



T. C
SELÇUK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ ve EDEBİYATI ANA BİLİM DALI

**THE VIOLENCE ELEMENT IN SARAH KANE'S *BLASTED*, *PHAEDRA'S LOVE*
AND *CLEANSSED***

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

HAZIRLAYAN
CANAN BALOĞLU

DANIŞMAN
YRD. DOÇ. DR. DİLEK ZERENLER

Konya 2012

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor Assistant Professor Dr. Dilek ZERENLER who guided me at every stage on my paper with great patience.

BİLİMSEL ETİK SAYFASI

Adı Soyadı	CANAN BALOĞLU
Numarası	074208001003
Ana Bilim / Bilim Dalı	İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYAT/İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI
Programı	Tezli Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/>
Tezin Adı	THE VIOLENCE ELEMENT IN SARAH KANE'S BLASTED, PHAEDRA'S LOVE AND CLEANSED

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	Adı Soyadı	CANAN BALOĞLU
	Numarası	074208001003
	Ana Bilim / Bilim Dalı	İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI/İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI
Öğrencinin	Programı	Tezli Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input type="checkbox"/>
	TezDanışmanı	YRD.DOÇ.DR. DİLEK ZERENLER
	Tezin Adı	THE VIOLENCE ELEMENT IN SARAH KANE'S BLASTED,PHAEDRA'S LOVE AND CLEANSED.

Yukarıda adı geçen öğrenci tarafından hazırlanan ...The Violence Element in Sarah Kane's Blasted,Phaedra's Love and Cleansed başlıklı bu çalışma. 18/04/2012 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda oybirliği/oyçokluğu ile başarılı bulunarak, jürimiz tarafından yüksek lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

Ünvanı, Adı Soyadı	Danışman ve Üyeler	İmza
1. Yrd.Doç.Dr. Dilek ZERENLER(Danışman)		
2. Yrd.Doç.Dr. Yağmur KÜÇÜKBEZİRCİ		
3. Yrd.Doç.Dr. Ayşe Gülbün ONUR		
4. Yrd.Doç.Dr. Sema ZAFER SÜMER		

ÖZET

Bu tezin temel amacı Sarah Kane'in Blasted, Phaedra's Love ve Cleansed oyunlarındaki şiddet faktörünü incelemektir. Bu tezin ilk bölümünde şiddetin tanımı, tarihçesi, toplumdaki yeri ve şiddetle sanat arasındaki ilişki ayrıntılı olarak açıklanmıştır. Şiddet sadece Sarah Kane'in oyunlarına özgü değildir. Şiddet ayrıca toplumlarında büyük bir sorundur. İnsanların yaşadığı her yerde özellikle de 21.yy da şiddet kendini gösterir ve Sarah Kane bu önemli konuyu oyunlarına taşımıştır. Bu tezin ikinci bölümünde Sarah Kane'in biyografisi ve yaşamının oyunlarına yansımaları oyunları hakkında genel bir fikir vermesi açısından incelenmiştir. Tezin üçüncü bölümünde ise Blasted, Phaedra's Love ve Cleansed' deki şiddet faktörü ayrıntılı olarak ele alınmıştır. Kane, şiddetin hayatımızın bir parçası olduğunu ve her zaman bizden güçlü birilerinin olduğunu belirtmiştir. Yazar insanların gerçeğin farkına varmalarını ve adeletsizliğe karşı kendilerini savunmalarını gerektiğini düşünür. Sarah Kane oyunlarında şiddet içeren sahneler kullanarak insanların ne kadar zalim ve acımasız bir dünyada yaşadığına dikkat çeker.

Özetle; Sarah Kane yüze vurumcu tiyatro akımının en önemli temsilcilerinden biridir. Yüze vurumcu tiyatro, oyunlarda şiddet içerikli sahneler kullanarak insanları derinden etkilemeyi amaçlayan bir tiyatro akımıdır. Blasted, Phaedra's Love ve Cleansed'i yazarak Kane de bu tiyatro akımına önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunmuştur.

SUMMARY

The main aim of this thesis is to examine the violence factors in Sarah Kane's plays; *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed*. In the first part of this thesis definition of violence, history of violence, the place of violence in society and the relationship between violence and art are explained in a detailed way. Violence is a concept that is not only peculiar to the plays of Kane but also it is a big problem of society. Violence is everywhere in which people live especially in 21st century and Kane handled this important subject in her plays. In the second part of this thesis the biography of Sarah Kane and reflections of violence in her plays are studied in order to give general idea about her plays and then; in the third part the violence factor in *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed* are examined in a detailed way. Kane states that violence is a part of our life and there is always the one who is more powerful. The playwright wants to express that people should be aware of reality and should resist on the injustice. Kane tries to show that people live in a brutal life by using shocking and violence scenes in her plays.

In summary it can be said that Sarah Kane is one of the most important playwrights of in-her-face theatre that aims to shock the audience with its horrible scenes. By writing *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed*, Kane assisted to in-her-face theatre on a large scale

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INTRODUCTION

Theatre has no memory, which makes it the most existential of the arts.

Sarah KANE

Sarah Kane was an English playwright who lived between the years of 1971-1999. She died at the age of 28. She attended the Shenfield High School, studied drama at Bristol University and she was graduated from there in 1992. The writer took MA course about playwriting at Birmingham University led by the playwright David Edgar. Then she began to write extraordinary plays. Kane's plays are extraordinary because they are different and striking. It is almost impossible not to be impressed by her plays. The style and language are very disturbing. Artaud describes the language of Kane as;

“I realized that the only language I could have used with a public audience would have been to take bombs out of my pockets and throw them in its face with a characteristically aggressive gesture. Because I don't think conscience can be educated or that it's worth bothering to try to educate it. And violence is the only language I feel capable of speaking... These are not just words, ideas, or any other kind of phantasmatic bullshit, these truly are real bombs, physical bombs, but it is so native and childish of me, isn't it, to say these kind of things so innocently, so pretentiously.” (Artaud, 1970:33-34)

Kane is one of the most important representative of in-her-face-theatre. In-her-face theatre is a kind of theatre which gives its message by shocking and disturbing the audience as Kane does in her plays. The origins of in-her-face-theatre lies down London, in 20th century. In-her-face drama has been staged by new writing theatres such as the Royal Court, Bush, Hampstead, Soho Theatre, Finborough, Tricycle, Theatre Royal Stratford East, and even the trendy Almeida all of which are in London. A group of playwright wrote the shocking, disturbing and contemporary plays which could not have been written 20 years earlier. The most important representatives of this theatre are Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill and Anthony Neilson. Mark Ravenhill is an English playwright, actor and journalist. He is the most important representative of in-her-face theatre. His play *Shopping and Fucking* has a sexually-violent content also; *Some Explicit Polaroids* is populated with the familiar gallery of criminals, junkies, sex-workers and psychotics who are Ravenhill's heroes. Anthony Neilson

is a Scottish playwright and director commonly associated with the in-er-face theatre movement and is known for his collaborative way of writing and workshopping his plays. His plays *Normal*, *Penetrator* and *The Cencor* are the great examples of drama especially in *Penetrator*, Neilson wrote some of the most brutally explicit sexual fantasy as well as staging one of the tensest fight scenes ever. The main aim of in-er-face theatre is to write contemporary plays and effect the audience deeply.

Sarah Kane, as one of the representative of in-er-face theatre, focuses on violence in her many plays. In this thesis her three plays, *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed* are chosen especially to portray 21st century world in the aspect of violence. In the first part of the thesis Kane's life and her understanding of theatre are given. The concept of violence is explained in a detailed way before examining her plays. It can be said that violence is an extreme form of aggression, such as assault, rape or murder. Violence has many aspects in the society such as exposing to violent media, experiencing violence at home or neighborhood. Certain situations also cause violent behaviour such as drinking or humiliation by others. Also, psychological disorder is one of the most important reasons for violence as in the case of Sarah Kane. It is known that Kane also had a mental problem and her psycholgy affected her plays' manner and subject.

Blasted is the first play of Kane and it includes violence, sex, cannibalism, torture, etc. In *Blasted*, characters use violence towards each other to take their revenge. In the play, Kane makes a connection with the Bosnia war and genocide. By this way Kane wants to draw attention to the institutions and culture which create aggression. *Phaedra's Love* is Kane's second play and it also includes violence, torture, sexuality and complex relationship. The play was written by Euripeds, Seneca and Racine in different ages and Kane uses the same theme to tell the sexual degeneration in the British Royalty and she underlines violence and taboo in the play. The play is around the love of Phaedra for her step-son, Hippolytus. At the end of the play Phaedra commits suicide and king Theseus kills everybody around him. The scene of violence is seen at the end of the play.

Cleansed is different from *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love* because there is not any main event. The play consists of four subjects who are related to each other and the play's setting is like a university but which functions more as a torture chamber. The characters are; Grace, Graham, Rod, Carl, Robin, Grace and Tinker. These characters have complex relationship with each

other. When the characters make a mistake, they are penalized by Tinker who regards himself as the leader of the group. The play focuses on identity confusion and it criticises understanding of love in 21st century.

Through the analysis of the plays in the aspect of violence it is aimed to reach that in everyday life people come across violence but it is hidden most of the time because of fear, humiliation etc. The theatre is just used as a mirror by Kane to tear off the mask of people. Throughout her life she experienced that people consciously use modernization to mask the reality. Thus she creates vivid characters to question the existence of violence in modern societies. It should be noted that because of being a contemporary playwright it is not easy to reach many books or articles about Sarah Kane and her plays. Thus, online articles or reviews are the sources that are used generally in this thesis.

2. DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE

“Deeds of violence in our society are performed largely by those trying to establish their self-esteem, to defend their self-image, and to demonstrate that they, too, are significant.

Violence arises not out of power, but out of powerlessness.

‘Rollo May’

As its general meaning it can be said that violence is any words or actions where the intention or impact is to cause pain, fear or harm; it is a misuse of power and authority. In every field of our life the example of violence can be seen: in schools, in families, in public transport, in workplaces namely in every place in which people live. It cannot be said that bad morals and genes cause violence. Because each person has a different personality and in each personality has the tendency of defending himself/herself. “There may be lots of reasons for the violent behaviours. Firstly, the reason may be biological. Hormones like testosterone, transmitters in the brain like serotonin, and blood abnormalities like hypoglycemia are only a few that have been mentioned.” (www.sodahead.com/.../the-causes-of-violence/blog-263921) These kind of factors are not inborn. They may be caused by a head injury, poor nutrition or environmental events. This fact is also underlined as;

“Fortunately, the National Academy of Sciences just reviewed hundreds of studies on the relationship between biology and violence, and it came to one clear bottom-line conclusion:

"No patterns precise enough to be considered reliable biological markers for violent behavior have yet been identified."The National Academy of Sciences found many promising leads that should be vigorously pursued by researchers, but so far, it could point to nothing as a proven, or even close to proven, biological risk factor for future violence.'" (www.sodahead.com/.../the-causes-of-violence/blog-263921)

Secondly, the reason may be sociological. Poverty, unemployment, ignorance and indifference family. These are the major factors. If a man is unemployed and cannot earn a living for himself or his family,he may act violently to reach what he wants.Some people try every way to earn money but they are not successful.Especially in these cases,they have the tendency of acting like that.This situation is also proved as ;

"... People who commit violence on the street are disproportionately poor and unemployed Prior to their arrest, jail inmates had, on the average, an annual income at the Federal Government's official 'poverty level' and about one-half were unemployed at the time they committed a violent crime.'"(www.sodahead.com/.../the-causes-of-violence/blog-263921)

And, finally the psychological disorder may be the factor of behaving violently. It can be analysed in two categories.The first one is mental disorder namely mentally disordered people may act violently towards his/her family, friends, colleagues etc...The second one is the ones who are not mentally disordered but still act violently. The developmental processes that we all go through, most of us are more or less successful, but some of us experience great difficulty. Particularly in a family the filter through which most of the sociological factors such as a parent's being unemployed and many of the biological factors like poor nutrition seem to have their effect on a child growing up.The relationship can be set up between psychological and sociological reasons of violent.The study results below prove this situation;

"Lack of parental supervision has been consistently related to delinquency, including violent delinquency. One study, for example, found that 10 percent of nondelinquents were poorly supervised by their parents, one-third of one- and two-time delinquents were poorly supervised, and over three-quarters of repeat offenders were poorly supervised. Another study found that for children growing up in very disadvantaged and violent neighborhoods who look like they have everything going against them, the one factor that seems to protect that child from growing up to be violent is having a parent overwhelmingly a mother who supervises her child very strictly and who nips misbehavior in the bud rather than waiting for the principal to call or the police officer to knock on the door.'"(www.sodahead.com/.../the-causes-of-violence/blog-263921)

The children who cannot find enough care from their parents try to find different ways to cope with their problems. One of, perhaps, the most dangerous one is using illegal drugs. But it is important to remember that the connection between one legal drug alcohol and violence is beyond dispute. “About one-third of all violent offenders are alcoholic, and the earlier an adolescent starts to drink, the more likely that teen will be violent as an adult.” (www.sodahead.com/.../the-causes-of-violence/blog-263921)

As it has been indicated before violence within the family is very common. The violence between the husband and wife. But, mostly the women are exposed to violent. Violence against women is a major public health problem and a violation of human rights. Lack of access to education and opportunity, and low social status in communities are linked to violence against women. Violence by an intimate partner is one of the most common forms of violence against women. A wide range of physical, mental, sexual and reproductive, and maternal health problems can result from violence against women. This fact is proved by the studies;

“In a 10-country study on women's health and domestic violence conducted by WHO, Between 15% and 71% of women reported physical or sexual violence by a husband or partner. Many women said that their first sexual experience was not consensual. (24% in rural Peru, 28% in Tanzania, 30% in rural Bangladesh, and 40% in South Africa). Between 4% and 12% of women reported being physically abused during pregnancy.” (www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/)

It is the fact that there are different types of violence such as physical violence, sexual violence, emotional violence, psychological violence, spiritual violence, cultural violence etc.. Physical Violence occurs when someone uses a part of their body to show his/her reaction; kicking, pushing, pinching, hairpulling, slapping, armtwisting, burning, overmedication, assault with an object or a weapon, stabbing and murder are the examples for physical violence.

Sexual Violence occurs when someone forces you to take part in sexual activity when you do not want to. Forced sexual intercourse, use a weapon to make you comply with a sexual act, denial of birth control, raping, forcing you to perform sexual acts and forced abortion are the examples of sexual violence. Emotional Violence occurs when someone says or does

something to make you feel stupid or worthless. Constant criticism, constant blaming, humiliating, threatening and not allowing you to have contact with your family and friends are the examples of emotional violence.

Psychological Violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in you to gain control. Threatening you with violence and abandonment, confinement to the home, verbal aggression and humiliation are the examples of psychological violence. Spiritual Violence occurs when someone uses your religious or spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate, or control you. Trying to control and change your religious beliefs, making fun of your religious and spiritual beliefs are the examples of spiritual violence. Cultural violence occurs when you are harmed as a result of practices condoned by your culture, religion or tradition. Rape-marriage, humiliating your cultural worths, sexual slavery and making fun of your tradition are the examples of cultural violence.

2.1. Violence From Past to Present

Violence can be seen in each period of human history. Even if its form has changed a lot from past to present, it could protect its presence. If human history is analyzed, it can be said that as the norms of the states have changed and developed, the style of the violence has changed also but it has never vanished. The violence is not specific to west or east but it is specific to human. Violence can be seen at any form in different situations. Violence may be seen in political form or in individual form. Early in the new age is the history of civilization of social relationship and the conviction of violence. Violent behaviours were limited by government monopoly and after that violence was seen as phenomenon beyond the modernism.

Since the period of 'civilizing process' the violence has been seen a concept that should not be in the public life. According to Elias there is a strong relationship between psychological structure and dominance structure of the societies. He found that thoughts and behaviours thrived in a certain direction in those times. (chs.revues.org/index740.html) The feelings which were peculiar to human beings were concealed. These developments were related to the sociable process in the same period. The increase of division of labour and production, the monopolization of violence by the government forced the people to improve themselves in view of the ideas. While they were trying to construct modern states, they knew that there would be no violence activities towards the public and this regulation would be applied by the state. But with the formation of modern states, the violence did not disappear it was only

monopolized. The state began to use the violence in the legitimate ways. And this fact caused an increase in the violent activities. The formation of the institutions may decrease the violence between the states but only by this way the violence could not be prevented and it could maintain its being in a civil way.

20th century was full of wars and revolution so it was the century of the violence also. World wars, fascism, stalinism, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki's bomb, the Jewish genocide and the Bosnian massacre in the middle of Europe were the reasons of violence in 20th century. At the end of this period it can be said that economical difficulties and dependency were the reason for the violence. The violence played an important role in this century that the scientist had to take into account the violence before they made an explanation. Arendt writes that it is "a rather sad reflection on the present state of political science that our terminology does not distinguish among such key words as power, strength, force, authority, and, finally, violence - all of which refer to distinct, different phenomena and would hardly exist unless they did." (www.fsmitha.com/review/arendt.html)

Today all these old verities about the relation of war and politics or about violence and power no longer apply.

"We know that a few weapons could wipe out all other sources of national power in a few moments 'that biological weapons are devised which would enable 'small groups of individuals to upset the strategic balance' and be cheap enough to be produced by 'nations unable to develop nuclear striking forces' that 'within a very few years' robot soldiers will have made 'human soldiers completely obsolete,' and that, finally, in conventional warfare the poor countries are much less vulnerable than the great powers precisely because they are 'underdeveloped' and because technical superiority can 'be much more of a liability than an asset' in guerrilla wars.'" (www.cooperativeindividualism.org/arendt-hanna_reflections-on-v...)

Also Engels thinks that power and violence are very different concepts. Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. Power is psychological; a moral force that makes people want to obey. (www.cooperativeindividualism.org/arendt-hanna_reflections-on-v...) Violence is different with its instrument. Phenomenologically, it is close to strength, since the implements of violence, like all other tools, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural

strength. Violence enforces obedience through physical repression. Those who use violence may manage to temporarily impose their will but their command is always tenuous because when the violence ends or the threat of it lessens there is even less incentive to obey the authorities. Control through violence requires constant vigilance. Too little violence is ineffective; too much violence generates revolt.

In 1987 a group of scientist published a report in which they said that science and its findings were used for bad aims and violence by the people. For instance;to say that animals could be used for fighting was a very wrong idea because the violence was a kind of phenomenon that was peculiar to human beings but not the animals.According to this group theory of evolution did not allow us to apply violence for colonialism,genocide or any kind of violent activities.They thought that people did not have violence neither in our ancestors nor in our genes.They reminded that violent behaviours were related with psychological and mental process and people could do something to invent peace as people invented the violence.There is however another factor in the present situation which though predicted by nobody is of at least equal importance. The technical development of implements of violence has now reached the point where no political goal could conceivably correspond to their destructive potential or justify their actual use in armed conflict. Hence warfare since times immemorial the final merciless arbiter in international disputes has lost much of its effectiveness and nearly all of its glamour.

As a result it can be said that violence is a bad heritage of the past which maintains its being in a civilized way and it wanders among us as a terrible ghost of history of humanity. Violence cannot be prevented though lots of developments and laws.Because it is a kind of instinct that is peculiar to human beings or there is a strong relationship between economy and violence.To live in a society that does not include in violence we should give much more importance to education and culture

2.2 Violence in Society

As it is known that women are face to face with violence today. Many foundations and institutions are for preventing the violence towards women. “According to a report in 2006 indicates that 12 to 15 percent of European women above 16 suffer domestic abuse in a relationship.” (ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews) Women across the world can face to face verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and then they suffer from chronic pain, sexually transmitted diseases, eating and sleeping disorders, alcohol abuse, job loss, the list may be too long. That fact is underlined with a research below;

“Every minute on average in Britain the police receive a call from a member of the public requesting assistance with domestic abuse. Two women are murdered every week in England and Wales at the hands of their partners or ex-partners, according to data released by the Sussex police, and included in the latest report of Women against Violence in Europe (WAVE), a European network of women's shelters.” (ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews).

Another research about violence towards women shows that the rate is quite high in the world. “In Italy, violence against women is rising. According to the latest report by the National Statistics Institute, ISTAT, 6.7 million women are estimated to have been victims of physical or sexual violence during their lifetime, out of a population of 60.3 million.” (ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews)

As it is seen any kind of women can be exposed to violence regardless of her age, race, ethnicity, education, cultural identity, socioeconomic status, occupation, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental abilities, or personality. A woman may be at risk of abuse at virtually any point in her life from childhood to old age. Again as it has been said before violence is everywhere in the world including France;

“In France, one woman is killed every three days in domestic violence, according to the interior ministry. A national police study in 2008 revealed that 156 women were murdered by their partner or ex-partner, while 27 men were killed in comparable circumstances. Nine children were murdered by their fathers. The deaths represent 16 percent of the national total of homicides.” (ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews)

The situation is not different in Turkey. Violence towards women is increasing day by day. There may be different reasons for this situation. The conditions of life is getting hard and this causes violence within the family. This situation is also proved as;

In a study conducted by Yılmaz Esmir and his students in 1991, in which they surveyed a representative sample of 572 women in Istanbul, nearly half of the women responded “Yes” to the question, “Do you think there are situations in which a woman deserves to be beaten by her husband?” (Esmir 1993, 116). In a non-representative sample conducted in Ankara in 1993-94, Leyla Gülçür interviewed 155 women and got a similar result; 43% of women always, often, or sometimes thought violence was “justified” (Gülçür 1996, 49). In the Aile İçi Şiddetin Sebepleri ve Sonuçları (Causes and Effects of Domestic Violence) survey, which was carried out by the Family Research Institution around the same time and was based upon a nationwide representative sample, it was concluded that “the majority of women who have been subjected to violence have a tendency to ‘normalize’ violence as a concept” (Arat, 2009: 9-10)

Consequently it can be said that in every society some people use violence to reach their aim, to be more powerful or to protect themselves. In the news people hear about violent events everyday. People are becoming intolerant, reckless and impatient.

2.3. Violence and Art

In history, the kingdoms and governments use violent scenes to show their power, to threaten their enemies etc. Violence has been reflected on art works in different forms during centuries. For instance music which is food of our soul is full of subjects telling our tragedy (war, poverty or death). Violence cannot be independent from nature so it can be said that violence and art live together to serve some aims.

In 18th century the artists could reflect their thoughts, feelings and ideas in their works and this period’s artistic understanding was romanticism. Romanticism defended the individuality of artist and the independence of society. In this period, the artists express themselves freely and the subjects like longing, sorrow, death have entered to the art in this way.

One of the most important painters in this century is Francisco Goya. He is the best representative of modern art. He portrayed the picture of war and bullfighting. To see the images that remind us violence in his portraits is possible. Also Pablo Picasso was the most important painter of 20th century drew the picture of war in his portrait. He portrayed a picture of war in Spanish to show the terrible affects of the wars. Burning of Jewish in Nazi’s

period became a subject in German painter Anselm Kiefer. Throughout history it is possible to see such painters, writers, poets etc. namely artists who reflected violence to their works.

Today cinema is an effective branch of art and it is more common compared to other forms of art. One way or another violent and horror films are very popular especially among the youngs. People think that watching that kind of films means to be more powerful and they feel themselves stronger.

“In fact, a large proportion of the artistic works of every civilization are produced as a result of some artist sublimating his violent inclinations and directing them into the production of an artistic work, which work is then enjoyed because the members of its audience are able to indulge their own violent inclinations by relishing it. There certainly can be no doubt that much of our artistic heritage is every bit as violent as are films today.” (Allen, 2009: 3)

It cannot be said that the violence is not independent from nature but it is independent from society. Like, love, peace, revenge and hatred are the feelings which are peculiar to human beings. Art has the aim of reflecting people's feelings so it can be said that the violence and art which form in ethic and aesthetic environment live together. Reflecting each other or using them instead of each other is not a coincidence but it is a forced result of their relationship. Art has been a reflection of revenge, hatred, jealousy etc. as well as peace, love, friendship etc. Art is a field which reflects the diversity of people relationship and indicates the sociological developments.

In a conversation with French writer Andre Gide they asked him: “why there was not a big novel in Switzerland?” And he answered: “because there was not any murder.” (Mülayim, 1995:1) This answer is a sign for showing on what art and literature has formed their's ground.

One of the biggest plays *Faust* by Goethe is a tragic play and everything's origin is badness in this play. He began to write this play at the age of 18 and could finish it at the age of 83. To reach the secret of the world he opened his door to devil and he believed that he could create something good by cooperating with bad things. *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde is an interesting novel. In this novel the hero is Dorian Gray and he is very handsome and he worships his own beauty. He is fed with badness and violence and he thinks that these emotions can make him more beautiful. He thinks that badness is a kind of virtue for him. He is

not sorry for being a bad man. Everyone knows that he is a bad man but they still admire him. Lots of examples can be given like that. There are a lot of different characters in plays, novels, stories etc. who think that violence means power. Literature and violence are relating to each other. It is possible to see the war of good and bad in literature.

Dostoyevski deals with violence in his work *Karamazov Brothers* and the dialogue between Ivan and Alyoşa shows that the writers can reflect the violence on their works directly. In this dialogue he said that; “think about it, there is a baby who is very little and is in his mother’s arms, there are lots of foreigners and they try to amuse the baby. And the baby laughs at that time a man aims the baby with a gun in his hand, the baby wants to hold the gun, he pulls trigger and kills the baby. Now say to me: Is not there a master art?” (www.enotes.com. Twentieth-century literary criticism)

In his book *Literature and Evil* George Bataille says that:

“evil is not a factor of conflict with natural order as long as it does not exit within the boundaries of the mind. If death is condition of life, evil relating to death will be one of the main factors which form the living things. Existence does not devote itself to badness but if it achieves, it should not leave itself within the boundaries of mind. As long as badness reflects the attraction of death like all the forms of eroticism it may be regarded as the object of a hidden defeat at best. This is an evil which is carried victoriously.” (Bataille, 1997:28)

Evil is a kind of demolition, it destroys and does not need to construct again. Jean Genet was a French writer but he was different because his life was full of rebellion and disobedience. He thought that the life was not real and everyone was hypocrite. In his book *Açık Düşman* he says that “you should experience the evil and violence in such an effective way that social forces which symbolize goodness cannot obtain you.” (www.enotes.com..twentieth –century literary criticism)

He selected being a bad person until he died. He thought that in such a twisty world being a bad person was better. He was born in orphanage and the life made mistake to him at the beginning so he passed his life to take revenge of the life. His works are generally based on badness, revenge, betrayal and violence.

Another French writer Marquis De Sade was also defender of evil. He passed his years mostly in prison and he wrote his works *Justine* and *120 days of Sodom in prison*. These works are accepted as the root of sadism. He tried to disrupt order and morality of the world. He mentioned his desire for extinguishing and extinction in his works *120 days of Sodom, Justine, Flagellated Women with Virtue* and *The Faults of Love*. He could not accuse of being bad in his work because he liked being bad also. In *Justine* one of the hangman says that;

“What a pleasureable action extermination is! Nothing can be more enjoyable: What can be more enjoyable than living that kind of pleasure?” Bataille says that “Sade sometimes creates a great presence which does evil and sometimes he does not believe in god: In his disavowal of god there are challenge to the god and taking pleasure from profanity. Mostly he replaced nature with the god. Sometimes he behaves as worshiper, sometimes he hails fuckings.” (Bataille, 1997: 92)

20th century is accepted as the representative of prevalent violence of modern society. Some critics of modern literature think that this trend was resulted from both the sensational appeal of violent behavior and its potential to shock readers by shaking their beliefs but the others think that it was resulted from World War II. In fact World War II effected people in a bad way. People began to be more aggressive and were concerned about their life.

For a number of twentieth-century poets, violence was an inescapable reality that suffused their work. “Critics have observed in the writings of Hart Crane the central imagery of destruction as it conveys the poet's essential inability to accept a deeply flawed world. In the poetry of Sylvia Plath and John Wain an attempt to discern the sources and effects of modern violence culminated in anger, frustration, despair, and, in the case of Plath, suicide. In her influential study *On Violence*, Hannah Arendt explored the balance between institutional power structures and violence, an equilibrium that was greatly upset as violent means were adopted to cleanse and reorder the world through fascism, collectivism, and imperialism in the twentieth century” (www.enotes.com › ... › Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism)

20th century novelists reflected the violence in their works. Not only in novels and poems but also in theatre the affect of violence can be seen clearly. In 21.st centry, with the appearance of in-yer-face theatre a group of playwrights began to write what they think in reality. In-yer-face theatre is a kind of theatre which aims to give its secret message by shocking, shaking and

confusing the audience. The play-writers in this theatre group generally employed violence, murder, rape or fear in their works. They reflected violence on the scene with its all nudity and this violent scenes effected audience deeply. Martin McDonagh, Simon Stephen, Irvine Welsh, Tracy Letts, Kerem Topuz and Sarah Kane are the most important representative of this theatre group. Especially Sarah Kane reflected violence, sex and rape in her plays and on the stage.

As it has been said before literature is way of expressing our thoughts and feelings. Every one has positive and negative feelings. Sometimes we want to express our enthusiastic feelings, sometimes we want to shout out our anger. Everyone has brutal feelings such as anger, hate, temper etc. Some people display these feelings physically, some people present them as an art and some keep them until they die. In literal works the murders which are planned perfectly namely blessed evil arouse admiration.

3. BIOGRAPHY OF SARAH KANE

3.1. The Life of Sarah Kane

Kane's father and mother were English journalist and Kane joined different drama activities when she was a teenager. She joined a local drama group as a teenager and directed plays by William Shakespeare and Anton Checkov. She worked as an assistant director for a production Kane went on her education at Bristol University and she attended theatre activities in school. She acted in school plays at a school in London's Soho district, and directed a number of student productions including Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Carly Churchill's *Top Girls*. After the graduation, she went to University of Birmingham and she received her M. A. degree.

Sick was her first-full length play and it is composed of monologues. The play was performed in Edinburgh Festival Theatre in Edinburgh, Scotland. *Blasted* was her first professional play and it is performed at London's Royal Court Theatre in January, 1995. It is notable that she was criticised for the language that she used and the violent scene in the play. Before Kane's death, the play had been produced in Germany, Austria, France, Australia, Serbia, Belgium and Italy.

In 1995, Kane also wrote a teleplay for *Skin*. It was a short film about a black woman who comes into contact with a skinhead and the unexpected twist about who will be the victim. During her season at Paines Plough, Kane wrote *Crave*. Because of the critical manner for *Blasted* and because Kane wanted theatergoers to judge the play on its own merits, *Crave* was first presented under the pseudonym Marie Kelvedon.

She was faced with lots of criticism but they could not deter her from continuing her works. And the playwrights, such as Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill, and Steven Berkoff continued to defend her as a thoughtful, brave, and angry poet. According to some critics, Kane became a tortured artist. “In his introduction to Sarah Kane: Complete Plays, her friend and colleague David Greig encourages us to focus on the literary qualities of Kane’s work rather than on the ‘mythology of the author’ which he terms ‘a pointlessly forensic act.’”(Greig, 1998:90). According to some critics, Kane became a tortured artist. “In his introduction to Sarah Kane: Complete Plays, her friend and colleague David Greig encourages us to focus on the literary qualities of Kane’s work rather than on the ‘mythology of the author’ which he terms a pointlessly forensic act” (Greig, 1998: 90).

4.48 Psychosis was her last play and it was performed in Royal Court Theatre. The play attracted so much attention as *Blasted* did five years before. The play’s name is *4.48 Psychosis* because Kane awoke at that time in every morning by thinking of suicide in her mind. She fought with depression and mental disorders throughout most of her adult life and each depression affected her heavily. Before her death she stayed in mental hospital and received medical-treatment for some time. She was treated by anti-depressant drugs. After she was dead, Tom Fahy, a psychiatrist who treated Kane in 1997 at Maudsley Hospital in London reported that Kane had told him she expected to be dead at the age of 27. On February 18, 1999, at the age of twenty-eight, Kane left a short note on her kitchen table “I have killed myself” and took an overdose of antidepressants and sleeping pills. At first, she was taken to King’s College Hospital in south London and later she was transferred to a psychiatric ward at Maudsley Hospital. However she committed suicide by hanging herself on the back of a lavatory door.

3.2. Sarah Kane and Violence in her Plays

Sarah Kane met with theatre in Comprehensive School after then; theatre began to draw her attention. She watched the *Mad* by Jeremy Weller and was affected so much. This play was a turning point for her. After watching this play, she said that “*Mad* changed all of my life, because it changed me, my behaviours and thoughts. If theatre can change life so much, it also can change the society.” (Biçer, 2010:18)

She thought that theatre could change the society because it could change the people and people form society. Sarah Kane was affected by *Mad* because it showed the complex and melancholic sides of the life as she felt. It is also possible to say that the rural industrial region in which she lived and her family’s strict ideas about religion affected her thoughts and play’s subject so much. In a conversation she said that “The Bible is full of rape, deterioration, war and fatal disease. I have dilemma in my mind about the period of my life.” (Biçer, 2010:18)

Another factor that affects her plays and thoughts is her relationship with her father. Even if there is not a clear source which shows her bad relationship with her father, it is possible to understand it in her plays. Her father was a journalist and she tried to show her anger by using journalists in her plays. In her play, *Blasted*, she used the main character Ian to show her hatred for her father. In a conversation she said again “The best journalist is the one who is dead.” (Biçer, 2010:20)

Sarah Kane is the most important representative of In-yer-face-theatre. It is a kind of theatre which grabs the audience by the scruff of the neck and shakes it until it gets the message. In-yer-face theatre shocks audiences by the extravagance of its language and images, unsettles them by its emotional frankness and disturbs them by its acute questioning of moral norms. In the light of in-yer-face-theatre, Kane began to write plays that include violence, sexuality, persecution, cruelty, etc. She thought that no one could dare to write the reality of life and people constantly would hide their inner and real feelings. While writing her plays she did not care about sociological norms and examined the subjects that were sacrosanct.

According to Sarah Kane the main responsibility of a playwright is to mention the reality no matter how they are disgusting. In the most of her plays she reflected the mental shock of the women who experienced rape and violence by the men. In her first play *Blasted*, while the journalist is trying to violating the girl, the soldiers enter the room and the scene turns into a war place suddenly. In this scene the example of violence and forcing to make sex can be seen clearly. In *Phaedra's Love*, the main character is a woman and she falls in love with her son-in-law. She says her thoughts and emotions but cannot get response. So, she becomes depressed and commits suicide. In *Cleansed*, the example of 'sadizm' can be seen clearly. The main character sadist Tinker behaves badly to everyone in the concentration camp because he wants to spirit off the emotions of the people gradually. And the *Crave*; it is not as violent as other plays of her but the dialogues between the people reflect how a brutal world we live in.

Kane was affected by Shakespeare, Ibsen, Brecht, Pinter and Bond while writing *Blasted*. The *Blasted* that is fed with such a rich fan and accumulation of the theatre shows the phenomenon of violence with its all side and clearly. It is clear in the play that Kane tries to reflect the chaotic atmosphere created by the war by using different kinds of methods and sources. The aim is to create the need of a world that is weapons-free and stage the things which cannot be represented. The main fact about *Blasted* is to react the violence which causes war and dominates all over the world.

As it is understood from the short explanations of the plays, she constantly express violence, sex and cruelty in her plays. It is almost impossible to see the symbol of love and compassion in her plays. The plays of Sarah Kane did not shut their eyes the reality of the time. Conversely, she mentioned truths in a sharp and clear way in her plays. By doing so, she aimed at making more conscious people and more conscious society.

4. VIOLENCE IN *BLASTED*

4.1. Summary of *Blasted*

Blasted was the first professional play of Kane. The play was first performed in Royal-Court Theatre in 1995. The play begins with the coming of Ian and Cate to the hotel room in Leeds, England. They loved each other in past and they are only friends now. Cate thinks that Ian is in a difficult situation, wants to help him. On the other hand Ian wants to make love with

Cate but she does not want to. Upon this, Ian attempts to encroach on Cate. Suddenly, someone knocks at the door and he is a soldier who wants to enter the room forcibly. That part in the play reflects the inner war in Bosnia in early 1990's. The soldier realizes that there is a woman and he began to seek for her. But Cate is able to run away from the room. Later the soldier jumps on the Ian rapes him and gouges out his eyes. Suddenly, a bomb is thrown to the room, the soldier kills himself. In the last stage, Cate comes to the hotel room with a baby who died. The baby is given to her by a victim. She embes the baby to eat and Ian bits the baby. Ian is both blind and hungry now. Later Cate goes and brings some food for the Ian. This is the most discussed and violent scene of the play. The play ends with the fearsome death of Ian.

Blasted received some of the most hostile reviews of the decade. Blinded by its explicit scenes of horror, most critics failed to see that what was really disturbing was the play's radical structure in which a first half set in Leeds hotel suddenly explodes into a war zone reminiscent of Bosnia. An example of experiential theatre which aims to reproduce the dislocation of war by means of a dislocation of plot. "This is not a play for the easily offended. Right from the first line containing a description of bowel movements, to the last scene containing cannibalism, attempted suicide and masturbation, it's difficult to call this piece anything other than avant garde. The two main characters of Ian and Cate are introduced as entering a luxurious hotel room, where the entire play takes place." (Slack, 2010)

Much has been written and said about Sarah Kane and her works. The critics started to talk about with her first play *Blasted* and continued until she died at the age of 28. *Blasted* was firstly enacted by the university students and directed by James Macdonald. The Royal Court Theatre Upstairs presented her first play, *Blasted* and it was greeted with almost universal condemnation. Jack Tinker of the Daily Mail described it as 'This disgusting feast of filth' whilst Charles Spencer of the Telegraph, calling it 'this wild play, said that she mistakenly believed that 'the ability to provoke shudders of disgust is all a playwright needs'. Whilst the newspapers were howling her 'depravity' from the rooftops, others had a different view. A hand-delivered fan letter from Harold Pinter was just one sign of his support of this exciting new playwright. He said, of *Blasted*, that she was facing something actual and true and ugly and painful". ([www. britishtheatreguide. info/articles/070399. htm](http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/articles/070399.htm))

In short it can be said that *Blasted* is a kind of theatre play which includes violence, sex, cannibalism, torture, etc. In *Blasted*, Kane makes a connection with the Bosnia war, genocide and the violence actions between two people. Kane wants to draw attention to the institutions and culture which create aggression in this play.

4.2. Violence in *Blasted*

Blasted that was staged in 12 January, 1995 in Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, became the most controversial play in London after *Romans* in Britain by Howard Brenton. The critics think that the usage of so much violence in a play is unnecessary and it evokes negative emotions in the people. In his book '*Love me, or kill me*' Sarah Kane and Graham Saunders states that, "Sarah Kane in turn saw such reactions by critics as indicative of a refusal to look beyond received dramatic form: 'If they don't have a clear framework in which to locate the play then they can't talk about it'" (Saunders, 2002: 27) But Kane thought; "Although the play includes violence, it is in the side of peace." (Biçer, 2010: 45) The playwright only aimed at shaking the audience from their root of the neck by using the features of in-ye-face-theatre. Kane tried to create a sensitivity to pain and purification in the light of post-modern theatre. In fact Kane was interested in the people who were innocent but were faced with violence in Bosnia War and she tried to draw attention to that point by using violence in the play but the written and visual press was not interested in the message they only focused on the violent scenes in the play. While there were lots of violent activities in the world that should have been a source of news, the press preferred humiliating *Blasted*. Kane explained this absurd situation with these sentences; "A big earthquake happened in Japan when the play was staged and in this country (England) a little girl was raped in the forest. But, they gave much more importance to *Blasted* than these event in their newspapers and the situation was not related with tabloids only." (Biçer, 2010:46)

As the physical, sexual and spiritual violence are one of the most important part of the world, the critics' sentences such as : "it is an example of disgracing the human being systematically', 'homosexual relationship, curving out, cannibalism', 'it is disturbing, humiliating, sweltering' effected the playwright deeply. As a result of these negative thoughts about Kane's play, the receding of the playwright was expected but Kane was able to hold on her job with the help of some playwrights. One of the playwright that supported the Kane was Edward Bond. He thought that *Blasted* was the permanence of *Saved* and *Romans* in

Britain and he said that; “*Blasted* is the only contemporary play that I want to write.”(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Kane)

It is possible to evaluate that Kane aimed at changing the reality of the human being and *Blasted* is a kind of adaptation of *Titus Andronicus* by Shakespeare because this play also includes tyranny, violence and blood. *Blasted* is a kind of acting to show the reality of war caused by the people who like the smell blood. *Blasted* consists of three parts: The play begins with the coming of Cate and Ian to the expensive hotel room. Cate and Ian are old lovers and they are in the hotel room. The first part consists of their dialogues. The violence is in the form of sexual in the first part. Ian wants to make love with Cate and he begins to sweet-talking to Cate to reach his aim. Ian’s struggle for showing the dominance of male and satisfying of his ego causes violence :

“Ian : Like the first cigarette of the day.

Cate : That's bad for you though.

Ian : Stop talking now, you don't know anything about it.

Cate : Don't need to.

Ian: Don't know anything. That's why I love you, want to make love to you.

Cate : But you can't.

Ian : Why not?

Cate : I don't want to.

Ian : Why did you come here?

Cate : You sounded unhappy.

Ian : Make me happy.

Cate : I can't.

Ian : Please.

Cate : No.

Ian : Why not?

Cate : Can't.

Ian : Can.

Cate : How?

Ian : You know.

Cate : Don't.

Ian : P l e a s e.

Cate : No .

Ian : I love you.

Cate : I don't love you.

(Ian turns away. He sees the bouquet of flowers and picks it up.) These are for you. Blackout. The sound of spring rain. ‘’ (www.scribd.com › ... › Screenplays & Plays)

As it is seen the dialogues are very clear and they consist of single-words. The characters do not lengthen the conversation thus their words are very strict. The play also reflects violence in the style of the playwright. After the spotlights which go out with these conversations it can be understood that Ian is defeated by his emotions and he rapes Cate. In fact, Ian is raping Cate during the night but it is not showed directly in the scene but it can be understood from the scattered flowers. Kane did not want to show the scene of raping because she tried to show the situation not a sexual psychosis but a violence in terms of postdramatic theatre because the forming feature of postdramatic theatre is experience. It is the fact that in postdramatic theatre the words or visuals are not important but to create the effect of shock by using meaningless scenes or transitions is more important.

Sarah Kane tried to establish a connection with the war in Bosnia and England by using the sexual taboo as a means of violence. In war camps the people were raped with excusing of batch cleaning and people ignored this reality. According to Kane there is no big difference between the rape in Leeds and the rape in Bosnia. Kane uses Cate as a passive and desperate character in the play, shows her experience deliberately and effectively.

“Cate, as a matter of fact, never escapes from the rape scene through the bathroom window after the bomb’s explosion. Her function in *Blasted* as an object of rape remains consistent throughout the play and serves as a visible manifestation of gender difference and otherness, posing rape as a deeply engendered social practice.’’ (Zhurba, 2008: 6)

As it has been stated before the rape in this part shows that the females are in unprotected and they are seen as the slaves of the males. Kane uses rape for reflecting violence towards the women all over the world. Cate gets consistently raped throughout the play;

“Literally, she is raped twice: in the beginning of the play (accompanied by the metaphor of scattered flowers that serves as a frame for the narrative, reappearing in the end of *Blasted*) and later outside of the hotel. Symbolically, she is also raped via language by various practices of social disempowerment (for instance, her fainting spells and Ian’s verbal abuse), as well as in the scene of Ian’s metonymic rape. Whether she stays in a hotel or makes it to the outside world, what awaits her is nothing but rape as if it is a common condition for a contemporary woman.’’ (Zhurba, 2008: 10)

The second part consists of the dialogues between Cate and Ian, later; Ian and the soldier. While Cate and Ian are talking about their relationship, someone knocks the door. They do not want to open it but they have to. Cate hides and Ian opens the door, it was a soldier. After that the conversations continue between soldier and Ian. Ian who thinks that he is sovereign and powerful turns into the captive and slave of the soldier. Now Ian is weak and in need of helping like Cate. The soldier wants to take revenge of his girlfriend because she was raped and tortured by other soldiers at the time of the war. The soldier was in depression and puts Ian in place of his beloved dead Col. The soldier smells the hair of Ian and begins to rape Ian by directing gun towards him because other soldiers did like that to his girlfriend:

“Soldier : Turn over, Ian.
 Ian : Why?
 Soldier : Going to fuck you.
 Ian : No.
 Soldier : Kill you then.
 Ian : Fine.
 Soldier : See. Rather be shot than fucked and shot.
 Ian : Yes.
 Soldier : And now you agree with anything I say. (He kisses Ian very tenderly on the lips. They stare at each other.)
 Soldier : You smell like her. Same cigarettes. (The Soldier turns Ian over with one hand.)

The Soldier turns Ian over with one hand.

He holds the revolver to Ian's head with the other.

He pulls down Ian's trousers, undoes his own and rapes him – eyes closed and smelling Ian's hair.

The Soldier is crying his heart out.

Ian's face registers pain but he is silent.

When the Soldier has finished he pulls up his trousers and pushes the revolver up Ian's anus''. (www.scribd.com
 › ... › Screenplays & Plays)

The soldier wants to take revenge of his girl-friend. He rapes Ian as the man rapes his girl-friend. He wants to ease his pain.

“On one level, soldier’s act of violence is representative of the meaning and scope that rape acquires in times of war, as well as a symbolic act of revenge for his own girlfriend who has been raped and killed by an enemy soldier. His lust for revenge cannot possibly be satisfied by punishing the actual abuser of his girlfriend for his girlfriend is a victim of war rape, which makes the probability of tracking down her victimizer very low.”(Zhurba, 2008:25)

The act of taking revenge of his girlfriend is not limited by the rape only. The soldier gouges out Ian’s eyes and absorbs them with great violence:

“Ian: Are you going to kill me?

Soldier: Always covering your own arse.

(The Soldier grips Ian’s head in his hands.

He puts his mouth over one of Ian’s eyes, sucks it out, bites it off and eats it.

He does the same to the other eye.)

Soldier : He ate her eyes. Poor bastard. Poor love. Poor fucking bastard.

Blackout. The sound of autumn rain’’. (www.scribd.com > ... > Screenplays & Plays)

In this scene the example of violence and barbarism can be seen clearly. These things are not unusual in fact. During the war a lot of soldiers act like that, they kill the women; men even the babies and eat them with great desire. People lose their humanitarian emotions and they are in an effort to give more harm to each other. At this point Kane tries to reflect the violence in the real life and wants to show that the degree of the violence and barbarism are beyond what people know. The soldier does what other soldiers do to his girlfriend but it is not the picture of them only; it is the picture of violence in the world.

The soldier kills himself at the end of this part. Kane who tries to reflect the violence with its all side has other shocking scenes for the audience. In this last part, Cate comes to the hotel room with a baby in her hand when Ian is blind and is about to die. The baby does not cry anymore because it is very hungry and Ian wants a gun from Cate to kill himself. The desperate mood of Ian can be understood with this conversation:

“Ian : Give me my gun.

Cate : What are you going to do?

Ian : I won't hurt you.

Cate : I know.

Ian : End it. Got to, Cate, I'm ill. Just speeding it up a bit.

Cate :(Thinks hard.)

Ian : Please.

Cate :(Gives him the gun.)

(Ian takes the gun and puts it in his mouth. He takes it out again.)

Don't stand behind me.

He puts the gun back in his mouth.

He pulls the trigger. The gun clicks, empty.

He shoots again. And again and again and again.

He takes the gun out of his mouth.

Ian : Fuck.

Cate: Fate, see. You're not meant to do it. God –

Ian :The cunt.

(He throws the gun away in despair?)”(www.scribd.com > ... > Screenplays & Plays)

This conversation between Cate and Ian tells the situation of the people who suffer and feel themselves worthless anymore. Also the collapse of religious belief as in the plays of Beckett and the extinction of all the value judgement are witnessed in the play. These are all the effects of the war and it can be understood that people may lose all of the beliefs and feelings in hard situations.

Another physical and spiritual violence is seen at the end of the play. The baby is dead because of the hunger and Cate buries it among the woods later, she covers its tomb with flowers. Ian and Cate are very hungry also. Cate wants to go out to find some food but Ian thinks that it is very dangerous but she does not listen to him and goes out. After, Ian cannot resist to hunger anymore and removes the baby from its tomb and begins to eat it. This violent and horror scene gives us an idea about how can a person be villain. At the end of the play Cate is seen with a piece of bread, sausage and gin in her hand. She feeds the Ian with her hands and Ian thanks her.

The ending of *Blasted* with complexity and problems directs the critics to different points. According to Nick Curtis the final scene of the play “is like a net which is thrown to the depth of human degradation”(Biçer,2010: 61). Ian’s thanks to the Cate means that he forgives her and Cate’s good behaviour towards Ian although he rapes her means that Cate accepts the situation. Sarah Kane who does not obey the rule of time-place-action unity in

classical theatre, forces imagination of the audience and presents the panorama of violence and pain in *Blasted*.

According to Aleks Sierz *Blasted* which is written by an angry woman is about love and hope and it is the best play of the Kane. Tom Sellar, the critic, thinks that Kane presents “the world of destruction” to the audience and her theatre is not the place of solution and liberation as in the theatre of Howard Barker. Edward Bond also comments on *Blasted* and he says “*Blasted* is the center of our humanity and the expression of antique need for theatre. Anyway Kane expressed that she was effected by the plays of Bond and the final scene of *Saved* by Edward Bond reflects the hope after lots of bad events as in the case of *Blasted*.” (Biçer, 2010: 62) Ian thanks to Cate at the final scene and it is sign of hope relating to future. Kane thinks that changing is possible in spite of everything and characters who are the victim of violence in the play can present a life to each other.

“*Blasted* is not a neat play with a boring plot that leads to amoral or philosophical ending. It is a play that is dirty, unpredictable, violent, and without any hint of a comprehensive meaning that would tie it all together. The violence is there to shock the audience but also to ensure that the audience will have no choice but to pay attention and think through the violence in their own way. Kane’s refusal to invest her violence with meaning leads to the criticism that it has no meaning, which is plainly incorrect.” (Dluback, 2005:4)

5. VIOLENCE IN *PHAEDRA’S LOVE*

5.1. Summary of *Phaedra’s Love*

Phaedra’s Love is a product which includes classical plays’ modern version. The play was shown in Gate Theatre in 1996 under the title of ‘New Plays, Antique Sources’. While writing this play, Kane was affected by Seneca’s *Phaedra* and decided to write it again in its modern version.

Phaedra’s Love is Kane’s second play and it was shown in London Gate Theatre, in 1996. Kane's took the story from the Euripide’s and Seneca’s tragedies about Hippolytus. There are four main characters in the play: Phaedra, Hippolytus, Strophe, and Theseus. Phaedra, the wife of king Theseus is very self-confident, proud and thinks that she is very attractive and can obtain whoever she wants. Hippolytus is the son of Theseus and stepson of Phaedra. He is very senseless, unconcerned and lazy. He does nothing except from eating hamburger, watching

TV, making sex with women and masturbating. Strophe is the daughter of Theseus and Phaedra. She is very selfish and only thinks herself. Theseus is the king of British Royalty. He is generally out of the country and he is very busy so he cannot find enough time to follow what is going on his family.

In the play Phaedra loves her step-son very much but she has to hide her feelings because she is the wife of Theseus so this situation cannot be accepted in British Royalty. But she cannot resist more and she explains her feelings to Hippolytus. Hippolytus does not pay attention to her love because every woman is the same for him. He thinks that women are only for making sex and they mean nothing for him. Phaedra is just one of these women. Phaedra's daughter, Strophe objects to this passion but not thinking of her mother she only thinks of herself. If this passion is known, they cannot live in the palace so she will have to give up this glory life. This love ends with the suicide of Phaedra. She cannot resist the pain of this unrequited love any more and wants to end her life for the sake of Hippolytus. Theseus comes to his country and wants to take revenge of his broken honor. He rapes Strophe by an oversight and kills her after that. Later, he plunges his knife to lifeless body of Phaedra. Theseus throws Hippolytus among the public and the people penalize Hippolytus by beating and torturing him. In the end of the play Theseus kills Hippolytus and the play finishes with that violent scene.

Kane who wants to shake and shock the audience achieved this aim by using the scenes including verbal and physical violence, rape, using of drug and extreme sex in *Phaedra's Love*. Kane was effected by the primitive character of Hippolytus and puts forwards the tabu and violence in Seneca's antique story so she moves the implicit tabu of modern world to the agenda. Kane wants to draw attention to the violence and torture in 20. century by using the encest relationship and violence in British Royalty.

As in *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* draws attention because of its violence and sexual content. Some critics find these scenes are too much and unnecessary. For instance *The Daily Mail's* Jack Tinker labelled it as "disgusting feast of filth". Also Charles Spencer wrote, "It's not a theatre critic that's required here: it's a psychiatrist." ([www. britishtheatreguide. info/articles/070399. htm](http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/articles/070399.htm)). Another critic about the play is "Kane has been deliberately provocative in bringing the extreme violence from off-stage in Seneca's classical version to centre-stage for her 1996 vision of a family whose self-destructive obsessions precipitate murderous societal violence." (Hopkins, 2008: 1). But some critics find the play valuable and

different, for instance Samantha Marlowe said that “*Phaedra’s Love* needs attraction in view of its unique values and it deserves a deep esteem.” (Biçer, 2010:66). And the writer of *Times* Kate Basset said that “Kane can talk about the objection and tedium in relations within the family but she can be clever at the same time.” (Biçer, 2010:66).

As a conclusion it can be said that Sarah Kane brings a searing modern sensibility to the ancient Roman's tale of royal family dysfunction and violent social unrest with this play. Love and generational ties are expressed in terms of forcefulness with increasingly inappropriate levels depicted of individuals forcing themselves upon another. Rape and vengeful mutilation are eventually presented but so self-consciously theatrical is their staging that a detachment develops in response to the victims suffering. (Hopkins, 2008:1)

5.2. Violence in *Phaedra’s Love*

Phaedra’s Love is one of the plays that examine the irregular relationships in British Royalty. In the play the playwright discusses conservative, oppressive and reactionary attitudes of society. *Phaedra’s Love* should be evaluated as a black comedy; Kane concreted individual extinction by using Hippolytus.

Michael Billington, the critic of *The Guardian*, said that “In view of structure the play has incontrovertible power but it is very hard to understand what it means in view of intellectual. I think the aim of Kane is to state that Royalty is a worthless myth in today’s World.” Also Paul Taylor, the columnist of *Independent*, said that “the last ten minutes of play is full of cruelty which reminds us *Blasted* and the castration, intestinal extraction and over-indulgence slips into a different place in the play.” (Biçer, 2010:65).

The first part of the play starts with the appearance of Hippolytus who is the protagonist of the play. In the first part it can be seen clearly that postdramatic theatre uses media industry as a theatrical element. Hippolytus watches a violent movie on the tv and he wants to deenergize.

A royal palace.

Hippolytus sits in a darkened room watching television.

He is sprawled on a sofa surrounded by expensive electronic toys, empty crisp and sweet packets, and a scattering of used socks and underwear.

He is eating a hamburger, his eyes fixed on the flickering light of a Hollywood film.

He sniffs.

He feels a sneeze coming on and rubs his nose to stop it.

It still irritates him.

He looks around the room and picks up a sock.

He examines the sock carefully then blows his nose on it.

He throws the sock back on the floor and continues to eat the hamburger.

The film becomes particularly violent.

Hippolytus watches impassively.

He picks up another sock, examines it and discards it. He picks up another, examines it and decides it's fine

He puts his penis into the sock and masturbates until he comes without a flicker of pleasure.

He takes off the sock and throws it on the floor.

He begins another hamburger.(www.scribd.com/doc/.../Phaedra-s-Love)

A violent movie on TV draws the attention of Hippolytus who tries to spend his time by eating hamburger and smelling his socks. He is affected by the violent scene in the movie, takes a sock and masturbates into the sock. In a sense he shows his reaction to violence by masturbating. Later, he continues eating hamburger and feels himself relaxed. Kane displays Hippolytus as an irresponsible and hard-hearted at the beginning of the play. Hippolytus's callous attitude towards violence labels him as a bad character. Kane tries to show Hippolytus as a bad postdramatic hero who is the prisoner of the time. Phaedra loves Hippolytus and risks everything about her life. She risks her husband, her wealth and to be killed for the sake of her love for Hippolytus but she cannot find any response to her love. The second, third and fourth parts of the play consist of the passion of Phaedra for her step-son. During these scenes Phaedra struggles between her honor and her love.

Phaedra cannot resist to this passion anymore and commits suicide at the end of this scene. "Kane's Phaedra feels the passion of love so vividly that it consumes her like a fire: "Can't switch this off. Can't crush it. Can't wake up with it, burning me. Think I'll crack. By contrast, Hippolytus maintains that nobody burns me". (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Phaedra-s-Love) But after the revelation of her death, Hippolytus finds in Phaedra's act the pure honesty he had thought unattainable in others, forcing him to reconsider his stance:

Hippolytus: This is her present to me [...]

Not many people get a chance like this.

This isn't tat. This isn't bric-a-brac [...]

Life at last [...]

She really did love me." (www.christophertester.com/KANE.doc)

In the fifth part of the play, Strophe is sorry for her mother but she still thinks herself and tries to persuade Hippolytus for denying the truth. She knows that Hippolytus is the only one who is responsible for her mother's death but she does not want to lose her glories life. She wants to believe that her mother is not raped but dies for the sake of Hippolytus. While they are talking about Phaedra, Hippolytus offers her to make sex but she refuses him this time. Strophe is in dilemma. On the one hand she is sorry for her mother and hates Hippolytus, on the other hand she thinks her future and knows that to live comfortable and in luxury she has to protect Hippolytus. It is possible to see lots dialogues about rape in *Phaedra's Love* because main character Hippolytus is full of violence, hatred towards society and he tries to feel relax by this way. For him the women mean nothing but they mean sex only. The dialogue below shows how Hippolytus talks arrogantly about Phaedra:

Strophe : My mother says she was raped. She says you raped her. I want to know if you had sex with my mother.

Hippolytus: Because she's your mother or because of what people will say?

Strophe : Because she's my mother.

Hippolytus : Because you still want me or because you want to know if she was better than you?

Strophe : Because she's my mother.

Hippolytus : Because she's your mother.

Strophe : Did you have sex with her?

Hippolytus : I don't think so.

Strophe : Was there any sexual contact between you and my mother?

Hippolytus : Sexual contact?

Strophe : You know exactly what I mean.

Hippolytus : Don't get stroppey, Strophe.

Strophe : Did she want to do it?

Hippolytus : You should have been a lawyer.

Strophe : Did you make her?

Hippolytus : You're wasted as a pseudo-princess,

Strophe : Did you force her?

Hippolytus : Did I force you?

Strophe : There aren't words for what you did to me.

Hippolytus : Then perhaps rape is the best she can do. Me. A rapist. Things are looking up.

(www.scribd.com/doc/.../Phaedra-s-Love)

Hippolytus behaves violently and arrogantly to all women. He thinks that he has right for raping them and relaxing by this way. Graham Saunders explains Hippolytus' violent action in his book *Love me or Kill me*;

“As in Seneca's version of the play Kane retains Phaedra's accusation of rape against Hippolytus, and here there is perhaps justification for the charge; indeed one could see how Hippolytus brutal contempt and rejection of her obsessive love for him could be likened to a form of mental rape. Kane commented, “what Hippolytus does to Phaedra is not rape—the English language doesn't contain the words to describe the emotional decimation he inflicts.” Rape” is the best word Phaedra can find for it, the most violent and potent.”(Saunders, 2002:30)

In the sixth scene of the play Hippolytus enters the prison because of raping. Hippolytus is very hopeless thus he wants to kill himself. At that point, the priestess tries to persuade Hippolytus for not accepting the rape charging for the sake of the country. Because The British Royalty passes hard days and this is quite an important event for the future of the country. Another crucial scene is again about sexuality. This time the priestess forgets her own identity and begins to make sex with Hippolytus. This situation is another demolition for Hippolytus; even the priestess sees him as a means of sex and he expresses his thoughts so;

Hippolytus : “It (Forgiveness) may be enough for you, but I have no intention of covering my arse. I killed a woman and I will be punished for it by hypocrites who I shall take down with me. May we burn in hell. God may be all powerful, but there's one thing he can't do.” (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Phaedra-s-Love)

The last scene of the play is again a violence show. King Theseus hears the events and comes back to the country with the fire of revenge. He comes to the tomb of Phaedra and begins stabbing her dead body. From this violence the degree of his hatred can be understood. King Theseus jumbles into the crowd and provokes the people against Hippolytus. Strophe and Hippolytus also jumble into the crowd to get rid of Theseus but it is not possible. The Theseus' eyes are covered with blood. He rapes the young woman not realizing that she is his daughter, Strophe. Theseus utters his regret by these words:

Theseus : Hippolytus. Son. I never liked you.

(To Strophe.)

I'm sorry.

Didn't know it was you. God forgive me I didn't know.

If I'd known it was you I'd never have -

(To Hippolytus.)

You hear me, I didn't know. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Phaedra-s-Love)

Hippolytus is among the public and he is beaten, his head is crushed with stones. The people cut his penis, stab him and apply all the violence and barbarism to Hippolytus. This torture is a response for his indifferent behaviours. Kane wants to emphasize that if you misdo to someone, you certainly get its recompense. Sarah Kane tries to establish parallels between the public who tortures and beats Hippolytus in the play and the people who ignores violence, child killings, wars in real life. She blames everyone for these violent acts. In the end of the play Theseus ends his life and Hippolytus is killed terribly.

Theseus : Hippolytus. Son. I never liked you.

(To Strophe.) : I'm sorry. Didn't know it was you. God forgive me I didn't know. If I'd known it was you I'd never have -

(To Hippolytus.): You hear me, I didn't know.

(Theseus cuts his own throat and bleeds to death. The three bodies lie completely still. Eventually, Hippolytus opens his eyes and looks at the sky)

Hippolytus: Vultures.

(He manages a smile)

If there could have been more moments like this.

Hippolytus dies. A vulture descends and begins to eat his body. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Phaedra-s-Love)

It is known that before Kane Euripides, Seneca and Racine and told this story but Kane deals with the plot from a different point of view. For instance, she uses Phaedra to show the contradiction between the unrequited love and traditional values. Also the playwright deals with the nature of the emotions like love, hatred, anger, violence, sexuality etc. in *Phaedra's Love*. *Phaedra's Love* displays all the great qualities of Kane's writing;

“Acknowledged as one of the ‘In Yer Face’ dramatists to change British Theatre, she raises a number of challenging questions and stirs our emotions, musing on why public figures attract so much love and hate, why a crowd turns from celebration to violence, and on how the love of a figurehead can drain the focus away from reality.” (www.n16mag/whats-on/...892.html)

Although the plays scenes that include violence and sex obsess the audience, it represents the real life of 21st century. In *Phaedra's Love* sexuality, physical and spiritual violence, intense relationships reach their peaks. Sarah Kane underlines her aim by these words; “If we achieve

experience by means of art, we can change our future....I would rather protect the people who are attacked than be one of the indifferent member of the society that drifts into the self-destruction.” (Biçer, 2010: 84)

6. VIOLENCE IN *CLEANSED*

6.1. Summary of *Cleansed*

Cleansed is the third play of Sarah Kane and it was shown in Royal Court Theatre Upstairs in 1998. The play is different from *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love* because there is not any main event. *Cleansed* consists of four subjects which are related to each other and the play's setting is like a university but which functions more as a torture chamber or concentration camp. The characters are; Grace, Graham, Rod, Carl, Robin, Grace and sadistic Tinker. The main issue starts with the death of Graham. Graham is brother of Grace and he is a drugster. Graham is killed by Tinker. After the death of Graham, Grace wants to keep alive him by wearing Graham's clothes, transplanting his penis and dancing with the soul of him.

The other subject is between Rod and Carl. They are two lovers and they promise that they will love each other until they die but Carl betrays his lover and shows Rod's behaviour as a reason. On the other hand Rod is ready for dying for Carl. Another case is between Robin and Grace. Robin is a student and he is mentally-ill. Robin falls in love with Grace. He cannot resist the problems of life and commits suicide. And, the last subject tells the loves of Tinker. Tinker loves a girl whom he meets in a night club. He constantly calls her as Grace and he tries to create a new woman (Grace) from her.

These are the events that are lived in the so-called university. Sadistic Tinker is the chief of this place and penalizes others by using his terrifying methods. In the play Kane wants to criticise oppressive systems by using the character Tinker. Tinker is the only man who has authority for judging, penalizing and deciding in that building.

The setting of the play is selected deliberately. Universities are the place of science and people are educated for the next generation. In the play their functions change and they become a place of torture camp. Kane wants to criticise the oppressive methods of universities by this way. Kane thinks that the youth are not free enough and they are under pressure. For instance,

Tinker directs everyone, measures their love and kills them violently in the play. It was said that the name "Tinker" came from the name of Jack Tinker whose review of Kane's first play *Blasted* was headlined as "this disgusting feast of filth". (www.chs.revives.org/index/740.html). The critic of British Tabloid, The Daily Mail, Jack Tinker criticized *Blasted* mercilessly.

The conversations in the play are very short to underline the characters boring and unattractive life. Kane prefers showing to telling in *Cleansed* and the playwright does not use any word in vain. She uses language as a part of violence in *Cleansed*. According to her every line has much more meanings in *Cleansed*. As in *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love*, *Cleansed* draws attention and it is criticized. One of the critics, Charles Spencer says:

"Kane is incapable of creating depth of character or moving an audience. She'd much rather kick us in the guts. For decades the film world has produced extremely violent movies, and I'm not talking here about the "splatter" movies but films in the mainstream. For goodness' sake, it was in 1970 that we first saw *Soldier Blue*! And it was 1965 that we first saw Edward Bond's *Saved at the Royal Court* and as long ago as 1980 that the National staged Howard Brenton's *The Romans in Britain*." (www.britishtheatreguide.info/articles/070399.htm) Also the writer of *Express* Robert Gore-Langton says: There is no any dangerous side in strolling extremes for the playwright. The received is full of repulsiveness. (Biçer, 2010:88)

As a conclusion the physical violence in Kane's plays that has caused such a public outcry has primarily to be interpreted in terms of the conceptual metaphor "the mind is the body:" the body becomes the epitome of a tortured soul. (co www.iainfisher.com/kane/.../sarah-kane-plays). By telling different life and love story Kane wants to show that people have different problems and they do not have any right to defend themselves. There is always the one who directs the people.

6.2. Violence in *Cleansed*

Cleansed is the most complex play of Sarah Kane because the play does not have a main theme. The play tells different lives of people in an old university campus. These people's life returns around this campus. Tinker, the main character, tries to control their lives and penalizes them if they make any mistake. He sees himself as the leader of them.

By using the methods of in-her-face- theatre Kane shocks the audience in *Cleansed*. Some scenes in the play are so terrifying and disgusting that it is nearly impossible to watch them clearly but Kane thinks that if the play does not include such scenes, it does not draw attention.(Biçer, 2010: 92) As it has been stated before Kane prefers effective scenes to long conversations. Violence and authority are stressed in the play;

“Thus, the non-realistic setting is a blending of diverse settings existing in reality: prison, university, brothel, and hospital. Kane concocts a setting of implicated violence (prison), help (hospital), and learning (university) into a metaphorical location that can be interpreted as Kane’s sinister view of the world. Thus, the people living in it are prisoners and made dependent upon help and sources of knowledge of some external powers in society.”
(www.iainfisher.com/kane/.../sarah-kane-overview)

The writer of *Evening Standard* Nicholas de Jongh criticized the play mercilessly and said; It was one of the most disgusting experience in my life. I couldn’t look at the stage constantly.I left the play insolently as I wanted.(Biçer, 2010:88) Another critic John Peter said that:I felt as if my bones were broken,my stomach was strained and was very hopeless after I watched the play.I think the thing that Kane tries to do is that.(Biçer, 2010:88) Sarah Kane who was criticized so mercilessly did not change her style and said that;Authorities can do everything unless the victims prevent them.There is no place for sensitivity in this world;the only exchangeable thing is violence.” (Biçer, 2010: 88)

In the first scene of the play the audience witnesses a death on the stage. The dialogues between Tinker and Graham remind the dialogues between a patient and a doctor;

(Tinker is heating smack on a silver spoon)

(Graham enters)

Graham: Tinker.

Tinker: I am cooking.

Graham: I want out.

Tinker (looks up)

Graham: Is that for me?

Tinker: I don’t use.

Graham: More.

Tinker: No.

Graham: It is not enough.

Tinker: I am a dealer not a doctor.

Graham: Give more.

Tinker (injects heroins into the corner of Graham' eyes)

Count backwards from ten.

Graham: Ten, nine, eight.

Tinker: Your legs are heavy.

Graham: Seven, six, five.

Tinker: Your head is light.

Graham: Four, four, five.

Tinker: Life is sweet.

Graham: This what this is like.

(They look at each other)

Graham: Thank you, Doctor.

(He slumps)

Tinker: Graham?

(Silence)

Tinker: Four.

Three.

Two.

One.

Zero. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

Graham uses heroins and he is an addict. He wants to die because life does not mean anything for him. Tinker helps Graham and kills him by injecting heroins to him. Tinker is a sadistic character and happy when he kills someone. Tinker loses his all humanistic feelings and behaving violently. He kills Graham not for saving him from this pain but for satisfying his egos.

In the second scene the relationship between Rod and Carl is displayed. The understanding of love of Rod and Carl are very different from each other. They are homosexual. While Carl betrays Rod, Rod is ready for leaving Carl. The difference between them can be understood easily from these dialogues:

Rod: What are you thinking of?

Carl: That I will always love you.

Rod: (Laughs)

Carl: That I will never betray you.

Rod: (Laughs more)

Carl: That I will never lie to you.

Rod: Now you are telling lie.

I wouldn't die for you.

I can't promise you anything.

Carl: I don't mind.

I don't expect anything.

You don't have to say anything.

Rod: Listen! I'am saying this once.

I am with you now.

I love you now.

I will do my best, moment to moment, not to betray you.

Now.

That's it. No more. Don't make me lie to you.

Carl: I am not lying to you. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

After this conversation Carl is faced with the tortures of Tinker. He is beaten by invisible men in the scene. Tinker inserts a broom handle through his anus. Carl promises Rod, he does not keep his promise and betrays him. Tinker penalizes his betrays and untruthful love. First punishment for Carl is cutting his clapper. Carl tries to apologize from Rod by writing his accuse on the muddy surface:

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 face ...so 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. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

In this part Tinker reads what Carl has written to Rod. This time Tinker cuts Carl's hands and prevents him to write anything. While Rod is saying "Say forgive me, I won't lie to you

Carl”, the rats are eating Carl’s hands. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)The punishments of Tinker are not limited to them. Tinker penalizes Rod more strictly and cuts his legs while he is dancing with the song of “The love dance of Rod”.Lastly; Rod says that “I will love you forever, I will never betray you”.Upon these sentences Tinker asks Rod: You or Him? Decide! And Rod answers: I...And Rod kill for the sake of his love as Phaedra in *Phaedra’s Love*. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

Tinker penalizes everyone who loves each other. Like “Big Brother” character in the *1984* by George Orwell,Tinker wants to control everyone and exterminates their humanistic sides.It is ironic that Tinker is also looking for true love.He falls in love with Grace but he cannot say it to her.Tinker meets a woman in the night-club and behaves her as if she is Grace;

Woman: I think about you when I...

Make love to me Tinker.

Tinker: Are you sure?

Woman: Make love to me.

(They both undress, watching each other.)

(They stand naked and look at each other’s bodies.)

(They slowly embrace.)

(They begin to make love very slowly.)

Woman: (Cries)

Tinker: (Stops). Are you right?

Woman: No, no I...

Tinker: Does it hurt do you want me to stop?

He begins to withdraw_She holds on to him.

Woman: Stay there. Stay there.

I love you.

(They begin to make love again gently.)

(Tinker cries.)

Tinker: What is your name?

Woman: Grace.

Tinker: No, I meant...

Woman: I know.It’s Grace.

Tinker: (Smiles). I love you Grace. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

From these conversations it can be understood that Tinker is not totally a bad person and he also feels like a normal person. Because he loves Grace very much and behaves very gently to that woman. In the play complex relationships are between Tinker-Grace, Grace-Robin and Grace-Graham. Tinker does not accept Grace to the institution and the cause of this will be understood later. Tinker loves Grace in fact but the only aim of Grace is to find his brother. Grace takes the clothes of Graham from Robin and wears them. Robin does not want to wear woman's clothes but he is forced to do this. Robin is nineteen years old. He is a lazy boy and he is excluded from the society.

This reluctant change causes this dialogue;

Robin: If you could change one thing in your life what would you change?

Grace: My life.

Robin: No, one thing in your life.

Grace: This is insane.

Robin: Wouldn't you wish your brother back?

Grace/Graham: (Laughs).

Grace: No, no. I don't think of Graham.

That's not how I think of him.

Robin: I had one wish I'd wish Graham live again.

Grace: Graham is not a thing to change. And he's not in your life.

Robin: He is.

Grace: How?

Robin: They gave me his clothes.

Grace: It is not necessary; Robin. It is not like he is dead.

Graham/Robin: What would you change?

Grace: My body. So it looked like it feels

Graham outside like Graham inside. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

Robin takes Graham as an example and tries to live like him. By wearing his clothes and behaving like him, he thinks that he obtains the soul of Graham. In the next scenes Grace accepts Robin as Graham and wants to marry with him. Grace wants to get rid of female body and asks Tinker to change her sex. Tinker transplants the penis of Graham to Grace by using electro-shock. After that Grace continues her/his life as a transexual. In the last scene of the play Grace looks like Graham, Carl wears the clothes of Robin and rats are eating

Grace/Graham's and Carl's body. The final scene is gloomy and last words said by Grace/Graham:

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. (www.scribd.com/doc/.../Cleansed)

In this dialogue Grace/Graham wants to tell that death cannot finish the love and asks for help. Carl gives his arm to Grace/Graham. While Carl is crying, they are looking at the sky. The rain finishes and the sun shines. With the screams of rat the play ends. In the final scene of the playwright underlines the fact that if people can still love though their lots of pains, then the love is the most powerful thing in life. Because the end of this play shows that violence, barbarism, repressing, homosexuality, encest relationship are meaningless as long as there is true love, the hope for the people never ends.

Kane made use of Artaud, Beckett, Pinter and Bond while writing *Cleansed* in view of techniques. Especially, the effect of Artaud's Violence Theatre can be seen clearly in the play. *Cleansed* is interpreted as a surrealistic play because dead characters are played by living characters in the play. Kane tries to solve the relationship between dominant and innocent in *Cleansed*

7.CONCLUSION

The main aim of this paper is to examine the concept of violence in Sarah Kane's three plays, *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed*, in a detailed way. In the light of this aim it is necessary to discuss violence itself at first. In the first part of the study the definition of violence and nature of violence are discussed in a detailed way. From the past to now it is possible to see violence behaviour in the society. It is the fact that in the history it is seen that states applied violence to conquer land or to keep their colonies under control. There were hot wars among the states. Today the form of violence changes but it is still in daily life. There are cold wars today and many people experiences violence especially in their inner world. At this point it is very useful to examine the plays of Sarah Kane because she potrays modern world's violence in her plays.

In the second part of the thesis the life of Sarah Kane and her understanding of violence are examined. She is one of the most important representatives of in-yer-face theatre that is seen in 21th century British Drama. The most striking feature of in-yer-face theatre is using violence, sex and torture on the stage. As a result the audiences are the ones who experience these features together with the actor/actress. Kane as a playwright warns people about violence by using violence itself on the stage. In her plays audience shock and are startled because of facing the violence so vividly.

In the third part of the thesis the violence factors in *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed* are examined in a detailed way. Firstly the summary of *Blasted* is given later scenes, dialogues and strict expressions are examined in the aspect of violence. *Blasted* is Kane's first play and it is full of violence, blood and torturement. In the play people witness that how brutal a person can be when he/she is in pain and wants to take revenge of as a result.

Secondly *Phaedra's Love* is examined. The play's summary is given and then; the violence factors, scenes, conversations and dialogues are examined in a detailed way. In this play Phaedra is exposed to the verbal violence by Hippolytus because she is the one who falls in love with her step-son. But Hippolytus humiliates all the women also Phaedra, too. The reason of his attitude is regarding life meaningless. At the end of the play Hippolytus is penalized in a violent way by his father, Theseus.

Cleansed is the last play that is studied in this thesis. After the summary of the play, the complex relationship is examined in a detailed way. This play is a bit different from *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love* because there is not a main them. In the play especially through the major character violence is underlined effectively.

As a result it can be said that Sarah Kane is a successful playwright. Kane draws attention of people to violence by using disturbing and disgusting scenes in her plays. According to Kane people cannot get rid of their problems by escaping from reality. In this context *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed* are good chances to confront with the reality of violence. She criticizes the modern world and the mechanical people. Kane questiones real love, justice, freedom of thinking and human values in her plays. While questioning them, she makes use of violence to make the people being aware of reality. Kane uses all the aspects of in-yer-face theatre to effect the modern world's people deeply. She has the understanding that if a play does not change peoples' thought, there is no point to write a play any more.

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