 2014: 8). Aristotle’s plays do not include political representation. On the other hand, Brechtian theatre targets representing historical facts as they are within the political context and provide audiences a critical approach towards the politics of that age. Since he is highly influenced by Marxist teachings, he calls his theatre ‘Dialectical Theatre’ in his declining years. Correspondingly, he is keen on presenting contradictions in his plays.

In order to provide audiences a critical approach, Bertolt Brecht creates a new theatrical technique called ‘Verfremdungseffekt’ or ‘V-effect’, known as the ‘alienation effect’ or strategy of estrangement (Glahn, 2014: 8). The goal of this technique is to get audiences away from their mentally or psychologically comfort zone by addressing to them and breaking the fourth wall which is also one of the prevalent aspects of Postdramatic Theatre.

The Theatre of Absurd, which “reveals the irrationality of the human condition and the illusion of what we thought was its apparent logical structure” (5), has a similar tendency to Epic Theatre in the sense of time and place. The plays are constructed in a way that “neither the time nor the place of the action are ever clearly stated” (Esslin, 1960: 3). Therefore, the Theatre of Absurd guides Postdramatic theatre in the sense of spatial and temporal relations for search for identity.

Parallel to Epic Theatre and the Theatre of Absurd, time and space are no longer constructed in a traditional way, but appear as dynamic concepts in the postdramatic theatre. When Glenn D’Cruz comments on “the neutral scene”, which can be considered a right term to discuss the neutralness or neutral elements of postdramatic theatre, he suggests that “the dialogue does not refer to space and time” (2018: 67). That is, these, which are already abstract and fluid concepts, are made more abstract, complex and obscure elements of the new theatre.

Hans-Thies Lehmann’s ground-breaking book titled ‘*Postdramatic Theatre*’ theorises the theatre from the 1970s up to now and discusses in what ways a play can be appraised as postdramatic. He starts the book by elucidating what the ‘post’ in the postdramatic means. He argues that

‘post’ here is to be understood neither as an epochal category, nor simply as a chronological ‘after’ drama, a ‘forgetting’ of the dramatic ‘past’, but rather as a rupture

and a beyond that continue to entertain relationships with drama and are in many ways as analysis and 'anamnesis' of drama. To call theatre 'postdramatic' involves subjecting the traditional relationship of theatre to drama to deconstruction and takes account of the numerous ways in which this relationship has been refigured in contemporary practice since the 1970s (2006: 2).

Calling the new theatre 'postdramatic' does not mean that it is something completely different from the classical theatre. It still grounded on the remnants and offers a reconfiguration of the classical tragedy as it has changed in many ways including techniques, style, staging and etc. The new theatre can no longer be evaluated in the traditional way. What postdramatic playwrights reject is the fundamental concepts of the Aristotelian tragedy. Hans-Thies Lehmann states that

tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete and whole and that has some magnitude, since it is possible for there to be a whole with no magnitude. And a whole is that which has a beginning, middle, and end (2006: 29-30).

Whereas Aristotle sees art mimetic in general, "postdramatic theatre can be seen as an attempt to conceptualize art in the sense that it offers not a representation but an intentionally unmediated experience of the real (time, space, body)" (Lehman, 2006: 134). Imitation is a key element in Aristotle's tragedy which is torn apart in the postdramatic theatre. Marvin Carlson notes that "the real enemy of the postdramatic is the mimetic" (2015: 591). Postdramatic theatre features neither representation nor imitation, because it "seeks to go beyond the limitations of representation" (Barnett, 2013: 65). It provides the audience with the experience more than mimicry by prioritising 'presentation'.

Since the objective of the new theatre is to exhort audiences to experience the life, theatrical and artistic should concur with everyday life. Hans-Thies Lehmann notes that "theatre is the site not only of 'heavy' bodies but also of a real gathering, place where a unique intersection of aesthetically organized and everyday real life takes place" (2006: 17). The language, characters and events are all created accordingly. Palaces, castles, kings, queens, and ornamental language are no longer popular, but a small flat or an office can be space for the theatre. It is also very common to encounter the use of slang or swearwords in the constructions of the live event on stage.

Another distinct feature of the postdramatic theatre is that it does not present a clear beginning, middle and end structurally. There is no longer a linear or chronological whole, so "we can diagnose the loss of the time frame" (Lehmann,

2006: 155) in the theatre. The progression of play is not sustained in a linear way. The ordered whole is collapsed with the use of (non)dramatic and theatrical techniques. “The linear progression of time can be punctuated and also reversed in the form of a ‘flash-back’ or a ‘flash-forward’” (Azaryahu and Foote, 2008: 180-182). In this respect, the sense of time gets a complex shape in the audience’s minds. During the play, they struggle to adapt to the change of time, and the present time includes various, at times clashing or disarrayed temporal frames and units.

The relation of text to performance is also debatable in the context of the new theatre, and a differentiation between drama and theatre is often made. “While drama refers to a dramatic text written in order to be read by readers and to be staged by directors, theatre connotes not only to the performance but also lighting, costumes, make-up, décor, the theatre building, etc.” (İzmir, 2017: 2). The text-based theatre of the previous ages is transformed into a performance-based theatre. The text has still an important role in the theatre, but performance has become before the text. There is a turn to performance which comprises the skills and styles of directors and players. Rather than representing or imitating the characters in the play as they are, actresses/actors present these characters as living entities. A postdramatic play constitutes the unity and disunity of all these factors and gains different shapes and meanings in the hands of directors and players.

With the turn to performance, audiences are involved more in the making of the theatre event. ‘The new dramaturgy’ seeks a new relationship with its audience: this theatre wants its audience to share in the multiple points of view, or at least alienate from its ‘normal’ way of viewing” (Kerkhoven cited in Fülle, 2017: 292). Audiences become a part of plays and theatre deviates in the form of unfixed and potent presentations. Hans-Thies Lehman says that

They require the spectators to become active co-writers of the (performance) text. The spectators are no longer just filling in the predictable gaps in a dramatic narrative but are asked to become active witnesses who reflect on their own meaning-making (2006: 6).

Audiences are not thus passive observers of the action on the stage, but they are placed right in the middle of the action by negotiating their own identities. In some ways, “Postdramatic theatre asks us to rethink the ways in which we read and perform plays” (Barnett, 2008: 23). Audiences may be asked questions about the events on the stage, and they may be expected to give direction to the play, which

permits improvisation and collaboration on the stage. This allows multiple interpretations and multiple meaning-making processes whenever plays are shown. In this respect, audiences cannot be sure whether they experience a real or virtual time duration, and there arise questions as to the experience of time, space and identities.

Since the new theatre forefronts performance, 'theatricality' shows up as a feature of postdramatic theatre. Roland Barthes explains theatricality as

It is theater-minus-text, it is a density of signs and sensations built up on stage starting from the written argument; it is that ecumenical perception of sensuous artifice – gesture, tone, distance, substance, light- which submerges the text beneath the profusion of its external language. (1972: 26).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the new theatre puts the performance in a prior position to the written text of plays. Music, dance, physicality, gestures, lighting etc. are put forward to contribute to theatricality. The action on the stage is often supported by music or sounds, which destabilizes the feeling reflected at that time, or electronic sounds create deeper and diverse effects on the audience. Events can be presented with a choreography, or the whole play can be staged as a musical. The movements and bodies of the dancer are chosen to convey certain feelings, experiences or events, hence they turn into the sources of impression and meaning in theatre. Hans-Thies Lehmann points out that “the body becomes the center of attention, not as a carrier of meaning but in its physicality and gesticulation” (2006: 95). In this respect, 'body' is a medium and tool dominating the theatrical presentation. He goes on to state that “love appears as a sexual presence, death as AIDS, beauty as physical perfection” (2006: 96). Ideas are presented physically using 'body' and body language is frequently used along with verbal and nonverbal language.

Within the context of body, actors/actresses have a substantial role in creating the theatrical atmosphere. They sometimes remain silent and stop the motion completely, or the motions are slowed down. Besides silence and duration, repetition, interruption, long pauses, and broken dialogues are often utilized in the new theatre. These techniques on dialogue also contribute to the theatrical time of the play and create an awareness on the flow of the theatrical time. All of a sudden, the conversation gets complex and becomes non-sense. At this point, audiences may feel an obligation to contemplate on the play and themselves.

The organisation of the stage space is another way to activate the audiences' minds. Stages may be closed places like rooms of a house or an office, and they are not filled with many props, or they can be left empty "to provoke the spectator's own imagination to become active on the basis of little raw material to work with it" (Lehmann, 2006: 90). The stage is principally decorated in such a way that audiences have to work out their own meaning of the play on an individual level. The aim of the minimalist stage decoration is not to present everything as fixed or readymade, but get the audience to enter into a world of minimalism, multiplicity, repetition, fantasy and disarray. Accordingly, the theatre space gains a new shape with the facilities of the modern age. Along with real props, technological devices on stage such as cables, microphones, screens function as new props in the new theatre. Especially the screen is used to set up the stage so that the external space and actors/actresses appear on stage. Alternatively, some of the characters are literally presented on stage while some of them are shown on screens. There emerges a 'technological space' and this space is augmented with spatio-temporal props.

With all these new techniques that make the new theatre 'postdramatic', the authors raise a provocative voice against the systems, policies, values and actualities of their epochs. "Those writers unveiled their anger via their plays which grabbed truth instead of degenerate bourgeoisie theatre and gave voice to social and political issues of the period in which they lived" (Doğan, 2016: 115). The meaninglessness of the war, cruel attitudes of governments during the Cold War era and the effect of all these violent agencies on human psychology have successfully been staged and problematised by the playwrights and the postdramatic theatre has thus proved to be a potent form to present human subject and its portrayals within disorderly, tyrannising and unstable settings.

4.2. Mark Ravenhill's Theatre

Mark Ravenhill's dramaturgy turns upside-down almost all the previous conventions or Aristotelian dramaturgy. His '*Shoot/Get Treasure/Repeat*', for instance, is a collection of sixteen distinct short plays, which has no direct bearings on each other and does not feature a linear perception of time at all. In many of his plays, the place is left ambiguous. '*The Experiment*' stands out with a disregard for real time, place and character. Even the gender of characters is not fixed and the

speaker is ambivalent and inconstant. His plays are permeated with the identity quests, which is an outstanding feature of the postdramatic theatre. His *'Ghost Story'* deals with the fear of death of two sick women, in which the roles and identities dissolve and become undistinguishable towards the end.

'Ten Plagues' is written in verse form and consists of sixteen short sections. It portrays a journey in the city. The setting changes in each section. The sense of time is recreated with the use of temporal words that do not refer to a specific or historic time such as today, yesterday, tomorrow, or at night. Addressing the audience repeatedly, the protagonist, who is characterised by the subject 'I', reveals that he is aware of being an actor and he takes part in a theatre event. It involves the audiences in the play through the characters addressing them. *'Ten Plagues'* is indeed a remarkable example of 'metatheatre', which was coined by Lionel Abel in 1963. Lionel Abel states that "they are aware of their own theatricality" (1963: 60) in the meta-theatre. Another extraordinary example, *'A Life in Three Acts'*, is made up of the speeches by Ravenhill and the performer Bette Bourne. At the beginning of the play, Mark Ravenhill introduces himself and then they have a conversation about Bourne's past. What makes the play unusual is that it is like an interview rather than a constructed story.

Mark Ravenhill wrote plays in the context of history and politics which are very popular themes among the postdramatic playwrights as well as postmodern and postcolonial playwrights. "His mannerist plays examine gender, class, and the political-social climate in which his characters live, and how the transactions of daily life (present and past) shape a, specifically British, culture" (Svich, 2003: 81). He harshly criticises the wrong policies of the countries which affected people both physically and spiritually in his *'Over There'* and *'The Experiment'*, which alludes to the cruel policies of the Nazis in Auschwitz, and *'Shoot/Get Treasure/Repeat'* which is about the US invasion of Iraq. Besides historical and political subjects, "Mark Ravenhill deals with the issue of popular culture, especially its aspect of consumerism" (Kostić, 2011: 162). *'Shopping and F***ing'* can be the most striking example of this. In this revolutionary play, "Ravenhill tries to show a consumerist and capitalist society to spectators, using violence and shock" (Güneç, 2017: 152). Due to the attacks on the consumerist Western societies in his plays, he has faced a critical backlash and political denunciations in the media and other platforms.

His plays starkly bring up the daily life to the stage, and this is what makes his place situated in the in-er-face theatre as well. Sierz comments that

The widest definition of in-er-face theatre is any drama that takes the audience by the scruff of the neck and shakes it until it gets the message. It is a theatre of sensation: it jolts both actors and spectators out of conventional responses, touching nerves and provoking alarm. Often such drama employs shock tactics, or is shocking because it is new in tone or structure, or because it is bolder or more experimental than what audiences are used to. Questioning moral norms, it affronts the ruling ideas of what can or should be shown on stage; it also taps into more primitive feelings, smashing taboos, mentioning the forbidden, creating discomfort. Crucially, it tells us more about who we really are. Unlike the type of theatre that allows us to sit back and contemplate what we see in detachment, the best in-er-face theatre takes us on an emotional journey, getting under our skin. In other words, it is experiential, not speculative (2001: 1-6).

In-er-face theatre aims to create a shock effect on audiences. Plays are mostly unexpurgated, swearing words or violent scenes are not cut out, but actors/actresses perform in an explicit way that what happens onstage really strikes audiences' mind. It shakes up and helps primitive feelings deep inside humans come to the surface. It incorporates the audience into the circumstance and forces them to question anything about the traditional ways of thinking. Audiences can be involved in the plays both physically and mentally. Mark Ravenhill's '*Shopping and F***ing*' can be regarded as a good example of in-er-face theatre. In the play, all the messages are directly and explicitly given onstage, and it forces audiences to confront with the experiences and perceptions of the people in the modern age.

One of the reasons why he is accepted as one of the pioneers of in-er-face theatre is the subjects he deals with in his plays. "In his works, AIDS, drug addiction, homosexuality, obsessions, gay drama and queer theory are observed" (Güneç, 2017: 157). Even in the contemporary age, these subjects are still bold and troublesome to present on the stage candidly and straightforwardly as Mark Ravenhill does. In this respect, he is audacious and assertive in the face of all the harsh criticism.

The rest of this chapter examines Ravenhill's '*Over There*' and '*Ten Plagues*' in terms of time, space and their interrelation with the construction of identity. It will also be revealed that how Mark Ravenhill deals with the concept of history in a postdramatic play. These plays can be accepted as theatrical pieces in progress as they allow diverse ways of creating the theatrical space in performance which, in turn, destabilises and deconstructs meaning created by the playscripts.

4.3. *Over There*

'*Over There*' deals with a historical event in a nonlinear fashion, but still consisting of a prologue, five acts and an epilogue. The prologue takes place in California at present, the setting goes back to 1986 in East Berlin in Act one. The second, third and fourth acts take place in West Berlin in the years of 1988, 1989 and 1990, consecutively. The fifth act takes place in East Berlin in 1991. The prologue does not reveal the exact time and place of the events. Using flashbacks and blurring the time and place totally in the prologue, Mark Ravenhill rejects the perception of linear historical time. Hans-Thies Lehmann says that

If time becomes the object of 'direct' experience, logically it is especially the techniques of time distortion that come to prominence. For only an experience of time that deviates from habit provokes its explicit perception, permitting it to move from something taken for granted as a mere accompaniment to the rank of a theme. Thus, a new phenomenon in the aesthetics of theatre is established: the intention of utilizing the specificity of theatre as a mode of presentation to turn time as such into an object of the aesthetic experience (2006: 156).

The play achieves a loss in the sense of time. The audiences are taken from the real-time into fictive time in which they have the chance to experience the spatio-temporal props and events which are exhibited on the stage. They enter into a totally different spatio-temporal world and their minds are reconciled accordingly. As long as they enter into that virtual time, they detach from the real-time and the main emphasis is just given on the "present" in which the meaning is assigned, diversified and reconstructed.

'*Over There*', which can be evaluated both a historical and political play, portrays the Berlin Wall, and shows how the citizens of Germany were affected by this political object. It is set respectively in California, West and East Berlin, where the story dwells on the lives of two twins as lead characters. One of them, Karl decides to stay with his father and lives in East Berlin and they both are supporters of the socialist regime, and the other one, Franz decides to stay with his mother and lives in West Berlin with his son. As they grew up in different parts of Berlin, their ideas and perceptions conform to the dominant ideology of their spatial surroundings. They often have arguments on West and East Berlin, and praise the conditions of life and policies of their governments.

Karl: We want to become active builders of the socialist / society. By working hard to learn through good deeds, we are helping socialism and the forces of peace throughout

the world. At all times in all places we oppose the incitement and the lies of the imperialist.

Franz: They're dead words coming out of your mouth – there are the stale – socialism – that's a lie – that didn't exist – these tight poor lives of – you were deceiving yourselves – your world – listen to me – your world can't exist. There's only my world. Yes. This is my world. And you're going to live it.

Karl: I hate your world (Ravenhill, 2013: 300-301).

They make a clear distinction between the two places they live in and always differentiate and code the places in which they live as “my world” and “your world”. As Martin Heidegger points out that “Da-sein can explicitly discover beings which it encounters in the environment, can know about them, can avail itself of them, can have ‘world’” (1996: 54). Da-sein can have its own world via the social interaction of Da-sein with space. This social interaction from birth to death is called by Heidegger “a succession of experiences ‘in time’” (1996: 324). Da-sein's social interaction with the environment (or world), which is being developed in time, is the determining factor for identity construction. Karl and Franz show their animosity spatially towards other places and ideologies. Hence, their attacks are self-referential and closely attached to the physical spaces. They both defend their spaces, but Franz has an overtly humiliating attitude towards East Berlin and its socialist ideology.

Both brothers demonstrate a strong spatial attachment to their physical environments. “The word “attachment” emphasizes the effect; the word “place” focuses on the environmental settings to which people are emotionally and culturally attached” (Altman and Low, 1992: 5). Attachment, as an effect on human beings which is created by a place, becomes a very determining factor in shaping life and also the individual's identity. Altman and Low maintain their discussion arguing that “place attachment may contribute to the formation, maintenance, and preservation of the identity of a person, group, or culture” (1992: 10). Thus, one constructs a purpose and self in relation to a particular place where identities are built up individually or in communities. Apart from the place, experience in that particular place is another key point in the concept of spatial attachment. Edward Relph states that

By taking place as a multifaceted phenomenon of experience and examining the various properties of place, such as location, landscape, and personal involvement, some assessment can be made of the degree to which these are essential to our experience and sense of place (1976: 29).

Experiences require involving in the rituals, cultural and national activities peculiar to that particular place such as funerals, wedding ceremonies, festivals, celebrations

of the independence of the countries or the activities which are carried out for the dominant ideology. Therefore, in the light of Karl's words, it can be suggested that what makes Karl attach to the East Berlin is the spatial specificity of the city which promotes and solidifies the socialist teachings through which he builds up a sense of self and an ideological stance.

After the death of their father, Karl goes to Franz's home in West Berlin, and he is detached from the space he identifies himself with.

Karl: Yes. This is great here. I love your flat. Your kid. The shops, the ... but that's not me. They're not mine. It's been great for a while. But I've got my own place over there. I'll find a job over there (Ravenhill, 2013: 288).

Even though Karl believes that the conditions in West Berlin are better than East Berlin, he sets a purpose for his life in that particular place and develops a spatial relation with it. He considers that what makes him exist is his social and spatial relations in East Berlin. His properties, neighbours, even the streets are determining in Karl's identity and his construction of self within a physical and mental world surrounding him. "Detachment", in this sense, brings about an identity crisis and its repercussions. The loss of belonging and attachment uproots Karl's perception of himself as an independent person and destroys his spatially-defined place in the outside world.

Although the Berlin Wall starts to fall, and there is nothing left about East Berlin, he cannot accept this permanent change of "realities" in his life. When they talk about the fall of the Berlin Wall and general conditions in Berlin, Karl asks "Who am I now? Who am I?" (Ravenhill, 2013: 271). His questioning of identity comes with puzzlement, "angst" and nostalgia in the form of surfacing memories. Howard notes that

In some respect, nostalgia involves a judgement that the past was better. I will call this the poverty of the present requirement. On this view, the intentional object of nostalgia is necessarily a past regarded as preferable to the present (2012: 643).

Karl, who is in a temporary flux due to the demolition of the Berlin Wall, turns to his imaginary past, which is more preferable and consoling for him. When comparing the past and the present experiences, opportunities and lifestyle, the present no longer includes that preferred lifestyle in the past, which constitutes the very essence of life for him. A solution for this is to keep the memories alive in mind in the present time

to face the temporality of the 'reality'. Therefore, for Karl, the past is constructed as safe heaven where his escape can be a success and his misery of loss can be channelled into tempo-spatial unity and attachment.

When Franz tells Karl that "take your history and your language and your – you wipe it – wash it away", Karl still goes on speaking in Russian about the history of East Berlin and answers, "I want my world that I knew with my place in it and I want that know" (Ravenhill, 2013: 292). Even though he leaves East Berlin corporally, he cannot leave that place behind mentally as all of his memories are stuck in a spatial vision. "Nostalgia, then, is literally the suffering due to the relentless yearning for the homeland" (Sedikides et. al., 2008: 304). Karl, as a nostalgic character, associates himself to East Berlin thinking that his self is stuck in that place temporally and spatially in which he has all the memories making his life meaningful and worth living.

Karl is aware that there is no place left which he can call 'his world', however it is agonising and pernicious for him to grasp reality. He loses the sense of belonging which it results in a form of the "transcendental homelessness", which Lukács explains as "the homeless-ness of an action in the human order of social relations, the homelessness of a soul in the ideal order of a supra-personal system of values" (1971: 61-62). Karl loses all his past, which is meaningful in East Berlin and constitutes his social identity, and this present detachment from this past leads him to suffer from an existential crisis, in which he is unable to accommodate himself in West Berlin, which is an alien and disconcerting space for him.

Karl's spatial crisis can be better understood in the context of 'liminality'. The term was first used by a folklorist, Arnold Van Gennep on rites and ceremonies in general such as a funeral, wedding, and the temporal stages in life such as pregnancy, birth, childhood, etc. Defining liminality as 'being threshold', he explains this term in three categories: 'rites of separation', 'transition rites', and 'rites of incorporation'. He "propose[s] to call the rites of separation from a previous world, preliminary rites, those executed during the transitional stage liminal (or threshold) rites, and the ceremonies of incorporation into the new world postliminal rites" (1960: 21). In the first stage, there occurs segregation between one and a familiar entity (it may be a group/society, a place, etc.), and then, the second stage, which is

the exact term to explain Karl's physical stage, emerges. The liminal (or threshold) stage can be explained: "simultaneously being both and neither" (Siganporia and Karioris, 2016: 20). The third stage can be explained by adopting and the union with the new phase or place. The liminal person has to reconstruct his/her identity in the third stage. "Therefore, liminality can be understood in the anthropological sense to be a temporary transition through which identity is reconstructed" (Beech, 2011: 288). In the transition period, one faces the loss of identity and get into the identity quest because of the detachment from the accustomed place. To overcome this identity crisis, one has to reconstruct the identity within the frame of the newly adapted space. As long as one cannot sustain his psychological existence in the postliminal stage, he/she will be stuck in the liminal stage perpetually and suffer from a spatio-temporal inbetweenness.

Correspondingly, Victor Turner, as an anthropologist, makes a re-discovery of liminality stating that "liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (1969: 95). Karl is physically present in West Berlin, but he is mentally stuck in the liminal space of a united Berlin. He cannot get into a later stage that represents the adaptation and developing an attachment to the new place. Karl, as a liminal entity, belongs to neither East Berlin nor West Berlin. Hence, he cannot stand this in-betweenness both corporeally and immaterially. He is unable to construct his identity outside of this 'ahistorical' and subjective space, which turns the demolition of the Berlin Wall as symbolic destruction of his self and as a traumatic discharge.

Karl's dislocation causes him to envy Franz and it generates problems between them.

Karl: Isn't it great? Anytime you don't want to, I'll do things. You commit a crime, I'll go to court. You get a cough, I'll go to the doctor. You want to marry again I can go to church. You can send me anywhere, any time and I'll be you. (Ravenhill, 2013: 286).

Since he cannot construct an identity in a place that he cannot associate himself with, he plunges into an identity quest. He admires Franz's life because he has a child and a regular life. Karl exaggerates the situation and behaves as if he was the father of Franz's son teaching him Russian and the socialist ideology, which Franz vehemently objects. Karl tells Franz what he teaches Franz's son: "For peace and for socialism be ready- be always ready. He likes saying it" (2013: 300). Franz wants to

change the subject as this disturbs him. Obviously, Karl cannot overcome his mental problem, which results in Franz's killing his brother and escape to California in the US. When he has sex with a woman called Carly, she asks him whether he wants to go back to Germany and he responds to her with a short answer: "no. Never. Germany's dead" (Ravenhill, 2013: 259). He insists to stay in California as a 'self-exile'. For Franz, the meaning of Germany as a homeland dissolves and it is embodied by the memory of Karl and a new sense of "thanatophobia", which comes from "*Thanatos*, the Greek god or daemon of nonviolent death, and *phobos* meaning fear" (2015: 371), and refers "death anxiety". In the context of psychology, "Freud held that fear of death represented unresolved childhood conflicts, and he theorized that humans were not able to truly accept their mortality" (Milosevic and McCabe, 2015: 371). According to Freud, children do not know what death is and what is after death. This obscurity still continues existing in adulthood, and death has always a negative connotation. Hence, nobody desires death due to its obscurity. What Franz has can be classified as 'thanatophobia' as he is haunted by this murder, he cannot overcome this trauma. German, as a place, makes him remember Karl, and if he goes back to there, he fears getting stuck into the memories of loss and liminality.

Symbolic meaning can be attributed to the twins. The playwright may create twin brothers as two lead characters, who come from totally different ideological and spatial backgrounds to show the inseparability of the spatio-temporal existence of Berlin. Even though the twins live in different parts of the city, they cannot maintain their life separately. Philip Oltermann explains the relation between the twins as "the confrontation between its two central characters is psychological rather than physical" (March 3, 2009). The brothers' physical relation may be the representative of the reunification of East and West Berlin, and becoming German a complete whole and a symbolic dissolution of the liminality. The death of Karl, or symbolically the downfall of East Berlin, bears also an allusion to the defeat of East Berlin and the reunion of Germany. After killing Karl, Franz says "we are one" (2013: 303) just like there are no longer two distinct spatial bodies, but a reunified city. The killing of Karl by the hands of Franz, who can be taken as the representative of the West Berlin, may be interpreted as the superior position of West Berlin over East Berlin. Historically, the West Berlin enjoyed an established superiority and economical dominance over East Berlin. West Berlin (ideologically)

took control of the whole city and became the hegemonic power just as Franz does. Therefore, the death of Karl symbolizes the victory of the capitalist ideology over the socialist ideology in German. Saying that “I don’t have German now, I look about me and everything I see is America” (Ravenhill, 2013: 304), Franz shows his awareness of the dominance of American ideology in his country. As a German citizen who has grown up in capitalist ideology, he admits that America haunts the whole country, and he does not feel German as his home anymore. For all these reasons, he willingly detaches himself from the country in a temporal and spatial escape into a new life.

Opposite to the spatial and temporal portrayal of the text, the exhibition of the play in 2009 at Royal Court draws a different and extraordinary picture of the characters and theatre space by evoking intriguing and at times disturbing effects on the audience which is a basic objective of in-her-face-theatre. As a pioneer of the in-her-face-theatre, Ravenhill achieves to create the feeling of unease and angst in the scenes of cutting and killing in the play. Natasha Tripney comments that “scenes of gouging, spurting and stabbing may be emotionally disturbing, but they usually don't evoke the same sense of physical unease that I felt while watching the later stages of Mark Ravenhill's *Over There* at the Royal Court” (March 13, 2009).

The play portrays brothers in the scene half-naked in act three, which indicates a potentially homosexual relationship exhibited on the stage. A reading of the script does not automatically allow the reader the boundaries and nature of the relationship between the two characters.



Fig. 1 London and Berlin reviews of Mark Ravenhill's 'Over There' play Published on May 19, 2009

Insisting that he has no particular tendency to present gay or lesbian characters in his plays, Ravenhill says that “my plays have included gay and lesbian characters because writing about those characters always comes easily to me, especially in the case of gay male characters. As a reflection of who I am, I include gay characters in the plays” (Aragay et. al., 2007: 91). In his plays such as ‘*Handbag*’, ‘*Mother Clap’s Molly House*’ and ‘*Some Explicit Polaroids*’, Mark Ravenhill constructs same-sex relationships to reflect his subjective preference as a writer and director.

There is not a plethora on the stage in terms of props. As furniture, there are a few small tables and a chair. The props are mostly food or drink containers like pockets of cereal, bottles of whiskey, boxes of chocolate, etc. First of all, even though there is a constructed historical space in the text of the play, the play does not feature an atmosphere of historic space on the stage since all the props are taken from the modern capitalist world. In terms of this unconventional staging of this historical space, ‘heterotopia’, which was coined by Michel Foucault, can be discussed. Explaining first ‘utopia’, he then indicates that

There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places- places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society-which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias (1986: 24).

Opposite to utopia which is a virtual or imaginary world, heterotopia refers to the only real space in which different multiple heterogeneous times and places simultaneously exist. He suggests museums and libraries as examples of heterotopias. In both of them, there are books and objects from different times and places. These two concepts have never come to an end throughout history, and will always go on building up in the future, too. Hence, it is inferred that the present time is the constitution of different epochs and places in heterotopias. In this respect, the singular perception of time and space has been destroyed, instead a multiplicity is welcomed.

Though Michel Foucault uses this term to refer to the structure of communities, it is also applicable to the theatre, especially the postdramatic theatre, since the theatre is also very much concerned with time and space. '*Over There*' can also be an outstanding example to discuss heterotopia. Joanne Tompkins states that "heterotopia exists within the present time and place" (2014: 18). There can be remnants of the past, as well as inferences of the future. Although the play refers to the 90s, the (re)construction of setting and staging of the play (props, food containers, and costumes) presents the play as if it is all about the modern-day. The way of staging creates an interference of different times and spaces, and a multiple sense of place and time like the presence of 90s Germany in the modern-day. The term supplies directors to create multiple possible spaces and time within the play or on the stage. Secondly, the sense of place is aimed to collapse or reconstruct on the stage. There is not a clear distinction between East and West Berlin on the stage. There are not also any clues that show the exact setting. The sense of space is blurred, it is not clear whether it is East, West, or California, but audiences can understand the setting thanks to the division of the acts.

In '*Over There*', the overlapping dialogues and speaking of the two characters at the same time may be directly relevant to the relationship between the twins. With this speech technique, Mark Ravenhill aims to show the conflict between the two characters. Speaking at the same time, the characters get involved in a competition or battle, and this battle can be likened to the battle of socialist and capitalist ideologies. Rather than listening, they interrupt each other's speech just like rather than defending, being on the attack against the enemy in war;

Franz And now we'll ...

Karl Josten ye mo. Josten geo t me fallin ro.

Franz That's better already.

Karl Yam resying recout le rarb yat lo bin.

Franz Now if we ...

Karl TE BIST NIST HE PRESTING K LE.

Franz I'm only trying to help.

Karl GRUSS OD YA PI GRUSS OD.

Franz You've ruined it now (Ravenhill, 2013: 291).

Their overlapping and interrupted dialogues can be taken as a way of representing their spatial and ideological conflict. This quote is also an evident for Karl's struggle for maintaining his ideological agencies and their metaphorical spatial hegemonic relationship between West and East Berlin.

Since the postdramatic theatre deals with the everyday life of societies/people who are from any class, the language of the new theatre appeals to anyone as well. Another way to create a natural/authentic atmosphere in the theatre is the strategies of hesitation, ruptured, and overlapping dialogue. Ryan Bishop asserts that "often utterances in everyday conversation are not composed of complete, uninterrupted sentences. Usually, much overlapping of statements and completion of thoughts by the other interlocutor occurs" (1991: 60). There can be many reasons for this except for creating a natural atmosphere such as creating an effect for the play, showing the inconveniency of having communication in real life, or revealing the complexity of human nature etc.

The way of Mark Ravenhill creating an extraordinary theatrical atmosphere as well as natural, the theme of the play, his characterisation, and direction was criticised. Michael Billington says that "Ravenhill explores postwar Germany's division and unification through the power battles between twin brothers. The result is fantastically clever and ingenious, even if, finally, fraternal behaviour seems to be dictated by the demands of political allegory" (8 March 2009). This political allegory makes Ravenhill obtain his goal which is based on how the borders and the sanctions of the ideologies affect human psychology, which time and space take the central stage.

4.4. *Ten Plagues*

'*Ten Plagues*' is based on the Great Plague of London which occurred in 1665 and known as the last big epidemic in London causing the death of 100.000 people. The play includes fifteen short sections and an epilogue in verse. Almost every section takes place in different parts of the city. Throughout the play, a character's journey along the streets of a tainted city is presented. The fear and effect of the plague haunt the whole city. Even though the protagonist is one of the luckiest people who haven't been infected, he witnesses the agonising outcomes of the plague and faces the death of his loved ones. He does not experience the physical side-effects of the plague, but he deeply goes through the psychological impact of being lonely and in fear of getting infected.

The title '*Ten Plagues*' also alludes that "Egypt was subject to a series of plagues, death of children, physical disruption of the country, and the loss of huge numbers of its inhabitants" (Grabbe, 2014: 63). According to Exodus, ten plagues were sent to Egyptian pharaoh by Jehovah, the creator in Christianity and Judaism, to allow Israelites, who were kept as slave by the pharaoh, to set them free. These plagues are named as "Blood and Frogs, Lice and Swarms, Pestilence and Boils, Hail and Locusts, Darkness and Death of the Firstborn" (Fredman, 1982: 333). After the tenth plague, the pharaoh set them free. A plausible reason why Mark Ravenhill may have named the play '*Ten Plagues*' is that the tenth plague is the last of these plagues, which also emerges in London as the last plague of the English history. In this respect, the play is an intertextual piece alluding to both events. These religious and mythical references make the play a blend of different temporal historical times and spaces.

In the postdramatic theatre, "rather than the individual's story, performers enact a more collective history, functioning as sites of memory in collaboration with the spectator" (Varney cited in DCruz, 2018: 146). The postdramatic theatre is, then, keen on addressing to communities. The memory of an individual is still included, but it stands not only for the individual but also for the expression of the collective memory of a group, a country or the whole humanity in the Postdramatic Theatre. This play also tells the collective history or memory of the English employing a single character's narration. In the '*Ten Plagues*' section, Mark Ravenhill starts

referring to this religious phenomenon saying that “I am as an Israelite when Ten plagues infect the land I live” (2013: 385). He continues and finishes this section with how and in what ways each plague was sent. He mentions all the specific plagues: “blood, frog, lice, flies, cattle fall and rot ‘sickness of animals’, blisters, fire fall, locusts, darkness, and the first-born die” (2013: 385). As a survivor who witnesses the plague, his journey includes the emergence of the plague and the recovery of the city. The protagonist draws a very painful picture with the memories of huge physical and mental loss in London.

Although the play resides in a religious and historical event, Mark Ravenhill depicts sickness as a contemporary concern in the modern world. With the lines “I was frightened/ That you’d kiss me/ I could have hit you/ For bringing your infection” (Ravenhill, 2013: 370), Mark Ravenhill associates the plague with AIDS and indicates his fear for contracting AIDS. Mesut Güneç notes that “the playwright’s homosexual boyfriend has died from HIV-AIDS” (Ravenhill cited in Güneç, 2017: 150). As a playwright who reflects his personal life and experiences in his plays, Mark Ravenhill makes his deceased lover immortal in this play. AIDS reminds Mark Ravenhill of terrible plagues caused by his loss. This indicates that the playwright portrays personal tragedies as collective and timeless experiences for humanity by merging myths with the contemporary concerns of the modern world in the play.

The collective experiences are expressed by way of an individual’s monologue by structuring the play in the form of monologue, and it is what makes the play distinct from traditional tragedies. Hans-Thies Lehmann notes that

From the point of view of theatre aesthetics it could be claimed that, conversely, only in the system of dialogue does the failure of speaking as communication between people become visible, while a monologue as a speech that has the audience as its addressee intensifies communication – namely the communication taking place in the here and now of theatre (Lehmann, 2006: 128).

Although there are more than one characters in the play, the story is told just by a sole character as in ‘*Ten Plagues*’. The main character’s name remains ambiguous throughout the play intentionally. Moreover, the sex of the character is also undisclosed until the play is staged. “Almond (...) plays an Everyman figure alone in an almost empty city” (Gardner, 8 August 2011). Almond, as an Everyman figure, is the representative of the feelings and emotions of the whole citizens of the city, even

dead ones. In both plays, the characters address the audience to activate them mentally and force them to a spatio-temporal experience. “The spectators do not observe but experience themselves inside of a time-space” (Lehmann, 2006: 152). Spectators are distanced and excluded in a dramatic dialogue whereas they are prioritised and actively involved in the monologue, which is used strategically in the postdramatic theatre.

In a discussion of the similarities between the Theatre of Absurd and postdramatic theatre, it is pointed out that “there is no story or plot to speak of here; the plays are often without recognizable characters” (Esslin cited in Lehmann, 2006: 54). Ambiguous characters are commonly used in the postdramatic theatre to accentuate the identity quest which is a key issue in the modern world. Besides the ambiguity in characterization, the plot has also lost its ultimate position in drama, as in *‘Ten Plagues’*. The play mainly comprises of some disconnected past stories and present circumstances which the character deals with. As a result of the lack of plot, the setting and the staging take prominence over the text.

Since the play does not have a common conception of plot or a plot at all, it creates a complex perception of time from the beginning until the end. As the first time expression, Mark Ravenhill uses spring, then he continues with these time implicated words: tonight, now, tonight, at night, tomorrow, night, yesterday, now, morning, today, September night, autumn, now, tonight, past, now, and it ends with the year which the plague started and ended, sixteen sixty-five, the only exact time expression. The spectators do not learn the exact time until the epilogue of the play starts. This is a way of deconstructing the sense of time.

For time to be experienced as unsettled in any significant sense, the context that frames time must also become unstable. In the Theatre, spectators experience tension between the time of the performance and the time of broader social (...) processes (Watkinson, 2019: 68).

As time cannot be grasped as a fixed matter, the notion of time, which is known as the constituent of theatre, is formed accordingly. Spectators may experience in-betweenness of both the flowing time units in plays and the virtual and physical time. “The thematization of real-time is avoided altogether by not referring to exact dates and time in the spoken text” (Lehmann, 2006: 161). This play also meets the expectation of spectators in regard of the postdramatic construction of time. Spectators may feel as if they get lost in the units of time psychologically and

mentally as it is really difficult to perceive time appropriately in the play. It can also be reckoned that the reason why Mark Ravenhill prefers using temporal time expressions until the end and indicates the time at the end of the play is to increase tension and create anxiety. “Time is [already] intangible, invisible, colorless, odourless, soundless” (West-Pavlov, 2013: 4), and these ambiguous expressions, which are used in the play, create a double abstract perception of time in mind. There is not a fixed construction of time, there is always a jump from one time to another turning time into an unreliable concept.

Mark Ravenhill mostly uses the present-time expressions like ‘now’, ‘tonight’, ‘today’, and the most frequent one is ‘now’. The story is told in a way that all the memories of the character are perceived as parts of the present moment. Time sense here reminds Husserl’s account of time. “The intuition of an extent of time occurs in a now, in one time-point” (Husserl, 1991: 21). Rather than distinguishing time as units, Husserl believes that the units of time, past, present and future all co-exist in ‘now’. Hence, one may say that ‘now’ for Husserl constitutes the experiences of now and all. The play thus extends ‘now’ to cover past memories, present events and future projections/visions.

Corresponding to the temporal reconstruction of the play, the construction of space of the play is anomalous. The play consists of sixteen small sections in verse. Even though the play takes place in the streets of London, the lead character appears in different places in almost every section. The play rejects the constant presence of a stable place from the beginning to the end. When the main character narrates his journey, he links his memories to a particular place or the present place, which he literally portrays a general picture of the city. Initially, he says “Suddenly/ I need a God” (2013: 364) and decides to go to a church to ask God to spare his life. He also portrays the emptiness of the church because of the plague saying that “The King has fled/ And courtiers/The palace empty/There is no rule” (2013: 364). After seeing the church empty, he utters “God grant the plague/ Spares me/ Alone” (Ravenhill, 2013: 365) in his pray in order not to get infected. Mark Ravenhill appears to expostulate clergymen and prayers in a way since they leave the house of God especially when they need to pray more to rescue the citizens of London.

Later on, the character goes to a market to buy a pig, and he makes observations in the street of London. He arrives home and continues to describe his journey by depicting how the streets leave a catastrophic impression on humans. He also mentions about the pit in which infected dead bodies are buried and draws daunting and nauseating disgusting pictures of the pit. He depicts the horrible atmosphere of the streets of London till the 'Return' section. It is the section in which the recovery of the city starts, the character goes to a market happily as almost the whole city starts to recover. The common point of all these different places is that all of them are daily visited by citizens to lead their lives, as in Hans-Thies Lehmann words, they are "the spaces of every day" (Lehmann, 2006: 152). If the new theatre is the reflection of the everyday life of communities, it is a valid choice to include places harboring people, especially the streets, churches, bazaars to observe humans and reflect their temporal realities. As it is so common to recreate the textual space on the stage in postdramatic theatre, there are some techniques or modalities to help directors to decorate the stage in an unusual way. Here, it gives rise to the discussion of "the peculiar temporality and spatiality of the scenic process" (Lehmann, 2006: 76). Since each director can create their own theatre space, there emerge different tempo-spatial theatrical spaces constructing and deconstructing the spaces of the everyday in various ways.

The development in the field of technology has shaped the perception of theatre space and has helped directors envision their own theatrical spaces.

Transformations of conventional spatial models in contemporary theatre architecture are primarily a result of development of technical and technological resources and systems, their impact on the size, character and structure of space – first and foremost the space of the stage, and the auditorium (Dinulović, 2015: 2).

With the help of technological devices, screens and speakers have been added up to the stage to restructure plays. As Mesut Günenç puts it,

In postdramatic theatre, apart from the director, each artist, dancer, musician and actor has a different and free place. The body searches for sound, rhythm and harmony instead of animating the character. Instead of traditional drama, the text turns to both visual and aural objects. We are not able to find the real meanings of the words, that is that words have a visual feature and so language is both an object and a musical subject (2017: 3-4).

The use of technology is one of the key factors contributing to the theatricality of plays, by including musicians as characters, screens as props, actors as forms in time and space. In the production of *'Ten Plagues'* at the Traverse

Theatre, a pianist accompanies the single character while the monologue takes place on the stage, and the play turns into a musical. With the use of a screen and musical apposition, the director achieves to construct an imaginary theatrical space where he intensifies the feelings with melodies and tones of the composition. All the factors together create harmony in the play. Words and representative bodies of characters flow in company with musical elements on the stage.

The textual space is completely discrepant from the theatrical space which is shown in Figure 2. Figure 2, which is taken from the 'To Dream' part of the play, displays the theatrical space including stage decoration, props, and most importantly the pianist who has a considerable role throughout the play. Instead of a plethora of props, the stage is intentionally designed in a minimalistic way.



Fig. 2¹

Stage decoration can be used as a way to activate the spectators' minds. In a play that is designed in a minimalistic way, spectators are expected to fill the emptiness and absences on the stage on their own way. In Lehmann's words,

The play with the low density of signs aims to provoke the spectator's own imagination to become active on the basis of little raw material to work with. Absence, reduction and emptiness are not indebted to a minimalist ideology but to a basic motif of activating theatre (2006: 90).

¹ Marc Almond in *Ten Plagues* at the Traverse Theatre, Richard Campbell, 2011.

In '*Ten Plagues*', there is just a chair for Almond, a piano, and nota stands on the stage. Although there are more than 5 nota stands, there is just a pianist as a musician. It is obvious that these nota stands are not put there aimlessly. They may refer to dead people due to the plague. It may have such a message that the people who should do their job, just like musicians, are dead now. These note stands are the symbols for the absence of the citizens who should have carried on their work but are detained by plague. With the screen and the help of lightening, spectators expose and feel deep inside the painful experience of the plague. While Almond tells the journey in the city, the pianist, Conor Mitchell plays a music that creates tension and fear parallel to what is told by Almond. The musician sometimes leads the actor or vice versa. Hence, the musician and the actor have a mutual effect on each other, and they achieve creating a visual and aural exhibition with the help of the screen as well.

The bodies on the screen accompany Almond and the music. The bodies have a shadowy, creepy, and unstable appearance and are alike skeleton. The images created on the screen are like dead bodies going around as a reflection of infected bodies on the street. Skeleton like bodies become a convenient choice to create the pessimistic, physically and psychologically sick and dreadful atmosphere of the city. They move in harmony with the music played by the pianist. In this respect, the flowing bodies become dancers who are the embodiment of this sorrowful plague.

Corresponding to the presentation of wretched and creepy dancing bodies on the screen, the musical exhibition of the play is a deliberate choice of the director. Besides creating the catastrophic atmosphere for the play, it can be explicated that the musicality contributes to the loss of sense of time and space for the play, too. "Musical time is conceived as simply durational, not periodic" (Schuldt, 1976: 557). Music, in its very essence, cannot be perceived as something fixed, but something flexible and fluid. In the play, the transition of time and one space to another is also advocated by the music. Music is utilised to create an unstable sense of spatio-temporal theatrical experience for the audience. It is used to take the audience from the real space-time to the virtual one or a mixture of mythical and historical spatio-temporality in which the sense of time and space is completely collapsed by the director. Audial effects enable the sense of 'loss' and question the linear sense of time and history, and fixed attachment to a particular space to give chance to audience feel empathy for other individuals who partake in the journey of Almond. It

is a way to make the audience generate multiple identities which virtually exist in different time and space within this modern theatrical space.

In addition to the temporal and spatial dilemma due to the fluidity and ambiguity, Ravenhill also presents a play in which he makes the audience to rethink 'being alive' and 'surviving' which enables the discussion of spatio-temporal existence of Almond. The character says "one hundred thousand dead/ But I alive" (Ravenhill, 2013: 387), after he portrays the mournful experiences and memories in the city. Lyn Gardner comments that

Almond's Everyman is a man apart, already a loser in love and emotionally walled up by fear in a city where all human contact brings risk and the everyday transactions are fraught. The once longed for lover is rejected when he becomes infected; but fear is also a contagion, and one that stops us leading a fully-lived life. After all, surviving and living are not the same at all (8 August, 2011).

Almond achieves to survive in this city in which the infection and death loom around, however, it is close at hand to get infected. His life and mind is haunted by the fear of plague and death. In the meantime, he loses his lover because of the infection which leads him to experience mourning and melancholy. "Both melancholia and mourning are triggered by the same thing—that is, by loss" (Person, 2007: XXII). The physical death is what force Almond to be in a gloomy and pessimistic mood. His agony gets double with the death of his lover. At this point, he may be considered as a liminal entity because he experiences in-betweenness of 'being alive' and 'surviving', mourning and the fear of death. He physically exists in a specific time and space, however, he does not exist mentally or spiritually, which gives rise to a questioning of the purpose of his existence.

4.5. Conclusion

As a playwright who uses questioning, visioning and forgetting in his plays, Ravenhill's *Over There* can be matched with *Ten Plagues* in the construction of time and space in chaotic lives. However, the two plays collapse the notion of time in different ways by using postdramatic techniques. While the notion of time is collapsed with flashback and flashforward in *Over There*, it is achieved by blurring and deconstructing the exact time in *Ten Plagues*. Both plays deal with historical events, and these historicised experiences are presented in modern spaces in a world of technology, dehumanization, and mechanisation.

In '*Over There*', there is a political expostulation as a response to the dehumanizing atrocities experienced in Germany as portrayed by a pair of twins in a love-hate relationship. In '*Ten Plagues*', Ravenhill condemns modern capitalism stating that "This is how business is done/When money is infection/In times of plague" (Ravenhill, 2013: 367) in the 'Market' section. He sees capitalism as a plague and the money as the infection in the capitalistic age. Moreover, both of the plays deal with the concept of death as physical and mental phenomena. A key discussion is, however, on time and space, which oversee, dominate, dismantle, and restore human experiences and identities in irrepressible and frenzied ways in contemporary life.



CONCLUSION

Space and time occupy an important position in the meaning-making process in theatre. As illustrated in this thesis, contemporary British theatre tackles plot structure, time and space in a reversed or deconstructed way. It is undeniable that the emergence of postmodernism has given a new impulse to the concepts of time and space in the theatre. One of the most notable concepts emerging in the reconstruction or deconstruction of time and space is theatricality, which came to prominences with the emergence of postmodernism. Theatricality has contributed to the new perceptions of theatrical space with the use of technological devices on the stage and the changing role of the audience in the theatre. The theatrical temporality becomes prevalent with the use of techniques such as flashbacks and flash-forwards.

Spatial and temporal relations are key to the (re)construction of identity in the light of philosophical interpretations of space and time by Kant, Heidegger, Bergson, Husserl and Lefebvre. The subjectivity of time (Kant), heterogeneity (Bergson), multiplicity (Husserl), the intertwined relationship of time and space (especially Heidegger with his concept of Da-sein), the correlative relation of space and culture (Lefebvre) and many other concepts related to time, space and identity have been put forward and contributed to the understanding of the dynamic relation between time, space, and identity.

In the second chapter, Caryl Churchill's *'Icecream'* and *'Top Girls'* display time and space and its theatrical reflections in her postmodern theatre. Defining the postmodern age as the 'spatial turn', the global world and urban life are reflected upon spatial and temporal concepts. The sceptic approach to the truth, true and reality has given rise to the loss of time. The concept 'historiography' has become popular in postmodern literary works and theatre has turned into a medium where plays are constructed as historiographical metatheatre. In *'Icecream'*, Caryl Churchill pictures

the failure of history by killing a professor of history, geo-historical identity search, hegemonic relations between individuals and ideologies as in the representation of British-American relations. Lance appears as very strongly attached to his American heritage but his identity crisis is attached spatially and temporally to American history and its failure to construct a long and legitimate history.

'*Top Girls*', is an outstanding example in which the conventional feminine identity is deconstructed and the new feminine identities emerging in the modern world are portrayed through the spatial and temporal boundaries in the play. The exhibition of a theatrical and fictive dinner table, surrounded by historical, mythical/legendary and a modern female character seeks roots in heterogeneous time which alludes to the simultaneity of time in Henri Bergson's writings. From a postmodernist view, Caryl Churchill gives these characters a chance to rewrite their history. She challenges the male-produced time and histories by relocating the historical female identities within contemporary life. Caryl Churchill's challenge to the patriarchy lies in the construction of theatrical time. The play depicts the business life from a feminist viewpoint by placing Marlene, a supporter of capitalism, as a boss in a recruiting company. Caryl Churchill juxtaposes kitchen and company placing different but strong characterized siblings in a spatial power struggle. The fragmented structure of the play is devised as a feminist approach. She deconstructs the progressive-masculine time making temporality an essential characteristic of the postmodern feminist playwriting.

In the third chapter, Roy Williams's '*Sucker Punch*' and '*Joe Guy*' present spatial and temporal construction of identity within the premises of the Postcolonial theory. As a reaction to colonialism, postcolonialism, also referring to the period after gaining the spatial freedom, aims at portraying colonised communities in different spatial settings. The concepts of postcolonialism mostly dwell on the spatial and temporal aspects of the stories. In '*Sucker Punch*', Roy Williams' choice of a gym is central to a Postcolonial reading of space since it functions as the third space in which the hybridization of characters becomes a reality. At the end of the play, however, the gym turns into the destructive medium in which, the coloniser – colonised struggle is represented in the clashes of the urban black identities.

Leon narrates both his failure and glorious success story in '*Sucker Punch*'. He himself tells his experiences and has an active role in his own process of (re)construction of identity. The contribution of the gym and the ring to the construction of identity is explained with the help of the subjectivity of time as theorised by Kant. It is also a way to challenge the exclusion of the black from the history and the fact that the black has no temporal root in modern urban history

In '*Joe Guy*', the collective spatial relations of black identity are represented in the self-exile of Joe. Migration from home countries to the colonising powers of the modern world brings forth the notion of assimilation and identity loss. His assimilation becomes evident when he struggles to leave his Ghanaian accent behind in an English speaking society. The city here becomes a new place for the oppression of minority black culture.

An important theatrical aspect of the play is the temporal construction of the play in radio sections. These radio sections are aimed at displaying the white-black relations and giving blacks back their voice to defend themselves and narrate their own history from the first person. The radio sections appear as a theatrical element that challenges the European history with a new medium of articulation black lives and their experiences.

In the fourth chapter, postdramatic theatre and Mark Ravenhill's '*Over There*' and '*Ten Plagues*' are elaborated in reference to Hans-Thies Lehmann's '*Postdramatic Theatre*'. Rejecting the notions the Aristotlean dramaturgy, he suggests that the new theatre still is established outside the premises of Aristotlean dramaturgy, but it is presented with new concepts and new theatrical elements that have altered the conception of time and space in the theatre. Mark Ravenhill thus rejects the linear structured historical time by employing flashbacks in '*Over There*', and forefronts the loss of sense of time in his historical play. He successfully achieves presenting his twin characters as the representatives of East and West Berlin, with their identities gaining meaning within the spatial boundaries of time. Attachment/detachment dichotomy, sense of belonging, displacement, liminality, transcendental homelessness, self-exile, heterotopia and nostalgia are some of the concepts that help us make sense of spatio-temporal relations in the play. '*Ten Plagues*', on the other hand, alludes to a historical and mythical event. The play

refers to the Great Plague in London in 1665 and the tenth plague which is believed to be sent to Egypt and caused the death of many. Writing the whole play in the form of a monologue, Mark Ravenhill emphasizes the present time, which assumes Edmund Husserl's extended presentness of identity. Exhibiting many parts of the city and sudden ruptures in both temporal and spatial presentations, Mark Ravenhill collapses the sense of fixed time and space. The concepts of loss, melancholia, mourning, in-betweenness, and liminality are central to the depiction of the catastrophic theatrical space. A pianist, audial effects, and a screen accompany the sense of catastrophe Almond goes through. Almond appears on the stage as an embodiment of the Everyman figure and the plays touches upon the present time through the lens of historical events.

All three playwrights in this study touch upon liminality in their plays. All the examined plays are based on either historical or political matters relocated in the contemporary settings by deconstructing or historicizing human stories. It can be concluded that contemporary British theatre has been aspired to present individual and collective identity crises within the scope of spatial and temporal relations by employing new theatrical strategies such as fragmentation, self-reflexivity, metatheatricality, disarticulation or disruption, which helps portray the human as the self-conscious, marginal, detached, cynical and flawed subjects of the contemporary world.

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