

**Treatment of Violence: A Psychoanalytic Study of
Sarah Kane 's *Blasted* and *Cleansed***

مُعالجة العنف: "دراسة نفسية تحليلية لمسرحيتي بلاستد وكليسد
للكاتبة المسرحية ساره كين."

Prepared by

Muthana Jaber Othman

Supervised by

Dr. Mohammed Mahameed

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Department of English Language and Literature

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Middle East University


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Authorization

I **Muthana Jaber Othman**, hereby authorizes the Middle East University to provide copies of my thesis to libraries, organizations, or individuals as required.

Name: Muthana Jaber Othman




Date : 25-6 -2020

Signature : 

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Thesis Committee 's Decision

Name	Position	Signature
Dr . Mohammed Mahameed	Supervisor	
Dr. Nisreen Twfiq Yousif	Internal Examiner	
Dr. Mustafa Ahmed AL Sammarie	External Examiner	

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my late father and mother who both raised me with proper values and principles, to my wife who always supports and encourages me to attain my goals .

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Abstract

This thesis examines and analysis the concept of violence in Sarah Kane works, as one of the most controversial dramatists in the United Kingdom whose plays are both shocking and shaking to the audience and critics. The thesis reflects how violence affects the life of Kane since her early stage of life leading to the renouncement of her evangelical beliefs . Violence is concretized, reflected and depicted apparently in her plays *Blasted* in 1995 and *Cleansed* in 1998 and other plays *Phaedra's Love* in 1996 , *Skin* in 1997 , *Crave* in 1998 and *4.48 Psychosis* in 2000. The thesis sheds light on the development of the concept of violence in Kane's character and her plays as well .

I shall argue and examine in this thesis that Kane's plays *Blasted* and *Cleansed* are both apparent reflections of drastic images of violence, bloodshed, rape, mutilation, cannibalism which she has reflected clearly as a depiction of deep rooted influence of violence in her personal and literary character.

Although Kane's debut play *Blasted*, was castigated by so many critics because of its onstage performance of violence, it can be reconsidered as an antiwar play which shows its authors concern for humanity and her hope for a better world where wars must be avoided. In this sense *Blasted* is an antiwar play which addresses the audience's indifference toward a war as a threat of humanity .

Keywords: *Blasted*, *Cleansed*, Violence, Rape, Torture, Pain, Mutilation, Cannibalism ,In Yer Face Theatre, New Brutalists, Eyeball Gouging.

معالجة العنف: دراسة نفسية تحليلية لمسرحيتي بلاستد و كلينسد للكاتبة المسرحية

ساره كين "

إعداد: مثنى جابر عثمان

إشراف الدكتور محمد محاميد

المُلخَص

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو تسليط الضوء على اعمال الكاتبة المسرحية البريطانية المثيرة للجدل ساره كين 1971-1999 وكيف اثر العنف في حياتها الخاصة منذ نعومة اظفارها و يناقش كيف تخلت عن تعاليم الديانة المسيحية التي اعتنقتها وانعكاس ذلك فيما بعد في مسرحياتها الستة (بلاستد 1995، فيدرفز لاف 1996، سكن 1997، كلينسد 1998، كريف 1998، فورتى فورتى ايت سايكوسيز 2000) التي قدمتها والتي ولدت حالة من السخط من قبل النقاد وخصوصا المسرحية الاولى بلاستد والمسرحية الثالثة كلينسد. وتتناول المسرحيات التركيز على موضوع العنف - التمثيل بالجسد، الاغتصاب واكل لحوم البشر والعديد من المفردات التي تخذش الحياء.

تأثرت الكاتبة منذ فترة حياتها المبكرة بالحرب في اليوسنة التي اندلعت ما بين 1992-1995 وجسدت الكاتبة في المسرحية الاولى التي اصدرتها عام 1995 بعنوان بلاستد عن ويلات الحرب من خراب. يسعى البحث الى تسليط الضوء على عرض دراسة تحليلية نفسية لمسرحية بلاستد ومسرحية كلينسد وكيف تجسد العنف الجسدي والنفسي في الشخصيات التي استعرضتها الكاتبة ساره كين.

الكلمات الافتتاحية: بلاستد، كلينسد، العنف، الاغتصاب، الالم، التعذيب، التمثيل بالجثة، اكل لحم البشر، مسرح الصدمه، المتوحشون الجدد، قلع العين.

Chapter One

1.0. Introduction

This chapter casts some shadow on significantly divergent sections that, in a way or another, reflect its prefatory nature in dealing with the issues raised throughout. It commences with background of the study, statement of problem, objectives, study questions, limits and limitations of the study and it is terminated with the definitions of the terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

Being overwhelmingly famed in the realm of drama, Sarah Kane wrote six plays in her lifetime. She was a British contemporary playwright with a classical sensibility who created a theatre of great moments of beauty and cruelty. Kane is looked upon as controversial and disturbing, and her plays deal with themes of redemptive love, sexual desire, pain, cruelty, torture and death. Her plays are characterized as having a poetic intensity, a pared-down language and the use of extreme and violent stage action particularly in her earlier work (Armstrong, 2015).

As a matter of fact, Kane is usually looked upon among her contemporaries as " a female playwright of violence" decisively enhance her truly affiliation to the so-called In - Yer- Face Theatre . To Kane , this sort of theatre is, in a way or another, the melting –pot in which Kane 's concepts of violence , brutality , and ruthlessness are fully crystalized and fused not only to be printed with the brush and colors of this theatre or to be flavored with

its unusual atmosphere , but also to reinforce the reality of its abnormality and to deepen its vagueness and oddity.

Kane is not only a member of that theatre nor is she something fleeting as if she was an " easy come easy go" .Pertinent to In-Yer-Face Theatre as she is , Kane definitely represents the phase of renewed and pumping fresh blood of theatre 's literary, aesthetic , philosophical and intellectual outputs taking into consideration the question of maintaining the constants.

Kane and her colleagues are reckoned as being a national continuity of In-Yer-Face theatre and its well- founded principles of producing .Albeit rebirthing, the concept of violence to be something familiar and homogenous with the human society 's culture.That the human being is the product of his/her environment is a matter of consensus and the environment around him/her is increasingly variable. One of three variables is surely what people has familiarized and accustomed . So , Kane and In-Yer –Face Theatre try to empty violence, hatred, ruthless of their unfamiliar and passive content. The theatre and its supports. Kane among them have adopted the slogan of " co-existence with violence and crudity to be a state of affairs" .

In- Yer- Face Theatre and Kane are referred to as " two faces of the same coin" because they are said to be in a complimentary relationship . In –Yer-Face Theatre is chiefly based on the philosophy of providing the audience with "shock and awe ". That is to say, the messages and implications of the theatre should be given to the audience by shaking their feelings and wills until they understand and interpret what is going on around them . Advocators of such a kind of theatre have justified that the utmost entertainment resides in

what is supported to be unusual and unfamiliar rather than is supported to be usual and familiar .Kane has been the fertile soil of theatre products and has embraced its unusual picture . Accordingly , it has not been surprising for audience or readers to find in Kane 's *Blasted and Cleansed* that filthy language is widely used to paint graphic images of different scenes . Nudity , sexuality and sadism are obviously normalized and adopted . In a word, Kane 's works have been shining instances of the line of In-Yer- Face Theatre's argument.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

Many of Kane's plays deal with violence both physically and psychologically. On this basis, this study is an attempt to dip deep into how Kane skillfully portraits violent acts on stage and how violence predominates the character 's psychology.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

The study is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study how violence is depicted in Kane's *Blasted* and *Cleansed*.
2. To scrutinize how violence affects Kane's characters psychologically.
3. To examine how Kane represents the In -Yer-Face Theatre.

1.4 Questions of the Study:

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. In what way does Kane demonstrate the In -Yer-Face Theatre ?
2. How is violence manifested in her *Blasted* and *Cleansed* ?
3. How does violence affect the two- play characters psychologically ?

1.5 Significance of the Study:

Kane is one of the most distinguished modern British playwrights. However, very few studies related to her plays have been conducted so far. Previous studies of articles in journals tend to deal with Kane's unique dramatic technique and to focus on her plays from a psychological point of view. The present study has a two-fold function: to study two of her plays critically and to analyze their characters psychologically. Thus, this study will hopefully be a source for students of undergraduate and postgraduate studies as well as readers interested in the plays of Kane.

1.6 Limits of The Study:

The study is limited to the investigation of two of Kane 's major plays: *Blasted* (her first play) and *Cleansed* (her third one).

1.7 Limitation of the Study:

The study will be conducted in the first semester of the academic year 2019 - 2020.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Violence

Kane can be best nominated as the playwright of violence. She has deserved such a title or nomination for she dosent only deal with violence in terms of its common sense or by its peculiar nature as laymen have understood or made use of it , but she is basically concerned with it as a multi- faced phenomenon governed by an internally psychological motives and resulted from self- struggles. For this reason, it is possible to argue that violence in *Blasted*

and *Cleansed* is rooted and cemented in Kane's inner voice that is lucidly represented by the active manipulation of the first person pronoun "I".

In -Yer-Face Theater

Multi- faced as it is, violence in Kane's works deceive as it tends to move apart like an object through space. This is quite natural in as it is implicitly – based product. One of the faces of violence in *Blasted* and *Cleansed* is possible seen in a form of sexuality, torture, rape and death. To Kane, these two forms are involved in scenes not to distort audience or reader's public decorum and then the overall play performance would be received with a stir and shock. The very performance of such scenes carries with it a metaphorical message stating that sexuality is not only a matter of privacy, nor is it a matter of evanescent, innate pleasure, but it may be a means of blowing off one's steam or a reaction of what is going on outside.

In some cases, sexuality is a matter of recognition and embodies supreme communication. In *Cleansed*, A bully a tormentor to the others as he is, Tinker has been invited by a prostitute to dance for him in a booth.

Blasted

Though relatively accepted and satisfied by audience, readers and critics, Kane's works are mostly watched eagerly, read avidly and castigated positively. Kane's portrait of violence is occasionally attributed to the Serbian wars adverse consequences that are undoubtedly seen as an external incubator triggering her sufferings. The catastrophic pictures of war as well as the scenes of destruction all have made Kane to devote the second half of *Blasted* to unveil the war chronicles.

Last but not least, Kane has unprecedentedly succeeded to tackle and to adopt the strategies of "give and take" with the concept of violence in her works. However, it leads her to put an end to her life, i.e violence has been to Kane, a fuel to run "the machines" of writing, but it has simultaneously been the tool of her suicide.

Cleansed

Works are usually intended to be a parameter according to which a playwright can objectively judge. Whether or not his/her psychological, intellectual and mental stock of events and experiences are successively expressed and elucidated. Whether they are skillfully oriented to find their ways to audience and reader's mentality and culture. In fact , it is not a fantasy to argue that Kane has been able to make use of such a parameter or a compass to monitor not only her characters harmonic directions alongside *Blasted* and *Cleansed* but also to draw via those charecters , how the line of demarcation between reaction and violence , between suffering and patience and security is blurred.

In her plays, Kane has made the plot transit alongside characters reactions, dialogue and personalities. That is to say, the plot has been replaced by some sort of a drastic shift accompanied by the plays characters. Kane s characters are always in conflict and the plot is primarily anchored to demonstrate such characters instability and restlessness.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

2.0. Introduction

This chapter is intended to provide a panoramic view and a general survey as to how critics and literature specialists diagnose profoundly Sarah Kane's works from the ground of their literary and psychological values of the concept of violence. The chapter consists of five sections: the first section is a comprehensive look at the theoretical literature related to Kane's two plays. The second one is concerned with how the emergence of In-Yer Face Theatre has shaded Kane's works. The third one is an attempt to trace the consequences of the Bosnian War on Kane's works. The fourth one is a speculative, albeit intellectual, treatise of how "violence" has saliently been recruited to be the central theme of Kane's plays. The last one centers on how human rights have considered Kane's works,

2.1. Theoretical Literature

As far as Kane's biography is concerned, Spajic (2018) writes that Kane was a British playwright, born on 3 February 1971 in Brentwood Essex. Her parents were working in journalism and the whole family was all devout Evangelists. Kane has made the plot transit alongside characters reactions, dialogues and personalities. That is to say, the plot has been replaced by some sort of a drastic shift accompanied by the play's character's are always in a conflict and the plot is primarily anchored to demonstrate such character's instability and restlessness.

Kane's interest in theatre has been accelerated at an early age when she was a member of the Basildon Youth Theatre Group (Saundres, 2009). She succeeded to direct some of

Chekov and Shakespeare works while she was a school student. Kane becomes an assistant director in production at Soho Polytechnic.

When being a student, she started her early writing. This was entirely viewed as her creative period since she was a member of a group of Bristol University Students known as the Sore Throat Theatre Company. The group wrote and acted a series of works. In 1991, she wrote a short work called *Comic Monologue*, in which she also performed at the Edinburgh Festival. This short work belonged to a series called *Dreams screams and Silences* (Saundres. 2009).

As for Spajic (2018), Kane was successful in her school. In July 1992, the year of her graduation, she obtained her first- class honors degree. Throughout, she already started to work on her first piece, *Blasted*, and once again performed at the Edinburgh Festival with the Store Theatre Company. The show was entitled *Dreams Screams 2*. Kane also wrote two monologues: *Starved and What She Said*. The same year at the Festival, Sarah attended Jeremy Wellers' *Mad*. It was a play whose actors were people with mental disease acted. This play, i .e performance, had a great impact on her perception of Theatre (Saunders, 2009).

When being at university, she applied for the assistant director job at the Bush Theatre, London, in 1992. Dromgoole (2000: 161), the Theatre's artistic director, says:

In her letter, instead of the usual two – paragraph cocktail of smarminess and arrogance, she sent in a four – page essay about the future of the British Theatre and hence the world. It was original, unremittingly bleak, and highly compelling. He says that she appeared at the interview " dressed in a lot of black, scowled a lot and got angry with (them) for

(their) failures to communicate with her. They liked her, thought that her intelligence and judgment were remarkable, but didn't offer her a job because they thought that her non – stop intensity might drag a little in rehearsal.

The next year, in October 1992, Kane registered at the Birmingham University as an MA student in playwright. This course was designed by the British playwright David Edger (Saundres, 2009). During her studies, Kane did not cope with the traditional mainstream theatre and with its authority (Stivicic 2003:1). An example of this was that she regularly visited Bush to see some shows there. Dromgoole (2000: 161-162) remarks:

Instead of the usual discreet slipping away with head lowered, Sarah would sit on the stairs and lecture the theatre staff and anyone hanging around, including on one occasion the actors waiting to make their entrances in the second half, on what wrong with the show. This was something we had to forcibly discourage. She had adopted us as parent to rebel against.

Kane was a talented actress but she felt depressed and inferior so that she spent her time for writing instead (Sivicic, 2003).

When attempted to take her own life, Kane's depression was aggravated in 1999. After this attempt, she was admitted in King's College Hospital.

Spajic (2018) asserts that the first draft of *Blasted* was written in 1993. Some its parts were performed by student actors at the University's Allardyce Nicoll Studio Theatre. Once performed, it was received with a stir and the audience was divided. However, it left an impression on the literary agent Mel Ken, who was one of the audiences at the

performance. *Blasted* was selected to be an option by the Royal Court and the rehearsed reading was to take place in 1994.

Kane commenced her job as a dramatist in 1995. When aged 22, she wrote her first play entitled *Blasted* at the time when she was preparing for her MA degree in drama at Birmingham University. *Blasted* has in fact been seen as a theatrical landmark of the 1990s. It led to a great stir at the London Royal Court Theatre and evoked critics' fury. *Blasted* has been severely criticized in reviews as a nasty apocalyptic and problematic piece simply because it provides a nightmarish experience. *Blasted* was written during the Balkan crisis whereby the atrocities of war are going to the known.

Kane applied for the job of an assistant director again. She was not well-qualified for the post, but the Bush insisted to keep her so that she began working as a literary associate.. However, she was not satisfied with them and she decided to vanish for brief periods of time. Dromgoole (2000:162) notes: "It was only a couple of days later that we realized she had walked out. She had left an indignant note, but unfortunately none of had ever found it".

Saunders (2002) reports that Kane wrote five works respectively: *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Cleansed*, *Crave* and *4.48 Psychosis*. These plays were accompanied by a script for a short ten –minute film (*Skin*). Her work was described as being of the brutality, and it was staged in the front of the spectators as well as her age .This, in turn, entailed that the British press denounced her as an *enfant terrible* (Babbage, 2011). Most, if not all, of the critics were very much harsh in their comments on her first play *Blasted*. They ,beyond hesitation, expressed their disapproval through a myriad of epithets, such as disgusting, disturbing,

degrading, depressing, prurient psycho- fantasies, understand brutalism, degradation in the raw, as well as descriptions like " having your face rammed into an overflowing astray " or " a sour taste in the mind " (Seirz, 2001). This notorious reputation was reflected in *Phadera's Love*. Therefore, she made her mind to stage her fourth play *Crave* under the pseudonym Marie Kelvedon, and thus it was not judged on the ground of her earlier works.

Spajic (2018) ascribes that Kane wrote the drafts for her film script *Skin* in 1994. Performed at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, the premiere of *Blasted* took place in 1995. In May 1995, the Royal Court managed an exchange program with New Dramatist, in which Kane was one of participants. During that year, she finished her script for *Skin*, which was filmed with Vincent O Connell and was screened at the London Film Festival. She started working on *Phaedra's Love*. It was part of the commission from the Gate Theatre in Notting Hill, London . The assigned director, Cath Mattock, was replaced by Kane and *Phaedra's Love* was staged on 15 May 1996. At the same year, Kane worked as a writer- in - residence at Paines Plough: It was a company specialized in new writing , from August 1 1996 to March 1998, when *Crave* was first produced at the same company . In February 1997, she took part in the Royal Court's Annual International Exchange Program with *Phaedra's Love*. During this year, being under the pressure of her unbearable depression, Kane was voluntarily admitted to the Royal Maudsley Hospital in London for the first time. Nevertheless, she was later released and recovered, so she directed Georg Buchner's *Woyczek* at the Gate Theatre (Saundres, 2009).

Saundres (2009) once again states that 1998 was a productive year for Kane: she wrote two new plays, the first one was performed on the main stage of the Royal Court. This led

her attending workshops in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and Sofia, Bulgaria, as well as workshops at the Royal Court's International Residency in London for dramatists from different countries.

Crave was performed in August 1998 at the Traverse Theatre as part of the Edinburgh Festival. As a part of the Royal Court International Play Development Program, Kane cooperated with Andalusian writers in Seville, Spain. In August 1998, she won an Arts Foundation Fellowship for Playwriting. (Spajic 2018)

Kane's play entitled 4.48 Psychosis, and written in 1998, casts light on depression and suicide. It was performed posthumously on 23 June 2000 at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs. As documented in article entitled "Remembering the Sylvia Plath of Playwrights : Who Changed British Theatre Forever", Kane's last – and darkest – play 4.48 Psychosis is accounted as an unconventional, unsettling stream of consciousness. The swansong of a playwright destined to be remembered as a troubled female artist (Evans,2016).

Kane exerts laborious efforts to elucidate the cruelty and the violence of the world in her plays by covering topics of "destructive love", sexual craving, pain, physical and psychological dimension 's of cruelty, issues of distress, melancholia and death (Bicer, 2011). Scrutinizing love, faith and redemption is something that sets Kane out of other authors of a 1990s mindset. (Babbage, 2011).

In all her plays, Kane deviated from traditional dramaturgy and its features like " linear sequence of time, creating definitive characters whose names, genders are stated, and recognizable plot, three unities of time, place and action, cause and effect connection" (Bicer2011:76) . Her text surpasses drama: they are plotless focused on conjuring images

through language. It is also fragmented and concise, but at the same time it is powerful and poetic as well. The language is devoid of redundancy but the images are completely of unspoken content (Stivicic, 2003). She manipulates post-dramatic strategies, for example, involving the audience instead of making them as passive observers, and " using media images on stage masculinization, playing with the density of signs, non hierarchy, physicality, and interruption of the real " (Bicer , 2011:76).

Spajic (2018) states that her later plays, *Crave* and *4.48 Psychosis*, significantly become a stumbling rock in front of the rest of her opus – neither the narrative is developed nor the characters are voices), the language collapses together with the reality, the spoken content is scattered, vague and can be interpreted in many different ways (Critzner,2008). *Crave* is often perceived as a humorous and uplifting lay in a way that it is the total opposite of *Blasted* , *Phaedra 's Love* and *Cleansed*, but Kane disagrees and says :

Blasted is a hopeful play. It is a lot more fucking hopeful than *Crave*, which oddly, other people have characterized as uplifting. I was a lot more at twenty than I am now, but people strangely enough the work of mine which I think fails to negate my own personal despair (*Crave*) other people find uplifting. The plays that I consider to be about hope (*Blasted*), faith (*Phaedra's Love*) and love (*Crave*) seems to have depressed everyone else. (Seirz, 2001:120).

Kane was known for her provocative plays- plays included basically all of such taboo topics as rape, torture, violence, cannibalism etc. In most of her productions, many audience members are expected to walk out, while others tend to miss the performance by

fainting instead. Kane's plays are as relevant now as they were in the 1990s. She wrote most of them while being under the pressure of severe clinical depression.

Kane was a talented actress but she felt depressed and inferior so that she spent her time for writing instead (Sivic 2003) . When attempted to take her own life , Kane 's depression was aggravated in 1999. After this attempt , she was admitted in King 's College Hospital.

2.2 The emergence of the In –Yer-Face Theatre in the United Kingdom and its shadow on Kane's Works

Kane has been affected by the events that predominated the atmosphere of UK and that were represented by the most exciting surge of new drama since the Angry Young Men had have a century before. (Seirz,2001). Sarah Kane has been regarded as one of the most important playwrights of that decade. Ten years after her death, her plays are still frequently acted around the world.

Kane has been labeled as an "In –Yer - Face" playwright, she was part of a group of contemporary British playwrights who were interested in making audiences feel the outcome of violence. On the other hand, Kane's plays are considered a challenge for many existing theatrical forms, among them, the late twentieth century resurgence of "*Angry Young Men*" plays. While critics have been accelerated to identify the main theme of her work as madness, few of them have tied each plays complex construction of madness with a struggle to complicate existing theatrical form (Seirz , 2003).

Characters, or more accurately characterization, are usually intended to be a parameter according to which a playwright can objectively judge whether or not his/her

psychological, intellectual and mental stock of events and experiences are successfully expressed and elucidated- whether they are skillfully oriented to find their ways to audience and readers' mentality and culture. In fact, it is not a fantasy to argue that Kane has been able to make use of such a parameter or a compass to monitor not only her characters' harmonic directions alongside *Blasted* and *Cleansed* but also to draw, via those characters, how the line of demarcation between reaction and violence, between suffering and patience and between scare and security is blurred.

In her plays, Kane has made the plot transit alongside characters' reactions, dialogues and personalities. That is to say, the plot has been replaced by some sort of a drastic shift accompanied by the plays' characters. Kane's characters are always in a conflict and the plot is primarily anchored to demonstrate such characters' instability and restlessness. This hence harmonizes the psychologically- based violence that Kane endeavors to show up explicitly or implicitly. In her attempt to sketch characters, Kane is basically concerned with the psychological environment rather than with the social settings, and thus her characters do not refer to social issues at all. For example, in *Blasted*, characters are oriented to reflect moral sides of violence, trauma and indifference, while in *Cleansed*, the psychological sense of violence is more and more manifested in relation to imagination and dreams that are manipulated as being a counterpart of reality.

Characters can expressively image violence in different ways. In *Blasted*, Kane has selected an ironic representation of Ian's job (a war correspondent during the Bosnian War) whereby the soldier illustrates his own resentment, boos and loathing of such a man and his job.

Characterization in *Cleansed* and *Blasted* has been well-organized, well-formed and well-structured in order to crystallize the concept of parallelism among sex, war and violence. Behind the scene of her plays, Kane would simply like to inform her readers and audience that violence can peacefully be co-existed and Kane, once again, displays another image of violence and brutality when are closely associated with the complexity of ethnicity and racism. In *Blasted*, The solider has opened a heated debate as to what Ian' nationality stands for. On the other hand, Ian seems to be biased to his own ethnicity and his attitude exudes hatred possibly adapted.

2.3 War in Bosnia 1992-1995 and its Reflections on Kane' Works

Historically speaking, the Bosnian war took place between 1992 and 1995. It was a hard travail resulted from the breakup of Former Yugoslavia and its adverse consequence. After the separation of Slovenians and Croatians from former Yugoslavia, the Bosnian Serbs rejected that Bosnians declared their independence. To attempt to provide some sort of protection for the Serbian territory and population, the Bosnian Serbs' forces advanced into the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and war broke out. Bosnian Serbs were striving to create their Bosnian Serb through a war which was characterized as genocide, ethnic cleansing and rape.

In Kane's *Blasted* and *Cleansed*, the concept of violence has been traced internally and externally. In the first place, it is a naturally internal attack and counter-attack against what Kane has been suffering from her environment though such an environment, in many cases, provides her with the outputs of her success as a student and with the premises of becoming a great playwright. Accordingly, step by step, violence becomes her increasing not

plummeting tendency to a tipping point. She is not internally concerned to dry up the sources of violence till it has exacerbated its matter to be the raw material of her plays.

To Kane, violence is similar to a 'hydra' in Geek methodology, i.e. a great multi-headed snake. Once a head is cut, it is quickly replaced by another one. Accordingly, it is a 'mask-like' veiling varying shapes, pictures and manifestations so that nearly in every scene of the two plays, it is possible find one of them associated with such and such character. It seems sensible that violence of Kane' *Blasted* and *Cleansed* is suitably accounted for as a 'one-in-all' phenomenon that goes beyond human mentality and psychology. It is frequently found as something pivotal on Kane' conscious will rather than her unconscious motivation, i. e it is occasionally a matter of non-finite responses to some internal obsessions which may or may not be fleeting and stealthy.

Violence is fed back externally as far as Kane' *Blasted* is concerned. It is worth-noting that *Blasted* has first of all been written to demonstrate and demarcate both the borders of her internally geographical setting (Britain) and the borders of her internally psychological setting (self-unconscious). Later, the second half of *Blasted* is written to outpace internal dimensions towards external horizons represented by the Bosnian War. That is, externality becomes the most remarkable property of violence side by side with its internality.

According to Kane, the soldier is meant to a symbol of the relation between the rape committed by Ian and the war that was simmering outside. Lacking his name in the play, the soldier reveals that his actions are not individual. Instead, the nameless soldier, who never shows which side he is fighting for, symbolizes the concept of masculine dominance

and violence. The soldier's occupation sets him as a perpetrator of violence, but also one who has experienced violence – he has no doubt seen the violence of war.

Ironically speaking, *Blasted* came into being in Leeds, but suddenly It has been revealed as an account of Bosnia. To put in another way, Kane has drastically changed the spatial dimension of the drama. The play outpaced the limits of distance imposed by geography and transported the audience into the experience of civil war. Accordingly, *Blasted* is at the same time both a play of two spatial axes: In the first place, it is rooted in Leeds (then jumps into the future). Next, it stays rooted in the 1990s (then jumps across Europe to Bosnia). It is also a play of a plenty of metaphorical meanings. Moreover, shifting into a war atmosphere in the second half makes the play have a perfect link between form and content.

When portraying war in general, Kane does not restrict herself in the Bosnian war. She is striving to persuade the viewers to look upon the inevitable danger of war in Britain while they consider the crises in Balkan. Actually, Kane is blending the reality of the crises in Bosnia by drawing a close relation between Ian and Cate to warn the possibility of war in Britain or any other countries (Dabiri, 2012).

Though insisting on the British setting of the play, Kane attempts to reduce the distance which Sierz (2001) thinks that it exists according to " geography and indifference" between Britain and Bosnia. Selecting a hotel room as the setting of the play, Kane is willing to invite the audience to see beyond geography. A hotel by itself represents the symbol of universality and multiculturalism. Moreover, the play directions also convey that the hotel room is not cheap and it could be anywhere in the world. In such a way, Kane tells the

audience that whereas Bosnia is far away concerning its geographical distance, Britain should learn not to be far from what is going on in Balkans because the same public conditions may be found in Britain because of internal problems like the racial conflicts. In the first place, it is a naturally internal attack and counter-attack against what Kane has been suffering from her environment though such an environment, in many cases, provides her with the outputs of her success as a student and with the premises of becoming a great playwright. Accordingly, step by step, violence becomes her increasing not plummeting tendency to a tipping point. She is not internally concerned to dry up the sources of violence till it has exacerbated its matter to be the raw material of her plays.

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Dabiri, (2012) states that Kane manages to straddle the distance between Britain and Bosnia by making the viewers follow up the parallels of war in Bosnia and the violent actions of the play and then advises them to look at the possibility of the same violent conditions in Britain. In this point, private as they are, the disputes between the sexes become an issue turning into violence, riot and even war. Kane describes the conditions of war.

2.4. Violence: The Central Theme of Kane's Plays

The production of violence has been designed by Kane to penetrate the nature the nature and the content of the two plays plot. The plot, from the very beginning, is floating: it is changeable and fluctuated in order to reflect characters oscillating mood and behavior. Violence, plot and characterization of the two plays are interwoven in a positive correlation. Because of the violence- based plot, characters images are portrayed to compensate, in many cases, the missing plot as if they were monitored by themselves. This situation refers to the reality of the psychological side of violence. Kane is willing to elicit in a way or another. Audience and readers can widely smell Realism with the flavor of Surrealism when Kane works are performed and written, and this is evident that Kane belongs to In- Yer – Face Theatre whose roots extended to Ibsen modern theatre

The study does not shut the door of exploring, scrutinizing and diagnosing the notion of violence from other different grounds. Indeed, all of the options can be on the study table. Psychological as it is, violence in Kane's plays may possible be tackled from Freudian angle, and if happened, it would be something promising and original by itself. Being a multi-faced concept, violence can also be covered by virtue of Existentialism. Jean-Paul Sartre' writings would be adventurous in such an area of study.

Highly affected by the Bosnian War, Kane's Blasted can arguably be set in a comparison with other works interested in war atmospheres.

Kane has apparently expressed her Treatment of Violence in her first play Blasted and her third play Cleansed. My aim behind writing this thesis is to treat the concept of violence which emerges in Kane personal life since early years and how violence is melted in the

character of Kane as being one of the most controversial dramatists of her era. Sarah's plays deal with violent images of violence such as pain, cannibalism, mutilation, torture , eye gouging, rape and taboo expressions, all of which have aroused resentment among critics and audiences at the same time (Urban, 2004) . The depiction of the atrocities of war in Bosnia is vividly depicted in *Blasted* and conveying a blatant message to the audience and society about the catastrophic consequences of war which result in unrest, havoc and disruption of the society. In *Cleansed*, Sarah depicted the lavish and lewd life in a university shedding the light on the sadistic character of Tinker, who controls savagely and inhumanely the lives of his colleagues and imposing his own instructions which turn their social lives into broken ones. Through reading *Blasted* and *Cleansed*, the audience and critics assess both plays as media storm due to the violent images (Morley, 1996).

Dabiri (2012) notes that in spite of the fact that Kane's *Blasted* was referred to as immoral by critics due to the extreme representation of violence and hence castigated by them. Yet, the play is moral in the sense that while it portrays a vivid picture of violence, it shows its author 's concern for humanity by warning the proximity and possibility of a destructive war situation in Britain or anywhere else all around the world. As a war play, *Blasted* demonstrates violence as an inevitable consequence of war and critiques the indifference of humanity in confrontation with the war in Bosnia and in a border sense in the whole world. Even though the stage directions mention British Leeds as the setting, Kane referred to the war in Bosnia as the source that inspired her for the second part of *Blasted*. Nowhere in *Blasted* the word Bosnia can be found and the author does not provide any information related to the location of the war while the war in Bosnia is often mentioned as the external reference of the war in the play. This caused confusion among

critics and audiences whereas helped them obtain meaning from the play. The simultaneity of writing *Blasted* and the war in Bosnia and also the author's commentary that the Bosnian war was her source of inspiration has positioned *Blasted* as a play about war and rape in Bosnia, where Sarajevo was heavily attacked by the Serbs and many Croatian and Muslim women were raped at Serbian rape Camps. Kane once said:

My intention was to be absolutely truthful about abuse and violence. All of the violence in the play has been carefully plotted and dramatically structured to say what I want about war. The logical conclusion of the attitude that produces an isolated rape in England is the rape camps in Bosnia. And the logical conclusion to the way society expects men to behave in war. (Chramosilová, 2013: 18)

Carney (2005:276) remarks that “theatrical violence works at odds with theatre itself, asserting a kind of false concreteness for itself, a sense of ‘reality’ with which the whole of the representation cannot compete”. He sees the reason for this in the act of violence being in some ways more real than the rest of the theatrical performance. Explicit violence, according to Carney, works as an “aesthetic disruption” which “deliberately frustrates coherence and continuity,”¹ as something is being done to the real body of an actor. Sierz (2001) makes a similar point when he says that “stage violence is almost always marking a point of no return”, as it takes place in “real time and real space” as opposed to the violence mediated through a camera, as in film or even in a news broadcast.

Violence is a powerful theatrical tool, and as such a favored one of both Kane and Crimp. For both of them, however, the cynical, ironic Tarantinesque use of violence is not aesthetically satisfactory – and, what is more, morally sustainable. For Crimp, violence is a

powerful metaphor for oppression by language, media, or social stances. For Kane, self-assertion, communication with others (and sometimes with oneself) is so painful at times that it can only be expressed theatrically through violence (Sierz 2001).

It is necessary to emphasize more that neither Crimp nor Kane uses violence to glamorize it; there is no unhealthy fascination in its representation. Crimp is considered a postmodern writer; yet, a play such as Jez Butterworth's *Mojo* contains much more postmodern irony, as it invites the spectator to enjoy the gruesome violence it portrays. Crimp, for all his playfulness, is a moral author. Kane, although often labeled an in-*yer-face* playwright, wanted to innovate rather than to shock, and certainly never intended her audience to enjoy the nightmares her characters have to endure. For her, violence has strong cathartic potential: "we have to descend to hell imaginatively to avoid going there in reality." (Stephenson and Langridge, 2014:133).

The way violence is represented in plays of Crimp and Kane is very different: in Kane, it is explicit and concrete. In contrast, no one would probably dream of counting Crimp into the group of in-*yer-face* playwrights. Jean-Marc Lanteri (2000) in his preface to *Dramaturgies britanniques 1980-2000* compares the use of violence of both playwrights. He argues that in Kane's plays the violence is concrete and radical, turning the people on the stage into pieces of meat. Crimp, however, uses more subtle, manipulative forms of violence. The real, brutal violence is often talked about instead of shown, its representation contenting itself with a commentary.

Concrete violence and cruelty is the central concern of only two early plays: *Dealing With Clair*, where a real-estate agent is abducted and murdered by a psychopathic client, and *Getting Attention*, which deals with child abuse. Even in these plays, however, nothing violent is ever shown to the audience. The effect is not gut-wrenching, as with *Kane*, but rather chillingly threatening. In *Getting Attention*, the four-year-old victim never appears on stage. Crimp tries to make his audience reflect on their own fears, so the torture is always only insinuated, never explicitly described (Sierz 2001).

One thing Kane and Crimp have in common is that violence in their plays is often accompanied by irony and clever verbal humor (admittedly very black). This has been widely acknowledged in the case of Crimp, but not often with Kane. Her tendency towards exaggerated theatrical gesture, huge, romantic characters and statements (“Love me or kill me”), and especially the never-ending torrent of violence has prevented the critics and audience from recognizing the shrewd, cynical wit underlying the plays. The wry humor of her characters has often helped to lighten what would otherwise be a very suffocating environment of Kane’s dramatic realm.

The humor has redeemed Kane’s plays from being too obviously profound and intense. However, this does not imply that she is not deadly serious about her issues. Similarly as with Crimp, the portrayal of violence serves to point out the evil side of human relationships: oppression, humiliation, and obsession (Sierz 2001). The high level of graphic onstage violence has, however, blinded some of the critics to the fact that oppression is being criticized and not praised or exploited for its shock-value: there have

been many critical attempts to establish a new streak of theatre-writing, decidedly immoral one, in the 1990s (Sierz 2001).

Labels like “New Brutalists” or “The Theatre of Urban Ennui” strove to imply that writers like Mark Ravenhill or Caryl Churchill were much younger, more bored and cool than was actually the case. There have been a lot of epigones of the new writers, and admittedly a lot of the plays contained an unjustified amount of brutality and not much more. The violence in Churchill’s plays is shocking but by no means purposeless. Sierz emphasizes that the aim of Churchill has been to “make violence as horrible, and as inescapable, as possible”, not “in order to titillate, or to make powerless audiences feel powerful and fascistic, in the way Hollywood films do, but in order to shock them out of their complacency” (Aragay et al, 2007:144).

The shock-value especially of the sexual scenes in Churchill’s plays was by no means unheard of. When reading Elinor Fuchs’s evaluation of the 1980s theatrical scene in New York, it is surprising to note the degree of obscenity and/or open eroticism found in the performances of the time. Fuchs remembers a performance of porn star Annie Sprinkle in Richard Schechner's Prometheus Project in 1985, during which Sprinkle stripped and invited the audience to touch her nipples or put their heads between her breasts. Next, she “asked any interested spectator to shine a flashlight at her genitals, examine them with a magnifying glass, and describe their texture and color” (Fuchs 1996, 116-7). In 1990, the same actress brought herself “to orgasm on a kind of altar, a ritual climax dedicated to those she loved who have died of AIDS”. Fuchs (1996:127) describes her feelings during this performance as “hushed reverence” and “something akin to love.” More obscene and

on the “excremental” side were the shows of Karen Finley, whose performance I’m an Assman consisted of the performer pouring “dog food, cream, and other condiments down the open neck of her ruffled 1950s party dress”(Fuchs, 1996: 119). Undoubtedly, there are some differences between the theatrical landscape of the UK and the United States; the impact of performance aesthetics has, however, been strong in both environments.

The answer seems to be the association of sex, violence and traditional dramatic form. In the 1980s, the new performances were created on a wave of “happy” postmodernism, in a relatively optimistic endeavor to explore the limits of what can be done on stage. It is also remarkable that although most of the shows mentioned by Fuchs show open and often extreme sexuality, they are usually not focused on abuse or violence. The whole experiment, it seems, was conducted within the sphere of the political statement which entitled all sexual groups, obviously females and homosexuals but also other sexual minorities, to have a say, to be seen and thus emerge from the realm of “unspeakable”.

Kane’s violence is especially shocking because her plays do not follow – in form or content – any outside, realistic logic but rather the Artaudian logic of dream and the subconscious. Sex, for instance, is deeply linked to ritual, as it equals power.

The one who rapes is the more powerful one than the one who is raped. On the other hand, the “voluntary”, non-violent sex has the significance of reception, recognition and harmony. Far from the act of “liberating eroticism”, sex has become “a desperate attempt to communicate”(sierz, 2001: 197). The scene with Tinker and the Woman in *Cleansed* is noteworthy in this respect. Tinker, who has acted as a bully and a tormentor to the inmates,

has been visiting an anonymous prostitute dancing for him in a booth. At the end of the play, the dancer comes out of the booth and makes love to Tinker.

Many have made the mistake of confusing Kane's preoccupation with violence for overactive imagination. However, Kane did not invent any of the particularly violent scenes: indeed, all the atrocities committed in her plays are accounts of real events taken from books on war violence (and, in the case of eye-gouging, from a book on football fans). She complained: "I tend to think that anything that has been imagined, there's someone somewhere who's done it" (Sierz, 2001:177).

Kane has retreated into mindscape does not mean violence does not follow her there. Indeed, due to the blurred identity of the speakers and the overlapping of their narratives the spectator is smothered by the omnipresent fog of pain and cruelty. Dysfunctional, confused relationships continue to play a big role. Self-hatred inevitably leads to violence – this time inflicted by the subject on him/herself. The punishment is taken in extremis and climaxes in suicide.

Kane starts her plays off with blatantly confronting the audience about the extent of their investment in their relationships and with this. She slightly eclipses a strong and also confrontational statement following shortly after: "I had a night in which everything was revealed to me. / How can I speak again?" Kane opens up "a can of worms" – as people are often preoccupied with searching for the meaning of life, they often forget to think ahead and wonder what such a revelation could cause. In *Blasted* this revelation seems to be one of the reasons to commit suicide – it might be the realization that there is no point in anything because of dying or something entirely different, but under the weight of this

knowledge the patient is driven to take her own life. Kane makes any moments of clarity out to be something rather undesirable and not really cathartic, ultimately leading to one's death. In spite of the main theme of *Blasted* being quite bleak and somewhat depressing, Kane manages to balance the gloom with flashes and glimmers of hope here and there and chooses to end the play ambiguously in the least (Tycker 2008). Apart from its Biblical sense and the possible reference to death, the recurring line "Remember the light and believe the light can also be seen as a generally hopeful and positive element in the play, light symbolizing "all things bright and beautiful", all things that are "good". And even though the patient several times openly talks about her hope diminishing – "insoluble hoping cannot uphold me"; and then disappearing altogether – "no hope no hope no hope no hope..."

Kane commented on *Blasted* reporting "I genuinely think because it is because if critics don't have a clear framework within which to locate the play they cannot talk about it" (Mitchell 2004, 18). Kane recognized her work as something new in the United Kingdom of the 1990 s. She saw in the theatre the potential to explore the real issues and to affect real change – to her critics were just getting in the way. She adds:

I think the obsession with content that the critics have means that any play rather than a play about violence , because they don't know how to talk about it – and that's exacerbated by the fact that theatre is alive art (Mitchell 2004, 19).

Throughout the remainder of her career , she would continue to push the limits of theatrical experience, and in doing so, earn the respect and admiration of some , and the animosity and dismissal of others.

In response to the numerous critics of the violence in *Blasted*, Kane noted that the violence in the play was de- glamorized and therefore of different kind than that of people like Trantino. Without glamour, violence is presented as it really is repulsive. Kane wondered why people had a problem with it in that case: Would people seriously prefer it if the violence were appalling? People would be able to tell the difference between something that's about violence and something that's violent. *Blasted* is quite a peaceful play. And this made Kane's struggle, during and for some time after, the premier of her first play. She felt that violence was the most pressing issue of the day and thought it not only should be, but needed to be addressed. Kane believed, as people such as John Fraser did, that art was perhaps the best means with which to explore "the nature of the beast". As we see, Kane insists that theatre is a supremely effective means through which we may confront the abject and thereby find ourselves (Mitchell 2004).

Walsh (2012) believes that *Cleansed* is rife with happenings which mostly appear through acts of extreme violence. Tinker produces a large pair of scissors and cuts off Carl's tongue. Tinker takes Carl by the arms and cuts off his hands .An electric current is switched on. Grace s body is thrown into rigid shock as bits of her brain are burnt out. After Carl's tongue is cut off, Grace and Graham dance their love for one another.

Bicer (2011) states that Kane uses the term " experiential" to describe her works which often explore violence and sexuality .Kane's plays are often the acts of physical, sexual and

verbal dimensions of violence and sexuality. In this process Jeremy Weller's Grass maker Project Mad (1992) in Edinburg has a big effect on Kane. On many occasions she emphasizes the need for experiential theatre which should completely deal with the roots of evils.

In- Yer- Face Theatre and Kane are referred to as “two faces of the same coin” because they are said to be in a complimentary relationship. In –Yer-Face Theatre is chiefly based on the philosophy of providing the audience with "shock and awe ". That is to say, the messages and implications of the theatre should be given to the audience by shaking their feelings and wills until they understand and interpret what is going on around them. Advocators of such a kind of theatre have justified that the utmost entertainment resides in what is supported to be unusual and unfamiliar rather than is supported to be usual and familiar .Kane has been the fertile soil of theatre products and has embraced its unusual picture. Accordingly, it has not been surprising for audience or readers to find in Kane’s *Blasted and Cleansed* that filthy language is widely used to paint graphic images of different scenes . Nudity, sexuality and sadism are obviously normalized and adopted. In a word, Kane’s works have been shining instances of the line of In – Yer- Face Theatre.

2.5 Human Rights and Kane's plays

Kane can be best nominated as the playwright of violence. She has deserved such a title or nomination for she dosent only deal with violence in terms of its common sense or by its peculiar nature as laymen have understood or made use of it , but she is basically concerned with it as a multi- faced phenomenon governed by an internally psychological motives and resulted from self- struggles. For this reason , it is possible to argue that violence in *Blasted*

and *Cleansed* is rooted and cemented in Kane's inner voice that is lucidly represented by the active manipulation of the first person pronoun "I".

Multi-faced as it is, violence in Kane's works deceives as it tends to move apart like an object through space. This is quite natural in as it is implicitly – based product. One of the faces of violence in *Blasted* and *Cleansed* is possible seen in a form of sexuality, torture, rape and death. To Kane, these two forms are involved in scenes not to distort audience or reader's public decorum and then the overall play performance would be received with a stir and shock. The very performance of such scenes carries with it a metaphorical message stating that sexuality is not only a matter of privacy, nor is it a matter of evanescent, innate pleasure, but it may be a means of blowing off one's steam or a reaction of what is going on outside.

In some cases, sexuality is a matter of recognition and embodies supreme communication. In *Cleansed*, a bully a tormentor to the others as he is, Tinker has been invited by a prostitute to dance for him in a booth.

Implementation of the 1998 Human Rights Act marked a pivotal moment in human rights development in the UK, as it incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms ("ECHR") into British law. The strong need for a formulation of basic principles of human rights across borders and cultures emerged after World War II and resulted in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("UDHR"), the first common standard adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Seen hopefully as the "international Magna Carta of all mankind" by Eleanor Roosevelt (1948), the UDHR was, however, only a guiding principle representing moral commitment to the

ideals of peace, freedom and equality, not a legally binding instrument. Since the United Nations failed to follow with a proposed Convention that would provide formal protection, the newly founded Council of Europe (1949) agreed on the regional ECHR. As well as being a member of the drafting UDHR committee, the UK, a founding member of the Council of Europe, also played an instrumental role in the development of the ECHR, and signed on in 1951. Nevertheless, this relatively straightforward British pursuit of human rights soon revealed a lack of intensity, as appeals to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg could not be made until the 60s and a British Bill of Rights did not follow for almost forty year (Bates, 2010). As such, “human rights discourse” is, in the words of Maggie Beirne, “a relatively recent phenomenon in Britain,” particularly because “until the entry into force of the Human Rights Act in 2000, the issue of human rights was seen as an international rather than a domestic issue ”(Beirne, 2005: 43).

Considered against this background, Kane’s work bears new resonance. Roosevelt hoped the UDHR would “help forward very largely the education of the peoples of the world,” as “a living document, something that is not just words on paper, but something which we really strive to bring to our lives” (Roosevelt, 1999: 162). While Roosevelt maintains that “the place to discuss the issue of human rights is in the forum of the United Nations”(Roosevelt, 1999: 163), Kane proves that her use of words in theatre indeed produces a living document that lends itself equally well to building a culture of human rights through exposing contemporary histories and mobilizing public pressure to make human rights a political and cultural priority. The discourses of power and empowerment can be seen within her scripts, as she explores the roles of victim, perpetrator and

bystander; it is no linguistic coincidence that she uses terms that have been key in post-Holocaust human rights studies scholarship. It has been argued that the victim-perpetrator bystander relationship provides a framework for the world of her plays, while simultaneously speaking to Kane's negotiations of the role of three participants of a theatrical production-the playwright, the actor, and the audience.

Out of these three categories, the question of the bystander emerges as the most significant in relation to Kane as a playwright. Fred Grünfeld defines the bystander as a third party in a victim-perpetrator conflict "who will not act or that will not attempt to act in solidarity with the victims" (Grünfeld, 2000:131). Seeing this indifference caused by an alleged lack of knowledge as a masked ignorance, "a specific choice made by a bystander in order to avoid the compelling moral obligation to help" (Grünfeld, 2011:336). Grünfeld contends there is no middle ground and denies the bystander neutrality. As an onlooker, the ignorant bystander becomes a "collaborator" of the perpetrator, as the bystander's inactivity facilitates the perpetrator's action by neither suppressing nor preventing the violation from happening (this ignorance is often promoted by the perpetrator). However, if the third party chooses to intervene in support of the victim, they assume the role of rescuer(Grünfeld, 2011).

Kane refuses the bystander-collaborator role by choosing to speak up as early as her first play at a moment when the international community had ceased to attend to the abandonment of longstanding humanitarian principles in the Balkans. She then continues in her negotiations with each play: "there isn't anything you can't represent on stage. If you're

saying you can't represent something, you are saying you can't talk about it, you are denying its existence, and that's an extraordinarily ignorant thing to do" (Saunders, 2001:48). Moreover, as if responding to Grünfeld's objection against voluntary ignorance, Kane declares that her "responsibility is to the truth, however difficult that truth happens to be" (Stephenson and Langridge, 2014: 143). Instead of looking away, her work faces the injustice and subsequently attempts to direct our focus to where it needs to be. Kane does not attempt to provide us with a moral compass. Instead, defying the tendency to reduce meaning to binaries of 'right' or 'wrong,' she allows for (and demands) her audience "to craft their own response" (Stephenson and Langridge, 2014: 131).

Factors like these speak to the crucial need for public attention and awareness and point with urgency to art's essential role in the complex apparatus of our society, as an imagined space where uncensored and independent discussion belongs. Where human rights activists complain about an acute lack of intellectual confrontation, Kane fights the silent acquiescence of the British media to the Balkan wars and provides new perspectives by exposing the conflict in its bare savagery. Instead of "glamorizing brutality" (Luckhurst,2005:114), *Blasted* reveals Kane's genuine interest in human rights, as she insists on bringing to the centre of a major world capital the atrocities of what was utterly unimaginable in the realm of 'civilized' global-Europe, while it was very much a reality to thousands in Bosnia.

Part of the urgency of the play lies also in the fact that history repeats itself—Carla del Ponte, former ICTY chief prosecutor and the key figure in the pursuit of Karadžić and

Mladić, alleges that Kosovo leaders, ethnically Albanian, kidnapped Serbs and sold their organs in the recent Kosovo war. Del Ponte gives an account of these procedures, reminiscent of Joseph Mengele's human experiments in Auschwitz, as if it were a passage from Kane's play:

The victims, deprived of a kidney, were then locked up again, inside the barracks, until the moment they were killed for other vital organs. In this way, the other prisoners were aware of the fate that awaited them, and according to the source, pleaded, terrified, to be killed immediately. (Quetteville, 2011:5)

Yet, as explicit as Kane is in her imagery, she is not openly reference the actual events she is addressing. As such, while *Blasted* addresses the globally long-ignored genocidal warfare in Bosnia, potentially its future performances promise to be equally relevant in more current political and social contexts, such as, for example, the humanitarian crisis in Darfur (Sudan), only one of 17 United Nations peacekeeping operations on four continents (Quetteville, 2011:12)

Kane, once again, displays another image of violence and brutality when are closely associated with the complexity of ethnicity and racism. In *Blasted*, The soldier has opened a heated debate as to what Ian's nationality stands for. On the other hand, Ian seems to be biased to his own ethnicity and his attitude exudes hatred.

Chapter Three

Methods and Procedures

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is chiefly viewed as being a 'dynamo' in terms of which the whole study has thoroughly been conducted and designed. It comprises three sections, each of which is not self-contained by itself, rather, all of them constitute a unitary, complementary and homogeneous system in order to make readers understand how the study is worked out.

3.1 Methodology of the Study

The study, for the first sight, depends on the deductive approach rather than the inductive one. The reason behind such a selection of the approach is attributed to the fact that the former is aimed to theory or general phenomenon by linking premises to conclusion. That is, it moves from something general into something specific. The latter is contrastively intended to shed light on generating new theory or phenomenon initiated as a result of data, and thus it moves from specific issues into general ones.

On this principle, the present study adopts the deductive approach as a research tool to dig deep the psychoanalytic side of the phenomenon of violence and its forms in Kane's *Cleansed* and *Blasted*. Violence is not something new nor is it something to be discovered. It is a state of affairs in most, if not all, of Kane's works, and the present study does not claim that it would be concerned with exploring violence and its adverse consequences as they are shown in Kane's plays. Furthermore, Taking advantage of such an approach leads

to tackle how the plays' characters have personally behaved under the shadow of plot kitted by threads of the concepts of violence, brutality and cruelty.

The deductive method of analyzing and discussing the two plays' orbit of thematic events contributes to frame the picture of violence from humanitarian, psychological, and mental perspectives. So, violence becomes a vehicle of which Kane makes use to unveil the implicitness of her soul.

The deductive approach is very much appropriate in dealing with Kane's *Blasted*, because she first writes the second half of the play under the influence of the Bosnian War, and this, by itself, gives impetus to the concept of violence to be of an external dimension.

3.2 Sample of the Study

The study sample consists of two selected plays, *Blasted* and *Cleansed* by the British dramatist Sarah Kane. The selection of these two dramatic works does not take place in a vacuum since it has been evident that the two plays have effectively elucidated the atmosphere of violence as Kane has desired.

3.3 Procedures of the Study:

1. Reading the original texts of *Blasted and Cleansed*.
2. Reading the previous studies that are related to the main topics of the study.
3. Reviewing the theoretical literature.
4. Discussing the topics of the study.
5. Drawing conclusions and recommendations.
6. Writing the study and its references according to the APA style.

Chapter Four

Analysis and Discussion

4.0. Introduction

This chapter is not a repeated attempt to re-analyze and re-discuss Kane' *Blasted* and *Cleansed* from a psychological and mental angles. Rather, it is possible to admit that this chapter is a deductive introspection of these plays via answering the questions already posed in the first chapter.

4.1. Discussion of in what way does Kane demonstrate the In -Yer-Face Theatre?

As a matter of fact, that Kane is usually looked upon among her contemporaries as "a female playwright of violence" decisively enhances her truly affiliation to the so-called In-Yer-Face Theater. To Kane, this sort of theatre is, in a way or another, the melting-pot in which Kane's concepts of violence, brutality, and ruthlessness are fully crystallized and 'fused' not only to be painted with 'the brush and colors' of this theatre or to be flavored with its unusual atmosphere, but also to reinforce the reality of its abnormality and to deepen its vagueness and oddity.

Kane is not merely a member of that theatre nor is she something fleeting as if she was an 'easy come easy go'. Pertinent to In-Yer-Face Theatre as she is, Kane definitely represents the phase of renewal and pumping fresh blood of theatre's literary, aesthetic, philosophical and intellectual outputs taking into consideration the question of maintaining the constants. Kane and her colleagues are reckoned as being a natural continuity of In-Yer-Face Theatre and its well-founded principles of producing , albeit rebirthing, the concept

of violence to be something common with the human society's culture. That the human being is the product of his/her environment is a matter of consensus and the environment around him/her is increasingly variable. One of these variables is surely what people has familiarized and accustomed. So, Kane and In-Yer-Face Theatre try to empty violence, hatred, ruthless of their unfamiliar and passive content. The theatre and its supporters, Kane among them, have adopted the slogan of 'co-existence' with violence and crudity to be state of affairs.

The history of theatre brings us to consider an undeniable milestone embodied by Henerik Ibsen, the founder, albeit the spiritual father, of the modern theatre that changed the facets of the traditional theatre represented by the Shakespearean theatre at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Ibsen and his contribution to initiate the modern theatre is indeed viewed as a "modernized revolution" against what has been traditional and consumed in the theatrical realm. He paves the way Realism be a de facto demand in the realm of theatre. In-Yer-Face Theatre whose reprehensive is Kane and Absurd Theatre whose representative is Beckett are not actually revolutionary reactions against Ibsen' modern theatre simply because they are brought about from that theatre's womb. They are fully aware of the inevitability of realism in their works and hence they have 'colored' Ibsen's Realism with some sort of Surrealism. To put in another way, it is possible to state the following analogue: Ibsen' modern theatre is, metaphorically speaking, an 'earthquake' that ruins the 'topography' of the traditional theatre, whereas In-Yer-Face Theatre and Absurd one are ironically 'aftershocks' that do not alter the basic landmarks of Ibsen' theatre: they are its inevitable extension.

In-Yer-Face Theatre and Kane are referred to as 'two faces of the same coin' because they are said to be in a complementary relationship. In-Yer-Face Theatre is chiefly based on the philosophy of providing the audience with 'shock and awe'. That is to say, the messages and implications of the theatre should be given to the audience by shaking their feelings and wills until they understand and interpret what is going on around them. Advocators of such a kind of theatre have justified that the utmost entertainment resides in what is supposed to be unusual and unfamiliar rather than in what is supposed to be usual and familiar. Kane has been the fertile soil of this theatre' products and has embraced its unusual picture. Accordingly, it has not been surprising for audience or readers to find in Kane's *Cleansed* and *Blasted* that filthy language is widely used to paint graphic images of different scenes. Nudity, sexuality and sadism are obviously normalized and adapted. In a word, Kane's works have been shining instances of the line of In-Yer-Face Theatre's argument.

Kane is seen as drawing from the modernist tradition because of her proximity to "continental avant-garde ideas and techniques." There are valid arguments for both approaches but those can be twofaced: for example, the system of theatrical allusions to iconic authors that is typical of her plays can be perceived both as a modernist and postmodernist feature. It is modernist in the exemplary use of allusions that utilize the quotations to enlarge the context of the play but at the same time change the quotation's meaning by placing it in a different context.

Kane announced that she wanted her art to be subversive: "All good art is subversive in form or content. And the best of art is subversive in form and content." This very statement

implies that there is a notion of some ideal to be subverted, which points to the modernist, avant-garde seeing of dramatic form, rather than the postmodern attitude. It is clear that Kane both draws from and subverts traditional dramatic structures. Her serious, pessimistic tone and experiments with structure make her more akin to the modernists than the postmodernists.

Concerning the theatrical and textual dimension, Kane calls for staging not simply viewed as one degree of refraction of the script on stage, but as the starting point for theatrical creation and calls for the deletion of the gap between the author and the director. Kane, herself a director and an occasional actress, naturally united the two aspects in her person. Her texts, although sometimes challenging in terms of staging, always maintain a very strong theatrical dimension. Her approach to her work as a performance is linked to the need for direct physical contact of the play and the audience. She liked the idea of an active spectator who can change the play by interaction with it. Ideal audience could accept what Kane's audience was at first unwilling to the audience will believe in the illusion of theatre on condition they really take it for a dream, not for a servile imitation of reality. Kane goes on to assert that the picture of a crime presented in the right stage conditions is something infinitely more dangerous to the mind than if the same crime were committed in life. This seems to bring back the Aristotelian notion of *mimesis* and *katharsis*. In an ideal world, the illusion will no longer be dependent on the probability or improbability of the action, but on the power to communicate and the reality of that action. The slightly improbable plot is forgivable if it means that the characters or the happening on the scene addresses itself to the spectators' whole existence, not just entertains them.

The double in “Theatre and its Double” refers exactly to this fact: theatre should be a double of life but not in the mimetic way. Rather, it should express the cosmic forces that are at work in our lives and that also form the part of the "cruelty". The theatre can therefore re-establish contact with the layers of our existence we do not normally use or think of; it expands our consciousness towards the rationally impossible by showing it on stage.

4.2. Discussion of how is violence manifested in her *Blasted* and *Cleansed*?

Kane can best be nominated as the playwright of violence. She has deserved such a title or a nomination for she does not only deal with violence in terms of its common sense or by its peculiar nature as laymen have understood or made use of it, but she is basically concerned with it as a multi-faced phenomenon governed by an internally psychological motives and resulted from implicit self-struggles. For this reason, it is possible to argue that violence in *Cleansed* and *Blasted* is rooted and cemented in Kane's inner voice that is lucidly represented by the active manipulation of the first person pronoun "I".

Multi-faced as it is, violence in Kane's works forges divergent trajectories and moves in different orbits. This is quite natural in as far as it is implicitly-based product. One of the faces of violence in *Cleansed* and *Blasted* is possible seen in a form of sexuality, torture, rape and death. To Kane, these two forms are involved in scenes not to distort audience or readers' public decorum and then the overall play performance would be received with a stir and shock. The very performance of such scenes carries with it a metaphorical message

stating that sexuality is not only a matter of privacy nor is it a matter of evanescent, innate pleasure, but it may be a means of blowing off one's steam or a reaction of what is going on outside. In some cases, sexuality is a matter of recognition and embodies supreme communication. In *Cleansed*, A bully and a tormentor to the others as he is, Tinker has been invited by a prostitute to dance for him in a booth. At the end, They make love to each other:

They hold each other, him inside her, not moving.

Woman: Are you here?

Tinker: Yes.

Woman: Now.

Tinker: Yes.

Woman: With me.

Tinker: Yes.

Indeed, *Blasted* insists on a direct parallel between sex and violence from the very first scene. It is opened with:

I've sat in better places than this

Ian gulps down a large gin

and re-enters the stage after a shower with only a towel around his waist and a revolver in his hand.

Death, to Kane, remains a 'safe haven' for those who have experienced all sorts of violence. In *Cleansed*, losing Graham makes Grace feel broken-hearted and fully grim. He cannot believe to stay alive without Graham. Smiling and asking for help are symbolically conceived of as considering death the 'eternal calmness':

Grace/Graham: Help me.

Reaches out his arm.

Grace/Graham: holds his stump.

They stare at the sky, Carl crying.

It stops raining.

The sun comes out.

Grace/Graham:smiles.

Kane promptly establishes a power imbalance with obvious sexual undertones, and as Ian puts the gun under a pillow on the bed that dominates the stage, he foreshadows the nocturnal rape that is about to happen. Ian's sense of superiority is not based solely on ethnic concerns, but extends to the manner in which he behaves towards Cate. He patronizes the young, insecure, and unemployed woman, who mentally resembles an even younger naïve girl who stutters "when under stress". Ian repeatedly trivializes the object of his sexual desire as inferior, savage and primitive:

IAN: That's what football's about. It's not fancy footwork and scoring goals.

It's

tribalism.

CATE: I like it.

IAN: You would. About your level?

The rape itself, however, remains unstaged—an absence so prominent within Kane's otherwise ruthless aesthetic that it paradoxically leads to a foregrounding of Cate's victimization. As the initial intimate story of an isolated abuse moves beyond the

boundaries of the modest Ibsen-like setting of a claustrophobic closed room, the elusive sexual assault proves to be a catalyst for the public violence to come and haunts the rest of the play.

Confining internal setting of the first half of the play is then revealed to be only symptomatic of the external chaos that is about to be exposed in the doom of society and catastrophism of the outside world at large. Still, the influence is reciprocal; the arrival of the Soldier invades the inner space of the hotel room and forces in the outside war, imposing its utter chaos and abruptly reversing the power relationship of the internal world. What was only an assumed external threat to the inwardly corrupted hotel room in the first half of the play, with every knock on the door treated as a potential danger by Ian, becomes a reality with the Soldier's arrival. The never-ceasing atmosphere of fear and the ever-present threat of violence in both worlds are linked by Cate's stutter and her fits, inside and outside of the room. These are provoked by anxiety, which she frequently tries to conceal by bursting into laughter, "unnaturally, hysterically, and uncontrollably", in effect only to further penetrate into the anarchic world of panicking hysteria. The sense of chaos deepens as Ian comes to the realization that there is no system in the world to rely on and nothing to believe in: "No God. No Father Christmas. No fairies. No Narnia. No fucking anything". The Soldier offers a simple logic instead, one he himself is satisfied by, where 'an eye for an eye' is the governing principle and power means right:

SOLDIER: Give us a cig.

IAN: Why?

SOLDIER: 'Cause I've got a gun and you haven't.

IAN: (*considers the logic. Then takes a single cigarette out of the packet and tosses it at the SOLDIER*).

As much as Kane obscures the line between private and global violence, so does she complicate the role of victim and perpetrator through the ambiguity of her complex characters. What is a polite gesture at one moment can turn into fierce violence the next, and vice versa. Cate constantly moves from seductive behavior suggesting her own desires to the defensive stance of an abused victim of a morally corrupt man twice her age. Yet despite the cruelty of the sexual assault and Ian's generally exploitative nature, his character, perhaps necessarily, elicits a certain degree of sympathy, as Ian becomes a blind, assaulted wreck on the ground of an apartment, with a rupture in the wall gaping onto the war-ridden world outside. We might now be willing to acknowledge that Ian is, all this time, only a dying man diagnosed with lung cancer, who, amidst his declarations of sovereignty, openly admits, "I'm scared of dying".

In the second place, Kane has been skilful and talent in portraying violence by virtue of designing very subtly a language or verbal communication that serve the purposes of what is tabooed or forbidden. The type of the language employed by Kane has mirrored the filthiness and crudity of the performed scenes. In the final act of *Blasted*, Ian appears uttering and repeating a taboo word:

Ian: *masturbating*.

Ian:cunt cunt cunt cunt cunt cunt cunt cunt cunt cunt

Darkness.

Light.

Ian: strangling himself with his bare hands.

Theatre was uniquely disposed to stage inner life because of its combination of

spatial and verbal expression, with the verbal element by no means “above” the spatial one. Kane springs her demand for new language, highly symbolic, oscillating between gesture and word. She talks of complex “hieroglyphs”, made out of the combination of gesture, language, characters and objects. The stage dimensions of her plays are extremely important. Exemplary is the final act of *Blasted*, where Ian appears in a sequence of (almost)

mute tableaux:

***Ian** shitting.*

And then trying to clean it up with newspaper.

Darkness.

Light.

***Ian** laughing hysterically.*

Darkness.

*Light. **Ian** having a nightmare.*

Darkness.

Light.

***Ian** crying, huge bloody tears.*

*He is hugging the **Soldier**'s body for comfort.*

Darkness.

Light.

***Ian** lying very still, weak with hunger.*

Darkness.

Light.

Ian tears the cross out of the ground, rips up the floor and lifts the baby's body

He eats the baby.

He puts the remains back in the baby's blanket and puts the bundle back in the hole.

A beat, then he climbs in after it and lies down, head poking out of the floor.

He dies with relief.

The motifs of *Blasted* that were discussed or introduced verbally in the play are now reintroduced in a sequence of symbolic images: Ian, who has spent the whole play refusing comfort, is now forced by his loneliness to seek reassurance by the dead body of the Soldier – his tormentor. The newspaper he wrote for is reduced to mere paper for the blind Ian and therefore used for cleaning his faces. Ian, who tells the Soldier he could never do the taboo things the Soldier prides in doing (torture, child-rape), now transgresses one of the oldest and most universal taboos by practicing cannibalism. The transgression is intensified by the sacrilege of the cross and Ian's unsuccessful attempts to take his own life.

Though relatively accepted and satisfied by audience, readers and critics, Kane's works are mostly watched eagerly, read avidly and castigated positively. Next, Kane's portrait of violence is occasionally attributed to the Serbian War's adverse consequences that are undoubtedly seen as an external incubator triggering her sufferings. The catastrophic pictures of war as well as the scenes of destruction all have made Kane to devote the second half of *Blasted* to unveil the war chronicles.

Kane has unprecedentedly succeeded to tackle and to adopt the strategy of 'give-and-take' with the concept of violence in her works. However, it leads her to put an end to her life, i.e. violence has been, to Kane, a fuel to run 'the machines' of writing, but it has simultaneously been the tool of her suicide.

The violent action of *Blasted*, for instance, is not required by the conventions of the plot and the strong physical effect is not justifiably necessary. What starts as a psychological conversational drama suddenly turns into a nightmare without any logical restrictions, which made critics issue throw notorious venomous remarks. However, *Blasted* is perfectly logical. In the Theatre of Cruelty, reality of the imagination and dreams appear on a par with life. What happens in *Blasted* is not rational in terms of reality but provides the audience with truthful distillations of dreams where its taste for crime, its erotic obsessions, its savageness, its fantasies, its utopian sense of life and objects, even its cannibalism, do not gush out on an illusory, make-believe, but on an inner level.

Blasted could almost said to be invented just to illustrate those theoretical lines; note that Kane even uses the cannibal motif. In her view, people walking out of the theatre during the production of *Blasted* were a positive manifestation, as it showed they "connected emotionally. Any strong reaction, be it positive or negative one, was always better than indifference for her.

On the other hand, this "cruel" treatment that Kane subdues her audience does not precisely correspond to the real meaning of "cruelty". It is true that some critics were in

favor of crime and violence on stage; as this was for them the most direct way to touch the spectators' emotions. What "cruelty" really meant for Kane, however, was that much more terrible and necessary cruelty things can exercise upon us. We are not free. The heavens can still fall upon our heads. And the theatre exists, in the first place, to teach us that. Viscerality is just a way to communicate this cruel truth to the spectators. What does this mean for the playwright and/or director – the person who is supposed to understand and mediate the metaphysical angst? Practicing cruelty involves a higher determination to which the executioner-tormentor is also subject and which he must be resolved to endure when the time comes. Above all, cruelty is very lucid; a kind of strict control and submission to necessity. It is understood that being alive always means the death of someone else. This is a good topic for a tragedy, but more importantly a message to the playwrights themselves and their responsibility. One tends to join the words immediately with the person of Kane, her life and death. The viscerality to which she subdued her audience was expressive of her own anxieties. Being in control of these meant understanding them and thus accepting the ultimate cruelty of human existence makes the notion finally lead her to take her own life – in a lucid and rational state of mind.

Kane, in *Blasted* used violence and viscerality to heighten her audience's social responsibility, uses it to a more catastrophic end in *Cleansed*. This play portrays inner life exclusively, making it inadequate to discuss its logic in terms of outer reality. Whether Grace becomes her brother Graham really or in her imagination does not matter. It is the idea and its spiritual and emotional value that the play is "about" and it is the metaphysical notion of surviving at the expense of someone else and losing one's own identity that is expressed through violence.

Kane differs from both modernists and postmodernists by her refusal of detachment and by her requirement of emotional involvement. Both Kane and her characters are absolutist, truth-seeking and provocative. Kane challenges individual categories of theatre. She disrupts realistic space and time, and negates the logical coherence of the action. In her incessant experiment, she strives to find a new, “truthful” portrayal of reality. Kane’s work is always very text-centered, even if all other theatrical categories have been negated. The text is an ideal means for the promotion of her individual vision”, expressed through her own idiosyncratic and written voice.

Kane shares the preoccupation with violence, trauma and abuse. This is by no means an unhealthy fascination but an artistic delivery of a powerful topic together with an obvious moral statement implied. She is aware of and alarmed by a society which spectators are habitually exposed and largely desensitized to violent or sexual spectacles in other media. The formal devices she uses are meant to help the audience come round from the limbo induced by everyday portion of aggression make them responsive again. The purpose of showing uncomfortable, traumatic subjects is not to prove that “anything goes” but rather to wake the spectator up by provoking strong emotion.

Such theatre might include events which point the spectators to their own presence precisely through amoral, asocial and seemingly cynical events. For Kane, there is a strong element of confrontation. She avoids simple statements, the complicity of the victim, and the relationship between the abuser and the victim is packed with theatrical. Kane uses

visceral effects and disturbing violence, often linked to sexual exploitation, in the context of the traditional theatre opportunities. She turns the representation of violence as such into the issue of admitting the truth and overcoming trauma.

Kane uses a strong climax, provoking at least some kind of emotional *catharsis* in the spectators. The word describes the psychological impact of the tragedy on its spectator, which consists of arousing “pity and fear” and results in emotional purgation of the spectator. *katharsis* is seen as the crucial term for the theory of drama as a whole, and undoubtedly the ability to rouse powerful emotions is still the touchstone of the authenticity of tragedy. This is enforced further in her experimental plays, where the stories are told in fragmented conversations; do not have a beginning, middle or an end. The genre expectations are fulfilled and then disrupted, preventing the audience from comfortably “enjoying” the performance and making them aware of their own expectations. The stories point to their own telling: they are told by uncomfortable, unidentified, disagreeing characters, pointing to the impossibility of portrayal of character.

Kane's works have mostly been considered shocking and outrageous even before she committed suicide. After that, their shock value has at least doubled and the theatre public was distinctly divided in their evaluation and interpretation – Kane was either canonized and blindly praised or stigmatized and reduced to a suicide artist. Her plays as well were appointed the status of suicide art and were suddenly interpreted largely biographically because of her death. It is possible to stay objective, acknowledge the parallel between Kane's plays and her suicide, but also move pass that interpretation as the only one and explore and discover many more subjects.

In Kane's plays, the purpose of the violence is diametrically opposed to the purpose of the violence in most other people's plays. The purpose of violence is to desensitize people to what violence is. Kane believes that a theatre had all the power of a hurricane that could leave scars in the mind, and that could proper its audience out into the streets with renewed fervor.

Through a close reading and analysis of the dramatic text it is possible to prove

that Kane's plays were not written simply as a dramatic outburst of her troubled mind or a passive aggressive suicide note. There is noticeable intent and craft behind the features of dramatic form that Kane used and it goes hand in hand with the multilayered contents of the plays. The fact that Kane did not include any speaker designations and omitted certain secondary information about the plays' characters, like their age or gender, only encourages the recipients – the readers, directors or the audience – to bring something of their own into the plays, and contributes to their possible identification with some of the characters and shaping the story in their own way. The fragmented and “disintegrating” text of *Cleansed*, for example, is to some extent structured and Kane's clever use of various linguistic features and visual layout of the dramatic text pertinently emphasizes different messages of the play.

Within the level of the play that deals with a suicidal despair, another major theme of the play emerges – Kane's critique of the mental health care system in the form of an exhaustive description of the patient's hospitalization journey and her battle with pathological grief. Kane brings out and takes a stand on several contemporary issues from

the psychiatric environment – attempted suicide as a cry for help, psychopharmacology, ethical dilemmas and doctor-patient relationships and many more – through a series of doctor-patient conversations and her clever use of the patient's case history and basic psychiatric diagnosis tools, like the Serial sevens test. This elaborate criticism and Kane's in-depth knowledge of these issues proves that she was in her right mind during her writing process; she even dropped a little hint in the text.

The last part of the analysis illustrates four other strong thematic clusters that pervade Kane's work and surpass the element of suicide. A great deal of her plays are devoted to the omnipresent theme of love and its value combined with a few moments of sheer confrontation of the recipients about their own ranking of love and friendship in their value system. Also faith in general and religious beliefs are dealt with and confronted, the knowledge of the meaning of life is portrayed as a not so desirable commodity and hope is given in a seemingly hopeless environment of death. All of these themes and topics are brought to the fore and to elude the preset social divisions – Kane re-divides and re-divides them again, breaks boundaries in order to leave a mark on the readers' and audience members' lives individually, and through that she tries to make a change in society.

Though relatively accepted and satisfied by audience, readers and critics, Kane's works are mostly watched eagerly, read avidly and castigated positively. Next, Kane's portrait of violence is occasionally attributed to the Serbian War's adverse consequences that are undoubtedly seen as an external incubator triggering her sufferings. The catastrophic pictures of war as well as the scenes of destruction all have made Kane to devote the second half of *Blasted* to unveil the war chronicles.

Last but not least, Kane has unprecedentedly succeeded to tackle and to adopt the strategy of 'give-and take' with the concept of violence in her works. However, it leads her to put an end to her life, i.e. violence has been, to Kane, a fuel to run 'the machines' of writing, but it has simultaneously been the tool of her suicide.

4.3. Discussion of how does violence affect the two-play characters psychologically?

In any dramatic work, characters, or more accurately characterization, are usually intended to be a parameter according to which a playwright can objectively judge whether or not his/her psychological, intellectual and mental stock of events and experiences are successfully expressed and elucidated- whether they are skillfully oriented to find their ways to audience and readers' mentality and culture. In fact, it is not a fantasy to argue that Kane has been able to make use of such a parameter or a compass to monitor not only her characters' harmonic directions alongside *Blasted* and *Cleansed* but also to draw, via those characters, how the line of demarcation between reaction and violence, between suffering and patience and between scare and security is blurred.

In her plays, Kane has made the plot transits alongside characters' reactions, dialogues and personalities. That is to say, the plot has been replaced by some sort of a drastic shift accompanied by the plays' characters. Kane's characters are always in a conflict and the plot is primarily anchored to demonstrate such characters' instability and restlessness. This hence harmonizes the psychologically- based violence that Kane endeavors to show up explicitly or implicitly. In her attempt to sketch characters, Kane is basically concerned with the psychological environment rather than with the social settings, and thus her characters do not refer to social issues at all. For example, in *Blasted*, characters are

oriented to reflect moral sides of violence, trauma and indifference, while in *Cleansed*, the psychological sense of violence is more and more manifested in relation to imagination and dreams that are manipulated as being a counterpart of reality.

Characters can expressively image violence in different ways. In *Blasted*, Kane has selected an ironic representation of Ian's job (a war correspondent during the Bosnian War) whereby the soldier illustrates his own resentment, boos and loathing of such a man and his job :

SOLDIER: that's your job.

IAN: What?

SOLDIER: Proving it happened. I'm here, got no choice. But you. You should be telling people.

IAN: No one's interested.

IAN: I write...stories. That's all. Stories. This isn't a story anyone wants to hear.

Kane, once again, displays another image of violence and brutality when are closely associated with the complexity of ethnicity and racism. In *Blasted*, The soldier has opened a heated debate as to what Ian' nationality stands for. On the other hand, Ian seems to be biased to his own ethnicity and his attitude exudes hatred:

SOLDIER: [...] English.

IAN: I'm Welsh.

IAN: English and Welsh is the same. British. I'm not an import.

SOLDIER: What's fucking Welsh, never heard of it.

IAN: Come over from God knows where have their kids and call them English they're not English born in England don't make you English.

SOLDIER: Welsh as in Wales?

IAN: It's attitude.

Yet, even the Soldier's role is of course not portrayed as black and white. Despite his mechanical, disinterested listing of the atrocious crimes he committed or was a witness to, the Soldier's very personal testimony reveals that he is not as impartial to his actions as it may seem. When he reveals his past to Ian, including the history of his violated, mutilated and murdered girlfriend, it is not done in an attempt to share, but possibly for the sake of voicing his story and being heard. In the Jacobean sense of revenge, the Soldier needs to perform on another the same violence his partner was subject to. The rape becomes a cathartic experience.

For him, as the Soldier is crying his heart out during the act. Even his discourse changes: instead of using the word 'sex,' the Soldier now confesses that :

I am dying to make love, Ian

Soon after,

he *blows his own brain out*.

Echoing Ian's claim that it has to be personal, it is in these exchanges that it is are not allowed to forget the individual in the army. The question of morality and responsibility is an ongoing interrogation in the play—to what degree is the soldier a tool of a higher structure, and to what extent can he be held responsible for his actions? .The Soldier seems to firmly believe that at home I'm clean. But it never happened. Yet his cathartic confession, Ian's rape, and the Soldier's subsequent suicide suggest otherwise. Again, the play reflects the instability of the situation in Bosnia and Serbia; Despite the UN's founding of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

The anonymity or at least blurred identity of characters is a common technique of Kane. They have the function of distancing and de-familiarization, a signal of retreating into mindscape and the shift from drama to poetry. In connection with violence, the physicality of the characters is not “auto-sufficient”, as in post-dramatic theatre, but expressive of the inner state. The expressive brutality sometimes replaces conversation, expressing difficulties in communication and relationships. The idea of a body on stage is particularly interesting in Kane's experimental plays where the actors do not play the protagonists but rather the narrators/creators of a story.

One aspect of Kane's plays is a very black sense of humor. Verbal humor is completed by the grotesque, usually associated with the afflicted body: this is for example the scene at the end of *Cleansed* when Carl (whose arms, legs and tongue have been cut off by Tinker) holds out his stump to Grace in the only friendly gesture he is able to perform. His affliction is so overwhelming that laughter is perhaps the most appropriate response. Similarly tragic-comical and blackly humorous is the moment in the last scene of *Blasted*, where Ian dies only to be revived by inclement weather:

He puts the remains back in the baby's blanket and puts the bundle back in the hole.

A beat, then he climbs in after it and lies down, head poking out of the floor.

He dies with relief.

It starts to rain on him, coming through the roof.

Eventually.

Ian Shit.

The isolated body part protruding from the floor, the effortless death (compared with previous unsuccessful attempts at suicide), and the laconic (and, in its implications, blasphemous) comment on afterlife all relate Kane to absurdity.

The language seems to free itself and function as a separate element when it is not burdened by the psychological notion of character and the consistency and probability of the plot. Even so, the spectator tends to make the fragments into a narrative, so the language of the drama in fact functions on two levels: as a play text, working with the expectations of the spectators, and separately, as a universal, usually poetic text. The rhythmical use of language does not mean negation of its theatrical possibilities; putting the stylized language on stage in fact doubles its significance.

Blasted, for instance, shows that just as there is no sense of safety in the play, in the internal world of the Leeds hotel room nor outside it, a play can also shatter our own sense of security. When Ian begs the Soldier not to share his horrid stories, the Soldier, undisturbed, continues giving his heartless account:

SOLDIER: Three of us –

IAN: Don't tell me.

SOLDIER: Went to a house just outside town. All gone. Apart from a small boy hiding in the corner. One of the others took him outside. Lay him on the ground and shot him through the legs. Heard crying in the basement. Went down. Three men and four women. Called the others. They held the men while I fucked the women. Youngest was twelve. Didn't cry, just lay there. Turned her over and - Then she cried. Made her lick me clean. Closed my eyes and thought of - Shot her father in the mouth. Brothers shouted. Hung them from the ceiling by their testicles.

Ian's words pleading for silence now mirror the audience's feelings. Yet just as the Soldier delivers his speech without interruption, the play continues relentlessly, forcing its reality on us as if invading our own personal space in the theatre.

All in all, characterization in *Cleansed and Blasted* has been well-organized, well-formed and well-structured in order to crystallize the concept of parallelism among sex, war and violence. Behind the scene of her plays, Kane would simply like to inform her readers and audience that violence can peacefully be co-existed and possibly adapted.

Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the present study's curtain is going to drop on declaring that the concept of violence in Kane's *Blasted* and *Cleansed* is discussed and examined, and it is time to state a set of findings accompanied with some humble recommendations.

5.1 Conclusion

Throughout surveying and screening in detail the topic on which the present study is chiefly based, the researcher reaches the following findings as to how Kane's *Blasted* and *Cleansed* have dealt with the notion of violence and then as to what violence has considerably been developed to be a 'time bomb' explosive and fragmented into 'shrapnel' of brutality, cruelty, torture, rape and slavery.

In Kane's *Blasted* and *Cleansed*, the concept of violence has been traced internally and externally. In the first place, it is a naturally internal attack and counter-attack against what Kane has been suffering from her environment though such an environment, in many cases, provides her with the outputs of her success as a student and with the premises of becoming a great playwright. Accordingly, step by step, violence becomes her increasing not plummeting tendency to a tipping point. She is not internally concerned to dry up the sources of violence till it has exacerbated its matter to be the raw material of her plays.

On the other hand, the concept of violence is fed back externally as far as Kane's *Blasted* is concerned. It is worth-noting that *Blasted* has first of all been written to demonstrate and demarcate both the borders of her internally geographical setting (Britain) and the borders

of her internally psychological setting (self-unconscious). Later, the second half of *Blasted* is written to outpace internal dimensions towards external horizons represented by the Bosnian War. That is, externality becomes the most remarkable property of violence side by side with its internality.

To Kane, violence is similar to a 'hydra' in Geek methodology, i.e. a great multi-headed snake. Once a head is cut, it is quickly replaced by another one. Accordingly, it is a 'mask-like' veiling varying shapes, pictures and manifestations so that nearly in every scene of the two plays, it is possible find one of them associated with such and such character. It seems sensible that violence of Kane' *Blasted* and *Cleansed* is suitably accounted for as a 'one-in-all' phenomenon that goes beyond human mentality and psychology. It is frequently found as something pivotal on Kane' conscious will rather than her unconscious motivation, i. e it is occasionally a matter of non-finite responses to some internal obsessions which may or may not be fleeting and stealthy.

The production of violence has been designed by Kane to penetrate the nature the nature and the content of the two plays plot. The plot, from the very beginning, is floating: it is changeable and fluctuated in order to reflect characters oscillating mood and behavior. Violence, plot and characterization of the two plays are interwoven in a positive correlation. Because of the violence- based plot, characters images are portrayed to compensate, in many cases, the missing plot as if they were monitored by themselves. This situation refers to the reality of the psychological side of violence. Kane is willing to elicit in a way or another. Audience and readers can widely smell Realism with the flavor of

Surrealism when Kane works are performed and written, and this is evident that Kane belongs to In- Yer – Face Theatre whose roots extended to Ibsen modern theatre.

5.2 Recommendations

The present study is to adopt the following recommendations:

1. The study does not shut the door of exploring, scrutinizing and diagnosing the notion of violence from other different grounds. Indeed, all of the options can be on the study table.
2. Psychological as it is, violence in Kane's plays may possible be tackled from Freudian angle, and if happened, it would be something promising and original by itself.
3. Being a multi-faced concept, violence can also be covered by virtue of Existentialism. Jean-Paul Sartre' writings would be adventurous in such an area of study.
4. Highly affected by the Bosnian War, Kane's *Blasted* can arguably be set in a comparison with other works interested in war atmospheres.
5. It is possible for Arab dramatists to benefit from Kane' experience as an active member of the English modern theatre in general and of In-Yer-Face Theatre in particular.

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Appendix

Appendix (1) Samples of Sarah Kane's *Play Blasted*

Scene One

A very expensive hotel room in Leeds - the kind that is so expensive it could be anywhere in the world.

There is a large double bed.

A mini-bar and champagne on ice.

A telephone.

A large bouquet of flowers.

Two doors - one is the entrance from the corridor, the other leads off to the bathroom.

*Two people enter - **Ian** and **Cate***

Ian *is 45, Welsh born but lived in Leeds much of his life and picked up the accent.*

Cate *is 21, a lower-middle-class Southerner with a south London accent and a stutter when under stress.*

They enter.

Cate *stops at the door, amazed at the classiness of the room.*

Ian *comes in, throws a small pile of newspapers on the bed, goes straight to the mini-bar and pours himself a large gin.*

He looks briefly out of the window at the street, then turns back to the room.

Ian *I've shat in better places than this.*

(He gulps down the gin.)

I *stink.*

You *want a bath?*

Cate *(Shakes her head.)*

Ian *goes into the bathroom and we hear him run the water. He comes back in with only a towel around his waist and a revolver in his hand. He checks it is loaded and puts it under his pillow.*

Ian *Tip that wog when he brings up the sandwiches.*

He leaves fifty pence and goes into the bathroom.

Cate *comes further into the room.*

She puts her bag down and bounces on the bed.

She goes around the room, looking in every drawer, touching everything.

She smells the flowers and smiles.

Cate *Lovely.*

Ian *comes back in, hair wet, towel around his waist, drying himself off.*

*He stops and looks at **Cate** who is sucking her thumb.*

He goes back in the bathroom where he dresses.

We hear him coughing terribly in the bathroom.

He spits in the sink and re-enters.

Cate *You all right?*

Ian *It's nothing.*

He pours himself another gin, this time with ice and tonic, and sips it at a more normal pace.

He collects his gun and puts it in his under-arm holster.

*He smiles at **Cate**.*

Ian *I'm glad you've come. Didn't think you would.*

(He offers her champagne.)

Cate *(Shakes her head.)*

I was worried.

Ian This? (*He indicates his chest.*) Don't matter.

Cate I didn't mean that. You sounded unhappy.

Ian (*Pops the champagne. He pours them both a glass.*)

Cate What we celebrating?

Ian (*Doesn't answer. He goes to the window and looks out.*)

Hate this city. Stinks. Wogs and Pakis taking over.

Cate You shouldn't call them that.

Ian Why not?

Cate It's not very nice.

Ian You a nigger-lover?

Cate Ian, don't.

Ian You like our coloured brethren?

Cate Don't mind them.

Ian Grow up.

Cate There's Indians at the day centre where my brother goes. They're really polite.

Ian So they should be.

Cate He's friends with some of them.

Ian Retard, isn't he?

Cate No, he's got learning difficulties.

Ian Aye. Spaz.

Cate No he's not.

Ian Glad my son's not a Joey.

Cate Don't c- call him that.

Ian Your mother I feel sorry for. Two of you like it.

Cate Like wh- what?

Ian *(Looks at her, deciding whether or not to continue. He decides against it.)*

You know I love you.

Cate *(Smiles a big smile, friendly and non-sexual.)*

Ian Don't want you ever to leave.

Cate I'm here for the night.

Ian *(Drinks.)*

Sweating again. Stink. You ever thought of getting married?

Cate Who'd marry me?

Ian I would.

Cate I couldn't.

Ian You don't love me. I don't blame you, I wouldn't.

Cate I couldn't leave Mum.

Ian Have to one day.

Cate Why?

Ian (*Opens his mouth to answer but can't think of one.*)

There is a knock at the door.

Ian starts, and **Cate** goes to answer it.

Ian Don't.

Cate Why not?

Ian I said.

He takes his gun from the holster and goes to the door.

He listens.

Nothing.

Cate (*Giggles.*)

Ian Shh.

He listens.

Still nothing.

Ian Probably the wog with the sarnies. Open it.

Cate opens the door.

There's no one there, just a tray of sandwiches on the floor.

She brings them in and examines them.

Cate Ham. Don't believe it.

Ian (*Takes a sandwich and eats it*)

Champagne?

Cate (*Shakes her head.*)

Ian Got something against ham?

Cate Dead meat. Blood. Can't eat an animal.

Ian No one would know.

Cate No, I can't, I actually can't, I'd puke all over the place.

Ian It's only a pig.

Cate I'm hungry.

Ian Have one of these.

Cate I CAN'T.

Ian I'll take you out for an Indian.
Jesus, what's this? Cheese.

Cate *beams.*

She separates the cheese sandwiches from the ham ones, and eats.

Ian *watches her.*

Ian Don't like your clothes.

Cate *(Looks down at her clothes)*

Ian You look like a lesbos.

Cate What's that?

Ian Don't look very sexy, that's all.

Cate Oh.

(She continues to eat)

Don't like your clothes either.

Ian *(Looks down at his clothes.)*

Then gets up, takes them all off and stands in front of her, naked.)

Put your mouth on me.

Cate *(Stares. Then bursts out laughing.)*

Ian No?

Fine.

Because I stink?

Cate *(Laughs even more.)*

Ian *attempts to dress, but fumbles with embarrassment.*

He gathers his clothes and goes into the bathroom where he dresses.

Cate *eats, and giggles over the sandwiches.*

Ian *returns, fully dressed.*

He picks up his gun, unloads and reloads it.

Ian You got a job yet?

Cate No.

Ian Still screwing the taxpayer.

Cate Mum gives me money.

Ian When are you going to stand on your own feet?

Cate I've applied for a job at an advertising agency.

Ian *(Laughs genuinely)*

No chance.

Cate Why not?

Ian *(Stops laughing and looks at her.)*

Cate. You're stupid. You're never going to get a job.

Cate I am. I am not.

Ian See.

Cate St- Stop it. You're doing it deliberately.

Ian Doing what?

Cate C- Confusing me.

Ian No, I'm talking, you're just too thick to understand.

Cate I am not, I am not.

Cate *begins to tremble.* **Ian** *is laughing.*

Cate *faints.*

Ian *stops laughing and stares at her motionless body.*

Ian Cate?

(He turns her over and lifts up her eyelids.

He doesn't know what to do.

He gets a glass of gin and dabs some on her face)

Cate *(Sits bolt upright, eyes open but still unconscious.)*

Ian Fucking Jesus.

Cate *(Bursts out laughing, unnaturally, hysterically, uncontrollably)*

Ian Stop fucking about.

Cate *(Collapses again and lies still)*

Ian *stands by helplessly.*

After a few moments, Cate comes round as if waking up in the morning.

Ian What the Christ was that?

Cate Have to tell her.

Ian Cate?

Cate She's in danger.

*(She closes her eyes and slowly comes back to normal.
She looks at **Ian** and smiles)*

Appendix (2) Samples of Sarah Kane's Play *Cleansed*

Scene 8

Rod: Baby.

Carl: (Looks at Rod. He opens his mouth. No sound comes out.)

Rod: You'd have watched them crucify me.

Carl: Tries to speak. Nothing. He beats the ground in frustration. He scrabbles around in the mud and begins to write while Rod talks)

Rod: And the rats eat my faceso what. I'd have done the same only I never said I wouldn't. You are young. I don't blame you. Don't blame yourself. No one's to blame. (Tinker is watching He lets Carl finish what he is writing, then goes to him and reads it.)

Rod: Say you forgive me. (He puts on the ring) I won't lie to you Carl.

scene 14:

Woman : I love you.

Tinker : Please. **Woman :** Though you loved me.

Tinker : As you are. **Woman** : Then love me , fucking love

Tinker: Grace.

Woman : Don't turn away.

scene20

Body perfect.

Back to life.

Felt it.

Here. Inside

. Here. And when I don't feel it, it's pointless.

Think about getting up, it's pointless.

Think about eating, it's pointless.

Think about dressing, it's pointless.

Think about speaking, it's pointless.

Think about dying only it's totally fucking pointless.,

Scene 20

Grace/ Graham looks at Carl.

Carl is crying....

They stare at the sky, Carl crying.

It stops raining . The sun comes out.

Grace / Graham smiles. (scene 20,