

The Envisaged Messages of Violence and Atrocities in Sarah Kane's *Blasted*

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Abstract:

The profoundly original British young playwright, Sarah Kane, is regarded as one of the leading figures of the 1990s playwrights. Although her writing life was short and brief- with five-full length plays- Kane was able to canonize herself as one of the British iconic playwrights. The 1995 production of Kane's debut play *Blasted* at the Royal Court Upstairs became the defining moment of a new aesthetic in the British theatre. As playwright born in the 1970s, witnessing the devastating events of the 1990s, Kane's fears, anger and desire are well reflected in her plays. Indeed, *Blasted* is the first play in which Kane began addressing the themes that most members of her generation were suffering from. The play pictures extreme physical and spiritual violence that torn apart the three characters. *Blasted*, as Kane indicates on different occasions, is mainly concerned with the Bosnian conflict. Thus, atrocities committed in Bosnia are masterfully depicted. The present paper aims to examine the manifestations of violence and atrocities in *Blasted* and the envisaged messages that Kane intends to deliver to her British audience in particular and the world in general.

Keywords: British theatre, Sarah Kane, *Blasted*, atrocities, violence, war.

الرسائل المتواخاة للعنف والأعمال الوحشية في مسرحية سارة كين "المتفجر"

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قسم اللغة الانكليزية/ كلية التربية/ جامعة الكوفة

الخلاصة:

تعتبر الكاتبة المسرحية البريطانية سارة كين واحدة من الشخصيات البارزة في حقل الكتاب المسرحيين في التسعينيات. وعلى الرغم من أن حياتها في الكتابة كانت قصيرة ومختصرة بنتاج خمس مسرحيات كاملة، إلا أن كين كانت قادرة على أنت نقش اسمها كواحدة من ايقونات الكتاب المسرحيين البريطانيين. لقد أصبح إنتاج مسرحية سارة كين الاولى "المتفجر" على مسرح رويال كورت عام 1995 نقطة التحول في أظهار قيم جمالية جديدة في المسرح البريطاني. كونها كاتبة مسرحية ولدت في السبعينيات وحيث شهدت الأحداث المروعة في فترة التسعينيات فأن مخاوف وغضب ورغبات كين انعكست بشكل جلي في مسرحياتها. في الواقع، تعتبر "المتفجر" المسرحية الأولى التي بدأت من خلالها الكاتبة بمعالجة الموضوعات التي يعاني منها معظم افراد جيلها. اذ تُظهر المسرحية بشكل جلي العنف الجسدي والروحي الشديد الذي بسببه تدمرت شخصيات المسرحية. تشير كين وفي مناسبات مختلفة بأن "المتفجر" تهتم بشكل أساسي بالصراع البوسني. وبالتالي، فإن الأعمال الوحشية التيار تكبت في البوسنة مصورة ببراعة في هذا العمل. يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة مظاهر العنف والأعمال الوحشية في مسرحية "المتفجر" وتحديد الرسائل المهمة التي تنوي كين إيصالها إلى جمهورها البريطاني بشكل خاص والعالم بشكل عام.

الكلمات الدالة: المسرح البريطاني، سارة كين، المتفجر، العنف، الحرب

1- A short note on the British theatrical scene of the 1990s:

Following the footsteps of their predecessors of the 1970s, the playwrights of the 1990s (Patrick Marber, Mark Ravenhill, Sarah Kane and many others) attempted- in their theatre- to express their anger and dissatisfaction. However, the approach that they followed seem to be very unique and different. Thus, the playwrights' era is described as the Post-Thatcher since their work respond to what Thatcher has radically changed in England. The theatre historian and critic, Benedict Nightingale, describes them as "Mrs Thatcher's disoriented children."^[1] Indeed, those playwrights intend to show that the Post-Thatcher generation has failed to "protect children and youth or guide them towards autonomy" ^[2] Thus, themes of isolation, tattered society, pain, poverty, human degradation and grief have become very dominant. It is worth noting that the scope of the 1990s theatre actually crossed Britain's borders.

Playwrights like Mark Ravenhill, Martin McDonagh, Anthony Neilson and Sarah Kane are considered the purveyors of 'in-yer-face' theatre: a literary term that is coined by Aleks Sierz. Accordingly, they have been labeled with different names/ titles, such as the 'Nasty 90's', 'New Brutalists', 'Nihilists', 'New Nihilists', 'New Jacobians', 'theatre of urban ennui', 'degrading sex', 'cool' theatre, extreme violence, and the 'Britpack'. Indeed, all of these names/ titles are intended to pinpoint the unimaginable acts and the cultural taboos of the explicit violence, killing, rapes of male and female, cannibalism, insanity ... etc.^[3] It is worth noting that the dominant kind of drama written in the 1990s was the 'in-yer-face'; however, "the panorama", Aragay *et al* clearly indicate, "was far more heterogeneous- gene rationally, thematically, and in terms of audience address."^[4]

Aleks Sierz and Kritzer vindicate the 1990s generational cohort by stating what the generation has been through. When Thatcher came to power, this generation was almost nine years old and for the next eighteen years the Tories was the only power that ruled the country, i.e., no big change could have been expected. The economic crisis of the 1970s, the job losses, and the decline of the trade unions...etc, all led to the birth of distracted generation. During the late eighties, the dance and the sexual culture dominated. People had to be on their own as many supports (mainly financial) were cut. The gap between the rich and the poor was widened. Also, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Iraq Gulf War, Bosnia, Rwanda all had doubted and altered the assumed false peace certainties that had been promised. Arts and health sectors had been hugely affected by the dramatic changes (ex: AIDS epidemic). ^[5]

It is a truism to suggest that playwrights of the 1990s evoked the tone of the Thatcher era. It must be noted, however, that they did not share an ideology. Rather, they shared what their young generation- the post-Thatcher generation, was suffering from- especially the impatience spirit that had become a distinctive feature of the young generation. The generational dialogue that was created by the in-yer-face playwrights attempt to "debate the meaning of the past, assumptions of the future, and the possibilities for societal change." ^[6] Consequently, explicit violence became one of the common features of the new writing scene that emerged in London during the 1990s.

What is very significant to be noticed about the in-yer-face playwrights is the fact that they can't be examined individually; rather, they should be talked of as playwrights who attempt to express their anger for the unendurable present. They try to deal with political issues from their personal perspectives believing that the power of theatre is more moving and effective than other media like television or cinema.

2- Sarah Kane as an iconic playwright:

Among her cohorts, Kane's very short oeuvre marks her unparalleled. Moreover, no matter how hard she has been rejected by critics and theatre-goers, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill and Edward Bond consider her "an important new dramatic voice."^[7] Kane's star shined in the 1990s where the absence of women playwrights in Britain noticeably focused on by critics. ^[8]

Kane, Stephen Daldry enthusiastically indicates, "put[s] the Royal Court in the news." ^[9] She belongs to a generation of playwrights whose anger and protest have been privatized by the government in the same way the rail and the telephone networks had been. Moreover, her generation is different from 1970s and 1980s playwrights like David Edgar, David Hare in the sense that it has no faith in the old tools or discourse. Thus the 1990s playwrights, including Kane, tend to be more personal in what to introduce on the stage. ^[10]

She is the first playwright of the 1990s young generation who gains her reputation as an outstanding figure. In fact, it took Kane years to be considered as an iconic figure since all her plays were revived at the Royal Court Theatre in 2001 which was described then as Sarah Kane Season.

Kane, as a leading young playwright of the post-Thatcher generation, shares with her young playwrights the shocking scenes of violence and crudely explicit language.^[11] She is considered a representative of the British young voice of the 1990s theatre who apparently attempts to address her young generation's concerns: desires, fears, dreams, and, above all, anger. Kane's depictions of brutality and violence have been the critics' main debates. As a playwright who is full with anger against government policies, Kane "constitute[s] a rejection of Thatcherite policies and an equally strong refusal to return to the pre-Thatcher social agenda of the 1970s".^[12] Mireia Aragay *et al*, in their influential book *British Theatre of the 1990s*, make Kane's *Blasted* the centre of discussing (with directors, playwrights, critics and academics) the new generation emergence of playwrights who have actually changed the style of writing and performing plays. The revolution in the British theatre which was undoubtedly led by Kane has "broaden the parameters of British drama in terms of both form and content." ^[13] Many critics and artists claim that Kane's work altered the landscape of British drama. Moreover, she is one of the playwrights who has, according to Ian Rickson, caused a huge convulsion. Max Stafford-Clark agrees with the statement that Kane can be considered as one of the Royal Court's archetypal figures. ^[14]

At the age of 28, in 1999, Kane put an end to her psychological disorder by hanging herself at a mental institution, ending a tragically playwrighting career. This tragic end actually causes more distracting views in interpreting her plays.

3- *Blasted*^[15]

With the exception to John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956) and Edward Bond's *Saved* (1968?), Kane's *Blasted*, which was performed at the Royal Court Upstairs in 1995, has caused an uproar, and thus, shocked the theatre, audience, critics, and the press that no other play in the history of the British theatre has ever had. It depicts the most devastating, horrible and disgusting scenes that the audience would imagine: rape; murder, eye-gouging and baby-eating. Its first premiere was a big shock and considered a horrifying performance because of which Kane sought a hide.^[16] Paul Taylor, in his hostile review, describes *Blasted* as "a little like having your face rammed into an overflowing ashtray, just for starters, and then having your whole head held down in a bucket of offal". ^[17]

Indeed, *Blasted* bombards the audience with events- especially the rape and murder- that are hardly been acted on the stage. The abolition of Theatre Censorship Act back in 1968 must have had the greatest effect in giving birth to such a play that has no borders in addressing any imaginable taboo. *Blasted*, Buse writes, has been rejected because its atrocities "cannot be digested." [18] British leading playwrights (Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill, Edward Bond, Martin Crimp and many others), effusively, understanding the underlined themes that the play explicitly tackles, defend *Blasted*. Astonishingly, Bond envies Kane and admits that *Blasted* is "the only contemporary play" that he wishes he had written. [19] Whereas Pinter clearly states that the play 'was facing something actual and true and ugly and painful'. [20] The significance of *Blasted* is that it makes the audience fully aware of the playwright's "concept of the postmodern condition as an essentially violent, possibly random, yet possibly causal, and consequently traumatic experience." [21]

Critics react to the play's performance indicating that its playwright has no experience and thus condemn it as a "juvenile attempt to shock the audience". [22] As an answer to the question with regard to the controversy surrounding 'in-her-face' Theatre, the director Stephen Daldry states that Kane's *Blasted* was the major cause of controversy that started back then. [23] It is even hard to reel off what has been stated in the dailies and the *Sundays* and other media in respect to the hysteria that the play causes to the viewers. [24] Kane defends the play's hysterical reactions by stating that:

The representation of violence caused more anger than actual violence. While the corpse of Yugoslavia was rotting on our doorstep, the press chose to get angry not about the corpse, but the cultural event that drew attention to it. That doesn't surprise me. Of course the press wish to deny that what happened in Central Europe has anything to do with us, of course they don't want us to be aware of the extent of the social sickness we're suffering from – the moment they acknowledge it, the ground opens up and swallows them.

The debut scene in *Blasted* is set in an expensive hotel in Leeds. The audience is introduced to a tabloid journalist, Ian, who spends much of the time smoking and drinking. He is accused to be engaged with an unnamed government organization. His presumably 21 years old girlfriend, Cate, behaves in a childish manner, as she repeatedly sucks her thumb; an act which lasts even up to the end of the play. Leeds is supposedly invaded by an indefinable force which is again intended to strip off the identity and thus overgeneralizes the general scope of the play. Indeed, such setting reflects social realism.

Ian is an eyewitness of the atrocities and brutalities that he has been involved in both the personal and public levels. Obviously, Kane attempts in the play to ridicule the role of the media during the Bosnia war. That's why she chooses the central character's career as a journalist who only covers stories that are far away from the real conflict that is actually taking place. Answering the phone he reports that "A serial killer slaughtered British tourist Samantha Scarce in a sick murder ritual comma, police revealed yesterday... ." [25] It is very strange how Cate reacts "How do they know you're here?" referring to Ian's organization. [26] Fear is dominant already.

Obviously Ian throughout the course of the play cannot find peace. Accordingly, he carries out different attempts such as, drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, subjecting his girlfriend to different types of violence so as to secure the obviously unattainable peace. Also, his physical condition is presented as weak due to some internal malady, putting him in constant suffering. The pain seems to get more severe as the play progresses. In Scene Two, Kane illustrates the worsening condition as she states "*He begins to cough, and experiences, intense pain in his chest, each cough*

tearing at his lung."^[27] Thus, drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes seem to soothe him a lot and are used as an escape attempt from reality. It is very noticeable that Ian causes serious pain to others; however, he "embodies most of the suffering that the play actually stages".^[28] Thus in the first half of the play we see "him busy with self-inflicted pain."^[29] Besides, he is under unembellished stress, expecting perilous things to happen at any moment. A knock at the room door instantly shows his real fear "*He takes his holster and goes to the door.*"^[30] Ian's possession of a revolver is an indication of the unease that is going on outside. It is worth mentioning that the stage direction indicates that Ian keeps loading and reloading his gun. It is an act that clearly manifests his unease and psychological suffering. In Scene Two, for instance, the bang outside, due to a car backfire, forces Ian to throw "*himself flat on the floor*" because of which Cate mocks him.^[31] Also, this bang may foreshadow the very serious upcoming events. "The tension of the first half of the play", Kane argues, "this appalling social, psychological and sexual tension, is almost a premonition of the disaster to come."^[32]

When there is a knock at the door, Cate asks Ian "DON'T ANSWER IT DON'T ANSWER IT DON'T ANSWER IT".^[33] Opening the door, Kane clearly plans, will have very serious consequences, particularly on Ian. She intends to reveal that the atrocities, violence and unease inside the room are not much different than those taking place outside, i.e., the universal levels.

Ian's callous disregard for what he is doing or what happens to him is intended to show the real world he lives in. He is considered a perpetrator who only tries to reenact what has happened before. Thus, abusing his girlfriend physically is palpably a duplicated picture of the war crimes that have been taking place as a result of the war. Ian verbally and physically attacks Cate; sometimes the attack is stated, others acted. He, accordingly, represents, at an allegorical level, "a dysfunctional, misogynistic, racist culture, violent and irresponsible, continuing to savage the world even while rotting away from within."^[34] Ian's brutal treatment of Cate- subjecting his girlfriend to humiliating actions- is very intense, and almost unbelievable to imagine how such event could have been staged. The stage direction indicates that Ian "*strokes her face until she calms down.*"^[35] Accordingly, Cate announces "You were horrible to me" and later "You are horrible"^[36] as she feels that she is truly hurt.

Male/female pair is a major theme in *Blasted*. However, Kane's female protagonist tries to achieve something and forces the stream of events to be with her side no matter how expensive the price is. Kane connects rape, the rape of a young woman in a hotel room, to a scene of civil war. The innocence of Cate contrasts with the violence and madness of her lover Ian. Thus, Cate- who has been brutally victimized- tries to create a sort of hope. Indeed, she is presented as a victim even before that play begins, stating "We always used to go to [Ian's place]." ^[37] One of the tests according to which the audience notices that Cate is threatened is that she, when under stress, stutters "I t-t-t-t-t-t- told. I really like you but I c-c-c-c- can't do this."^[38] Thus whenever Cate feels that her safety is being violated by Ian's aggressive actions, she stutters accordingly. Also, she is not ready to marry Ian by simply replying to his inquiry "I couldn't"^[39] and later states that she "couldn't leave mum."^[40] She, moreover, confesses that "[She is] not [his] girlfriend anymore."^[41] These excuses, based on how Kane presents Cate in the whole play, could be accepted.

The sudden- blasted- appearance of unnamed soldier on the stage adds much to the suspense and the insecurity of the occupants of the room. His appearance, we can argue, violates the already unsaved, worried, and shaky environment. He is the

second perpetrator whose main rule is to victimize the first one, Ian. Thus he violates the disturbed nature of the room. The Soldier in *Blasted*, once arrived, drags the play into illogical consequences that the audience cannot easily interpret.^[42] Kane doesn't clarify the reason(s) because of which the Soldier appears: he narrates the crimes that are taking place outside whether (his crimes and/ or Ian's). Moreover, Ian's fragmented and inadequate confessions are meant to foreshadow or prepare the audience for the arrival of the second perpetrator. Thus he threatens Ian with a gun and takes his victim's gun. Moreover, the intruder himself goes through terrifying moments as an explosion blasts a hole in one of the room's walls.

The huge explosion in Scene Three- which causes "a large hole in one of the walls, and everything is covered in dust..." marks a very significant transformation.^[43] It is meant to take the audience, metaphorically speaking, somewhere exceeding the borders of the Serbian or Leeds borders. Thus English society is not isolated from what is happening in Bosnia. Theatre usually tackles issues that are related to public and private life. Kane assures the deliberate and calculated connections between England and Bosnia as she points out "Just because there hasn't been a civil war in England for a very long time doesn't mean that what is happening in Bosnia doesn't affect us." ^[44] Indeed, the explosion shocks and shakes the audience so that to be prepared for the kind of violence that is never expected to take place on the stage. Moreover, this is to give the audience the chance to judge how things are different before and after the explosion as the hotel room turns into a war zone.

Kane astonishingly presents the Soldier as a perpetrator who has been involved in violent actions. By informing Ian about his town, the Soldier does not designate the nationality of the invading troops. However, he is not suggesting that they could be English. "[T]he overdosed danger that theatre show", Kane writes, "is the same what it exists in life."^[45] The bomb that hits the hotel from the one hand and soldier's intrusion from the other are intended to shift the play's domestic level into an international hue. Besides, the genocidal events narrated by the Soldier are reenacted in the hotel room by both the oppressor and the oppressed. Thus Ian and the Soldier have much in common as far as violence and atrocity are concerned: "Ian spews racial and sexual slurs, and the soldier embodies irrational violence." ^[46] The Soldier's action and dialogue with Ian show the audience that the former has committed atrocities that are more violent, terrible and horrible than the latter. Thus the Soldier talks about the violence that his girlfriend has been through. Accordingly, he attempts to re-enact that violent scenes on Ian. In fact, the violence occurs outside the hotel by the soldiers have become visible through Ian's rape scene. By violating Ian's body, the Soldier re-enacts what his girlfriend has been thorough. In other words, the atrocities outside the hotel have been brought and duplicated inside. Thus the sexual relationship that takes place inside the hotel room expands into the outside world of atrocity.

It is obvious that the Soldier's detainee, Ian, has been accused of some atrocities which we cannot take for granted. As a result, he rapes him and savagely sucks out his eyes and eats them. Such punishment suggests that war crimes which have been/are committed need to be thoroughly shed light on.

The Soldier's rape act shifts the scene from its domestic domain to a universal one; the same that takes place outside the hotel room. Urban writes: "Ian's violated body becomes the means by which the atrocities occurring outside become visible".^[47] Indeed, the audience might feel uncertain of the feelings towards what Ian is being through, i.e., whether or not to pity him. Commenting on the

victimization and violence in the contemporary British theatre, Aleks Sierz states that "provocative drama became more complex, less ideological... theatre offered grey areas and ambiguous situations".^[48] As an answer to the relation between the rape in the play and the rape as a war weapon in Bosnia, Kane clarifies "Quite a lot".^[49] She adds that "The logical conclusion of the attitude that produces an isolated rape in England is the rape camps of Bosnia. And the logical conclusion to the way society expects men to behave is war."^[50] Thus what the Soldier is doing can be only considered a reenact of the brutality that took place in the supposed or hinted civil war that play is suggesting. The encounter between the Soldier and the journalist is meant to tell stories and introduce eyewitnesses who, to an extent, represent two sides of the same coin. The soldier's crimes are not different from the journalist's. One might, logically unacceptable, assume what Ian is being through is obviously paying an equal price for his crimes. Kane clearly expresses that her intention "was to be absolutely truthful about abuse and violence. All of the violence in the play has been carefully plotted and dramatically structured to say what I want about war."^[51] In clarifying how the common rape in Leeds reflects the mass rape as a war weapon in Bosnia, Kane indicates that "The unity of place suggests a paper-thin wall between the safety and civilization of peacetime Britain and the chaotic of civil war."^[52] The Soldier's girlfriend, through his narration, is another causality who has been brutally killed in the same way the Soldier rapes and kills the family members. Ian's rape by the Soldier pictures the latter's rape of the twelve-year-old girl. After completing his role of manifesting the most shocking scenes of violence and atrocities, the Soldier shoots himself to add to the sense of the unanswerable brutal tragedy.

Feeling highly endangered, Cate hides in the bathroom and then flees through the window. This has blessed her with not only freeing herself from the Soldier, who unquestionably does not mind to do what he has done to his victim, but also exploring and performing her violated liberty. This idea can be supported by what Cate has returned with, an injured baby who also died. *Blasted* does not end with the baby's death. Cate buries the baby in the same room and leaves Ian in a quest for food. Burying the dead baby is an indication of Cate's humanistic values regardless of what she been through. Besides, she is the only character in the play who is willing to "mourn the past rather than simply digs it up."^[53] Now alone, Ian pursues a final solution to his pain. He devours the baby's corpse and then climbs into the grave.

As a woman playwright Kane does not believe that her gender would affect her responsibility in delivering the truth. She points out that her "only responsibility as a writer is to the truth, however unpleasant that truth maybe."^[54] Now blind, raped and intensely hopeless, Ian begs Cate to give him the Soldier's gun to take his life out. Cate, however, informs Ian, "It's wrong to kill yourself" because "God wouldn't like it."^[55] The Soldiers' brutality by torturing Ian physically and spiritually can only be completed by Ian's attempt to commit suicide. Ian is devoid of option, that's why he decides to commit suicide since his life will not bring him any good. He is so desperate as he has lost everything. It is hard to explain how Kane depicts war in *Blasted*. Indeed, the unexpected element is what "drags the characters and the play into a chaotic pit without logical explanation."^[56] It is worth quoting in this context that "Kane's plays give us tools for surviving in a world without order."^[57]

The non-stop violence in the play from the beginning to the end highlights the fact that the audience "ceases to care, or conversely is traumatized by the onslaught of graphic violence and portrayals of human degradation."^[58] The scenes of violence and atrocities in the play are not meant that the audience should sympathetically react to them. Instead, the audience must have their own place as Kane "purposely gives us

no viable position, drawing us into an experience of abjection.”^[59] The savage acts in *Blasted* are Kane’s message to the audience about the brutalities of war.

Conclusion

Themes that the 1990s theatre tackled are very devastating: comfort (mainstream) theatre obviously could not accommodate such themes, and, as a result, the audience could not easily comprehend the underlying messages. Indeed, violence, atrocities and brutalities in *Blasted* are well manifested by the two perpetrators, Ian and the Soldier respectively. The audience goes through the uneasy feelings as these horrible actions both narrated and reenacted repeatedly. All three characters are subjected to, at different levels, physical; and spiritual violence and atrocities. Kane by presenting the violence inside the hotel room intends to overgeneralize- as result of the war- the violence everybody is facing outside the local space: a universal perspective as violence could be everywhere. Ian as a victim is a painful real picture of all victims outside the hotel. Thus, the shocking sexual violence of rape (male & female), physical abuse, eye-gouging, and cannibalism are meant to examine a dysfunctional world which the British, Bosnian ...etc have experienced. Accordingly, the play intends, whether directly or indirectly, to interrogate Europe's social relationships. Kane’s crucial message is that the injustice and anomalies lie in the centre of her society.

In Performing violence, brutalities and atrocities before the audience, Kane strives hard to explicitly reflect the distributed world that her generation was witnessing. Indeed, Kane has been very successful in delivering her messages concerning the destruction of the war because of which humanity is eradicated. All the negative feedbacks that the play received are the ultimate sings of Kane’s success in crossing the boundaries and forcing the audience, and beyond, to pay attention to their relatives. There are absolutely no other media than theatre that could depict such realities. Accordingly, *Blasted* can be considered one of the very exceptional and most dazzling plays in the history of the contemporary British theatre that force the audience, critics, playwrights, directors to examine it with amazement and respect.

Notes:

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 - 2 Kritzer, Amelia Howe. Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain New Writing: 1995–2005. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. P 220
 - 3 See Kritzer, Amelia Howe. Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain New Writing: 1995–2005. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Pp27-66 and Aragay, Mireia et al. British Theatre of the 1990s. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. P ix
 - 4 Aragay, Mireia et al. British Theatre of the 1990s. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. P x
 - 5 See Kritzer, Amelia Howe. Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain New Writing: 1995–2005. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Pp29-30
 - 6 Ibid P29
 - 7 Buse, Peter. Drama+ Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama. UK: Manchester University Press, 2001. P 172
 - 8 See Aragay, Mireia et al. British Theatre of the 1990s. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. P xi

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- 9IbidP10
 10IbidPp 18-19
 11Kritzer, Amelia Howe. Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain New Writing: 1995–2005. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. P27
 12See Kritzer, Amelia Howe. Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain New Writing: 1995–2005. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.P30
 13Ibid Pix
 14Aragay, Mireia et al. British Theatre of the 1990s. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. P 33
 15Kane began writing *Blasted* during her year on the MA in playwriting at Birmingham University and the play's first two scenes were given a workshop presentation at the end of the course. There are two 1993 drafts of the play: one draft was used for the rehearsals and the workshop performance, while the other one contains a number of corrections in Kane's handwriting. While there are differences between the two, in both versions, the soldier is named Vladek and he refers to Leeds as a 'Serbian town'. See Urban, Ken. 'The Body's Cruel Joke', in *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Drama*, eds. Nadine Holdsworth and Mary Luckhurst. US: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2008. P168.
 16 The Royal Court Theatre Upstairs seats only 25 people which indicate the fact the audience is not far from the stage. Buse, Peter. *Drama+ Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama*. UK: Manchester University Press, 2001. P173.
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 22Kritzer, Amelia Howe. Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain New Writing: 1995–2005. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. P27.
 23Aragay, Mireia et al. *British Theatre of the 1990s*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. P 9.
 24Buse, Peter. *Drama+ Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama*. UK: Manchester University Press, 2001. P187.
 25Kane, Sarah. *Complete Plays*. London. Methuen Publishing Ltd. 2001,P 12. This quotation and all the subsequent ones are taken from the same reference.
 26IbidP12
 27Ibid P23
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- 42It is worth mentioning that the intruder(s) in Pinter's early plays break(s) a safe environment, and thus change that environment upside down. Whereas in Kane's *Blasted* the Soldier arrives to environment that is already broken.
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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There are no conflicts of interest

Abstract

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