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***METATHEATRE IN SELECTED POST  
COLONIAL PLAYS***

*A PhD Thesis*

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## الملخص العربي

## **English Summary**

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كلية الآداب  
قسم اللغة الإنجليزية وآدابها

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**Chapter I**  
**Metatheatre: A Medium for the Post Colonial**  
**Discourse**

## **Chapter II**

**Re-working Myths: Ola Rotimi's  
*The Gods are Not To Blame* & Wole  
Soyinka's *The Bacchae of Euripides***



## **Chapter III**

**Replacing the Text: Aime`Cesaire's *A Tempest***

**& Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's *The Trial***

***of Dedan Kimathi***

## **Chapter IV**

### **Converting the Norms: Derek Walcott's *Pantomime* & Athol Fugard's *The Island***





## **Preface**

The dramatic form is the medium through which the dramatist translates his own ideology. Nowadays it is very difficult to comprehend an ideology without referring to its medium or form. The dramatic medium used by playwrights differs as it is influenced by the basic assumption of what is truthful and valuable. Writers from different periods with different ideologies do this in different ways; this is because their answers to existential questions differ, for example what is truth? Where is to be found? How can we perceive reality? The writers' perception is determined by their own temperament as well as the culture in which they live.

Until recently, great literature was universal; it was that which expressed general truths about human life. However, this vision about universality becomes no longer applicable in the contemporary time. A great development has occurred in the literary theory in the recent past; the most notable of which is its challenge to universal literature or great work of art as a representative of one true value or as embodying a shared human experience. The more recent shift in contemporary literary theory is in fact an effect of the development in

‘cultural theory’; the new theories are more than ‘literary’, they are concerned with a more radical cultural politics, one of which is post colonialism which is the point of discussion in this thesis.

The dramatic form that is utilized, gains new dimensions and is influenced by the writer’s new vision about reality. From this perspective, metatheatre as a dramatic form will be elaborated. What is metatheatre? What devices does it employ? How far can this form be utilized to realize one’s identity and how do post colonial dramatists make use of this form to criticize the discourses through which Western thought had claimed to possess reality and subject position?

The thesis is divided into four chapters and a conclusion. Chapter one: **Metatheatre: A Medium for the Post Colonial Discourse** provides a critical account about the dramatic form under discussion through the views of the different critics. The chapter tries to illuminate the characteristics of this form and its various devices. It also gives an account about post colonialism as a critical discourse that has influenced and been influenced by the different literary theories. It sheds light on its ideology to get to know how the dramatic form under discussion can be utilized by the post colonial

dramatists to challenge the Eurocentric vision, produce new alternatives and establish themselves as different. The two following chapters will discuss the reworking of canons and paradigms that have claimed for long time their universality, their supremacy and their objectivity in the presentation of reality. Chapter two: **Re-working Myths: Ola Rotimi's *The Gods are Not To Blame* & Wole Soyinka's *The Bacchae of Euripides***, explores how these African dramatists use classical myth as medium suitable for reworking and creating a new work of art with different realities. Chapter three: **Re- placing the Text: Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest* & Ngugi Wa Thiong'O's *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi*** maintains the idea of reworking and illustrates why Shakespeare as a prominent figure in literature, and history as a discourse become a ground for re evaluation. As for chapter four: **Converting the Norms: Derek walcott's *Pantomime* & Athol Fugard's *The Island***, it is dedicated to the explanation of an important metatheatrical device 'role playing' and explains how far this device has been utilized by post colonial dramatists to create a new subject position. A conclusion then follows to give a critical account of the dramatic form discussed in the dissertation.