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William Shakespeare's Hamlet (1603) Four Hundred Years Later in Dot Hutchison's A wounded name (2013): An Intertextual Dialogic Scrutiny

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Dedication

To the memory of my dear mother, whose love and spirit continue to guide me each day.

To my father, my brothers, and my wonderful sister Sihem, for the support they've given me.

To my beloved aunts Hassina and Lydia, my grandmother Kaissa, and my uncles Idir and Nadir, along with his wife Sanaa, for the love and encouragement that have carried me through.

To my Dear best friend Khadidja, for always standing by my side through everything.

And to my binome, Karima Amerouche, for being part of this journey.

Malika

2023/2024 has been the most difficult year of my life, as I've struggled and continue to struggle—with depression. However, there have been people who have encouraged me to keep going, even through the toughest times. Among them are my sisters and friends. I dedicate this work to them, and to my binome, Chettir Malika, for her support, and to my best friend, Kahina Boulam.

I also dedicate it to Massilva and Messipsa, the appel of my eyes.

Karima

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Abstract

This research studies Dot Hutchison's *A Wounded Name* (2013) in relation to William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) through an intertextual dialogic approach. The aim is to explore and analyse the connection between these two works, focusing on how Hutchison engages with Shakespeare's tragedy using modern narrative techniques. To achieve this, the study relies on Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of intertextual dialogism, specifically overt polemic and stylization, alongside Julia Kristeva's concept of intertextuality. After examining *A Wounded Name* in light of *Hamlet*, the analysis reveals that Hutchison's novel acts as an intertext, reinterpreting and challenging Shakespeare's original themes, characters, and plot. Hutchison's use of pastiche and homage highlights the enduring relevance of *Hamlet*, while also addressing contemporary concerns like mental health and gender dynamics. Through this study, we conclude that *A Wounded Name* not only mirrors Shakespeare's tragedy but also critiques and modernises it, enriching the dialogue between past and present literature.

Contents

Dedication.	I
Acknowledgment.....	II
Abstract.....	III
Contents	IV
I. Introduction	1
Review of Literature	2
Issues and Working Hypothesis	7
Methodological Outline	8
II. Methods and Materials.....	10
1. Theoretical Framework.....	10
2. Materials	13
III. Results.....	15
Chapter one: Dialogues Across time: Analysing <i>Hamlet</i> and	
<i>A wounded Name</i>.....	17
1. Intertextuality and Stylization in <i>A wounded name</i>	17
2. Character Reimagination: Intertextuality and stylization	21
3. <i>A wounded name</i> : Stylization of Character Development	24
4. <i>A wounded name</i> : Stylization of <i>Hamlet's</i> Plot.....	26
5. <i>A wounded name</i> : Stylization of <i>Hamlet's</i> themes	28

Chapter two: Pastiche and Polemic in Hutchison's *A wounded name*

1. *A wounded name*: An Overt Polemic Against Shakespeare's

Hamlet35

2. Pastiche in *A wounded name*42

V. General Conclusion51

VI. References54

I. Introduction

What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason!
How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how
express and admirable! In action how like an angel!
in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the
world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me,
what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not
me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling
you seem to say so. (Act 2, Scene 2)

Throughout our little experience in life, we are always surprised by humans acts and the ambiguity that goes with them. When reading the quote which is taken from William Shakespeare's famous tragic play *Hamlet*. We gained a deeper understanding of human nature and a clearer insight into its complexity and ambiguity. In the quote above, Hamlet is expressing his disillusionment with humanity, he wonders at the complexity and potential of human beings. He describes them as rational, limitless in abilities, and the highest example among all creatures. However, despite this admiration, he sees humans as insignificant. This is to say, they are merely dust. Hamlet's ambiguity gets inspired by his real life at that time. Shakespeare was influenced by Amleth, a prince who figured madness to exact revenge on his uncle for killing his father. Adding to this Shakespeare was influenced by some medieval stories which featured similar themes of revenge and madness. For instance, Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish tragedy* and the Finnish tale of Kullervo from the Kalevala are notable stories that most likely inspired Shakespeare to write *Hamlet*. another major point that could have really moved him to write the play is his personal experiences, particularly the death of his son Hamnet. As we mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, humans are full of ambiguity, at the same time, we cannot separate our personal experiences from our daily life just as writers cannot really produce interesting works without being inspired by their life experiences. This personal touch is evident in Shakespeare's great abilities to craft compelling dialogues that reveal deep insights into the human condition. Hamlet's famous soliloquy "to be or not to be" (Act 3, Scene 1, p. 98) is an example as the prince grapples with profound

questions of existence action and morality. Also, he uses figures of speech, metaphor and poetic devices in his language, this is what makes memorable lines and phrases that have become part of the cultural vocabulary. Even though Shakespeare's play is full of deep meanings and morals, many readers are attracted by his writings. Among those readers, we find writers who react both positively and negatively to the play. And one of those writers is Dot Hutchison. She retells *Hamlet* in a contemporary way, told from Ophelia's perspective. In her work *A wounded name* Dot Hutchison was drawn to retell *Hamlet* because she wanted to explore the character's fragile mind and their experiences in a unique and contemporary setting. Therefore, she goes deeper into Ophelia's emotional state making her more complex and a more relatable character than in the play, she also wanted to incorporate elements of the original story into a contemporary context, using the backdrop of a boarding school.

The Review of the Literature

William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) is a classic tragedy that sparked a huge number of critics, as it has been a major focus of literary criticism for a long time, with scholars analysing its intricate themes, characters, and cultural impact from different angles. This review examines the critical perspectives of Harold Bloom (1998), Terry Eagleton (2003), Ania Loomba (2002) each of whom offers unique insights into the play.

Harold Bloom, in his influential works *Shakespeare: The invention of the human* (1998) and *Hamlet: Poem Unlimited* (2003), presents a deeply humanistic and character-centric analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. He argues that Shakespeare created Hamlet with unparalleled psychological depth, portraying him as a "mortal god in an immortal play" (Bloom, 2003, 88) who grapples with profound existential and philosophical questions. Rather than accepting the common interpretations that link Hamlet's melancholia to mourning his father or resentment toward his mother's sexuality, Bloom suggests that something within

Hamlet has already died before the play even begins “something in Hamlet dies before the play opens” (Bloom, 2003, p. 86). This inner death is central to his character and fuels his existential crisis, making Hamlet’s tragedy about more than revenge or Oedipal issues.

According to Bloom, Hamlet’s melancholy is not tied to any external loss but stems from a war within his own consciousness, an awareness of his own vast intellect and its limitations. This internal struggle, rather than any outward motivation, defines Hamlet’s deep-seated melancholy and paralysis throughout the play. Central to Bloom’s analysis are Hamlet’s soliloquies, particularly “To be, or not to be” (act3, scene 1, p. 98) which he views as windows into Hamlet’s soul, revealing his intellectual brilliance and deep-seated melancholy. He argues that this soliloquy transcends a simple meditation on suicide and instead serves as an exaltation of Hamlet’s consciousness, reflecting his profound engagement with existential questions. Each phrase and pause in the soliloquy, Bloom suggests, captures the “cognitive music” (Bloom, 2003, p.36) of Hamlet’s mind, elevating his internal struggle into a philosophical reflection on being and the limits of human action. Bloom also proposes that Hamlet struggles against his creator, Shakespeare, especially evident in the play-within-a-play sequence, representing the playwright’s attempt to regain control over his creation. After the graveyard scene, Bloom argues, Hamlet undergoes a transformation into an “angel of destruction” (Bloom, 2003, 96) with a purged self-consciousness. This transformation highlights the paradox of Hamlet’s enduring appeal and his disinterest in personal identification, while still caring about his legacy.

Bloom concludes that Hamlet’s complexity, reflexivity, and self-consciousness reflect a modern sense of individuality, making the character’s existential dilemmas universally resonant and highlighting Shakespeare’s revolutionary impact on literature and human identity. we find Harold Bloom’s analysis of *Hamlet* both insightful and controversial, we agree with his assertion that Shakespeare crafted Hamlet with unprecedented psychological

depth, making the character's existential dilemmas and introspective soliloquies universally resonant. Bloom's recognition of Hamlet's transformation and concern for his legacy adds a profound layer to the character's complexity. However, we disagree with Bloom's dismissal of traditional interpretations, such as the impact of King Hamlet's ghost and the revenge motif, which are central to understanding Hamlet's motivations. Furthermore, Bloom's suggestion that Hamlet's melancholia stems primarily from a bond with Yorick, rather than his father's murder, seems to overlook significant textual evidence. Lastly, while the idea of Hamlet struggling against his creator is intriguing, it may impose a modern perspective on Shakespeare that the playwright did not intend.

From a Marxist perspective, in his seminal work *William Shakespeare (1986)*, Terry Eagleton offers a detailed Marxist analysis exploring the social and economic dimensions of the play. Eagleton examines how *Hamlet* represents the political and class struggles of that time paying attention to the context of power relationships and societal structures. He argues that the play serves as a critic of the developing middle-class values during the Renaissance by portraying the ruling class's instability and corruption. He states "The play *Hamlet* is preoccupied with questions of power and property, of ownership and exchange, and these economic concerns are articulated through the lens of personal and familial relationships. Claudius's murder of King Hamlet and subsequent usurpation of the throne is a stark example of the corrupting influence of power and the instability it brings to the social order" (Eagleton, 1986, p. 83) he sees that Claudius's act of killing his brother the king and then taking the throne as a clear example of this corruption, which disrupts the established order and exposes how weak the political power can be. Furthermore, Eagleton argues that Hamlet's struggles with action and inaction reflect bigger worries in society about power and fairness. He believes that Hamlet's soliloquy "to be or not to be" (act 3, scene 1 p.98) is a point that represents the conflict between enduring suffering and fighting unjust systems. He sees

hamlets personal issues as a reflection of the struggles faced by oppressed people within a hierarchical society. Egleton in his Marxist analysis wants to show that hamlet is more than a merely personal tragedy but it is also a critique on the social injustices and power struggles during the renaissance. While Terry Eagleton's Marxist interpretation of *Hamlet* provides a detailed criticism of power and class, we find his concentration on socioeconomic themes limiting. The play appears to be primarily focused with existential and psychological themes, such as the nature of existence, death, and human suffering, rather than social and economic critique. Hamlet's psychological troubles, existential distress, and moral dilemmas are universal and profound, transcending the socioeconomic setting that Eagleton highlights. By limiting the characters motivations to economic and class considerations, Eagleton ignores the profound psychological and emotional components that contribute to Hamlet's ageless and truly human tragedy.

In her postcolonial analysis (2002), Ania Loomba, provides a striking interpretation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* through a postcolonial lens, focusing on themes of power, otherness, and identity. Loomba considers the play's power battles, notably Claudius' takeover of the throne, as metaphors for colonial conquest and resistance, with Hamlet's quest to reclaim his rightful place mirroring the resistance of colonized peoples. She states:

In *Hamlet*, the question of rightful succession and the moral legitimacy of the throne is depicted through the lens of colonial usurpation and resistance. The power struggles within the Danish court can be paralleled with colonial conquest, where Claudius's rise to power represents the colonial aggressor and Hamlet's quest for revenge symbolizes the resistance of the subjugated" (Loomba, 2002, p. 123).

She explores the notion of otherness by examining how characters like Hamlet and Ophelia respond to oppressive forces, representing the psychological impact of colonial subjugation. The ghost of King Hamlet is viewed as a symbol of unresolved historical injustices, similar to the after effects of colonialism. She also addresses how *Hamlet* reflects early modern colonial anxieties and the intersection of gender and colonialism, particularly in the portrayal of

female characters subjected to patriarchal and colonial control. Her analysis underscores the play's exploration of cultural hybridity, with characters embodying traits of both colonizer and colonized. Loomba's postcolonial perspective thus reveals *Hamlet* as a complex commentary on power, identity, and resistance, illustrating its continued relevance to contemporary socio-political issues. While Loomba's postcolonial perspective is insightful, we find her interpretation that the madness of Hamlet and Ophelia primarily symbolizes the psychological impact of colonial subjugation to be overemphasized as this view may overshadow other critical dimensions of the play. We believe that Hamlet's feigned madness and Ophelia's genuine descent into madness can be more accurately understood through psychological and existential lenses, reflecting their personal and moral dilemmas rather than merely reactions to oppressive forces.

On the other hand, Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* (2013) the contemporary retelling of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from Ophelia's perspective offers a young adult interpretation with a focus on the psychological depth and modernity. By focusing on Ophelia's inner world and psychological conflict, Hutchison delivers a fresh and nuanced performance, challenging traditional views of her as a passive, and tragic figure. Set in a boarding school similar to Elsinore, the novel preserves the original's themes of grief, madness, and revenge while making them accessible to modern readers. This intertextual dialogue enriches the story, prompting a reconsideration of supporting characters and highlighting the continuing relevance of Shakespeare's themes in addressing issues such as mental illness and societal expectations. Although Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has received extensive critical attention for centuries, contemporary reinterpretations such as Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* have not received the same rigorous analysis. While *Hamlet* has been dissected from various angles such as psychological, existential and postcolonial, to name a few its contemporary adaptations and reimagining often remain in the shadows of

their illustrious predecessor. This disparity highlights a gap in literary scholarship, where the focus tends to remain on the original text rather than its modern manifestations. Consequently, works like *A Wounded Name*, which provide fresh perspectives and relevant commentary on the timeless themes of *Hamlet*, await comprehensive academic scrutiny. This oversight not only limits our understanding of how Shakespeare's legacy evolves but also misses the opportunity to explore how modern narratives reinterpret classic dilemmas in the context of contemporary issues, particularly within young adult literature. As the field continues to expand, there is a growing need for critics and scholars to turn their attention to these innovative adaptations to fully appreciate their contribution to the ongoing dialogue with Shakespeare's work.

Issue and working hypothesis

From the above review of the literature, it is evident that William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has started significant discourses and debates among scholars and critics. Plenty of studies have been conducted on *Hamlet*, emphasizing its importance and impact. These studies have interpreted the play from a Marxist, humanistic, psychological, and postcolonial perspectives. However, Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* has not received the same level of academic attention and remains relatively underexplored in scholarly discourse. From our knowledge No studies have integrated both works together, and there is very limited research on the intertextual dialogic approach within a single body of work. Thus, in our dissertation, we propose to undertake a comparative and contrastive study, analysing both works together. Our goal is to highlight the similarities and differences between Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, focusing particularly on their engaging dialogue. Through this analysis, we aim to shed light on how *A wounded name* both mirrors and diverges from the themes, characters, and narrative structure of *Hamlet*. By examining the interplay between the two works, we seek to contribute to a deeper understanding of Dot

Hutchison's reinterpretation of Shakespeare's classic tragedy and the ways in which it engages with and challenges the original play.

In the first phase of our study, we firstly examine the link between both literary works and that by running a thorough analysis on their themes, characters, and narrative structures. We draw the parallels between them in order to be able to identify the textual connections that connect them together, then closely compare the way the characters such as Ophelia, Hamlet, Claudius, and the rest were portrayed as well as the development of the main themes such as grief, madness, and revenge. By conducting a detailed comparative study our aim is to uncover the ways in which Hutchison's novel engages with and responds to Shakespeare's original play. Once we establish the commonalities between the two literary works, in this second phase of our study we contrast the works and explore the different ideologies present within them. We examine how Dot Hutchison's reinterpretation of *Hamlet* diverges from Shakespeare's original text, particularly in terms of motivations, narrative choices and thematic emphasis. Our study will provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between *A wounded name* and *Hamlet* offering a valuable insight into the ways in which literature can be reimagined and reinterpreted across different contexts and time periods. And throughout this study we will also draw on Kristeva's idea of intertextuality and Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of dialogism from his two works *The Dialogic Imagination (1981)* and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (1984)*.

Methodological Outline

This dissertation under the title of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name: An Intertextual Dialogic Scrutiny* embarks on an exploration of intertextual dialogue between Shakespeare's iconic tragedy *Hamlet* and Hutchinson's contemporary retelling *A wounded name*. The Dissertation is composed of five sections. Starting with the

first section it contains a general introduction that starts with a quote taken from *Hamlet* followed by a brief explanation, then an introduction to the literary works and their authors. Followed by a review of the literature where we review the critics that *Hamlet* has received. the first section concludes with the issue and the working hypothesis that outlines the study gap and the methodology to be followed in the making of the dissertation. The second section starts with methods and materials. The methods consist of a theoretical framework that will review Intertextuality and Micheal Bakhtin's concept Dialogism on which our work is based on, followed along by Materials that consists of brief summaries of the two literary works. The third section consist of the inferred results and the accumulated findings of our research paper. In The fourth section presents the discussion and the analysis of the play and the novel. It will be divided into two chapter. The first chapter will discuss intertextual dialogic and stylization aspects of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and its contemporary adaptation *A wounded name* meanwhile the second chapter analyses the overt polemic and pastiche in Hutchinson's novel in comparison to the original play. Lastly the end of the dissertation consists of a conclusion that contains the summary of the key findings.

II. Methods and Materials:

1. Theoretical framework

In order to study William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603) and its contemporary interpretation *A wounded name*(2013) from an intertextual dialogic perspective, we are going to draw on both the theory of intertextuality and Bakhtin's concept of dialogism, we are also going to make use of his two concepts 'stylization' and 'overt polemic'.

Starting with intertextuality, the term intertextuality was first used by Julia Kristeva in her essays *s Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1980) and then in *The Bounded Text* (1980). The concept that she initiated suggests that a text is not an independent entity it is shaped by its interaction with other texts' she writes in *word, dialogues and novel* (1980) "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations any text is the absorption and transformation of another"(Kristeva, 1980, p 66) this means that no text exist in a vacuum rather every, texts are intertexts or texts that existed before and each written piece is not entirely new it's a mix of things the writer has read or heard before. Although the term 'intertextuality' was introduced by Julia Kristeva in 1966. It is important to mention that the foundational concepts were presented by earlier scholars such as Ferdinand de Saussure, with his structuralist approach to language that laid the groundwork for understanding the signifying nature of texts(Saussure, 1966), and Roland Barth with his notions of "Readerly" (Barthes, 1967) and "writerly" (Barthes, 1970) reading, which challenged traditional notions of authorship and encouraged active engagement with texts, and lastly Mikhail Bakhtin with his theory of dialogism which provided a conceptual framework for understanding the dynamic interaction between texts (Bakhtin, 1981-84). Though Kristeva's work was deeply influenced by Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of dialogism.

In his books *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981) and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984) the Russian theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin presents his concept of dialogism. The term dialogism as defined by Bakhtin examines how a person's speech is connected to other people's words and ideas, shedding light on the relationship between individual utterances and broader discourses Bakhtin argues that communication is dialogical in nature, meaning that every utterance is informed by different voices, past and present. In *The Dialogical Imagination*(1981) and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984), Bakhtin examines how dialogism functions in literary texts, particularly in the novels of Fyodor Dostoevsky. He emphasizes the polyphonic nature of Dostoevsky's stories, in which characters engage in complex dialogues that reflect different social, ideological and philosophical perspectives. Bakhtin's concept of dialogism emphasizes the dynamic and open character of meaning-making, challenging conventional ideas of authorship and interpretation. By means of dialogism, Bakhtin provides a more profound comprehension of language and literature as locations of continuous discourse and interaction, whereby meaning is generated throughout the interaction of different voices.

Bakhtin also introduces other concepts in his works *The Dialogic Imagination* and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* such as 'stylization' and 'polemic' which are two distinct concepts that emerge to complement the term dialogism and both concepts are related to the intertextual dialogic nature of language. Stylization refers to intentionally copying or imitating another author's style of writing in a new text. It involves interacting with the original text's voice, creating a connection between the two texts. Through stylization, a writer can add details, meanings, and intentions of another writer to their own work, making it a part of a larger cultural and literary dialogue. This interaction highlights how all texts are connected and constantly evolving, with meanings being shaped and reshaped through the mix of different voices and styles.

On the other hand, polemic, involves engaging in a debate within a text where two opposing ideas clash within the same context. According to Bakhtin, polemic just like stylization involves taking another author's words and using them in your own work. However, the difference is that unlike stylization where the original author's style is maintained, in polemics, the borrowed words are used in a confrontational way. This means that the new author deliberately opposes the original ideas. In other words, instead of agreeing and continuing along the same path as the original idea or author, the new author takes a different approach, directly challenging and contradicting the original concepts.

Bakhtin identifies two types of polemic: hidden polemic and overt polemic, both follow a similar idea, but they differ slightly. In hidden polemic, the other person's argument conflicts with the author's words in a subtle and indirect manner. This makes it hard to grasp the opposing viewpoint if only the surface meaning is considered. Bakhtin notes "the other's thought does not personally make its way inside the discourse, but is only reflected in it, determining its tone and its meaning" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 196). The opposing argument also carries a hidden meaning that affects the text. therefore, this type of polemic often requires careful reading and interpretation in order to find the hidden tensions and contradictions. On the other hand, an overt polemic is directly aimed at the other person's argument, challenging it openly and clearly. Bakhtin states "overt polemic is quite simply directed at another's discourse, which it refutes, as if at its own referential object" (Bakhtin,1981, p. 196). This type of polemic is easy to recognize because it explicitly contradicts the original dialogue without any ambiguity. It leaves no room for doubt about the opposing stance, making the conflict clear to all readers.

2. Materials

Summary of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603):

Hamlet's father, the king of Denmark, is killed by his own brother Claudius, who within a short time marries Gertrude, Hamlet's mother, and becomes the new king. Hamlet is shocked that his mother has married so soon after his father's death and felt angry that she has married Claudius. Soon a ghost starts visiting Hamlet, telling him that his father was, in fact, murdered by Claudius and that he should seek revenge. Hamlet wants to make sure that what the ghost was telling him is the truth, so he pretends madness and plans revenge. He stages a play he called 'a mousetrap' where he reveals the way his father was killed, following the exact narration of the ghost. By doing so, he waits his uncle's reaction to confirm his guilt. During the staged play, Claudius reacts strongly which further proves that he murdered his own brother, the king. And That is where the play starts taking a tragic turn. Throughout his planned revenge, Hamlet accidentally killed Polonius, Ophelia's father, whom he thought was Claudius. Therefore, Ophelia goes mad with grief over her father's death. Claudius takes the opportunity by sending Hamlet far away to England to have him killed. He then made another plan to kill Hamlet by organizing a confront between Hamlet and Ophelia's brother, Laertes. Claudius gives Laertes a poisoned sword to kill Hamlet and also prepares a cup of poisoned wine as an additional measure. But Claudius's plan goes horribly wrong when the poisoned sword wounds both Hamlet and Laertes and Gertrude drink the poisoned wine. Knowing that his end is near Hamlet uses the poisoned sword to kill Claudius finally avenging his father.

Summary of Dot Hutchinson's *A wounded name* (2013):

A wounded name is a contemporary retelling of William Shakespeare's classic tragedy *Hamlet*. It is told from Ophelia's perspective. It reimagines the classic tragedy in a contemporary setting, while it still maintains the essential elements of the original play. The

story is set in Elsinore academy; it revolves around a sixteen years old Ophelia, a smart and observant girl with an ability to see ghosts and struggles to cope with her past trauma. The story begins with the death of the academy's headmaster Hamlet, who is killed by his own brother Claudius, a fact discovered by Ophelia after she sees Hamlet's two ghosts and later on confirms it through the gardener Jack who gives her the weapon used by Claudius. Later on, the truth is discovered by the headmaster's son Dane who is also able to see one of his father's ghosts. Dane is Ophelia's friend at first but after his father dies, they get closer as Dane goes through grief and seeks comfort from Ophelia, their friendship develops into something more. Polonius, Ophelia's father, and her brother Laertes are against the close relationship the two had as they believe that Ophelia's mental state is not stable enough which makes her less of a wife material and not compatible with Dane which resulted in Ophelia's internal struggles to intensify as she deals with her father's expectation, her brother's protectiveness, and her own feelings for Dane. The story takes a tragic turn after Dane confirmed his father's murder through a staged play he organized to trick his uncle. Dane's desire for revenge grows bigger resulting in devastating consequences. Ophelia finds herself stuck in the middle of a dangerous situation filled with vengeance costing her big losses.

III. Results

In this dissertation entitled: William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name: an Intertextual Dialogic Scrutiny*. We explored the interaction between Hutchison's novel and Shakespeare's play through an intertextual dialogic approach lens, examining how the two texts engage with and respond to each other. We examined how Hutchison's novel gives a new reinterpretation to the original play and develops its characters, themes and narrative. Studying these intertextual connections gave us a better understanding on how contemporary adaptations like *A wounded name* can provide a new perspective on classic works. Also, the way the dialogical interaction between the two works allows a good exchange of ideas which further highlights the timeless relevance of William Shakespeare's classic *Hamlet*.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, we revealed the intertextual and dialogic relationship between Shakespeare's classic play, *Hamlet*, and Dot Hutchison's contemporary retelling *A wounded name*. Through a thorough analysis of their themes, characters, and narrative structures, we identified numerous parallels that emphasized their textual connections. By examining the portrayals of characters such as Ophelia, Hamlet, Claudius, and others, as well as the development of themes like grief, madness, and revenge, it became clear that Hutchison's novel interacted actively with Shakespeare's play. This detailed comparative study uncovered how Hutchinson responded to the original play and reinterpreted it through the lens of contemporary issues and perspectives. Furthermore, this chapter delved into how *A wounded name* stylizes Shakespeare's play. Hutchison's *A wounded name* employed a distinct stylization that echoed Shakespeare's original language and stylistic choices while also introducing contemporary elements. This blend of styles enriched the narrative and deepened the connection between the two literary works. By using stylization.

In the second chapter of this dissertation, we examined how *A wounded name* employs pastiche and overt polemic to reshape and critique the themes and structure of *Hamlet*; we analysed how Hutchinson's reinterpretation of *Hamlet* differed from Shakespeare's original play in terms of motivations, narrative choices, and thematic emphasis. By employing pastiche, Hutchinson paid homage to Shakespeare and at the same time created a unique narrative voice that resonated with modern readers. Moreover, the concept of overt polemic was central to this chapter. Hutchison's *A wounded name* not only dialogued with *Hamlet* but also engaged in a critical discourse that challenged and re-examined the original play's themes and characters. This polemic approach allowed Hutchinson to address and critique the societal and cultural issues reflected in *Hamlet*, offering a fresh perspective that encouraged readers to question and reconsider the original text's implications.

Chapter one: Dialogues Across time: Analysing *Hamlet* and *A wounded Name*

Discussion:

Introduction:

Literature has a unique ability to go beyond the limitations of time, allowing works separated by years and centuries to engage in meaningful conversations. Even after four hundred years William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* still has a huge impact and continues to resonate; its themes and characters echo through contemporary adaptations and reinterpretations in movies, plays or novels. One such profound dialogue occurs between Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Hutchison's *A wounded name*, a novel written centuries later yet deeply interwind with Shakespeare's masterpiece.

This chapter investigates how Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* engages in intertextual dialogism with William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, focusing on the modern adaptation of the original work. It explores how Hutchison reinterprets its themes, characters, and narrative elements. Additionally, the chapter examines how these elements are stylistically modernized for a contemporary audience while maintaining a connection to the play. By analysing both the intertextual links and stylistic updates, this chapter reveals how *A wounded name* converses with and transforms Shakespeare's classic.

1. Intertextuality and Stylization in *A wounded name*:

a) *Hamlet's* lines and scenes: Intertextuality in *A wounded name*

In Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is brought into a modern high school setting, mixing the classic story with contemporary elements in a fresh and engaging way. This novel retells Shakespeare's tragedy through a contemporary lens, demonstrating the power of intertextuality and stylization in literature. Hutchison's adaptation engages with the original text on multiple levels, blending traditional elements with innovative narrative techniques to resonate with today's readers.

The American writer smartly incorporates lines and scenes from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, creating a rich tapestry of intertextual connections. Hutchison often uses direct quotations from *Hamlet*, which helped reinforce the thematic links between the two works. One powerful example is Hutchison's use of Hamlet's most famous soliloquy "to be, or not to be." (Act 5, scene 1, p.98) In Shakespeare's play, this soliloquy is a deep reflection on existence, suffering, and the nature of death. Hamlet's contemplation reflects his own inner struggles and questions about life and death, which resonate deeply with the play's central themes. Hutchison reimagines the soliloquy through Hamlet's contemporary version with Dane's personal reflection on life and death. When Dane speaks to Ophelia he whispers, "Only one. only ever one. A single question: to be or not to be?" (Hutchison,2013, p. 206). This echoes Hamlet's question adding Dane's sense of desperation, "is it more worthy, more noble, to endure this chaotic hell or to stand ground against a sea of troubles and, by standing, end them?" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 206) Hutchison does not just copy Hamlet's words; she makes them more intense by showing Dane's emotional pain, which is clear in his trembling voice and closeness to Ophelia. Hutchison's version of the soliloquy adds more emotions by trying it into Dane's and Ophelia's personal struggles. Dane's crisis connects not only with Hamlet's thoughts but also with Ophelia's own inner troubles. By linking both characters to Hamlet's soliloquy, Hutchison shows that these questions about life and death are still relevant today, just as they were in Shakespeare's time.

Another example is Hutchison's adaptation of Ophelia's lament in *A wounded name* which reflects a sophisticated reinterpretation of Shakespeare's original text. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia laments her father's death with lines such as, "He is dead and gone, lady, He is dead and gone; at his head a grass-green turf, at his heels a stone" (Shakespeare, 1603, p. 156), which vividly expresses her grief and loss. Hutchison adapts this lament for her contemporary audience, writing:

He is dead and gone, lady. He is dead and gone, and at his head an angel guards and an angel weep, all for a band of gold that broke in the face of the truth. (Hutchison, 2013, p. 279).

This modern version maintains the mournful tone of Shakespeare's original, while adding contemporary elements like the angel imagery and the "band of gold" which could symbolize a broken marriage. Both versions capture the deep emotional pain Ophelia feels after the loss of her father. In the contemporary version Hutchison preserves the emotional intensity of the original while making them resonate with modern audience.

Following this, the novel smoothly moves into another strong moment that Hutchison takes from Shakespeare, Ophelia's distribution of flowers. In *Hamlet*, this scene, with the lines "there's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember: and there is pansies. That's for thoughts" (Shakespeare, 2013, p. 164). This moment not only marks her descent into madness but also shows the weight of her emotional struggles, the heartbreak over her father's death and her inability to express her grief in words. Hutchison mirrors this passage in her modern retelling, writing "There's rosemary," I tell him, "That's for remembrance. You need to remember. And there, that's pansies. That's for thoughts" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 287). In *A wounded name*, this line is embedded within a scene where contemporary Ophelia reflects on her own mental state; much like in the original play, she uses flowers to communicate emotions she cannot fully express through words as she stands before Laertes with her arms full of flowers. Her words, though repeating Shakespeare's lines, are delivered in a context that highlights the modern Ophelia's ongoing issues with mental health and her complex relationship with grief and revenge. The scene is set with her brother Laertes, Claudius, and Gertrude, reflecting how each character reacts to her apparent breakdown, much like in *Hamlet*.

Another clear reference in *A wounded name* is the use of Hamlet's last words, "The rest is silence" (Shakespeare, 1603, p. 215). In Shakespeare's play, these words show Hamlet

accepting death and the end of his pain. Hutchison echoes this line in her novel's final chapter when Ophelia enters the river, bringing her journey to an end with the same words. Hutchison's use of "The rest is silence" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 311) directly connects her novel to Shakespeare's play, creating a link between Hamlet's tragic ending and Ophelia's last act. In both stories, the phrase signals a moment of acceptance, Hamlet faces death, and Ophelia tries to escape the chaos of her life. This phrase in *A wounded name* makes Ophelia's death feel even more emotional, suggesting that, like Hamlet, her death might bring her peace from all her suffering. This part of Hutchison's novel feels final and powerful. For Hamlet, "The rest is silence" means he knows death is coming and that nothing comes after but quiet. For Ophelia, returning to the river, a place connected to her earlier trauma, shows she is searching for peace. Hutchison's version of Ophelia's death is not just about giving up but also about finding calm after struggling with her mental health, family, and Dane's tragedies.

Hutchison's choice to include "The rest is silence" also highlights a key theme that runs through both *Hamlet* and *A wounded name*: death as a way to escape and find peace. In Shakespeare's play, Hamlet's final words suggest that death might bring relief from life's burdens. In Hutchison's version, Ophelia's return to the river is her way of ending the pain she has faced throughout the novel. Her death feels both sad and peaceful, much like Hamlet's. Additionally, in Hutchison's modern setting, "The rest is silence" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 311) gains new meaning. Throughout *A wounded name*, Ophelia struggles not only with outside forces but also with her inner battles fighting issues like mental health and being silenced as a woman. Her choice to accept silence at the end could be seen as both a tragic defeat and a final act of control, where she chooses the only thing, she can silence. In this way, Hutchison gives a modern twist to Shakespeare's phrase, making it meaningful for today's readers.

b) Character Reimagination: Intertextuality and Stylization:

1) Ophelia: A stylized female character:

In *Hamlet*, Ophelia is a tragic figure who is controlled by the men around her, her father Polonius, her brother Laertes, and Hamlet. She is caught in a struggle between familial loyalty and romantic love, but her voice is largely absent in the play. Her mental breakdown and death result from the intense pressure she faces, as she is torn between her duty to her father and her feelings for Hamlet. Ophelia never truly expresses her own thoughts beyond her famous mad scenes. She is often viewed as a passive victim of circumstances, whose madness is a response to the actions of those around her. Similarly, Dot Hutchison's Ophelia in *A wounded name* faces the same struggles with family control and emotional struggles. Hutchison stylizes Ophelia with more agency and introspection. Like the Shakespearean Ophelia, she is deeply affected by the men in her life, particularly her father and brother, but instead of being purely a victim, Hutchison's stylized Ophelia shows more resistance as she refuses to fully conform her family's control and her internal monologues allow readers to understand her inner turmoil, Ophelia actively wrestles with her mental health and emotional challenges. For instance, she expresses her reluctance to conform to her father's demands by resisting her medication:

I empty the pills from Sunday and Monday and slip them into the plastic baggie hidden between my mattresses. There are too many pills there, too many days I forget or else just can't make myself turn away all the sights and sounds of that other world that weaves so closely through ours (Hutchison, 2013, p. 2)

Both Ophelias struggle with their inner turmoil, but Hutchison's Ophelia is more reflective of her situation, exploring her mental state more deeply than Shakespeare's version, who is primarily seen through the lens of others.

Ophelia's descent into madness in *Hamlet* is closely tied to the death of her father Polonius, Hamlet's rejection, and the overwhelming pressures placed upon her by the men in

her life. Her madness manifests through her cryptic songs and symbolic distribution of flowers, revealing the unravelling of her mind. Similarly, in Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name*, Ophelia also grapples with emotional instability and societal pressure. Her madness is not tied to the death of her father but rather stems from past traumas like drowning with her mother and a deeper connection to the supernatural. Unlike Shakespeare's Ophelia, who is portrayed as a passive victim of the events surrounding her, Hutchison's Ophelia is more introspective and conscious of her mental health struggles. Her madness is intricately linked to her connection with the supernatural world, particularly the bean sidhe, who represent the external manifestation of her internal grief and wildness "The sky is blue today. too bright to reflect the sorrow of the bean sidhe keening beyond the cemetery fence" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 1). And also her ability to see ghosts "I try to stay away from the graveyard at night, watching the ghosts through my window so they never know that I can see them, hear them, when the medications are forgotten or not working" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 34). This supernatural element adds a mystical layer to her madness, stylizing her emotional fragility in a way that contrasts with Shakespeare's more straightforward depiction of mental breakdown.

2) *Hamlet*: A character from Shakespeare's text with Hutchison intentions:

In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the titular character is at the heart of the play's exploration of themes like madness, revenge, grief, and deep existential questioning. Hamlet is a deeply troubled figure who constantly reflects on life, death, and the morality of revenge, famously captured in his soliloquy, "To be or not to be." His emotional struggles, his hesitation to take decisive action, and his obsession with avenging his father's murder all contribute to his eventual downfall. As a character, Hamlet embodies the weight of internal conflict, unsure of how to act in a corrupt and uncertain world.

In *A wounded name*, Dot Hutchison stylizes Hamlet as Dane, a young man who shares many of Hamlet's core traits: His grief, anger, and existential pondering, but with a modern focus on mental health and emotional trauma. Dane, much like Hamlet, is consumed by grief over his father's death. Hutchison gives this grief a more direct link to modern understandings of mental health. Dane is not just a prince navigating political intrigue but a teenager dealing with the intense emotional trauma of losing his father. This is made clear early in the novel when Ophelia finds Dane hiding from the world, utterly broken by his loss "Ophelia, I don't think I can do this" (Hutchison, 2013, p.). This intimate moment echoes Hamlet's philosophical musings in his soliloquies but brings the emotional struggle closer to the surface, making it more tangible and immediate. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the protagonist's grief is intellectualized, often expressed through abstract monologues. In *A wounded name*, Hutchison stylizes Dane's grief as deeply emotional, grounding it in his need for Ophelia's presence and his inability to cope with his father's death. Where Hamlet questions the meaning of life in his famous soliloquy "To be or not to be: that is the question" Dane similarly reflects on whether life is worth enduring, but in a more modern context. In Chapter 26, Dane mirrors Hamlet's existential angst, holding a gun to his head while questioning the value of life "There is a question, Ophelia. Only one. Only ever one. A single question: to be or not to be?" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 206). While Hamlet's soliloquy contemplates action and inaction in a philosophical sense, Dane's reflection is raw and immediate, steeped in personal pain. The crisis is no longer just intellectual it is a physical and emotional battle, connecting more directly with modern readers who may recognize similar feelings of despair, anxiety, and confusion.

Like Hamlet, Dane experiences a profound existential crisis. In both texts, the character wrestles with questions of life and death, existence, and the purpose of action. Shakespeare's Hamlet famously wonders whether it is better to "suffer the slings and arrows

of outrageous fortune” (Hutchison, 2013, p. 206) or to end one’s suffering through death. Dane, too, struggles with the overwhelming pressures of his life, but his reflections are more deeply personal and connected to his mental health.

Dot Hutchison’s *A wounded name* engages in a rich intertextual dialogue with Shakespeare’s Hamlet, reimagining Hamlet as Dane, a character who grapples with many of the same existential questions but in a way that feels more immediate and relevant to modern readers. While both characters are deeply troubled by grief, anger, and the pressures of avenging their fathers, Hutchison stylizes Dane in a way that foregrounds his emotional vulnerability and his battle with mental illness. Through his relationship with Ophelia and his inner reflections on life and death, Dane becomes a more emotionally complex and relatable version of Hamlet, one whose struggles reflect the complexities of mental health in the modern world.

c) *A wounded name*: Stylization of Character Development

In Shakespeare’s play, the titular character stands as one of literature’s most psychologically intricate figures. Hamlet’s journey is defined by his intense introspection and existential angst, which manifest in his famous soliloquies. He is a character torn between the desire for revenge and his deep moral and philosophical considerations, which often lead him to question the nature of existence itself. Hamlet’s struggle with inaction versus action is central to his development, as he grapples with the overwhelming burden of avenging his father’s murder. His oscillation between moments of decisive action and paralyzing doubt reflects his inner turmoil, making him a figure who is simultaneously relatable and enigmatic.

Hamlet’s psychological complexity is further deepened by his relationships with other characters. His interactions with Ophelia, Gertrude, and Claudius reveal his conflicted feelings about love, loyalty, and justice. His love for Ophelia is overshadowed by his

disillusionment with women, stemming from his mother's perceived betrayal. His confrontations with Claudius are charged with tension, as Hamlet vacillates between seething hatred and a paralyzing awareness of the moral implications of murder. These internal conflicts culminate in Hamlet's tragic downfall, where his intellectual paralysis and eventual impulsive actions lead to a catastrophic end.

Hamlet's character development is also deeply influenced by the historical context of the Elizabethan era. The play reflects the anxieties of a time marked by religious uncertainty, political instability, and the intellectual shifts of the Renaissance. Hamlet embodies the spirit of the Renaissance humanist, caught in the conflict between emerging ideas of individualism and the lingering influence of traditional religious beliefs. The Reformation's impact on England, with its deep religious divisions, can be seen in Hamlet's existential dilemmas and his questioning of the afterlife. Similarly, the political instability and concerns about succession during Queen Elizabeth I's reign are mirrored in the play's exploration of power, legitimacy, and the moral consequences of political actions.

In *A wounded name*, Dot Hutchison reinterprets and expands upon these character complexities in a modern setting, offering a fresh perspective on Hamlet through the character of Dane and, more significantly, through Ophelia. While Dane mirrors Hamlet's brooding nature and existential struggles, it is Hutchison's portrayal of Ophelia that stands out for its depth and innovation. She is not merely a passive victim of the events around her. In *A wounded name*, Dot Hutchinson reimagines Shakespeare's Hamlet from Ophelia's perspective, giving her a voice and more depth compared to the original play. While Shakespeare's Ophelia is often seen as a tragic victim, with limited control over her fate, Hutchinson's portrayal adds layers to her character, making her more central to the story and allowing readers to explore her inner thoughts, struggles, and emotions. Hutchison's stylized Ophelia is not simply a passive figure but an active narrator, which brings her closer to the

reader. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia's madness is one of the most memorable parts of her character, but we never fully understand what drives her to that point. Hutchison in a stylized fashion of the source text fills in these gaps by exploring Ophelia's mental and emotional world. Through internal monologues and flashbacks, we see how deeply she is affected by the loss of her father, her complicated relationship with Hamlet, and the societal pressures around her. These elements give Ophelia a more realistic and complex portrayal, showing her as a person dealing with grief, love, and identity.

By exploring the psychological development of these characters in greater depth, Hutchison enriches the intertextual dialogue between *A wounded name* and *Hamlet*, offering new insights into the timeless themes of identity, madness, and the human condition. The novel's engagement with modern feminist thought and mental health awareness highlights the enduring relevance of these themes and provides a fresh perspective on the characters' journeys, making them resonate powerfully with a 21st-century audience.

d) *A wounded name* stylization of *Hamlet's* plot

In *A Wounded Name*, Dot Hutchison stylizes the plot of *Hamlet* in a way that remains true to the original framework while weaving modern sensibilities and unique narrative elements into the storyline. Hutchison's novel reshapes Shakespeare's classic into a contemporary setting at Elsinore Academy, providing readers with a familiar yet fresh interpretation. The novel maintains the core events of the *Hamlet* plot but with adjustments in tone, style, and character focus to suit the modern context.

One of the key aspects of plot stylization in *A wounded name* is the way the story retains *Hamlet's* central conflicts but alters the atmosphere and pacing, offering a more intimate and internalized version of the narrative. Ophelia, as the novel's protagonist, narrates her point of view, providing insights into her thoughts and emotions that Shakespeare's

original character lacked. This subjective viewpoint allows the plot to shift focus toward Ophelia's inner world, while still following the overall structure of Hamlet's tragedy. For instance, in the opening scene of Hutchison's novel, we encounter Ophelia's deep reflections on death during the funeral of Elsinore's Headmaster, Dane's father, a moment that mirrors the beginning of *Hamlet* but presents a highly personal and melancholic interpretation "The sky is blue today, lovely and innocent and callous, too bright to reflect the sorrow of the bean sidhe keening beyond the cemetery fence" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 1).

Another notable aspect of plot stylization is Hutchison's use of supernatural elements, which heighten the emotional and psychological tension of the narrative. These elements are closely intertwined with the plot's progression, creating an atmosphere of madness and tragedy that echoes the original play. In Ophelia's world, supernatural forces like the bean sidhe and the presence of her dead mother's ghost contribute to the growing sense of instability as the events of *Hamlet* unfold. This enriches the storytelling with a mystical layer that symbolizes both Ophelia's mental state and the inevitability of the tragic fate awaiting the characters. Such additions not only stylize the plot but also enhance the tragic undercurrents of *Hamlet* by deepening the protagonist's connection to the ethereal world.

In *A wounded name*, the major plot points from *Hamlet* such as the death of King Hamlet and Gertrude's marriage to Claudius are mirrored but in a modern setting. The headmaster's death at Elsinore Academy reflects the loss of King Hamlet, and everyone is devastated by it. Ophelia captures this moment with the line, "This is the day Hamlet Danemark V, Headmaster of Elsinore Academy, is laid to rest and the world mourns" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 5). The weight of the headmaster's death shapes much of the plot, just as King Hamlet's death drives the events in Shakespeare's play. Similarly, Gertrude's quick remarriage to Claudius is echoed when, shortly after the headmaster's death, Gertrude agrees to marry Claudius "and Gertrude, whom I have loved since we were but children, has

consented to be my wife” (Hutchison, 2013, p. 69). This deeply angers Dane, much like Hamlet in the original play. Dane explodes with rage during a family dinner, accusing his mother of moving on too quickly “Father’s been dead barely a month! What the hell is wrong with you?” (Hutchison, 2013, p. 69) This confrontation reflects Hamlet’s outrage in the original play, where he feels betrayed by his mother’s swift remarriage.

Finally, Hutchison’s stylization of the plot preserves the essence of Shakespeare’s tragedy but through a more lyrical and introspective style. The progression of the plot remains recognizable, as key events such as Hamlet’s anger towards his mother, his obsession with his father’s death, and the tragic end of Ophelia still occur. However, the language and portrayal are softened through Ophelia’s poetic narration, where even moments of violence or despair are filtered through her introspection: "This is the day Hamlet Danemark V, Headmaster of Elsinore Academy, is laid to rest and the world mourns"(Hutchison, 2013, p. 5).

In conclusion, *A wounded name* stylizes Hamlet plot and infuse it with modern context, supernatural undertones, and a deeper focus on personal and psychological dimensions. Hutchison’s novel reimagines the tragedy not through grand political intrigue but through the delicate inner worlds of its characters, particularly Ophelia, creating a version of Hamlet that is deeply rooted in emotional and mental landscapes.

e) *A wounded name* Stylization of *Hamlet*’s Themes:

1) Madness:

Madness is one of the central themes in both Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and Hutchison’s *A wounded name*, in *Hamlet* madness is particularly presented through the characters of Hamlet and Ophelia. In Hutchison’s *A wounded name* retains this thematic focus on madness and presented it mainly through Ophelia but expands and deepens it. Shakespeare’s play presents madness largely as a reaction to grief and betrayal, Hutchison’s retelling transforms madness

into an inherited and supernatural condition, linking Ophelia's internal struggles with her environment and her family history. Through this stylization, Hutchison explores the fragile boundaries between sanity and madness, reality and the supernatural.

In *Hamlet*, Ophelia's madness is portrayed as a consequence of overwhelming grief for her father Polonius's murder and Hamlet's rejection. Her mental state deteriorates rapidly, and her madness is presented through her erratic behaviour and disjointed speech. In *A wounded name*, Hutchison's Ophelia grapples with a much deeper and more complex form of madness. Rather than merely reacting to external events, Ophelia's madness in *A wounded name* is intertwined with her family's history, particularly the psychological legacy left by her mother's death. In Chapter 1, Ophelia reflects on her father's fear that she has inherited her mother's madness "father will see the wildness in my eyes" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 2), "he trembles to give it voice, as though voicing it will make it real, but always the truth is there in his eyes: I am too much my mother's daughter" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 2). Here, Hutchison introduces the idea that madness is something passed down from one generation to the next. Ophelia's father, Polonius, is constantly worried that Ophelia will follow in her mother's footsteps, succumbing to the same mental illness. This familial connection to madness is an important addition to Shakespeare's original theme, turning it into something that is not only reactive but also inherent in Ophelia's identity. While Shakespeare's *Hamlet* hints at the supernatural through the ghost of King Hamlet, Hutchison expands this element significantly in *A wounded name*, using it to blur the line between reality and madness. Ophelia's interactions with the supernatural particularly the bean sidhe and her mother's ghost further complicate her mental state. These supernatural experiences contribute to Ophelia's sense of being caught between two worlds: the world of the living and the world of the dead. In Chapter 12, Ophelia's reflection on the lake and her connection to death further emphasizes her mental fragility, "The lake has become a strange sort of refuge of the late. my mother and

I died here” (Hutchison, 2013, p. 91). Ophelia’s closeness to the supernatural world, symbolized by the lake and the bean sidhe’s presence, suggests that her madness is not simply a psychological condition but also a spiritual one.

In *Hamlet*, Ophelia’s madness is largely depicted through her outward actions—her flower distribution, her singing, and her eventual drowning. Ophelia in *A wounded name* is given a strong internal voice, which allows readers to witness her internal battle with madness. Ophelia in *A wounded name* is far more aware of her mental fragility, and this self-awareness adds depth to her character as she struggles to maintain her sense of self. In Chapter 20, Ophelia acknowledges the madness she feels within herself, but also her detachment from the fear it brings to others specially her father, Polonius and her brother Laertes; she says, “The madness my father and brother see... it only scares me when I see the reflection of it in their eyes” (Hutchison, 2013, p. 92). This self-awareness makes Ophelia’s descent into madness more tragic. Unlike Shakespeare’s Ophelia, who seems unaware of her unravelling mind, Hutchison’s Ophelia is painfully conscious of the wildness that grows within her, yet she feels powerless to stop it. This adds a layer of complexity to the theme of madness, transforming it from an external force to an internal struggle that Ophelia must face alone.

2) Death

In both Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and Dot Hutchison’s *A wounded name*, the theme of death is central to the plot and character development. While *Hamlet* explores death as a philosophical issue, Hutchison brings the theme of death closer to the emotional lives of the characters, particularly Ophelia. In *A wounded name*, death is not only a philosophical idea but also a haunting force that permeates Elsinore Academy and follows Ophelia throughout her life. The novel adds supernatural elements and deep emotional connections to death, making it an inevitable, haunting, and even fated part of the story. The tragic deaths of

characters, especially Ophelia, Dane (Hamlet), and Laertes, reflect this stylization of death as something inescapable.

In both works, death is introduced early and casts a shadow over everything that follows. In *Hamlet*, the death of King Hamlet sets the plot in motion, as the ghost of the king demands that Hamlet seek revenge. In *A wounded name*, death similarly haunts the characters from the beginning, but it is portrayed in a more emotional and supernatural way. The novel opens with the death of the headmaster, a parallel to King Hamlet's death, which sets the tragic events of the story in motion. From the start, Elsinore Academy is marked by death, much like the court of Denmark in *Hamlet*.

Hutchison uses supernatural elements, particularly the bean sidhe, to reinforce the idea that death is a constant presence just like it is in Shakespeare's play. The bean sidhe's wails serve as an ominous reminder that death is always near. In Chapter 1, Ophelia hears their keening during the headmaster's funeral "The Headmaster will be buried today and the bean sidhe keen" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 1). And in chapter 31 when her father died "the bean sidhe sing louder, the cries feral and inhuman. The death they've been waiting for has happened." (Ibid., p. 255)

In *Hamlet*, death is something Hamlet contemplates philosophically, wondering about what comes after life. In *A wounded name*, however, death feels more immediate and inescapable, especially for Ophelia, who is surrounded by it. The academy itself becomes a place where death is ever-present, affecting everyone within its walls the same way death was constantly hovering over Elsinore in Shakespeare's text affecting, thereby, almost everyone. In the novel death is not just an abstract idea it is something Ophelia has always felt connected to. This connection comes from her mother's suicide, as well as her own near-death experience when she almost drowned as a child. This gives Ophelia a deep emotional bond with death, which shapes her view of the world. While Hamlet in the play is frightened by the

uncertainty of death and the afterlife, Ophelia accepts it as an inevitable part of her life, even finding comfort in it.

In both literary works, characters wrestle with the idea of death as an escape. In *Hamlet*, Hamlet famously questions whether it is better to endure the suffering of life or to end it through death. However, his fear of the unknown afterlife prevents him from taking his own life. In *A wounded name*, Ophelia views death as a more certain escape from the overwhelming pressures she faces. Her promise to her mother makes death feel like a form of release from the emotional troubles she experiences at Elsinore Academy.

Both *Hamlet* and *A wounded name* feature tragic deaths that serve as climaxes to the story. In *Hamlet*, nearly every major character meets a violent end, including Hamlet himself, Ophelia, and Laertes. In *A wounded name*, death is similarly tragic but feels more fated, especially for Ophelia. Ophelia's own death, which occurs in both works, is treated with a deeper emotional connection in *A wounded name*. Throughout the novel, Ophelia seems aware that her death is inevitable, and her final destination would be to keep her promise to her mother and follow her in the lake, and throughout the end, Ophelia seems aware of the death of the others and there would be no escape aside from death; she thinks, "Dane will die. Laertes will die" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 306) "no one will escape. The house reeks of death and fear." (Ibid., p. 306)

3) Revenge Stylized by Hutchison:

In both *Hamlet* and *A wounded name*, revenge serves as a powerful force that drives the characters toward tragedy. In the play, the prince is consumed by the need to avenge his father's murder, and this singular focus on revenge destroys not only him but also nearly everyone around him. Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* stylizes this theme of revenge,

showing its psychological toll on characters like Dane and Laertes, and its impact on those close to them, particularly Ophelia.

Just like Hamlet, Dane is haunted by the need to avenge his father's death. His anger is not only directed toward Claudius but also toward his mother, Gertrude, who remarried Claudius shortly after his father's death. Dane's internal conflict mirrors Hamlet's, as his desire for revenge drives him to madness and deepens the emotional turmoil in the novel. The moment Dane encounters his father's ghost, plays a crucial role in this obsession. The ghost presses Dane toward revenge, as seen when Ophelia reflects

Dane and the ghost still talking at the corner, both of them worked up, but most of their words don't carry the way they should in such an open space. "promise" and "family" and "vengeance" float like whispers on the breeze. (Hutchison, 2013, p. 144).

This moment, much like in *Hamlet*, shows how Dane's revenge is not just a personal mission, but something he feels commanded to fulfil by the ghost of his father.

Laertes, like his counterpart in *Hamlet*, seeks revenge for the death of his father, Polonius. His anger and grief push him to the brink, and he is manipulated by Claudius, much like in the original play. Claudius persuades Laertes to kill Dane, framing it as an act of justice "Laertes plots and plots and plots with Claudius dripping poison in his ear like a malevolent fairy godfather" (Ibid., p. 291) This quote shows how Laertes, driven by grief and vengeance, becomes a pawn in Claudius's larger scheme. Claudius, ever the manipulator, advises Laertes "Drink this Laertes and sit down and for love of all that's holy listen to me. You can have your revenge and I will assist you in it" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 301). Here, just like in Shakespeare's play, revenge is not a noble pursuit but a tool used by Claudius to further his own goals. Despite his rage, Ophelia attempts to steer Laertes away from revenge, telling him "Revenge will not bring him back. He is gone" (Ibid., p. 288). This echoes the futility of revenge, a theme that Hutchison weaves throughout the novel. Laertes' pursuit of revenge,

much like Dane's, leads only to further suffering and tragedy. It is not an act of justice but one that continues the cycle of violence.

A significant aspect of Hutchison's stylization of the revenge theme is seen through Ophelia's eyes. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia who is largely a passive character, is swept along by the events surrounding her. In *A wounded name*, however, she is a keen observer of the destruction that revenge causes. She sees how revenge consumes Dane and Laertes and how it drives them to madness. At one point, Ophelia says "Revenge is sorrow waiting to weep. Look where it got Dane. Look where it got Father" (Ibid., p. 287). This reflection captures the essence of the novel's message on revenge that it does not heal; it only brings more grief. Ophelia also recognizes the heavy toll revenge takes on those who pursue it. She understands that once the cycle of revenge begins, it is nearly impossible to stop. The narrative hints at this inevitability, as Ophelia foresees the tragic outcome "revenge after all is a messy business" (Ibid, p. 148) and throughout the end of the novel when she says, "Dane will die. Laertes will follow. And Horatio... the best of us will shatter until there's nothing left. The star blazes and burns. And dies. There is just nothing left" (Ibid, p. 305). Here, Ophelia predicts the tragic fates of the characters, much like the fatal end in *Hamlet*.

Chapter Two: Pastiche and Polemic in Hutchison's *A wounded name*

Introduction

In this chapter, we explore how *A wounded name* by Dot Hutchison engages in overt polemic against Shakespeare's *Hamlet* while simultaneously paying homage to it through "pastiche". Hutchison presents strong, modern viewpoints on gender, mental health, and societal pressures, using her novel to critique the issues embedded in *Hamlet*. By focusing on these social and philosophical concerns, *A wounded name* becomes a powerful response to the limitations of Shakespeare's treatment of characters like Ophelia. Additionally, Hutchison uses pastiche to honour the original structure, language, and themes of *Hamlet*. She incorporates elements from Shakespeare's work while adapting them to fit the needs of a modern audience, creating a fresh reinterpretation. Through this analysis, we will see how *A wounded name* uses both overt polemic to critique *Hamlet* and pastiche to preserve its timeless essence, effectively creating a dialogue between the two works that bridges the gap between past and present. An overt polemic, within Bakhtin's framework, is a direct and open argument where one text actively challenges or critiques another. It engages in a clear dialogue with the original, often disagreeing with its themes or ideas. This type of polemic highlights the tension between the two works, showing a critical response rather than silent agreement.

1. A wounded name (2013): An Overt Polemic Against Shakespeare's Hamlet

In *A wounded name*, Hutchison takes Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and reinterprets it through a contemporary perspective, using overt polemic to engage with the 21st century issues, such as feminism, mental health issues and societal pressures. While the play dealt with broader, existential questions and the corruption of power, the novel shifts the focus to more personal and psychological struggles, particularly those experienced by women.

a) An Overt Polemic Against Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: The Reimagining of *Hamlet's* plot:

A wounded name is an explicit critique of some of *Hamlet's* core aspects. While the novel follows almost the same plot as the original and the unfolded events were the same, Hutchison directly challenges the male-dominated narrative, the treatment of women and the portrayal of madness, particularly through her central character, Ophelia. By reworking the emotional tone, character dynamics, and themes, Hutchison opens a dialogue with Shakespeare, questioning his representation of female characters and their struggles. The decision to give Ophelia a voice and agency serves as a powerful polemic, challenging the way *Hamlet* traditionally frames its story.

One of the most striking changes Hutchison makes is the shift in focus from Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, to Ophelia a sixteen years old girl in Elsinore academy. In Shakespeare's version, Hamlet's voice dominates the play, guiding its emotional and philosophical direction. However, in the contemporary version, Ophelia becomes the primary narrator, reclaiming the narrative space that Shakespeare often denied her. Hutchison allows Ophelia to tell her own story and take control of events, a shift that serves as more than just a narrative choice, it acts as a direct critique of the male centric lens through which the original play is viewed. By stepping into Ophelia's mind, readers gain access to a perspective that was marginalized in *Hamlet*, pushing Hamlet's dominance aside in favour of Ophelia's experience.

another major difference in Hutchison's reimagining of Hamlet as Dane is the role of Ophelia in his life. In Shakespeare's version, Hamlet pushes Ophelia away, consumed by his need for revenge and his mistrust of women following his mother's remarriage. Their relationship is fractured, and Ophelia is left devastated, eventually descending into madness. In *A wounded name*, however, Dane seeks comfort in Ophelia, turning to her for emotional

support. Their relationship, while still marked by Dane's instability, becomes a central part of his emotional journey. Instead of dismissing her, as Hamlet often does, Dane relies on Ophelia to ground him, even though his emotional turmoil harms her. This dynamic adds depth to both characters, highlighting the complexity of relationships where both individuals are suffering. Dane's dependence on Ophelia is revealed in scenes like this one, where he confesses to her: "You're the one thing that's real. The one thing that makes all of this real, that makes me feel real. I need you, Ophelia. I need to know that you won't walk away." (Hutchison, 2013, p.49).

While Hamlet is emotionally distant, often isolating himself from those around him, Dane clings to Ophelia, though his need for her is often toxic. Their relationship reflects the complexity of love when mental illness is involved, where both partners are struggling to cope with their own issues. This makes Dane a more modern, emotionally vulnerable version of Hamlet, shaped by his need for connection even as his mental state deteriorates.

Hutchison's Ophelia goes far beyond the weak, tragic character with no voice that Shakespeare created. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia's fate is largely determined by the men around her—her father Polonius, her brother Laertes, and Hamlet himself. She serves as a tool in their stories, often losing her voice amid their louder, more dominant narratives. Hutchison rejects this portrayal. In her novel, Ophelia is not a mere passive character; on the contrary, Ophelia is portrayed as a woman with a story, a woman who is observant, who is aware of her surrounding and painfully aware of her mental health struggles and how societal forces, especially those imposed by men, try to control her. This level of self-awareness marks a radical departure from Shakespeare's Ophelia, who never expresses her thoughts on her condition. As Hutchison writes, Ophelia recognizes the manipulation: "Laertes watches me. I don't know if he's under orders from our father or if it's simply something he's taken upon himself, but his eyes follow my progress about the room"(Hutchison, 2013, p.20). This acknowledgement of constant male surveillance speaks volumes about Ophelia's inner life,

which Shakespeare's Ophelia never vocalizes. This shift from Hamlet's struggles to Ophelia's inner life serves as a feminist overt polemic against the original play, where Ophelia is a character without agency.

Shakespeare presents Ophelia's madness as a reaction to external events such as Hamlet's cruelty, his rejection, and her father's death. Hutchison, however, expands this portrayal, showing that Ophelia's mental health is part of a larger, ongoing battle, rooted not just in the actions of the men around her but in her trauma and supernatural experiences. Ophelia is acutely aware of her struggle, as she reflects, "I took my pills this morning," (Hutchison, 2013, p. 24).even though the pills do not always manage her reality"I took my pills, but the pills are like words, they don't always mean anything even when they should" (Ibid., p. 40)

Ophelia's madness is not merely a product of male actions but is deeply connected to her own internal world, her grief and the supernatural elements she encounters, like the bean sídhe and ghosts. The supernatural visions serve as manifestations of her trauma, elements she must come to terms with over time.

They hover above their graves in unhallowed ground, suicides and vocal unbelievers, those who have crossed the Lows of Heaven so openly that their souls remain tied to these mounds of earth and decay. As the night deepens, they gain solidity and the flickering blue- white light becomes individual bodies, faces, people, some of whom I've known. (Hutchison, 2013, p. 33)

This portrayal of the supernatural reflects Ophelia's internal chaos, emphasizing the emotional depth of her struggle. Hutchison's reimagining presents a pointed critique of how female madness has often been portrayed in literature, as a passive, tragic flaw—allowing Ophelia to reflect on her trauma instead of simply becoming a voiceless, broken figure.

Shakespeare presents Ophelia's madness as a reaction to external events such as Hamlet's cruelty and rejection and her father's death. Hutchison expands this portrayal, showing that her mental health is part of a larger, ongoing battle.

As Ophelia's story unfolds in *A wounded name*, Hutchison critiques how Shakespeare's *Hamlet* intellectualizes madness. In *Hamlet*, much of the focus is on whether Hamlet's madness is real or feigned, with Hamlet himself philosophizing about life, death, and existence. In contrast, Hutchison presents Ophelia's madness as deeply emotional, visceral, and tied to her experiences of loss and supernatural visions. "You said you hear the bean sidhe, right? That they mourn for the dead?" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 24). asks Horatio, to which Ophelia responds with a nod, acknowledging that the supernatural forces are intertwined with her perception of reality. This divergence from Shakespeare's approach critiques the space given to male characters to reflect on their madness, while female characters are reduced to passive victims.

This reworking of madness is also tied to the broader theme of death, a subject central to both *Hamlet* and *A wounded name*. In the original text, death is a philosophical topic for Hamlet, who reflects on it abstractly, particularly in the famous scene where he contemplates Yorick's skull in the graveyard. Hamlet's musings on mortality are intellectual, even detached. Hutchison, however, offers a much more personal and emotional approach to death through Ophelia's experiences. For her, death is not a distant philosophical idea but a real, ever-present force. The banshees and ghosts surrounding her are constant reminders of death's inevitability. "The faerie women sing for the deaths in the great families... They may sing forever" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 17), Ophelia observes, showing how deeply connected she is to the idea of death. Hutchison's portrayal of death through Ophelia is far more emotional and rawer than Hamlet's philosophical reflections, offering a feminist critique of how male characters intellectualize mortality, while female experiences are grounded in emotional, lived realities.

b) Feminist Critique: The Treatment of Ophelia:

A wounded name provides a powerful feminist critique, especially through its portrayal of how Laertes and Polonius control Ophelia's choices, autonomy, and body. Both characters embody a patriarchal mindset that reduces Ophelia to a symbol of chastity and compliance with societal norms. Hutchison uses their actions to critique the double standards and gendered expectations that continue to burden women. Laertes, in particular, tries to lecture Ophelia on multiple occasions since the beginning of the novel one major example is when he tries to lecture her on the importance of maintaining her purity, all while preparing for a more promiscuous lifestyle during his travels. This duality exposes the hypocrisy of traditional gender expectations, where male sexuality is tolerated, even celebrated, while female sexuality is harshly controlled and scrutinised. This double standard is sharply highlighted in a pivotal moment when Laertes warns Ophelia to avoid a relationship with Dane, insisting that her innocence must be preserved. "You're so innocent, and Dane's... well, Dane. He has a lot more experience than you, and you need to stay away from that," (Hutchison, 2013, p. 131). He tells her, reinforcing the belief that a woman's worth is tied to her sexual purity, while a man's "experience" is accepted, even valued. However, Ophelia is quick to confront this hypocrisy, calling out her brother's own behaviour, "Do not preach to me that chastity and virginity are the steep path to Heaven while you debauch your way through Paris" (Ibid., p. 132). Through this exchange, Hutchison critiques not only Laertes but also the societal double standard that allows men sexual freedom while policing women's behaviour.

The control over Ophelia's choices does not end with Laertes. Polonius, her father, further exemplifies the oppressive control of the patriarchal system. He, too, seeks to manage Ophelia's relationships, dictating her actions as though she has no autonomy of her own. When he commands her to avoid Dane unless chaperoned, he is not only undermining her

agency but reinforcing the idea that women cannot be trusted to make their own decisions. His words, “From this time forward, you will make every effort to avoid Dane without Gertrude or myself there to act as chaperone,” (Hutchison, 2013, p.135) reflect the broader societal expectation that women must always be watched and controlled, incapable of independent thought or action.

Hutchison deepens this critique of Shakespeare’s play by linking the control over Ophelia’s relationships to the control over her mental health. Throughout the novel, Ophelia is pressured to conform not only to societal expectations about her body and sexuality but also to the demands placed on her emotional and mental well-being. Her father’s and brother’s efforts to manage her life reflect how women’s mental health is often pathologized when it does not fit within the accepted societal framework. Ophelia’s visions of ghosts and the supernatural become a metaphor for nonconformity, and her family’s insistence that she take medication to suppress these visions illustrates society’s broader tendency to control and dismiss women’s emotional experiences. This pressure to suppress her emotions and comply with societal norms becomes a focal point in the narrative. Ophelia’s refusal to take the medication prescribed by her father, represent a quiet but significant act of resistance. In this sense, Hutchison overt polemic gives Ophelia the agency that Shakespeare’s original character lacked. Unlike in *Hamlet*, where Ophelia passively succumbs to the pressures around her, Hutchison’s Ophelia actively resists. Her decision not to take the pills, is symbolic of her desire to retain control over her own mind and body, despite the oppressive forces surrounding her.

Ophelia’s struggle is not just about relationships or mental health; it is also about the emotional manipulation she faces from those closest to her. Her father, brother, and Dane each place demands on her, tying her worth to the fulfilment of their expectations. Laertes warns her to preserve her purity, Polonius dictates her interactions with Dane and makes her promise

not to be involved with him, and Dane seeks her emotional commitment and asks for a promise too. Therefore, Ophelia is caught in a web of expectations that pull her in different directions, each demanding her loyalty and obedience. Her reflection that “Dane asked for a promise. Laertes asked for a promise. Father asks for a promise. A promise is a rope around the neck” (Hutchison, 2013, p.136) captures the suffocating effect of these conflicting demands. As she tries to navigate these relationships, Ophelia slowly begins to lose her sense of self, highlighting the toll that societal and familial pressures can take on women.

In *A wounded name*, Hutchison masterfully interweaves these themes of gender dynamics, familial control, mental health, and societal expectations, creating a narrative that resonates with contemporary readers. By reframing Ophelia’s story through a modern feminist overt polemic, Hutchison critiques the traditional power structures that limit women’s freedom and agency. The novel speaks to ongoing struggles faced by women, showing how patriarchal values continue to shape their experiences and restrict their autonomy. Through Ophelia’s journey, Hutchison offers a powerful commentary on the importance of self-determination and the resilience required to resist societal pressures.

2. Pastiche in *A wounded name*:

Dot Hutchison wrote *A wounded name* in a very different time and culture than when *Hamlet* was written. The novel was published in the 21st century, a period when postmodernism plays a big role in literature. Postmodern authors are known to often use pastiche to connect with classic texts, reworking them to reflect modern issues. In *A wounded name*, Hutchison reinterprets *Hamlet* by focusing on today’s themes like mental health, gender roles, and the pressures of society. Her use of pastiche follows today’s literary trends that focus on intertextuality—where stories refer to and interact with other stories. This method allows her to have a conversation with Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, echoing its language

and themes, but also changing them to fit a modern audience. Her novel does not just copy *Hamlet*; it reimagines it, using pastiche to create a new story that connects with today's readers.

a) ***A wounded name* by Dot Hutchison: A Tribute to the Main Characters of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*:**

Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* is a modern retelling of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, set in the contemporary setting of Elsinore Academy, a prestigious boarding school. While Hutchison reimagines many aspects of the original play, the novel retains its connection to the source material by paying homage to the central characters of *Hamlet*. Characters like Dane, Ophelia, Gertrude, Claudius, and Polonius are reinterpreted in a modern context, yet they still reflect the core traits and roles that made them memorable in the original play. Through these characters, Hutchison honours the essence of *Hamlet*, while exploring new dimensions of their personalities, relationships, and struggles.

1. Dane: A Tribute to *Hamlet*:

In *A wounded name*, Hamlet becomes Dane, a troubled and grieving teenager boy coping with the sudden death of his father, the headmaster of Elsinore Academy. Like Shakespeare's Hamlet, Dane is consumed by grief, anger, and confusion as he tries to understand the circumstances surrounding his father's death. His feelings of betrayal by his mother, Gertrude, and his uncle Claudius are mirrored in Hutchison's novel, as Dane struggles to accept his uncle's swift rise to power and his mother's quick remarriage.

Dane's character pays homage to Hamlet's introspection and melancholy, particularly in how he questions life and death. His brooding personality and his questioning of life echo Hamlet's famous soliloquies, such as "To be or not to be," (Hutchison, 2013, p. 206) where Hamlet contemplates the meaning of existence. In *A wounded name*, this is reflected in

Dane's increasingly erratic behaviour as he grapples with the injustice he feels. Hutchison captures Hamlet's emotional troubles while placing it in a contemporary context, where Dane's mental health is a central theme. This focus on his psychological struggles deepens our understanding of the original Hamlet's emotional state, while also honouring the complexity of the character.

2. Ophelia: An Homage to an Early Modern Character:

In *A wounded name*, Dot Hutchison reimagines Ophelia in a way that honours Shakespeare's character while adding new layers. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Ophelia is often seen as passive, driven mad by Hamlet's rejection and her father's death. Hutchison keeps Ophelia's tragic story but gives her more control, making her an active narrator who tells the story and observes what's happening. This Ophelia has more self-awareness and emotional depth, showing how she navigates her inner world and grief with more strength than in Shakespeare's version.

Hutchison builds on Shakespeare's themes of madness and death, but adds a modern understanding of mental health. In *A wounded name*, Ophelia struggles with her fragile mental state, as she often questions reality. Her connection to the supernatural, like the bean sidhe, represents her ties to death and grief: "I've grown up with the ghosts that play hide-and-seek through the gaps in my medications, but I've never seen two ghosts for a single man" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 89). This mystical element helps Hutchison stay true to Shakespeare's Ophelia while giving her more depth and showing both her vulnerability and strength.

Hutchison also keeps the theme of Ophelia's flowers, but gives them more meaning. When Ophelia gives flowers to Laertes during her madness, she knows exactly what they symbolise: "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. You need to remember... and there, that's pansies, that's for thoughts" (Hutchison, 2013, p.288). This focus on the symbolic meaning of the

flowers shows her complex emotional and psychological struggles in a way Shakespeare couldn't fully explore. By using pastiche, Hutchison transforms Ophelia from a tragic victim into a more active and complex character. She doesn't just speak for herself but for others around her. This honours Shakespeare's original themes while giving Ophelia a more modern voice and allowing her struggles to be explored in new ways.

3. Gertrude and Claudius:

In both *Hamlet* and *A wounded name*, Gertrude and Claudius are central to the plot, particularly in their relationships with Hamlet or his modern counterpart, Dane. In *A wounded name*, Gertrude remains the mother figure who remarries quickly after her husband's death, causing her son deep emotional pain. Hutchison's Gertrude, much like Shakespeare's, is torn between her loyalty to her son and her new relationship with Claudius. Her swift remarriage triggers a powerful sense of betrayal in Dane, just as Hamlet felt in the original play. Dane's outrage reflects the depth of his pain "Barely in the ground but you need to replace him? Christ and with his brother!" (Hutchison, 2013, p.) This mirrors Hamlet's feelings toward his mother's actions, where both sons feel emotionally abandoned by their mothers' decisions to remarry so quickly Hutchison deepens this emotional conflict by making Gertrude's struggle between her son and Claudius more visible, adding layers of vulnerability to her character.

Similarly, Claudius in *A wounded name* mirrors his Shakespearean role as a usurper who seizes power after his brother's death. In both works, Claudius is responsible for killing Hamlet's father, Claudius murders the headmaster, just as he kills King Hamlet in Shakespeare's play.

Claudius was there before I was. He was the one who called the ambulance, the one who held Gertrude when the noise brought her from the house, the one who ordered us to keep Dane away when he would have come to look as well. "What could make a man kill his own brother?" I whisper, the thoughts too dark for the bright day (Hutchison, 2013, p. 57).

As the new headmaster of Elsinore Academy, As the new headmaster of Elsinore Academy, he is ambitious and manipulative, using charm to win over others while hiding his true intentions. His calculated actions, such as how “his eyes never change their calculating expression” (Ibid., p.21) while interacting with others, capture the same cunning nature found in Shakespeare’s Claudius. Hutchison honours the original Claudius by keeping his ambition and political manoeuvring intact but places him in a modern context where his control over the academy becomes a symbol of his power. His manipulation, both of people and positions, drives a wedge between Dane and Gertrude, echoing the same family tension found in *Hamlet*.

4. Polonius and Laertes:

Polonius and Laertes, though secondary characters, are essential to the development of the plot in both *works*. In Shakespeare’s play, Polonius is a meddling courtier who advises King Claudius and attempts to control the lives of his children, Ophelia and Laertes. His eventual death at Hamlet’s hands becomes a turning point in the tragedy. Hutchison pays homage to this role by retaining Polonius’s overbearing and intrusive nature in *A wounded name*. As Ophelia’s father, Polonius still tries to control her life, dictating her actions, particularly in her relationship with Dane. He is portrayed as consumed by his own duties and oblivious to the emotional needs of his children “Father can be awkward and consumed by his tasks but he is never intentionally cruel” (Hutchison, 2013, p.19). This line reflects his well-meaning but misguided interference in Ophelia's life, which leads to tragic consequences, just like in *Hamlet*. Hutchison further mirrors Polonius’s intrusive role by having him orchestrate situations to spy on Dane and Ophelia, which ultimately brings about his downfall. Polonius’s obsession with uncovering the truth about Dane’s feelings for Ophelia leads him to manipulate his daughter. His meddling in Ophelia's relationship and his failure to recognize

the emotional damage he causes are key elements that Hutchison retains from Shakespeare's original, while also adding more emotional depth to his character in *A wounded name*.

Just as in *Hamlet*, Polonius's interference leads to his tragic death, which serves as a catalyst for the novel's final events. In *A wounded name*, Ophelia finds herself haunted by her father's murder: "Father was going to hide himself in Gertrude's room. Father was going to listen to her conversation with Dane. Father was there" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 265) His death at Dane's hands mirrors his death in *Hamlet*, reinforcing the cyclical nature of tragedy and the consequences of his controlling behaviour.

Hutchison's Laertes, much like Shakespeare's, remains a protective brother, always vigilant about Ophelia's choices. In Chapter 17, we see him cautioning Ophelia to avoid Dane, mirroring his role in *Hamlet*. He says, "You're so innocent and Dane's... well, Dane. He has a lot more experience than you and you need to stay away from that. From him." This is reminiscent of Laertes in *Hamlet* warning Ophelia about Hamlet's intentions. His protective nature is tied to both his sense of family honour and his fears about how society will judge Ophelia. Also, Laertes is quick to seek revenge for his father's death, which ultimately leads to the play's tragic conclusion. As in *Hamlet*, Laertes is driven to revenge in *A wounded name*. In Chapter 37, he trembles with fury upon learning that Dane was involved in their father's death. His grief and rage push him closer to Claudius, who, like in the original play, manipulates him. "Laertes plots and plots and plots with Claudius dripping poison in his ear like a malevolent fairy godfather." Hutchison's portrayal underscores his vulnerability to revenge, showing that despite his outward strength and protectiveness, he is also easily influenced, much like in Shakespeare's tragedy.

In *A wounded name*, Hutchison successfully pays homage to Shakespeare's character, while reimagining them in a modern setting. Characters like Dane, Ophelia, Gertrude,

Claudius, and Polonius retain the essence of their Shakespearean counterparts, with their emotions, conflicts, and relationships echoing the original tragedy. Through these characters, Hutchison honours the timeless themes of *Hamlet* such as grief, madness, betrayal, and revenge while giving them new life in a contemporary world. This balance between imitation and innovation allows *A wounded name* to serve as both a tribute to Shakespeare and a fresh exploration of the characters' inner worlds.

b) Pastiche in *A wounded name*: The Plot of *Hamlet*

In *A wounded name*, Dot Hutchison skilfully uses pastiche to pay homage to the plot of Shakespeare's original text, while transforming it to address today's issues like mental health and gender dynamics. The novel does not simply imitate Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; it reimagines its structure and plot elements to resonate with contemporary readers while staying true to the spirit of the original.

Hutchison retains the fundamental structure of the play, particularly the key events like King Hamlet's death, Claudius's treachery, and the unravelling of the court. However, she shifts the focus from Hamlet's internal struggle to Ophelia's, which alters the dynamic of the story. In doing so, Hutchison provides a fresh perspective. For instance, the opening scene in both *Hamlet* and *A wounded name* sets the tone for the narrative. In *Hamlet*, the ghost of King Hamlet appears, signalling the beginning of Hamlet's quest for revenge. Similarly, in *A wounded name*, Hutchison begins by highlighting Ophelia's connection to the supernatural, particularly her encounters with the bean sídhe and her mother's ghost. This twist on the original plot enhances the mystical and psychological elements, focusing more on Ophelia's emotional and mental state. The supernatural becomes a key part of Ophelia's journey, similar to Hamlet's encounter with his father's ghost, but it serves to deepen her internal struggle rather than drive a quest for revenge.

One notable use of pastiche is Hutchison's adaptation of *Hamlet's* play-within-a-play scene, which is used to unmask Claudius's guilt. In *Hamlet*, this scene is critical in advancing the plot and confirming Claudius's role in King Hamlet's murder. Hutchison maintains the essence of this moment but adapts it to a more contemporary context. In the novel, instead of a traditional play, the concept is modernized with more symbolic gestures, like the use of a syringe to reveal Claudius's guilt "From his waistcoat, he produces the syringe with its remnants of proof" (Hutchison, 2013, p. 237). This modernization allows readers to engage with the scene in a way that feels relevant to today's world, while still maintaining the tension and purpose of Shakespeare's original plot device. For example, in Chapter 29, Dane orchestrates a performance to reveal Claudius's guilt. The scene mirrors the "Mousetrap" from *Hamlet* but uses modern touches like poetic language and symbolic gestures, making it accessible to contemporary readers while preserving the core of Shakespeare's original plot.

Hutchison's pastiche is also evident in how she reimagines Ophelia's tragic arc. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia's descent into madness and her eventual death are central to the plot, but they happen offstage and are mostly influenced by the men around her, her father, brother, and Hamlet. In *A wounded name*, Hutchison expands Ophelia's story, giving her more agency and a voice that challenges her passive role in Shakespeare's version. Ophelia's eventual death by drowning remains a key plot point in *A wounded name*, but Hutchison reimagines this moment as more personal and introspective. Ophelia's connection to the supernatural elements, and the lake, and her promise to her mother provides a new layer to her demise, making it feel more like a personal choice rather than a consequence of male dominance. In Chapter 40, Ophelia's reflections on the lake and her mother's ghost reflect her acceptance of her tragic fate, deepening the emotional impact of her death. This twist on the original plot highlights Hutchison's ability to use pastiche to honour Shakespeare's structure while adapting it for modern readers. Her Ophelia does not simply follow the path laid out for her

by others, but instead faces her fate with a deeper understanding of the societal pressures and personal struggles that have led her to that point.

Hutchison's pastiche also involves the careful incorporation of symbolic moments from *Hamlet* into *A wounded name*. One of the most prominent is the recurring imagery of water, which in both works symbolizes Ophelia's fragile mental state and her eventual death. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Ophelia's drowning is reported by Gertrude in a poetic, yet detached manner. In *A wounded name*, however, the lake plays a more significant role in Ophelia's narrative, representing both life and death. The supernatural figures, like the bean sídhe and the lake itself, serve as metaphors for Ophelia's internal struggle and her slow surrender to the forces pulling her toward death. This addition of supernatural elements tied to water transforms the plot's symbolism, enriching the theme of madness with a mystical layer. The lake becomes a recurring symbol in the plot, as Ophelia reflects "The lake has become a strange sort of refuge of late" (Hutchison, 2013, P.91). This modernized representation of her connection to the lake not only pays homage to the original plot but also deepens the tragic undercurrents of her character's fate.

Dot Hutchison's pastiche both honours and transforms the plot of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Through reimagining key moments, such as the play-within-a-play and Ophelia's death, Hutchison creates a modern version of the story that resonates with contemporary readers. The use of supernatural elements and modern symbols allows Hutchison to preserve the essence of Shakespeare's tragic plot while providing fresh insights into Ophelia's journey. Through this skilful blend of past and present, Hutchison pays tribute to Shakespeare's original work while offering a nuanced critique that engages with modern themes like mental health, gender roles, and personal agency.

IV. General Conclusion

Throughout this memoir, we have examined Dot Hutchison's *A wounded name* through the lenses of intertextuality, Stylization, pastiche, and overt polemic, particularly in relation to William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. By analysing these two works together, the focus has been on how *A wounded name* not only pays homage to Shakespeare's original but also critiques and reimagines it to fit a contemporary context. Hutchison's novel operates as both a tribute and a challenge to *Hamlet*, engaging in an intertextual dialogue that bridges cultural and temporal gaps.

The initial analysis explored the intertextual connections between *Hamlet* and *A wounded name*, with Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of dialogism serving as an umbrella theoretical framework. Hutchison does not simply mimic *Hamlet*; instead, she reinterprets key elements, especially the character of Ophelia. By giving Ophelia a voice that was largely absent in Shakespeare's text, Hutchison introduces fresh insights into the psychological and emotional dimensions of the character, thereby reconfiguring the narrative to reflect 21st-century concerns.

In particular, *A wounded name*, addresses themes of mental health, autonomy, and gender dynamics, all of which are underexplored in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare's portrayal of Ophelia as a passive, tragic figure gives way to Hutchison's more active, resistant Ophelia, who struggles against societal and familial expectations. This shift not only adds depth to Ophelia's character but also signals Hutchison's overt polemic against the original play's treatment of female characters.

The second part of this study highlighted the role of pastiche and overt polemic in shaping *A wounded name*. Hutchison's use of pastiche allows her to retain the essence of Shakespeare's language, themes, and motifs while simultaneously transforming them to

engage with modern issues. In this way, she blends the old with the new, paying homage to *Hamlet* while critiquing its limitations. The overt polemic is particularly evident in Hutchison's exploration of gender roles and mental health, where she offers a pointed critique of the power dynamics and societal structures that constrain women's autonomy, especially Ophelia's.

The portrayal of Ophelia as a woman who resists control whether by her father, her brother, or her lover serves as the cornerstone of Hutchison's polemic. Unlike Shakespeare's Ophelia, who is largely acted upon, Hutchison's Ophelia defies these constraints. This act of resistance places Ophelia at the centre of *A wounded name's* feminist critique, reflecting Hutchison's engagement with contemporary feminist discourse.

By engaging with *Hamlet* through stylization, pastiche and overt polemic, *A wounded name* ultimately offers a reimagined narrative that speaks directly to the concerns of today's readers. The themes of madness, power, and identity remain present, but they are reframed to address modern issues, such as mental illness and the pressures of societal expectations. The novel's first-person perspective and stream-of-consciousness narrative provide an intimate look at Ophelia's internal struggles, giving her agency and complexity that were absent in the original.

This memoir has demonstrated that Hutchison's *A wounded name* is not merely a retelling of *Hamlet*, but a rich reworking that both honours and critiques Shakespeare's masterpiece. Through the use of intertextuality, pastiche, and polemic, Hutchison has created a work that continues the conversation initiated by *Hamlet*, while simultaneously pushing that dialogue into new territory. Her novel stands as a testament to the enduring relevance of Shakespeare's work and the power of contemporary reinterpretations to breathe new life into classic texts.

While this memoir has relied on an intertextual dialogic approach, there are other promising perspectives for future study. One such approach is psychoanalytic literary criticism, which could explore in greater depth the mental and emotional states of both Ophelia and Dane. Using Freud's theories of the unconscious or Lacan's ideas of desire and identity, researchers could investigate the psychological complexities and traumas that these characters endure, particularly in the context of contemporary mental health awareness.

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