

**RE-TELLING EXILE: REINTERPRETATIONS OF ANCIENT
MYTHS IN TIMBERLAKE WERTENBAKER'S *THE LOVE OF THE
NIGHTINGALE* AND CHRISTA WOLF'S *MEDEA.VOICES***

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Abstract: My paper focuses on the representations of exile in Timberlake Wertenbaker's *The Love of The Nightingale* and Christa Wolf's *Medea. Voices*. Although the former is a dramatic text and the latter a novel, they are connected as far as their approach to reinterpreting ancient myths is concerned. The three main female figures of the myths – Philomele and Procne in Wertenbaker's work, Medea in Wolf's – are subjected to exile, their geographic displacement resulting in psychological alienation. Their Otherness manifests itself at the level of the discourse. For each of the three characters, exile is experienced first and foremost as silence and (seemingly) hopeless quest for truth(s). However, in both *The Love of The Nightingale* and *Medea. Voices*, the characters manage to regain their "voices" by having their stories presented from a different perspective. Nevertheless, these new stories are not supposed to be taken for granted, they do not present the Truth. On the contrary, they compel the reader to question what Jean-François Lyotard called "grand narratives," the myths presented especially by male authors, including Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, since Antiquity. Thus, *The Love of the Nightingale*, as well as *Medea. Voices*, do not end with female vengeance in the form of filicide, but with a series of interrogations to which no clear answer is provided.