



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

English Language and Literature Department

**EVOLVEMENT OF THE CHANGELING FIGURE IN THE
SELECTED ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN PLAYS**

Barış ARPAÇ

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2023

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Abstract

ARPAÇ, Barış. *Evolution of the Changeling Figure in the Selected Elizabethan and Jacobean Plays*. Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2023.

Changelings are terrorising figures in the beliefs and superstitions of the medieval period. These awe-inspiring figures of the fairy lore were believed to be fairies or inanimate objects left behind after a healthy infant is stolen by troublesome fairies. This belief in changelings, the precaution taken against them, as well as the rituals to get rid of them persisted well into the nineteenth century. While this figure's influence on English society is observable throughout the English history, its portrayals in the dramas of the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods are worth attention as these representations display a shift from expressing the fears that had been persisting since the Middle Ages to presenting this figure as the embodiment of different ideas. The introduction chapter of this thesis examines the changeling figure in the context of the social history of the medieval and the early modern periods and its representations in literature to reveal its significance, and the fact that its representations were consistent with each other in the mentioned periods. In this context, the first chapter of this thesis analyses two plays from the Elizabethan period, the anonymous *Misogonus* (1560-77) and William Shakespeare's (1564 – 1616) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595-96) and comes to the conclusion that the representations of the changeling figure in this period are consistent with folk narratives and legends that include this figure. To examine the differences between the representations of the changeling figure in two different periods, the second chapter conducts a comparative analysis of two Jacobean plays, *The Changeling* (1622) by Thomas Middleton (1580 – 1627) and William Rowley (1585 – 1626), and *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623) by Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker (1572 – 1632) and John Ford (1586 – 1639). As it is concluded in the second and Conclusion chapters of this study, the changeling figure is no longer represented in the context of fairy lore in the Jacobean period, instead, it evolves into the embodiment of different ideas such as change and transformation due to the influence of James I on the

society and literature. Therefore, this study argues that the changeling figure experienced an evolvment in the Jacobean period, as it was separated from its roots in fairy lore, its connotations with the fear of losing an infant, and the superstitions accompanying the figure, and thereby presented as the embodiment of various ideas.

Keywords

Changeling, Superstitions, Fairy Lore, the Elizabethan Drama, the Jacobean Drama

ÖZET

ARPAÇ, Barış. *Kaçırılmış Çocuk Figürünün Seçili I. Elizabeth ve I. James Dönemi Tiyatro Oyunlarındaki Değişimi*. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2023.

Periler tarafından kaçırılmış çocuklar orta çağ insanlarının inanç ve batıl inançlarından kaynaklanan korkunç figürlerdir. Peri inancının bu dehşet verici figürlerinin, perilerin ebeveynlerinin yanından sağlıklı bir çocuğu çaldıktan sonra geride bıraktığı bir peri veya obje olduğuna inanılıyordu. Kaçırılmış çocuklara olan bu inanç, bu kaçırılmalara karşı alınan önlemler ve geride bırakılan periden kurtulmak için geliştirilen yöntemler varlıklarını on dokuzuncu yüzyıla kadar sürdürmüştür. Bu figürün İngiliz toplumuna olan etkileri İngiliz tarihinin her noktasında görülebilirken, I. Elizabeth dönemi ve I. James dönemi tiyatro eserlerindeki temsili, bu figürün neden olduğu, orta çağdan beri süregelen korkunun temsilinden farklı fikirlerin vücut bulmasıyla öne çıkmaktadır. Bu tezin giriş kısmı, kaçırılmış çocuk figürünün önemini ortaya koyma ve temsillerinin bu dönemlerde uyduğunu gösterme amacıyla bu figürü orta çağ ve erken modernite dönemlerinin sosyal tarihi bağlamında değerlendirmekte ve figürün edebî temsillerini incelemektedir. Tezin birinci kısmı I. Elizabeth döneminden anonim *Misogonus*'u (1560-77) ve William Shakespeare'in (1564 – 1616) *A Midsummer Night's Dream*'ini (1595-96) analiz etmiş ve kaçırılmış çocuk figürünün bu dönemde halk anlatı ve efsaneleriyle uyum içinde olduğu sonucuna ulaşmıştır. Bu araştırmanın ikinci kısmı ise I. James döneminden Thomas Middleton (1580 – 1627) ve William Rowley'nin (1585 – 1626) *The Changeling* (1622) oyununu ve Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker (1572 – 1632) ile John Ford'un (1586 – 1639) *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623) oyununu, bu figürün iki farklı dönemdeki temsilleri arasındaki farkı incelemek amacıyla karşılaştırmalı biçimde analiz etmektedir. İkinci kısımda ve sonuç bölümünde varılan sonuç, kaçırılmış çocuk figürünün I. James döneminin tiyatro oyunlarında artık peri inancı bağlamında temsil edilmediği, değişim ve dönüşüm fikirleri gibi çeşitli fikirlerin vücut bulması hâline geldiğidir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, kaçırılmış çocuk figürünün I. James'in toplum ve edebiyat üzerindeki etkisinden dolayı I. James döneminde peri inancındaki kökenlerinden, sağlıklı bir çocuğu kaybetme

korkusundan ve figürle bağlantılı batıl inançlardan koparıldığından dolayı bu figürün bir evrim geçirdiğini ve dolayısıyla çeşitli fikirlerin vücut buluşu olarak temsil edildiğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Kaçırılmış Çocuk, Batıl İnançlar, Peri İnanç, I. Elizabeth Dönemi Tiyatrosu, I. James Dönemin Tiyatrosu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KABUL VE ONAY.....	i
YAYIMLAMA VE FİKRİ MÜLKİYET HAKLARI BEYANI.....	ii
ETİK BEYAN.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ÖZET.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1: CHANGELINGS ON THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE.....	33
1.1 THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CHANGELING FIGURE IN ANONYMOUS <i>MISOGONUS</i> (1560 - 77)	35
1.2 THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CHANGELING FIGURE IN A <i>MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM</i> (1595-96).....	47
CHAPTER 2: CHANGELINGS ON THE JACOBEAN STAGE.....	63
2.1. THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CHANGELING FIGURE IN <i>THE CHANGELING</i> (1622).....	67
2.2. THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CHANGELING FIGURE IN <i>THE SPANISH GYPSY</i> (1623).....	79
CONCLUSION.....	92

WORKS CITED.....97

APPENDIX 1: ORIGINALITY REPORT.....111

APPENDIX 2: ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORMS FOR THESIS.....113

INTRODUCTION

Come away O human child
To the woods and waters wild
With a faery hand in hand
For the world's more full of weeping than
You can understand (Yeats 183)

This thesis aims to examine how the changeling figure is represented in the plays written and performed during the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods, and how the changeling figure evolved from the representations of fairies into the embodiment of different ideas such as change in character and transformation in the Jacobean plays. Through examining the fairy tradition in England, the meaning of the changeling figure, its importance for the English people and its early representations in the medieval period, the sixteenth and the seventeenth century English drama, it discusses how the representation of the changeling figure evolved between these mentioned periods. It does so by examining the dramatic representations of the changelings in four plays, anonymous *Misogonus* (1560-77) and William Shakespeare's (1564 – 1616) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595-96) in the Elizabethan period, and *The Changeling* (1622) by Thomas Middleton (1580 – 1627) and William Rowley (1585 – 1626), and *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623) by Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker (1572 – 1632) and John Ford (1586 – 1639) in the Jacobean period. In the Elizabethan and the Jacobean plays, including the plays this study focuses on, representing fairy lore was very popular. Changelings are a part of the fairy tradition, and fairy belief was prominent in the pre-Christian belief systems of continental Europe and England. This fairy belief was maintained by the European and English people after Christianity became the dominant faith, because the superstitions, holy days, and narratives concerning fairies persisted, and even in some cases integrated into Christianity. Due to the interactions between English and other European cultures throughout the centuries, English fairy lore was deeply affected by Germanic, Scandinavian, French, Scottish and Irish beliefs. Common motifs, superstitions, figures, and narratives are therefore observable in different cultures. One of these common

figures is the figure of changeling, a fairy or inanimate object left behind after a human infant is taken away by the fairies. This changeling belief had social importance for the English folk due to their fear of losing a healthy child to a mischievous fairy. Fairies were believed to be a threat to the newborns until their baptism, as they were not under the protection of Christianity. This awe-inspiring figure caused the formation of new rituals concerning the protection of the infants after birth, and rituals aiming to bring the stolen child back. These protective measures aimed to frighten the fairy to the point that it would run away and bring the stolen human back, yet such practises sometimes resulted in infanticide as some of these measures included exposure to fire or wildlife which will be mentioned in detail in the following paragraphs. This belief affected the literary works as much as it did so the lives of English people from the medieval period to the mid-twentieth century. Accordingly, this thesis studies the changeling figure in relation to fairy lore in England and how it was represented in the dramatic works in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods successively. For this purpose, it examines the fairy tradition, definitions of changeling, and how the figure of changeling is used by the dramatists of the mentioned periods. In order to build the foundation necessary for this study, the introduction part of this thesis analyses the fairy tradition in England, its roots and its literary representations in addition to the changeling figure, its roots, early descriptions and representations. The practises concerning this figure, infanticide, real life records related to it, its literary representations, and the change its representation went through during the seventeenth century are also included in the study.

In order to understand the definition and the representations of the changeling figure apart from its significance in English literature, the relationship between literature and folklore, and how the pagan and then the medieval folklore has contributed to literary representations need to be examined thoroughly. People believed that the changelings left behind after a child was abducted were either fairies or inanimate objects placed by fairies; therefore, the changeling figure was considered under the fairy lore. As Henn expresses “[i]t is probable that the student of the future will demand footnotes or glosses too much that his grandfather would have recognised instantly; in much the same way as portions of literature depending on some ... well-known myth which was once familiar to every schoolboy, now requires to

be explained” (230). Studying, understanding, and explaining the legendary figures literature borrows is an important step into unveiling the importance of folklore, superstitions and legends. English literature borrows various figures from its rich past which were very familiar to the past generations, but some of the meanings these figures conveyed, as well as the awe they aroused, have been lost to the contemporary reader. As Alfred Nutt, during his presidential address to The Folklore Society in 1899 stated, “in England certain customs may be traced from their inception to the present day, and the results to be derived in such cases from a truly methodical and scientific investigation should prove of the utmost value where the custom alone survives and its history has to be reconstructed” (“Presidential Address” 77). Nutt’s point is applicable to the many fairy lore practises and their consequences which still survive long after the establishment of the belief; however, the search for its source and how the belief and the related customs have developed requires a deeper examination. In this regard, in order to understand how the changeling figure evolved and was defined in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods, its roots and the social changes that triggered its different representations and understandings are to be explained.

Examination of the roots of the fairy tradition in England, its cultural significance, and its association with the changeling belief allows this study to trace the reason for the inclusion of the changeling figure in the mentioned plays. Considering the fact that the substitution left behind after a fairy steals a child is also a fairy, fairies and changelings are sometimes used interchangeably; therefore, the changeling figure can also be considered under the wider tradition of European fairy belief. All around Europe, fairies were believed to be non-human, non-animal dwellers of earth with supernatural powers because “[f]airies are generally regarded as of a nature between spirits and men, or as spirit beings with the resemblance of a body. ... In many aspects they are like mankind. ... But they have powers beyond those of ordinary mortals, yet like those attributed to medicine-men, sorcerers, and witches” (Hastings “Fairy” 679). These supernatural entities were believed to live like ordinary people, they had homes, occupations, relationships and social structures, but they were also different from people as they possessed supernatural powers. As explained by Darren Oldridge, “[t]hey lived at the margins of human habitation, usually on hilltops or in marshes and woods; they

could interact with mortals, and possessed the power to heal sickness and locate hidden things; and they could enter homes to steal food or receive gifts” (*Supernatural* 119). They were neither completely evil as they were sometimes helpful to mortals, nor utterly good figures as they enjoyed tricking people with their fairy gold and they sometimes abducted people. Therefore, the double nature these creatures possess does not only apply to the complex harmony of supernatural and ordinary, but also to how they stand outside of evil/good dichotomy. The mentioned qualities of the fairies are also applicable to the changelings because in the changeling narratives, the substitution is a fairy and the stolen child is taken to a fairyland where he or she is introduced to the lives of fairies.

Fairies in European and English folklore were believed to inhabit a place called Fairyland. As explained in *The Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legends*, “[i]t is ruled over by a king and queen, but generally the queen is dominant. ... Their social organization is, of course, like that of men. They live in fairy houses, furnished lavishly with gold and silver” (“Fairy” 363). While this matriarchal land was a self-sufficient environment for fairies, they occasionally left the land to intervene with people’s lives, cause mischief and abduct mortals into the fairyland. Throughout the Middle Ages, the location of the land was ambiguous as “[f]airyland could be anywhere and everywhere —the guts of mountains, the middle of country roads, the mossy darkness of a dense forest” (Buccola “Fancy’s” 15). Fairyland and its locations have been used as settings in many literary works throughout the Middle Ages. For example, the fourteenth century anonymous Breton lai *Sir Orfeo* depicts an oppressive fairy king and a prison-like fairyland where Orfeo’s wife is a captive. This medieval work reflects people’s fears of fairy theft. Another fifteenth century medieval anonymous romance, *Sir Launfal* also includes a fairy lady who lures Launfal, a knight of the Round Table, and tricks him into being dependent on her with the help of riches. Rich gifts are treats fairies are known for giving to humans. While these romances do not refer to the captive characters as “changelings,” the abduction motif that is fundamental in a changeling narrative is apparent in the mentioned works.

Just like the origin and the nature of the fairyland, the origin of the fairy lore is uncertain, too; yet, “[e]arly theories were based on Christian belief of the time: in the West Country piskies were thought to be the souls of babies who had died unbaptized, and in the tin mines the knockers were the spirits of Jews doing penance for their part in Crucifixion” (Alexander 94). According to Katherine Briggs, there are four possible origins of the fairy belief. For her, fairies are, “I. The Dead; II. Degenerated Gods, and, allied to them, Nature; III. Lurking Remnants of Primitive Races; IV. Human Beings acting as the witch” (“The English Fairies” 284). These categories separate the origin of the belief into four groups; the fairies might be remnants of the dead, they might be connected to gods and nature, they might be primitive races (Picts, for example), or they might be ordinary people who practise witchcraft. Additionally, all these categories suggest that the fairy belief included fear, as all four possible origins are connected with different fearful events or things. This fear fairies evoked is also observable in the folk narratives about changelings.

Although the exact origin of the belief and superstitions concerning fairies are unknown, tracing the word itself is possible. According to Thomas Keightley, the word “Faerie” evolved over time and took up four different meanings: it meant illusion, a land of illusion, the folk of Fairyland, and an individual from Fairyland (8-10). From Keightley’s observations, fairies’ connection with illusion is deductible due to the fact that fairies and fairyland are associated with enchantment, other world, and supernatural power. This was not unfamiliar to the English folk, and even made use of by Geoffrey Chaucer in his *The Canterbury Tales* (1397). Chaucer wrote “That Gawayn, with his olde curteisye, / Though he were comen ayeyn out of Fairye, / Ne koude hymn at amende with a word” (“The Squire’s Tale” 95-97). Chaucer used the word “Fairye” to refer to a place while Edmund Spenser (c. 1552 – 1599), in his *Fairie Queene* (1590 – 96) preferred the word to point at individuals from the fairyland when he wrote “Soone as the Faerie heard his Ladie speake, / Out of his swowning dreame he gan awake” (I.V.63). These are, indeed, different usages; yet they were not sequential, considering the fact that Chaucer used the word “Fairye” to refer to an individual, and the poet of anonymous *Sir Launfal* mentioned above used it with reference to a supernatural queen, long before Spenser.

Similar to the belief in fairies and its representations in literature, changeling representations in literary productions are also old. While Ralph of Coggeshall's (? – after 1227) *Chronicon Anglicanum* (c. 1200- c. 1299)¹ is cited as an early example including the changeling figure in literature, the absence of the substitution motif renders this text from an old example of the representation to another example of fairy abduction motif of the Middle Ages, as in *Sir Orfeo*.² Reginald Scott, in his famous work *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) mentions his disbelief in witchcraft, considers changelings as a part of the fairy belief and states that “you shall understand, that these bugs [speciallie are] spied and feared of sicke folke, children, women and cowards, which through weaknesse of mind and bodie, are shaken with daime dreams and continuall feare” (152). Thus, he indicates that these kinds of superstitions were very common. But more importantly, his statement reveals how these kinds of beliefs spread fear among the common folk. Later, a seventeenth century author, John Bulwer exemplifies how this word was also used to indicate sudden and/or dramatic physical changes in people. Bulwer examines modifications and physical alterations of body in different cultures in his work *Anthropometamorphosis: Man Transform'd: or, the Artificall Changeling* (1650), in which he uses the phrase “artificial changeling” to point out a parallelism between the act of intentionally altering physical qualities and the grotesque physical qualities changelings were believed to possess. Both works exemplify abduction and change in appearance motifs of the changeling narratives, and those who believed in such creatures.

In the Renaissance period (1550 – 1660) and the time of Reformation during the reign of Henry VIII (1509 – 1547), how fairies were perceived changed as well as the beliefs in supernatural entities and superstitions about them. According to Deanne Williams, “Medievalism and the idea of the Middle Ages are retrospective inventions, having less to

¹ The chronicler is thought to be one of the various chroniclers worked on the *Chronicon Anglicanum*; therefore, the manuscript was older than Ralph of Coggeshall and outlived him.

² Orfeo's wife is abducted into the fairyland by the fairy king but there is no substitution left behind. Therefore, even though the abduction motif that is included in the changeling narratives is visible in the romance, another crucial part, substitution is missing which means that while Orfeo's wife's abduction into fairyland has similarities with the changeling narrative, it is not possible to classify the romance as a changeling narrative.

do with the qualities of the period itself than with the agendas of those who seek to describe it” (214). This perspective about the mythic past that works retrospectively opened the supernatural figures of the Middle Ages to interpretation and their nature caught the attention of many poets and writers, either to present them as villains or to use them as helpful figures. As Ronald Hutton stated, “[i]n the period of the English, Welsh, and Scottish Reformations, and (even more particularly) that immediately succeeding, the late medieval concept of the fairy kingdom, and fairies in general, became the subject of intense interest and debate across most of Britain” (1147). While the belief was represented in a variety of literary works produced in the Reformation, theologians of the post-Reformation argued about the nature of the fairies and tried to understand the differences and/or similarities between fairies and demons, as well as their connections with witchcraft. While debates on the nature, history, and reality of fairies were aggravating all across the Isles, fairy mythology became a central source of inspiration for English literature, and it found representations in different genres. These awe-inspiring supernatural entities were highly influential during the period that “fairy mythology was probably more prominent in British culture between 1560 and 1640 than at any time before or since” (Hutton 1147). Consequently, fairy representations flourished and varied throughout the literary productions of the late medieval and the early modern periods. Additionally, Minor Latham states that the fairy representations were very prominent in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods, and cites the names of the writers who touched upon the subject of fairies in literature as follows:

Among the writers who most conversant with the fairy lore of the period and in many instances most given to make use of it, are Scot, Camden, Warner, Puttenham, Lyly, Spenser, Nashe, Greene, Drayton, Sir John Harington, Thomas Middleton, Churchyard, James VI of Scotland, Dekker, Fairfax, Fulke Greville, Beaumont and Fletcher, Heywood, Rowlands, Hall, Burton, Shakespeare and Jonson. (17)

As it is possible to be observed from the names given by Latham, fairies were important to discuss and represent for the Elizabethan and the Jacobean writers.

In accordance with the flourishing representations of and debates on the fairies during the late medieval and the early modern periods, some writers had debates on the nature of fairies

and their relation to Christianity which later on were adopted by the Renaissance writers to set their own representations of the changeling figure. To exemplify, Chaucer, in his “Wife of Bath’s Tale” in his *The Canterbury Tales* (1397), wrote:

In th’olde dayes of the Kyng Arthour,
 Of which that Britons speken greet honour,
 Al was this land fulfild of fayerye.
 The elf-queene, with hir joly compaignye,
 Daunced ful ofte in many a grene mcde.
 ...
 But now kan no man se none elves mo,
 For now the grete charitee and prayeres
 Of lymytours and othere hooly freres,
 That serchen every lond and every stroom,
 As thikke as motes in the sonne-beem,
 Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, boures,
 ...
 This maketh that ther hen no fayeryes.
 For ther as wont to walken was an elf
 Ther walketh now the lymytour himself (857-76)

The quoted part of the tale is the account of how the fairies were driven out of the country by the Catholic clergymen. Chaucer wrote that the fairies and elves were replaced by the friars, because they were walking on the land that was once populated with fairies. Hence, he presented England as a place where pagan beliefs of the magical and supernatural are replaced by Christian holiness and faith. During and after the Reformation period, people’s understanding of religion changed, as “[f]or ... late Elizabethan writers, the bugs of folklore belonged to the unreformed past – but their vestiges lingered unhealthily in the present” (Oldridge “Fairies” 1). These bugs of folklore were used to criticise the religious ideals of the pre-Reformation era. Later on, William Cleland (c. 1661 – 1689), a Scottish poet, presented the religious changes with the criticism of the past beliefs that was also included

in Chaucer's work. Just like Chaucer, he connected the disappearance of the fairies with the appearance of religious figures. Yet, in contrast to Chaucer and his focus on Catholicism, Cleland's representation focused on the role of the Reformation for the fading of the fairy lore:

For there and several other places
 About mill dams and green brae faces,
 Both Elrich, Elfs and Brownies stayed,
 And Green gown'd Farries daunc'd and played;
 When old *John Knox*, and other some
 Began to plott the Baggs of Rome
 They suddenly took to their heels.
 And did no more frequent these fields. (59)

Like Chaucer, Cleland indicated that men of religion numbed down the belief in fairies. Therefore, “[t]wo centuries after Chaucer and half a century after Scot, William Cleland explicitly connects Christian reform with the fading of the fairies” (Ostling 14) by replacing Chaucer's friars and monks with John Knox, a Scottish reformist, and his followers. Similarly, physician and cleric John Webster (1610 – 1680), in his *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* (1677), stated that the sicknesses are associated with supernatural causes by the common people who live in areas where ignorance and Catholicism are commonplace:

And we our selves having practiced the art of medicine in all its parts in the North of *England*, where Ignorance, Popery, and superstition doth much abound, and where for the most part the common people, if they chance to have any sort of the Epilepsie, Palsie, Convulsions or the like, do presently perswade themselves that they are bewitched, fore-spoken, blasted, fairy-taken, or haunted with some evil spirit... (np)

Therefore, Webster, as Cleland, presented fairies and thereby changelings as Catholic superstitions. He suggested that the belief in fairies and changeling were more prominent in the rural North, where Catholicism was more commonly believed in. Even though Cleland, and later on Webster associated the disappearance of fairies with the Reformation and implied that the fairy belief was a part of the Catholic belief, it is a “groundless and puzzling

assumption that Catholics would want to associate themselves with pre-Christian figures of superstition such as the fairies, when quite the opposite is likely to have been the case” (Young 35). Even though they did not associate themselves with the fairies, it is apparent that several medieval and early modern writers associated them with fairies, and hence the Catholic clergymen were somehow considered as a part of the fairy lore and the changeling belief.

As it is mentioned above, a fairy and a changeling are interchangeably used due to their interconnectedness caused by the fact that a changeling is, in nature, a fairy left in substitution for a human infant.³ However, there are definitions of the changeling figure by some scholars and folklorists who neither deny its relation to the fairy lore nor present it as a new figure. On the contrary, in these definitions, the fairy lore roots are on focus. Changeling is an integral figure of the mentioned fairy lore as well as the Christian belief, considering the function of baptism as a form of protection against it. According to *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1989), a changeling is “[a] child secretly substituted for another in infancy; *esp.* a child (usually stupid or ugly) supposed to have been left by fairies in exchange for one stolen” (18). Therefore, *OED* describes the changeling figure as a supposed substitution for an infant with another uglier or more stupid child. On the other hand, while defining the changeling figure, folklorist Sidney Hartland states that “fairies and other imaginary beings are on the watch for young children, or ... adults, that they may, if they find them unguarded, seize and carry them off, leaving in their place one of themselves, or a block of wood animated by their enchantments and made resemble the stolen person” (93-4). According to

³ Considering the fact that the changeling figure includes a substitution motif, the word “changeling” poses a serious challenge for the translation of the word in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* into Turkish as there is no supernatural figure that resembles a changeling in Turkish folklore. Bülent Bozkurt translated the word in his translation as “bir çalıntı çocuk” (41) and Emine Ayhan and Aysun Şişik as “çalıntı bir çocuk” (103). While these translations fail to convey the deeper meaning of the figure that arises from the idea of substitution, Özdemir Nutku’s suggestion, “Değiştirilen çocuk [İnanışa göre, çalınan güzel bir çocuk yerine, periler tarafından bırakılan çirkin çocuk]” in his *Shakespeare Sözlüğü [Dictionary of Shakespeare]* is much more successful in terms of explicating the term’s socio-historical aspects. Hence, the challenge the word poses for the translators causes them to focus on the “stolen child” meaning included in the figure, instead of representing the fear of child substitution.

the explanation in *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (1910) “[t]he stories of changelings, wherever found, show that the act of exchange took place when the human child had been left unguarded for a moment, or through the helplessness of the mother, or by some trick on the part of the fairy thieves, or because the usual precautions against them had not been taken; the theft took place before the child had been baptized” (“Changeling” 359). Katherine Marry Briggs provides further details on the nature of the fairies, and hence changelings, by stating that “[t]he fairy changeling which was supposed to be substituted for the mortal baby stolen by the fairies was generally a fairy, either a fairy boy who did not thrive, and old fellow of whom they felt themselves well rid, or even at times a family man who wanted a rest from the responsibilities of his position” (*Encyclopaedia* 382). Thus, what was left behind was either someone unwanted or someone wishing a break from responsibilities, unless it is an inanimate object in the likeness of the infant. The exchange of the beautiful and healthy infant or baby with an old, unwanted and ugly fairy might indicate the mothers’ fear of losing a healthy progeny.

There are a lot of parallels between the changeling narrative and the child theft narratives in folk literature as both narratives include stolen children, and their origins are open to debate. In his anthropological examination of the fairy beliefs in Celtic countries, Walter Yeeling Evans Wentz proposes four different possible roots of the changeling belief: Kidnap Theory, Human-Sacrifice Theory, Soul-Wandering Theory, and Demon-Possession Theory (244-51). All four of these categories are connected to the fearsome nature of fairies and the oral tradition. From the perspective provided by Evans Wentz, these four roots display how this fearsome figure was conveyed by the oral tradition and exported from Celtic to English culture. In the Kidnap Theory he claims that the changeling belief was caused by the kidnappings or kidnap stories developed during the conflicts between either pre-Celtics and Celts or Druids and Christians; yet, this is not a sufficient explanation as the theory is “failing to grasp the essential and underlying character of this belief, does not adequately explain it” (Wentz 246). Wentz cites Alfred Nutt’s theory on human sacrifice in pre-Christian Celtic communities under the title of Human-Sacrifice Theory. According to Nutt, “[i]t is at least possible that the sickly and ailing would be rejected when the time came for each family

to supply its quota of victims, and this might easily translate itself in the folk-memory into the statement that the fairies had carried off the healthy and left in exchange the sickly” (*Re-birth* 231). His explanation points at the psychological aspects of the changeling belief, as well as its connections with infanticide. Nutt also states that “[t]he sacrifice of ‘one-third of their healthy offspring,’ though it may have been accepted as necessary, *must*, even when the creed was most firmly believed in, have weighed as a heavy burden upon the people” (*Re-birth* 230). Thus, he illustrates how infanticide as a means to finalize economic dependence created by a baby, ending the requirement of taking care of a needy infant by killing it, is a social reality.

For the Soul-Wandering Theory, Wentz provides a comparative anthropologic reading on the changeling motifs in different cultures. According to him, a “[c]omparative study shows that non-Celtic changeling beliefs parallel to those of the Celts exist almost everywhere, that they centre round the primitive idea that the human soul can be abstracted from the body by disembodied spirits and by magicians” (242). Finally, in Demon-Possession Theory he argues that a demon can possess a body as “demons, who sometimes may be souls of the dead, can possess a human body while the soul is out of it during sleep, or else can expel the soul and occupy its place” (249). This theory, consequently, constructs a bridge between the idea that a malicious being can possess someone’s body and the idea of child substitution by fairies. According to Wentz, theories other than the Kidnap Theory explain the psychological background of the belief in Celtic countries a little bit better as it focuses on the fear of losing and infant and getting lost. His suggestions generally focus on the psychological aspects — psychological distress children and parents experienced, as well as the beliefs and superstitions related to the figure— of the belief; yet, the pathological aspects —deformities or disabilities these children might have possessed— of the belief should also be considered in order to understand the belief in all its gravity.

One of the oldest examples of changeling representations might be found in a Gaelic song which “records a sung battle between a mother and the fairy who desires her child” (Purkiss

58). This might have been written even before the Middle English examples. The battle is narrated as follows:

Fairy: He is my ungraceful child,
 Withered, bald, and light-headed,
 Weak-shouldered, and weak in his equipments,
 That have not been put to use.

Mother: He is my ruddy child, plump and praiseworthy;
 My yew-tree, my rush, raised to woman;
 My bird and my eggs, since thou hast taken my time with thee,
 My watchful care, my calved-cows, and my heroes with thee;
 Last year thou wast under my girdle,
 Thou art this year neatly gathered
 Continually upon my shoulder
 Through the town. (Campbell 146)

Apart from demonstrating the fact that the changeling figure has its roots in the Celtic culture, this verbal battle between the mother and the fairy displays the double nature of the changeling figure: it is both an “ungraceful child” and a “ruddy child.” It is beautiful for her mother, but is also deformed.

Even if various definitions of changeling include grotesque physical qualities, there is no exact deformity or disease attributed to a changeling because “whenever a cretinous or diseased child made its appearance in a family, it was usually regarded as a changeling” (Spence 233). From the early Middle Ages to the late nineteenth century, a lot of changeling depictions had been following similar grotesque representations of a child. Even though there is no standard way of illustrating a changeling, mostly children are described as extremely slim; although they eat a lot; they are not old enough to speak but they can, and they are not old enough to even move but they can dance. A similar description of the physical qualities of a changeling is visible in Ben Jonson’s “An Elegie” in his work *Underwood* (1640). The poetic persona states:

But then consent, your Daughters and your Wives,
 (If they be faire and worth it) have their lives
 Made longer by our praises. Or, if not,
 Wish, you had fowle ones, and deformed got;
 Crust in their Cradles, or there chang'd by Elves,
 So to be sure you doe enjoy your selves. (19-24)

By using the words “fowle” and “deformed” to refer to the children “chang'd by Elves”, or more specifically to changelings, Jonson presents children who are born with deformities as changelings. This representation stresses the fact that the bodily deformities, without giving any specifics, might be associated with changelings.

Moreover, the prolific Jacobean playwright John Webster (1580 – 1632), in his *The Devil's Law-Case* (1620-3) describes changelings in a similar manner. One of the characters describes an infant's outlook as follows:

CONTILUPO. The midwife straight howls out, there was no hope
 Of th' infant's life, swaddles it in a flay'd lambskin,
 As a bird hatch'd too early, makes it up
 With three quarters of a face, that made it look
 Like a changeling, ... (IV.II.216-220)

This description of the infant, through drawing a parallelism between the ugliness of the infant and his being a changeling, reflects the idea that the changelings were believed to have deformed bodies. Yet, such attributions are not always observed in every single changeling representation. This is due to the fact that “[t]he individual case was made to fit the superstition, and thus we possess no standardized data respecting the precise appearance of a changeling, abnormal physical attributes or the symptoms of disease accepted as a sure sign that the child had been ‘taken’ and an elf left in its place” (Spence 233). Therefore, while in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods changelings were thought to be physically deformed, and this deformity is represented in the literary works produced in these periods, this idea of deformity is not observed in every changeling representation.

In addition to the narratives presenting disabled or sick children as changelings, there are records depicting how this process can also work the other way around when people made assumptions about completely healthy people just because they experienced a change. In his biographical account, Richard Davies (1635 – 1708) notes how his mother observed a similarity between his son being a Quaker and the changeling figure:

At length my Mother came tenderly to me, and took a View of me, looking on my Face, and she saw that I was her Child, and that I was not as they said, Bewitched, or Transformed into some other Likeness, which was reported of *Quakers* then, and that they bewitched People to their Religion, &c. Thus they deceived them and many others, with such strange Stories, and we were accounted with the Apostles, *Deceivers, yet true.*
(31)

For Davies' mother, he seemed like her child, yet he was different just like the children who were thought to be changelings; he was acting like someone else. His mother assumed that her child had been replaced, as she could not believe that her son turned out to be a dissenter; hence, her son's being a changeling turned out to be a plausible explanation. Although the physical qualities that separate changelings from real infants were ambiguous and inconsistent, claiming or observing someone as a changeling without any real evidence was also probable. According to Capp, "[h]er response echoed widespread rumours that Quakers might be changelings, or transformed, or possessed by demons. Clearly such wild reports were sometimes believed, or at least half-believed" (328). So, Capp's statement indicates that a changeling was not always considered as a fairy left in substitution of a human infant, but a figure who displayed abrupt changes in character. The reason behind this inconsistency in the representation of a changeling might be the changing nature of folklore. As Antonio Gramsci puts it, "[f]olklore, at least in part, is much more unstable and fluctuating than language and dialects" (195). In other words, beliefs, superstitions, practices, and their representations produced by folklore are subjected to change from place to place, time to time, and culture to culture, similar to the definition, understanding, and representation of a changeling.

Even though it was not easy to differ a real infant from a changeling by looking at their behaviour and appearance, people managed to come up with ways to decide whether a baby

is human or a fairy. Its hardship was due to the fact that “[m]ost of the stories of changelings, in fact, assume that, though the outward characteristics might justify vehement suspicion, yet they were not absolutely decisive, and that to arrive at certainty the elf must be brought to betray himself” (Hartland 111). Thus, the best way to understand the nature of the creature was to make it betray its disguise, either by failing to stick to its role due to laughter, or terror. This judging process generally necessitated some rituals that were connected with terrorising the fairy and some other rituals that were concerned with understanding the nature of the creature, the latter was especially practical in situations in which parents were not certain. For example, “mother[s] [were] advised to prepare food or boil water in one or several eggshells, whereupon the changeling cries that he has seen many things (involving a great lapse of time), or has lived so long, but has never seen a sight like that” (Hastings “Changeling” 359). This ritual, called brewing an eggshell, aimed to trick the fairy into laughing or exclaiming, as both of these actions would reveal the supernatural entity. Edwin Hartland, without giving any specific date, notes that in an incident where this method was used, the fairy jumped and exclaimed:

I am as old
as Bohemian gold
Yet for the first time now I see
Beer in an egg-shell brew'd to be. (113)

Yet, such peaceful practises were not always practical. When it was uncertain whether people were dealing with a changeling or not, more violent measures would be taken:

When the changeling is supposed, like this one, to be a fairy child it is often tormented or exposed to induce the fairy parents to change it back again. This method has been responsible for dreadful amount of child suffering, particularly in Ireland. Only occasionally were they advised to treat the child kindly so that their own children might be kindly treated in return. (Briggs *Encyclopaedia* 71)

Such violent methods victimized children by burning them, scalding them with a hot object, or exposing them to the wilderness. These aimed to threaten the changeling with death so that it would leave and bring back the real human infant. Considering the devastating effects of such violent practises on children, infanticide as an outcome of this practise was the most

violent one that could not be undermined. To illustrate, Emer Dennehy notes, “[i]n Ireland, in 1826 a four-year-old boy, believed to be ‘fairy-struck,’ was drowned in the River Flesk, Co. Kerry, while in 1884 a three-year-old ‘fairy child’ was severely scalded on a hot shovel in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary” (23). These incidents are striking, both as evidence of how these superstitious practises can result in violence against children and the existence of this tradition for hundreds of years.

Since superstitious beliefs regarding children and childbirth contributed to the practise of infanticide (Kastenbaum 468), a close relationship between the violent practises for getting rid of a changeling and infanticide might be observed because of an economic fact. As the economic dependence of humans lasts long, infanticide helps to finalise the investment (Özdemir and Eroğlu 554). Economic dependence means that a child consumes the resources the parents possess; hence, if a child is replaced by a fairy, who will be of no use to the parents, the investment of resources in this entity is biologically meaningless. Therefore, taking the risk of killing a fairy infant for the sake of retrieving the real infant is biologically logical, as the continuation of the economic dependence and investment on time, energy, and resources on a fairy child, who will never be of any use to the parent, is not profitable. Hence the financial conditions made the parents sacrifice their offspring. Even the murder of the disabled children, who were seen as nonhuman entities and monsters, was justified as their parents believed that they were killing a monster, not their child.

As for the social background of infanticide, Kastenbaum states that “[d]uring the Middle Ages, children born with physical defect or behavioral abnormalities were often viewed as evil or the product of supernatural forces. ... To view the child as potentially evil, dangerous, or worthless, rationalizes the desire to eliminate the burden or threat without guilt or remorse” (465). Considering how disabled or abnormal children were observed as non-human or below-human, and the fact that the ugly, deformed and grotesque physical attributions of the changeling figure might be connected with real-life diseases these children had, it might be argued that the belief in the existence of changelings is a justification of infanticide which abruptly finalises the economic dependence of a so-called “useless” specimen. Additionally,

Maria Piers puts forward another explanation for the psychological state parents might be in during and before committing infanticide through introducing the term “basic strangeness.” According to her, “[b]asic strangeness denotes primarily the opposite of empathy. It is a state in which we ‘turn off’ towards others and are unable to experience them as fellow human beings” (38). Considering the fact that the infanticides victims who were accused of being a changeling were considered as fairies, not human beings, her explanation might shed light on the psychological state behind those who killed these infants. They most probably convinced themselves that it was not infanticide, but a rightful murder of a changeling.

While the changeling figure was mostly associated with children, scholars and academics have been debating that in the Middle Ages when the figure was popular, the idea of childhood itself was non-existing or undefined. In his influential book, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien regime* (1960) Philippe Ariès makes suggestions on the nature of childhood in the medieval period. He puts forward that childhood in the medieval period was not a concept which is similar to today’s understanding. He argues that “[t]he idea of childhood is not to be confused with affection for children: it corresponds to an awareness of the particular nature of childhood, that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult, even the young adult. In medieval society this awareness was lacking” (128). Yet, his suggestion does not imply that children were neglected, forsaken or despised (128). He suggests that children came to the stage of social life as autonomous entities in the eighteenth century, in a very abrupt way. Yet, according to Adrian Wilson, there is a contradiction between the changeling figure and Ariès’ ideas as he makes a “demonstration that there was a historical period in which, for a given theme, modern attitudes or practices cannot be detected, and when instead there subsisted a different pattern, more or less incompatible with the modern” (133); and “Ariès consciously writes from what has been called a ‘present-minded’ point of view” (Wilson 136). Ariès argues that the present conceptions of childhood were missing in some of the historical periods; yet, such an assumption disregards the fact that different paradigms can construct different conceptions in different periods.

Even though childhood as a phase of life was not clearly defined in the Middle Ages, the changeling figure had a lot of qualities associated with children. To illustrate, the changeling figure stands for the people who were vulnerable to supernatural entities, and these people were unchristened children; thereby, the belief in the existence of changelings indicates that the people in the medieval and the early modern periods considered children as a distinguished group in the society. As Ariès' argument relied on an investigation on the understanding of childhood in the Middle Ages, it is possible to argue that his investigation ignores the fact that childhood might have been understood and defined differently in the past. Historian Lawrence Stone, a critic of Ariès, pays attention to the indifference of people to children and childhood in the sixteenth century due to the high infant and child mortality rates, and he states that "in sixteenth and early seventeenth century very many fathers seem to have looked on their infant children with much the same degree of affection which men today bestow on domestic pets" (Stone 105). By so, just like Ariès, Stone also considers the lack of a childhood concept that is similar to the contemporary understanding of childhood as a piece of evidence for the lack of an understanding of childhood in the past altogether.

Linda Pollock opposes both Ariès and Stone in her book *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (1983) by suggesting that "[i]f there is an appreciation of the *immaturity* of the child in either the physical ... or mental sphere ..., then whoever has that appreciation possesses a concept of childhood, no matter how basic or limited it is" (97). Her argument stresses children's physical, mental and spiritual immaturity by locating them in a position where they are vulnerable to supernatural forces. In addition, as Pollock puts it, "[o]ne way of studying the problem would be to discover not only how parents viewed their children, but also how they viewed the parental role" (97). Considering the fact that the child substitution and abduction motifs position the mother as a figure who needs to defend the child, and get her child back, these motives, as well as the changeling belief, display how parents appreciated childhood in the very early stages of history, contrary to the arguments of Ariès and Stone.

Despite the disagreement among the scholars on the nature and specific period of childhood in the medieval and the early modern periods, children were the subjects of theft in both periods, and hence they were the vulnerable figures in changeling narratives. Child theft by supernatural creatures neither emerged in the early modern era, nor was their presence limited to northern Europe; indeed, this motif was present even in the early Middle Ages. For example, an animal folk saint's story from the thirteenth century France is not very different from a changeling narrative. Saint Guinefort was considered to be the protective saint of children, because it was believed that he was slaughtered while protecting an innocent baby. As Diane Purkiss explains:

Saint Guinefort the Greyhound Dog, is the protector saint of children. He is both a man and a dog. According to Christian pantheon of Saints, a dog named Guinefort saved a child from drowning in a river. As he is the protector Saint of children, mothers of sick children who are convinced that their offspring is replaced brought their infants to the wood (in Medieval Period) to perform a ritual. They called the dog saint to their help, left the sick infant in forest and leave. They believed that fauns (half man, half goat creatures of Roman Mythology that roamed the forests) stole their baby. These creatures love the baby, but harm it; therefore, shared the feelings of the mother who loved her own offspring but willing to harm the replacement. They required the mother to harm the baby, displaying her willingness to get her baby back. (53-5)

Apparently, superstitions about Saint Guinefort, the Greyhound Dog include violence against children. Apart from having been subjected to violence, children were left in the forests in the hope of recovering a “real” infant. A similar behavioural pattern is also observable in the rituals of exchanging the fairy changeling with the real infant, since violent treatment of the changeling is considered necessary to recover the real infant in some cases. Another case is exemplified in the medieval theologian Guillaume d’Auvergne’s (1190 – 1249) *De Universo Creaturarum* (1231). According to his statement, people believed that “changelings are sons of demons, whom they have substituted for human children, so that women would feed them as if they were their own ... the children are thin, they cry incessantly and they are so greedy for milk that four wet-nurses cannot keep one happy. After staying with the women for a few years, they vanish” (qtd. in Kuulilala 81). This is very close to the nature of changelings described in the Middle Ages, as well as the child substitution motif associated with the demonic entities. Moreover, in *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) one of the most important books on witchcraft and demonology, Heinrich Kramer (c. 1430 – 1505) and James Sprenger (1436

– 1495) describe the changeling figure, and associate it with child theft and substitution. Kramer and Sprenger, in contrast to Saint Guinefort's fauns and in harmony with d'Auvergne's demons, associate this phenomenon with the work of the devil. They state that:

Another terrible thing which God permits to happen to men is when their own children are taken away from women, and strange children are put in their place by devils. And these children, which are commonly called changelings, or in the German tongue *Wechselkinder*, are of three kinds. For some are always ailing and crying, and yet the milk of four women is not enough to satisfy them. Some are generated by the operations of Incubus devils, of whom, however, they are not the sons, but of that man from whom the devil has received the semen as a Succubus, or whose semen he has collected from some nocturnal pollution in sleep. For these children are sometimes, by Divine permission, substituted for the real children.

And there is a third kind, when the devils at times appear in the form of young children and attach themselves to the nurses. But all three kinds have this in common, that though they are very heavy, they are always ailing and do not grow, and cannot receive enough milk to satisfy them, and are often reported to have vanished away. (192)

Kramer and Sprenger's description of the changeling figures displays their abnormal physical qualities, their unending appetites and their inability to thrive. They associate the changelings with the devil, yet they also argue that God is responsible for their demonic actions. Kramer and Sprenger further claim that the substitutions are the consequences of the sins of parents, and what people consider as fairies are actually the devils in disguise.

In addition to various superstitious assumptions about their nature and appearance that mostly stem from folk beliefs, actual deformities of children are also the reasons for the association of this figure with the devil. A changeling figure embodies some medical conditions that could not be scientifically explained in the medieval and the early modern periods. As mentioned before, fairyland was thought to be very similar to the human world with its complex social structures, monarchs, and fairies who have lives similar to those of humans. This parallelism between the two worlds was used to rationalise disabilities, as “[i]f the fairy economy is a human creation and represents human anxieties, then the changeling legend speaks to communities and perhaps individuals that also feel socially marginalized and vulnerable to the effects of declining health” (Lawrence 94). Recorded real-life incidences of child substitution by fairies are accompanied with several superstitions as well as the harsh

reality of alienation and violence that the disabled or sick children were subjected to. According to Emer Dennehy, the changeling figure might emerge due to some medical — though inexplicable in the medieval and the early modern periods— conditions some children suffered from. As Dennehy notes:

Many of the physical traits assigned to changelings would today have a clear medical explanation—a developmental malformation such as a cleft palette or a clubfoot, a genetic anomaly such as Down Syndrome (Trisomy [21]) or, in extreme cases, a fatal abnormality such as Edwards Syndrome (Trisomy 18).⁴ Changelings were also often described as having insatiable appetites (while paradoxically failing to gain weight), along with persistent crying and/or vomiting, which perhaps reflected ‘hungry baby’ syndrome, colic or gastric reflux disease. (22-23)

Thus, the correlation between a changeling and a diseased or disabled child figure suggests that the changeling figure might be the product of the fear of the unknown. The fear induced by the unknown child diseases, therefore, was probably the origin of the figure. As Eberly explains, “[o]bservations of unusual newborns, and of children who over time became different, provided a rich source of such images to the storyteller; the tales themselves attempted to provide explanations for differences which were otherwise inexplicable, answers for questions which were otherwise profoundly and painfully unanswerable” (74). Therefore, changelings became the embodiments of the sick or disabled children, and were accordingly observed, understood, and treated similar to how sickly and abnormal children were treated in the medieval and the early modern periods.

Due to the changeling figure’s connection with childhood diseases and physical deformities caused by these diseases, changelings were associated with monstrosity and monstrous births. The changeling motif, as an important, influential, awe-inspiring and terrifying figure of the medieval and the early modern English culture possesses valuable cultural data on how

⁴ Trisomy is an abnormality of the chromosome and the numbers next to the term refer to the number of the chromosome where the abnormalities are observed. Trisomy 21 and Trisomy 18 refer to Down Syndrome and Edwards Syndrome respectively. Dennehy mistakenly refers to Down Syndrome as Trisomy 12 (23).

children, childhood diseases and abnormal births were conceived by the public. On monstrosity Jeffrey Jerome Cohen states that:

The monster is born only ... as an embodiment of a certain cultural moment —of a time, a feeling, and a place. The monster’s body quite literally incorporates fear, desire, anxiety, and fantasy (ataractic or incendiary), giving them life and an uncanny independence. The monstrous body is pure culture. A construct and a projection, the monster exists only to be read: the monstrum is etymologically ‘that which reveals,’ ‘that which warns,’ a glyph that seeks a hierophant. (4)

Basing on Cohen’s description of the monsters and monstrosity, the changeling figure is not very different from a monstrous figure since it also incorporates fear, desire, anxiety, and fantasy: fear of losing a healthy person, desire to have a perfect child, the anxiety of raising a defected creature, and the fantasy of little people with extraordinary powers. By associating the changeling figure with a monstrous figure, it is possible to gain insight into the medieval and the early modern English society from this non-human entity, because monsters “define us by stalking our borders and mirroring our traits” (Mittman and Hensel xiii). Fairies and changelings were believed to live in a land and society which are very similar to those of humans, and possess traits that are very similar to humans —as explained before, fairies had ordinary lives⁵—; yet, they were also very distinct with awe-inspiring aspects. Considering them as monsters, reading them as cultural bodies, and investigating these monstrous figures’ presence and change in English drama, hence, provide the scholars with a novel reading on English culture and literature, as this unveils the meaning of these creatures in literary pieces, and the reflections of the folk beliefs in literature.

In *Memoirs of Bartholomew Fair* (1859), in which he analyses and discusses the Bartholomew Fair that is held in London from the twelfth century to the nineteenth century, Henry Morley notes that “[s]ince the days of Queen Elizabeth, when the wonders of the outlying world began to pour in rapidly upon the English people, a thirst for marvels, and a

⁵ On the ordinariness of fairies, J. R. R. Tolkien argued that the term “supernatural” ought not to be used when defining them. He stated that “it can hardly be applied, unless *super* is taken merely as a superlative prefix. For it is man who is, in contrast to fairies, supernatural (and often of diminutive stature); whereas they are natural, far more natural than he” (28).

credulity, in the beginning very natural, had tempted the exhibitor to seek for Monsters from abroad” (246). As abnormal births were considered monstrous, and the children who had abnormalities after birth were seen as monsters, the changeling figure could also be considered as a monster since it had birth abnormalities. Nicholas Culpeper (1616 – 1654), in his medical book *Culpeper’s Directory for Midwives* (1651) puts forward the idea that “[h]istories tell us many Monsters brought forth by women” and such “[a] Monster is that which is either wholly or in part like a beast, or that which is ill shaped extraordinary” (151-52). While his description of birth abnormalities as monstrous is an indicative of the scientific attitude against such children, the attitude in the fair against them is an indicative of the popular interest in disfigured children, and by extension, in changelings. One of the monsters brought to the fair was a supposed changeling. Morley’s book includes a reprint of an undated handbill about this changeling:

“A Changeling Child.

“To be seen next door to the *Black Raven* in *West Smithfield*, during the time of the Fair, being a living Skeleton, taken by a *Venetian Galley*, from a *Turkish Vessel* in the *Archipelago*. This is a *Fairy Child*, supposed to be born of *Hungarian Parents*, but chang’d in the Nursing, Aged Nine Years and more; not exceeding a Foot and half high. The Legs, Thighs, and Arms so very small, that they scarce exceed the bigness of a Man’s Thumb, and the face no bigger than the Palm of one’s hand; and seems so grave and solid, as if it were Threescore Years old. You may see the whole Anatomy of its Body by setting it against the Sun. It never speaks. It has no Teeth, but is the most voracious and hungry Creature in the World, devouring more Victuals than the stoutest Man in *England*.

“Vivant Rex et Regina.” (255)

This handbill’s description of the so-called changeling child parallels the descriptions of the changelings in the folk narratives. The child is extremely slim, yet always hungry; it is older than nine years old, yet it does not speak. The handbill describes this changeling child as a monster that can be examined for entertainment. Therefore, changelings were observed as monsters, and the interest in them was not only restricted to literature, on the contrary, the figure was woven into the lives of the people through first hand experiences and exhibitions.

While the changeling figure was popular in folk narratives and literature, it was also included in chronicles; thereby, it fused the superstition with history. Therefore, in order to further explain the popularity of the changeling figure in English society, history and literature, recorded changeling incidents need to be examined chronologically.⁶ One of the oldest recordings—or accusations—of a changeling in English history dates back to the reign of King Edward II. This was recorded in several chronicles written in the medieval period. A man named John of Powderham⁷ accused the king and his mother of fraud, and claimed that he was the real Edward II, and the rightful heir to the English throne. As W. R. Childs explains, “he claimed to be Edward I’s son taken from the cradle. The canon of Bridlington also reported that he was changed in the cradle by the midwife for an unknown reason” (151). The reports of the incident provide a rational explanation—being changed by a midwife instead of a fairy—to this incident; yet, according to Richard Green, “the vast majority saw the hand of the devil at work. We do not need a great deal of imagination to detect here the routine demonization of a fairy motif—in this particular case, that of the fairy changeling” (121). This unusual political claim displays the popularity of the changeling figure, and how it could be affiliated even with the king.

Another interesting record of a changeling is in a seventeenth century autobiography titled *Mount Tabor* (1639). Under the subtitle “Upon an extraordinary accident which befell me, in my swaddling cloaths,” R. Willis reports an abduction incident he experienced as follows:

When we come to years, we are commonly told of what befell us in our infancie, if the same were more than ordinary. Such an accident (by relation of others) befell me within few daies after my birth, whilst my mother ley in on me being her second child, when I was taken out of the bed from her side, and by my suddain and fierce crying recovered again, being found sticking between the beds-head and the wall; and if I had not cryed

⁶ Apart from the recorded incidents cited here, see Briggs, Katherine Mary. *A Dictionary of British Folk-Tales in the English Language: Part B Folk Legends*. London: Routledge, 1991. Print., in which folklorist Katherine Briggs provides a wide selection of folk legends that include the changeling motif.

⁷ His name varies in different chronicles. For a detailed examination of his names and their importance, as well as a comprehensive examination of this political issue, see Childs, W. R. “‘Welcome, My Brother’: Edward II, John of Powderham and the Chronicles, 1318.” *Church and Chronicle in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to John Taylor*. Ed. Ian Wood and G. A. Loud. London: The Hambledon Press, 1991. 149-63. Print.

in that manner as I did, our gossips had a conceit that I had been quite carried away by the Fairies they know not whither, and some elfe or changeling (as they call it) laid in my room. (92-93)

Willis' report contains a lot of crucial aspects related to the changelings. He was an unchristened child, a heathen who is susceptible to supernatural beings. He was carried away when his mother was not there, and the people who witnessed/heard the incident believed that he was being stolen, and a changeling was replaced with him.

The following shocking changeling record is borrowed from the history of Ireland. In the late nineteenth century, a sick woman named Bridget Cleary who was thought to be a changeling was violently burned to death by her husband Michael Cleary who was trying to save his wife by purging the fairy with fire: "Michael Cleary was disturbed that his spirited, good-looking wife persisted in visiting one of the ancient fairy forts⁸ near their home. ... By going too often near the fairy fort, she was surely tempting the fairies to carry her off and he'd abide no changeling under his roof" (Hoff and Yeates 56). He was convinced that she was a changeling when his wife changed and became someone else. Thus, he tormented her physically to take his wife back, and tortured her with hot equipment to drive the changeling away. For example, "[o]n Thursday, when he used a metal spoon, and again on Friday, when his weapon was a burning stump of wood, Michael Cleary's actions amounted to a kind of oral rape. On both occasions Bridget Cleary was pinned down" (Bourke 120). So, she was tortured to get back the "real" Bridget, but when it did not work out, Michael burned her alive. According to an eyewitness, while his wife was burning in the house, in front of a wide audience, Michael Cleary said "She's not my wife. She's an old deceiver sent in place of my wife. She's after deceiving me for the last seven or eight days, and deceived the priest today too, but she won't deceive anyone any more. As I began it with her, I will finish it with her. ... You'll soon see her go up the chimney" (Bourke 124). He believed that his wife was a changeling, so he used fire to purge the fairy away so that he could take his wife back, as

⁸ Remains of circular ancient buildings.

fire was commonly used from the medieval period onwards to retrieve the real person from the fairies.

Although the idea that a fairy might steal a child and replace it with one of their own is unacceptable in Christianity, the figure of changeling is also used to present some of the doctrines and biblical stories of Christianity. As Haffter points out, “[f]rom the 11th century onwards we read of various saints —Stephen, Lawrence, Bartholomew and Onuphrius— that they were stolen from the cradle and replaced by a demonic changeling” (58). Similar to Saint Guinefort’s association with the substitution of children by supernatural beings and its heroic duty to save them was sanctified by the French Catholic Church, there are connotations of changeling figures in some medieval hagiographies.⁹ Furthermore, according to Rose A. Sawyer, in some Chester Mystery Cycle plays, especially “Magi, The Vinters Playe” and “Innocents, The Gouldsmythes Playe” the child substitution motif is integrated into the biblical stories of the plays by using the word *cangun/conjeoun* which is an older version of the word “changeling”; moreover, she claims that it was used as a derogatory term applied to the infant Jesus’ body (89). Another example of *cangun/conjeoun* in literature is in a hagiography. In Saint Katherine’s hagiography in *South English Legendary* (c. 1300), during Saint Katherine’s discussion with the learned men, one of the men accuses her of being a changeling by saying ““Seie, dame conIoun, ʒwat arþou?’: þis o legistre seide” [‘You damn *congun/conjeoun*, what are you?’ said the scholar] (95). Obviously, both of these works integrate the idea of child substitution into Christian iconography.

Apart from being a literary representation, the child substitution and theft by fairies was a real fear for the Catholics. Consequently, medieval Christianity used baptism as a protective

⁹ For painting of demonic abduction and the killing of the demonic changeling in the medieval hagiographies, see Bartolomeo, Martino Di. “Return of the Saint and Burning of the Changeling.” *Seven Scenes from the Legend of St. Stephen*. c. 1390. Mixed Technique on Poplar. Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt am Main. For the unmasking and the killing of a demonic changeling, see Torell, Miquel. *Altarpiece of Sant Bartomeu de Cruïlles*. 1450/1500. Tempera, oil and wood. Museu d’Art de Girona, Girona. Finally, for a comparative account of the medieval child abduction motifs, see White, Gordon David. “Medieval and Modern Child Abductions.” *Demons Are Forever: Contacts and Exchanges in the Eurasian Pandemonium*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2021. Print.

tool against such abductions since children were assumed to be potential victims of supernatural attacks prior to being Christianised. Additionally, baptism was considered as a rite of passage to humanhood; hence, “[t]he folklore of the changeling illustrates that it is not the Christian values of heathen versus Christian that are at stake, but a question of being human or not” (Skjelbred 222). Therefore, while baptism is a means of protection against a substitution with a changeling, it also represents a dichotomy between human and non-human from the perspective of Christianity.

Although changelings were assumed to have some aspects familiar to humans mostly because they were considered to take the shape of the real infants, they were supposed to lack intelligence in contrast to humans. While describing changelings, it is stated in *OED* that they are “usually stupid or ugly” (18). As Latham puts it, “changelings were distinguished by their lack of brains, ... [i]ndeed, so lacking were they in intelligence that the word itself later took on a secondary meaning of half-witted person” (156-57). This might be due to the fact that “[m]entally retarded children were thus clearly taken for changelings, particularly cases with hydrocephalus and cretinism” (Haffter 56). While both of these diseases cause mental challenges, just like the already mentioned diseases associated with changelings, they also drastically disfigure infants and cause them to look similar to one another rather than another human being. Hence, while being intellectually challenged was one of the distinguishing properties of a changeling, the later meaning the word took up, an unintelligent person, also became popular and was used as an alternative word to define people who lack intelligence.

In the Elizabethan period, poets and playwrights tended to use the changeling figure similar to its folk representations in the medieval period, while the Jacobean poets and playwrights preferred its later meaning more and recontextualised the changeling figure. To illustrate, Edmund Spenser (c. 1552 – 1599) defines the changeling figure, in his long poem *The Faerie Queene* (1590 – 96) as follows:

From thence a Faery thee vnweeting reft,
There as thou slepft in tender fwaddling band,

And her bafe Elfin brood there for thee left:

Such men do Chaungelings call, fo changed by Faeries theft. (I.X.153)

His description of the changeling figure clearly borrows from the folk narratives without any recontextualization of the figure. Spenser's representation is not a unique one; as explained earlier, this figure and its folkloric representations were popular from the Middle Ages onwards. Contrary to this, in the Jacobean period, associations of lack of intelligence and ugliness with the changeling figure became the key aspects of its representations. For example, Michael Drayton (1563 – 1631), in his poem *Nymphidia* (1627) stresses the idiocracy associated with the changelings when he describes a substitution incident:

Thus when a Childe haps to be gott,

Which after prooues an Ideott,

When Folke perceiue it thriueth not,

The fault therein to smother:

Some silly doting brainlesse Calfe,

That vnderstands things by the halfe,

Say that the Fayrie left this Aulfe,

And tooke away the other. (73-80)

Drayton's depiction of the changeling figure directs harsh comments on the mental state of the abductee and the people who believe such tales, and represents them as idiots. Therefore, the poem's focus is not on the folkloric background of the figure —though it still uses it— but on the intellectual deficiency of the abductee. However, such a shift in the representation of changeling shall not be taken as a sign of a dying superstition, because the changeling belief was still alive in the Jacobean period and afterwards. For example, Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) in his *Leviathan* (1651), which was written approximately twenty six years after the Jacobean period, suggested that “[t]he *fairies* likewise are said to take young children out of their cradles, and to change them into natural fools, which common people do therefore call *elves*, and are apt to mischief” (464), and he depicted them as a part of an ongoing superstition. His depiction, just like those of the Jacobean writers, promoted the

claim that the changelings lack intelligence, but was also founded on its traditional image in folklore.

Even though fairies were widely discussed and represented by the medieval and the early modern writers, their representations were not always consistent with each other. Kaitlyn Culliton, who examines fairy representations in dramatic works written between 1575 and 1615 argues that there is a variety of fairy representations and she summarises her argument as follows:

[T]hese texts shift from portraying fictionally real fairies to fairies that are counterfeit within their respective dramatic universes. Coinciding with this development is a shift in the locations in which these characters appear. In their earliest theatrical manifestations in the Elizabethan entertainments, fairy characters appear in outdoor landscapes. As the depictions of fairies begin to change from fictionally real to counterfeit, the characters gradually transition into indoor spaces. I argue that this development indicates a significant historical shift toward the demythologization of the fairy figure —the process through which these figures began to be widely conceived of and written about as entities of fiction. (2-3)

Thereby, she argues that fairy representations started to change at the end of the Jacobean period. From Culliton's perspective, it might be argued that the changeling representations in the Jacobean period also coincide with the demythologizations of the fairies. As will be discussed in the second chapter of this study, the changeling representations in the dramatic works produced in the Jacobean period are not direct representations of the fairy belief or folk narratives; instead, they present the changeling figure as the embodiment of different ideas, like change in a character. Culliton argues that "these appearances begin to reflect an increasing skepticism toward the fairy figure, which manifested itself in changing depictions of the landscapes with which the fairies interacted" (3). Accordingly, the Jacobean plays examined in this study depict changelings in closed spaces, or in a transition to a closed space. To illustrate, in *The Changeling*, changelings are the members of the household or the madhouse, and in *The Spanish Gypsy*, the self-fashioned changeling returns back to her household in the end. Therefore, while Culliton's argument does not provide a certain explanation for the shift in the representations of changelings in the Jacobean period, her

analysis provides an insight into why these changelings might be demythologized and represented in enclosed spaces.

In the light of the background information provided, this thesis analyses the representations of the changeling figure in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean drama successively in order to explain the changes in its representation in these periods. For this purpose, four plays are analysed to figure out how the changeling motif is made use of and changed by the playwrights in the successive periods. Each of these plays depicts a different changeling figure. Considering the scarcity of changelings in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean drama, these are unique plays including changeling figures, and hence, they provide the researchers with plentiful examples to understand the function and representation of the changeling figures in the plays. Through the analysis of the mentioned plays, it is observed that the Jacobean playwrights presented the changeling figure as the embodiment of the idea of change, without any overt reference to the fairy lore this figure comes from. Therefore, the difference between the representations of the mentioned figure in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean plays is the fact that the Elizabethan playwrights presented the changeling figure in accordance with the traditional fairy lore and contemporary superstitions, but the Jacobean playwrights had more freedom and hence, they referred to various ideas by making use of the connotations of the changeling figure, such as bodily transformations and changes in character.

As for its methodology, the thesis is divided into two chapters, focusing on the representations of the changeling figure in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean drama successively. The first chapter focuses on the changeling representations in the plays written/performed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. Building on the background information provided at the beginning of the chapter, *Misogonus*, a play including a child abduction motif in which twins are separated from each other is examined in relation to how the changeling figure and the child abduction motif are associated. It is followed by a very similar analysis of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Considering the fact that this play popularised the dramatic representations of fairies and includes a

changeling boy —though sometimes referred to as the Indian boy by some scholars— the chapter focuses on how the playwright uses or modifies this popular figure in his play. Through the analysis of the mentioned plays and the changeling figures included in them, it is observed that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Misogonus* do not completely recontextualise the changeling figure, on the contrary, both of them present this figure in accordance with the folk narratives of the medieval and the early modern periods. While Shakespeare introduces new features to the changeling representations, *Misogonus'* playwright's representation is closer to that of the folk narratives. Even though Shakespeare changes the representation by depicting the life of the stolen child in fairyland, the representation, just like in *Misogonus*, does not exclude the motif of fairy abduction or the distress this figure causes. Hence, both plays present the changeling figure in a manner that is very similar to the folk narratives of the Middle Ages.

The second chapter examines *The Changeling* and *The Spanish Gypsy* which were produced during the reign of King James I of England and Scotland. The study of Thomas Middleton and William Rowley's *The Changeling* reveals that the play diverges from the traditional representations of changeling, and reshapes the figure by contextualising it to represent a so-called fallen woman. Hence, it is argued that the changeling motif is associated with violence and immorality of a woman, differing the play from its predecessors. Lastly, Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker and John Ford's *The Spanish Gypsy* dramatizing a gypsy woman who defies her father's wishes fictionalities a changeling figure which might be examined in relation to alienation, monstrosity and gypsies in the Jacobean period. These arguments conclude that the Elizabethan and the Jacobean representations of the changeling figure vary on the basis of their similarities with the fairy lore and the folk narratives of the Middle Ages. James I's succession to the throne, the novel understandings of the supernatural and fairies, and the change drama as a genre experienced when the monarch changes might be effective in this evolvement of the changeling figure.

CHAPTER 1

CHANGELINGS ON THE ELIZABETHAN STAGE

The first chapter of this thesis aims to examine the literary representations of the changeling figure in the selected dramatic works produced in the Elizabethan period through analysing how these representations are similar to and differ from the ones in the popular beliefs of the mentioned period and its precedent the medieval period. A changeling was believed to be a fairy or an inanimate object in great likeness to the real baby that is left in substitution for a human infant who is abducted by the fairies. These creatures were thought to be ugly, slim yet with an extreme appetite, unable to thrive, and overall troublesome. As the by-product of an unwelcomed exchange, changelings were frowned upon, feared, and tried to be scared away with the hope of reversing the terrifying exchange. In light of its definition and influence on English society, this chapter argues that the changeling figure's representations during the Elizabethan period had significant parallelisms with the period's superstitions concerning this awe-inspiring figure. English people were mostly afraid of fairies and thereby changelings, and both were integrated, popularised and widely represented in the literary texts produced in the mentioned period. This public interest in the fairy lore led to the increasing popularity of fairy and/or changeling representation in the dramatic works. Within this concept, this chapter examines the changeling representations in anonymous *Misogonus* (1560-77) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595-96) by William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616) produced in the Elizabethan period, by basing on the social and religious history of the period, the roots of the fairy lore's popularity, folkloric representations and understandings in the period. The argument is extended to the medieval folklore due to the fact that the medieval and the Renaissance representations have many similarities in term of the folk beliefs, legends and superstitions.

While there are more than two plays including the mentioned figure in the Elizabethan period, two works are selected for this study: Anonymous *Misogonus* (1560-77) and William Shakespeare's (1564 – 1616) *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595-96). These works are distinguished pieces among the others, because while *Misogonus* is one of the earliest dramatic representations of the figure and as its representation is closely connected with the folklore, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is the literary work that popularised the figure in English drama. Although it might be argued that Shakespeare's work is at liberty to differ from the folkloric representation in some respects, the representation of the figure displays strong connections with folk belief.

The term "Elizabethan Drama" refers to the drama tradition in the reign of Elizabeth I, from 1558 to 1603. Different from the medieval plays, the Elizabethan plays started to be performed in permanent spaces specially constructed for theatrical performance. In this period, the first permanent playhouses were built, and "Elizabethan entrepreneurs risked the capital required to erect permanent theatres in the 1560s and 1570s and actors joined into formally organized companies" (Braunmuller 53). Yet, these permanent places were not in central locations "largely because the City authorities regarded them as a nuisance. The Court feared they spread sedition; the Magistrates believed that they fomented what the writers of insurance policies call 'riots and civil commotion'; the Puritans accused them of promoting immorality of various kinds" (Cunningham 15). These new permanent spaces for theatres "created a staggering, and continuing, demand for new material. Seeking to attract and hold an audience, dramatist and theatre companies supplied jigs, folk tales, jingoistic war-plays, courtly pastoral, and much else" (Braunmuller 53). These private and public theatres were used by organised adult companies and semi-organized boys' companies. F. P. Wilson stresses that when the connection between the Court and the Parliament got weaker, the Court's connection with the theatres grew stronger and the patrons in the Court made some of the companies more prosperous (84-85), which consequently enhanced the influence the Court had on the theatres. These companies performed plays that followed the episodic structure of the medieval drama, while they rarely included the unities of time, place, and action, in addition to the parallel plots and subplots that are related to the main plot (Wilson

and Goldfarb 129). This use of two plots is visible in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in which two plotlines that are unrelated at the first glance are connected to construct the main story. In these two plotlines, the story of the humans and the story of the fairies are given separately. Both of these plotlines parallel each other when they construct the main dramatic action, and their stories intermingle in the forest.

The Elizabethan period was rich in plays and playwrights, as influential playwrights like William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616), Ben Jonson (1572 – 1637), Christopher Marlowe (1564 – 1593), Thomas Kyd (1558 – 1594), and John Lyly (1554 – 1606) produced their works in this period. In this period, changelings were referred in *The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* (1594) by Christopher Marlowe, in *Hamlet* (1599 – 1603) by William Shakespeare. Yet, both of these references are shallow, and neither of these plays put emphasis on the changeling figure like the ones examined in this study.

1.1 The Representation of the Changeling Figure in Anonymous *Misogonus* (1560 - 77)

Misogonus is an anonymous Elizabethan play which survived in a single manuscript (San Marino: Huntington, MS HM 452) which is probably a transcript of the play, or a revised edition of the original text (Wiggins 175). The original manuscript has six different names written on it, but these names were neither written by the same hand nor in the same period. Even though there is not enough evidence to pinpoint the exact author of the play, there are some scholarly debates concerning the names written on the manuscript. These names are Anthony Rudd, Laurentius Bariōna, Thomas Rychardes, Thomas Warde, W. Wyllm̄, and John York (Barber 3-7). Among these six names, some of them are more probable to be the author of the manuscript than others. For example, after the names of the speakers are listed, a name is cited on the manuscript by hand as follows:

Laurentius Bariōna

Ketthering die 20

Novembris

Anno 1577 (173)

So, Laurentius Bariona is identified as one of the more possible candidates. Additionally, after the prologus, two more names are given: Thomas Rychardes and Thomas Warde. Even if the names and their connection to the manuscript and the play are considered by scholars, there is no consensus on the exact authorship of the play. According to G. L. Kittredge, it is a strong possibility that Laurentius Bariona is the author of the play. As he states:

‘Bar’ is of course, ‘son,’ and we may without temerity recognize in ‘Laurentius Bariona’ plain *Laurence Johnson*. ... The prologue to the ‘*Misogonus*’ is signed ‘Thomas Richardes.’ A Person of this name was one of Johnson’s fellow-students at Oxford (college unknown). ... The authorship of the ‘*Misogonus*’ is still an open question. If, as Collier thinks, the play was written in 1560, the author may have neither been Johnson nor Richards. (335, 337)

But, Kittredge argues that there might be a mistake in the supposed production date of the manuscript; therefore, he argues that Laurence Johnson is a probable author of the manuscript. On the other hand, Ester E. Barber who considers Kittredge’s argument “conjectural” and argues that the text has an author, a scribe and a reviser proposes the possible candidates for the authorship as follows:

Anthony Rudd wrote *Misogonus*, probably between 1564 when he entered Cambridge and 1577 when the manuscript of the play is dated. (2) Laurentius Bariona, because his name is prominent on the title-page and because a number of corrections and revisions in the manuscript are in this handwriting, was the owner of the manuscript and the play’s reviser. (3) Thomas Rychardes, whose name is written prominently following the prologue in the same hand which copied out the entire play, was the Scribe. (17-18)

In conclusion, while there are several theories on the identity of the author, there is no evidence conclusive enough to determine the exact person. Therefore, *Misogonus* is to be considered an anonymous play until new research proves otherwise.

Similar to the authorship of the play, its exact date of composition is also unknown. According to the explanation in *British Drama 1533 – 1642: A Catalogue*, which suggests that the play was written between 1558 and 1577, the best guess is November 1577, these different dates “reflect the play’s Protestant bias (which places it within the reign of Elizabeth

I) and the MS date: the latter is the only secure solid date associated with the play and is therefore the best guess” (175). Therefore, the catalogue marks the year 1577 as a strong possibility due to the fact that the Protestant bias included in the play suggests strong connections with the Elizabethan period’s literary productions, and as the manuscript itself has a remark on it which implies that the play was written in Novembris 1577. Yet, the infamous¹⁰ John Payne Collier (1789 – 1883) suggested a different date based on a dialogue included in the play:

CRITO. How many yeare a go ist since he were borne can any of ye tell.

lay all year heades together & make trewe acownt.

CODRUS. It were after the risinge rection ith north I remember well

where was corne then Alison letes see how that will mounte.

...

ALISON. Threet no more I hate now heis twentye & fo[ure]

our tom were borne but a yeare aftere I can te[ll] (IV.i.129-32, 139-40)

In the scene, the characters try to determine the age of Eugonus and they agree that he was born twenty-four years ago, after the rising in the North. According to Payne Collier, “[t]he great insurrection in the North occurred in 1536, and, adding twenty-four years, the age of the young man, to that date, it would give 1560 or a little after, as the time when *Misogonus* was first produced” (368). Collier’s argument is built on a single reference to the Pilgrimage of Grace which was a traditionalist revolt against the Reformation. As Sir Edmund Chambers stated, dating the play to 1560 is not decisive as “it is not quite clear that the rambling dialogue of rustics, in which the passage occurs, justifies the interpretation put upon it” (31). Therefore, similar to the non-identifiable author of the manuscript, the exact date of composition is also ambiguous due to the lack of evidence.

¹⁰ Even though he was a respected scholar, he was also known for his habit of forgery. Samuel A. Tannenbaum accused him of a possible mutilation of the manuscript of *Misogonus* as he stated, “[i]n connection with this memorandum it must be noted that someone—in all probability, John P. Collier— had tampered with the word “Kettheringe” [sic] on the title-page, ‘ward’ being written over the letters ‘ring’” (310).

In *Misogonus*, Misogonus' father Philogonus overindulges in his son after his wife's death. Misogonus turns out to be an intemperate and violent man. In order to change him, a friend of Philogonus, Eupelas who believes that Misogonus will eventually grow up, wants to help Philogonus. After Misogonus is informed about the deal, the fool of the play, Cacurgus advises Misogonus to make a counterattack. After Oenophilus introduces Misogonus to Melissa, they play cards. When Philogonus catches them dancing, he threatens to disinherit him. Upon that incident, he learns that he had another son —Misogonus' twin brother who was sent away by their mother. The twin brother, Eugonus has a deformity, he has an extra toe on one of his feet which makes him easily identifiable by the nurses who helped his birth. Misogonus does not welcome his brother and he rejects his father's pardon. He feels ashamed after he sees his brother and father together. Then, he is convinced by Liturgus to sit at the table with them and to reconcile with his father. As the final act of the play is missing, there is no clear conclusion. Still, the consideration of the last act as the reconciliation and pardoning part of the play is a sound assumption, driven by the final indications of the fourth act. The twin brother's, Eugonus' role might be read as a changeling narrative, considering the fact that the character includes some characteristics attributed to changelings and as he is described as a changeling by one of the characters.

The only direct reference to the changeling narrative, and hence to the idea that a fairy steals a child and puts another fairy in replacement, is in Cacurgus' dialogue with Isabell and Madge, two women who witnessed the birth of the twins. Cacurgus addresses Isabell and Madge, and says:

CACURGUS. To beare wines yow ar now both toward your londlord trottinge
 that his wife of tow children at once [w]as brought to bede
 but take hede what yow doe lest yow dame your selves quite
 for ye one was not a christen child as yow thought it to be
 but a certaine ferye there did dasill yowr sighte
 & laid hir changlinge in the infantes cradell trwlye
 Hoping therby your mistrisse child to haue gott

and to leaue hir changlinge there in the stead
 which when she saw in a weke she coud nott
 she fetcht it away when yow thought it were dede
 An overwhart neighbour to of yours now alate
 tels him whether twas sent as though trwe it had ben.
 but sheis a gayte yow knowe well & a very make ...
 and the fery from that day to this was near se... (III.iii.97-110)

Cacurgus' explanation is important in that it includes both the process of abduction and the definition of changelings, and in it "one of the earliest and fullest references to fairy changelings is to be found" (Latham 151). Cacurgus, in the disguise of a learned man, tells this story to scare Madge Caro and Isabell Busby in order to prevent their revealing of the identity of the twin brother. His description borrows various aspects of the changeling narratives, such as the appearance of the troublesome fairy and the child exchange, and thereby proves that the figure was well-known when the play was produced. The play evidently depicts how the fairies steal and replace children, or more precisely, it reveals people's belief in child abduction by fairies. Cacurgus claims that the child was taken from the bed when it was unattended and was replaced with a creature that was not Christian. This story is in stark similarity with the folk belief and other historical records of changeling incidents mentioned in Introduction part of this thesis. Therefore, the play's representation of the changeling figure is consistent with the folklore, as it does not reimagine or divert the motif.

Since Eugonus and Misogonus are twins, their birth would be considered abnormal as twins had been considered as the subjects of abnormality and fear throughout history. Pliny the Elder (AD 23/4 – 79) noted a "case of the woman who bore twins of whom one resembled her husband and the other an adulterer" (539), which displays that the legitimacy of the twins was questioned and discussed in the Roman period. A similar fear is even reflected into several medieval literary works by anonymous poets as in the anonymous Breton lai *Lay le Freine*, and by poets like Marie de France (c. 1160 – 1215) who presented a similar

discomfort and accusation of illegitimacy in her lay *Lai le Fresne* (late 1100s). The lay exemplifies the prejudices attributed to the legitimacy of twins and mothers of twins in the medieval society and several medieval literary productions. In relation to this tradition of questioning the legitimacy of twins, *Misogonus* introduces the idea that this fear can also be associated with the loss of a healthy infant which is also apparent in the changeling narratives. Both twins and changelings induce the fear of the illegitimacy of the offspring; moreover, while twins worry people about adultery, changelings do so about raising a fairy instead of their real child. Therefore, by introducing the changeling narrative into the birth story of Eugonus and Misogonus, Cacurgus aggravates the fear of having an illegitimate child. In this regard, the changeling figure is the recontextualization of the ones in the folk narrative. However, the play does not reconstruct the figure but reveals the fear related to twins while maintaining the descriptions of and the fear induced by the changeling figure.

Another reason why the twins' birth has been considered abnormal, and thereby linked to the changeling narrative, might be the fact that the Elizabethans were interested in physically deformed newborns. Even though Eugonus' deformity on his foot is not considered an abnormality or monstrosity in the text, it is still connected to the Elizabethan interest in the monstrous births. Such descriptions of birth deformities were popularised in the ballads published in the Elizabethan period. According to A. W. Bates, "[i]t is surprising to learn that birth defects, or, to use the language of the time, monstrous births, were popular subjects for ballads. At least twenty dealt with this topic, out of a probable total of a few thousand titles, and they offer contemporaneous records of birth defects" (202). Such ballads sometimes provided grotesque woodcuts that illustrate the monstrosities of the newborns, and prose parts explaining the deformities the monster had. For example, the prose explanation in *The forme and shape of a Monstrous Child / borne at Maydstone in Kent, the .xxiiij. of October. 1568* (1568) illustrates a highly deformed infant as follows:

[C]hild being a man child, had first the mouth slitted on the right side like a Libardes mouth, terrible to beholde, the left arme lying vpon the brest, fast therto ioyned, hauing as it were stumps on the handes, the left leg growing vward toward the head, and the ryght leg bending toward the left leg, the foote therof grow|ing into the buttocke of the sayd left leg. In the midst of the backe there was a broade lump of flesh in fashion

lyke a Rose, in the myddest whereof was a hole, which voided like an Issue. Thys sayd Childe was bourne alyue, and lyued .xxiiij. houres, and then departed this lyfe. Which may be a terrour aswell to all such workers of filthynes & iniquity, as to those vngodly liuers. (np)

Such deformities made children monsters, unnatural subversions of the flow of the nature. As Eugonus in the play has a birth defect, he is a “monster” according to the period’s understanding; moreover, he is also defined as a monster by Cacurgus who described him as a changeling. Therefore, the attribution of the changeling identity to Eugonus stems from the idea that children who were born with disabilities were considered monsters in the Elizabethan period, and it connects the changeling narrative with this understanding. As explained before, the changeling figure is mostly connected with child disabilities. Hence, even though Cacurgus does not know the fact that Eugonus had an extra toe at birth, by his definition of him as a changeling, a figure that is associated with monstrous birth, it might be argued that the play includes this changeling figure to hide Eugonus’ real identity.

Still, the characters in the play do not respond to Eugonus’ deformity as is usually the way with the changeling narratives. After Cacurgus tells his made-up story of Eugonus’ disappearance, two old women accept that they believe in Cacurgus’ reimagination of Eugonus as a fairy left behind and later sent away by the mother:

ISABELL. Nay good Mr leaue your magication crafte

ites as trrwe I knowe as it had comed out of gods owne mouth

MADGE. I gi gi giue defiaunce to yow so so so so soft saft

Ide rather youde tell me some drinke for my toth. (III.iii.115-18)

Isabell and Madge’s answer to the supernatural take of the events they witnessed, and their belief in Cacurgus’ explanation of the nature of Eugonus’s birth display the changeling figure’s effects on the English people. Considering the prominence of the folk belief in the sixteenth century, their unquestioning belief in the story is plausible. In his *The Art of English Poesy* (1589), George Puttenham (1520 – 1590) refers to the fact that such stories were believed by women:

[B]ut I had rather have him called the Changeling nothing at all swerving from original, and much more aptly to the purpose and pleasanter to bear in memory —especially for our ladies and pretty mistresses in court whose learning I write, because it is a term often in their mouths, and alluding to the opinion of nurses, who are wont to say that the fairies use to steal the fairest children out of their cradles, and put other ill favored in their places, which they called changeling, or elves. (256-57)

His reference indicates that people in the sixteenth century believed in the similar representations of the changeling figure in the folk narratives. Puttenham specifies women in courts and nurses as the real believers —just like Scott’s argument that such bugs were believed by “ficke folke, children, women and cowards” (152). Puttenham’s claim is confirmed in the play, as Isabell and Madge are old nurses. Considering both Puttenham’s and Scott’s suggestion that mostly women believe in the figure, and the similarities between its folk representation and the dramatic representation in *Misogonus*, it is obvious that the play does not re-invent or recontextualise the changeling figure, instead, it presents the figure as it is represented and believed in the sixteenth century England.

While the representation of the changeling figure in the play is consistent with the folk representation before and during the period *Misogonus* was produced, the reaction of the characters to the fact that someone is accused of being a changeling is different from the folk narratives. Isabell and Marge, instead of directly accusing Eugonus and trying to banish the so-called fairy, try to understand whether he is indeed the missing twin as the real Eugonus has six toes:

ALISON. An ye be my maistrisse sonne gentleman yeave six toes oth righte foute

I haue toulde them many a tyme & often they stand even all by dene

EUGONUS. It can n[o]t otherwise be Ime even ye same ye talke one without doubtte

& for a crtainty if ye will yeist haue my fout sene. (IV.i.117-20)

Unlike in the folk narratives, the characters find a logical way to determine Eugonus’ real identity. While this difference is unique as the rest of the descriptions are consistent with the folk tales, it is not surprising considering the fact that most literary productions did not include any form of fairy torture.

Similar to Isabell and Madge's reactions to the claims about Eugonus' changeling identity, the father-son meeting distorts the changeling narratives. The play, by establishing the idea of the illegitimacy of an heir, yet then abandoning it differs from the historical records—like the questioned legitimacy of Edward II's reign— or folk narratives and the literary representation of the figure. As Eugonus' father is uninformed about the lie concerning the legitimacy of his son, he welcomes him with open arms:

PHILOGONUS. O welcome home my sonne my sone my comfort & my joy
 thou art the lenthner of my life the curar of my care
 here of my house possession take & all my land enjoy
 I thinke my selfe as happy now as if a duke I wear. (IV.i.178-81)

The play presents this not as a moment when the changeling identity is ousted, but as a lovely welcome by a father. Considering the fact that this is a school play and was written for educational aims (Bond 168-69), such a representation might be intended in order to discredit the superstition, and had no aim of excluding the child abduction motif, and hence such a representation might be preferred for educational reasons as it might be written for drama classes in universities, instead of recontextualization of the changeling figure.

In contrast to this representation that differs from the changeling narratives, Misogonus' reaction to his brother's return is more in line with the folk representation of the changeling figure. Misogonus attacks his twin brother and accuses him of being a "countererfett":

MISOGONUS. Gods precious boddy this counterfett skippthirft is come all ready.
 drawe your weapons like champions & kepe him from possession.
 ...

PHILOGONUS. Away away thou branlesse foole wilt thou never be wise
 stand out of my way wagghalter or I wil britche the nakte

MISOGONUS. Whatsomere here be that chalings anye thinge here Ile indite him at the sise
 ist kepe yow from settinge a foute within this thresolde as stout as ye m[a] ...

EUGONUS. Alas brother I come for no lands I cume o see my father I
 & to doe my deutye vnto him as it doth me become

MISOGONUS. Brother thou ladleper thou runagat roge ey brotherst me
by all the devils in hell I will surky the thome. (IV.ii.1-12)

As it is inferred from their conversation, Misogonus does not welcome his twin brother with open arms, instead, he tries to prevent him from getting into their property. His violent reaction to Eugonus exposes his fear of losing his own property. But it is also a reminiscence of the claims made about Edward II's legitimacy as an heir. Similar to how Edward II had to deal with the imposter who claimed the right to his land and property, Misogonus has to fight against this doppelganger. As there is no reference in the play to the changeling incident Edward II experienced, it cannot be suggested that the text fictionalizes the historical event. Nonetheless, the fear in responses of Eugonus and Edward II is apparently similar.

The relationship between these two brothers and Misogonus' reaction to Eugonus is functional as *Misogonus* is a prodigal son play, which is a type of play which includes references to the biblical story in which the father-son relations are depicted (Beck 109), and hence, the changeling motif might be considered in regard to the tradition of the Elizabethan prodigal son plays. As it refers to a biblical story and follows the prodigal son tradition, *Misogonus* "enables us to claim for England the credit of having produced one of the most elaborate and original comedies on the prodigal son" (Boas "Early English" 110). In *The New Testament*, in Luke 15, a son wants his share of the riches of his father yet wastes all of it. He works in the field and then goes back to his father and repents, he is welcomed with open arms and a feast is given for him. His older brother gets upset to see that the fatted calf is killed for his younger brother but gets educated by his father for his resentment (Luke 15:11-32). The parable describes their reunion as follows: "[F]or this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found! And they began to celebrate" (Luke 15:24). In the parable, the second son's spiritual journey is presented as a rebirth. According to Ervin Beck, a prodigal son play in its perfect form should include the events in Christ's parable in Luke, but he also accepts that it is not always possible to represent a biblical story in a dramatic work flawlessly. As Beck states:

In its absolutely perfect form, of course, this archetypal plot would be faithful to the sequence of events found in Christ's parable in Luke 15:11-32, thereby consisting of ten 'segments' of action: the request (vv. 11-12a), the granting of the request (v. 12b), the trip to the far country (v. 13a), the riotous living (vv. 13b-14), the recourse to work (v. 15a), the bondage-humiliation-despair (vv. 15b-16), the recognition-repentance-return (vv. 17-20a), the generous reception (vv. 20b-21), the celebration (vv. 22-24), and the elder brother's response (vv. 20b-21). One would hardly expect a group of plays, however, to adhere faithfully to the details of the Biblical story. Such literary plotting would be trite indeed. (109)

Considering how Beck's classification leaves room for playwrights to omit certain parts of the parable from their dramatic representations, *Misogonus'* story might be read in connection with the parable. At the beginning of the play, *Misogonus* is the sole heir of his father, and he has a riotous life; yet, his brother's appearance initiates *Misogonus'* fear of sharing his wealth with him. According to Richard Helgerson, plays like *Misogonus* are connected with the fears of the Reformation. As he states:

They dramatize the familiar warning that prodigality, foreign travel, love —anything that carries one off the narrow path of rational virtue— leads necessarily to repentance and in doing so they served as a vehicle for the conservative fears of men who had lived through the period of dangerously rapid change brought on by the Reformation, men to whom the world necessarily seemed beset with perilous temptations. (34-35)

Therefore, it might be argued from Beck's and Helgerson's perspectives that the biblical elements in the play make it possible to read it as a prodigal son play written from the perspective of the Reformation society.

Considering the fact that the parable has similarities with the play, it might be argued that there is a deliberate parallelism drawn by the anonymous playwright. Considering the fact that the father figure in the parable states "for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found" (Luke 15:24), it is clear that the idea of lost and found child that is also included in the changeling narrative is present in this parable. As Todd Compton stresses, "[h]ere the embrace symbolizes love of a parent for a child; forgiveness and compassion for a wayward child; and, on a more transcendent level, the love of God for his children" (37). This representative embrace also occurs in the play when *Eugonus* is welcomed with the blessings of his father, and hence with God's love for his creations.

Eugonus' welcome is didactic for Misogonus who is close to repentance at the end of the play. Before his father lovingly accepts Eugonus back into the community, Misogonus and Cacurgus try to pose him as an outsider, as an alien from the fairy kingdom. As "the son, who began as a sole heir to his father's wealth, ends as a younger brother begging a meager share from his rediscovered elder," (Helgerson 35) representing Eugonus as a changeling is an attempt to render him illegitimate in order to keep him away from receiving anything from the family's wealth. Therefore, Cacurgus' definition of Eugonus as a changeling is an evasion from accepting the twin brother's soon-to-be-acquired position in the society and the family.

In connection with Misogonus' rejection of the position his brother will acquire with his arrival to their father's land, the changeling narrative included in the play also bears resemblance to the parable. In *The New Testament*, upon receiving the news about his younger brother's arrival and the feast thrown for him, the older brother protests as it is stated in the parable:

Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" (Luke 15:28-30)

Not only does the brother who stayed protest against the warm welcome his younger brother receives, but he also rejects the fact that they are brothers, and he says to his father that he is "this son of yours." Similarly, Misogonus describes Eugonus as "Gods precious boddy this counterfett skippthirft is come all ready" and when his brother reminds him that they are brothers he responses as follows: "Brother tou ladleper thou runagat roge ey brotherst me / by all the devils in hell I will surky the thome" (IV.II.1, 11-2). Therefore, just like in the parable, the brother who stayed at home rejects the brother who left, and does not perceive him as a brother. In light of this similarity between the parable and the play, the representation of Eugonus as a changeling fortifies Misogonus' rejection of Eugonus. He is not only described as a "counterfett" and "runagat roge" but he is also described as a nonhuman entity as he is represented as a changeling. Therefore, as a prodigal son play, as a play that draws

inspiration from a parable in the Bible, *Misogonus* makes use of the changeling narrative in the context of the relationship between the brothers. It is used to display how Misogonus does not perceive the brother who left as his sibling, and it recontextualises their relationship by materialising the fear of losing status and wealth by the arrival of the brother back home which is not included in the parable.

In conclusion, anonymous *Misogonus* includes a changeling narrative in connection with a character who was sent away when he was a child. The play provides a description of how the exchange happened in a manner that displays the beliefs related to the changeling figure. Although Eugonus is defined as a changeling because of a lie, it does not make him an illegitimate child. Even though the inclusion of Eugonus as a changeling in the play seems irrelevant at first, it gains meaning when his experience connotes to the prodigal son plays, and he represents the English people's belief in changelings. Due to the resemblance the changeling narrative has with the parable of the prodigal son in The New Testament, the changeling figure is used as an illustration of the relationship between two brothers and the father in Luke 15. Still, the changeling figure in the play is not totally a recontextualization of the folk figure, on the contrary, it embodies some of the characteristics attributed to the changelings in the folk narratives: monstrous birth, physical deformation, being taken away after birth, the idea that old, weak people and women believe in changelings, questioning of the legitimacy of the heir, and the return of the real child. Therefore, the representation of the changeling figure in *Misogonus* is mostly in parallel with the beliefs of the English people in the sixteenth century.

1.2 The Representation of the Changeling Figure in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595-96)

As one of the most-known playwrights of all time, William Shakespeare's influence on English literature and drama is undeniable. William Shakespeare was born on April 22 or 23, 1564 but the second date is generally accepted as his birthday (Lee 7-8). As Joseph Quincy Adams notes, after a life spent around theatre, he passed away on April 23 (472). Between

the years 1564 and 1616, Shakespeare witnessed both the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods. While Ben Jonson separates Shakespeare from the age he belonged to by describing him in his poem “To the Memory of My Beloved, The Author, Mr William Shakespeare, And What He Hath Left Us” (1623) as “[h]e was not of an age, but for all time!” (43), his entanglement with the periods and the people of the periods are undeniable. Even though the monarch of England during most of Shakespeare’s life was Queen Elizabeth who ruled between 1558 and 1603, Shakespeare also got connected with the monarch of his last years, King James I of England. According to Schoenbaum, “the universalities of Shakespeare’s art have their topical aspect, and it is a fact that a special relationship was established early on between his company and the new monarch. They became his players” (*William* 250). Therefore, Shakespeare and his literary career were moulded in the Elizabethan period, but his last years were influenced by the Jacobean period. In light of this fact, his plays reflected not only the political and social realities of the late sixteenth century England, but also provided inspiration for the newly emerging Jacobean drama in the early seventeenth century.

Shakespeare’s plays, according to Edward Dowden, can be grouped as follows: “1. Pre-Shaksperian Group, 2. Early Comedy, 3. Marlowe-Shakespeare Group. Early History, 4. Early Tragedy, 5. Middle History, 6. Middle Comedy, 7. Later History, 8. Later Comedy, 9. Middle Tragedy, 10. Later Tragedy, 11. Romances, 12. Fragments” (x). This classification separates plays into groups by their themes while also providing a chronologically easy-to-follow structure. Apart from this classification, Frederick S. Boas suggests that some plays like *All’s Well that Ends Well* (1601-5) and *Measure for Measure* (1603-4), might be considered “Problem Plays” as these “[d]ramas so singular in theme and temper cannot be strictly called comedies or tragedies. We may therefore borrow a convenient phrase from the theatre of to-day and class them together as Shakspeare’s problem-plays” (*Shakspeare* 345). According to Seda Çağlayan Mazanoğlu, Boas, by separating Problem Plays, “asserts that categorising them as either tragedy or comedy limits their contents and structures as there are both tragic and comic elements in them” (6). In Dowden’s classification of Shakespeare’s plays, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* falls under the group of Early Comedy which locates the play both as an earlier play of Shakespeare and as a comedy. According to Dowden, “in

the Early Comedies, mistakes of identity, disguises, errors, and bewilderments, in various forms, recur as a source of merriment and material for adventure” (xi). Considered as the secondary changeling figure in the play, Bottom’s experiences in the fairyland display all the characteristics of the Early Comedies Dowden mentions. Even if fairies, and more specifically changelings were employed in Shakespeare’s *A Winter’s Tale* (1609-11) and *Hamlet* (1599 – 1601), the changeling figure in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is distinguished with its intermingling of the fairy world and the human world through a changeling who has a central role in the play despite its not being a main character. Moreover, the play incorporates a secondary changeling into the play which further develops the changeling representation.

A Midsummer Night’s Dream is a five-act comedy about a night when the quarrels and affairs of the fairy kingdom and the human world are crossed. The first edition of its text was published by Thomas Fisher in 1600 (Brooks xxi); and it belonged to the winter season of 1595 (Lee 161). The play depicts a night when the conflicts of fairy folk and human folk intermingle, the order is replaced by chaos, the order is re-established, and lovers fall into madness. As Brubaker explained, “[i]n *Dream* the lovers are made wacky, first by love and then by a magic spell, one being a kind of metaphor for the other” (109). The chaos in the human world is ignited by Hermia who after her rejecting his father’s will is warned by Theseus. Gleckman rightfully comments that “fighting her father’s power is hopeless; in this society, children are seen as almost non-sentient ... while fathers are godlike and can maim or even destroy their progeny at will” (24). The conflict in the Fairyland is caused by a quarrel—or even, a custody fight—between the monarch of the land, Titania and Oberon, who fight over the paternal rights they claim on a stolen Indian boy, a changeling. This changeling’s existence at the very centre of the play is the indicator of Shakespeare’s being knowledgeable about the folk narratives. The importance attributed to the changeling by Shakespeare is obvious once it is noticed that the playwright reimagined the changeling figure and represented it at the centre of the conflict.

The only other representation of the changeling figure in the plays of Shakespeare is in *The Winter's Tale* in which Perdita, daughter of Hermione is left on the coast of Bohemia to be killed by exposure; yet, she is found by a shepherd and his son who think that the baby is a changeling left behind and keep her to receive a reward from the fairies. However, the play's portrayal of the changeling figure revolves around the idea of mistaken identity instead of the fairy lore. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is unique in respect that it includes two changeling figures —the Indian boy and Bottom— that are presented in consistence with their representations in folk narratives, and both of them possess a central role in the play. Therefore, compared to *The Winter's Tale*, in *Midsummer Night's Dream* the representation of the changeling figure derived from the fairy lore is on the foreground, making it a unique play popularising the fairy lore in English drama.

In order to discuss the changeling representations in the play, its fairy representations, in general, are to be examined to understand from where Shakespeare borrows them. According to Kenneth Muir, Shakespeare “doubtlessly read some Ovid at school, and a copy of *Metamorphoses*, bearing his possibly forged signature, is still in existence” (1). *A Midsummer Night's Dream's* depiction of fairies is the result of Shakespeare's reimagining the fairies of the English folklore and the Ovidian metamorphosing beings. These supernatural elements are of utmost importance for the play and its interpretations. As Miller suggests, “[b]y introducing the fictive worlds of Ovid and English folklore into the doings of the nobles and the workmen of Athens, [fairies] pose open-ended questions about illusion and reality, existence and art to those willing to press beyond the older interpretation of the play as charming theatrical fantasy or a comic medley or burlesque” (244). Shakespeare's fairies are somehow very similar to the folkloric representations of fairies which are discussed in the Introduction part of this thesis. For example, just like the fairies in folklore, they are supernatural beings with extraordinary powers, they live in a fairyland, they have a matriarchal society, and they are troublesome. Additionally, Bottom's metamorphosis is similar to the changes in the Ovidian literature, where people and deities shapeshift into different animals and stars. Despite these, Shakespeare's depictions of fairies are also different from the folkloric figures in some respects. As Purkiss explains:

The fairies of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are far more kindly and benevolent, far less dangerous, than the fairies of medieval romance, and they are also much more manageable than the fairies of witch-trials,¹¹ English and Scottish. ... The sweet fairies of the *Dream* are indeed the remote ancestors of every wholly benign fairy, right down to pink-clad Sugar Plum fairies in tights. In taking the sting of death out of fairies, Shakespeare robs them of their complexity. (180-81)

Purkiss' explanation focuses on the lack of complexity in the representation that is originally present in the folkloric tales of the fairies; yet, it is possible to argue that the lack of complexity in Shakespeare's reimagination of fairies introduces new possibilities to the dramatic representations, and it allows novel readings to be made on politics and social issues. Therefore, Shakespeare's representations are incomplete rather than ignoramus in that he represents fairies as less dangerous creatures of the forest, while also complex in their ability to mirror the social realities of the period. Apart from the difference in their behaviours, Shakespeare's fairies —though somewhat similar to— are also different from the folkloric fairies, because in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* fairies are smaller than the fairies of folklore and they are less dangerous as they only cause trouble for the humans. The size of the fairies varies in folk tales, hence there is no possibility to determine the exact size of these beings. As Briggs explains, “[t]he most usual size was perhaps about three foot, but it is clear that in Warwickshire, as in the other parts of England, the tiny fairies who lurked among the flowers were taken as a matter of course,” but the representations in the folk narratives were not always consistent with this measurement, as “until [Shakespeare's] time the fairies of literature had been of human or more than human dimensions, but the country fairies were of very varying sizes, from the giant-like spriggans of Cornwall and the fairy ladies who married human husbands down to the tiny fairies” (“The Folds” 169). Thereby, Shakespeare's representation of fairies as extremely small creatures who can “hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear” (*A Midsummer* II.i.15) is not a reimagining of a folktale, it is a new perspective introduced to English literature.

¹¹ The author refers to the connection established between fairies and witches, which will be shortly discussed in the second chapter of this thesis.

In the light of the fact that Shakespeare in his *A Midsummer Night's Dream* reimagines the fairies while being faithful to the folkloric source, the changeling figure that has been discussed in this thesis as a part of the fairy tradition is also reimagined and altered. Even though the changeling is a small child, the fact that Shakespeare refers to the figure as a changeling instead of referring to it as a “fairy boy” or “a human boy” and utilises its folkloric roots to construct the conflict in the play displays the fact that Shakespeare purposefully uses this folkloric figure as a central figure. Shakespeare might want to create a figure that is widely known and feared by the audience to make the play interested, or he might borrow the figure from another important work in the period that he is familiar to, *The Faerie Queene* by Spenser.

Interestingly, the changeling boy is never given voice in the play, and instead, he is described by the other characters. The changeling boy's story in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is given from two perspectives. Firstly, Puck tells the story as follows:

PUCK. The King doth keep his revels here tonight;
 Take heed the Queen come not within his sight;
 For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
 A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king—
 She never had so sweet a changeling;
 And jealous Oberon would have the child
 Knight of his train, to trace the forest wild:
 But she perforce withholds the loved boy,
 Crowns him with flowers, and makes him all her joy. (II.i.18-27)

His account of the events that happened when the boy was stolen —though not performed but only narrated in the play— reminds the audience of the changeling narratives in folklore. As discussed before, changelings are fairies left in substitution after a beautiful and healthy infant is stolen. Similarly, according to Puck, the boy is stolen from a king, and Titania holds him with “perforce” while cherishing the changeling boy as a beautiful treasure. Additionally, Puck claims that Oberon wants to obtain the child in order to train him as his

knight, in line with the representation of fairies as child thieves in folklore. Therefore, Oberon's jealousy might be associated with a fairy's impulse to steal a child. Since the child is stolen, no one has a right to own him, which forges the main conflict between Titania and Oberon. As Slights explains, "Oberon's competing and exclusive claim suggests that perhaps, as Puck implies, no one in fairyland has a rightful claim to him. Anyone who wants the changeling, for whatever purpose, may have to withhold him 'perforce,' that is, forcibly" (260). This reflects the perspective of Puck, a male figure; on the other hand, Titania, as a female, has another account of the changeling boy's story.

Titania's account of the changeling's past is different from Puck's version:

TITANIA. His mother was a votress of my order;
 And in the spiced Indian air, by night,
 Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
 And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
 Marking th' embarked traders on the flood:
 When we have laugh'd to see the sail conceive
 And grow big-bellied with the wanton wind;
 Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
 Following (her womb then rich with my young squire),
 To fetch me trifles, and return again
 As from a voyage rich with merchandise.
 But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
 And for her sake do I rear up her boy;
 And for her sake I will not part with him. (II.i.123-137)

Her story, compared to Puck's, is more sentimental, and different from the traditional changeling narratives the child substitution motif is replaced with a compassionate relationship between two females. While Puck depicts Titania as a thief who stole something valuable from a man, the Indian king —and therefore, should hand it over to another male

figure, that is Oberon— Titania’s explanation leaves out any male’s paternal right over the child, leaving Titania as the seldom protector of the figure. As Kurian explains:

While both accounts of the boy’s origins posit India as his place of origin, the gendered account of his parentage is also significant: Puck’s account mentions the child’s father, the Indian king from whom the child has been stolen and of whom we hear no further mention in the play. Titania makes no mention of the father; instead, we are told about the mother in her narrative, in which the father has no bearing on the child, nor do his rights count for anything. ... These matriarchal structures could be the frame or the rationale for Titania’s actions in taking the child away from India and his father. (8)

Hence, while this explanation of the child’s origin subverts the traditional changeling figure’s abduction and substitution motifs, it also displays the matriarchal structure of the fairyland. By mentioning only the votress mother of the changeling boy, and by claiming that she would never surrender to him, Titania claims matriarchal power while clearly indicating that it is her decision to keep the child. According to Gleckman, “Titania’s mode of presenting her memory of the changeling boy’s mother, her votress, suggests nostalgia” which is about the diminishing female space in the early modern England, as “in Shak[e]speare’s England, all-female spaces such as Titania’s are also being threatened by social developments such as the closure of convents and the increasingly powerful guiding philosophies of patriarchal Protestant marriage” (39n30). This also parallels to the diminishing female space in the play as the Amazonian rule ends, and a patriarchal kingdom, Athens arises from this previously female space.

Oberon, by separating the changeling boy from the female space and with his desire to get him, initiates the quarrel between the two monarchs. Oberon says, “Do you amend it than: it lies in you / Why should Titania cross her Oberon? / I do but beg a little changeling boy / To be my henchmen” (II.i.118-21), and he demands the child to be handed to him. Parallel to the folk narratives, the changeling is sought after by the fairies; yet, the idea that a stolen infant might be stolen again by a different fairy is a novelty Shakespeare introduces to the changeling narratives. This second theft is connected with the paternal struggle between two fairies and the rites of passages any boy needs to undergo. Julie Crawford notes that, as well as Titania’s explanation, Oberon’s desires “eroticized master and minion relationships”

(23n156) as both Titania and Oberon's actions stand for an interest in a minion in the social structure. While Titania wishes to possess the child for the sake of a votress, Oberon wants to have the child to be his "henchman." Oberon's desire to turn this little boy into a "henchman" may be considered as a male figure's desire to carry a boy from childhood to manhood different from Titania who carried the boy from the world of humans to the world of fairies. As Kurian states, "Oberon wanting the Indian boy as his "henchman," his "knight" is, once again, only a natural progression as the child grows and can no longer be a page-boy, but can graduate to the retinue of the fairy king. If we continue along this line of argument, then the Indian boy is not being severed from his foster mother but moving from one serving position in a royal household to another" (7). Therefore, it is possible to argue that Oberon's actions and desires revolving around the changeling boy not only stem from the folk belief itself but also reflect a boy's movement from boyhood to manhood.

Moreover, the changeling boy's biological parents and nationality are as important as his current family and location in the midsummer night. As discussed earlier, the changeling boy is also referred to as the Indian boy,¹² an ethnicity that connotes to the unknown, the dangerous, and the exotic for the English audience. As stated by Marion Hollings:

Shakespeare, perhaps following Spenser in *The Faerie Queene*, registers vestiges of the romance tradition's location of "fairy land" in India. Reproducing the rhetoric of the travel narratives, which superimpose the fantastic onto India and vice versa, and owing much to the romance tradition

In travel narratives recounting voyages to the "East," much of the cultural power of "faeries" is projected onto this landscape and its inhabitants, such as unlimited wealth beyond dreams and fantasies of erotic gratification, but also a certain unpredictability and an underlying potential for harm and fear of the unknown—an anxiety rooted in crossing the boundaries of the knowable. (157-58)

¹² The changeling's connection with the Indian identity is especially visible in one of the paintings by Sir Joseph Noel. See Paton, Sir Joseph Noel. *The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania*. 1849. Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh. The changeling figure is represented as an Indian child armed with a bow and dressed in a leopard skin cloth. The changeling's stark contrast with the fairies, who are depicted with fair skins, displays the idea of the exotic Indian with his brown skin colour and exotic apparel. Also, while the changeling figure is supposed to be a victim in folklore, the painting shows him hiding behind Titania while smiling.

In light of this information, Shakespeare uses the assumptions about and connotations of India to mystify the changeling figure by constructing a bridge between the unknown Orient and the unknown location of the stolen child. Therefore, the changeling does not only embody the fear of child abduction by supernatural figures, but also the fear of the potential harm from the unknown Indian land. Hence, Shakespeare imitates the traditional representation of the Orient as a dangerous and exotic place in the medieval literature and Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*.

In addition to its presence as an embodiment of the unknown, Shankar Raman also argues that the changeling figure has imperial and colonial connotations. By comparing the "economy" created through the abduction of the changeling with the economy established between England and India, Raman argues that:

Titania's refusal to repeat Oberon's description of the boy as a *changeling* emphasizes the difference between their respective "economies." For Oberon, the boy must function as a token of exchange, and this function belongs to his essence, as a changeling. Through the enforced exchange of the boy, Oberon's knightly, imperial order is instituted and stabilized, just as the economy of mercantile colonialism in India itself rests upon the fiction of equal and just exchange. (244)

Raman's argument connects the ideas that a stolen child is a commodity, and the English people have a so-called fair trade. This reading provides a different perspective on the reason why Shakespeare chose India as the origin of the changeling boy. Another reading on the colonial aspects of the changeling boy is provided by Kim F. Hall, who argues that the changeling might be considered a representation of a colonial commodity. He states that "Titania and Oberon's domestic quarrel is really a gendered contest over proper control of foreign merchandise. Titania becomes the intractable female who withholds merchandise and upsets the colonial project when she refuses to turn over the boy" (85). According to Hall, the ownership of the changeling boy represents the colonialist activities of England in Eastern communities, and Titania's refusal, in this context, might be considered as a refusal of these activities.

In addition to Raman and Hall's reading of the changeling through colonial economies, another reading on the assimilation accompanying colonialism is also probable. As Kurian argues, the changeling boy in the play "is no longer a child being lovingly brought up by his (foster) mother or godmother: he is already a serving boy in the tradition of black pages, which began sometime in Tudor England" (7). Kurian's suggestion of a connection between the black pages of the early modern period and the changeling boy of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a sign of assimilation, which might also be an influence on Shakespeare's recontextualization of the character. Considering all the connotations the changeling boy, or the Indian boy has about India, it is possible to claim that Shakespeare used the Indian setting to recontextualise the changeling figure to represent the awe, fear and anxiety the Indian land arouses for the European audience while also representing the imperial mercantile practises of the Elizabethan period.

In addition to its colonial and imperial connotations, the changeling figure's connection with India also opens the text up to interpretations concerning his power. In parallel to the previous discussion on the different perspectives concerning the changeling boy and the feminine nature of the fairy kingdom, the changeling figure has the potential to disturb the patriarchal system. In contrast to the imperial and colonial undertones present in the changeling figure, James W. Stone suggests that in the play Shakespeare,

appeals not to this stock of exotic religious and gender stereotypes, but instead to India as a feminist utopia where Titania and her female servant raise together a changeling boy with no assistance or intrusion from any man. Feminist collaborators, the servant labours to give birth to the posthumous child, and Titania labours to raise it as a memorial tribute to its beloved but absent surrogate mother. (100)

Through a focus on the relationship constructed between females, Stone suggests that the Indian origin of the changeling boy is not a way to exotise the figure in order to induce additional awe in the audience but to display a disturbance in the patriarchal society.¹³

¹³ In this regard, Bindu Malieckal's argument about the connection between a community in India and the represented female relationship in the play is noteworthy: "The 'order' to which Titania and the changeling's biological mother belong is similar to the likes of a 'tharavad' or household that in early modern Malabar was owned and inhabited by related women and their offspring. Since female

Considering this function of the changeling boy in relation to the gender struggles in the play, the changeling boy moves from a female space to a male space. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the female space, Amazonia is turned into a male space, Athens. This transition also brings out the patriarchal social order as observed in Theseus' words to Hermia when he states, "What say you, Hermia? Be advis'di fair maid. / To you your father should be as a god" (I.i.46-47) and later "For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself / To fit your fancies to you father's will; / Or else the law of Athens yield you up" (I.i.117-19). Both of these statements are indicators of the patriarchal structure of Athens as Theseus "unsurprisingly, is all for the patriarchal right of the father" (Rowland 41). Yet, the changeling boy's existence resists the establishment of this structure in the fairyland as he belongs to the mother, and therefore, the mother has all the rights to the child.

Oberon's struggle to take the child away from Titania might be considered as a struggle to establish the patriarchal system that is present in human society. Therefore, the changeling boy's liminal location in the fairyland where the matriarchal society of the fairies is in a clash with the new patriarchal society of the human world, and Oberon's struggle to capture the changeling reveal Oberon's attempt to organise the fairyland in accordance with the human society's gender structures. Paradoxically, by doing so, Oberon acts unmanly as "[t]he figure of Oberon, examined through the political lens of Titania's matriarch, serves as a figure of masculine disorder, where he is more aligned with rebellious and disorderly women in the play such as Hermia, who defies the orders of Theseus and her father by running away with Lysander, or Helena, who aggressively pursues her love interest into the forest" (Walters 159). He tries to establish his power by acquiring the changeling boy Titania dearly loves, but "[a]s part of this process, Oberon allows his consort's sexual impulses wide range in straying from him, but he also takes care to control every element of her experience"

members of a 'tharavad' were polyandrous, they were not bound to spouses by marriage in the same way wives were to their husbands in the West or even in the Middle East. This interesting situation was coupled with the fact that a 'tharavad' was not controlled by one head-of-the-household as would be the case in a more conventional domestic setting, so children of a 'tharavad' could boast many mothers" (309). This discussion on the resemblance between the actions of Titania and the tharavad culture has similarities; yet, Shakespeare's knowledge on the subjects is not certain.

(Gleckman 28). In order to let Titania's sexual impulses stray from him, Oberon uses a male human. Subsequently, he gives the following order to Puck:

OBERON. The next thing then she waking looks upon
 (Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull
 On meddling monkey, or on busy ape)
 She shall pursue it with the soul of love. (II.i.179-82)

Oberon's order and Puck's attempts to fulfil it result in the abduction of Bottom. Oberon and Puck put Bottom in the place of the changeling boy. Upon this magical intervention, Titania falls in love with Bottom. She orders her beloved to be brought to her as follows:

TITANIA. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.
 The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye,
 And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
 Lamenting some enforced chastity.
 Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently. (III.i.190-94)

Considering the fact that abduction is a common motif in the changeling narratives, it is possible to argue that Bottom emerges as a second changeling in the play. As Lina Perkins Wilder states, "Oberon's revenge on Titania produces another 'changeling' in Bottom himself, who replaces the 'changeling boy' in Titania's affections: having Bottom, she willingly surrenders the boy to Oberon" (48). Therefore, Oberon tries to assert dominance by humiliating Titania, but he also seeks to acquire the changeling boy from Titania by giving her a replacement, a changeling. The difference between the medieval and the early modern folk representations of the changeling figure is that neither of these figures, the changeling boy or Bottom, is the substituted fairy. Traditionally, the changeling is the fairy or inanimate object that is left behind after the abduction. Nevertheless, Shakespeare does not mention any form of substitution, his recontextualization only focuses on the stolen humans. Therefore, this representation of Bottom as a changeling, just like the changeling boy, is similar to the folk representation; but, it is also a Shakespearean recontextualization. Additionally, the idea of fairies trading changelings is another novelty. As discussed before, fairies are believed to

have humanlike societies, thereby, it is logical to assume that fairies would trade between themselves. In light of this fact, Shakespeare's addition of the "changeling trade" stands as a novelty.

On the Renaissance stage, Bottom's identity as a changeling might arouse awe in the audience as it was frightening. Yet, Shakespeare's contribution to the changeling narrative, Bottom's transformed face, introduces another layer of fear. As Reginald Scot explains:

If I affirme, that with certeine charmes and popifs praiers I can fet an horffe or an asses head upon a mans fshoulders, I shall not be belieeued; or if I doo it, I shall be thought a witch. ... The words used in such case are uncerteine, and to be recited at the pleasure of the witch or coufener. But the conclusion is this: Cut off the head of a horffe or an asse (before they be dead) otherwise the vertue or strength thereof will be the lesse effectually, and make an earthen vessell of fit capacitie to containe the same, and let it be filled with the oile and fat therof; cover it close, and dawbe it over with lome: let it boile over a soft fier threé daies continuallie, that the flesh boiled may run into oile, so as the bare bones may be láene: beate the haire into powder, and mingle the same with the oile; and anoint the heads of the standers by, and they shall séeme to have horffes or asses heads. (315)

His description of a witch transforming a human's head into the head of a horse or an ass is the evidence of the fact that the public of the sixteenth century were familiar with the idea that a witch can transform people's heads into the heads of different animals. Therefore, Bottom's transformation is terrifying for the play's audience. Combined with the fact that the changeling figure was known and feared by the audience, Bottom's transformation, just like his abduction, frightened the audience. This second awe induced by the transformation is another novelty Shakespeare added to the representation of the changeling figure due to the fact that even though people believed that the substitution is a transfigured fairy or inanimate object, the idea that a human might be transformed or put in the likeness of an animal is not a part of the folk belief.

Considering both of these changelings, the changeling boy (or the Indian boy) and Bottom, it might be claimed that Shakespeare recontextualises the changeling narratives. While the folk representations focus on the substitutions left behind and offer protective measures against them, Shakespeare focuses on the humans who are abducted to the fairyland. These

humans are treated and observed differently because while in folk belief stolen humans are considered as valuable goods for the fairies, Shakespeare represents them as sentimentally valuable beings as Titania builds emotional connections with both the changeling boy and Bottom. Additionally, while the transformation of Bottom's head to inspire awe makes the changeling narrative more dreadful, Shakespeare's representation of fairies as small and less harmful beings diminishes the fear. Nonetheless, Shakespeare's recontextualization does not create a completely new changeling figure as he still constructs the changeling boy and Bottom's stories on the fairy abduction motif in changeling narratives. The Shakespearean representation's major difference from the folk representation is the fact that his audience is not informed about the substitution but the abductee because he does not mention how the changelings are substituted, but instead, he focuses on the changeling boy and Bottom as changelings in the fairyland.

In conclusion, the representations of the changeling figures in the plays studied in this chapter display strong resemblances to the folk belief about the changelings which was familiar to the people of the Elizabethan period. While *Misogonus* mostly stays consistent with the folk belief in its representation of the changeling figure, it also uses it to stress the popular beliefs concerning twins and monstrous births, and turns it into an educational tool through representing it in the context of the parable of the prodigal son. While these usages introduce new meanings to the changeling narrative by way of focusing more on the abductee, none of them recontextualises or reimagines the changeling figure altogether. Similarly, William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* includes a changeling figure that is very similar to its representations in the folk belief. Yet, Shakespeare's novelty in representation arises from the perspective it introduces to the changeling narratives: The play displays the life of a changeling boy after his abduction into the fairyland. Additionally, Shakespeare's representation of the changeling figure as an Indian boy who is stolen from a king materialises the fear of the oriental East felt by the English people. Therefore, the Shakespearean changeling figure does not differ totally from the changeling figure familiar to the people of the medieval and the early modern periods. Overall, neither of the analysed

plays recontextualises the figure completely, instead, they intermingle it in accordance with the beliefs of their predecessors and contemporaries.

CHAPTER 2

CHANGELINGS ON THE JACOBEAN STAGE

The second chapter of this thesis focuses on the literary representations of the changeling figure in the dramatic texts produced in the Jacobean period (1603 – 1625). This figure is examined through a comparison between the representations of the mentioned figure in the folk narratives, the medieval period, the Elizabethan period and the Jacobean period. Through the analysis of the selected plays from the Elizabethan period, it can be observed that the representations of changelings on the Elizabethan stage are mostly similar to the representations of them in the folk narratives. There are parallelisms between the folk representations and the theatrical depictions of the changeling figure in the plays of the Elizabethan playwrights; however, contrary to this, this is not observed in the plays written and/or performed in the Jacobean period. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Elizabethan playwrights contextualised changelings in accordance with the folk narratives because they depicted changelings similar to the folk representations of the fairies and changelings. Even if the Jacobean playwrights recontextualised the changeling figure by differing it from the folk narratives, their changelings were still inspired from the folk narratives. Accordingly, this chapter aims to examine the changeling representations in the Jacobean drama in two plays through focusing upon the social changes in the period, the thematic differences of the Jacobean drama from the Elizabethan drama, and the attitudes related to the immigrants, women, and changelings. Hence, this chapter proposes that the change in the changeling representations on the Jacobean stage was the direct consequence of the social, political and religious changes, the idea of self-fashioning, and the increasing fear and interest in the supernatural dominant in this period.

While the selected plays, *The Changeling* (1622) by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, and *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623) by Thomas Middleton (1580 – 1627), William Rowley (1585 – 1626), Thomas Dekker (1572 – 1632) and John Ford (1586 – 1639) are only two of the few

works including the changelings in the Jacobean literature, they are distinctive due to their playwrights' merits in recontextualising the changeling figure. While *The Spanish Gypsy* presents the changeling figure in accordance with the idea of self-fashioning and the prejudices of the English against the minorities in the Jacobean period, *The Changeling* presents the same figure in the context of women in the Jacobean period by utilising the dramatic conventions of the period. Considering the fact that these two plays are not the only ones containing a changeling in the Jacobean period, this chapter occasionally refers to other contemporary literary works in order to analyse the alternation of the changeling figure in this period.

After Queen Elizabeth I's death, James VI of Scotland became King James I of England in 1603. He united Scottish and English thrones and stated that "I am the Husband, and all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife; I am the Head, and it is my Body; I am the Shepherd, and it is my flocke: I hope therefore no man will be so vnreasonable as to thinke that I ... should be a Polygamist and husband to two wiues" (272). His succession to the throne marked the beginning of the Jacobean period. Even though the Jacobean drama was considered a part of the Elizabethan or Stuart dramas until recently, its certain characteristics make it distinctive. On the term "Jacobean Tragedy," John E. Cunningham states as follows:

The term, then, is not a chronological one; rather it is used to denote plays of a certain atmosphere or flavour, and flavour is not easy to describe.

Most of these plays were very closely concerned with death and dying, with the air of the graveyard and the thoughts of men as they reached their end. They are full of powerful, often oppressive, sense of the passing of time, the haste with which everything decays. The natural order in which medieval folk believed everything in the world to be arranged under God's providence is often wildly overthrown; and the minds of many of the characters are overthrown, too. The imagery of the plays is diseased, gloomy, fetid; the verse becomes harsh, crabbed, intense. (89)

Cunningham's description of the tragedies produced in the period displays that the Jacobean tragedies were considerably dark in tone and grave in themes. On Cunningham's ideas, Pascale Aebischer notes that "[i]n such uses of the period descriptors 'Elizabethan' and 'Jacobean,' the latter becomes everything the former is not: decadent, violent, satirical,

derivative” (1). In other words, the Jacobean drama is darker in tone and more serious in subject; thereby, it is a distinctive literary period that should be considered separate from the Elizabethan and Caroline periods.

James I’s succession to the English throne did not only influence the drama, but also provided people with discussions on the nature of witches and fairies which were highly effective on literary productions. James I was very interested in supernatural and especially in witchcraft. In his book *Dæmonologie* (1597), James I describes fairies and changelings as follows:

That fourth kinde of spirites, which by the Gentiles was called *Diana*, and her wandring court, and amongst vs was called the *Phairie* (as I told you) or our good neighboures, was one of the sortes of illusions that was rifest in the time of *Papistrie*: for although it was holden odious to Prophesie by the deuill, yet whome these kinde of Spirites carryed awaie, and informed, they were thought to be sonsiest and of best life. To speake of the many vaine trattles founded vpon that illusion: How there was a King and Queene of *Phairie*, of such a iolly court & train as they had, how they had a teynd, & dutie, as it were, of all goods: how they naturallie rode and went, eate and drank, and did all other actiones like natural men and women: I thinke it liker Virgils *Campi Elysij*, nor anie thing that ought to be beleued by Christians, except in generall, that as I spake sundrie times before, the deuill illuded the senses of sundry simple creatures, in making them beleue that they saw and harde such thinges as were nothing so indeed. (73-74)

Through these statements, James I denotes people’s beliefs and superstitions about fairies such as the circumstance that fairies could steal people. Yet, he does not accept that fairies are real; on the contrary, he claims that the Devil makes people believe in such creatures with illusions. Although James I acknowledges the fact that people believe in fairies and changelings, he associates them with witchcraft in his work. One of the speakers in *Dæmonologie* is asked whether fairies appear to the witches and people or not, and he answers that such creatures might appear to witches and normal people. As the speaker claims, “[t]hey may do to both, to the innocent sort, either to affraie them, or to seeme to be a better sorte of folkes nor vncleane spirites are, and to the Witches, to be a cullour of safetie for them, that ignorant Magistrates may not punish them for it, as I told euen now” (75). Therefore, James I’s description of fairies and the connection he makes between fairies and witches subvert the fairy queen figure included in some Elizabethan works such as *A*

Midsummer Night's Dream and *The Faerie Queene*. The subversion gives the narrative a darker turn, presenting the supernatural queen as a devilish illusion.

King James I's attitude towards the witches and supernatural beings, and consequently towards fairies and changelings, influenced the social, political and literary spheres of England. Wallace Notestein stresses King James' influence on these spheres as follows:

It goes without saying that his position as a sovereign greatly enhanced its influence. This was particularly true after he took the throne of England. The dicta that emanated from the executive of the English nation could not fail to find a wide audience, and especially in England itself. His work offered a text-book to officials. It was a key to the character and methods of the new ruler, and those who hoped for promotion were quick to avail themselves of it. To prosecute witches was to win the sovereign's approval. The judges were prompted to great activity. Moreover, the sanction of royalty gave to popular outbreaks against suspicious women greater consideration at the hands of the gentry. (101)

As argued by Notestein, James I's influence as a monarch caused a great social change. This new prejudice against "suspicious women" might be the reason behind the shift in changeling representations in the Jacobean period. Considering how James I considered fairies as illusions created by devils, it is possible that the Jacobean playwrights considered fairy representations as illusionary, or metaphorical in order not to create representations contrasting James I's claim.

The connection between fairies and witches was also on stage. Minor Latham provides a list of plays displaying such a connection as follows:

On the stage, the connection between the witches and fairies are shown. The weird sisters who had been fairies or goddesses of destiny in Shakespeare's source, appeared in *Macbeth* as witches, practising all the familiar ceremonies of their profession. The witches' power of evil through the aid of the fairies was shown in *The Pilgrim* of Fletcher. The fact of their execution because of their seduction by Robin Goodfellow was mentioned by Ben Jonson in *The Devil is an Ass*; and in *The Sad Shepherd* a witch herself appeared with Puck-Hairy or Robin Goodfellow as the visible source of her power and wickedness. (168)

As seen from Latham's list, the association of witches and fairies entered to English stage by means of some of the most important playwrights of the period. This association of witches

and fairies, the prejudice against everything supernatural and the so-called “suspicious women,” and the obvious connection between changelings and fairies might be inspirations for the Jacobean playwrights. These influences might lead them to recontextualise the figure, separate it from its fairy roots and associate it with moral fall, suspicious women, and change in character.

Apart from the playwrights of the plays studied in this chapter, this period was marked with other famous playwrights like Cyril Tourneur (1575 – 1626), John Webster (1580 – 1632), Francis Beaumont (1585 – 1616), John Fletcher (1579 – 1625), John Marston (1576 – 1634), Ben Jonson (1572 – 1637) and William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616). Although the Jacobean period has various prolific playwrights and dramatic productions, the changeling figure does not appear in many plays produced in this period. Ben Jonson only mentions it in *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), John Webster uses it to depict a deformed child in his *The Devil’s Law-Case* (1620-23), Thomas Dekker makes use of it in his *The Whore of Babylon* (1607), and Shakespeare presents it as an insignificant and minor figure in his *The Winter’s Tale* (1609-11) and *Cymbeline* (1608-10). Obviously, Jonson’s, Webster’s, Dekker’s and Shakespeare’s representations of the changelings are shallower than the plays selected for this study. Thereby, by acknowledging the existence of the changeling representations in these plays, this study focuses only on *The Changeling* and *The Spanish Gypsy* which have a variety of changeling figures that are on the foreground in the plotlines.

2.1 The Representation of the Changeling Figure in *The Changeling* (1622)

The Changeling by William Rowley and Thomas Middleton is a tragedy that was written and performed in the Jacobean period. As Jeffrey Masten points out, “[p]laywrights in the early modern England did write alone ..., but more often they wrote with another playwright, or with several others, or revised or augmented scripts initially produced by others” (357). According to Gerald Bentley:

Collaboration between two or more dramatists, especially professional dramatists, was a common method of composition in the greatest days of the English drama. It was more

common in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, but it was not unusual in the time of Charles I. Well-known collaborations like those of Beaumont and Fletcher or Middleton and Rowley or Shakespeare and Fletcher should not be looked upon as oddities, but as common occurrences in the careers of professional dramatist of the time. (234)

Therefore, the collaboration in the writing process of *The Changeling* was not an exception in the Jacobean period. While collaboration in writing indicates that the play was written by two playwrights, it does not mean that the work they put in was homogenous. Pauline Wiggin claims that some parts of the play were written by (or at least display a certain resemblance to the styles of) different playwrights:

We find then, that in ‘The Changeling,’ as in ‘A Fair Quarrel’ and ‘The Spanish Gipsy,’ the style of different scenes show different characteristics, corresponding to those of Rowley’s style and Middleton’s. Throughout the underplot the character of the fun, the burlesque and horseplay, constantly suggests Rowley; form of expressions recall passages in Rowley plays, and the prominence given to the clown part is characteristic of him. ... In the intervening scenes of the main play, on the other hand, we found great self-restraint in action and expression, and absolute adequacy to the demands of singularly trying situations, and a subtlety of conception and treatment that seemed to be Middleton’s; forms of expression suggested him, and the relentless realism that distinguishes him was noticeable throughout. (49)

Hence, different portions of the play are attributed to two different playwrights. According to Patterson, “[i]t has been common practice since P. G. Wiggin’s 1897 study to attribute to Middleton most of the castle plot, while to Rowley are assigned the hospital plot and the opening and closing scenes of the play” (1632). Yet, Wiggin’s method of analysis depends on metrical analysis that distributes certain stylistic choices to one of the playwrights, and hence has been challenged many times. Samuel Schoenbaum, who considers Rowley a “third-rate dramatist who never in his independent work gave any indication of exceptional talent” (*Middleton* 216), concludes his discussion on Wiggin’s and other critics’ examination of the authorship of the play by stating that “Middleton is responsible for the characterization of the principal figures and the general conduct of the main action, and that he wrote the following scenes: II, i-ii; III, i-ii, iv; IV, i-iii; V, i-ii, Rowley was entrusted with the composition of the first and last scenes and the minor plot —I, i-ii; III, iii; IV, iii; V, iii” (216-7). A similar Middleton favouritism is apparent in T. S. Eliot’s comment on the play. He favours Middleton as follows:

In poetry, in dramatic technique, *The Changeling* is inferior to the best plays of Webster. But in the more essence of tragedy it is safe to say that in this play Middleton is surpassed by one Elizabethan alone, and that is Shakespeare. In some respects in which Elizabethan tragedy can be compared to French or to Greek tragedy *The Changeling* stands above every tragic play of its time, except those of Shakespeare. (88)

His comment focuses on the genius of Middleton and does not mention Rowley's contribution. By excluding the inconclusive discussion on which the playwright wrote which part of the play, this study accepts that the play is co-written by two playwrights, and thereby refers to them as co-playwrights.

Before the discussion on the representation of the changeling figure, the plot of the play can be summarised as follows: Beatrice falls in love with Alsemero, yet her father wishes her to marry Alonzo. In order to get rid of Alonzo, Beatrice convinces De Flores to kill him and then to leave the country. After De Flores kills Alonzo, he brings back his finger with a ring on it. Beatrice offers De Flores money for his service, but he refuses because De Flores is in love with Beatrice and wants to have sexual intercourse with her. While Beatrice tries to use her social status to deny De Flores' request, he claims that they are now equals as they are partners in the murder. As Beatrice is blackmailed by De Flores, she has no other option than to have sex with him. After Beatrice marries Alsemero, Beatrice is afraid to have sex with him as she is no longer a virgin. Alsemero gets suspicious about Beatrice's chastity, and gives her a potion that reveals a person's virginity. She fakes the symptoms and convinces Alsemero that she is a virgin. Later, Beatrice makes Diaphanta, her helper, have sex with Alsemero as she is still a virgin. Diaphanta is supposed to come back by midnight to conceal her identity from Alsemero in the dark, but when she does not, Beatrice suspects that she enjoys the intercourse. De Flores suggests burning down her chamber and forcing her to come there. Beatrice accepts the offer and implies that she is in love with De Flores. After Diaphanta arrives at her chamber, De Flores kills her and brings her burned body to the stage. Later on, Beatrice's father Vermandero announces that the murderers of Alonzo are found. The so-called murderers he refers to are the characters of the subplot that takes place in a madhouse. In the subplot, Antonio and Fernando enter the madhouse in disguise of madmen in order to have sex with Isabella, madhouse owner Alibius's wife. They are accused of being

murderers as their disguises are revealed and it is known that they broke into a madhouse. However, this claim is quickly disproven. After Jasperino and Alsemero see Beatrice and De Flores in a garden, Alsemero accuses Beatrice of lying and cheating with De Flores. Beatrice confesses having used De Flores for the murder of Alonzo, but she also says that she did it just for Alsemero's love. This does not prevent Alsemero's locking her up. Alsemero faces De Flores and tries to make him admit the murder. As De Flores thinks that Beatrice betrayed him, he confesses their intercourse. Alsemero locks him up with Beatrice. Beatrice comes out with a knife wound and confesses that she previously sent Diaphanta to Alsemero's bed. De Flores admits the murder and stabs himself. Before dying, Beatrice asks for forgiveness. The play concludes with a discussion on how characters change. As seen from the summary, many characters undergo changes and the co-playwrights emphasise these changes both in the dialogues and by recontextualising the changeling figure as the embodiment of change. Hence, it is not possible to talk about a single changeling in the play. Beatrice and De Flores might be argued to be the main changelings in the play as their fall into madness and sin is the focal point of the play; yet, Alsemero, Antonio, Alonzo's brother Tomazo, and Antonio's friend Franciscus can also be considered as changelings due to the fact that they also experience change in the play.

The play is titled *The Changeling* but the only direct mention of the changeling is in the title and the characters list included in the first edition of the play. In the 1653 edition of the play, on the list of *Drammatis Personæ*, Antonio is specified as The Changeling (Middleton and Rowley np). According to N. W. Bawcutt, from the specific meaning of the word "changeling," a stolen and substituted child, "derived the use of the word simply as an equivalent for 'idiot,' as in the play, where Antonio is 'The Changeling,' though he is never referred to by this name in the actual text of the play" (3). Accordingly, Antonio is referred to as an idiot in a stage direction that announces "*Enter Pedro, and Antonio like an idiot*" (1643). Therefore, this reference is more in line with the fool tradition of theatre, rather than the changeling narratives of the Elizabethans. Yet, such an explanation limits the meanings of changeling. While the word was used to refer to idiots, it still embodies the idea of change

and exchange; thereby, the play *The Changeling* is to be examined in the context of change in order to analyse its representation and recontextualization of the changeling figure.

The play was put on stage with the same title, *The Changeling* which indicates that the play is somehow connected to the changeling figure. As discussed before, the word “changeling” also acquired the meaning of “idiot.” Considering the title in relation to this meaning of the word, it might refer to the idiot characters in the play who mostly act in the comic subplot. People in the Asylum subplot might be considered as idiots, or at least, they can be observed as people who act like an idiot. Yet, considering the fact that the play focuses on the change in characters as stressed at the very end of it, it is possible to argue that the co-playwrights recontextualised the changeling figure by separating the idea of change and imposter from the motif of substitution, and turned it into a reference to changes people experienced. This is what Catherine A. Hébert also states. For her, “[t]he title has, therefore, at least dual significance and applies not only to the idiots, real and feigned, of the comic subplot, generally viewed as the work of Rowley, but also the tragic main plot, primarily the work of Middleton” (66). Therefore, the significance of the title both lies in its reference to the idiots of the subplot, and the changes in characters in the main plot.

The main plot focuses on Beatrice’s downfall from a respectable noblewoman to an immoral, corrupt murderer. This is connected with the meaning of the word in the early modern England when the Quakers were referred to as changelings as they were different from the others and from their own previous selves. As discussed previously in this study, the Quakers were also referred to as changelings, due to the fact that they change from people who believe in the Anglican doctrine to religious dissenters. Similarly, Beatrice experiences such an internal change rather than the external exchange the changeling figure experiences in the folk narratives. The moral change Beatrice has experienced is expressed in Alsemero’s statement at the end of the play along with the changes experienced by the other characters. Alsemero explains the changes as follows:

ALSEMERO. What an opacous body had that moon

That last changed on us! Here's beauty changed
 To ugly whoredom; here, servant-obedience
 To a master-sin: imperious murder!
 I, a supposed husband, changed embraces
 With wantonness, but that was paid before.
 [*To Tomazo*] Your change is come too: from an ignorant wrath
 To knowing friendship. —Are there any more on's? (V.iii.196-203)

The play comes to an end with Alsemero's listing the changes experienced by the characters. Their changes are stressed, and those who changed are exposed. Considering all these characters who experience a change throughout the play as recontextualization of the changelings in the folk narratives, the title of the play might be read as a reference to multiple characters in the play, in contrast to the 1653 folio which suggests Antonio as the only changeling.

The first character whose change is mentioned by Alsemero is Beatrice. In the beginning, Beatrice is depicted as a moral character, but in the end, she dies as a woman who ordered her fiancé's death, a woman who couldn't protect her chastity, and a woman who made another woman sleep with her husband. Therefore, the lines "That last changed on us! Here's beauty changed / To ugly whoredom" (V.iii.197-98) refer to her change from a virtuous lady to a wicked one. Hence, through this change "Beatrice is the central 'changeling,' and her fickleness, occasioned by immaturity and pampered wilfulness, has begun for her a process of progressive degradation, ... —in a sense to become in some degree a 'changeling' too" (Hébert 66). Her transition from a moral woman pursuing love to an immoral woman who would commit any crime to acquire what she wishes is a complex process. According to Henry E. Jacobs, her transition consists of three stages: "(1) a shift from loving Alonzo to hating him and loving Alsemero, (2) a shift from hating De Flores to accepting him, and (3) a final shift from loving Alsemero to fearing him and loving De Flores" (656-57). The stages of Beatrice's change are embedded in her immoral pursuit of love. Beatrice's submission to her love, lust and madness pushes her to a point of no return. Therefore, her change from a

moral character to a wicked one exemplifies the new recontextualization of the changeling figure on an ethical level. After Beatrice's moral downfall starts, De Flores states her irreversible change as follows:

DE FLORES. Look but into your conscience; read me there.

'This a true book; you'll find me there your equal.

Push! Fly not to your birth, but settle your

In what the act has made you. You're no more now;

You must forget your parentage to me.

You're the deed's creature; by that name you lost

Your first condition, and I challenge you (III.iv.135-41)

In his statement, De Flores puts forward that Beatrice's sin caused her change, now her noble birth is meaningless, and she is no longer a beautiful and noble woman, but she is what her actions turned her into. Additionally, the dialogue between Alsemero and De Flores also stresses the same kind of change as follows:

DE FLORES. It could not be much more:

'Twas but one thing, and that is she's a whore.

ALSEMERO. It could not choose but follows. O cunning devils!

How should blind men know you from fair-faced saints? (V.iii.106-109)

While the recontextualization of the changeling maintains the idea that a beautiful and healthy person is lost and changed with a monster, it excludes the idea of substitution. Beatrice is not substituted, instead, her change comes from within, and her own decisions and lust turn her into a changeling. Furthermore, after learning Beatrice's sin, Alsemore states "'Twas in my fears at first; 'twill have it now, / O, thou art all deformed!" (V.III.76-7). This statement is a reminiscence of changelings' deformed bodies; therefore, the co-playwrights mix the moral deformities and changeling deformities, thereby recontextualise the figure even further. Finally, Beatrice also accepts this change, "[a]dmitting at long last that she is the whore that others perceive her to be ..." (Sugimura 259) when she states that "'Tis time to die when 'this a shame to live. (*Dies*)" (V.iii.177). Thus, Beatrice's change from "beauty"

to “whoredom” is an indicator of the alteration of the changeling figure in which the child substitution motif in the folk narratives is replaced with an internal, moral decomposition that results in an immoral figure left in the place of a pure virgin.

The second changeling described by Alsemero as someone who has “servant-obedience / To a master-sin: imperious murder!” (V.iii.198-99) is De Flores, a previous servant turned into an immoral monster who kills, rapes and lies due to his lust. At the beginning of the play, De Flores is a servant who is in love with Beatrice. De Flores’ change is intermingled with Beatrice’s moral deterioration as Beatrice’s every step towards Alsemero, “draws her closer to De Flores, and every turn brings her back to the starting place, so that she must commit again the crimes that wed her to De Flores” (Ornstein 186). When Beatrice uses her sexuality and beauty on De Flores, she ignites his change. De Flores kills Alonzo and Diaphanta cold-heartedly in order to gain his love’s favour. While Beatrice uses De Flores’ love for her to make him kill Alonzo, she does not want, at least at the beginning, to have sex with De Flores. As Joost Daalder states, De Flores “is dangerously deluded in supposing that she seeks his help in killing Alonzo because she wishes to seek a union with him. In fact, at the end of this scene, both characters are revealed as living in a fantasy world” (11-12). This delusional state of mind of De Flores is aggravated by Beatrice’s requests, even though he, from the beginning of the play, implies a desire for a sexual relationship with Beatrice. Therefore, even if De Flores is not a sane character at the beginning, in the end, he turns into a monster who can assault anyone for lust. According to Henry E. Jacobs, “... De Flores becomes perhaps the most important character in the play. He is not only a changeling but also a creator of changelings. As the symbolic serpent, he introduces death into Vermandero’s castle. Moreover, he moves through the play as an angel (or devil) of death, producing change in whatever he touches” (674). Therefore, his downfall to madness and sin, or his transformation that renders him a changeling produces new changelings in the play by introducing changes in the lives of the other characters. Additionally, De Flores is described by Beatrice as an “omnious ill-faced fellow” who “disturbs me / Than all my other passions” (II.i.52-53). This “ill-face” is caused by “the heat of the liver” (II.ii.80), which means that De Flores’ physical deformity is caused by a disease. Therefore, in addition to De Flores’ change,

his physical deformity also reminds the audience of the physical deformities in the folk narratives about changelings; yet, in contrast to folk narratives, his deformities do not appear after he changes. Within this context, De Flores' fall into immorality and crime is the result of the recontextualization of the changeling figure, because the malicious fairy left in substitution of a healthy infant is replaced with a criminal servant whose services turn sinful for the sake of carnal desires.

Alsemero names himself as the third person who experienced a change in the play. His change is not a result of his immoral actions like the ones mentioned before, but is the result of Beatrice's trickery. His statement, "I, a supposed husband, changed embraces / With wantonness, but that was paid before" (V.iii.200-201) is a reference to the fact that Beatrice sends her servant Diaphanta to their marriage bed instead of having intercourse with her husband herself. Her desire to conceal her infidelity causes Alsemero to commit adultery. Therefore, Alsemero changes from a husband to a stranger to his wife, and hitherto might be considered as another changeling in the play. Later, Alsemero addresses to Tomazo and states, "Your change is come too: from an ignorant wrath / To knowing friendship" (V.iii.202-203). Hence, he refers to the fact that Tomazo who gets caught up with a vengeful fury after getting informed about his brother's murder returns into sanity. The following statement by Tomazo after everything is revealed and the murderers are dead, reveals his change:

TOMAZO. Sir, I am satisfied: my injuries
 Lie dead before me. I can exact no more
 Unless my soul were loose, and could o'ertake
 Those black fugitives that are fled from thence,
 To take a second vengeance; but there are wraths
 Deeper than mine, 'this to be feared, about 'em. (V.iii.190-95)

He sincerely states that his injuries have healed, and his desire for revenge is satisfied. As A. L. Kistner and M. K. Kistner suggest, while "De Flores and Beatrice who by completely submitting to their passions, take the irretrievable step into madness," Alsemero and Tomazo

“temporarily lose their reason and can be restored to sanity” (41). Therefore, Tomazo’s change, and thereby his changeling identity, is a result of his turn back to sanity, or the treatment of his curable madness. Hence, his change is different from the previously mentioned changelings. While the others change from good to bad, moral to immoral, and sanity to madness; Tomazo moves from madness into sanity. Such a representation further modifies the changeling figure because while the folk narratives describe the fairy abduction and substitution as a move from beautiful and healthy to ugly and troublesome, Tomazo’s change is the exact opposite.

After Alsemero’s statement about the changes experienced by himself and Tomazo, two other characters declare that they are changelings, too. These are Antonio, the character who is named as the changeling in the 1653 folio, and Franciscus, his friend. Both characters are functional in the subplot of the play, and they act like madmen in the madhouse scenes. They announce their changes as follows:

ANTONIO. Yes, sir: I was changed too, from a little ass as
I was, to a great fool as I am; and had like to ha’
been changed to the fallows, but that you know my
innocence always excuses me.

FRANCISCUS. I was changed from a little wit to be stark mad,
Almost for the same purpose. (V.iii.203-208)

Their statements are comical considering the fact that they acted mad while the characters of the main plot, namely Beatrice and De Flores descend into real madness. Considering Antonio is the fool of the play, and the fact that he was referred as the changeling in the 1653 folio due to his being the fool, his statement that he also changed might be read as another amendment of the changeling figure. The substitution with a changeling is again replaced with a change in the character, yet the co-playwrights intermingle this with the fool tradition of drama by representing the changeling figure as a character who only acts like a fool.

Finally, Alibus, another character in the subplot might be considered a changeling due to his promise of change in the future, and he is added to Alsemero's list of those who change. This character experiences little change compared to Beatrice and De Flores; yet, he is still represented as a changeling. Alibus' future transformation is mentioned by Isabella, his wife as follows:

ISABELLA. [*to Alibus*] Your change is still behind,

But deserve best your transformation.

You are a jealous coxcomb; keep schools of folly,

And teach your scholars how to break your own

head.

ALIBIUS. I see all apparent, wife, and will change now

Into a better husband, and never keep

Scholars that shall be wiser than myself. (V.iii.209-14)

His promise to change into a better husband in the future, similar to Antonio and Franciscus'; is ironic in a scene where murder and adultery are revealed. Yet still, due to his promise, Alibus might be considered one of the changelings, even if his change does not take place in the course of the play.

In addition to considering the transformations experienced by the characters in the play as recontextualizations of the changeling figure in the folk narratives, it can also be argued that the changeling figure is used to empower the patriarchal system. Cristina Malcolmson argues as follows:

... Thomas Middleton appealed to Parliamentary opposition to Stuart policy by objecting to James's plans for a Spanish marriage two years before *A Game at Chesse*, in fact in *The Changeling* in 1622. But the strategy of *The Changeling* suggests that Middleton's work is far more patriarchal in a traditional sense than these characterizations would imply. *The Changeling* examines hierarchical relations in terms of male control over women and the institution of marriage, and in doing so subverts its own potential for a truly radical critique of 'state power and ideology.' (320-21)

Considering from this perspective, accepting that Middleton and Rowley favoured traditional gender hierarchy, it is possible to argue that the negative connotation of the word

“changeling” is also invoked by the co-playwrights. As an awe-inspiring figure, the changeling figure in the folk narratives haunted the medieval and the early modern audiences with horror. It was something unwanted, unwelcomed, and feared. In the light of this argument, only Beatrice and De Flores can be accepted as the changelings of the play as they are represented as immoral sinners who bring destruction to the lives of the other characters by defying the hierarchical roles they have: Beatrice defies his father by rejecting the marriage he arranges, and De Flores defies his master by assuming a new master for the sake of possessing Beatrice’s body. Their rejection of the hierarchical order ends in punishment, and both of them die in a shameful manner as their sins are announced in front of other characters. Therefore, Middleton and Rowley, by including the changeling figure in their play, according to Malcolmson, supported the traditional hierarchical and patriarchal structures of the early modern England, and invoke the negative connotations of the changeling figure to denounce the characters that defy these structures.

In conclusion, *The Changeling* includes numerous changelings, but these changelings are different from the ones in folk narratives. The child substitution motif is removed, and replaced with the change in morals and characters. Therefore, Thomas Middleton and William Rowley use the changeling figure that was very well known by the public, and was recently popularised in William Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* in order to represent changes in the characters. This recontextualization disassociates the figure with children, and associates it with adults. Such a recontextualization was a novelty as it removed the child substitution motif in the traditional changeling narratives. These “evolved changelings” are closer to the ones James I described in his *Dæmonologie*. Instead of holding troublesome fairies responsible for the inexplicable changes in the characters, the play presents the delusional characters’ change and the changes they initiate in the people around them, reminding James I’s claim that the fairies were delusions constructed by the devils. Hence, the changelings created by Middleton and Rowley display major differences from the changelings in the folk narratives. Thereby, the changeling in the Jacobean play is recontextualised as a figure who experiences a change and transformation, instead of being a figure of substitution.

2.2 The Representation of the Changeling Figure in *The Spanish Gypsy* (1623)

The Spanish Gypsy by Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker and John Ford is a Jacobean play intermingling gypsies, rape, marriage, and concealed identities. In a study published in 1924, H. Dugdale Sykes claims that the play was not composed by Middleton but by Ford. He puts forward this idea as follows:

Although, so far as I can find, no critic has heretofore questioned the ascription to Middleton and Rowley of *The Spanish Gypsy* I have long doubted whether Middleton had any hand in this play, finding it utterly dissimilar in style from his other dramatic work, whether assigned to him alone or to Middleton and Rowley. Recently a prolonged study of Middleton's plays converted my doubts into a feeling of absolute certainty that he was in no way concerned in *The Spanish Gypsy*, either as original author or reviser. ... The internal evidence is at least sufficient to show that *The Spanish Gypsy* is substantially Ford's play, that henceforth it should be included among his dramatic works and excluded from Middleton's. (11-12)

Hence, Sykes argues that the artistic qualities of the play do not display similarities with Middleton's canon, instead, they are similar to the style of Ford. This statement is backed by another critic, T. S. Eliot who states that "Middleton remains merely a collective name for a number of plays —some of which, like *The Spanish Gipsie*, are patently by other people" (85). Even though Sykes is incorrect in his claim about Middleton, he is most certainly correct about Ford's contribution. The play was written by a collaboration of the four playwrights as contemporary studies suggest. Suzanne Gossett, who wrote an introduction to the play in *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (2007) published by Oxford University Press, explains the contributions of the playwrights as follows:

Ford was probably responsible for the rape plot (1.3, 1.5.1-74, 2.2.1-118, 3.2.242-300, 3.3, 5.1.1-126, 5.3.1-95). Thomas Dekker is most evident in 2.1, 2.2.119-75, 3.1, the songs in 3.2 (82-113, 197-217), and 4.1.1-148. Rowley seems to have written 4.3, and may also be responsible for parts of Soto's role. Middleton's hand has been most confidently identified in 1.5.73-127, 3.2.114-94, 4.1.149-210, and 4.2, but he may also be responsible for other elements of the Don Juan/Preciosa plot (1.4, 2.1.104-13). (1723)

Even though Lukas Erne comments on the division made in the Oxford edition of Middleton's works and states that it is "so detailed that much seems necessarily speculative"

(497), considering the fact that the collaboration among playwrights was a common practise then, this study thereby refers to these four playwrights as the co-playwrights.

There are not any traditional changelings in the play, instead, the figure is only mentioned by the characters and is altered by the co-playwrights. This renewed changeling figure, as in *The Changeling*, is different from the changelings in the folk narratives. While in *The Changeling* the figure is the embodiment of the changes in the characters, in *The Spanish Gypsy*, what a changeling stands for is shaped through self-fashioning and the popular perceptions of the gypsies in the seventeenth century England, the former through Pretiosa, the latter through Don Juan. Therefore, this novel changeling figure is examined through self-fashioning which was popular in the early modern period and the perceptions about the gypsies in England during the seventeenth century.

Before discussing how the changeling figure is represented and what it stands for in the play, as well as how it differs from the Elizabethan representation and the ones in *The Changeling*, the plot of the play is summarised as follows. At the beginning of the play, Roderigo sees Clara walking with her family and decides to kidnap her as he is struck by her beauty. After kidnapping her, Roderigo rapes Clara but feels remorse and decides to let her go. Before she leaves, she steals a crucifix from his room. Roderigo's friend who helps kidnapping her later realises that the girl they kidnapped is actually the girl he was courting. Next, the gypsy Preciosa and the other gypsies in Madrid appear. Both Sancho and Don Juan court her, and Don Juan asks her hand in spite of the difference in their social status. Preciosa convinces Don Juan to live among the gypsies for two years so that he can marry her. Luis tries to court Clara, but she is reluctant. Luis and Clara's father talk about how years ago Luis' father was killed by Alvarez who still lives in exile. Sancho runs away to join the gypsies, later, Roderigo who still feels remorse for his crime, decides to join Sacho. The gypsies perform a play in Don Juan's father's house. While passing by, Clara is injured near Roderigo's father's house, and she is taken in. She realises that this is the same house she was previously raped in, and reveals the crime to Roderigo's father, Fernando. Gypsies arrive at Fernando's house, and he asks them to perform a play he wrote. He gives the lead role to his son Roderigo to

act a man who has to marry an ugly woman. During the performance, Andrew (Don Juan) gets arrested due to a fight. Fernando reveals the fact that Roderigo's role is to be real, and he now has to marry an ugly heiress. Roderigo says that he wishes to marry a beautiful woman he sees during the performance, and his father agrees. It is revealed that this woman is Clara, but Roderigo does not recognise her as she was wearing a veil when she was kidnapped and raped. Fernando forces Roderigo to confess his crime and his desires to marry his victim. This is heard by Clara's family who reveals the truth behind their marriage. Preciosa comes to Fernando to beg for forgiveness for Don Juan. Eugenia, wife of Father reveals that Andrew is Don Juan and the leader of the group is Alvarez in disguise. Also, she reveals that she is married to Alvarez, and that she is actually Fernando's missing sister. Moreover, she reveals that Preciosa is Fernando's daughter. The play ends with Preciosa and Don Juan's marriage.

The only direct mention of the changeling figure in the play is in the dialogue between Father and Preciosa:

FATHER. Thou art my noble girl! A-many dons
 Will not believe but that thou art a boy
 In woman's clothes —and to try that conclusion,
 To see if thou be'st alchemy or no,
 They'll throw down gold in musses. But, Preciosa,
 Let these proud sakers and gyrfalcons fly;
 Do not thou move a wing. Be to thyself
 Thyself, and not a changeling.

PRECIOSA. How! Not a changeling?
 Yes, father, I will play the changeling:
 I'll change myself into a thousand shapes
 To court our brave spectators; I'll change my postures
 Into a thousand different variations
 To draw even ladies' eyes to follow mine;
 I'll change my voice into a thousand tones

To chain attention. Not a changeling, father?

None but myself shall play the changeling. (II.i.98-113)

Contrary to the plays examined in Chapter 1, the play does not include any abduction and/or a change from beautiful to monstrous. Instead, the changeling figure is used to depict a transformation that is voluntary in nature. Preciosa accepts being a changeling, and assumes such an identity for herself. Such a presentation is a novelty considering the fact that it is completely separated from the idea of child abduction that was very prominent in the medieval and the early modern representations. Hence, the changeling in *The Spanish Gypsy* is an altered version of the folk changelings. This subverts the traditional involuntary exchange of a troublesome supernatural being because the changeling here assumes an identity willingly by means of self-fashioning.

In order to understand the reason for Preciosa's answer to Father, and her being addressed as a changeling in their dialogue, the idea of self-fashioning in the Renaissance drama is to be examined as it is also employed in the Jacobean play. Stephen Greenblatt explains the emergence of the idea of self-fashioning as follows:

As a term for the action or process of making, for particular features or appearance, for a distinct style or pattern, the word had been long in use, but it is in the sixteenth century that *fashion* seems to come into wide currency as a way of designating the forming of a self. This forming may be understood quite literally as the imposition upon a person of physical form ... But, more significantly for our purposes, fashioning may suggest the achievement of a less tangible shape: a distinctive personality, a characteristic address to the world, a consistent mode of perceiving and behaving. (2)

According to Greenblatt's claim, the idea of fashion, and thereby self-fashioning, is about constructing a different personality or character which is consistent in itself. The idea reached its maturity in the sixteenth century, even though it had been used for a very long time.¹⁴ Additionally, Greenblatt states that "self-fashioning occurs at the point of encounter between an authority and an alien, that what is produced in this encounter partakes of both the

¹⁴ For a discussion on the medieval self-fashioning and its representation in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, see Bayıltılmış Ögütücü, Oya. "Medieval Self-Fashioning: Identity Performances in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*." Diss. Hacettepe University. 2016.

authority and the alien that is marked for attack, and hence that any achieved identity always contains within itself the signs of its own subversion or loss” (9). Therefore, for Greenblatt, self-fashioning arises from an encounter between an authoritative figure and an outcast. Considered from this perspective, Preciosa’s self-fashioning is a means of resistance against Father, the authority which locates Preciosa as the alien. The fact that the co-playwrights use the changeling figure in relation to self-fashioning is in line with Greenblatt’s argument about aliens, because traditionally the changeling figure is associated with a troublesome supernatural being, an alien which is left in substitution for a real person. Hence, Preciosa’s self-fashioned changeling identity is a novelty, as even though the changeling figure has been associated with “the other,” it has not been attributed previously or associated with any resistance against authority.

Additionally, reading this self-fashioning from the perspective of witch trials and the social context of the Jacobean period provides another perception on the issue. Stephanie Irene Spoto argues that “[i]mages of witches mirror and invert stereotypes of typical female domestic roles, and some women would voluntarily choose to identify with the figure which was causing fear and alarm in their society, as witch trials were often the only way that women’s issues were given a stage and a public outlet” (53-54). Considering this argument, utilising the changeling narrative, which is intermingled with witchcraft, provides Preciosa with an opportunity to protest against her passive role in society. Thereby, this folk figure is used as a tool to reflect the male fears and to reject the male authority. However, changelings in the folk narratives of the medieval and the Elizabethan literature were passive victims, as both the child taken and the fairy left faced violence. Taken into consideration from this perspective, Preciosa’s self-fashioned changeling identity, and its relation to authority in the play are, thereby, novel. Hence, this new changeling figure requires further examination in order to understand why it is chosen as a counter-authority performance in the play.

The association of the changeling identity and female autonomy is extant in the scenes following the dialogue between Father and Preciosa about the changelings. As discussed in the previous paragraph, Preciosa’s self-fashioning as a changeling, or to use Greenblatt’s

terminology, as an alien, renders Preciosa as a monster acting out of the social norms of the seventeenth century. Although Clara is raped and set free, Preciosa has the ability to deny a suitor, or make deals with them in relation to marriage. After Preciosa declares herself a changeling in Act II Scene I, she makes a deal with Don Juan as follows:

PRECIOSA. Marry me? Eat a chicken ere it be out o'th' shell?

I'll wear no shackles. Liberty is sweet; that I have, that
I'll hold. Marry me? Can hold and lead mix together? a
diamond and a button of crystal fit one ring? You are
too high for me, I am too low; you too great, I too little.

EUGENIA [*to Juan*] I pray, leave her, sir, and take your gold
again.

PRECIOSA. [*to Juan*] Or if you dote, as you say, let me try
you: do this.

JUAN. Anything; kill the great Turk, pluck out the Mogul's
eye-teeth! In earnest, Preciosa, anything!

PRECIOSA. Your task is seen set down: turn Gypsy for two
years. Be one of us. If in that time you mislike not me,
nor I you, here's my hand. Farewell. [*Exit*] (II.ii.252-65)

In this dialogue, Preciosa denies her suitor's hand, and proposes an exchange: her hand in return for two years of exile. She clearly states that she considers marriage as captivity, and thereby does not wish to be in chains. Instead, she proposes to strip her suitor of his class, and thereby his superiority, by turning him into a gypsy. As Buccola explains, "she strikes a bargain with him that strips him of his presumptive class (and gender) superiority over her" ("None but Myself" 184). Therefore Preciosa, a character who self-fashions herself into a changeling, displays a resistance against the patriarchal norms, as she denies a suitor that is—at the time of the dialogue— superior to her in class and sex. Hence, the play presents the changeling figure in the context of self-fashioning and renders the terror-inflicting figure of the Middle Ages into a figure that resists the social norms. Therefore, it might be suggested that the co-playwrights of *The Spanish Gypsy* produce this folk figure by stripping it of the

child substitution narrative and the changes experienced by the characters in *The Changeling*, and turn it into a figure of resistance against the authority in accordance with the idea of self-fashioning.

Thus, Preciosa's self-fashioned identity produces another changeling through her resistance against the authority of Don Juan. As mentioned above, Preciosa convinces Don Juan to live like a gypsy for two years. As Don Juan accepts the deal, he willingly leaves his identity behind and assumes the identity of a gypsy. Hence, Don Juan's transformation is a reminiscence of the changelings in folklore. He is, in a way, "stolen" from the society he belongs to when he is persuaded by Preciosa to give up his noble identity. Hence, he is "abducted" into a society he does not belong to, and hence he is forced to join a group of people associated with criminality and trouble. Brayn Reynolds explains the stereotypical attributions to the gypsies as follows:

By the 1620s the floating signifier 'gypsy,' which was short of 'Egyptian,' had become a totalizing catchphrase or euphemism for members of early modern England's criminal culture. ... [I]n spite of its implicit reference to all members of criminal culture, the signifier 'gypsy' usually denoted people who travelled nomadically in groups, had dark skin, read fortunes, were performers, and acquired a reputation for immorality. The connotation or signified to the signifier 'gypsy' was the paganism, sorcery, nomadism, profane sexuality, theatricality, deception, thievery, indeed, the multifarious criminality, the 'gypsyism' with which 'gypsy' is typically associated in literary texts, statutes, legal records, and personal letters of the period. (23)

According to Reynolds' explanation about the attributions of the word "gypsy," and the stereotypical understandings of gypsies in England throughout the early modern period, it is possible to argue that there is a parallelism between the folk understanding of the fairies and the early modern understanding of the gypsies. Just like the gypsies, fairies were believed to be a troublesome group of beings that were harmful to society, could use magic, would deceive and steal. Thereby, Don Juan's involvement into the gypsy group offers parallelisms with the narratives about abductions into the fairyland. Therefore, the parallelism constructed between the gypsies as a minority in England and fairies through the changeling figure renders Don Juan as the second changeling in the play which recontextualises the changeling narrative by separating its roots from the fairy lore and constructing a new image of it in

relation to the gypsy culture, even though Don Juan is never referred to as a changeling in the play.

Similar to the identification of Don Juan as a changeling, Preciosa, as well as Father and Eugenia might be considered as changelings because of their being associated with the fairy lore through the gypsy culture. At the end of the play, the real identities of Preciosa, Father and Eugenia are revealed. Preciosa is Fernando's daughter, Eugenia is his sister, and Father is Alvarez in exile. While Father's and Eugenia's identities are constructed through their self-fashioning, Preciosa's real identity is revealed by Eugenia as follows:

EUGENIA. And to that sister's charge you did commit

Your infant daughter—in whose birth your wife,
Her mother, died.

FERNANDO. Woman, thou art too cruel!

PRECIOSA. What d'ye mean, grannam? 'Las, the nobleman
Grows angry!

...

EUGENIA. Your child and sister,
As you supposed, were drowned.

FERNANDO. Drowned, talking creature!
'Supposed'?

EUGENIA. They live. Fernando, from my hand,
Thy sister's hand, receive thine own Constanza,
The sweetest, best child living. (V.iii.21-29)

What is revealed in this dialogue has parallelisms with the folk narratives including changelings because they also have the similar motifs of losing an infant after birth, a child lost and then found, a child brought into an "exotic" society, and, the stress on the beauty of the lost child. Considering Preciosa's self-fashioned changeling identity, and the parallelisms drawn between the fairies and the gypsies, it is apparent that Preciosa was, in fact, a changeling even before she self-fashioned herself into a changeling. Similar to Preciosa,

other characters like Father, Eugenia, Don Juan, Roderigo, Sato, and Sancho change their identities to that of the gypsies. The transition to gypsydom is presented in the play as follows:

OMNES. [*sing*] King can have but coronations;

We are as proud of Gypsy-fashions.

Dance, sing, and in a well-mixed border

Close this new brother of our order.

FATHER. What we get, with us come share;

You to get must vow to care—

Nor strike Gypsy, nor stand by

When strangers strike, but fight or die.

Our Gypsy-wenches are not common;

You must not kiss a fellow's leman—

Nor to your own (for one you must)

In songs send errands of base lust.

OMNES. [*sing*] Dance, sing, and in a well-mixed border

Close this new brother of our order.

JUAN. On this turf of grass I vow

Your laws to keep, your laws allow. (IV.i.42-57)

This ceremony functions for not only changing Don Juan's mindset, but also his social standing; thus, he experiences a change which is both personal and public. In addition to Don Juan, there are other characters in the play who join the gypsy group. As Preciosa was changed when she was a child and self-fashioned herself as a non-traditional changeling, it is possible to argue that all the characters who become gypsies in the play might be considered as changelings even though they do not identify themselves as changelings. Despite the fact that only Preciosa is mentioned as a changeling, other characters follow the same pattern of leaving their real identity behind and joining an "exotic" folk. Therefore, it might be suggested that these changelings are similar to the ones in *The Changeling*, because they are depicted as the embodiments of change in social standing. Yet, different from the

ones in *The Changeling*, their transformation is not a transition from pure to evil, but from nobility to gypsydom.

There are secret identities and stolen children in the source text of the play; yet, since the co-playwrights add the changelings into the plot, they also add the fairy lore to the play. According to Suzanne Gossett, “[t]he heart of the Juan/Preciosa/Cardochia plot comes from ... Cervantes’s *Novellas Exemplars, La Gitanilla*” (1724). The story and the name of Preciosa are quite similar both in Cervantes’ and the co-playwrights’ works. Although Cervantes also stresses the fact that Preciosa changed her identity when she was a child, the mentioned novella does not include the dialogue in which the changeling identity is referred. Cervantes’ reasoning behind Preciosa’s secret identity comes from his assumption that gypsies are thieves. For Cervantes, “[i]t seems that Gypsies were born into the world only to be thieves; they are born of thieving parent, grow up with thieves, study to be thieves, and finally, in the end, become very common thieves under any and all circumstances; and desiring to steal and stealing are, in them, like inseparable accidental qualities that cannot be shed except in death” (11). It might be deduced from Cervantes’ assumption that gypsies were believed to be thieves just like fairies. While Cervantes’ work excludes any references to the changelings, it is possible to claim that Cervantes’ Preciosa is also a changeling, as she is also changed into a gypsy in her childhood and lives in an “exotic” society. Yet, the direct mention of the changeling is a novelty added to the plot by the English co-playwrights. Thereby, by describing the gypsies as thieves, *The Spanish Gypsy* introduces them not only as outlaws, but also as changelings.

It might be argued that the addition of the changeling figure into Cervantes’ novella is a political decision taken by the co-playwrights, as there is a parallelism between Prince Charles’ adventure to Spain and the play. Prince Charles, son of King James I, went on an adventure to Spain in order to marry Infanta Donne Maria; yet, this adventure ended in failure as the marriage negotiations stopped due to English people’s objections. Christopher Hibbert summarises the political events following James I’s desire for Charles’ marriage to Infanta Donna Maria as follows:

[King James I] had been trying to bring about a marriage between Prince Charles and the Infanta Donna Maria, sister of King Philip IV. Such an alliance, urged on him by Roman Catholic members of the Howard family and by the wily Spanish envoy, the Count of Gondomar, would, he hoped, result in the Spanish Habsburgs abandoning their support of the Austrian branch of the family and allowing the restoration of his daughter and son-in-law, if not the throne of Bohemia, at least to their palace in Heidelberg. The Commons would have none of this: they wanted a Protestant alliance not a Catholic one, an offensive against Spain and an immediate end to the marriage negotiation. (49-50)

As Charles Carlton states, people “were overjoyed that the heir was back safely in England. Without his papist bride and with his mission a failure, Charles was a great success. ... [O]n 6 October 1623 everyone cheered, and no one cared” (47). People were overjoyed when they see their future king coming back without a Catholic wife. Considering the political changes in post-Reformation England, Charles’ desire to marry a Spanish Catholic woman was a political crisis. This political turmoil is represented in *The Spanish Gypsy*. As Gossett argues, “[t]hree young men flee secretly from their fathers to the Gypsies, like Prince Charles and Buckingham galloping off to Spain, but only one, John, is ultimately successful, and even he suffers a frightening imprisonment that recalls Spain’s enforced retention of Charles” (1725). Additionally, Preciosa’s identity as a changeling, or its being rewritten as a changeling, reflects the popular hope of the people as “[i]n what may be wishful thinking, John’s prize, Pretiosa, proves to be not ‘really’ a Gypsy and consequently John does not really ‘convert’” (Gossett 1725). Thereby, the changeling Preciosa is a child stolen, not the child left behind, and hence she is the lost beautiful child. She is the representation of hope for the people who were worried about Prince Charles’ possible wife. Therefore, the changeling figure added into Cervantes’ novella has both political and cultural function, as while Charles’ affair was a very popular topic among people, so was the changeling figure. Hence, it might be claimed that the changeling figure through self-fashioning is recontextualised in two different layers: First, it is associated with the gypsies and thereby it reflects the early modern understanding of gypsies. Second, it is associated with Charles’ possible wife through whom the Protestant nature of England might be changed in the near future.

The Spanish Gypsy written close to the end of the Jacobean era, and near the dawn of the Caroline period is a tragicomedy with its plot including the gypsies, marriage, rape, and

changing identities. The main changeling figure in the play is Preciosa who identifies herself as a changeling. She fits into the traditional folk representation of a changeling as she is actually a lost child who is separated from her family, and additionally, she is a self-fashioned changeling by her willing adaptation to the gypsy identity. In addition to her, Father, Eugenia, Don Juan, Sancho, Sato and Roderigo might be read as changelings as they change their identities. Therefore, the changelings in *The Spanish Gypsy* are different from those in the Elizabethan plays studied in Chapter 1. The fairies are replaced with the gypsies, child theft and substitution are replaced with a lost child and her return, and the changeling left after the child is taken away is replaced with the changing identities created by associating the figure with the gypsies.

In conclusion, both *The Changeling* and *The Spanish Gypsy* contributed to the evolution of the changeling figure in the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods. As explained in Introduction, changelings were traditionally and folklorically believed to be what is left behind after a child is stolen by fairies. While the Elizabethan playwrights presented this figure in accordance with its folkloric representation traced in the Middle Ages, the Jacobean playwrights modified this traditional representation and used this figure as an embodiment of different ideas, particularly the change itself. In the Elizabethan plays, the changeling figure arose awe, fear of infidelity, and the fear of losing a healthy infant; conversely, the Jacobean playwrights attributed new connotations to the changeling figure and refrained from presenting it with its previous connotations. In *The Changeling*, the changelings are people who lose their innocence by falling into madness and sin, while the changelings in *The Spanish Gypsy* mostly have concealed identities, and one of them have self-fashioned changeling identity as a resistance against authority. But, the changeling representations in both plays are still connected to the changeling lore so much that the connection between the recontextualization and the original fairy lore is undeniable. The changelings in *The Changeling* convey the fear of change and they become the embodiments of change or transformation. On the other hand, an exchanged child and a lost healthy infant who is later found are the changelings in *The Spanish Gypsy*. Accordingly, through the analysis of *The Changeling* and *The Spanish Gypsy*, it is possible to deduce that the meaning and

representation of the changeling figure differ from its medieval and the Elizabethan counterparts. Therefore, the changeling figure that has been already known by the early modern audience evolves and gets a new meaning.

CONCLUSION

This study's argument is that the changeling representations in the dramatic productions of the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods differ from each other due to the fact that the representations change and get separated from the folk narratives and beliefs concerning the figure, and started to be used as the embodiment of the idea of change itself in the Jacobean period as a result of the influence of James I. The transformation experienced by this figure is highly connected to childhood illnesses and disability, as there is a strong possibility that the children who were killed, or seen as monsters in the medieval and the early modern periods were sick or disabled children. This argument relies on the fact that the changeling children are depicted as monsters who eat a lot, but can never grow, and with grotesque bodies. But the representations of this figure in literary works do not focus on its monstrous body, instead, this figure reflects the fear of losing a healthy infant due to the intervention of supernatural monsters without any logical reason. Therefore, its inclusion in literary productions also originates from this fear, as seen in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Especially in the Elizabethan period's dramatic representations, the figure is awe-inspiring and terrorising, but it is not harmful. Instead, the figure is the victim of other troublesome beings. On the other hand, the representations of the changeling figure in the Jacobean period differ in that they present the figure as the embodiment of change, and the representations of the figure do not follow the examples provided by the folk narratives of the Middle Ages. As discussed in Chapter 2, the victimhood of the changeling children in the medieval and the Elizabethan plays is replaced with changes in character and the idea of self-fashioning in the Jacobean plays. As this thesis argues, changelings in the dramatic productions of the Jacobean period might be described as figures who change in character, either as a victim or not, through an internal or external process or by means of another individual. These changelings' connection with the fairy lore is vague, and they are thereby demystified. Therefore, in the Jacobean period, the changeling figure's representations depend more on the playwrights' decisions rather than its folkloric representations.

In order to understand the significance of the changelings for English people, its prominent role in literary productions of the early modern period, and the evolvement of the figure in the Jacobean period, this study examines, in the introduction part, the scholarly research on the changeling figure in the medieval and the early modern England. The figure's folk representations, its representations in the literary works produced in the mentioned periods, and the historical records concerning the figure are essential in order to emphasize its popularity. Accordingly, the changelings in the examined pieces of literature and the historical records are depicted as children with disabilities who are believed to be fairies left in substitution after the real infant is abducted by fairies. It is possible to find this figure in historical records, folk legends, and literary productions in the medieval and the early modern periods, as well as the later eras that are excluded from this study. Considering its prominent role in the literature and social history of England, the changeling figure and the connotations its representations convey are noteworthy. Moreover, the fairy representations in the Jacobean period are different from their Elizabethan ones, corresponding to the change of the changeling representations. This difference is examined in two chapters, the former examining the changeling representations in the selected dramatic works produced in the Elizabethan period, and the latter examining the same figure in the selected plays produced in the Jacobean period.

As the result of the examination, this study reveals that the changeling figures in the literary productions of the Elizabethan period are mostly consistent with the representations of the changeling figures in the folk narratives. Through the analyses of anonymous *Misogonus* and William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the comparison of the changeling representations in both plays with the folk narratives including changelings, it is found that both plays present the figure very similar to the medieval and the early modern folk representations. In *Misogonus*, the abduction and substitution processes are presented, and a parallelism between the figure and the parable of the prodigal son is constructed. Similarly, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* the changeling figure is the embodiment of the understanding of the figure in the medieval and the early modern periods. Even though in the play there is a stolen infant, there is no mention of his substitution; however, its descriptions

of the abduction of the changeling boy and its representation of Bottom as a secondary changeling are in line with the folk representations. The fact that Shakespearean fairies are miniaturised and depicted as less menacing creatures does not change the fact that the changeling representation in the play has a lot of parallelism with the folk narratives. Therefore, it is concluded that the plays analysed in this study display how the Elizabethan playwrights depict the changeling figure in accordance with the folk narratives produced before and during the Elizabethan period. While they attribute some new meanings to the figure, or exclude some of its characteristics, the representations of the changeling figure in these plays have strong parallelisms with the folk narratives because they do not separate the figure from fairy lore, on the contrary, they depict it either as a fairy or a stolen boy in the fairyland.

In contrast to the Elizabethan plays examined in the first chapter, the selected Jacobean plays present the changeling figure different from the folk narratives. This study argues that the changeling in *The Changeling* by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley is recontextualized since the figures who are defined as the changelings experience change in their characters. While Beatrice and De Flores are the main changelings in the play, there are various characters who experience a change in their characters. Although the change in character is extant in the changeling narratives of the medieval and the early modern England, due to the fact that a changeling is a substitution that is different in behaviour than the stolen infant, the mentioned play differs from the fairy lore by excluding any mention of fairies. Instead, the play focuses on the change itself, and emphasises the fact that various characters change in character throughout the play.

In *The Spanish Gypsy*, Thomas Middleton, William Rowley, Thomas Dekker and John Ford recontextualise the changeling figure in a similar manner. The play depicts characters who willingly join a gypsy band, and thereby change their own identities. Therefore, the play uses the changeling figure as the embodiment of the change in character and social status, as the characters who turn into gypsies lose their previous social standings and become the “others” of the society. Moreover, in the play, a gypsy woman, Pretiosa, who is accused of being a

changeling consequently takes up the identity of a changeling. Hence, the play intermingles the idea of self-fashioning with the changeling figure, and presents it as an identity that might be adopted. Through the analyses of these Jacobean plays, this study reveals that the changeling figure experienced an evolvement in literary productions when James I succeeded to the English throne. Both in *The Changeling* and *The Spanish Gypsy*, the changeling figures are out of the fairy lore, and they stand for change itself. In the mentioned plays, the changeling representations are customized by the playwrights, not by the traditional depictions of the figure. By excluding its fairy roots, the Jacobean playwrights demystify and demythologise the figure. Therefore, the changeling no longer arouses the fear of losing a healthy infant, but it stands for change itself. This study puts forward the idea that this change was put in motion by the influence of James I's ideas about the nature of witchcraft, as the representations of witches and fairies were intermingled in the period by the playwrights.

The effect of this evolvement is observable in contemporary representations of the changeling figure. While the changing representations of the changeling figure alienate it from its fairy roots in the Jacobean period, this transformation does not eliminate the changeling figure. In the *Star Wars* canon (1977 – Present), *Dungeons and Dragons* games, the horror film *The Changeling* (1980) directed by Peter Medak, the biographical film *Changeling* (2008) directed by Clint Eastwood, *The Changeling: A Novel* (2017) by Victor LaVelle, TV series *Supernatural* (2005-20) created by Eric Kripke, and the Irish short horror film *Changeling* (2022) written by Marie Clare Cushman are some of the examples in which this figure is extant. Considering the variety of the mediums this figure is represented in, it might be argued that the representations of the changeling figure are still commonplace today. Similar to the variety of the mediums, the representations are also different from one another. While in the *Star Wars* canon, the changeling figure is used as a name for some shapeshifting aliens, the *Supernatural* show uses them to describe abnormal behaviours in children. Therefore, these representations reflect the artistic freedom introduced to this figure by the Jacobean playwrights. Just like the Jacobean playwrights' recontextualization, these recent works make use of this figure without being completely true to its folk roots; however, their representations still reflect the fear of losing an infant, fear of an unknown intruder,

and/or the fear of the transformation of someone loved. Hence, this study suggests that these contemporary representations might be examined from the perspective provided by this thesis, in order to reveal how this figure has continued to evolve until the 2020s.

In conclusion, through comparative analyses of *Misogonus*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Changeling*, and *The Spanish Gypsy* respectively, this study puts forward the idea that the changeling representations vary in the dramatic productions of the Jacobean period, as the figure is represented without any overt reference to fairy lore, and due to the fact that the representations are embodiments of different ideas like change in character and social status.

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Tarih: 29/06/2023

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