ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF PARODY IN JEANETTE WINTERSON'S *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT* AND *BOATING FOR BEGINNERS*

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ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF PARODY IN JEANETTE WINTERSON'S *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT* AND *BOATING FOR BEGINNERS*

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This study aims to analyze the use of parody in Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners*. Winterson uses parody as a means to re-contextualise and re-interpret the Biblical material in a playful manner in these two novels. Moreover, parody becomes a means for her to revise certain other texts and discourses. Due to these parodic references to other texts and discourses, the novels have an intertextual structure and they are open to a variety of interpretations instead of releasing a single meaning.

Key words: Parody, postmodernism, feminism, the *Bible*, intertextuality.

ÖZ

JEANETTE WINTERSON'IN *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT* VE *BOATING FOR BEGINNERS* ADLI ROMANLARINDA PARODİNİN KULLANIMI

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Bu çalışma Jeanette Winterson'ın *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* ve *Boating for Beginners* romanlarında parodinin kullanımını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Winterson bu iki romanda parodiyi İncil'deki bazı öyküleri farklı bir bağlamda ele almak ve yorumlamak için kullanmaktadır. Ayrıca parodi Winterson'a diğer bazı metin ve söylemleri gözden geçirme fırsatı tanımaktadır. Diğer metinler ve söylemlere yapılan parodik göndermeler romanların metinler arası bir yapıya sahip olmasını sağlamış ve tek bir anlam ortaya koymak yerine birçok yorumu içlerinde barındırmalarını sağlamıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Parodi, postmodernizm, feminizm, İncil, metinlerarasılık.

To My Family

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. 1. The Aim of This Study

The aim of this study is to analyze the use of parody in Jeannette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners* with an emphasis on the concepts she attacks and subverts in these two novels. Parody is a medium through which past forms can be rewritten for many different purposes. The aim may be to imitate a past form in order to exalt it or to criticize and subvert a past form in order to deconstruct it. Winterson clearly chooses the latter in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners*. She finds the gaps in the Biblical texts and these gaps become the target of her attack. Thus, her deconstructive use of parody arouses questions about the *Bible* in mind. She shatters the sacred foundations of the *Bible* through her deconstructive use of parody. She finds out the little gaps within the Biblical material through parody and gradually forms a big void out of these gaps. Being great contributions to the tradition of postmodern parody**,** the novels shatter the belief in fixed concepts such as the sovereignty of the author within the written text and perfect unity of grand narratives, which are extensive explanations of knowledge through one universal truth, as well as divine relief and hope. This chapter will clarify the purposes of Winterson's use of parody in general and the purposes of each chapter in particular.

2. 1. Introduction

Winterson displays her negative notions regarding the gender biased perceptions and she is also against the traditional, monolithic features of fiction such as a chronological time order, consequential order of events and logical

pattern of unity. She problematizes the totalitarian perceptions which generate from the belief in one single transcendental truth and she questions the validity of grand narratives such as the *Bible*. Parody becomes a deconstructive tool and strategy to subvert and topple down what is accepted as fixed in her novels. Winterson also creates a complex intertextual structure by means of parody. Consequently, the novels are networks of many other texts including parodic references to other works of literature and discourses. Hence, it is impossible to seek a traditional understanding of unity in them. As open texts, they "answer not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination" (Barthes, 1971, p.159). The parodic intertexts create an open textual whole which deconstructs the traditional understanding of work as a closed entity which puts forward a single, definite interpretation. Winterson makes use of parody to deconstruct the patriarchal notions and interpretations of the *Bible* in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, and to deconstruct the concept of author and work in *Boating for Beginners* and to create open textual narratives through parodic intertexts in both of these novels.

The second chapter will aim at establishing a proper definition of parody which will fit with the aims of the study. Hence, different definitions of parody will be discussed. The concept of parody has been defined in many different ways and the problem of coming up with a conclusive definition has been a topic of debate. Thus, the differences and similarities between parody and other types of re-writing will briefly be explained in order to distinguish parody as a distinct form. Furthermore, the concept of parody will be dealt within a historical context to show the different viewpoints about the issue. The formalist approach to parody as a medium of literary evolution and Bakhtin's concept of parody in relation to his concept of carnival and polyphony will be followed by a short description of Genette's theory of parody as textual interaction. Finally, the viewpoints of 20th theoreticians Linda Hutcheon, Margaret Rose and Simon Dendith will especially be emphasized. Moreover, the relationship between post-modernism and parody will further be elaborated to set a theoretical background for the argument about these two contemporary novels. Finally, a definition which will be conclusive within the limits of this study will be put forward. After establishing a foreground

by explicating the nature of parody, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners* will be discussed in relation to this theoretical framework.

The third chapter will analyse the use of parody in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* as a means of deconstructing the patriarchal notions in the *Bible* and forming a textual body of composite references. The novel deals with the questionings of a girl who was adopted into a fundamentalist Christian family in a northern working class town. The novel received a lot of critical attention. It has been regarded as an autobiographical novel in which Winterson narrates her own plight as a lesbian in the patriarchal society. It has also been read as a novel picturing the clash between young and old generations, belief and sexuality, fact and fiction, history and story (Simpson, 2001, p.6). Hence, the novel has challenged the dogmatic views in many different aspects. It has been mainly dealt with as a lesbian and postmodern text. Critics who focused on it as a lesbian text mainly talked about Jeannette's initiation into her lesbian identity (as the representator of lesbian sexuality) within a harshly dogmatic patriarchal society. Furthermore, those who have approached the novel as a postmodern text explored its postmodern narrativity and examined the different narrative styles within the novel such as fairy tale and romance (Makinen, 2005, p.30). Some critics have been concerned with its intertextual structure and they have focused on the intertextual references within the novel and explicated them by mainly referring to *Morte D'Arthur*, the *Bible* and *Jane Eyre*. This study will focus on *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* as a postmodern text which parodies the *Bible* as a grand narrative.

The *Bible* has several functions in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*. First of all, the functions of the Biblical material will be analyzed. Winterson uses the *Bible* to frame her story and thus each chapter in the book bears the names of the chapters in the Old Testament. Moreover, each chapter deals with one aspect of the Biblical book it refers to. Hence, the Biblical concepts will be analyzed through direct quotations from the *Old Testament*. How these quotations are altered and the reasons for these alterations will be explicated in relation to parody. Furthermore, Winterson parodies certain other texts such as *Morte D'Arthur, Jane Eyre* and certain fairy tales. These references will also be analyzed

in order to display how Winterson deconstructs the patriarchal notions by means of parody and the function of these references in forming a complex network with the other references will be discussed.

The fourth chapter will focus on the parodic nature of *Boating for Beginners*. As in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, Winterson retells the Biblical material with certain crucial changes in order to criticize and subvert the patriarchal and totalitarian notions of the Scriptures. The scope of the Biblical material in this novel is not as extensive as in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit;* that is, the novel heavily relies on the parody of *Genesis* only. Hence, first the Flood myth in the *Bible* will be summarised through direct quotations from *Genesis*. Two distinct aims lying behind the use of parody will be distinguished as the deconstruction of the concept of author and the deconstruction of the concept of work. The definitions of author, text and work will be given by referring to Roland Barthes's definitions in "The Death of the Author" and "From Work to Text." First of all, how the concept of author is undermined in the person of Yahweh will be shown through analysing some examples from the book. Moreover, other examples showing how the book has gained an open textual status will be discussed. In addition to the Biblical references, the book refers to a variety of other texts, famous people and contemporary issues. The different intertexts contributing to the open, composite structure of the book will be finally discussed.

The final chapter of the study will once more summarise the objectives of Winterson in her use of parody. By deconstructing the holy status of the *Bible* and God, she deconstructs the sources of divine relief and she ends up within a vacuum where nothing has a fixed definition. Hence, the final chapter will discuss whether she fills this vacuum she has created. Furthermore, these two novels are great contributions to the tradition of parody. The chapter will also clarify their importance from a historical point of view.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS PARODY? THE DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO PARODY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

This chapter will aim at clarifying what parody is and how the term 'parody' will be used within the context of this study. First of all, the etymological roots of the word 'parody' will be dealt with in order to come up with a more conclusive definition. Furthermore, certain distinctive characteristics of parody such as the tone and the different approaches towards the target text will be discussed. Then other related terms will be analyzed in order to distinguish parody as a distinct form. In order to put forward a broader perception of the term 'parody,' different approaches towards parody in the 20th century will be discussed. Finally, parody will be defined within the light of this discussion with special emphasis on its purposes within the limits of this study.

2.1. Etymology and Definition

Parody has remained an ambivalent term over the centuries. It has been used in many different senses for many different purposes. The fact that parody lacks a single definite interpretation is signaled in its etymological roots which incorporate two different explanations. The etymological root of parody is traced back to the Greek word "parodia." Hutcheon clarifies that the "odos" part means song and the prefix "para" denotes two different meanings. It may mean "counter" or "beside" another song (Hutcheon, 1992, p.32). Thus, parody is approached in two different ways. It is a song which is "against" or "besides" another song. Consequently, parody may be sung "in opposition" to some other song or "besides" some song- which means imitation of that song (Rose, 1995, p.46). In other words, the attitude of parody towards its target text cannot be pinpointed as criticism, approval or admiration since it may aim at both criticizing another song

in order to subvert its ideological roots and premises, and imitating another song with approval and admiration.

One of the most significant points to consider while defining the nature of parody is thus the varying attitudes of parodists towards their target texts. As Rose suggests, the vagueness stemming from the etymology is clearly reflected in the various attitudes of parodists (1995, p.45). First of all, the parodist may have certain disrespect for the imitated text. In this case, the parodist aims at critical mockery. However, the parodist may approach the target text with sympathy. In this case, he uses that text as an example. Hence, the parodist may have a positive or a negative approach to the text that is going to be worked on. Moreover, parody may have a range of different tones depending on the approach of the parodist. It can adopt a serious critical tone or a comic and ironic tone varying according to the intention of the parodist. According to Rose, the relationship between the parodic and the comic is crucial because comedy adds a renovating aspect to parody. She states that parody is "the comic re-functioning of performed linguistic and artistic material" (1991, p.52). Hence, the parodist makes use of comedy as a tool to re-write the target text. Among other different tones, irony is also of strategic importance. Irony forces the audience ("the decoder") to adopt an inferential strategy to understand the parodist's ("the encoder's") interpretation and evaluation of the target text (Hutcheon, 1991, p. 53).

Although these different approaches and tones aim at different types of textual analysis, their overall focus is the same on the whole. Whether the approach towards another text is positive or negative, or whether the tone is serious or comic, the overall focus of parody is the reproduction of another text. In other words, the main aim is to change a text in order to create something fresh and novel out of it. Parody mainly focuses on textual reproduction through the reminiscence of past forms. Nevertheless, as Hutcheon states, it is not only "a matter of formal borrowing" (1991, p.30). The target text remains in the background and a new text is built upon this background. The parodist forms a dialogue with the past form in order to renovate it. Thus, parody is the re-contextualisation of other texts and re-working of traditions in order to re-formulate a distinguished, new entity.

2.2. Parody and Other Related Terms

It is important to distinguish parody from related terms in order to understand the basic features and functions of parody. The two significant literary terms that have been seen as related with parody are travesty and burlesque. These three forms have a lot in common since all of them include comic imitation of a certain subject matter, style or attitude (Bozkurt, 1977, p.71). The difference between burlesque and parody is indicated in their etymological roots. The term burlesque is derived from the Italian word "burla" which means "joke or trick" (Rose, 1995, p.54). Rose explains that "some burlesque does not even require a specific literary model and the word has been used to describe a variety of types of comic and even non-comic entertainments" (1995, p.54). Hence, the term burlesque is used to refer to an entertaining approach in general. Parody, on the other hand, requires a more complex literary transformation as the Greek word "para-odos" (besides or counter to another song) suggests. Parody is more than a comic re-handling of certain subject matters and unlike burlesque, it is directed towards a specific, individual style, work or discourse.

The difference between parody and travesty was considered slighter as both were described as types of burlesque in the 18th century (Rose, 1995, p. 62). The term 'high burlesque' which involves "contrast of the trivial to the high" was used to describe parody whereas the term low burlesque which involves "comparisons of the high to the low" was used to describe travesty (Rose, 1995, p. 51). To illustrate, the 18th century French poet, Nicholas Boileau's burlesque poem 'The Lutrin' deals with a trivial incident among monks in order "to expose the luxury, indolence, and contentious spirit of a set of monks" (Rose, 1995, p. 63). The poet ridicules the trivial subject matter by presenting it with dignity, which is seen as an example of 'high burlesque.' On the other hand, the 17th century English poet, Charles Cotton's *Scarronides* treats the story of Aeneas and Dido in a trivial manner as it "presents Aeneas as a vagabond and Dido as a fishwife" (Rose, 1995, p.60). This treatment of an important subject matter in a trivial manner is considered as 'low burlesque.' However, parody has gained new

functions in time, which makes it easier to distinguish it from travesty. As Rose clarifies, parody does not only "bring a high work low" but it also "reduces the very distinctions between high and low upon which such canonizations are based, or where they simply ignored such distinctions" (1995,65). In other words, parody is not only a matter of comparison, but it also questions and tries to undo the distinctions between what is deemed as "low" and what is deemed as "high".

The term "plagiarism" has also been used in close relationship with parody. Plagiarism can be described as "literary theft" or "close imitation of other literary texts" (Rose, 1995, p.69). Parody makes use of imitation too, but plagiarism hides and tries to destroy the source material unlike parody which does not "intentionally" hide its purposes of literary transformation. Moreover, parody is also different from "pastiche" which is another type of literary imitation. Pastiche is a more "neutral" practice of "compilation" and it is not always "critical of its sources" as is parody (Rose, 1995, p.72). Another similar term which includes the copying of other literary texts is "quotation." The practice of quotation includes placing different literary texts together. The term "quotation" has been used in line with parody since parody makes use of it. The parodist usually aims at "establishing a comic discrepancy or incongruity" between different texts by using quotation and parodic quotation is more critical in nature than the other types of quotation (Rose, 1995, p.79).

Parody has also been compared and frequently been confused with the term "satire." Satire is a literary technique which holds up "the vices and the follies of a person, a society or even of mankind" in order to ridicule (Bozkurt, 1977, p.68). It is also a kind of protest which aims at provoking change -at "correction through ridicule and censure"- or preventing change (Bozkurt, 1977, p. 68). Hence, like parody, satire presents an imitation of a certain subject and has a critical stand point. The satirical writing is a combination, a mixture of elements which are proposed either with the purpose of jesting or in earnest. This combination is the essential method of satire in imitating other texts. According to Highet, some of these elements which have been constant in most satire are "variety, down-to-earth unsophistication, coarseness, an improvisatory tone, humour, mimicry, echoes of the speaking voice, abusive gibbing, and a general

feeling real or assumed of devil-may-care nonchalance" (1962, p.233). The difference between satire and parody mainly lies in their purposes. Highet points out that "the satirist, though he laughs, tells the truth…but often the satirists declare that their truth is what people do not want to hear" (1962, p.234). Therefore, the satirist aims at revealing a truth. He may mean to help the public by telling the truth and by giving valuable advice or warnings or he may mean to explicate certain secrets or scandals which hurt many people. Hence, the unpleasant, vicious and morbid reality is presented in a critical approach and what remains of this reality in the final analysis is its base, coarse and ridiculous aspects. As for parody, it does not necessarily aim at a negative judgement in its imitation of other texts. The parodist sometimes "deviates from an aesthetic norm" and sometimes "includes that norm as background material" and in such a case "any real attack would be self-destructive" (Hutcheon, 1991, p. 44). Even if the parody sometimes has a negative approach towards its target, the underlying purpose is always to build a new series of ideas upon its target and hence the target text has to remain within the body of parody.

2.3. The Different Approaches towards Parody

Parody has been approached from very different perspectives in the 20th century which affected the present understanding of parody as a textual synthesis. At the beginning of the 20th century, parody played a significant role in the formalist understanding of literature which mainly focused on establishing "a scientific" basis for the theory of literature (Selden, 1997, p.29). The formalists tried to clarify how a literary text is created through the use of aesthetic effects (Selden, 1997, p.30). They approached the literary language as a constructed mode of reality and according to Shklovsky, the main aim of literary language is "defamiliarization." He argues that our perception of life and objects loses its freshness and becomes automatized in time and the purpose of a work of art is to bring about "defamiliarization," that is "to change our mode of perception from the automatic and practical to the artistic" (Selden,1997, p.33). Shklovksy indicated that art can achieve "defamilirization" through "laying bare" its own

devices. In other words, art should refer back to its structure and processes to provide the audience with a fresh perception and to overcome automatization (Selden, 1997, p.34). This definition denotes parody as an important mode of defamilirazation because "by undermining an earlier set of fictional conventions which have become automatized, the parodist clears a path for a new, more perceptible set" (Waugh, 1984, p.64). Hence, the parodist deviates from what is habitual and what is established by usage through contrasting different art forms. Furthermore, Russian formalists stated that parody can bring about the evolution of literary styles through "re-ordering the elements in the system." That is to say, "high status elements" may be replaced by "low status elements" in the re-ordering process of parody (Dendith, 2000, p.33). This process causes renewal and progress in literary forms according to Russian formalists. They discerned parody as a positive dynamic of change which "as a literary strategy, deliberately sets itself up to break norms that have become conventionalized" (Waugh, 1984, p.65).

Mikhail Bakhtin's approach towards parody was similar to that of the Russian formalists. Like the formalists, he believed that parody had a major role in literary evolution. Bahktin's major concern is the distinction between "monologic" and "polyhphonic" (dialogic) forms, which he puts forward in *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*. Unlike the "monologic" form, the "polyphonic" form is "non-autor/itarian" in which there is no perfect harmony between the consciousnesses of the characters and the author. On the contrary, the characters are distinctly independent in their conviction and hence the novel becomes an entity in which various voices interact and clash (Selden, 1997, p.42). Bakhtin names parody as an important means of dialogue between the past "monologic" forms and the contemporary "polyphonic" works. Not only does parody represent the past voices and discourses but it also "fights against them" (Bakhtin, 1990, p.364). Thus, the aim of "parodic stylisation" for Bakhtin is to "re-create the parodied language as an authentic whole, giving it its due as a language possessing its own internal logic" (1990, p.364). In other words, parodic stylisation is not mere representation of old discourses; rather it is a procreative force which first dissolves and then re-organizes them.

Bakhtin's theory of parody is in close relationship with his idea of carnival and "carnavalisation" which he talks about in his book *Rabelais and His World*. Bahktin uses the term "carnivalisation" in order to indicate the link between the literary genres and the carnival. Carnival is a popular revelry in which all the hierarchies are subverted, "opposites are mingled" and "sacred is profaned" (Selden, 1997, p.43). These popular festivities had a major role in the development of literature especially in the Renaissance and parody is a form which was born out of the nonconformist energy of the carnival. For Rabelais, Cervantes and Shakespeare, carnival with its festive mood was a means to get rid of the valid, authoritative discourses in order to illustrate the relative nature of all dialects, jargons, and languages whether they were official, ritualistic or hierarchal (Dendith, 2000, p.23). Thus, parody functioned "both as a symptom and a weapon in the battle between popular culture energies and the forces of authority which seeks to control them" (Dendith, 2000, p.23). Hence, Bakhtin's theory of carnival mainly stressed the significance of the subversive force of parody in the process of literary and cultural change.

Another important theorist who dwelt on the significance of parody was Gerard Genette. In his *Palimsestes*, Genette denotes the differences between various kinds of parody such as travesty, burlesque and pastiche. While classifying these forms, Genette mainly focuses on their textual relations. He uses the term "hypertextuality" to talk about this relationship, that is "the relationship of one text to an earlier one" (Hutcheon, 1991, p.21). Through a textual analysis, he differentiates parody from other related forms like travesty, transposition, pastiche, skit and forgery. Hence, for Genette, parody is different from travesty in that travesty is satirical as a form of textual representation and parody should be playful rather than satirical. Pastiche is distinct from parody since its method is imitation while parody focuses on direct transformation (Dendith, 2000, p.11). Similarly, skits, which mean "charges" in French, can be distinguished from parody in that they are satirical and aim at imitation. Consequently, Genette defines parody as a transformational and playful relationship between two texts (as cited in Hutcheon, 1991, p. 38). He uses the terms "hypotext" and "hypertext" to refer to the textual relationship. "Hypotext" is the original text upon which

"hypertext" builds its parodic transformation (as cited in Dendith, 2000, p.13). Thus, parody is a form of hypertext for Genette which tends to use textual transformation rather than imitation as its method and mood can only be playful.

Genette's theory of textual interaction has been found quite restricted by certain 20th century theoreticians. Dendith states that Genette's focus is mainly the formal aspect of this interaction. The social and the historical phases which provide a ground for textual interaction are not dwelt upon (2000, p.14). Genette's idea of hypertextuality has also been found limited by Linda Hutcheon. She believes that Genette's definition is not extensive enough since parody is viewed as "a minimal transformation of another text" (1991, p.18). However, for Hutcheon parody is more than "a nostalgic imitation of past models" (199, p.8). She thinks that parody is the totality of conservative and revolutionary drives and hence she emphasises the dual nature of parody which is "double and divided." Consequently, she calls parody "an authorized transgression" and as a result of this "transgression," a new text is built (1991, p.26). As Hutcheon suggests, the duality caused by conservative and revolutionary impulses is quite paradoxical. The parodic text tries to topple the traditional, which signals the revolutionary impulse of parody. However, the power to question and to subvert is authorized by the very tradition it tries to destroy. Thus, parody has to remain within the limits of the parodied text. Consequently, Hutcheon indicates that "the ambivalence set up between conservative repetition and revolutionary difference is part of the very paradoxical essence of parody" (1991, p.77).

The power of parody for transgression is determined by the audience's familiarity with the literary tradition of the text in question as well as the text itself. Hutcheon argues that "the parodic codes have to be shared for parody –as parody- to be comprehended" (1991, p.93). In order to "decode" the intention of the parody, the reader should know about the original text. Thus, readers have a significant role in the creation of parody. Parody depends on a set of shared cultural and linguistic codes which enables its very intention to be grasped by the assumed audience.

Another 20th century theoretician, Margaret Rose, defines parody as "the comic refunctioning of performed linguistic and artistic material" (1995, p.52).

Rose explains that by “refunctioning” she points to the “new set of functions given to parodied material in the parody” (1995, p.52). Hence, Rose argues that the original text acquires new functions by becoming the subject of parody. This view is similar to Hutcheon’s definition of parody as “trans-contextualisation” according to which the original text gains new features through re-contextualisation (Hutcheon, 1991, p.35). However, Hutcheon finds Rose’s definition quite restrictive as well since Rose emphasises the existence of a comic aspect in parody. Hutcheon is after a more “neutral definition” of parody and she believes that her definition of parody as “repetition with critical difference” “would allow for the range of intent and effect possible in modern parodic work” (1995, p.20). Rose, on the other hand, thinks that Hutcheon’s refusal to emphasize the comic aspect of parody is associated with Hutcheon’s disregard for the “reduction of parody to the negative and one-dimensional form of ridicule with which the modern definition of parody as burlesque has been associated” (1995, p.239). The definition of parody as burlesque comedy deprives it of its “more complex intertextual aspects” (Rose, 1995, p.239). Thus, what Hutcheon is trying to reach is a more exalted definition of parody which dwells upon its other textual functions rather than just the comic one.

Hutcheon also emphasises the importance of parodic representation in post-modern thought. Post-modernism in literature has started as a reaction against “the elitism, sophisticated formal experimentation and tragic sense of alienation to be found in the modernist writers” (Selden, 1997, p.201). As well as being a reaction to modernist art, postmodernism problematizes the notions of history and reality. These are “no longer possible, since both have become ‘textualized’ in the world of images and simulations which characterize the contemporary age of mass consumption and advanced technology” (Selden, 1997, p. 200). Hence, the textual and representational quality of reality and history are foregrounded for the sake of undermining their unquestionable state in the previous value judgement. Parody is a central form to postmodernism according to Hutcheon because “parody is a value-problematizing, de-naturalizing form of acknowledging the history of representations” (Hutcheon, 1989, p.94). Hence, parody fits well as a post-modern tool to undermine and deconstruct the previous

value judgements by emphasizing their representational status. Furthermore, parody as Genette clarifies, requires a trans-textual relationship and thus is inevitably intertextual. Intertextuality is primarily associated with the post-structuralist theory which deals with certain postmodernist questions related to language, representation and literature.

Post-structuralism has put forward the unstable nature of signification. This means that the symmetrical unity between the signifier and the signified is no longer valid. Instead, poststructuralists claim that the signifier/signified relationship is arbitrary. The signified is "the product of a complex interaction of signifiers which has no ending" (Eagleton, 1996, p.110). Hence, meaning is created by the endless play of signifiers rather than by a harmonious correspondence between concepts and signifiers. Moreover, "there is no fixed distinction between signifiers and signified either" (Eagleton, 1996, p.111). The signified becomes other signifiers which are defined through other signifieds in the dictionary. Hence, "tree" signifies a tall plant (tree -signifier- = plant – signified) and plant in turn signifies a living organism on earth. The process is "infinite and circular" and it is impossible to reach "at a final signified which is not a signifier in itself" and hence, meaning is divided and "dispersed along a whole chain of signifiers" (Eagleton, 1996, p.111). As a result, the meaning of a sentence cannot be grasped simply by "piling one word upon the other because each word contains the traces of ones which have gone before and at the same time open to those which are coming after" (Eagleton, 1996, p.111). Thus, meaning is disclosed within the play of signifiers, which constitutes an infinite tissue.

The implications of the refusal of a closed, reachable meaning in literature have been the refusal of the concept of work as a closed entity. Roland Barthes argues that while a "work" contains meanings that are traceable back to the author (and therefore closed), a text is something which remains open. In his 1968 essay, "The Death of the Author," he clarifies that text is "not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash" (1968, p.146). Hence, he points to the clashing of different texts in a never-

ending space of different contexts, which explains the theory of intertextuality in post-structuralist thought. According to Julia Kristeva who introduced the term "intertextuality" for the first time, "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is absorption and transformation of another" (Kristeva, 1941, p. 37). Hence, by referring to never-ending transmission between different texts, Kristeva defines a text as a matrix of various other texts. The inevitable co-existence of texts makes it clear why parody has been an important medium of representation in post-modernism. As a form of "authorized transgression," parody trespasses into different texts and at times becomes a clashing point of different texts to form a fresh whole from the familiar.

Simon Dendith, in his book *Parody*, reacts to the dispute over parody by stating that it is "a fruitless form of argument" (2000, p.6). He approaches parody as "part of everyday processes by which one utterance alludes to or takes its distance from another" (2000, p.6). Hence, while trying to formulate a conclusive definition, one would end up with a "large number of incompatible definitions and differing national usages" (2000, p.37). Instead, Dendith emphasizes the local and the cultural aspect of parody as its major determiners. He defines parody as "any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production to practice" (2000, p.9). Hence, Dendith puts forward a more flexible definition which avoids clear cut divisions. First of all, Dendith stresses the variability of the power of attack. Moreover, he names "culture" another significant variable of parody. His definition describes parody as the production of various cultural and representational processes.

2.4. The Meaning of Parody within This Study

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the process of re-interpretation and re-telling of the *Bible* in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners* by means of parody. Hence, Hutcheon's definition of parody as "repetition with difference" is appropriate to explain this process. Winterson re-tells the Biblical stories by re-contextualising them. The end of this textual reproduction bears a lot of Biblical features, yet it is a distinct text bearing

a fresh interpretation of the Biblical material. As a parodist, Winterson does not aim at imitating the Biblical texts for a respectful acknowledgement of their sacred status. In line with Bakhtin's ideas of a parodist who "fights against" the past voices and discourses, Winterson aims at dissolving other literary texts and discourses in order to create a new whole out of them (Bakhtin, 1990, p.364). Moreover, her approach towards her target text can best be described as critical mockery. According to the Shklovsky's idea of "defamilirization," it is possible to overcome automatized perceptions through mocking and undermining the conventional forms of writing and traditional discourses. Hence, "defamilirization" is an important aspect of Winterson's parody. She aims at undermining the Biblical texts through displaying disrespect towards their patriarchal foundations. Therefore, her parody also has "a value-problematizing" agenda which Hutcheon deems an important aspect of parody (Hutcheon, 1989, p. 94). Her tone while displaying her disrespect is a playful one, so Rose's definition of parody as "the comic re-functioning of performed linguistic and artistic material" quite fits into Winterson's endeavor. Most of the time, she underlines the textual and fictional status of the voice of authority within the Biblical texts in order to dethrone this voice from its fixed status in a playful manner. She makes fun of her target text and hence comedy is an important part of Winterson's parody.

Hutcheon also explains the importance of the audience in the creation of parody. The audience should be familiar with the target text and traditions. In the case of *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners*, the knowledge of the Biblical text is not sufficient because Winterson mixes the Biblical material with contemporary discourses, cultures and beliefs, literary and critical theories, and contemporary lifestyles. Therefore, the audience as the "decoder" has to be alert to this contextual richness in order to grasp the "encoded" parody as the final synthesis.

Genette mainly focuses on the textual relationships in parody and says that parody is a type of playful textual transformation. This definition applies to Winterson's use of parody in terms of tone as Winterson mocks her target texts in a playful manner. The serious tone of the commanding voice in the *Bible* is

replaced by a light-hearted and a jovial one which makes fun of this commanding voice. Nevertheless, Winterson does more than transform the Biblical material. She places the Biblical material within a matrix of contemporary texts and contexts and her synthesis is therefore intertextual. It is possible to find traces of different texts within her final synthesis. Moreover, she underlines the representational and textual status of certain Biblical beliefs and her engagement with representations implies her post-modern use of parody as a tool of deconstruction. Consequently, within the context of this study, the term “parody” will be used to refer to the re-contextualisation of certain texts to re-interpret and re-formulate their foundations in a playful manner.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF PARODY IN *ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT*

The concept of parody includes the re-writing and revision of certain texts in order to explore the relationship of a work with other works and other traditions. This is what Winterson does in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, in other words, she revises the texts which have been accepted and respected by the patriarchal society through parody. The patriarchal notions, which stem from the belief in the superiority of the male and which consequently, assign insignificant and passive roles to the female in the social structure are the main points of her attack. As the main target of her attack, the *Bible* is mainly criticized for its patriarchal foundations through parody.

The *Bible* has several significant functions within the novel. First of all, Winterson makes use of the *Bible* as a framing device in this novel. Moreover, the *Bible* has functions other than that of a framing device within the novel. The chapter titles have the names of the books in the *Old Testament* and each chapter includes a few key elements from Biblical stories. The use of the Biblical material is seen as "reductionistic" by Bollinger as each chapter focuses on one Biblical concept only rather than dealing with the whole Biblical book (1994, p.365). Thus, Bollinger states that Winterson "relies upon only the most general and the conventional sense of each text" (1994, p.365). That is, Winterson re-visits each Biblical book in essence without following each story in particular.

Another important point to consider about Winterson's use of the Biblical material is her approach to the Biblical material as a parodist. As pointed out above, the parodist may approach the target text with sympathy or disrespect which determines their final parodic synthesis as the mockery or the respectful imitation of the target text. As for Winterson, she is subversive and iconoclastic, that is contradictory, in her use of the Biblical material. She approaches her target

text with disrespect to put forward critical mockery through parody. Hence, the *Bible* which is about people in search of divine relief is parodied to re-tell the struggles of a lesbian woman's life (Simpson, 2001, p.68). Moreover, the lesbian and the antiauthoritarian interpretations the novel calls forth are in contrast with the patriarchal and the sexist interpretations of the *Bible*. In other words, Winterson parodies the Biblical material by playing down the authority lying behind the stories through critical mockery. Moreover, comedy, which has been named an important tool of parody especially by Rose, is another significant aspect of Winterson's parody. Winterson's comic re-handling of the Biblical material is mainly in line with her frequent juxtaposition the sacred with the trivial. By comparing the sacred foundations of the Biblical material with the ordinary lifestyle of Jeanette, she creates her comic and parodic version of the target text. Thus, the element of humour and comedy becomes an important vein of her parody.

As an example of postmodern parody, the novel is also the juncture of different texts as well as the Biblical material. Hence, Winterson refers to certain other texts to build her story. The references to canonical texts such as *Mort D'Arthur, Jane Eyre* and certain fairy tales such as the Red Riding Hood and Beauty and the Beast aim at contrasting these texts and their traditions with the present traditions. Thus, by adding different interpretations to these texts through parody, Winterson questions the valid traditions within these works from a marginalised standpoint. On the whole, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* is full of echoes of other texts and it functions as a common ground in which "a complex conversation between texts can thus take place" (Cosslett, 1998, p.15). This chapter will analyse the parody of the Biblical material and certain other texts in order to display how they become a questioning mechanism in the hands of Winterson.

In order to construct her parody, Winterson structures the novel according to the order of the Biblical books. Therefore, the first chapter is called "Genesis" after the first book of the *Old Testament*. *Genesis* in the Old Testament includes the accounts of God's creation of the world. According to Dyas, the Biblical concept of creation "can mean both the process by which the universe was made

and the created order which emerged" (2005, p.13). "Genesis" in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* echoes the process of creation in that this chapter narrates the origin of Jeanette as an adopted daughter to a fundamentalist Christian family and the order created by the mother. It becomes evident in this chapter that the mother lives with some dogmatic binaries. As expressed by Jeannette, "She had never heard of mixed feelings. There were friends and there were enemies" (Winterson, 1985, p.3). Her dogmatic binaries shape Jeannette's religious environment as well as her viewpoints. She says, "I discovered that everything in the natural order was a symbol of the Great Struggle between good and evil" (Winterson, 1985, p.16). Thus, she is under the influence of her mother's binary logic.

Moreover, the creation story in Genesis introduces a binary logic lying behind all the process of creation. God creates the universe by dividing "light from the darkness," "Day" from the "Night," and "Earth" from the "Seas" (*Bible*, p.1). Hence, the process of creation is clearly pictured as the division and definition of concepts through binary oppositions. Binary oppositions are defined as "differences which are manipulated socially and culturally in ways which cause one group to dominate or oppress another" (Selden, 1997, p.137). Hence, binary oppositions signal a power struggle between concepts in which one party is defeated as less significant than the other. *Genesis* also makes this power struggle clear not only by the division of concepts but also by emphasizing man as the supreme power over these divisions:

> "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth" (*Bible*, p.1).

Man who was created in God's image was separated from all the other creations as their master, and hence master of all power struggles. As Doan indicates, this system of oppositions and power relations is juxtaposed by Jeanette mother's vision of the universe as a flux of oppositions (p.142, 1994):

> Enemies were: The Devil (in his many forms)
>
> Next Door
>
> Sex (in its many forms)

Slugs

Friends were: God

Our dog

Auntie Madge

The novels of Charlotte Bronte

Slug Pellets (Winterson, 1985, p.3)

However, the mother's list of binary oppositions tends to mix the sacred with the trivial. For instance, God, slug pellets and their dog are shown as equal in the power struggle between friends and enemies. By trivializing the sacred, the list also trivializes the underlining logic in the book of *Genesis*. Parody has a "value-problematizing" function as Hutcheon has stated (Hutcheon, 1989, p.94). Winterson makes use of this function of parody in order to deconstruct the traditional value judgements lying beneath the *Bible*.

Another example of how Winterson deconstructs the traditional notions in the *Bible* through parody is Jeannette's mother's vision of herself as the Virgin Mary, which is another parodic attempt at equating the sacred with the ordinary: **"**She was very bitter about the Virgin Mary getting there first. So she did the next best thing and arranged for a foundling. That was me" (Winterson, 1985, p.3). The mother envies the Virgin Mary but her "ambition to emulate the Virgin Mary and adopt a Messiah" makes her a mere replica of the Virgin Mary (Cosslett, 1998, p. 16). As well as the Virgin Mary, the holy image of Jesus as the Lamb of God who sacrifices himself for saving the humanity is also mocked: "One of my earliest memories is me sitting on a sheep at Easter while she told me the story of the Sacrificial Lamb. We had it on Sundays with potato" (Winterson, 1985, p.3). The sheep is equated with Jesus through the story Jeanette's mother tells. Nevertheless, after personalizing the sheep as the saviour of humanity, they eat that sheep. This treatment of the holy image of Jesus is a parodic re-writing aiming at attacking the holy foundations of this Biblical story.

Winterson further plays down the holy status of Jesus by comparing his temptation on the pinnacle with a trip to a hill nearby. In the book of *Matthew* in the *New Testament*, how the Satan tries to tempt Jesus is narrated. The Satan takes Jesus to the pinnacle of a temple and says "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself

down" (*Bible*, p.3). However, Jesus is not tempted and does not jump from the pinnacle to impress people as the Satan bids him. Jeanette likens her ordinary experience with the sacred experience of Jesus: "When you climb to the top of the hill and look down, you can see everything, just like Jesus on the pinnacle except it's not very tempting" (Winterson, 1985, p.6). This reference to a sacred story within an ordinary one is another instance of Winterson's strategy of handling the sacred on the same level of importance as the trivial.

Genesis also narrates the story of Abram who is ordered to leave his home and family to go to a land which God will show him. It is promised by God that "Abram will be the father of a great nation and through him all the nations of the earth will be blessed" (Dyas, 2005, p.31). He is also renamed by God as Abraham which means "the father of multitude" (Dyas, 2005, p.32). Hence, the creation of a patriarch is revealed in *Genesis*. However, as Bollinger notes, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* tends to omit "the significant men from the creation" (as cited in Makinen, 2005, p.34). As opposed to the Biblical *Genesis* which recounts the selection of "one tribe, one family, then finally one patriarch: Abraham," *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* presents a matriarchal origin story "where father and son do not exist" (Makinen, 2005, p.40). The father figure is presented as emasculated from his patriarchal role:

> Her husband was an easy going man, but I knew it depressed him…She was wrong as far as we were concerned, but right as far as she was concerned and that's really what mattered (Winterson, 1985, p.5).

The patriarchal household is deconstructed into a matriarchal one where the father has no decision making power and he is not a "father" at all but "her husband" since he is deprived of his mighty status. All the neighbours and friends around Jeanette are women and the dominant female influence on Jeanette also indicates that Winterson has removed "any significant male figures from her birth narrative" (Bollinger, 1994, p.365).

Jeanette's mother's conversion story is also a parody of people looking for divine relief. The Bible promises relief to all believers who repent their sins:

> Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool (*Bible*, p. 624).

Jeanette and other women's conversion is not however motivated by repentance or regret about their sins. First of all, it is hinted that what draws women into the church is far from spiritual attraction: "He (Pastor Spratt) was very impressive. My mother said he looked like Erol Flynn, but holy. A lot of women found the Lord that week" (Winterson, 1985, p.5) Thus, what was attractive to Jeanette's mother and other women was the pastor himself rather than the promise of divine relief in the first place. Furthermore, it is hinted that Jeanette's mother was after some material gain:

> 'There is nothing wrong,' he said when the *Chronicle* somewhat cynically asked him why he gave pot plants to the newly converted [...] When my mother heard the call, she was presented with the copy of the psalms and asked to make a choice between a Christmas Cactus (non-flowering) and a lily of the valley. She had opted for the lily. When my father went the next night, she told him to be sure and go for the cactus (Winterson, 1985, p.8).

The underlying motivation behind the mother's conversion is a pot plant rather than some kind of divine revelation. Hence, the promise of spiritual relief is overcome by the promise of material gain and sexual attraction.

There is a fairy tale in this chapter which goes on exploring the mother's choice of conversion to the church of Pastor Spratt on an allegorical level (Simpson, 2001, p.12). In this fairy tale which Jeanette has made up herself, a beautiful princess takes on the responsibilities of a hunchback:

> Her duties would be:
>
> (1) To milk the goats
>
> (2) To educate the people
>
> (3) To compose songs for the festival (Winterson, 1985, p.8).

Thus, she chooses an alternative lifestyle to the petty lifestyle in the court (Simpson, 2001, p.12). Hence, as opposed to the traditional fairy tale princesses who seek happiness in marriage, she chooses to stand on her own feet by taking

over responsibilities. The function of this parodic revision of a fairy tale is to display how Jeanette's mother finds herself a new path in religion and her adoption of Jeanette. Hence, she chooses a more active lifestyle with her conversion to the church as opposed to her lifestyle as a housewife.

Jeanette also creates parodic versions of the Biblical stories to amuse herself. In the Sunday School Room, she creates an alternative story to the Biblical story of Daniel while playing with the Fuzzy Felt which is a toy for young children and which consists of a backing board and a number of shapes to be placed on the board to create pictures. According to the Biblical account, Daniel is thrown into the lions' den by the King of Babylon as a result of a plot against him. Nevertheless, as he is free of guilt, the lions do not hurt him at all:

> My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lion's mouth, that they have not hurt me: foreasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king have I done no hurt (*Bible*, p. 798).

Nevertheless, in Jeanette's version, the lions attack Daniel. She is noticed by Pastor Spratt while creating her story:

> 'What's that?'
>
> 'Daniel,' I answered.
>
> 'But that's not right,' he said, aghast. 'Don't you know that Daniel escaped? In your picture the lions are swallowing him.' (Winterson, 1985, p.13).

Although she says that she has confused the stories, she actually parodies the real story on purpose. The way she makes fun of the Biblical story by changing its end indicates her hunger for alternative stories and foreshadows her future search for an alternative lifestyle to the missionary one she is leading with her church members.

The second chapter *Exodus* focuses on Jeanette's going to school. The book of *Exodus* is about Moses' encounter with God as a result of which "he is commanded to lead his people out of slavery" (*Bible* 51). The word "exodus" means departure in Greek. It signals departure for Israelites from their homeland in the *Bible* and departure from home for Jeanette as *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* relates how Jeannette leaves the strict household to see the secular world

outside. Like the Israelites who try to survive in the wilderness, Jeanette struggles to fit to the wilderness of the secular world. Simpson states that "Jeanette is guided by a pillar of cloud (the unwritten laws of the school) which she is unable to interpret" (2001, p.19). Thus, the school provides some guidance in the wilderness of the outside world like the "pillar of cloud" which guided the Israelites towards the Promised Land. As the chapter pictures Jeanette's immersion into the outside world, the juxtaposition between the church and the outside world becomes evident. Once Jeanette goes deaf for three months but no one notices it. When she finally makes it clear that she cannot hear, everyone believes that she "was in a state of rapture and no one could speak to" her (Winterson, 1985, p.23). Miss Jewsbury finally realizes that she is not "full of spirits" but she is deaf. Thus, Jeanette witnesses that what the church puts forward as true may not always be true. This leads Jeanette into a sense of self-contradiction:

> Since I was born, I had assumed that the world ran on very simple lines, like a larger version of our church. Now I was finding that the church was sometimes confused. This was a problem (Winterson, 1985, p.27).

Jeannette is left alone in the wilderness of the hospital this time and seeing that the church has been wrong about the reason for her plight, she understands that the church is not an absolute power.

In the second chapter, Jeanette goes on playing down with religious beliefs through displaying them as insignificant. For instance, she talks about how Elsie gets up to talk about trivial matters to testify to "God's goodness":

> 'Listen to what the Lord has done me this week.'
>
> She needed eggs and the Lord sent them.
>
> She had a bout of colic, and the Lord took it away (Winterson, 1985, p. 23).

This is a light treatment of people's expectations of miraculous happenings caused by some unlimited power. Therefore, this treatment makes fun of such expectations.

As Jeanette tries to cope with her contradictions between the secular world outside and the church, she makes up certain stories. The first one is the story of Noah. According to *Genesis*, God decides to punish people for their wickedness by sending a deluge. God spares only Noah and his family as the only innocent people left on earth. She re-tells the story of Noah to herself in a different way:

> It showed two parent Noah's leaning out looking at the flood, while the other Noah's tried to catch one of the rabbits. But for me, the delight was a detachable chimpanzee, made out of a Brillo pad; at the end of my visit she let me play with it for five minutes. I had all kinds of variations, but usually I drowned it (Winterson, 1985, p.24)

This is a cynical treatment of the Noah story and by changing the story in her mind and creating alternative ends, she undermines the authority lying behind this Biblical story. In a way, she displays her anger at the clash of the church with the world outside. She becomes aware of the restricted notions of the church and her different ending for the Noah story indicates that she has become aware of the relative nature of perceptions. Nevertheless, her vision of the secular world is not so positive either. She creates a story called 'How Eskimo Got Eaten' while staying at the hospital to amuse herself. The story displays how she sees the world outside:

> I had to invent a story about, 'How Eskimo Got Eaten,' which made me even more miserable[...] I thought of the sea walrus I had just invented. It was wicked, it had eaten the Eskimo (Winterson, 1985, p.27)

This does not end on a happy note either. Hence, her perception of the world is one of chaos and pain. Both stories have a lot of violence in them and this shows that she cannot find peace either in church or in the world outside. Furthermore, she tries to cope with this contradiction by likening herself to people of eminence from Biblical and secular stories:

> So I was alone. I thought of Jane Eyre, who faced many trials and was always brave (Winterson, 1985, p.28).

> I scrambled up and went inside, feeling like Daniel (Winterson, 1985, p.41)
>
> This tendency towards the exotic has brought me many problems, just as it did to William Blake (Winterson, 1985, p.42)

The people she likens herself to clarify her feelings point to some confusion in her mind. When she needs courage, she thinks about Jane Eyre and Daniel, and about William Blake who was considered "gifted but insane till mid nineteenth century" (Simpson, 2001,p.15) when her efforts at school are not appreciated. Hence, she makes use of a flux of religious and secular intertexts to display her confusion at the state of life as relative rather than as one fixed whole. Winterson makes use of parody to transgress the limits of different texts and she creates a fresh narrative of Jeanette's experiences out of the familiar texts. By bringing together these different intertexts, Winterson creates what Kristeva calls "a mosaic of quotations" (Kristeva, 1941, p.37). Although this "mosaic" consists of familiar texts, what is presented as the synthesis of these intertexts is fresh and unique. Hence, in line with Shklovsky's concept of 'defamiliarization', Winterson creates a fresh whole out of what is known and what is habitual.

Her experience in the outside world teaches her an important tenet: "no emotion is the final one" (Winterson, 1985, p.27). The final lesson is also a parodied form of the lesson that the Israelites got from God through the Ten Commandments at the end of their wanderings. According to Dyas, the key concepts in the Ten Commandments are "worshipping God alone" and "loving others" (2005, p.57). These key concepts denote God as the ultimate source of wisdom and love as the ultimate emotion. However, her wanderings in the wilderness of the secular world lead Jeanette to a stance of relativity where no concept can stand out as fixed for long.

The third book of the *Old Testament* is *Leviticus*. This book contains certain fundamental laws of the Jews and the religious ceremonies to be followed on certain occasions (Simpson, 2001, p.27). In a way, the book demonstrates the initiation of Judaism. The chapter in Winterson's book, likewise, demonstrates the process of Jeannette's growing up and "the mother's initiation of Jeannette into

her role as evangelist" (Makinen, 2005, p.34). Her mother tries to make Jeanette a part of the religious activities carried out by the church:

> The conference was booked for Saturday, and there was always a market near Infant Street on Saturdays, so my mother gave me an orange box, and told me to shout at everyone what was happening (Winterson, 1985, p.60).

She completes the chore assigned by her mother. However, she is still not initiated into the role that her mother foresees for her. Instead, she forms her own opinions: "the sermon was on perfection, and it was at this moment that I began to develop my first theological disagreement" (Winterson, 1985, p. 60). As the following fairy tale expresses, the search for perfection for Jeannette is "the search for balance, for harmony" (Winterson, 1985, p.64). Hence, it is a relative feeling changing according to individual needs whereas the sermon describes perfection as a condition before "the fall," a state of "flawlessness" (Winterson, 1985, p.60). Thus, Jeanette cannot help questioning the church doctrine and as opposed to the Book of *Leviticus* which preaches a monolithic viewpoint, she has initiated herself into a sceptical standpoint.

The fairy tale Jeanette tells in this chapter parodies the gender politics lying behind the traditional fairy tale genre as well. The traditional fairy tales project women as submissive and totally dependent on a male power to survive the dangers of the outside world. The male on the other hand is shown as bold and clever. According to Bacchilega, the traditional fairy tales support the traditional gender politics and "by showcasing 'women' and making them disappear at the same time, the fairy tale thus transforms us/them into man-made constructs of 'women'" (1997, p.9). Winterson parodies this man-made picture of women in this version. The fairy tale fits in with the traditional plot. It is about the search for love of a handsome prince, but the depiction of the prince does not follow the traditional pattern: "He was considered by many to be a good prince, and a valuable leader. He was also quite pretty, though a little petulant at times" (Winterson, 1985, p. 61). Whether he is a good leader is questionable as the words "by many" suggests. Moreover, he is not handsome but "pretty." Besides, he is pictured as a flawed character, not as a paragon of perfection. In his search for

perfection, he meets his heroine in the woods and although he sees in her the perfect lady that he has been looking for, she is not the typical perfect fairy tale heroine. She refuses to talk to the prince's advisor since she is busy:

> 'Fair maid,' he began.
>
> 'If you want to chat,' she said, 'you'll have to come back later, I'm working to a deadline."
>
> The advisor was very shocked.
>
> 'But I am royal' he told her.
>
> 'And I'm working on a deadline' she told him (Winterson, 1985, p.63)

The perfect woman turns out to be "business-like, bold, intelligent, outspoken and fiercely independent" (Simpson, 2001, p.25). Unlike the submissive gender role model, she has no fear of authority. Moreover, the fixed happy ending also does not ensue as the perfect woman turns down the prince's proposal. The prince's reaction to her refusal is "But you must, I've written all about you" (Winterson, 1985, p.64). Hence, by turning down the prince, the perfect woman also turns down the traditional gender role model created by men for women. Consequently, she is punished for her boldness. Winterson revises the traditional fairy tale format and the parodied version she creates questions its patriarchal foundations. As she does with the Biblical stories, she analyzes the traditional fairy tale genre with a negative approach and with certain disrespect in order to question and undermine the patriarchal notions in it which assign women a less significant, weak position in the narratives.

The Book of *Numbers* displays the "wanderings of Israelites to the Promised Land" (Simpson, 2001, p.30). The identical chapter in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* displays Jeanette's theoretical wanderings about the nature of love and marriage till she reaches her own true self, her lesbian identity, which is ironically equated with the Promised Land. At the beginning of the chapter, Jeanette discovers the widespread notion that everyone looks for "the right person" to get married to:

> Everyone always said you found the right man.
>
> My mother said it, which was confusing.
>
> My aunt said it, which was even more confusing (Winterson, 1985, p.72)

Consequently, she discovered that marriage was a social institution and also this search for the right person was pointless since all the women she had encountered were disappointed in marriage. For instance, her aunt tells her, “I laughed for a week, cried for a month, and settled down for life” when she got married (Winterson, 1985, p.73). Jeanette looks at certain fairy tales and sees a similar disappointment on the part of women in them too. Winterson once more revises the fairy tale genre and this time she questions how fairy tales encourage patriarchy by deceiving women through faulty representations of love and marriage. Jeanette first reads “Beauty and the Beast” which is about the marriage of a princess with a beast. The beast turns out to be a handsome prince once the princess kisses her. According to Zipes, the animal bridegroom which worries Jeanette in this story originally “stems from matriarchal societies” in which the female is seen as the “initiator of human action and salvation” whereas the male is seen as uncivilized (1983, p.34). In this fairy tale, the beast becomes a human being only after the princess kisses him. Thus, on a metaphorical level, he has become civilized through a female intervention and influence. Jeanette starts thinking about the real situations and quickly grasps that women do not end up as lucky as in the fairy tales in reality: “And what about my Uncle Bill, he was horrible and hairy, and looking at the picture transformed princes aren’t meant to be hairy at all” (Winterson, 1985, p.72). Hence, Jeanette decides that men do not actually change by women’s influence and women are trapped and made to live with beasts all their lives. Zipes explains that the belief in the civilizing influence of women decreased in the 17th century and as a result, “the female bringer of salvation could only find her ‘true’ salvation by sacrificing herself to a man in his house or castle, symbolical of submission to patriarchal rule” (1985, p.34).

Jeanette also realizes that the disappointment of women stem from the faulty representation of men and marriage as a source of happiness: “Slowly I closed the book. It was clear that I had stumbled on a terrible conspiracy (Winterson, 1985, p.72). She realises that the expectations created by such stories are actually misleading: “What do you do if you marry a beast? And kissing them didn’t always help” (Winterson, 1985, p. 72). Hence, she understands that the promise made to women in this story is also a deception as nothing can be

changed so easily in reality. Then she thinks about “Little Red Riding Hood”: “And beasts are crafty. They disguise themselves like you and I. Like the wolf in ‘Little Red Riding Hood’ (Winterson, 1985, p.73)

The Little Red Riding Hood is also trapped by a wolf which devours both the grandmother and the little girl. The narrative purpose of the 17th century tale according to Zipes was to warn little girls about their sexuality and the underlying moral message was: “ if you do not walk the straight path through the sensual temptations of the dark forest [...], then you will be swallowed by the wolf, the devil or sexually starved males” (Zipes, 1983, p.52). Hence, as Zipes points out, the wolf stands for a male threat. The overall message initiated by these two fairy tales is that women should be careful as their sexuality is always under the threat of male oppression. In “Beauty and the Beast,” the princess obeys the patriarchal order and accepts her parents’ choice and she is rewarded for her submission. The Little Red Riding Hood, however, is punished since she follows the path the wolf asked her to and as a result she is victimized by the patriarchal order. Winterson revises these popular fairy tales and parodies the myth of marriage as the source of eternal happiness by displaying how Little Red Riding Hood and the princess in The Beauty and the Beast are deceived by man disguised as animals. When Jeanette finally asks “Did that mean that all over the globe, in all innocence, women were marrying beasts?” she subtly claims that the real oppressive and beastly nature of men continues to suppress women under certain disguises.

Similar to the fairy tales which deceive women into accepting the passive position assigned to them in the society, the different version of *Jane Eyre* created by Jeanette’s mother aim at deceiving Jeanette into accepting the religious lifestyle decreed by her mother. Jeanette remembers how her mother used to read her *Jane Eyre* over and over when she was a little child. Jane Eyre is an orphan girl who later becomes a governess. While working as a governess, she falls in love with her employer, Mr. Rochester. However, on their wedding day, it is revealed that Mr. Rochester is already married and that his wife who has gone insane has been living in the attic. The wedding is cancelled and Jane’s cousin St John Rivers proposes to her this time to join him in his missionary work in India. Nevertheless, Jane refuses this offer saying that they do not love each other.

Jeannette later discovers that her mother has changed the ending of the story by telling her that Jane is eventually married to St John Rivers to join in the missionary work: “I found out, that dreadful day in a back corner of a library, that Jane doesn’t marry St John at all, that she goes back to Mr. Rochester” (Winterson, 1985, p.74). From the mother’s perspective, St John Rivers represents the Christian duties whereas Mr. Rochester represents worldly passions. Minogue states that “As St John runs to meet his Lord, and his death, she [Jane] runs to human love and life” (1999, p.xxiii). Hence, it is clear that the choice between Mr. Rochester and St John Rivers is one between earthly pleasures and religious duties. The mother equates Jeannette with Jane in her mind and sees a similar choice awaiting Jeanette in the future. By rewriting the ending, she aims at imposing her own choice on Jeannette. Jeanette’s mother’s revision of *Jane Eyre* is a parodic double of the story and her alternative ending puts an end to the religious controversies that Jane’s choice initiated. She foresees that Jeanette will have to choose either to stay with her mother and the church members or to leave her home to stand on her own feet. Hence, in order to impose her own choice on Jeanette, she plays down with the narrative in *Jane Eyre*, which creates a fresh version preaching for the mother’s ideals.

Throughout this chapter, Jeannette questions the stories related to love and marriage between a man and a woman. She sees the hypocrisy lying behind these stories and parody becomes a questioning tool which she uses to reveal the underlying hypocrisy in these tales. Her mother’s own story at the end of the chapter as to how she fell in love is the final attack on heterosexual union myths. Jeanette’s mother falls in love with a Frenchman and soon after she starts feeling “giddy or fizzy in the belly” (Winterson, 1985, p. 87). She goes to see a doctor about this and the doctor tells her “You may well be in love, [...] but you also have a stomach ulcer” (Winterson, 1985, p.88). Thus, what she thinks as love turns out to be a stomach ulcer. She takes some medication and “the next time they met, she felt nothing” (Winterson, 1985, p.88). The doctor’s comment parodies how Jeanette’s mother lacks emotional depth. Moreover, this story ridicules the common notion of love as a source of excitement and happiness. She

parodies the concept of love by representing the source of her excitement and "giddiness" as an illness rather than love.

In *Exodus* in the *Old Testament*, it is explained that the Israelites were guided by the Lord in their journey towards the Promised Land:

> And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night (*Bible*,p. 67).

Later in the Book of *Numbers*, the pillar of cloud is again referred to as a guide to Israelites:

> And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents (*Bible*, p.143)

As the Book of *Numbers* in the novel parodies the journey of Israelites by equating it with the theoretical journey of Jeanette about the nature of love and marriage, there is also a reference to the pillar of cloud: "We left together, me on a cloud and her [Melanie's] handbag full of tracts on the gifts of the Spirit, and advice for new converts" (Winterson, 1985 p. 86). As the Lord guides the people over a pillar of cloud, Jeanette is guiding the newly converted Melaine. The reference is parodic in that the Lord is equated with Jeanette as a spiritual guide. A sacred story is used to refer to an everyday situation and hence the power of this sacred story is undermined.

The fifth book of the *Old Testament*, *Deuteronomy*, emphasizes the Ten Commandments once more and narrates the final events of Moses's life. This chapter in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* is a theoretical one in which Jeanette's reflections on history, truth and fiction are presented. The *Old Testament* restates the laws of the monolithic belief in this chapter and Moses declares that these laws will remain universal: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain; my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as the showers upon the grass" (*Bible*,p. 210). Winterson, on the other hand, once more emphasizes the importance of scepticism and plurality in her own book of laws. Her definition of history is that:

> History should be a hammock for swinging and a game for playing, the way cats play. Chew it, chew it, rearrange it, and at bedtime it's still a ball of string full of knots (Winterson, 1985, p. 93).

Hence, history is only a matter of organizing the past events into a cohesive whole. Yet, this process of ordering is quite selective which disrupts the multiplicity of historical events. She refers to Pol Pot who started a communist revolution in Cambodia:

> And in some ghastly way Pol Pot was more honest than the rest of us have been. Pol Pot decided to dispense with the past altogether […] In Cambodia, the cities were to be wiped out, maps thrown away, everything gone. No documents. Nothing. A brave new world (Winterson, 1985, p. 94).

Pol Pot started a new order in Cambodia and hence all the old documents lost their validity. All that had been accepted as true and valid lost their fixed status. Winterson suggests that our notion of history as universal and objective may not be true since history itself is determined by the dominant political ideology. The beginning of a new political ideology in Cambodia meant the beginning of "a new world" with new historical accounts which wiped the previous accounts. Both the Biblical *Deuteronomy* and its namesake in the book try to establish a certain standpoint. The Biblical *Deuteronomy* establishes the laws of Judaism as the unchanging rules for humanity whereas the chapter in the novel parodies this approach by refusing single interpretations:

> Perhaps the event has an unassailable truth. God saw it. God knows. But I am not God. And so when someone tells what they heard or saw, I believe them, and I believe their friends who also saw, but not in the same way (Winterson, 1985, p.94).

The overall notion this chapter tries to put forward is that everything we accept as truths is the outcome of different interpretations which are determined by different ideologies and circumstances. As *Deuteronomy* establishes the Ten Commandments, this chapter establishes Jeannette's standpoint as a sceptic who refuses to organize stories into a specific frame and thus into a single interpretation (Simpson, 2001, p.33). The monolithic interpretation of the church

will clash with Jeanette's ideas which welcome free thinking. As the statement "If you want to keep your own teeth, make your own sandwiches…." indicates, Jeanette tells people to formulate their own opinions instead of depending on the dictated ones.

The chapter "Joshua" underlines the theme of loss through a complex body of references to different texts. Winterson parodies different stories to tell the story of Jeanette, which echoes all the different stories, yet puts forward a new perception to Jeannette's situation. First of all, the Biblical story of Joshua is interwoven into the whole chapter. The Book of *Joshua* is about the conquest of Canaan by Israelites. The chapter in *Oranges Are Not the only Fruit* is particularly concerned with the part about the Battle of Jericho. Joshua, the successor to Moses, follows God's instructions and walks around the city walls of Jericho together with seven priests blowing trumpets. At the end of the seventh day, the city walls collapse:

> So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him and they took the city (*Bible*,p. 219).

This battle is paralleled with the battle between Jeanette and the church. As her affair with Melanie is revealed, she keeps "blowing her own trumpet, standing up against the community in defence of her lesbian sexuality" (Coslett, 1998, p.16). Winterson parodies this Biblical story by placing Jeanette as the Joshua figure:

> 'Do you deny you love this woman with a love reserved for men and wife?'
>
> 'No, yes, I mean of course I love her' (Winterson, 1985, p.105)

She does not change her stand that there is nothing wrong in what she feels for Melanie and she is still good and right. The church members ask her to repent and her mother burns all the memories of Melanie to punish her. Jeanette's comment about the events shows that she also sees herself as a Joshua figure:

> Walls protect and walls limit. It is in the nature of walls that they should fall. That walls should fall is the consequence of blowing your own trumpet (Winterson, 1985, p.112).

The references clearly suggest similarities with the Biblical story. Like Joshua, she behaved in a headstrong manner and blew her trumpet which resulted in the collapse of the walls. In Jeanette's case, the walls belong to the church which surrounded and protected her till then. However, her assertion of her own choice brings about the fall of the secure walls of the church for her.

Moreover, in her defence at the church, she refers to the words of Saint Paul in his epistle to Titus: 'To the pure all things are pure,' I yelled at him. 'It's you not us.' (Winterson, 1985, p.112). The pastor accuses them of unnatural passions by reading St Paul's words. Jeanette uses the pastor's weapon against him through this reference. This quotation originally is: "Unto the things pure all things *are* pure: unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (*Bible*, p. 218). Hence, the quotation describes the state of unbelievers and by alluding to these words; Jeanette accuses the church of hypocrisy since they cannot see that there is nothing unnatural about her feelings. Jeannette also refers to the nursery rhyme about Humpty Dumpty:

> Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall.
> Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
> The City of Lost Chances is full of those who chose the wall.
> All the king's horses and the all the king's men.
> Couldn't put Humpty together again (Winterson, 1985, p.113).

The reference to this story underlines similar themes with those of the Joshua story. Winterson interweaves the Joshua story to underline her break from the church and the collapse of safe walls which have protected her so far. The story of Humpty Dumpty also underlines the loss of protection. As Humpty Dumpty falls from the wall, his shell breaks down and its repair is not possible. The shell is the means of protection for the egg and Jeanette perceives that the church has been supposed to protect her in a similar way. Jeanette like Humpty Dumpty has gone through a fall in the eyes of her church fellows and has lost her bond with the church which has been her family and her home so far.

Another reference which strengthens the theme of loss is a poem called "Not Waving but Drowning" by Stevie Smith. During a church campaign on the beach, a church member, called Mrs Rothwell, goes swimming and when she waves people think that she is drowning, but it turns out that she is actually waving:

> 'Is she waving?' May wondered anxiously.
>
> 'Drowning more like,' exclaimed Fred, peeling off his jacket and tie (Winterson 1985 117).
>
> 'But, you were signalling for help.'
>
> 'Nay, I were waving goodbye' (Winterson, 1985, p.117).

Similarly, the persona in the poem is thought to be waving but unlike Mrs Rothwell, he is actually drowning and asking for help:

> I was much further out than you thought
>
> And not waving but drowning (Smith, 1987, p.167)

The poem underlines the themes of loss of hope and life. Unlike the persona in the poem, Mrs Rothwell is not drowning. She is only waving at the others. First, Winterson establishes the feeling of loss which has also been strengthened through the reference to Humpty Dumpty. Then, by picturing Mrs Rothwell as waving, she signals that there is still hope for Jeanette in the distance. Moreover, the parodic reference to this poem contributes to the body of intertexts which has come together through a thematic relationship.

Winterson alludes to the *Bible* once more at the very end of the chapter. She re-interprets the Biblical description of heaven with a reference to the river Euphrates in the first line: "On the banks of the Euphrates find a secret garden cunningly walled (Winterson, 1985, p.123). Euphrates is one of the rivers in heaven according to Genesis: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; from thence it was parted and became into four heads [...] And the fourth river is Euphrates" (*Bible*,p. 2). As the reference to Euphrates suggests, the description belongs to the Garden of Eden. Yet, in Winterson's revision the tree of knowledge is no longer an apple tree, but it is an orange tree:

> Close to the heart is a sundial and at the heart an orange tree [...] To eat of the fruit means to leave the garden because the fruit speaks of other things, other longings (Winterson, 1985, p.123).

Orange is the colour of Jeanette's demon which helps her to accept her sexuality**.** Orange also functions as a metaphor throughout the novel. According to Laura Doan, it is "a metaphor for the self/world or self/other dichotomy" (1994, p.147). She explains that orange represents the conflict between the inner and outer selves of a person because it consists of "rough, thick, seemingly impenetrable exterior" and "a soft, delicately segmented inner fruit" (1994, p.147). Hence, the function of the metaphor is to display Jeanette's journey towards her inner self, which is indeed a difficult one:

> I took out the largest [orange] and tried to peel it. The skin hung stubborn, and soon I lay panting, angry and defeated. What about grapes or bananas? I did finally pull away the outer shell and, cupping both hands round, tore open the fruit.
>
> 'Feeling any better?' Sitting in the middle was the orange demon (Winterson, 1985, p.113).

As the hard exterior of the orange prevents easy access to the fruit itself, her environment makes it difficult for Jeanette to come to terms with her inner self and to establish her lesbian identity. As orange becomes the symbol of her search, the demon to help her in this search for identity is also orange. The Orange Demon explains his function as:

> We are here to keep you in one piece, if you ignore us, you are likely to end up in two pieces, or lots of pieces, it's all part of the paradox (Winterson, 1985, p.109).

The function of the Orange Demon is to help Jeanette keep her integrity by making the best choice in relation to her sexuality. Consequently, she makes her choice to stand by her actions and leaves the church. The orange tree in the secret garden and the Orange Demon stand for her lesbian sexuality. As she has made her decision, she has to leave the Garden of Eden. This story has a similar thematic structure emphasising the fall and the loss of protection.

The seventh book of Old Testament, *Judges*, is about the historical background of the Israelites after the death of Joshua up to the time of Samuel. This part deals with the deeds of certain leaders or "judges" (Simpson, 2001, p. 42). Winterson mainly plays with the words "judging," "judgments," and "judges" in this chapter. Hence, the Biblical judges are paralleled with people from her own church who judge her sexual choice. Jeannette has another lesbian affair with another church member called Kathy and when others find out about their relationship, Jeannette decides to leave the church. At the beginning of the chapter, Jeannette's mother appears as the judge figure:

> She didn't believe in Determinism and Neglect, she believed that you made "people and yourself what you wanted. Anyone could be saved and anyone could fall to the Devil, it was their choice." While some of our church forgave me on the admittedly dubious grounds that I couldn't help it (they had read Havelock Ellis and knew about Inversion), my mother saw it as a wilful act on my part to sell my soul. (Winterson, 1985, p.128).

She thinks that Jeannette's sexual choice is a spiritual treachery and that this choice means being in league with the Satan. Her harsh judgment shows that she lacks the flexibility and the empathy that the other church members have. Secondly, Pastor Spratt appears as another judge figure:

> The pastor snatched it away and explained to me as quietly as he could that I was the victim of a great evil. That I was afflicted and oppressed, that I had deceived the flock. 'The demon,' he announced very slowly, 'had turned sevenfold' (Winterson, 1985, p.131).

The Pastor is the representative of the church Therefore, Jeannette is being judged and isolated by the whole institution of the church. Moreover, the church also judges their sect which mostly included women and depended on sisterhood:

> The real problem, it seemed, was going against the teachings of St Paul, and allowing women power in the church. Our branch of the

> church had never thought about it, we'd always had strong women and the women organized everything (Winterson, 1985, p.133).

The ministers, teachers, and preachers were all women in this sect which would mean "usurping" the male identity (Makinen, 2005, p. 35). Upon their judgment about their sect, Jeannette's mother thinks "having taken on a man's world in some ways I [Jeannette] flouted God's law and tried to do it sexually" (Winterson, 1985, p. 134). Hence, the mother tries to justify Jeanette's sexual choice by stating that she has gained male sexual habits as she has been given manly responsibilities by the church. Knowing her mother's strict notions, Jeannette is enraged by her mother's endeavour to justify her sexual choice. She now becomes a judge figure judging her mother's thinking:

> I knew my mother hoped I would blame myself, but I didn't. I knew now where the blame lay. If there's such a thing as spiritual adultery, my mother was a whore (Winterson, 1985, p. 134).

This time, it's Jeanette who blames her mother of spiritual treachery. The chapter ends with Jeannatte's leaving home. She thinks that "it was not a judgment day, but another morning" (Winterson, 1985, p.135). After all these judgments, she is trying to console herself that life is still going on.

At this point, a reference to the story of Sir Perceval and King Arthur contributes to the theme of search for inner identity started by the references to the Orange Demon. Sir Perceval who leaves the court misses his home and friends:

> Tonight, bitten and bruised, he dreams of Arthur's court, where he was the darling, the favourite. He dreams of his hounds and his falcon, his stable and his faithful friends Dead or dying (Winterson, 1985, p. 135)

Winterson refers back to the story of King Arthur in order to show how Jeanette feels facing all the negative judgements of the church. Jeannette appears as a Sir Perceval figure who has been cast out of his home in search of the holy grail. She knows that she will leave her home like Sir Perceval, who will not be seeing his friends again as they are "dying or dead." Jeanette knows that she will similarly be cast out of her home and friends. Parody at this point functions as a bridge to

bring together the references to Orange Demon, the Garden of Eden, King Arthur and Sir Perceval to establish the theme of the search of inner self or identity.

The Book of *Ruth* is concerned with the story of a foreigner who remains loyal to her widowed mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth leaves her own people and religion to stay with Naomi after the death of her husband (Dyas, 2005, p.79). Makinen suggests that "feminist Bible scholars have read Ruth's choice as a significant attack on patriarchal culture's use of women as an exchange value between men and re-evaluation of women's relationships with other women" (Makinen, 2005, p.35). Winterson also uses this story to attack patriarchal culture by emphasizing Jeannette's relationship with her mother. First of all, Jeannette stands out as a Ruth figure which indicates that she is finally liberated "from patriarchal structures as she finally takes charge of her own women centred story" (Cosslett, 1998, p.17). Moreover, Ruth has to give up her past life because of her bond with Naomi. Similarly, Jeannette has to leave her home because of her bond with other women, Kathy and Melanie (Coslett, 1998, p.17). Thus, the theme of loyalty in the Biblical story is similar to Jeannette's search for loyalty in other women. The Book of *Ruth* also tells the exile of Naomi and her return to her homeland. Likewise, Jeannette is exiled from her home because of her lesbianism, but finally returns to her mother despite all the controversies that they had: "[...] she had tied a thread around my button, to tug when she pleased" (Winterson, 1985, p.176). She admits that there is a strong bond between her mother and herself despite all the controversies they have had. Bollinger points out that "Jeanette's action thus reproduces the theology of the Ruth text; she opts to express to her mother the same *hesed* (loyalty, duty, mercy, goodness and kindness) Ruth showed Naomi" (1994, p.370). Hence, both stories deal with "female loyalty and bonding, female autonomy, exile and return" (Cosslett, 1998, p. 17).

In the last chapter, Winterson intertwines the stories of Winnet and Sir Perceval into the story of Jeanette. The story of Winnet bears many similarities to the story of Jeanette, the most significant of which is their exile from home because of their emotional attachments. Like Jeanette who has been banished from church and her family, Winnet is also banished by her father, the sorcerer:

> ‘Daughter, you disgraced me,’ said the sorcerer, ‘and I have no more use for you. You must leave.’
>
> Winnet could not ask for forgiveness when she was innocent, but she did not ask to stay (Winterson, 1985, p.147)

Winnet like Jeannette thinks she has not done anything wrong, but she has to leave despite her innocence. The story of Winnet forms a parallel to the story of Ruth. Winnet’s experience of exile refers back to the exile theme in the story of Ruth and two stories come together to form the story of Jeanette and express how she feels. Furthermore, Winterson also refers to the story of Sir Perceval who experiences a similar feeling of banishment when he is away form Arthur’s court:

> Sir Perceval curses himself for leaving the round table, leaving the king, and the king’s sorrowing face. On his last night at Camelot, he found Arthur walking in the garden and Arthur had cried like a child, and said there was nothing (Winterson, 1985, p.166)

Thus, the story of Sir Perceval also supports the theme of exile that the other stories have put forward. Moreover, the bond between Arthur and Sir Perceval is parallel to the bond between Jeannette and her mother. Arthur’s sadness indicates that he does not want Sir Perceval to leave and Sir Perceval also regrets his decision later on. The story expresses that the bond between Jeannette and her mother is still valid and Sir Perceval’s regret also parallels Jeannette’s longing to go back home.

Winterson re-works different texts in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit.* First of all, she frames her narrative with the Biblical chapters. Though not directly referred to, the Biblical stories are paralleled with the encounters of Jeanette. Their holy status is undermined by being juxtaposed with the marginal experiences of Jeanette through parody. Although she mocks her target text most of the time, she still presents a serious criticism through parodying the Biblical material and questioning its value judgements and patriarchal foundations. Moreover, Winterson forms a complex intertextual whole by re-working other literary texts. The novel is composed of a web of references to different texts and discourses such as the fairy tales, *Jane Eyre*, and *Morte D’Arthur*. The “mosaic” created by the numerous intertexts remains unique and genuine as the voice of

Jeanette is distinguished among the different voices released by these different texts. The re-working of different texts enriches the novel as a result of which it becomes a dialogue of different texts rather than a conventional narrative.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF PARODY IN *BOATING FOR BEGINNERS*

Winterson's second novel, *Boating for Beginners* is also a complex body of different texts which are brought together to question the Biblical flood myth and its patriarchal implications. Winterson makes use of parody as a tool to subvert the patriarchal notions in the *Bible* as well as the 20th century capitalist values and discourses in which the Scriptures have lost their spiritual value. The Biblical flood myth functions as a frame in which many contemporary intertexts and discourses are interwoven. The outcome is an intertextual mixture which "creates pluralist signifying practices within the textual parody of *Genesis*" (Opperman, 2000, 82).

By emphasising the plurality of signifiers, *Boating for Beginners* also denies the presence and the possibility of reaching a meaning as a result of the ongoing signifying practices. Hence, the belief in the "transcendental signifier" – "the sign which will give meaning to all others"- is also subverted (Eagleton, 1996, p. 112). God, as the author of scriptures, stands out as the "author of the Authors, the authority behind all authorities" (Vanhoozer, 1998, p.47). By representing God as a fictional entity, Winterson mocks the privileged status of God as "the transcendental signifier." His secondary status within the text indicates that he has been dethroned from his role as the almighty creator. Thus, the concept of author is undermined within the holy image of God. Furthermore, Winterson deconstructs the concept of "work" by disrupting the unity in the Biblical Flood myth through parody. As opposed to the traditional notion of "work" which releases a single 'theological' meaning ,the 'message' of the Author-God**,** *Boating for Beginners* presents an open narrative which denies the existence of a single meaning (Barthes, 1968, p.146). Winterson creates a textual double to the Biblical Flood myth through parody. By presenting a combination of contemporary capitalist discourses within the frame of the subverted Biblical

flood myth, Winterson aims at deconstructing the concepts of author and work, and creating an open textual narrative which releases multiple meanings.

According to the Biblical Flood myth, mankind becomes corrupt ten generations after the creation of Adam:

> The Earth was also corrupt before God; the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth (*Bible*, p. 5).

The state of the world worries God so much that he decides to punish all the living beings for their corruption by sending a deluge. He decides to save only one man, Noah who "was a just man, perfect in his generations" (*Bible*, p.5). God tells Noah to build a wooden ark and get on the ark together with his wife, his three sons and their wives. God also tells Noah to take one pair of every kind of mammal, reptile and bird. Noah obeys God's order and it rains till all the living beings on the earth perish. Then God decides to put an end to this and the water starts to recede and the ark comes "to rest on the mountains of Ararat" (Cohn, 1996, p.12). Noah sends a raven to make sure that the water has receded, but the raven does not return. Then he sends a dove and as the dove finds nowhere to set its nest, it comes back to the ark. Noah waits for another week and sends out the dove once more. This time the dove returns with an olive leaf in its beak and Noah understands that the water has completely receded. Noah builds an altar and offers burnt offerings to God. When God sees this, he is pleased and he promises never to destroy the earth again- "I establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth" (*Bible*,p. 6). Cohn suggests that Yahweh "acts as a judge who is outraged at the infraction of the divinely established law" and he proves his status as "the one and the only god" (1996, p.16). *Boating for Beginners* mocks the authoritarian image of God trying to act as an ultimate power and displays how he fails to prove his authority within the textual plays of fiction created through parody.

Winterson parodies the Biblical Flood myth, and hence the story in the book has some crucial changes. The story is presented in a contemporary context

and Noah is re- delineated as a 20th century capitalist who is running a boat company called "Boating for Beginners." Moreover, Yahweh, the almighty creator of the universe according to the Scripture, is dethroned by being presented as the outcome of Noah's experiments with the electric toaster and black gateau. While trying to find out "the principle of life" in his laboratory, he finds it in his kitchen. When he gets some Black Forest Gateau and some ice-cream from his deep freezer, he feels "a curious, frightful, intoxication motion" which rocks "the plate back and forth." Consequently, he sees "new life forms struggle their way to the surface of what had been vile slime" which turns out to be a great power (Winterson, 1994, p.83). Winterson makes use of parody as a deconstructive strategy to subvert the privileged role of the author by emphasizing the fictional status of God and the traditional notion of "the book" as a holy closed entity by re-contextualising the flood myth and turning it into an open textual narrative. Moreover, the subverted flood myth becomes an intertextual frame to parody other contemporary discourses and beliefs such as consumerism, patriarchy and the romance fiction.

Winterson's criticism on the absolute, god-like authority of the author has been a topic of contemporary debate among the critics. From a historical point of view, the figure of author appears as a modern figure, an outcome of the "Enlightenment." Enlightenment changed the medieval concept of human beings as all faulty, sinful creatures and awakened a belief in human beings as "thinking and willing subjects." Philosophers such as Decartes and Kant were sure about the human beings' capacity to think and attain knowledge about the outside world. Hence, the modern subject who is "a free agent, a free thinker" and who is "autonomous," "a law onto self," is called "an author: a creator of texts and a maker of meaning" (Vanhoozer, 1998, p.44). Roland Barthes made a strong argument against the centrality of the figure of author in the literary study. Barthes had a similar notion concerning the author figure. He also believed that the author is a modern figure. He indicated that the concept of author is one of the outcomes of the capitalist ideology as the capitalist ideology celebrated the "person" of the author. Hence, the author has become a ruler figure in literary history appearing in biographies, interviews and magazines. The person and the

work are united in time and literature as “tyrannically” centred on the personality of the author, his life and tastes. The author is seen as the nourisher of the book as “he exists before it, thinks, suffers, lives for it” and this relationship is seen as similar to the relationship between the father and the son (Barthes, 1968, p.145). Nevertheless, linguistically, the author is a “subject” in language (“not a person”) (Barthes, 1968, p.145). Barthes adopts the term “modern scriptor” instead of “author.” As opposed to the author who “nourishes” his book, “ the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing” (Barthes, 1968, p.145). The idea that the presence of the author is limited within the book is also expressed by Michel Foucault. Foucault states that “the author does not precede the works; he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition and recomposition of fiction” (1969, p.221). Hence, the author is a textual and linguistic being who does not have any supremacy beyond the text.

Furthermore, as Ward indicates, certain deconstructive theologians have seen a relationship between Derrida’s view of language and Christians’ view of Christ. For Derrida, language “involves an epidemic deferral of meaning” (Ward, 2003, p.79). Thus, there is no final, absolute meaning but only a chain of deferral. Post modern Christian theologians see Christ as the “Word of God” which makes him the transcendental signifier of all the signifying practices. Winterson in *Boating for Beginners* breaks this chain of signifiers by referring back to the ultimate creator as a fictional creation.

God’s position within the *Bible* as the centre of existence and as the “transcendental signifier” is disrupted through parody. For instance, God has been given many different positions in the book, which keeps undermining his holy status. The first reference to God presents him as an actor taking part in the film *The Big Flood*, which at the same time seems to make fun of the film industry the only aim of which is to make more and more money:

> *All this was happening a long time ago, before the flood. The Big Flood starring God and Noah and a cast of thousands who never survived to collect their royalty cheques* (Winterson, 1991, p.12).

In fact, Winterson refers to the play of signifiers which do not refer to a final meaning. In this case, the concept of God is lost among many different images: God the actor, God the almighty in the film, and God the almighty in the scriptures. The second reference to God is as "I am that I am, Yahweh the unpronounceable" (Winterson, 1991, p.13). Winterson leaves certain figments of doubt at this point since a word which cannot be pronounced cannot refer to another word nor can it have any meaning. Thus, it is bound to remain outside the signifying chain, which seems to mean that God has become a "displaced signifier" within the book (Opperman, 2000, p.84).

The sacred status of God is further undermined by presenting him on the same level of eminence with that of the human characters:

> This is the biggest theatrical spectacle anyone has ever seen, and it's got Bunny Mix doing the screenplay and YAHWEH himself helping with the dialogue. How can it fail- the winner of the Purple Heart Award and the Creator of the world brought together for the first time [...] (Winterson,1991, p.47).

Bunny Mix is a famous writer of a series of romance novels and her creations in literature are juxtaposed with the creation of the world. Hence, what is real and what is fictional are jumbled together and consequently God's power is no longer beyond comparison in this jumble.

Moreover, God's being acted out by men in the film also questions his status: "God is a multifaceted and complex character who shouldn't be restricted by a single actor" (Winterson, 1991, p.21). According to the scriptures, God created man in his own image, but in this case several men are acting in order to create an image of God. Thus, the transcendental image of God is blurred. In addition, the image of God changes constantly throughout the book. Noah's son Ham refers to God as "not a namby-pamby socialist idol," "the God of Love," "the Omnipotent Stockbroker," and "Omniscient Lawyer" (Winterson, 1991, p.30). Hence, God is decentred from his fixed holy status.

The character development of God suggests that he is not a flawless, superior being; on the contrary, under a mask of perfection lies a capitalist businessman whose primary concerns are his personal and financial profits:

> 'Destroy him, destroy him,' urged one of the more hyperactive angels.
>
> 'I can't do that,' snapped God. 'It would mean a riot. I've just started to get some control down there, and our Good Food Guide's selling well. I like being in print (Winterson, 1991, p.53).

God does not want to destroy Noah, because he is afraid of a possible riot which would disturb his business. He is also hungry for fame, so he does not want to destroy Noah fearing that he would not be famous any more. Thus, by picturing him with his flaws, Winterson makes fun of the image of God as a paragon of perfection. Noah, who has been God's business ally, is also presented as a capitalist figure: "Noah was right wing, suspicious of women, and totally committed to money as a medium for communication. Yet when he spoke he charmed" (Winterson, 1991, p.69). According to Genesis, Noah is saved due to his honesty as he was "a just man, perfect in his generation." However, the way he has been presented as profit-hungry business man plays down the status of perfection that *Genesis* assigns to him.

The way God is presented in the *Bible* is also questioned through parody. According to the *Bible*, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love" (*Bible*, p.243). Hence, God is the ultimate source of love. The *Bible* also calls people forth to love each other: "And we have known and believed the love that God had to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him" (*Bible*,p. 243). True believers are bound to God through the belief in God's love for humanity and through the love they have for him. There is a reference to this notion in the novel:

> For a few moments the cloud hovered, then veered away in dazzling loops, leaving a message in the night for all to see: GOD IS LOVE, DON'T MESS UP WITH ME (Winterson, 1991, p.14).

God in the novel does not present love as a bond between himself and people, but rather he threatens people by his immense power. This opposing attitude is also questioned:

> If you refused the message, you were an outcast, and although they might claim to love your soul the rest of you could literally and metaphorically go to hell [...] Noah said that love is hard and strong and love makes choices. Love discriminates and above all, love cannot embrace the inherently unlovely, ie those without Yahweh in their hearts (Winterson, 1991, p. 70)

Noah and God made it clear that only those who believe in their doctrines are loved and the others are not accepted in the bond between God and humanity. Hence, God no more uses his ultimate love as a bond, but love becomes a means of threat to make people believe in his grace.

Winterson creates further irony by presenting God as a creation of Noah: “Noah had made the Unpronounceable by accident out of a piece of gateau and a giant electric toaster” (Winterson, 1991, p. 85). Therefore, the Biblical belief that God is the origin of all living things is deconstructed. God himself becomes a creation with a fictional image which is under construction. Noah in his diary in which he takes notes about his experiments narrates how God and himself planned everything:

> I realized that I must bargain with him, so we have invented something we call Fundamental Religion. That is, he claims to have made the world and everything on it, and I go along with that as his chosen spokesman. It will make me rich, and perhaps give me a chance to regain control. He still needs me (Winterson, 1991, p.85).

Hence, the Fundamental Religion starts as a bargain between Noah and God. The underlying intention behind the Fundamental Religion is presented as power struggle. Noah is trying to make more money by using God and he is even hoping to control him in the future. After reading Noah’s diary, Desi comments that God is not actually an almighty figure:

> ‘So you see, the Unpronounceable’s an all-powerful ice-cream cone and Noah and the boys are going to float away to a better world’ (Winterson, 1991, p. 96).

Desi’s comment indicates that although God has great power, he is still under the control of Noah as his creator and Noah is the decision maker rather than God himself. The idea that God is a creation is underlined when Noah says that he is “God’s mother”:

> ‘But I thought that for you,’ shouted Noah from the floor of the desert.
>
> ‘I know you did mother,’ conceded the Lord (Winterson, 1991, p. 91).

God is no longer the origin of all living things. The idea that God is a creation himself disturbs the present order which is established around the “transcendental signifier” as the source of ultimate truth.

God’s authority over the Bible is further shaken by the presentation of the Orange Demon**.** Different from the Orange Demon in *Oranges Are the Only Fruit* who represents Jeanette’s lesbian sexuality, the Orange Demon in this book is a meta-fictional power who can transcend fiction:

> ‘You might not be,’ grumbled Doris ‘but I am. This may be my one appearance in print. I may never occur in another novel. You appear all the time; you can afford to be relaxed.’
>
> It was true. The orange Thing turns out everywhere, as a demon, a sprite, omnipotent author, flashes of insight (Winterson, 1991, p.71).

The Orange Demon is powerful enough to exist outside the text and to move from one text to another. As opposed to God whose identity is dependent on the text which Noah will produce with Bunny Mix, the Orange Demon has an identity beyond the textual unity. He is the controller of different texts unlike God who is controlled by the text. As a meta-fictional being, he has a wider perspective than God about the flood God and Noah are planning:

> ‘Flood myths are very potent things; humankind can’t resist them. I knew this was going to happen right from the start. Don’t you know that men always pee on the fire? (Winterson, 1991, p. 92)

The Orange Demon refers to flood myths other than the one narrated in Genesis. Cohn indicates that "The story of the flood, which we know from Genesis and associate with Noah, originated in Mesopotamia" (1996, p.1). He further adds that the story was re-written in the Akkadian period and the flood myth has Old Babylonian, Greek and Roman versions (1996, p.3-5). Since God cannot exceed the story which has been created for him, his power is also enclosed within the written text. On the other hand, as a meta-fictional entity, Orange Demon can comment on different texts. Thus, his meta-fictional powers make him superior to God.

God is the author of the *Holy Scriptures* in the Christian belief. Nevertheless, he loses his authority over the Scriptures within the novel. As opposed to the idea that author is the maker of meaning, God has lost his status as the origin within the textual plays of fiction. Noah points out that:

> 'So I'll suggest that we re-write Genesis and make it look like God did it all from the very beginning and, we'll put a lot of stories about how mysterious he is, and how no one knows where he came from.' (Winterson, 1991, p.110).

The parodic shift from the omnipotent originator to a fictional creation suggests that the Holy Book is no longer in control of God, but God is in control of the written text himself. Noah further comments: "[...] we can write what we want in our book, pass it down and call it the inspired word of God" (Winterson, 1991, p.111). This comment indicates that God has also lost his active status within the process of creation, but has become a part of a narration which belongs to someone else. Furthermore, as a creation of Noah, God does not have an identity beyond the written text. In fact, His identity is being shaped within the narrative which Noah is creating for the post-flood world:

> 'I've had a bad journey and something funny is happening to my left leg. It seems to be generating a smoke column, which in the ordinary way wouldn't be too bad, but this one appears to have a personality [...] If I am God to the world I can't reveal a rival. People will call me pagan and it won't be so impressive being in two places at the same time. I'll be ordinary!'

> ‘Calm down!’ Noah soothed. ‘There is no problem that your mother can’t solve (Winterson, 1991, p. 112).

God does not precede either the world or humanity since his identity is still being shaped. Hence, his ultimate power as a creator is questionable over the already created world order. Furthermore, he is depicted like a little child here who needs his mother’s help. The way Noah ‘soothes’ him indicates that he is still not mature enough to solve his problems. The way Winterson portrays the image of God as the so-called author of Holy Scriptures deconstructs the concept of author by parodying God as a part of a written text. As pointed out above, the author figure is a multi-faceted one and it has originated from language. By displaying God’s holy image as a creation of language, the novel assigns him and all the authors a secondary status within the written text.

As well as the concept of author, Winterson also deconstructs the concept of work by creating a textual double to *Genesis* through parody. The text, according to Barthes, is “not a line of words releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning ,the ‘message’ of the Author-God, but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash.” (Barthes, 1971, p.146). Similarly, *Genesis* is doubled through parody so that it no more releases the message of God. The *Bible* has been given a textual status from the beginning: *“Of course you know the story because you’ve read it in the Bible and other popular textbooks”* (Winterson, 1991, p. 12). Hence, the *Bible* is stripped of its status as a work which, as Barthes clarifies, contains meanings that are traceable back to the author, and therefore closed. The *Bible* is further displaced by being referred to as the fictional co-creation of God and Noah:

> …they [Noah and God] were collaborating on a manuscript that would be a kind of global history from the beginnings of time showing how the Lord had always been there, always would be there and what a good thing this was. They were anxious to make the book dignified and popular, and had decided to issue it by instalments starting with *Genesis, or How I Did It* (Winterson, 1991, p.14).

Noah and God’s attempt to put forward a work – a methodological unity- is parodied since this attempt ironically downgrades the status of the *Bible* as a

work. Moreover, according to Barthes text is an "experienced activity of production." It is not an "object of consumption," but "a play, activity, production, practice" (Barthes, 1971, p.157). Noah and God's endeavours open up the signifying practices in the *Bible* so that it loses its origin. To illustrate, Noah and God decide to make a film out of the *Bible*: "Stunned by the process of their literary collaboration Noah and God had decided to dramatize the first two books" (Winterson, 1991, p.20). Hence, by filming the *Bible*, Noah and God deconstruct its unity as a work since the *Bible* becomes a textual entity which is open as an experience. In addition, Noah and God further open up the *Bible* by adding the process of filming into their production: "As it happened, a film company would be putting the whole thing on camera, not just the play itself but the making of the play" (Winterson, 1991, p. 20). Barthes argues that the work is a general sign in which an ultimate, secret meaning is sought whereas the text focuses "on the deferment of the signified" (Barthes, 1971, p.158). The practices of Noah and God complicate the signifying processes in the *Bible* as result of which it loses its unitary nature:

The Book	/	Genesis Story	/	Process of making film	/	The Film
(Bible)		(Parody)		(Practice)		(Production)

Not only does the *Bible* gain a textual status but it also loses its transcendental origin within the multiple signifying practices.

The book openly problematizes the fictional status of the *Bible* at certain points. The intellectuals in the film set treat the Holy Book as an ordinary work of literature:

> 'I see a lot of similarities here to *Macbeth*, don't you?' Gloria overheard one of the art people say. 'The grouping, the thematic construction of their dialogue, the portends contained in the most casual sentences..?' [...]
>
> 'This is the inspired word of God, isn't it? As delivered to Noah in a mighty cloud of printed leaflets? [...]

> ‘You think all this is God’s idea? What would the creator of the world be doing in a filmset?’ (Winterson, 1991, p.52).

Gloria is surprised because the holy words of God are treated like other fictional texts. The comparison of Genesis with other fictional works is another sign of the *Bible* being treated like a work of fiction.

The fictional status of the *Bible* is also emphasized within the breaks in the book where the narration is stopped and certain comments on the *Bible*, characters and events are made by a third voice. In one of these breaks, the *Bible* is addressed as a text which has gained popular acceptance:

> Just as a point of interest: the *Bible* is probably the most anti-linear text we possess, which is why it’s such a joy. People have believed for centuries, on the authority of the book of Genesis, that there was once a deluge over the whole world. Maybe Genesis is less important than it was, but we still like flood stories – whether they are Plato’s *Atlantis* or yarns about the Loch Ness Monster (Winterson, 1991, p. 65-66).

The comment is subversive as well as being deconstructive. The *Bible* is deconstructed by being equated with Plato’s *Atlantis* and the Loch Ness monster which are fictional creations.

It is constantly underlined that the *Bible* as a fictional entity is no more the centre of truth. The references to the writing process of the *Bible* subvert the flood myth in a humorous way. Bunny Mix and Noah decide on the details of the text together to make it credible. Bunny Mix suggests making use of a bird after the deluge: “We could say we sent out a bird and it kept coming back until it found a perch somewhere else. That’s very romantic. Readers will enjoy that” (Winterson, 1991, p.138). Bunny Mix and Noah are trying to make the text interesting for the readers as well as credible so that they will give it credit and believe it. Another instance is the addition of rainbow to the text:

> ‘I suggest,’ said the rabbit of romance slowly, ‘a rainbow.’
>
> ‘A rainbow,’ repeated Noah. ‘Perfect. We go walking off all fresh and hopeful and we look up and see a rainbow. We can pretend we

> didn't have them before. No one's going to argue, are they?' (Winterson, 1991, p. 139).

They add the rainbow to the story again to make their story interesting for the readers. Their underlying aim is to make their story popular and stay permanently in people's minds through the ages. By opening up the writing process of the flood myth, Winterson denies the permanence of any written text and invites the readers to consider the different interpretations within a text before taking it for granted. This is an iconoclastic approach to the *Bible* since it aims at breaking the validity of its keystones as stating that the *Bible* is a fictional means of devoicing it from its sacred status.

Orange Demon's proposal to create an alternative text to the *Bible* also aims at preventing it from remaining as the only explanation pertaining to flood myth:

> The vital thing is to have an alternative so that people will realize that there's no such thing as a true story. I'm depending on you. History and literature down the centuries are depending on you. Are you willing to let that baldie and his mad family rewrite the world without any interruptions? Or can I trust you? (Winterson, 1991, p.124)

What the Orange Demon suggests to Gloria and her friends is to create multiplicity through different stories so that people will suspect the divine foundations of the *Bible*. Barthes states that:

> The work has nothing disturbing for any monistic philosophy[...]; for such a philosophy, plural is the Evil. Against the work, therefore, the text could well take as its motto the words of the man possessed by demons (1971, p. 160).

The work releases a single meaning and thus puts forward a single interpretation. The text, on the other hand, breaks the 'monistic' spell of the work by putting forward multiple interpretations. The Orange Demon believes that by creating an alternative version, the girls can turn the *Bible* into an open narrative. Once the *Bible* is opened up through alternative interpretations, it will gain a textual quality and will no more be perceived as sacred.

In addition to the Biblical flood myth, the conflict between God and Lucifer is also parodied. There is a reference to Lucifer's decision to leave God:

> The angel cheered up and climbed back into the cloud. 'What a life,' he thought. 'One day I'm going to start my own business.' (Winterson, 1991, p.134)

Lucifer states that he is not pleased by his mission and he will leave God to start his own business. According to the *Bible*, Lucifer is cast down from God's grace because of his pride:

> How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [...] For thou hast said in thine heart, I'll ascend into heaven, I'll exalt my throne above the stars of God [...] I'll be like the Most High (*Bible*, p. 634).

Lucifer claims to be as powerful as God himself and he is sent down from heaven for this claim. However, according to the reference in the book, Lucifer perceives the relationship between himself and God as a business relationship and he simply wants to quit. Thus, there is a subtle indication that the story of Lucifer will also be changed in Noah and Bunny Mix's version of the *Bible* which passes onto future generations as the source of ultimate truth.

In addition to the Biblical references, the novel is full of references to other works of literature and contemporary issues. Hence, the novel has an open, intertextual structure which has lots of parodic references to other contemporary texts. First of all, the parodic intertexts about the consumer society aim at criticising capitalism and its profits-centred values. To illustrate, Ham's *Hallelujah Hamburgers* aims at gaining more money by manipulating religious beliefs:

> I want you to help me prepare and patent a menu in keeping with our faith- though of course we'll have to buy the materials in bulk which might mean a slight drop in standards [...] It's a hamburger press and I want it for the staple item on our menu, the Hallelujah Hamburger, served with fries and mixed salad (Winterson, 1991, p.31).

Ham is trying to make some profit by appealing to people's religious beliefs. Moreover, Bunny Mix, who is the writer of a series of romance novels, has a similar purpose:

> She had written almost one thousand novels, all of which had the same plot, but she was clever enough to rotate the colour of the heroine's hair and the hero's occupation so that you never felt you were actually reading the same book twice in a row (Winterson, 1991, p. 16).

Bunny Mix as her name suggests uses the same story by adding different details and she also aims at gaining financial profit by playing with public interests.

As well as being a means to criticize capitalism, intertextuality is also used to criticize certain patriarchal discourses. For instance, Noah's delineation as an anti-feminist character ironically includes a feminist motto:

> He believed that personal is political, bought a national newspaper and began to attack the Nineveh Council for what he called 'wanton and ungodly spending.' [...] 'A simple diet,' said Noah, 'is more important than gold.' (He meant this as a metaphor only). 'A simple diet prepared by a simple wife, these are the corner-stones of a godly life.' (Winterson, 1991, p. 14-15).

Noah believes that 'there was no need, after all, to be vegetarian, charitable and feminist.' He is definitely against feminism and women's liberation as he emphasizes the domestic role of women and states that they should be 'simple.' Nevertheless, his personal motto, "personal is political," which brought him success in his endeavours is a contemporary feminist motto.

The fridges are also frequently referred to as the starting point of feminism. Mrs Munde believes that "being able to store food for longer periods had broken down the community spirit" as " there was no need to share now, no need to meet every day, gathering your veg and killing a few rabbits"(Winterson,1991, p. 39). Nevertheless, why Noah is against fridges and frozen food has to do with his anti-feminism as later a couple makes it clear in a No Artificial or Frozen Food Meeting:

> The wife said that she had given up her part time job to concentrate on cooking properly for herself and her husband, she'd felt happier and more fulfilled. 'Course I miss the girls at work, but you have to make sacrifices, don't you?' (Winterson, 1991, p. 87).

The reason for the underlying hatred for fridges and frozen food is the contemporary discussion according to which fridges save time and effort in the kitchen, which women use to liberate themselves. Winterson's revision of this debate makes fun of the relationship between feminism and the fridges:

> 'I want to ask a question,' piped a voice from the floor. 'I want to know where you draw the line. Can I keep my milk in a cool box in summer or not? It doesn't have any ice and it doesn't freeze anything, but it does keep things cool.' (Winterson, 1991, p. 105).

This is a question asked to Gloria's mother about the religious laws. The person's remark indicates that religion is completely against freezers. What is more, the question is rather a trivial one, which implies that the whole debate about freezers is actually quite insignificant. Another underlying remark is that religion is against freezers for it is against women's liberation, which is clarified by another speaker:

> 'This is nonsense,' yelled someone else. 'You want to put the clock back. Where would feminism be today without the deep freeze?' (Winterson, 1991, p.105).

The whole debate is represented through a critical point of view which makes fun of the clash between religion and women's liberation by displaying it as a petty argument.

Barthes states that "the work closes on a signified" (1971, p.158). In other words, the work points to one specific meaning which "is considered to be a secret, ultimate, something to be sought out" (1971, p.158). On the other hand, the text is not a closed entity since it "practices the infinite deferment of the signified" (158). That is to say, the text does not have one single, traceable meaning due to "a serial movement of disconnections, overlappings, variations." The text is quite different from the work in this aspect as it "is not comprehensive (definite, 'what the work means') but metonymic, the activity of associations, contiguities, carryings-over coincides with a liberation of symbolic energy" (1971, p.158)

Boating for Beginners is also open to a variety of interpretations as it is a textual narrative. It is a complex body of references to a variety of literary texts and famous people. This blending of various intertexts makes it impossible to end up with a single and definite interpretation. First of all, there are a lot of direct references to certain works of literature and some famous people. Some of the literary works which are referred to throughout the novel are Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* (44), Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (52), Alfred Lord Tennyson's 'Lady of Shallot' (20), Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, Lillian Hellman's *Little Foxes* (72). Moreover, some famous people who are referred to are the cartoonist James Thurber (79), the poet John Keats (76), the actor Gary Cooper (71), the actress Scarlett O'Hara (72), Joan of Arc and the writer Mary Eddy Baker (25), and the musician Cliff Richard (28). There are also other contemporary references. To illustrate, there are references to a soap opera called *Dallas* (99, 100), a contemporary magazine called *The Vogue* (60, 74) and a contemporary fast food restaurant called *Pizza Hut* (32). These diverse references create what Barthes calls a "metonymic" unity in which the references do not end in an ultimate interpretation, but call forth other references**.** Moreover, these references create what Brecht calls an "alienation effect" on the audience. This concept is based on the idea that we tend to take the society and life for granted without questioning their validity since we are familiar with them. Hence, in order to adorn us with a fresh understanding, he tries to make the familiar unfamiliar. He states that "the presentation exposed the subject matter and the happenings to a process of de-familiarisation. De-familiarisation is required to make things understood" (2000, p.25). In order to renew the audience's perception, Brecht presents the familiar as strange and contradictory. Similarly, Winterson presents these familiar references within a new unfamiliar context, which forces the reader to consider these references from a different perspective and a new viewpoint.

In addition to these direct references, there are certain comic and parodic revisions of other texts. One of these references is Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*:

> She had gone up to the house to make scrambled eggs with wheat germ and found Noah's eldest son, Ham, wandering around her

> primitive kitchen. Naturally she felt aggrieved. Some places you shared with others and some you don't. A room of her own was important to Mrs Munde (Winterson, 1991, p.28).

Mrs Munde feels uncomfortable because of Ham's presence in her kitchen. She sees the kitchen as her personal space. Her idea of "a room of her own" sounds ironical when it is compared with Woolf's idea of "a room of her own." Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* argues that "women's writing should explore female experience in its own right and not form a comparative assessment of women's experience in relation to man's" (as cited in Selden, 1997, p.125). Woolf believes that women should create their own writing- their own personal space in a way-independent from men's traditions. Thus, she preaches a break from the traditions men have assigned to women. Mrs Munde's words also refer to Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their of Own*. Showalter states "Women have generally been regarded as 'sociological chameleons' taking on the class, lifestyle, and culture of their male relatives" (as cited in Eagleton, 1986, p.13). Similar to Woolf, Showalter is also against male dominance over women's writing and the literary representations of women. Mrs Munde's idea of kitchen as a place of her own sounds quite ironic in the light of these references because cooking is a female responsibility according to the patriarchal traditions. As opposed to Woolf and Showalter who focus on a break from the male traditions, Mrs Munde is happy with the role assigned to her by the traditions.

Another literary work that has been revised is Christopher Marlow's *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*:

> No sooner had she spoken these words than a bright orange demon hovered in front of her nose holding a pen and a bit of paper. 'Just sign here,' it told her cheerfully. 'There is more to life than honest toil.'
>
> 'What am I doing?' asked Gloria, becoming more her usual self again.
>
> 'You are making an investment,' replied the shiny creature. 'I promise you, you won't regret this. Your life is about to change' (Winterson, 1991, p.32).

The Orange Demon appears as a Mephistopheles figure and Gloria's pact with the Orange Demon is similar to the scene in *The Tragical Histroy of Doctor Faustus* where Mephastophilis asks Faustus to sign a document showing that he has given his soul to Lucifer in return for magical powers:

> MEPHASTOPHILIS. [...] But tell me Faustus, shall I have thy soul?
> [...]
> FAUSTUS. Ay Mephastophilis, I give it thee.
> MEPHASTOPHILIS. Then stab thine arm courageously,
> And bind thy soul, that at some certain day
> Great Lucifer may claim it as his own,
> And then be thou as great as Lucifer (5, 49-52).

The revision bears similarities to the original text. Although Gloria does not gain any powers unlike Faustus or promise to give her soul, the pact is still significant. The Orange demon is a metafictional power who can go in and out of different texts: "Whenever something other than plot drops in, it is really the orange demon adding an extra dimension" (Winterson, 1991, p.72). Thus, a pact with Orange Demon will give Gloria some power. It is not magical power as in Faustus's case, but she will have power to live in other texts, namely the text she and her friends write as a counter-argument to Noah's *Bible*.

There is also a reference to the literary critic Northrop Frye and his work *Anatomy of Criticism*. Gloria reads about Frye's idea of the development of language through stages: "She knew there were stages, three to be precise, because she had read a book by Northrop Frye said so" (Winterson, 1991, p.44). She is impressed by his classification. Nevertheless, she perceives them as stages of development for a person rather than language:

> Gloria had enjoyed the book though she hadn't expected to, and had begun to table her own life according to its premises. And now, she had clearly reached stage two, and begun to separate what she felt and what she thought (Winterson, 1991, p. 44).

She tries to apply this theory of language to her own life and consequently, this misconception makes the reference quite ironic since Gloria herself is a fictional character created through language. As an outcome of language, which she is not

aware of, she tries to develop herself by following the tenets which describe the development of language.

Mediveal mystery plays have also become a part of the web of references within the book. Yahweh indicates his wish about being a part of these play cycles now and then: 'No, no.' YAHWEH was getting exasperated. 'I *want* to be toured in York and Wakefield' (Winterson, 1991, p.53). Wakefield and York are the two of the surviving mystery cycles from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The mystery cycles "were formed in the towns that, in spite of war and plague, became increasingly prosperous and independent" and they aimed at "religious instruction and entertainment for a wide audience" (Abrams, 1993, p.308- 309). Yahweh wants their drama to be a part of these cycles. The reference parodies the formation of these cycles because Yahweh's words suggest that they do not actually aim at religious edification.

The creation of God by Noah as a result of his experiments with a giant electric toaster is a reference to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Noah writes his experiences in a diary and he records his intentions about his creation as follows:

> No one can conceive the variety of emotions that now bear me onwards. I have resolved, contrary to my first intention, to make a being of gigantic stature; that is to say about eight feet high and proportionally large. Such a being will be able to withstand the current (Winterson, 1991, p. 84)

Noah's depiction as a scientist who is about to resolve a significant question is similar to the depiction of Victor Frankenstein:

> Nor could I consider the magnitude and complexity of my plan as any argument of its impracticability. It was with these feelings that I began the creation of a human being. As the minuteness of the parts formed a great hindrance to my speed, I resolved, contrary to my first intention, to make the being of a gigantic stature; that is to say, about eight feet in height, and proportionably large (Shelley, 1996, p.42-43)

Noah's words and emotions are almost the same with Victor and his diary also expresses these emotions by using almost the same words as Victor. Yet, Noah's

experience mocks Victor's experiences because as opposed to the monstrous Frankenstein, Noah's creation is a comical figure. Victor dreads his creation as it looks unnatural: "Oh! no mortal could support the horror of that countenance. A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch" (Shelley, 1996, p. 46). He feels horrified when he faces his creation and regrets what he did. Similarly, Noah feels regret about his creation. Yet, unlike Frankenstein, his creation is far from being scary:

> I saw the thing itself, dressed all in white, with a long beard and an ice-cream pallor. I cursed the day I had thought of using vanilla essence as moisture for the brain (Winterson, 1991, p. 84)

Noah's creation is a mock-Frankenstein made up of ice-cream and vanilla. Winterson parodies *Frankenstein* in order to trivialize God's creation. When compared with the scary stature of Frankenstein, God is seen as a rather funny and petty figure.

Romantic fiction, romantic poetry and ongoing public interest for romance on TV are parodied in the person of Bunny Mix throughout the novel. Bunny Mix is a popular figure whose fans are "ready to undergo all kinds of physical and spiritual sacrifices in order to attain the 'bunny-girl' standards embodied by her perfectly objectified heroines" (Onega, 2006, p.41). Bunny Mix is presented as a celebrity with lots of different interests. First of all, she has a TV show called "The Bunny Mix Romance Show":

> The Bunny Mix Romance Show was a very popular afternoon programme in which a woman would be pleasantly accosted by a mysterious tall figure. If she behaved in a fitting and simpering manner a number of boys would then rush onto the set singing in barbershop harmony and strewing flowers (Winterson, 1991, p.29).

The Bunny Mix Romance Show is a reference to the afternoon programmes which are popular among housewives. The proper behaviour for women is described as "fitting and simpering." Thus, the representation of an ideal woman on TV as a simple, unsophisticated being is criticized through the Bunny Mix Romance Show. Moreover, Bunny is also a successful writer of Romantic fiction, winner of "the Purple Heart Award for best romantic fiction" (Winterson, 1991, p.39).

Nevertheless, what she does is to re-write the same story over and over in order to make money as pointed out above and that is why she is against the experimental novel:

> 'The experimental novel is a waste of public funds, and I'm sure Noah would agree with me.' (Noah did). [...] It's very selfish not to think of your reading public. I am rich because I provide a valuable public service' (Winterson, 1991, p.59).

Bunny is abusing people's interests in romantic fiction to make money and she finds the experimental novel unpleasant as it does not bring about much financial profit. Furthermore, Bunny sees herself as a part of the women's tradition of writing:

> I am an heiress, the interpreter of the women who first inspired us. I mean, of course, those three sisters who used to live with their drug-crazed brother in a desolate mango swamp round Ilkley. I have taken on their burden [...]
>
> 'But they weren't rich,' threw in Desi.
>
> No dear, they were socialists. I can't help that.'
>
> (Winterson, 1991, p.60).

She refers to the Bronte sisters as her ancestors, but she also accepts that unlike them, her endeavours are all profit-oriented. Hence, the presence of Bunny Mix as the inheritor of women's tradition of literature suggests that it is bound to be lost, as Bunny Mix accepts the male domination in the representation of women. Finally, Bunny is also a poet and romantic poetry is mocked through her poetry:

> [...] she would offer her lyric poem 'Hyacinths,' [...] and her more serious and stirring 'Ode On A Grecian Parrot,' which said how parrots seemed to transcend time by living so long-which was enviable- how they couldn't kiss each other- which was their shortcoming (Winterson, 1991, 120).

The poem is a reference to the poems of famous romantic poet John Keats. "Ode On a Grecian Parrot" is the combination of the two of Keat's poems: "Ode On a Grecian Urn" and "Ode to a Nightingale." In "Ode On a Grecian Urn," Keats expresses his "longing for permanence in a world of change" (Abrams, 1993, p.

793). Similarly in “Ode to a Nightingale,” Keats explores the themes of mortality and permanence:

> Thou was not born for death, immortal bird!
> No hungry generations thread thee down
> The voice I hear this passing night was heard
> In ancient days by emperor and clown (1993, 792)

Bunny’s poem “Ode On a Grecian Parrot” has similar themes of immortality, but through the light and humorous repetition of the same theme, these famous romantic poems are mocked in the hands of the profit hungry “rabbit of romance.”

Boating for Beginners is the culmination of a web of references to many different texts. First of all, there are references to the Biblical flood myth. The flood myth is parodied and the re-worked version mocks the concept of author in the person of God, the author of *Holy Scriptures* and the concept of work by breaking the unity of *Genesis* through intertextuality. The intertexts are parodic and comic references to literary works, famous people, and certain contemporary issues such as consumerism, feminism and capitalism. It is important to note that the Biblical flood myth functions as a framing device to bring all these distant references together. By weaving all these different items together, Winterson creates a text which releases multiple meanings and is open to a variety of interpretations.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Parody adorns the text it touches upon with a special power to go beyond its boundaries. As Hutcheon states, “the parodic text is granted a special licence to transgress the limits of convention” (1986, p.75). *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners* use this licence for multiple purposes. First of all, both novels present a different version of the stories in the *Bible* through parody in order to criticize the patriarchal discourses and to deconstruct the unity in the *Bible* which stems from the belief in “a transcendental signifier” or one central truth. Moreover, there are lots of references to other works and re-workings of other texts in both novels, which create a web of intertexts. These re-workings are parodic in that they visit other texts with a humorous approach to revise them and create a fresh perception towards them. The intertextual structure of the novels creates open textual narratives which bring about multiple interpretations and calls forth multiple meanings.

Winterson questions the validity of the religious belief through parody in both of these novels and she invites her readers to question any concept that stands as absolute. The humorous revisions of the Biblical stories deconstruct the unity in the *Bible* and the new subverted versions no more promise divine relief stemming from one almighty power that is the source of love and truth. Instead, the parodic revisions put forward gaps in the stories and the readers end up with a vacuum in the end. Nevertheless, the novels do not offer an alternative source of relief for the readers to fill in the gaps they have created. *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* ends when Jeanette goes back home after some time. However, this does not mean that she has finally solved the conflicts between herself and her mother:

> Families, real ones, are chairs and tables and the right number of cups, but I had no means of joining one, and no means of dismissing

> my own; she had tied a thread around my button, to tug when she pleased. I knew a woman in another place. Perhaps she would save me. But what if she were asleep? What if she sleepwalked beside me and I never knew? (Winterson, 1985, p.176).

She returns to her mother because of their bond as a family. She thinks that this bond is permanent and there is no way she can get rid of it. Yet, she also makes it clear that her home is no more a source of happiness and hope for her. She feels that there is some source of hope in the distance, but she is not sure whether she will ever reach it or whether it is already too late to reach that hope. Hence, *Oranges Are not The Only Fruit* acknowledges the presence of some hope and relief, but also suggests that it lies in the distance. Similarly, *Boating for Beginners* does not promise much hope in the end. The book ends when a gardener finds the *Bible* which was written by Noah and Bunny Mix and a note written by Doris, Gloria's friend:

> But for Gardener himself as he grows older and more esteemed the question comes back and back. 'Where did it come from? Who wrote it? And Doris, who was she?' And he answers himself time and time again as he walks down English lanes watching the stars: 'God knows', he says. 'God knows!' (Winterson, 1991, p. 160)

The gardener keeps wondering about the authors of the manuscripts all his life. Yet, he never finds a satisfactory answer to his question. Hence, there is doubt and uncertainty at the end of the book rather than hope. The gardener's final comment about the writers of the manuscripts also indicates that the novel paradoxically ends where it starts. The book starts with acknowledging Noah and God's dominance over the world: "He had been chosen, it seemed, to lead the world into a time of peace and prosperity under the guidance of the One True God" (Winterson, 1991, p. 13) As the story unfolds, this dominance is questioned and deconstructed. Nevertheless, the book does not provide an alternative relief to Noah and Bunny Mix's version. The gardener's final comment 'God knows!' suggests that the book ends by acknowledging the validity of the belief in God, which it has questioned and subverted until this point.

Winterson's use of parody in these two novels is also a great contribution to the tradition of parody. Winterson connects the post-structuralist theories with parody in these novels. *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* aims at breaking the unity of the Biblical stories through subverting them by means of parody. The underlying motive in this aim is to open up the Biblical stories and bring about multiplicity as opposed to the belief in a single meaning. Hence, the motive itself is a post-structuralist one which upholds the text and its multiple voices against the unitary nature of the work and its all-powerful author. *Boating for Beginners* has also a similar aim. The concepts of work and author are questioned and subverted in order to deconstruct the belief in a "transcendental signifier," which is a post-structuralist agenda. Furthermore, post-structuralism upholds the idea that there is an on-going transmission between texts and that texts are not bound by any original unity in themselves since they constantly refer to one another. The intertextual structure of *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* and *Boating for Beginners* is in line with this thought. There are many references to other texts and many literary works are revised through parody. Hence, Winterson creates a huge body of references which are bound together by means of post-modern parody.

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