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## From Peritext to Text: Constructing Authorship in David Hare's Selected Plays

### Abstract

The article examines the ways in which two autographic peritexts tie in with the main texts of two verbatim plays they precede. The discussion addresses the question of transactions between peritext and text in view of interrelated aspects. Invoking background knowledge and the context of other verbatim plays, the inquiry concentrates mainly on *The Permanent Way* and *Stuff Happens*, staged in the years 2003-2004. While the main inquiry concerns the broader subject of constructing authorship in peritext, the further question involves the use of narrative frameworks to connect the peritext with the main text. The analysis concentrates on the ways a writer asserts, or declares, and stages his authorship, sometimes his authority, originating the process with significant enunciations in the prefatorial zone. Dealing with verbatim plays, the article invites reflection on the nexus of authorship, authority, authorization or authentication and "truth".

*Keywords:* peritext, authorship, narrative, verbatim drama, David Hare.

### 1. Introduction: Situating oneself

The present article focuses on the relationship between the peritext<sup>1</sup> and main text in *Stuff Happens* and *The Permanent Way*. Considering the complex mode of existence of plays, it is necessary to situate the discussion in what Stanley Fish defines as an "interpretative community" (1980:343). Hence the subsequent considerations are based on the assumption that plays take the form of texts and performances. Leaving behind the earlier dispute between the theatrical and the literary approach, this analysis follows reflections of Manfred Jahn, who distinguishes three lines of study in the reception-oriented theories of drama labelling them "Poetic Drama", "Theatre Studies" and "Reading Drama" (2001:660). The present discussion follows the school of "Reading Drama" by positing a recipient who reads the text with a "view

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1 Peritext, a subcategory of paratext, denotes a form attached to the book. When necessary, the discussion invokes the broader concept of paratext.

of a possible or actual performance” and a theatregoer who “appreciates a performance through [...] knowledge [...] of the text” (Jahn 2001: 662). The following examination pursues a performance-oriented textual analysis which includes not only stage directions but, more importantly, prefatorial peritexts. The latter seems to go beyond the scope of the school’s immediate interest but can be treated as its logical expansion. Often perceived as independent additions or secondary texts absent in performance, author’s or editor’s notes in prefatorial position belong to the complex system of notes including, as Genette argues, footnotes ([1987]1997:320-321). In drama, notes are considered either as invisible *directives*—prescriptions addressing the reader and the actors—or a form of *description* (Genette, [1991]1993: 32), i.e. a pause in narratological terms. In book-oriented studies paratexts, including peritextual notes, “mediate the book to the reader” (Macksey [1987]1997: xviii). If considered a “process statement” or a “diegetic statement”, stage directions belong to the narrative; they represent a story whose enunciating subject is the author-narrator.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, reading drama may invite its comprehensive narratological analysis.

## 2. Desire to control the *oeuvre*/text: Author vs. *scriptor*<sup>3</sup>

Author’s notes preceding both *Stuff Happens* and *The Permanent Way* are autographic, prefatorial peritexts<sup>4</sup> which, following Genette’s classification, can be referred to as assumptive or original prefaces ([1987]1997:197). As opposed to the delayed peritexts, the function of the original preface is to “ensure that the text is read properly”, an assertion Genette develops along two lines. The preface makes it certain that the text is read rather than lost in oblivion by arguing—among other values—its importance, novelty, and truthfulness. On the other hand, the preface guides the process of reading by “giving directions” ([1987]1997:209) concerning, for instance, contextual information, genre, order (224) and, finally, the author’s statement of intent (222). While importance and truthfulness will be discussed later in the context of verbatim strategies, it is the question of authorial control that is of primary interest in the present section.

In “The Death of the Author” Roland Barthes announces the demise of the “Author” and the rise of the “scriptor”. Barthes explains that the Author, “when believed in”, is absent from the main body of the text, and remains in a relation of antecedence with the book s/he is nourishing the way a father feeds the child ([1967]1977:145). Moreover, it is his intention to provide guidelines “releasing a single ‘theological’ meaning” the philosopher calls a message of the “Author-God” ([1967]1977:146). Seán Burke comments that, in fact, in “The Death of the Author” Barthes expresses intellectual disgust with claims of individual authors to control “reality” and thus “meaning” ([2008] 2011:21)—a radical opinion which, interestingly, does not eliminate the writer entirely. The modern writer-scriptor, Barthes argues proposing in the same essay the author’s return in a new role, “is born simultaneously with the text” ([1967]1977:145). Consequently, writing cannot and does not involve notation, recording or representing—a proposal which eliminates the traditional mimesis in drama. Instead, writing designates a perfor-

2 Genette, who prefers the “narrative pause” points to the author-narrator while Monika Fludernik, who argues for the diegetic statement, has the subject-narrator—discussed in Jahn (2001:668).

3 The concept of *scriptor* as discussed by Roland Barthes ([1967]1977:145).

4 Quoted peritexts, i.e. author’s notes and epigraphs are brief and have no page reference. They precede the main body of the text. Abbreviations *SH* and *PW* are used for the purpose of brevity and refer, respectively, to *Stuff Happens* and *The Permanent Way* by David Hare.

mative, first person enunciation Barthes conceives in linguistic terms ([1967]1977:145). Its applicability to literary studies is often limited to John L. Austin's theory of speech acts and thus leaves out other, non-verbal arts. Theatre studies, following Wolfgang Iser, have developed the concept in a much broader context of performance (Fisher-Lichte [2004] 2008: 24 ff) materializing in autopoiesis, collapse of binaries, transformation and embodiment. This theatrical proposition has been successfully appropriated for the study of the epic as recently shown by Sonja Longolius (2016: 8-10). Representation as a performative act aims to release drama (and literature) from the restraints of traditional mimesis and the related concept of authorship. Put forward by Iser, it consists in "a continual oscillation between the bracketed world and that from which it has been separated. The former [...] becomes a medium for revealing what has been concealed in the empirical world" ([1989]1993:239). According to Iser, representation is an act of staging, involving semblance and difference, a performance which brings forth and enacts "something absent" (1993:301).

In the light of performatively conceived representation, Hare's conception of authorship appears to be complex. On the one hand, overlapping theatre and journalism, his plays align naturally with social realism (Hauthal 2013:150). A relevant category for understanding this hybrid form of documentary realism is "the specific notion of 'truth'" (Drews-Sylla 2013: 87) linked to the Aristotelian idea of mimesis and often combined, especially in political drama, with romanticism and social (ist) realism. On the other hand, the use of direct address Hare introduces and the fact of a self-staging of the writer-figure subvert the convention of the "fourth wall" by foregrounding the author's presence. To complicate matters even more, commenting on Hare's concept of spiritual goodness, Duncan Wu argues that the playwright should be affiliated with the Romantic tradition where power is associated with creative will (1995:97 ff) so that, as John Deeney shows, "Hare's conception of 'the good' is indivisible from his own manufactured status as an *author-god* figure" (2006:435-36). It is a construction of authorship which in the case of Hare enables him to shuttle between the intra and the extra-textual, an oscillation resulting in a series of transgressions marked by his obsessive occupation of thresholds such as autographic peritexts in print and roles of actor/performer/playwright "in one" in the theatre. The writer is both inside and outside his work, a liminal condition which points, perhaps, to a writer in the process of becoming, a transformative process paratexts sustain as channels of communication between the intra and the extra-textual. In *Via Dolorosa*, for example, the writer appears "as himself" (Lane 2010: 60) giving an account of his private journey to Israel and Palestine: when on stage Hare shares with the audience a performer's rather than an actor's experience. Delivering the monologue as direct address, Hare focuses on the audience rather than the scene or on his connection to the "acted" material. Hence the fourth wall (and the stage/audience binary) collapses not only in the text but also in its theatrical *modus operandi*. On the other hand, in the authorial note to *Stuff Happens*, the reader finds an authoritative rather than performative instruction of a fathering writer/subject who announces, "What happened happened", adding that "[n]othing in the narrative is knowingly untrue". What the author-god ascertains is to be taken as fact. The author's testimony, like a historical record, becomes a source of truth. In brief, staging the classical mimesis and subverting it at the same time, the playwright acts both in support of the Author concept and against it, notably by opening channels between the intra and extra-textual perceived as a universe of discourse occupied by the scriptor, one more fiction that, paradoxically in the context of fact-based drama, cannot be falsified.

In the notes preceding *SH* and *PM* the writer uses the first person narrative *giving instructions* on how to read (or watch) the play, thus legitimizing himself as the person responsible not only for the peri-

text but also for the main text. In the former play, the context is defined as the “centre of recent history” and the genre as “history play”—“not a documentary”—and, ultimately, a play “driven ... by its themes as much as by its characters and story”. Although Hare explains that all instances of direct address “quote people verbatim”, the collage of quotations obtained from “private and public” sources has been framed and ordered with the aid of genre-specific instruments into a history play: the gaps have been filled, as Hare admits, with the aid of his imagination. In that way Hare brings together the “depth” and the “detail” of research. While detail supports realism with the numerous “researchers”, including Dr Christopher Turner, the fictional framework produces the narrative and guarantees the control on which the playwright insists in his note. The actors-researchers function as channels linking the extratextual source of the testimonies in a seemingly direct way to the audience. Still, even if the actors wear headphones enhancing the accuracy of the interviewee’s utterances rendering their accents, and the author withdraws from crafting phrases, the ordering, editing and shaping as well as the narrative frame remain the writer’s responsibility—the domain of the Author.

The intention expressed in the “Author’s Note” to *Stuff Happens* is confusing. Hare emphasizes the authenticity of the staged material by referring to its corroboration by “multiple sources” and their verbatim quotation. When on-stage the politicians are quoted accurately so that the difference between the source and the staged text seemingly disappears. It is, supposedly, a repetition without difference. Consequently, by insisting on accuracy and transparency, Hare promotes the classical representation as well as the presence of the invisible though powerful author who controls the traffic. On the other hand, both peritexts, especially the note preceding *The Permanent Way*, acknowledge the *collective* authorship involving nine actors-researchers and a workshop period, the “countless meetings” as well as specified intertextual indebtedness. Here, the author appears to be born in the process of collecting, transforming and sharing—he performs his role as scriptor.

### 3. Absence and presence of the Author/writer in drama

In traditional mimetic plays the author stays outside both main and peri-text, including prologues and epilogues. However, in modern theatre, the playwright/author begins to occupy a central position, enters the “represented world” to trigger off, as Anna Krajewska argues, a process of filiation with lyrical poetry and the epic (2000: 257). Filiation with the epic enhances a narratological analysis of drama, rendering Genette’s proposition more adaptable to the analysis of paratexts in drama. With the author on stage, the performance may resemble a rehearsal, for instance in the theatrical works of Tadeusz Różewicz, who amends his official biography, or of Tadeusz Kantor whose participation in the performance and the notorious use of the possessive pronoun “my” emphasises the right of the artist to be present on a stage where his life and suffering constitute the subject and object of performance. An interlace of the writer’s biography and fiction leads, according to Krajewska, to a new method of writing which brings together the tangible materiality of life and fiction (2000:261), thus providing an opportunity for *authentic* experience.

David Hare is mostly known for his dramatic fictions. Though, from *The Permanent Way* (2003) to *Stuff Happens* (2005) and in *The Power of Yes* (2009), he became engaged with writing for fact-based theatre. In three of his autobiographical works (*Via Dolorosa*, 1998; *Wall and Berlin*, 2009), the playwright

appeared on stage addressing the audience directly in his own voice. Chris Megson and Dan Rebellato suggest that Hare's commitment to direct communication has dissuaded him from employing the "mediating discourses of the theatre" (2007:236), and instead encouraged him to adopt a non-fictional, liminal lecture format. Megson and Rebellato characterize Hare's performances as forms of "studied exposition" (2007:239), provocatively polemic, and violent in flinging accusations in the face of the audience. The opening lines in *Berlin* provide a good example of the playwright's performance:

Here I am, I'm back in Berlin, and as usual I can't get the  
hang of it.  
I've been coming to this city, off and on, for well over  
thirty years and each time it's different. The world has  
changed and so has Berlin. In the mid-1970s, I was  
booed in the Schiller Theater, which today I can't even find.  
(2009:3)

Defining the direct address as exposition, the critics seem to point to its potentially peritextual quality. Hare speaks in the first person so that the difference between an autographic peritext and autobiographical main text is easily obliterated.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, both mingle fact with fiction.

#### **4. The author's presence/absence in verbatim plays: creativity, truth and authenticity**

Though plays are defined as *verbatim* on the basis of definite strategies used by playwrights and teams of actors-researchers, it is really an umbrella term, encompassing plays whose material has been recorded and texts based on interviews whose content could be traced back. Verbatim strategies can be deployed in the context of diverse forms of political and realistic theatre which follows its own rules, potentially causing a clash with the austerity of verbatim methods. Verbatim, further on, usually implies that the material is orally transmitted and the spoken testimonies transcribed into the written play-text, a process which raises the question of transmission and of the role of a writer who becomes a journalist-mediator. If based on written material, Cantrell writes, the plays should fall within the wider category of documentary theatre (2013:3), capable of merging with history play in which even the author may be reduced to a researcher. The author's actual participation in the interviewing, collecting and editing process as well as the methods followed by teams of interviewers, including their contextualisation, are all signalled in the peritexts that reveal the underlying concept of authorship. Hence Robin Soans's *Talking to Terrorists* emphasises team work in the peritext signed by both the writer and the director, Max Stafford-Clark. The two signatures point to collaborative authorship. *Guantanamo: 'Honor Bound to Defend Freedom'*, 'edited' by Victoria Brittain and Gilian Slovo, foregrounds the method – "taken from spoken evidence" – to put emphasis on veracity and truthfulness already in the peritext which, in this case, to enhance authenticity, admits to the failure of not being able to interview a single member of the government. On the contrary, in *Stuff Happens* failure is never admitted. Two epigraphs have been inserted between the "Author's Note"

<sup>5</sup> Marilyn Booth comments on this type of obliteration in the context of feminist writing: "I see her preface equally as peritext and as internal to the text, for in the preface her own biography begins to emerge, linking her as an evaluative narrating persona to the subject-objects of her discourse" (2015: 24).

and the main text—an excerpt from Dwight D. Eisenhower’s 192nd News Conference on August 11, 1954 and a quotation attributed to Jonathan Swift. Accuracy and authenticity are expected from both verbatim and documentary plays. Therefore, it comes as a surprise when the Swift quotation, according to the *Oxford Treasury of Sayings and Quotations*, is “not traced in Swift’s works” (2011:270), and though invoked by various sources is merely apocryphal. This throws light on the truth-value of orally transmitted knowledge but whether the ironically subversive effect produced by the epigraphs has been calculated or not cannot be resolved. The Eisenhower quotation brings in the concept of “preventive war”:

All of us have heard the term ‘preventive war’ since  
the earliest days of Hitler. [...] In this day and time ...  
I don’t believe there is such a thing; frankly  
I wouldn’t even listen to anyone seriously  
that came in and talked about such a thing.<sup>6</sup>

The quotation is not accurate either. The inserted square brackets contain a missing fragment. The writer’s editing signals one case of omission but leaves out another. The epigraphs reveal the author’s editorial decisions as well as his ambivalent attitude to truthfulness and authenticity. The writer, like the Barthesian Author, authorizes himself as an invisible editor whose role in shaping the supposedly verbatim material is performed from “outside”, without the reader’s knowledge. The writer’s peritextual statement concerning fact and fiction is discredited despite bold assertions: “Scenes of direct address quote people verbatim. When the doors close ... I have used my imagination”.

While the *signed* authorial note in *Stuff Happens* reveals the identity of the speaker/writer only in the latter part of the first paragraph, acknowledgements to 9 actors-researchers and a named consulting scholar dominate the *unsigned* peritextual note preceding *The Permanent Way*. Even if the first person in *SH* appears later, the objectively impersonalising language of the opening lines is indicative of a strong authorial personality:

*Stuff Happens* is a history play, which happens to centre on very recent history. The events within it have been authenticated from multiple sources, both private and public. What happened happened.  
(“Author’s Note”, *SH*)

The notes to *SH* and *PW* presuppose different concepts of authorship constructing peri-textual assumptions which affect the model of authorship found in the “main texts”. The writer, following Roland Barthes’s “Death”, may return in the main text as either the Author-god or as scriptor. If we follow the peritextual, epigraphic inscription in the later, autobiografictional *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*—“[i]t must all be considered as if spoken by a character in a novel”—the writer returns as character in the main text.<sup>7</sup> Analogous cases can be traced in drama. While the verbatim *Black Watch* by Gregory Burke has a character called “writer” interviewing soldiers in the main text, Moises Kaufman’s *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* lists “Moises Kaufman” among the characters and stages him in an interview with a literary critic, Marvin Taylor, at the beginning of act two. Returning as a character, the writer returns in the capacity of an author-guest, a journalist-researcher invited in an act of hospitality, returning to the stage from which he has been excluded (Derrida [1997] 2000:152). If proper names are used, the reader is obviously tempted and even compelled to associate the character with the author, even though

6 For the full text of the conference see “The American Presidency Project”, [www.presidency.ucsb.edu](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu)

7 The epigraph appears in the 1974 edition.



“Moises Kaufman” appearing in the peritextual notes differs from “Moises Kaufman” in the main text. Ontologically, one emerges from the threshold of the peritext, while the other, even if bearing the same proper name, undergoes a process of fictionalisation.

In *Stuff Happens* and *The Permanent Way*, the author offers still another solution. Though in the first text he fails to appear either in his name or as character, it does not eliminate his presence entirely. Considering the desire for control expressed in the peritext, the Author-god can be pursued in the anonymity of the supradiegetic level of the play’s narrative which may, additionally, seek to authenticate the documented experience. The other text contains several references to the invisible writer<sup>8</sup> called “David” (for example pp.10, 26, and 67) to foreground the method the play implements in its pursuits of truthfulness. One of the interviewees recreates the queries related to the making of *The Permanent Way*:

David. I would like to see a drama of people who make things work. If Hatfield is in a play, I’d like it to be mentioned as a town of determined people. The town will regenerate and rebuild and rise out of all this. (2003:57-58)

The latter case authenticates the experience collected in the testimonies by staging the author in the new role of a researcher who emerges from the process of writing.

Verbatim texts are far from uniform. They can be subdivided into “readerly” and “writerly” (Barthes 2002: 4-5). The former are classic and representational, based on verisimilitude where “reality” and truth are inherent either in the documentary material or in the “narrative” (Reinelt 2011:117). This seems to be the case of Hare’s *SH* and *PW*. On the other hand, verbatim plays which open up to a “writerly” status require the *engagement* of the audience, so that “meaning” or, as Reinelt argues, the “truth” is produced “in the relationship between the narrative, its mediators [performance, author] and its audiences” (2011:117). This performative rather than verbatim method of building a sense of authenticity can be detected in experimental plays, for instance in Anthony Neilson’s *Realism* or in Gregory Burke’s *Black Watch*. Verbatim performance is underwritten by the promise to get at reality through the documents and the narrative. Still, the success of these endeavours, according to Reinelt depends on the phenomenological intersubjective relation and engagement of the spectators (2011:112) who can only be imagined in the reading process. Paradoxically, in the case of *SH* in particular, the narrative frame may control and prevent the audience from spontaneous engagement.

Can readers and viewers liberate themselves from these superordinate powers? More readerly plays, even if they employ the recently *en vogue* verbatim strategies, are likely to develop narrative frames supporting the extratextual authority of the writer. Only in experimental, transgressive or creative projects, writes Longolius, is there potential for liberation, offering to the readers (and audiences) a possibility to “rewrite” and reinterpret the text by entering into the “productive endeavour” (2016:25) rather than remaining passive consumers. Engagement is thus related to performative strategies rather than to verbatim methods.

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<sup>8</sup> “David”, according to the play’s editions, is not listed as character. A character denotes traditionally a speaking part. Still, “David” may be present on stage as a non-speaking ghostly figure whose status can be variously interpreted.

## 5. Control over the text through narrative frameworks

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Paratexts, as Genette observes, serve to reinforce and enhance *communication* between reader and author or “person responsible” ([1987]1997:266), i.e. author, editor or publisher. Peritextual knowledge conditions the reader’s understanding and interpretation of the main text. As a result, peritexts function as channels of transition, enabling and mediating the traffic between the extra and the intra-textual and constituting a threshold where fact and fiction meet. Due to this in-between status, the author may appear in the autographic peritext either as himself or as frame narrator setting out to assert control over the main text and to authenticate the narrative that follows. Moreover, the writer may reappear in the main body of the text in various roles, including “contact character” (Duyfhuizen, 1992:159), writer-figure, a narrative level voicing the writer’s authority or viewpoint, impersonal paratextual narrative or authorial voice, e.g. in stage directions and notes. Additionally, peritexts may take the form of diverse genres and subgenres which have diverse narrative and authenticating potential.

Considering the question of authorial control via narrative frameworks, the discernible spectrum in Hare’s writing spans from impersonalising, quasi-objective narratives to highly personal narratives of life-writing. Even the enunciating subject of stage directions can be treated either as narrator or as playwright.<sup>9</sup> The Author, in an autobiographical narrative, whose beginning can be the autographic peritext and in which the writer appears in his own person as *originator*, can continue as originator/author/narrator/actor/ character in the main text. Moreover, as Smith explains in *Self-discovery and Authority in Afro-American Narrative* ([1987]1991: 2) and Reinelt confirms in the context of Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson’s *Reading Autobiography* (2011: 116), the “key aspect of autobiographical writing is the persuasion of the reader to accept the authority of the narrator” (116). Valerie Smith adds that some protagonist-narrators “affirm and legitimize their psychological autonomy by telling the stories of their own lives” and argues further that, paradoxically, “by fictionalizing one’s life, one bestows a quality of authenticity on it” ([1987]1991:2). Hence the “process of authorship” may provide the narrators/speakers with “a measure of authority” (1991:2). This policy can be detected in the reading of *Via Dolorosa* and other autobiographical plays or plays preceded by distinctly autobiographical peritexts, for example Philip Ridley’s volumes of collected plays. However, David Hare’s *Stuff Happens* and *The Permanent Way* use a strategy which does the opposite. It struggles to eliminate the openly autobiographical pact to introduce a quasi historiodiegetic peritext.

It is Bernard Duyfhuizen who notices the peculiar function of historiodiegetic paratexts which he defines as “extrafictional frames placed by the author in an attempt to over-determine the reader’s experience of the text by insisting that the narrative is *not* [my emphasis] autobiographical but only fiction” (1992:188). Promoting the text’s fictionality, a historiodiegetic peritext undermines the autobiographical modes of narrative framing (diverse forms of life-writing, letters, memoirs, author’s testimonies etc.) in their capacity to authenticate the main text. In the “Author’s Note” to *Stuff Happens*, the playwright insists on a clear distinction between fact and fiction. While scenes of direct address “quote people verbatim”, what happens when the “doors close” is fiction and fiction is the domain of the playwright. The play is not a documentary in journalistic terms. Even if it is considered a hybrid, ultimately unsuccessful in its

9 Jahn construes a model which compels him to consider the enunciating subject as narrator so that the stage directions become a controlling narrative frame (2001: 672). Still, in various narratological propositions, the enunciating subject is treated interchangeably as either authorial voice or narrator.



endeavours to tell fact from fiction,<sup>10</sup> the peritext excludes autobiographical authentication drawing the reader's attention to the importance of the narratives of transmission and the need to inquire about *credibility* in the context of transmission. Transmission involves research methods and hypotheses which are also classifiable as fictions. Unlike Hare's *Via Dolorosa*, the narratives of transmission are based neither on the author's experience nor on his testimony. The historiodiegetic narrator invokes extrafictional listeners (the actors and researchers) and their interlocutors foregrounding in that way the process of transmission from the oral to the written as team-work involving a group of co-authors. Therefore, the acknowledgements in both plays, *SH* and *PW*, should not be treated as merely conventional. The note to *PW* lists the 9 actors and the research-coordinator admitting further on that only "a fraction" of the collected material has been represented. This note points to the various omissions that are unaccounted for. The process of transmitting data must have been governed by mechanisms signalled covertly by the epigraphs but never revealed. On the other hand, the gaps between and within the documents have been clearly pointed out and, in that way, also the need for the historiodiegetic narrator (later on becoming the editor) to continue his work and the work of the remaining extradiegetic narrators in the main text. Duyfhuizen admits to the possibility of contact between the historiodiegetic and extradiegetic narrative level (1992:156). It is therefore my contention that, especially in *SH*, the historiodiegetic peritextual narrative develops into the extradiegetic, which Roland Weidle identifies as the "superordinate level" (2011: 70). The actor-characters, as Weidle notes, are raised from the intradiegetic position (70) to the superordinate level or the extradiegetic. The multiple actors perform typical narrative functions of providing information, interpreting, paraphrasing and, in spite of the emphasis put on their multiplicity, remain indistinguishable while performing the essential function of a vehicle of transmission. Moreover, the characters of the Journalist (1.5), the Politician (1.9), the Palestinian Academic (2.12), the Brit in New York (2.18) and the Iraqi Exile (2.24) are also lifted above diegesis. They are personifications of viewpoints distilled from the analysis of research material, a result of transmission analysis and the extension of the extrafictional frame controlled by the author/writer/editor/narrator/scriptor—a form of complex or compound authorship arising from the collaboration of numberless contributors or authorial functions.

In *PW*, instead of a superordinate narrative level, there is an invisible contact character named "David". Even though the given name is used instead of the proper name, the situation raises interpretative questions. Amelia H. Kritzer, referring to the "playwright's identity" (2008:176), suggests that "despite its factual basis and collaborative creation, the work expresses Hare's viewpoint. [...] Hare invokes his personal experience and position when he places responsibility [...] upon major political parties..." (2008:177). In that way, interpreting "David" as focalizer, Kritzer revives the autobiographical mechanism of authentication and credibility, which verbatim strategies undermine. Therefore I would argue that references to "David", like the presence of actor-character-narrators in *Stuff Happens*, may represent a ghostly return of the multiple interviewers/co-authors rather than a return of the Author. The advantage of the name is its recognisability but it is the author-scriptor who follows the text rather than the David Hare whom Kritzer mentions referring to "Britain's most visible and respected playwright" (2008:177). On the other hand, the references to "David" simply foreground the documentary-style with the otherwise hidden narrative agent, the covert shower and arranger of the collected factual material.

10 See Roland Weidle's analysis in "Mimetic Narration" (2011:70-71).

## 6. Concluding remarks

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While there are still many questions left unanswered about the ways peritexts relate to the main texts in drama, this article has aimed to show that in non-experimental realistic plays, verging on docudramas and history plays and deploying verbatim strategies, prefatorial peritexts provide significant channels of communication between the extra and the intra-textual realms, becoming in that way a liminal zone *in-between*, a threshold where fact and fiction meet, a juxtaposition essential for these fact-based plays. In this particular selection of texts, whose examples are *Stuff Happens* and *The Permanent Way*, the peritextual threshold serves as ground where, moving in two directions, the traffic triggered off in the author's note reminds us either of the fictionality of the main text or asserts its factuality. Further on, involved in processes of authorization, authentication and making truth claims, peritexts address the problem of authorship. Oscillating between assertions of authorial "creative will" and scriptor functions, authorial identity is often destabilized and contested by multiple co-authors directing the attention of readers to narratives of transmission. Autographic peritexts tend to penetrate, as extensions of authorial or narrative control, the primary text using diverse methods such as bridging forms of life-writing, insertions of writer-characters, and extensions of narrative frameworks, where the historiodiegetic level of the peritext establishes contact with the extradiegetic level of the main text, often obliterating the difference between the primary and the secondary text, rendering this classification doubtful if not untenable. Finally, considering our explorations, it seems that peritexts in modern drama require in-depth hermeneutic analysis rather than deserving a condescending attitude which reduces them to conventional fillers.

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