

T.C.
ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Ph.D. THESIS

**THE THEATRICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF
TRAUMATIZED PSYCHE: BESIDE HERSELF,
THE SKRIKER AND CRAVE**

Muhammed Metin ÇAMELİ
2520160109

SUPERVISOR
Assistant Professor Arpine MIZIKYAN

ISTANBUL – 2022

ABSTRACT

THE THEATRICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF TRAUMATIZED PSYCHE: BESIDE HERSELF, THE SKRIKER AND CRAVE MUHAMMED METİN ÇAMELİ

This study aims to explore various theatrical strategies employed for the representation of the psychic trauma in three selected plays written after the 1990s: Sarah Daniel's **Beside Herself**, Caryl Churchill's **The Skriker** and Sarah Kane's **Crave**. These three playwrights, who are among the most distinguished playwrights of the contemporary British theatre, view theatre as an appropriate space where trauma can be articulated. In their articulation of trauma through theatre, they cling to the idea that different theatrical devices they utilize serve the purpose of consolidating the ineffectiveness of verbal language to transmit trauma onto stage. The disruption in the cognitive mechanisms of trauma victims in these plays is presented by means of this alternative dimension of regarding theatre as a tool of exposing what remains unseen and of speaking what remains unspeakable. This study will then attempt to prove that the problem of the inadequacy of language in the expression of a traumatic experience can be solved with the help of these playwrights' integration of innovative theatrical methods, particularly into the three selected plays. Under the guidance of trauma theories postulated by Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, and Cathy Caruth, this study will also attempt to show that these theories contribute to the exploration of the traumatic experiences of the characters in the plays under discussion to a great extent. By zeroing in on the particularities of the notion of trauma, each one of these theorists enables readers to reconsider other means of surmounting the unspeakability of trauma that is deemed as a hindrance to its expression through literature.

Keywords: Psychic Trauma, Traumatic Memory, Trauma and Theatre, Freud and Trauma, Language and Trauma

ÖZ

BESIDE HERSELF, THE SKRIKER VE CRAVE ADLI ESERLER ÜZERİNDEN RUHSAL TRAVMANIN TEATRAL TEMSİLLERİ MUHAMMED METİN ÇAMELİ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, 1990larda yazılan Sarah Daniels' ın *Beside Herself*, Caryl Churchill' in *The Skriker* ve Sarah Kane' in *Crave* adlı oyunlarında ruhsal travmanın çeşitli teatral stratejiler aracılığıyla temsil edilişlerini incelemektir. Bu üç oyun yazarı, Çağdaş İngiliz Tiyatrosunun önde gelen isimleridir ve tiyatroyu, travmanın dillendirilmesi açısından önem taşıyan, uygun bir alan olarak görmektedirler. Tiyatro vasıtasıyla travma unsurunu ele alırken, kullandıkları farklı teatral yöntemlerin, sözlü ifadenin travmayı sahneye taşımaktaki yetersizliğini telafi ettiği fikrine bağlı kalmaktadırlar. Bu oyunlardaki travma mağdurlarının bilişsel düzeneklerindeki bozulma, tiyatroyu görülmeyeni ve konuşulmayanı dışa vuran alternatif boyutta bir araç olarak algılama fikri yardımıyla yansıtılmaktadır. Travmatik bir deneyimin ifade edilişinde dilin yetersizliği sorunu, çağdaş oyun yazarlarının yenilikçi teatral yöntemleri, özellikle bu çalışma için seçilen üç oyun üzerinden görülebileceği gibi, eserlerine dahil etmesiyle çözüme kavuşabilir bir hal almaktadır. Bu tezin bir diğer amacı, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, ve Cathy Caruth tarafından öne sürülen travma teorilerinin, seçilen üç oyunda yer alan karakterlerin travmatik deneyimlerini irdelerken, sağladığı büyük ölçüde katkıyı yansıtmaktır. Bu teoristlerin her biri, travma kavramının ayırdedici özelliklerine odaklanarak, okuyuculara, travmanın edebiyat yoluyla aktarımında açığa çıkan sorunlara ilişkin farklı çözüm yöntemleri üretme imkanı sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ruhsal Travma, Travmatik Hafıza, Travma ve Tiyatro, Freud ve Travma, Dil ve Travma

PREFACE

This thesis is the product of hard work and painstaking research of long years; therefore, I feel obliged to note that I am immensely indebted to certain people whose contribution to the research and writing process was of paramount importance to the completion of the study. First of all, of course, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor Assistant Professor Arpine Mızıkyan for her invaluable academic help, constant encouragement, moral support and discipline. It would have been improbable to finalize this study without her guidance. I feel blessed for seizing the chance of working with such an excellent academician. I would also like to express my gratitude to my committee members Assistant Professor Özlem Karadağ and Associate Professor Gamze Sabancı Uzun whose insightfulness, academic knowledge and intellectual guidance throughout this process played a crucial role in the completion of this thesis. Last but not least, I would like to thank my dear parents Gülser Çameli and Ahmet Çameli for their sincere emotional support and understanding. I would never have been able to finish this study without their compassion.

MUHAMMED METİN ÇAMELİ

İSTANBUL, 2022

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ÖZ.....	iii
PREFACE.....	iv
CONTENTS.....	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1

CHAPTER I

“I WAS NEVER ON MY OWN”: SARAH DANIELS’ BESIDE HERSELF	35
---	----

CHAPTER II

“MY DAD DID THINGS TO ME. I NEVER TOLD YOU THAT. MY MUM SHUT ME IN THE CUPBOARD”: CARYL CHURCHILL’S THE SKRIKER	65
---	----

CHAPTER III

“LISTEN. I AM HERE TO REMEMBER. I NEED TO... REMEMBER. I HAVE THIS GRIEF AND I DON’T KNOW WHY”: SARAH KANE’S CRAVE	93
CONCLUSION.....	117
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	129
CV.....	144

INTRODUCTION

As a recognized literary trauma theorist of the 1990s and academic Cathy Caruth, who chiefly concentrates on the languages of trauma and testimony, writes in her influential work **Trauma: Explorations in Memory** that “the attempt to gain access to a traumatic history [...] can only be perceived in inassimilable forms”¹. For Caruth, trauma is such an intense blow to one’s psyche that a traumatized mind cannot process it easily and articulate it normally. Yet, by locating limitations of language in relation to trauma in the landscape of her studies, Caruth interrogates whether verbalizing the unspeakable and working through trauma would be achieved through literary mediums. Therefore, what Caruth essentially emphasizes with a reference to inassimilable forms is that different means to represent trauma must be found since the assimilation of discursive language into a literary narrative does not have the full potential to shed light on the elusive nature of trauma. In other words, turning her head away from literal language, the theorist draws attention to the necessity of employing figural language that could make the silence of traumatized individuals audible through fiction. As an author and professor of English literature Christa Schönfelder in **Wounds and Words: Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction** addresses this Caruthian perception of representing trauma noting that

“According to Caruth, trauma demands a mode of representation that textually performs trauma and its incomprehensibility through, for example, gaps and silences, the repeated breakdown of language and the collapse of understanding.”²

Caruth’s assertion then implies that the only way to compensate for the failure of linguistic representation of trauma is to have recourse to alternative means of transmitting trauma with the help of testimonial power of literature.

In Sarah Daniels' **Beside Herself** (1990), Caryl Churchill's **The Skriker** (1994) and Sarah Kane's **Crave** (1998) as selected plays for the study of this dissertation, unfathomable nature of repressed trauma of victims of sexual abuse in childhood is worked through by means of varying theatrical devices. They evoke inassimilable forms in the above-mentioned Caruth's account. In these plays, traumatic memories of characters return to haunt them in the shape of ghostly presences or as repetitive flashbacks which cannot be integrated into the symbolic world with the use of verbal language. This mainly originates from the fact that the language that we use turns out to be rather inadequate for the expression of trauma and memory of a traumatic event in our past is reenacted in the present with the incapacity of articulating it fully. What we see in these plays is a counterpart representation of psychic trauma through numerous instruments ranging from the device of doubling one's identity to the employment of incomprehensible, non-linear language. Such literary devices can be considered as viable mechanisms for conveying the unnarratable. That is to say, even though trauma transcends language, theatre as an apt medium of transmitting the pain of victims of trauma serves the purpose of depicting the unnarratable to a certain extent. Based on the validity of the assumption that discursive language we use in the symbolic world cannot do justice to the gravity of soul-destroying experiences, this dissertation, thus, aims to explore the ways in which Daniels, Churchill and Kane view theatre as one important forum for conveying the deferred impacts of childhood sexual abuse traumas of the protagonists onto stage by utilizing varying theatrical strategies. What is identified as unrepresentable through words of the verbal language becomes representable by means of their further attempts at exploration and expression of psychic trauma.

¹ Cathy Caruth, **Trauma: Explorations in Memory**, Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 156.

² Christa Schönfelder, **Wounds and Words: Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction**, Bielefeld, transcript Verlag, 2013, p. 30.

It is also important to note that the belief in a traumatic experience's exceeding people's capacity for verbal accentuation is known to have become much stronger in the twentieth century. The traumatic history of this century and its relatedness to rising popularity of trauma studies bring to mind essential questions as follows:

What is at stake when we consider, as we seem to do ever more frequently, the whole history of the twentieth century under the sign of trauma, with the Holocaust increasingly functioning as the ultimate cipher of traumatic unspeakability or unrepresentability? And what if this assessment is then extended- under the guise of various forms of apocalyptic and anarchic thinking- to the whole history of enlightenment modernity: modernity as the trauma that victimizes the world, that we cannot leave behind, that causes all of our symptoms?³

A walk through the twentieth century accompanied by the above-stated critical questions raised in writer and professor of Comparative Literature Andreas Huyssen's work **Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory** entails reflecting upon the inherent ties between the modern period and trauma. Associating the historiography of the twentieth century with the indicatives of trauma stems from the fact that it was a century of distress all across the world. Indeed, this tumultuous period of time was contaminated by repercussions of successive wars that dominated the general atmosphere. All the iconic trauma events such as the Two World Wars, the Holocaust, the Cold War and the Vietnam War took place during this age and their after-effects disrupted the cognitive mechanisms of trauma victims, witnesses and listeners. This also corroborated the assumption that expression of the suffering originating from the brutalizing events of the modern age is not representable through words.

³ Andreas Huyssen, **Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2003, p. 9.

The condition of physically and mentally wounded individuals bearing witness to the atrocities of the period, especially to those of the Second World War brought to the fore a shift towards defining trauma more like a psychic wound. Besides, understanding the significance of the Second World War does help to make sense of contemporary debates circulating around the term as Peter Leese and Jason Crouthamel in **Traumatic Memories of the Second World War and After** point out that “The Second World War and its aftermath constitute a formative moment in the social, cultural and political history of trauma. A focussed examination makes it possible to investigate anew given concepts, diagnoses and moral assumptions.”⁴ What turns World War II into a crucial and traumatic event for the humankind lies behind the reality that it led to a sharp increase in the number of people incapacitated by war neurosis and of people killed dependent upon their ethnic identities. In the aftermath of World War I which had already caused a nationwide suffering, it resulted in the re-emergence of gruesome standards of living for people from all walks of life thereby arousing a renewed curiosity in the field of trauma studies as well. Likewise, the literary productions of this period in question has assuredly had the traces of post-war situation in England. Based on the premise that a literary genre like a novel or a play is better understood with a closer look at the characteristics of the period in which it has been composed, any piece of literary work produced in the aftermath of the Second World War should be examined thoroughly in a direct correlation with this big event as Paul Crosthwaite in his book **Trauma, Postmodernism and the Aftermath of World War II** contends:

The sheer extent to which a concern with the Second World War has permeated literary fiction, and particularly the work of many of the post-war era’s most talented and celebrated writers, must, however, have contributed to the potency that the war still possesses within contemporary cultural memory.⁵

⁴ Peter Leese, Jason Crouthamel, **Traumatic Memories of the Second World War and After**, Denmark and USA, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p. 7.

⁵ Paul Crosthwaite, **Trauma, Postmodernism and the Aftermath of World War II**, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p. 175.

Another significant event of the twentieth century leaving indelible marks on the minds of its victims, witnesses and listeners is the Holocaust which has been the object of attention for trauma studies since its outbreak. Suited to be titled as an inhumane act resulting in the million deaths in the twentieth century, as American literature and memory studies scholar Michael Rothberg in **Multidirectional Memory** stresses, “The Holocaust has since played a pivotal role in the discussion of trauma as a universal trope for traumatic history or even as a universal cipher of suffering.”⁶ Just after the mass murder on an enormous scale of the two World Wars, the Holocaust was an unendurable traumatic event for the humanity. Brutal victimization of the Jews and Romans, the homosexuals, the intellectuals, the disabled and people from varying ethnic groups left a nationwide sorrow behind as clinical psychologist and author Natan Peter Felix Kellermann in his book **Holocaust Trauma: Psychological Effects and Treatment** describes the ineffable memories of the event as follows:

Imagining the horrors of the Holocaust cannot leave us indifferent. The images haunt us day and night and make our blood run cold and our hearts race with fear. If we really put ourselves in the place of the victims, it is a terrifying experience. Behind every single destiny, there is a chamber of cold horror. It does not leave us any rest. The images of death and torture will be a constant companion.⁷

As underlined by Kellermann, even empathetic thinking would suffice to feel the heinous nature of this milestone event of the modern age.

The aforementioned cognitive disruption of the vast majority of individuals lamenting for the destructive effects of the World Wars and Holocaust was intensified as this century also bore witness to the Cold War and the Vietnam War.

⁶ Michael Rothberg, **Multidirectional Memory**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2009, p. 151.

⁷ Natan P. F. Kellermann, **Holocaust Trauma: Psychological Effects and Treatment**, New York, iUniverse, 2009, p. 3.

The most remarkable of these two was the Vietnam War whose origin is clearly explained by George C. Herring in the article **The Cold War and Vietnam** as follows:

The conflict in Vietnam stemmed from the interaction of two major phenomena of the post- World War II era, decolonization- the dissolution of colonial empires- and the cold war. The rise of nationalism in the colonial areas and the weakness of the European powers after the Second World War combined to destroy a colonial system that had been an established feature of world politics for centuries. A change of this magnitude did not occur smoothly, and in Vietnam it led to war.⁸

What began as a resistance against French colonialism proved to be an international chaos of grand implications and caused a prolonged traumatization particularly on the part of veterans and soldiers. Author and psychotherapist Shoshana Ringel in **Trauma: Contemporary Directions in Theory, Practice and Research** identifies the characteristics of victims of war trauma as follows:

During the Vietnam War, soldiers and veterans returned with incapacitating symptoms that often developed into chronic problems affecting their capacity to cope with, and function in, civilian life. Many of them started to abuse drugs and alcohol, behaved violently toward their parents, or became homeless and unemployable.⁹

Observing the reactions and common symptoms of them by psychiatrists accelerated the pace of studies directed towards traumatized patients in that the soldiers and veterans back from the war needed treatment.

⁸ George C. Herring, "The Cold War and Vietnam", **OAH Magazine of History**, Vol. 18, No: 5, 2004, pp. 18-21.

⁹ Shoshana Ringel, Jerrold R. Brandell, **Trauma: Contemporary Directions in Theory, Practice and Research**, USA, Sage Publications, 2012, p. 4.

It should be stressed that the events that form the common framework of the twentieth century as an age of historical trauma were not limited to the Two World Wars, the Holocaust and the Vietnam War. This century also testified to other influential events such as the Indo-Pakistan War, the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989, and the Bosnian War. What is peculiar about the Bosnian War is that it led to hot debates and the emergence of new conceptions about the issue of sexual violence with the occurrence of mass rape as author and professor Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż in her chapter “The Exploitation of Trauma: (Mis-) Representations of Rape Victims in the War Film” in **Languages of Trauma: History, Memory and Media** emphasizes that

The Bosnian War was crucial in changing the manner of thinking about rape in wartime. What this war brought to attention was the patterns of sexual victimization beyond the hitherto assumed typical contexts of rape (“individual and gang rapes in conjunction with looting and intimidation of the target ethnic groups”), such as “rape in detention facilities or camps, involving women being picked out by soldiers, camp guards, paramilitaries and civilians for both individual and gang rapes, beatings and killings.”¹⁰

As it can be understood, the violence perpetrated upon women in the form of rape and sexual assaults, the sharp increase in the occurrence of dreadful events and massacres have been the major driving forces of the twentieth century during which “concepts like rape trauma syndrome (first described in 1974), battered women syndrome and abused child syndrome paved the way for a gradual shift in thinking”¹¹ too. Additionally, the new socio-political awareness of the 1960s and 1970s accelerated the process of feminist movements thereby addressing issues of sexual abuse, gender inequality and violence with a lot more emphasis.

¹⁰ Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż, “The Exploitation of Trauma: (Mis-) Representations of Rape Victims in the War Film,” **Languages of Trauma: History, Memory and Media**, ed. by Peter Leese, Julia Barbara Köhne and Jason Crouthamel, Toronto, Buffalo and London, University of Toronto Press, 2021, p. 276.

¹¹ Christa Schönfelder, **op.cit.**, p. 44.

The referred gradual shift in thinking also became manifest via the characteristics of post-war Britain drama. Considering the British cultural movements after the 1950s like The Angry Young Men Movement or Absurd Drama, it could be maintained that theatre struck audiences/readers as a privileged site not only for describing the drastic socio-cultural changes but also for studying the effects of such changes upon psychological conditions of individuals. In other words, having brought a new seriousness of content and having made the theatre a shared space for the expression of personal and public traumas, the post-war dramatists were concerned about the depiction of the stagnancy of human life in a war-stricken world. They contemplated upon the meaning of being a human in the aftermath of traumatic events of the modern age which brought an overwhelming sense of isolation in the minds of citizens. The helplessness of the estranged modern man and the hopelessness about the future have been successfully projected within the plays by John Osborne, Harold Pinter, Samuel Beckett and others. To illustrate, it was Osborne's **Look Back in Anger** (1956) that heralded a new epoch in British theatre. By alluding to the political problems of his time through the central character Jimmy's remarks, Osborne puts before our very eyes a society based upon class distinction and hypocrisy with its inevitable destructive impacts upon post-war generation. Jimmy's indignation at English class system, conventional societal structure and family of his wife point to the play's affiliation to staging trauma as Michelene Wandor in **Look Back in Gender: Sexuality and the Family in Post-War British Drama** briefly argues, "The trauma and personal worry about the family, male sexuality and heroism are so evident in *Look Back in Anger*."¹²

Samuel Beckett as a post-war European playwright is also frequently associated with studying the psychological and historical trauma of the twentieth century.

¹² Michelene Wandor, **Look Back in Gender: Sexuality and the Family in Post-War British Drama**, London and New York, Routledge Revivals, 2015, p. 17.

In accordance with The Theatre of the Absurd, Beckett's works bring a new dimension to our conception of trauma with the playwrights' integration of the linguistic failures and silences on stage and of the void that comes to the fore. For instance, in **Waiting for Godot** (trans. 1954), Beckett creates a gloomy social landscape imbued with absurdity and existential crisis of man. Elizabeth Butler Breese in her chapter "Claiming Trauma through Social Performance: The Case of Waiting for Godot" in **Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering** maintains that

Days and weeks go by, but the mood of collective trauma lingers. When performed in these situations, *Waiting for Godot* expresses waiting, uncertainty, anguish, and the fear that people experiencing collective trauma feel acutely in their daily lives. Like Vladimir and Estragon, individuals and collectives experiencing collective trauma do not know when their situation will end.¹³

What is important to note is that the referred two characters entangled in the existential void - Vladimir and Estragon as traumatized individuals – talk back to traumatic experiences through bodily articulations rather than using the logical pattern of language. Their numbness, postures and tendency to commit suicide are suggestive of the fact that trauma finds expression not through their words but body movements and actions. The way they react to trauma by using their bodies as a voice also backs up the argument that trauma is unspeakable with its reflection on post-war British stage. Looked from this perspective, Beckett's play can be said to have proven the extent to which the convergence of non-verbal components and declaration of the body as a form of representing trauma are serviceable in replacing solely linguistic articulation of traumatized minds by means of words.

¹³ Elizabeth Butler Breese, "Claiming Trauma through Social Performance: The Case of Waiting for Godot," **Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering**, ed. by Ron Eyerman, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Elizabeth Butler Breese, London, Paradigm Publishers, 2011, p. 219-20.

It is of utmost significance to underline that Absurdism's dramatic technicalities like its negation of coherent dialogues while illuminating the despair of humanity endeavoring aimlessly to find meaning in their existence can be traced back to The Theatre of Cruelty of the 1930s. Introduced by French poet, actor and theorist Antonin Artaud, this movement is known to have been a design for experimental theatre which emphasized the fact that the theatre must incorporate elements that are superior to words in order to shake audience and let them give free rein to their unconscious repressions. For Artaud, this meant being able to use theatre as a forum where language uses its power and the characters react to problems lying at the heart of their traumas through their engagement in other varying methods. Author Jeromy Hopgood summarizes its characteristics as follows:

This style was intended to disrupt the audience/artist relationship and create an entirely new theatrical language based on movement and gesture. Theatre of Cruelty posits that language is insufficient to communicate the trauma and cruelty of the world, therefore words should be stripped of meaning and chosen based on their phonic abilities. The shriek, scream, grunt and cry hold more meaning than naturalistic dialogue in this style.¹⁴

Hopgood's stress upon the insufficiency of the language in the articulation of trauma in relation to this theatre movement's tendency to have recourse to other dramatic strategies can also be said to have been a primary source of inspiration for women playwrights, especially occupying British stage as of the period between 1970s and 80s. Women playwrights in the 1970s paved the way for the emergence of encounters with their own selves on the part of women audience/readers. They did not hesitate to symbolize female experiences on stage by calling into question the veracity of patriarchal doctrines.

¹⁴ Jeromy Hopgood, **The Projection Designer's Toolkit**, New York, Routledge, 2022, p. 196.

The theatre of women playwrights also utilized from Epic Theatre that gained popularity in the early twentieth century. Originated by Erwin Piscator as a term, this theatrical style is studied with direct references to German poet and playwright Bertolt Brecht who aimed to form a new dramatic style like Artaud did. Concentrating upon gestural/physical acting style more than realistic performative techniques, Brecht had no intention of creating a sense of catharsis that would relax the audience. Peta Tait in **Forms of Emotion: Human to Nonhuman in Drama, Theatre and Contemporary Performance** discusses the central motifs of Brechtian theatre pointing out that

Brecht's theatre can be aligned with affect theory encompassing the bodily sensations of thought even as it contradicts the belief that emotional feeling develops as an innate, intrinsic individual experience. Epic theatre utilizes physicalized performance to show how emotional feelings are shaped by material circumstances. The subsequent recognition of culturally constructed ideas of emotions and emotional feeling in the twentieth century can be aligned with mid-twentieth-century epic theatre and its acted emotions that are described, externalized, signalled and cognitively comprehended.¹⁵

The emphasis upon the physicalized performance for epic theatre renders it possible to maintain that Brecht experimented with displaying a void in signification that needs to be filled by the audience's bodily reactions. What Brecht attempted to do was showing the way to the audience in order for them to be more mentally engaged in what they watched rather than getting stuck in emotional manipulation. In Brechtian terms, this is identified as distancing effect. It should be added that Howard Barker's Theatre of Catastrophe and even the Theatre of Panic associated with the Spanish dramatist Fernando Arrabal contributed to writing styles of contemporary playwrights who turned to disruptive strategies for a better critical observation on the part of spectators.

¹⁵ Peta Tait, **Forms of Emotion: Human to Nonhuman in Drama, Theatre and Contemporary Performance**, New York, Routledge, 2022, p. 117.

Among the female playwrights of the 1970s who is assumed to have been profoundly inspired by critical thinkers like Brecht or Beckett while writing plays in line with the New Feminist Theatre, Caryl Churchill can be ranked as one of the most adept at grappling with issues ranging from societal problems to repression of women. Churchill's bold representational style enabled her theatre to acquire a peculiar dimension by means of which women spectators/readers managed to construct a new social identity. To be more specific, it could be noted that theatre turned into a forum where women's repressed silence about the maltreatment meted out to them in the grips of patriarchy started to be heard. For this reason, it would also be proper to assert that her theatre has always been subversive in terms of its posing challenges to male dominance and social roles ordained for women. Her endeavour to investigate women's position in society also made her think about the representability of traumatic experiences onto stage and resort to the application of multifarious techniques. Her growing fascination with exposing trauma through theatre coincides with the 1990s during which the drive to represent trauma on stage reached its peak. One of the most baffling, mind-blowing productions of Churchill during the 1990s is **The Skriker** (1994) in which the phantasmagoric apparition's transgressive and poetic language serves as a theatrical tool of delving into the depths of the traumatized psyche. As will be explored as an integral part of this dissertation, the play provides enough scope for theatrical representation of trauma with its disruptive nature.

The theatre of women playwrights turned into a mixture of numerous dramatic modes with its incorporating post-war period social concerns and the damage done to the world from the 1970s onwards. In the late 1980s and 90s, a group of other female playwrights like Sarah Daniels and Sarah Kane earned reputation as well.

With her diligence to raise consciousness about increasing problems of domestic violence and sexual abuse in the last phases of the twentieth century, as Elaine Aston in **Feminist Views on the English Stage: Women Playwrights, 1990-2000** puts it “Like Churchill, Daniels is a well-established figure on the contemporary English stage, is one of the feminist canonicals.”¹⁶ Among the plays that she wrote during her career, the play **Beside Herself** (1990) is indubitably remarkable with respect to its studying trauma and its publication is known to have almost coincided with American psychiatrist and scholar Judith Herman’s essential work **Trauma and Recovery** (1992) which provides critical insight into an understanding of trauma survivors. Through the above-stated play, one of the supposed underlying intentions of Daniels is to shed light on destructive effects and traces of abusive relationships upon victims’ minds as Aston likewise adds “In *Beside Herself*, the side that Daniels takes, and invites her audience to take, is that which by the 1990s was increasingly being silenced by the media reporting of abuse: that of the abused child/woman.”¹⁷ As will be explored within the present study, the playwright uses theatre as an apt site of verbalizing the unnarratable issue of child sexual abuse with her recourse to alternative modes of theatrical representation.

It is crucial to stress that attempts of representing psychological trauma in contemporary theatre could be observed in the astounding theatre movement of the 1990s titled as in-yer-face or post-political theatre too. The plays belonging to this new wave of theatre are rife with fury and violence; the dirty language and overt subjection to sexuality on the part of audience. Displaying attitudes of individuals having dysfunctional families and taking on the roles of the abused/abuser, characters of in-yer-face plays prove themselves to be governed by their fragmented identities which make them center of attention for many trauma studies.

¹⁶ Elaine Aston, **Feminist Views on the English Stage Women Playwrights, 1990-2000**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 39.

¹⁷ **Ibid.**, p. 40.

British theatre critic Aleks Sierz renowned for coining the term “in-yer-face” describes key features of this new wave of drama in his landmark book **In-Yer-Theatre: British Drama Today** as follows:

The widest definition of in-yer-face theatre is any drama that takes the audience by the scruff of the neck and shakes it until it gets the message. It is a theatre of sensation: it jolts both actors and spectators out of conventional responses, touching nerves and provoking alarm. Often such drama employs shock tactics, or is shocking because it is new in tone or structure, or because it is bolder or more experimental than what audiences are used to. Questioning moral norms, it affronts the ruling ideas of what can or should be shown on stage; it also taps into more primitive feelings, smashing taboos, mentioning the forbidden, creating discomfort. Crucially, it tells us more about who we really are. Unlike the type of theatre that allows us to sit back and contemplate what we see in detachment, the best in-yer-face theatre takes us on an emotional journey, getting under our skin. In other words, it is experiential, not speculative. [...]¹⁸

It must be underlined that the urge to astonish audience by exposing them extreme sort of violence on stage has its origin in Antonin Artaud’s “Theatre of Cruelty” as well. It can be said that Artaud’s dream about the function of theatre in **Theatre and Its Double** comes true in in-yer-face movement. Artaud holds the view that

We want to make out of the theater a believable reality which gives the heart and the senses that kind of concrete bite which all true sensation requires. In the same way that our dreams have an effect upon us and reality has an effect upon our dreams, so we believe that the images of thought can be identified with a dream which will be efficacious to the degree that it can be projected with the necessary violence.¹⁹

It is understood that this theatre marks a break with conventional aspects of drama by paving the way for the emergence of a new generation of playwrights that are discontent with society’s/individual’s oblivion to the real situation of the world.

¹⁸ Aleks Sierz, **In-Yer-Theatre: British Drama Today**, London, Faber and faber, 2001, pp. 4-5.

¹⁹ Antonin Artaud, **Theatre and Its Double**, New York, Grove Press, 1958, pp. 85-6.

One of the most outstanding playwrights of the in-er-face theatrical trend is certainly Sarah Kane who stands out with her distinct experimentation with writing. Starting with her first work **Blasted** (1995), several criticisms have been levelled at Kane's theatre on the grounds that it glamorized sex and violence and proved to be insufficient in tackling political matters. However, in one of her interviews, she is known to have emphasized that she was inspired by the outbreak of Bosnian War for the writing process of her first play and for a dramatist like Kane, the political environment of the twentieth century mattered a lot as Sierz also notes,

The in-er-face generation whose drama style was pioneered by Kane was influenced as much by international events like the reunification of Germany as national movements such as the New Labour political movement.²⁰

Another important point to be made about **Blasted** and Kane's other in-er-face plays is that they form a fertile ground for trauma studies with their affiliation to issues ranging from sexual abuse to repressed memories.

If trauma and theatre relationship is examined by dividing the history of theatre into different epochs, it must be noted that theatre's affiliation to trauma is not confined to post-war or contemporary British stage. Representation of violence, oppression and abuse has been at the core of theatre since the Greeks which points to theatre's everlasting concern with staging of mind-shattering events. What is more important to clearly indicate at this point is that theatrical aspect of trauma is imbued in the structure of the term and genealogy of trauma studies as well. However, it was not until the late 1880s that the theorization of what is identified as psychic trauma today and its connection to theatre started to be investigated.

²⁰ Aleks Sierz, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

Patrick Duggan in his astute work **Trauma-Tragedy: Symptoms of Contemporary Performance** underlines a key point as regards trauma's theatrical history and points out that "The development of trauma theory is underpinned by a history of theatricality, and performativity is inherent within the structure of trauma."²¹ Duggan's contention is that practices and methods of theatricalising intense personal and public suffering constitute the very essence of what is known as contemporary trauma theory.

Before detailing what is meant by theatrical history of trauma theory as accentuated by Patrick Duggan, it would be relevant to contemplate upon the history of trauma as a term. Nicole A. Sütterlin in her chapter "History of Trauma Theory" in **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma** gives an account of the emergence of this concept by tracing it back to the nineteenth century and extends the scope of the discussion:

The first systematic medical explorations of what would later be termed "trauma" began in the 1860s, when British medical practitioners investigated a mysterious condition called "railway spine". This condition was ascribed to victims of railroad accidents who presented with physical disorders without having suffered any obvious organic injury. As a symbol of technological development and societal progress in the nineteenth century as well as of the dramatic changes brought about by modern life, the railway is intrinsically linked to the history of trauma.²²

²¹ Patrick Duggan, **Trauma-Tragedy: Symptoms of Contemporary Performance**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012, p. 17.

²² Nicole A. Sütterlin, "History of Trauma Theory," ed. by Colin Davis, Hanna Meretoja, **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma**, New York, Routledge, 2020, p. 12.

Sütterlin's attributing the origin of what is called as "trauma" today to a physical accident leaving its marks on victims' bodies brings to mind its originally having been situated in the domain of medicine. Trauma as a term is known to signify "wound" in Greek vocabulary. In medicine, the notion of trauma is utilized when one's body is attacked and damaged by forces against which the body is incapable of defending itself without getting medical help. Sütterlin's account may also hold good for thinking about the issue of how this medical notion has been transposed into psychology and psychiatry in that the author makes a mention of technological and societal progress in the modern period. Namely, these referred developments can be said to have caused some changes in people's mental and behavioural states that are linked to the departure of trauma as a concept from its original disciplinary field.

Likewise, British writer and academic Roger Luckhurst contends that the developing mechanization of society by the end of the nineteenth century must be taken into account with respect to the emergence of trauma as a concept. From Luckhurst's standpoint, the new urban life and its effects upon individuals' psyche along with the rapidly growing construction of the railways designated a certain way of conceptualization of trauma too. Yet, Luckhurst gives more detail about what was named as "Railway Spine" underlining the idea that the railway spine was the starting point of the very first theorizations of psychic trauma. The writer in his book **The Trauma Question** states that "Railway spine was the first instance of a theory of trauma that became contentious because rival theories placed it at opposing ends of the spectrum from physical to psychical etiologies."²⁵ Within the same book, Luckhurst also draws attention to the studies of the surgeon Herbert William Page as one of the first trauma theorists who is known to have attributed the railway spine to neurological aspects.

²³ Roger Luckhurst, **The Trauma Question**, New York, Routledge, 2008, p. 22.

The surgeon Herbert W. Page in his **Injuries of the Spine and Spinal Cord and Nervous Shock** (1883) proposed that the prolonged reactions of survivors of railway accidents originated from the damage the incident did to their minds not merely to their bodies. He postulated that the victims must have absented the psyche from instant interaction with the brutalizing incident that came back as a delayed shock. It can be said that there is a reference to the notion of trauma and latency with an emphasis upon a traumatized mind's incapability of assimilating it during the time of its occurrence since Page argued that symptoms were:

warded off in the first place by the excitement of the scene, the shock gathering, in the very delay itself, new force from the fact that the sources of alarm are continuous, and for the time all prevalent in the patient's mind.²⁴

The significance of Page's argument is that it stimulated initial investigations about hysteria and trauma. Furthermore, his stress upon trauma's belatedness does evoke that of contemporary trauma theorists such as Geoffrey Hartman, Shoshana Felman, and most importantly Cathy Caruth about whom more will be explored in line with the purpose of this dissertation.

One another essential and interesting point Luckhurst makes about Page's theorizations of hysteria in line with the railway spine relates to the case of some accident victims who demanded money from railway companies by pretending to be mentally-damaged as Luckhurst clarifies:

An organic origin for railway spine nearly always resulted in huge payments for damages to those caught up in railway accidents, and this was being worryingly extended to those without any visible physical injury. To associate nervous shock with hysteria was to equate it with a shameful, effeminate disorder, often dismissed as a form of disease *imitation* (what was called "neuromimesis") or malingering.²⁵

²⁴ Herbert W. Page, **Injuries of the Spine and Spinal Cord and Nervous Shock**, London, J. and A. Churchill, 1883, p. 148.

²⁵ Roger Luckhurst, **op.cit.**, p. 23.

It would be plausible to allege that the presence of individuals feigning psychic traumatization for monetary purposes might have cast some doubt upon the veracity of emerging conceptualizations of trauma during that time. However, their pretence described as malingering by Luckhurst turns our attention to the theatrical history of trauma theory which has been previously stated with a reference to Patrick Duggan's argument. Patrick Duggan suggests that

It is within this notion of malingering- especially as it relates to *imitation*, pretence and make-believe- that I want to suggest that Page's arguments align the genealogy of trauma with a sense of performativity or theatricality.²⁶

In spite of the fact that they showed no signs of hysteria, these people's pretending to be mentally ill "amounts to a perpetuation of hysteric symptoms through what might be thought of as a neuromimetic performance, through playing the role of a hysteric for financial gain- or literally, acting (it) out."²⁷

In his discussion of the inherent quality of theatricality in the genealogy of trauma, Duggan in his chapter "Trauma and Drama/Theatre/Performance" in the book **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Drama** turns to French neurologist and professor of anatomical pathology Jean Martin Charcot as follows:

Charcot's theatricalized practice also highlights the dubious and contested background from which trauma theory has grown: its roots, we might argue, are in the violently theatrical traumatic experiences and pecuniarily motivated presentations of performed hysterical symptoms before audiences.²⁸

²⁶ Patrick Duggan, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁸ Patrick Duggan, "Trauma and Drama/Theatre/Performance," **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Drama**, ed. by Colin Davis and Hanna Meretoja, London and New York, Routledge, 2020, p. 332.

Playing an important role in the process of theatricalizing traumatic experiences, Charcot is believed to have utilized numerous techniques to which Georges Didi-Huberman in his work **Invention of Hysteria** (2003) addresses and writes “His techniques varied from exploding packages of gun-cotton under patients’ noses to masturbating them until they could take no more.”²⁹ Such methods must have been quite shocking for the audience because “these methods were played out in the overtly theatrical setting of his famous Tuesday Lectures with the expressed purpose of investigating, understanding and curing les nevroses traumatiques.”³⁰

Keeping in mind theatre’s attendance to traumatization whose account is given with reference to Herbert Page’s and Jean Martin Charcot’s undeniable influences, it would, at this point, be relevant to address Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud who is said to have begun his first researches on human mind with the inspiration he got from Charcot’s studies. Nevertheless, as Duggan stresses “having later rejected hypnosis and indeed many other aspects of Charcot’s work, Freud could be argued to have become the founding father, so to speak, of Trauma Studies as it is known today.”³¹ Contemporary trauma studies initially developed in the 1990s and adhered to Freudian conceptualization of trauma as an overwhelming experience unintegrated into psyche. This model of trauma posits that trauma is the ultimate unrepresentable phenomenon challenging the confines of language, disrupting the mind and reenacting itself with delayed responses like flashbacks or nightmares. Hence, trauma studies in the late twentieth century can be said to be engaging with unassimilated, elusive and repressive nature of trauma by relying upon Freud’s primary contentions about traumatic experiences and memory. Furthermore, trauma studies investigate the effect of trauma in literature and society by focusing upon its psychological and cultural values.

²⁹ Georges Didi-Huberman, **Invention of Hysteria**, London, The MIT Press, 2003, p. 176.

³⁰ Patrick Duggan, ““Trauma and Drama/Theatre/Performance,” **op.cit.**, p. 331.

³¹ Patrick Duggan, **Trauma-Tragedy: Symptoms of Contemporary Performance**, **op.cit.**, p. 21.

Michelle Balaev in the chapter titled as “Trauma Studies” in the book **A Companion to Literary Theory** considers the reliance of trauma studies today upon Freudian framework and explains it as follows:

Freud’s theories- that traumatic experiences are repeated compulsively, divide the psyche, influence memory differently than other experiences, and are unable to be experienced initially but only in a narrative reproduction of the past- are key ideas informing the first development in trauma studies scholarship that address the theory of trauma and the ways that trauma influences memory and identity. This criticism and that which would follow employs psychoanalytic theories to analyze emotional suffering in texts as well as the language of loss, disruption, and of fragmentation. In particular, the concepts of latency, pathology, dissociation, and infection are central to the first or traditional Freudian trauma model that suggests trauma is an unrepresentable event that fundamentally fragments the psyche.³²

Among the theorists of the 1990s displaying a rising concern for expounding the relationship between trauma as psychological wound and its signification in literary realm, Cathy Caruth can be said to be the most prominent one with landmark publications of trauma studies like **Trauma: Explorations in Memory** (1995) and **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History** (1996). In the trauma model developed by Cathy Caruth, trauma is perceived as an unassimilated event that is beyond linguistic representation. For Caruth, the moment when a victim makes an effort to narrate a traumatic experience, the victim faces the difficulty of linguistically coding it. What lies behind this situation can be, then, the deterioration of the mind by the traumatic experience whose memory hinders the past from being integrated into a coherent narrative at present. Trauma’s vague existence in the victim’s consciousness this way fragments the psyche and makes it possible for the traumatic memory to operate illogically.

³² Michael Balaev, “Trauma Studies,” **A Companion To Literary Theory**, ed. by David H. Richter, UK, Wiley Blackwell, 2018, p. 363.

Caruth's conceptualization of trauma in this model points to the validity of the notion that trauma resists being totally represented with an emphasis upon its dissociative nature. As such, when a traumatic event is reenacted with its belatedness, its linguistic abnormality and mysterious presence in the memory simultaneously come into effect and it cannot be properly verbalized. Caruth in **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History** presents her viewpoint with respect to the nature and after-effects of trauma positing that

Trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that is not otherwise available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language.³³

In her interpretation of trauma as the belated return of the suppressed within the psyche, Caruth tends to make reference to her reading of theoretical texts by Freud to a serious extent. In particular, her focus upon trauma's dissociative aspect with the acknowledgement that trauma disrupts the mind as a result of a traumatic experience can be thought as an evidence of her writing in closest proximity to Freudian trauma model. Given that Caruth's complicity in viewing trauma as an experience which is unrecognized by mental knowledge forms the basis of her analyses, her giving information about her model of trauma characterized by latency and irrepresentability of the concept in the chapter "Trauma, Time and Address" In **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma** must be highlighted as it follows:

³³ Cathy Caruth, **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History**, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, 1996, p.3.

The theory of trauma, as it arose in Freudian psychoanalysis just before the turn of the twentieth century, is distinguished by its focus on an inherently temporal structure: the delay, within the experience of catastrophe, that defers its occurrence to the future. This temporal delay, named in Freud's early work by the word *Nachträglichkeit* (deferred action, afterwardsness), involves a fundamental paradox at the heart of trauma: it is the most immediate experience and yet the least accessible; its deferral is also an endless return of what was never fully experienced in the first place. In the last several decades this combination of insistence and unassimilability, as it emerges in the symptoms of traumatic nightmares and other forms of repetition described by Freud, has frequently been characterized in terms of a problem of representation: as the non-representability of the event that prevents its adequate assimilation to knowledge and transformation³⁴

It is important to notice that Caruth concentrates upon Freud's notion of deferred action as a central component of her own model of trauma which indicates that this belatedness of a traumatic experience resists representation. For Freud, such a traumatic experience, as stated in one of his earliest theories "The Theory of Seduction, can be a sexual assault in childhood challenging the boundaries of language. Freud's "Theory of Seduction" holds that sexual abuse in childhood is followed by traumatic neuroses. Interpreting the seduction as a state in which a child is subjugated to maltreatment, this theory can be said to have provided the basic knowledge about a damaging relationship between an adult and a child in pre-puberty phase. With the help of recollections of childhood stories full of some analytic symptoms shared by patients, Freud has viewed this theory as a means of reflecting upon the starting point of the early relationship of the abused to the abuser. The theory, more importantly, puts a great deal of emphasis upon these repressed memories that linger on patients' minds after traumatic sexual experiences as Freud himself described:

³⁴ Cathy Caruth, "Trauma, Time and Address," **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Drama**, ed. by Colin Davis and Hanna Meretoja, London and New York, Routledge, 2020, p. 79.

The patient cannot remember the whole of what is repressed in him, and what he cannot remember may be precisely the essential part of it.... He is obliged to repeat the repressed material as a contemporary experience instead of remembering it as something in the past³⁵

The repressed memories in the unconscious are valuable data for analytic interpretation because not the traumatic experience itself but the role the reenactment of the traumatic experience as repressed memory does play helps a lot to find the origin of some mental problems. Therefore, as a part of his postulation of the theory of seduction, Freud indeed means that what formulates trauma is two different phenomena which are intertwined with one another. The first one of these experiences resurge when a person is too young to assimilate it into his/her consciousness whereas the second one comes at a later phase. What is peculiar about the second one is that it is not always traumatic but it is believed to be functioning as a reminiscent of the first one which was once repressed. This idea is named as *Nachträglichkeit* by Freud and it stands for a dialectic between the two events and as Roger Luckhurst indicates that “This two-stage theory of trauma, the first forgotten impact making a belated return after a hiatus, has been central to cultural trauma theory.”³⁶

What is also significant to note pertaining to Caruth’s model of trauma whose origin is traced back to Freud is that Freud’s text **Beyond the Pleasure Principle** (1920) can be a key text for her. Within this text, Freud turns his attention to the inclination of traumatized people to repeat bad experiences in their dreams, basically to what he names as “repetition compulsion.” Peter Buse in his book **Drama+Theory** notably draws attention to the influence of this text and states that

³⁵ Sigmund Freud & J. Strachey (ed.), **Beyond the pleasure principle: the standart edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud**, London, The Hogarth Press: The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1955, p. 288.

³⁶ Roger Luckhurst, **op.cit.**, p. 8.

Perhaps the founding text of trauma theory is Sigmund Freud's long essay *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), where the founder of psychoanalysis tries to explain a seemingly perverse psychic phenomenon: *repetition compulsion*. In repetition compulsion a subject unconsciously relieves, or even acts out, a traumatic, unassimilated experience from the past, not just once, but repeatedly. Why, Freud asks, when humans generally try at all costs to avoid psychic pain do they in this case appear to deliberately seek it out? He by no means satisfies himself with an answer, but he suggests that through repetition a trauma from the past may eventually be recognized and mastered.³⁷

The text begins with a reference to the psychic symptoms manifesting themselves as traumatic nightmares and aligning with war neurosis. The reenactments of trauma that such patients experience come to the fore as flashbacks or nightmares and preclude them from assimilating the pain into their past, so they relieve it in the present. Namely, what triggers the original trauma could be the second event which is not necessarily traumatic as explained in Freud's *Nachträglichkeit* but which brings the original event back to mind and functions like a blow. The mind is overwhelmed by this remembrance of the suppressed trauma as Freud explicated that

Such an event as an external trauma is bound to provoke a disturbance on a large scale in the functioning of the organism's energy and to set in motion every possible defence measure. At the same time... there is no longer any possibility of preventing the mental apparatus from being flooded with large amounts of stimulus, and another problem arises instead- the problem of mastering the amounts of stimulus which have broken in and of binding them, in the psychical sense, so that they can be disposed of.³⁸

It is understood that the breakdown in the protective shield of the mind is accompanied by involuntary and recurrent resurgence of the original traumatic event that helps trauma to be acted out.

³⁷ Peter Buse, **Drama+Theory**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2001, p. 174.

³⁸ Sigmund Freud, "**Beyond the Pleasure Principle**," Standard edition, vol. 18, pp. 1-65, reprinted in Penguin Freud Library vol.11, Harmondsworth, Penguin, [1920a] 1984, p. 301.

In **Beyond the Pleasure Principle**, trauma is perceived as an enigmatic structure or as an experience of an event that is unassimilated into one's psyche as it takes place. It comes back in the form of behavioral reenactments or traumatic dreams which can also be identified as the literal return of the event in Caruthian account. Clinging to the idea that the traumatic dream is then a literal memory of the actual traumatic event, she turns to another key work of Freud titled as **Moses and Monotheism** (1939) in which Freud theorised the delayed resurgence of traumatic symptoms in the aftermath of an accident while giving an account of Jews' murder of Moses and Jews' belated sense of guilt. Freud is known to have named such a resurgence of traumatic symptoms as "latency" and Cathy Caruth in **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History** interprets Freud's theorization as follows:

In his use of the term *latency*, the period during which the effects of the experience are not apparent, Freud seems to compare the accident to the successive movement in Jewish history from the event to its repression to its return. Yet what is truly striking about the accident victim's experience of the event, and what in fact constitutes the central enigma revealed by Freud's example, is not so much the period of forgetting that occurs after the accident, but rather the fact that the victim of the crash was never fully conscious during the accident itself: the person gets away, Freud says, "apparently unharmed." The experience of trauma, the fact of latency, would thus seem to consist, not in the forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known, but in an inherent latency within the experience itself..³⁹

Caruth expands the theory postulated by Freud and particularly concerns herself with the issue of how the belated experience of trauma like the one explained through Jews's history in **Moses and Monotheism** could be a part of literary narrative. This being said, insofar as trauma challenges the boundaries of speech in Caruthian view, theorizations of her perspectives raises critical questions about the possibility of trauma being incorporated into literary verbalization at the same time.

³⁹ Cathy Caruth, **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History**, op.cit., p. 17.

What Caruth might mean is that literature can represent trauma with the help of a variety of differing techniques that lay an emphasis upon its unintelligible nature. Through appropriation of trauma for literary verbalization, readers might better comprehend the processes that play a role in the formation of a traumatized psyche. Hence, it can be restated here that the aforementioned playwrights like Daniels, Churchill and Kane follow the pathway literature offers, as foregrounded by Caruth, in order to make the psychological wound of their characters conceivable by means of a mode of representation shaped by their own strategies.

At this point, regarding Caruth's formation of her literary theory, it must be underlined that she feeds on works of contemporary psychiatrists and psychologists too as Joshua Pederson in the article **Speak, Trauma: Toward a Revised Understanding of Literary Trauma Theory** clearly explains:

Though her description of trauma shows her debt to Freud, Caruth ties her literary theory firmly to the work of contemporary clinical trauma specialists, most prominently van der Kolk and Herman. The two most important elements of her depictions of trauma- its amnesic quality and its unspeakability- find analogues in the work of these theorists.⁴⁰

It is seen that Caruth endorses the common view of van der Kolk and Herman which is geared towards conceptualizing a traumatic event as unnarratable and she makes references to their view in her landmark publications **Unclaimed Experience and Trauma** and **Trauma: Explorations in Memory**. For both van der Kolk and Herman, when victims attempt to put into words their confrontation with a traumatic event, they fail to find the fitting words to make it comprehensible to others.

⁴⁰ Joshua Pederson, "Speak, Trauma: Toward a Revised Understanding of Literary Trauma Theory," **NARRATIVE**, Vol. 22, No: 3, 2014, p. 335.

Van der Kolk in his astute work **The Body Keeps The Score** addresses one of the most inherent qualities of traumatic events which constitutes the core of Caruth's literary theory as well by contending that "Unfortunately, it's not so simple: Traumatic events are almost impossible to put into words. This is true for all of us, not just for people who suffer from PTSD."⁴¹ Likewise, for the memory of traumatic events, in **Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body and Society** which van der Kolk edits with McFarlane and Weisaeth, it is maintained that "Because they have no verbal component, memories of trauma elude narrative representation, they are essentially indescribable."⁴² Caruth supports these assertions firmly and what Judith Herman claims in her essential publication **Trauma and Recovery** align with van der Kolk's ideas as Herman writes that

Traumatic events produce profound and lasting changes in physiological arousal, emotion, cognition and memory. Moreover, traumatic events may sever these normally integrated functions from one another. The traumatized person may experience intense emotion but without clear memory of the event, or may remember everything in detail but without emotion.⁴³

It becomes self-evident that Herman's description of the amnesic quality of traumatic memories coincide with that of van der Kolk to a large extent. It should also be stressed that Herman touches upon the unrepresentability of traumatic experiences through her interaction with her patients who have tried to articulate their traumas noting that "The patient finds it more and more difficult to use words. At times the patient may spontaneously switch to nonverbal methods of communication, such as drawing or painting."⁴⁴

⁴¹ Bessel Van der Kolk, **The Body Keeps The Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma**, New York, Penguin Group, 2014, pp. 232-33.

⁴² Bessel Van der Kolk, Alexander C. McFarlane, and Lars Weisaeth, **Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body and Society**, New York, The Guilford Press, 1996, p. 287.

⁴³ Judith Herman, **Trauma and Recovery**, New York, Basic Books, 1992, pp. 33-4.

⁴⁴ **Ibid.**, p. 177.

As it is specifically mentioned in van der Kolk's quoted view pertaining to trauma's unspeakability and its sufferers, it does make sense to add that the conceptualization of trauma with a new diagnosis named as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in the third edition (DSM-III) in 1980 is considered to have been a revolutionary step. In that edition, what brings about PTSD is identified as an event with an external impact on the part of the patient. The definition of PTSD can be better understood with the one provided by John P. Wilson as he explains:

Twelve years after Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders second edition (DSM-II), PTSD emerged as a separate diagnostic entity and was placed among the anxiety disorders, presumably because anxiety, emotional distress and physical disequilibrium were among the primary affective reactions associated with traumatization. Further, to receive a diagnosis of PTSD the individual had to manifest at least four symptoms (e.g., intrusive recollections) from three clusters of symptoms (12 total) which included forms of reexperiencing the trauma; numbing and detachment responses and changes in personality that were not present before the trauma (e.g., sleep disturbance, survival guilt)⁴⁵

As for the type of people prone to display symptoms of PTSD, Wilson's account of the disorder following the description is necessary to be integrated here as he notes "The existence of PTSD also helped to validate and legitimate the suffering of those victimized by stressful life-events. (e.g., childhood abuse, rape victims, war veterans, disaster survivors, etc.)"⁴⁶. Nonetheless, it should be known that DSM- IV which is a more current edition merely specifies PTSD as trauma itself, not as an anxiety disorder.

⁴⁵ John P. Wilson, "The Historical Evolution of PTSD Diagnostic Criteria: From Freud to DSM- IV," **Journal of Traumatic Stress**, Vol. 7, No: 4, 1994, p. 691.

⁴⁶ **Ibid.**, p. 692.

Considering all the emphasized points, it is remarkable that the Freudian-Caruthian concept of trauma provides an all-encompassing framework for the comprehension of the problems inherent in speech. Besides, the predominant view that trauma is beyond representation is believed to have illuminated a lot of early theorists. Adopting Freudian psychoanalytic approach for the interpretation of trauma in literary studies attributes a crucial role to the employment of varying techniques by the novelists, poets or playwrights as well. That is to say, the appropriation of trauma as a linguistically non-codified notion means carrying an important obligation to offer a wider range of means whereby a traumatic experience is represented within a book or on stage. As such, not words as literary mediums but other strategies that renounce conventional modes of representation address the issue of performing trauma as will be explored within this dissertation.

Apart from Freudian-Caruthian model of trauma as the essential theoretical framework, it is important to state that this dissertation will also utilize Julia Kristeva's perspectives particularly as regards trauma and language while making references to theatrical representation of trauma within the selected plays. Despite the fact that Julia Kristeva's name is not frequently mentioned within trauma studies, understanding her concept of the semiotic vs the symbolic and its affinity to language bears relevancy to the purpose of this dissertation. More precisely stated, the connection of Kristeva's ideas to the plays studied here is that language of trauma operates on the semiotic realm and the playwrights' theatrical strategies evoke this notion. The Bulgarian- French linguist, philosopher and psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva's theories of the speaking subject and signification with an inquiry into the dialectics between the semiotic and the symbolic may be viewed as useful means of grasping how a person speaks the unspeakable. In Kristevan sense, the dialectics between the semiotic and the symbolic is revolutionary which can be explicated with the help of psychoanalysis. Kristeva expounds her own focus on the theory of signification by referring to the two different aspects the semiotic and the symbolic represent.

Whereas she regards the former as the matriarchal aspect of language that is linked to unconscious drives, she regards the latter as the patriarchal aspect of language that subdues the semiotic. That is to say, the realm of the symbolic offers an acknowledgement of the paternal laws, masculine and structure that poses a contrast to the realm of the semiotic symbolizing the feminine. Vincent B. Leitch in **The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism** addresses these two forces described by Kristeva as follows:

The *symbolic* is that aspect of language that allows it to refer. It is systematic, propositional, rule-bound, tied to the social order, dependent on a functional separation between the subject and the object, capable of existing independently of its referent. The *semiotic* dimension of language – which cannot be known except in the moments where it breaks through the symbolic- is that aspect that bears the trace of the language user's own body and of the mother's protolinguistic presence- the babbling of the infant who tries out the vocal repertoire before he or she learns to speak.⁴⁷

Leitch's emphasis upon the mother's protolinguistic presence which helps Kristeva to define the semiotic makes it possible to contend that the semiotic in Kristevan account is bound up with the infantile pre-Oedipal alluded to in the studies of Freud. Relevantly, it conjures up Kristeva's idea of the chora in **Revolution in Poetic Language** in which it may serve as a metaphor for the bond between the mother and child before the mirror phase as Vincent B. Leitch puts it:

In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva thus maintains that all signification entails the dialectical interaction of the symbolic and the semiotic. The semiotic represents the discharge of pre-Oedipal instinctual energies and drives within language; it is associated with what Kristeva, following PLATO, designates as the *chora* (literally, "space"; Greek)- receptacle, space, womb. This semiotic *chora*, which "precedes and underlies figuration," is, in turn, connected to the maternal body, to the feminine in general, and to what remains mysterious, unintelligible and unsignifiable.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Vincent B. Leitch, *op.cit.*, p. 2166.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2166

The stage of *chora*, then, signifies what precedes the separation from the mother, or, in other words, the realm of the language named as the symbolic by both Lacan and Kristeva. What governs the *chora* could be said to be the matriarchal aspect of language, the semiotic, associated with drives and impulses. Furthermore, it can be noted that the *chora* is not even a signifier itself since it designates prelinguistic phase in the development of a child as M. A. R. Habib in **A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present** states:

This *chora* which regulates the drives is to be distinguished from the realm of the symbolic, which is the realm of spatial intuition and of language. Following some comments of Plato, as well as insights of Freud, Lacan, and Melanie Klein, Kristeva associates the prelinguistic semiotic process with the mother: the mother's body, as the site around which the oral and anal drives are structured, is the "ordering principle" of the semiotic *chora* and is also "what mediates the symbolic law organizing social relations."⁴⁹

Upon entering the realm of the symbolic law, Kristeva thinks that the child begins to construct his/her own sense of identity thereby separating himself/herself from the mother. From this point onwards, the symbolic occupies a central position in the rest of the child's life in that the child makes use of language in order to turn into a speaking subject in the social order. As M. A. R. Habib summarizes this process in Kristevan account:

In summary, the semiotic process includes "drives, their disposition, and their division of the body, plus the ecological and social system surrounding the body, such as objects and pre-Oedipal relations with parents." The realm of the symbolic encompasses the emergence of subject and object as well as the constitution of meaning structured according to categories tied to the social order.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ M. A. R. Habib, **A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present**, UK, Blackwell Publishing, 2005, p. 698.

⁵⁰ **Ibid.**, p. 700.

These theorizations with a stress upon trauma's challenging the boundaries of language and marking a break with the meaning are known to have opened up doors for further exploration of this subject in literary studies alongside psychological and historical approaches. Taking into account the idea of trauma's unspeakability and unrepresentability lying at the heart of contemporary literary trauma theory as the valid assumption and Caruth's stress upon testimonial power of literature against the unrepresentability of trauma, this dissertation focuses upon the theatrical representation of trauma and traumatic memories of characters in three selected contemporary British plays in three different chapters.

Chapter I concentrates upon Sarah Daniels' **Beside Herself** and discusses personal trauma of Evelyn whose double Eve accompanies her throughout the play. As a contemporary playwright, Daniels creates a sphere where Evelyn's trauma is represented by means of the theatrical device of doubling and pivots on a theatrical convention that aims to perform the "unspeakable" on stage with different techniques. The traumatized character's (Evelyn's) inner reality is explored through the imagined character, Eve, and Evelyn's fragmentary perception of things is also represented through the playwright's use of a broken mirror within the play. The articulation of trauma with the help of aforementioned theatrical devices in the play supports the idea that theatre becomes a powerful tool for expressing what is hard to put into words.

Chapter II covers Caryl Churchill's **The Skriker** and focuses upon personal experiences of two young women, Josie and Lily, who are haunted by a ghastly apparition named as the Skriker by the playwright. The language of the apparition coupled with the underworld where it lives manifest itself as exceptional theatrical techniques to point to the non-representability of trauma at a linguistic level.

The artistic expression of the protagonists' psychological breakdown creates a situation in which the unspeakable becomes the speakable on the part of traumatized individuals. Namely, the playwright's strategies provide testimony to trauma and turn the stage into an apt site for the representation of distortions in the cognitive mechanisms of trauma victims.

The final chapter examines Sarah Kane's **Crave** in which four unidentified voices named as A, B, C and M come together to refer to both individual and collective traumas. Short utterances of these characters that defy conventional use of language coupled with no clear setting and stage directions provided by the playwright suffice to claim that the play represents the effect of trauma on individuals' psyche by favour of several mechanisms. Containing elements of experiential theatre, the play brings an alternative dimension of studying the internal and external conflicts of a troubled mind that speaks the language of the repressed.

The conclusion compares and contrasts the ways in which the three playwrights, Daniels, Churchill and Kane, utilize diverse theatrical techniques in their study of the traumatized psyche in the selected plays.

CHAPTER I

“I WAS NEVER ON MY OWN.”¹:

SARAH DANIELS’ **BESIDE HERSELF**

Sarah Daniels, who was born in 1956, is a British playwright and a well-established figure associated with feminist theatre throughout her career. In her plays, emphasis is laid on the unfair treatment meted out to women by men in general. In other words, her plays as a whole can be said to be functioning as a critique of women’s oppression by men in many respects. The period 1981-94 is known to have been a span of time during which Daniels wrote her most other influential plays such as **Ripen Our Darkness** (1981), **Masterpieces** (1983), **Neaptide** (1984), **The Cut Girls** (1988), **Head Rot Holiday** (1992) and **The Madness of Esme and Shaz** (1994).

All of these plays’ being harshly criticized including the ones she wrote in the 2000s by male writers is a proof of condemnation of feminism rising to prominence in the late twentieth century. She has been labelled as a man-hating dramatist with feminist anger by some of her male contemporaries. As Elaine Aston highlights “Feminist and man-hating were also used as terms of abuse. Put the two terms together and man-hating feminism typifies the male view of Daniels’s lesbian/woman-centered feminist politics.”² However, with respect to such a description of her identity, Daniels makes an important commentary in an interview:

It’s not about hating men, it’s about putting the focus on women and trying to say, “Hey, look, this is going on. This is how it feels from there. How can we redress it?” Feminism has put a different perspective on a lot of human experience. Incest, for example, might always have been a taboo subject, but there is a world of difference between the sexual relationship of two consenting adults in the same family and sexual acts done to a three-year-old by her father. The latter now is no longer termed incest but sexual abuse. And the change in perception came about not because some lexicographer put another definition in the dictionary, but because women started to speak up, often in the face of hostile criticism, disbelief and ridicule about their experience.³

Daniels' rejection of any defence for the violence perpetrated against women either physically or mentally along with her constant reiteration of the need for the salvation of all the oppressed women have become integral components of all her works. It is very important to underline the fact that the playwright has managed to make audience realize the role sexual abuse plays in traumatizing a lot of female figures in early phases of their lives. For Daniels, what lies behind the trauma of the women labelled as hysteric or mad by mostly their oppressors is their childhood experience of sexual abuse. The accompanying terror of being marginalized by everyone who happens to know about the abuse in the patriarchal world has invariably made it an obligation for such traumatized women to keep it as a top secret.

Daniels regards the theatre as an apt means of exposing what is difficult to symbolize or what is difficult to speak with the help of language while studying cases of traumatized people. The playwright creates an alternative dimension whereby traumatic experiences of a person are examined. She employs diverse methods of representation that require the engagement and detachment of the audience/reader at the same time thereby helping one to gain a new perspective in the analysis of the reconstruction of trauma on stage. By adding an imagined character or some other props into her plays where a trauma victim's fragmentary comprehension of things is foregrounded, Daniels challenges the ineffability of trauma to a serious extent. Relevantly, the main purpose of the present chapter will be to examine how the playwright makes use of several techniques in **Beside Herself** to put on stage the given trauma of the main character, Evelyn with references to the link between the play and trauma theory as well.

¹ Sarah Daniels, **Daniels Plays 2: Cut Girls; Beside Herself; Head-rot Holiday; Madness of Esme and Shaz**, London, Methuen Drama, 1997, p. 106.

² Elaine Aston, "Daniels in the Lion's Den: Sarah Daniels and the British Backlash", **Theatre Journal**, Vol. 47, No: 3, Oct. 1995, p. 400.

³ Heidi Stephenson, Natasha Langridge, **Rage and Reason Women Playwrights on Playwriting**, London, Methuen, 1997, p. 4-5.

Beside Herself written in 1990 is concerned with reflecting upon how sexual abuse affects women's sense of identity and their social interactions. The events in the play take place in the present day London. The protagonist, Evelyn, is a middle-class, white and heterosexual woman who works in a community group house for people with mental disorders. She assists them in relearning daily tasks, however, she wants to avoid taking part in discussions as regards patients' problems like the issue of child abuse. Having been abused by her own father who is a respected surgeon in her childhood, Evelyn suffers from a serious trauma. The social life that she tries to lead by working in the house is actually replete with memories of her own imprisonment in her abused childhood. Her alter ego, Eve, accompanies her wherever she goes as the inner voice coming from deepdown. Whereas Evelyn stands for a conventional woman figure whose priorities are defined by the patriarchal system, Eve is always there to resurge her suppressed trauma by pushing Evelyn to face it. Namely, the notion of individual trauma is inherent in Evelyn's inner self- Eve, whose accompaniment symbolizes Evelyn's trauma of sexual abuse. It would be proper to contend that the haunting presence of Eve in the play could be interpreted in line with a description of trauma made by Cathy Caruth. Corresponding with Sigmund Freud and Bessel van der Kolk's studies, the conceptualization of trauma in Caruthian perspective becomes manifest as follows:

In its most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena.⁴

In the play, Eve's spectrality, then, is a reminiscent of what Caruth identifies as an appearance of other intrusive phenomena since it infiltrates into Evelyn's daily life in the form of a ghostly apparition as a result of her trauma of sexual abuse.

⁴ Cathy Caruth, **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History**, London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 11.

It must be underlined that Evelyn fights against the power of this inner voice as the voice of her abused, childhood self until she meets other victims of abuse like Dawn in the community group house named as St. Dymphna's. Her encounter with other traumatized individuals suggests that the protagonist of the play is not alone and there exists solidarity indeed. Taking on the role of a listener of their stories makes Evelyn feel obliged to turn to her own life. This part of **Beside Herself** ostensibly gives a clue about the play's readability through the relationship between trauma, testimony and witnessing as well. In **Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History** (1992) as one of trauma theory's landmark texts, psychoanalyst Dori Laub argues that

The task of the listener is to be *unobtrusively present*, throughout the testimony; even when and if at moments the narrator becomes absent, reaches an almost detached state. The listener has to respond very subtly to cues the narrator is giving that s/he wants to come back, to resume contact, or that s/he wishes to remain alone, a wish for aloneness that sometimes coincides with the emergence of a creative testifying self. Survivors beginning to remember often desire to be alone, although very much in someone's presence; the listener has to be exquisitely responsive to these cues.⁵

When the position Evelyn takes as a listener of the child abuse story on the part of Dawn is considered, it can be said that the protagonist's bending an ear to painful memories of Dawn pushes her to recollect those of her own and feel a sense of solidarity. Evelyn acts under the impact of what she hears and reflects upon the relevancy of the story to that of her own "because trauma returns in disjointed fragments in the memory of the survivor, the listener has to let these trauma fragments make their impact both on him and on the witness."⁶ It must be added that becoming knowledgeable about such case histories encourages Evelyn to confront her father and at the point she does this, Eve goes away in the close of the play.

⁵ Dori Laub, **Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History**, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, London, Routledge, 1992, p.71.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.71.

In line with Daniels' attempt to prove the continuity of women's suffering, the play opens with a prelude titled as "The Power and the Story". The prelude brings to the stage four female characters (Eve, Delilah, Mary and Mrs. Lot) from the Old Testament. They are named women in the Bible which is said to have been written in compliance with patriarchal rules as a holy book. Eve, Delilah or Mrs Lot have their own specific stories causing them to be called as transgressors, punished women because of their going against males' authority in those times. In the prelude, they come together in a supermarket and discuss the verisimilitude of male-determined remarks in relation to their being labeled as incriminated ones. It is important to note that the playwright's choice of this non-naturalistic setting where women criticize the repercussions of living in a male-governed society upon their destiny is an indicative of her irony at stake. Christina Wald in **Hysteria, Trauma and Melancholia Performative Maladies in Contemporary Anglophone Drama** maintains that

Presenting Eve, Mrs Lot, Delilah, and Jezebel, Daniels chooses female figures of the Old Testament who to this day serve as cultural icons that embody a sinful, irrational, and insane concept of femininity that is indispensable for male sanity as its constitutive order. Rewriting the stories of these biblical women from their own perspective, Daniels pursues a similar project to Furse, Johnson, and Morrissey. The prologue treats the fates of the women with irony, exaggerates or trivialises them, and invents unknown motivations for their ostensibly mad acts.⁷

By putting these figures from the Old Testament in a surreal scene and making them speak about the injustice of patriarchal impositions, Daniels could be said to be questioning socially accepted norms of meaning. The creation stories show that men are entitled to have more authority over women since the women are believed to have been created from men's own flesh as Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar stress "From Eve, Minerva, Sophia, and Galatea onward, after all, patriarchal mythology defines women as created by, from, and for men, the children of male brains, ribs and ingenuity."⁸

The incessant ordeal of being a sane, dutiful and conservative woman stereotype in a heterosexual relationship is artfully but implicitly criticized by the playwright at the end of the prelude with her adding the voice of a man figure:

Man (VO)	Would those women causing absolute havoc please put a sock in it. Yes, you in the biscuit aisle. Some poor devil has collapsed by fresh fruit and we're holding you responsible.
Mrs Lot	Oh, crumbs.
Eve	Oh, Christ.
Delilah	What's new? ⁹

The man figure holding all women accountable for the guilt of succumbing to the temptation is faced with the rhetorical question of Delilah who is fearful of the future of women. This being said, the playwright, through the lens of a biblical woman figure "Delilah" from the distant past, might point to a dreadful future when women will still be treated unfairly if they turn a deaf ear to Eve's outcry over men's falsification of women's roles.

Mingling the past with the present and future, the prelude directs the attention of the audience/reader to specific topics like abuse from the outset. By means of uniting biblical figures in a symbolic world, the playwright presents a new perception of reality as well. Interrogation of male discourse in the Bible resulting in a reinterpretation of women's stories creates a feeling of split. This may be considered as the sign of the split existence made explicit through theatrical device of doubling one's identity in the case of Evelyn by Daniels in the rest of the play.

⁷ Christina Wald, *Hysteria, Trauma and Melancholia Performative Maladies in Contemporary Anglophone Drama*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 117.

⁸ Sandra M. Gilbert & Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2000, p. 12.

⁹ Sarah Daniels, *Daniels Plays 2: Cut Girls; Beside Herself; Head-rot Holiday; Madness of Esme and Shaz*, London, Methuen Drama, 1997, p. 103.

In the scenes that follow the prelude, Daniels depicts the traumatic situation of child abuse through multiple stories. The first and major story belongs to Evelyn whose sense of degradation is expressed by her double figure, Eve, in the play. In Scene One, Evelyn is back to George's (her father) house after doing some shopping for him as she does fortnightly whereas Eve is by the fridge waiting inside. The way Evelyn/Eve appears on stage from the very beginning raises critical questions in minds. Evelyn's fulfillment of the responsibility of buying stuff for her father serves as an indicator of the fact that she fits in the definition of a woman figure meeting the needs of a man as expected to be done in a patriarchal society. As for Eve standing by the fridge, it is right to claim that she is her alter ego, her suppressed inner voice concealing memories from her past, basically her childhood. Like the fridge that keeps the food she buys for her father in it, Eve keeps all the secret realities in her inner world. Elaine Aston clarifies Evelyn's splitting of the self noting that

In the play, the central female protagonist, Evelyn, is represented as a split subject (in the Lacanian sense). Eve, her younger self, is constantly present as the figure of abused child. When Evelyn, the adult woman, cannot find a means of expressing herself in "Daddy's words," the (Symbolic) patriarchal order which refuses to recognize the F / father as abuser, Eve is able to speak the unspeakable.¹⁰

While Evelyn is talking to her father, Eve's taking turns responding to his statements shows the real dynamics of the relationship between the daughter and the father. The unspeakable, which represents Evelyn's disturbed childhood, turns into speakable through the theatrical device of doubling one's identity by the playwright. This initially happens when the silence of the domestic atmosphere is suddenly shattered by one of the most thought-provoking responses of Eve as the inner voice of the traumatized psyche of Evelyn to George's needs:

¹⁰ Elaine Aston, "Daniels in the Lion's Den: Sarah Daniels and the British Backlash", *op.cit.*, p.402.

Evelyn Dad, I do your shopping every fortnight. (*Goes to the cupboard and puts the tins away.*)
George (*hurt rather than angry*) I don't care about the shopping. I'd prefer a bit more of your company.
Evelyn I know.
George I'm not asking much.
Eve (*sarcastic*) You've never given much.
George We never asked much. When your mother was alive we hardly ever saw you. Now it's just me and you.
Eve (*sneers*) It's the least you can do.¹¹

The sarcastic tone of Eve requires contemplation upon the highly possibly inadequate fathering of George who was not involved with the care of Evelyn during her upbringing. George typically stands for the peripheral father figure within patriarchy which has resulted in Evelyn's revulsion from his current demands. Soon after Evelyn's making clear that she does not need to be in the company of her father except for visiting him so as to bring food to the house, the moment when her alter-ego, Eve, reacts to the household accident caused by George is also noteworthy:

He stands suddenly, accidentally knocking his cup and saucer on the floor. They smash. The noise makes Evelyn and Eve jump in fright.
Eve covers her face and drops to the floor.
George (*pathetically*) Damn! Damn!
Evelyn (*shakily*) It's all right. It was only an accident. No real damage done.
George (*sits down again, miserably*) Oh, God. I can't bear getting old.
Eve Then drop dead.
Evelyn (*shocked, responds to Eve*) I'm sorry, I didn't mean that.¹²

It is seen that Eve speaks the unspeakable in such moments and reveals the feeling of disgust of Evelyn towards her father. However, Evelyn endeavours to be oblivious to her alter ego's apprehension, fury and aggression and changes it into kind and self-denying attitude.

¹¹ Sarah Daniels, *op.cit.*, p. 107.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 108.

At the very end of Scene One, the underlying reason of Evelyn's evading her father who is assumed to have damaged her both mentally and sexually is considerably justified with the fear she feels on George's mentioning Joanne, her daughter. Her trial of putting a distance between her father and her daughter bears a striking resemblance to her own trial of alienation from him save for his shopping needs. Hence, her over-protection of Joanne from her father who simply wishes to see his granddaughter must be a sign of the imminent danger coming from the side of this old man and a sign of his being a perpetrator too. Evelyn's utmost care for the safety of Joanne can be read in her lines:

George	Joanna said that she'd come and see me in the summer holidays.
<i>Eve turns back.</i>	<i>Her concentration now strongly focused on George.</i>
Evelyn	She can't. Not on her own.
George	Nonsense.
Evelyn	She's not old enough.
George	She's old enough to get on the tube.
Evelyn	It's too far.
George	I'd meet her at the station.
Evelyn	No. (Then.) I'll bring her over.
George	Would you? That would be nice. Thank you.
Evelyn	(hurriedly) And I'll see you in a fortnight. I must dash now.
	Sorry, I really do have to go. Sorry. Bye.
<i>Evelyn walks towards the door. Eve follows her.</i>	
Eve	(jeeringly) Sorry, sorry, sorry.
Evelyn	(turns) Bye
Eve	Sorry. ¹³

What Daniels renders intelligible in Scene One, specifically considering its ending, is that a tragic story of a victim of sexual abuse is awaiting the audience/reader for the rest of the play.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

The role Eve plays in **Beside Herself** with its appearance on stage from the first scene arouses critical mechanisms of the audience/reader to a serious extent. The device of doubling Daniels employs so as to represent trauma compels one to engage in the struggle of Evelyn. She finds herself in a situation which makes it hard for her to express her suffering through verbal language. Eve details the complexities of her disrupted mind with her utterances and Evelyn's interaction with the psychic double points to the antilogocentric nature of trauma as well. Whatever Eve utters is like a path to be taken for an entry into the traumatized psyche of Evelyn. All the emotions, fears, ideas are subdued somewhere in the inner psyche of Evelyn which renders it improbable for her to express them like Eve does. The hardship of gaining and reporting a lucid understanding of what trauma is, therefore, remains a puzzling matter both on the side of the playwright and the audience/reader. The risk is, perhaps, inherent in the language which does not meet the expectations of Evelyn to express her trauma. Putting an effort into integrating the language into the expression of her trauma proves the extent to which traumatic memory is incomprehensible. Anne Goarzin in the paper titled as "**Articulating Trauma**" develops an argument which provides insight into the difficulty of expressing traumatic experience through language as she points out:

In the case of a traumatic event, the subject's defences are radically called into question. There is also an overwhelming side to traumatic experience, in that it questions the usual systems of care and control, or connection and meaning experienced by the individual. Trauma is thus ambivalent on the individual level, as an experience of excess that can only be manifested in the lack of a meaningful structure or form to express this extreme, unbearable moment the self goes through.¹⁴

Evelyn in **Beside Herself** goes through that unbearable moment on several occasions. The inaccessibility of her trauma on a linguistic level comes to the surface in a number of different ways.

¹⁴ Anne Goarzin, "Articulating Trauma", **OpenEdition Journals** , Vol.36, No: 1, 2011, p.2.

The unpredictable way in which the reenactment of a traumatic moment in the past works, thus, puts a traumatized person in a challenging situation to find the right words to explain his suffering. Even verbal language which is known to be one of the most effective means of communication is separated from the logocentric thereby creating a dilemma on the part of the victimized person. In **Beside Herself**, Evelyn's childhood trauma of sexual abuse does not find any ways of fitting itself into the social world with appropriate words. Like the split in Evelyn's existence or the broken mirror image, language solely reflects a destructed image of the reality too. Evelyn's communication with the figure of Eve aligns with the experience of trauma, since it can be defined as "an event in the subject's life defined by its intensity, by the subject's incapacity to respond adequately to it, and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects that it brings about in the psychical organisation."¹⁵ Language disrupts an individual's inner drives since it moulds itself to fit into the symbolic order. The words uttered, like those of Evelyn, are subjected to the changes made in accordance with the rules of the symbolic order thereby giving no way to the expression of the real exposed by the traumatic memory. Language in **Beside Herself**, thus, shows the extent to which the words of the symbolic blur one's view of the reality. When the language of a traumatized psyche is integrated into that of the symbolic real, what comes into effect is a peculiar language style formed by certain linguistic strategies as Daniels especially adopts with her use of Evelyn's double. At this point, it may also be stated that the representation of Evelyn's trauma takes place outside of the symbolic realm of language which brings to mind Julia Kristeva's semiotic¹⁶.

¹⁵ Jean Laplanche, J. B. Pontalis, **The language of Psycho-analysis**, trans.by Nicholson Smith, New York, Norton, 1973, p. 465.

¹⁶ Kristeva in her **Revolution in Poetic Language** studies two interdependent aspects of language. The semiotic is identified as the maternal aspect of language that has to do with the speaker's inner drives. These drives which are associated with the unconscious become manifest in the speaker's utterances or in the images they use to transmit messages. This realm of semiotic is, in Kristevan sense, suppressed by what the theorist describes as the patriarchal aspect of language, namely, the symbolic. The symbolic is rule-bound and therefore it becomes meaningful through grammatical structures whereas the semiotic is free from the rules and reminiscent of language of a child. Considering these points, it can be said that Eve's language as the language of abused self of Evelyn or language of the traumatized psyche operates in the semiotic realm where the patriarchal language invalidating women experiences of abuse does not exist.

The apparition of Eve whose perspective helps Evelyn to see herself is distant from the symbolic order. The way Evelyn views the reality is fragmented and this reality does not correspond to the one she constructs by leading a life of a middle-class heterosexual woman. The language she uses in the social life is not reflectory of her real self, either. The idea of language's being impotent to reflect the trauma of a disrupted psyche and the reaction of a victim to the hauntings like that of Evelyn are interpreted as a kind of an encounter with the Real in Lacanian framework as Goldberg in the paper **"Trauma, Narrative, and Two Forms of Death"** notes:

Trauma is caused by the subject's close encounter with what Lacan calls the "Real"- a situation or an event that exceeds the symbolic order and therefore cannot gain any meaning in the subject's symbolic framework. Something in this encounter bypasses the cognitive mental apparatus and is experienced by the subject as excess. This excess is doomed to return as a traumatic symptom and to haunt the subject in a compulsory manner.¹⁷

When the mentioned incomprehensibility of the "real" outside the symbolic order merges with the reenactment of traumatic experience, Evelyn is seen as being totally unable to grapple with the case and create knowledge of the past properly. The difficulty she has in understanding the self is, perhaps, an integral component of her facing the real in Lacanian sense too. But, it must be recalled that Eve, as an intensified reference to Evelyn's crying wound, certainly represents that inaccessible, incognizable traumatic event of her past within the play. Eve keeps haunting Evelyn relentlessly as expressed by Lacan as a manifestation of her devastated inner psyche until the very end. For Sarah Daniels, this literary strategy, basically the idea of representing one's traumatized psyche with the help of a hallucinatory apparition, might serve as an adequate means of analysis of trauma against the inadequacy of verbal language as has been stated.

¹⁷A.Goldberg, "Trauma, Narrative, and Two Forms of Death", **Literature and Medicine**, Vol. 25, No: 1, 2006, p. 133.

The idea of the “split self” introduced in Scene One as a theatrical device employed by Daniels to represent trauma on stage is accompanied by “the mirror” which also functions as another device in Scene Two. The scene opens with a description of the living room at St Dymphna’s which puts an emphasis on the existence of a broken mirror:

The room has been vandalised. The recently emulsioned walls have been daubed with paint. The only decipherable word “Loonies” has pride of place between the picture rail and frame of the mirror over the fireplace. The mirror is smashed. The fragments lie scattered over the floor.¹⁸

It is clear that the room is in an awful condition because of the crime of vandalism. At a symbolic level, a parallelism can be drawn between the condition of this room and the condition of traumatic patients as residents of the house. Inside of the room might be thought as a representative of the inside of their brains disrupted by emotional breakdown. Likewise, the appearance of the word “Loonies” near the shattered mirror may inevitably bring to mind the possible relatedness of the word to the issue of madness and sexual abuse as integral parts of the play because the shattered mirror coupled with the word could be there to point to the fragmented identity of the abused women labelled as mad in its entirety.

This can also be adaptable to Evelyn’s mindset shaped by repressed reality of abuse. Like the shattered mirror, her psyche is utterly devastated and broken into many pieces on account of her experience of sexual abuse by her father. Unable to come to terms with what was done to her, Evelyn stands there as a victim whose inner self is sort of fragmented like the mirror standing there in a bad condition.

¹⁸ Sarah Daniels, *op.cit.*, p. 111.

The issue of sexual abuse at the center of **Beside Herself** as regards its relevancy to Evelyn/Eve is an inherent component of Scene Two in which Evelyn views herself from the broken mirror at St Dymphna. What must be particularly stressed with respect to this hospital is that it makes one question about the fundamental reason why Daniels might have chosen the hospital with such a name as the place where much of the story takes place. Upon inspection, it is understood that the name is a highly symbolic one since it is the name of a thirteenth century woman who is known to have been a victim of incest too. Jade Christine Angelica in her book **A Moral Emergency: Breaking the Cycle of Child Sexual Abuse** gives a brief historical account of Saint Dymphna which could also shed some light upon the issue of why the name might have been chosen by the playwright as Angelica states:

Saint Dymphna, an incest victim living in the 7th century Ireland, left behind a tragic story. Dymphna was the daughter of a pagan Irish king and Christian mother. After his wife died, the king desired his daughter Dymphna in marriage. Resisting him, Dymphna fled. The king found her and beheaded her. In the 13th century, the body of Saint Dymphna was discovered in the Flemish town of Cheel near Antwerp, and a number of lunatics and epileptics were allegedly restored to health. Because of this miracle, Saint Dymphna became the patron saint of the mentally ill.¹⁹

Considering the given account coupled with the similar case of Evelyn who is a victim of incestual abuse, the reason behind Daniels's choice for the name "Saint Dymphna" could be linked to her target of referring to the theme of sexual abuse. St. Dymphna, as a societal institution, is also like a sphere where the personal trauma of Evelyn is intertwined with the collective trauma of the others who are sufferers of different forms of abuse too.²⁰

¹⁹ Jade C. Angelica, **A Moral Emergency: Breaking the Cycle of Child Sexual Abuse**, Kansas City, Sheed & Ward, 1993, p. 60.

²⁰ The abuse stories narrated at St Dymphna's bear a striking resemblance to those narrated to Sigmund Freud. The daughter stories Freud listened to like the cases of Anna O., Lucy R., Katharina, Elizabeth von R. depicted in **Studies on Hysteria** all made him hold the view that their hysteria had to do with a destructive father-daughter relationship. Fathers as the culprits are told to have perpetrated obnoxious acts and captivated their daughters. Additionally, what Freud has underscored through his "Seduction Theory" also includes the influence of suppressed traumatic memories of such a relationship upon the victims which means that the repressed memories linger on the victims' minds.

When Evelyn appears on stage in Scene Two at St Dymphna's for the first time, it is seen that she enters the room with a framed print of Breughel's Icarus that she uses to cover the broken mirror:

Evelyn	I knew it was supposed to be unlucky to have a mirror over a fireplace but- (Pause.) I look good.
Eve	Stupid.
Evelyn	(to Eve) I feel okay.
Eve	Dirty.
Evelyn	(to Eve) I'm all right.
Eve	Worthless.
Evelyn	Now, best place for the picture.
Eve	You shouldn't talk to yourself. Not here of all places.
Evelyn	(<i>holding the picture against the wall</i>) No. ²¹

Evelyn's hanging this beautiful painting on the wall to cover the mirror serves as a reminiscent of her attempts in the daily life to cover her repressed psyche. Her life seems to have an outward beauty like this painting which actually has to do with Icarus' victimization. Relevant to this subject, it must be underlined that Icarus is merely reflected as a small point in the painting which symbolizes the indifference of the society to a traumatized individual as well. It shows that life goes on regardless of the suffering of the victimized individuals like Evelyn. For instance, she preoccupies herself with her task at St Dymphna's, does household chores that help to make her and the others around assume that she leads a typical life of a sane, heterosexual, middle-class woman. However, by doing so, she reinforces the idea that it is the patriarchy exerting its power on the social realm. She falls into the trap of believing that the symbolic real represented by her social life could silence the outcry of her split self. Irrespective of Eve's statements about her shattered reflection in the broken mirror, Evelyn seems to be content with what she sees which shows her incapability of acknowledging the truth.

²¹ Sarah Daniels, *op.cit.*, p. 114-15.

The above mentioned entrance of Evelyn into St. Dymphna's is also striking in terms of Eve's verbal undermining of Evelyn's efforts. Eve's utilization of derogatory terms such as stupid, dirty and worthless shows the extent to which Eve hinders Evelyn from building any self-confidence as being an individual who may feel normal. The way Evelyn acts in this scene matches with Judith Herman's depiction of psychology of abuse victims in trauma theory as Herman details:

[A]dult survivors who have escaped from the abusive situation continue to view themselves with contempt and to take upon themselves the shame and guilt of their abusers [...] In the effort to placate her abusers, the child victim often becomes a superb performer [...] She may become an emphatic caretaker for her parents, an efficient housekeeper, an academic achiever, a model of social conformity [...] None of her achievements in the world redound to her credit, however, for she usually perceives her performing self as inauthentic and false.²²

The unassimilated trauma of Evelyn put on stage by the utterances of Eve as the paradoxical figure for Daniels' handling the issue of incestuous sexual abuse additionally echoes Christine Froula's evaluation in her work **The Daughter's Seduction: Sexual Violence and Literary History** with her allusion to Judith Herman as well as she states, "Herman shows that the abusive or seductive father does serious harm to the daughter's mind as well as to her body, damaging her sense of her own identity and depriving her voice of authority."²³ For Judith Herman, traumatic events shatter the construction of the self and cast the victim into a state of existential crisis as observed through the relationship between Eve/Evelyn.

It may also be noted that, in Freudian perspective, Eve undermines Evelyn's confidence by telling her off for what she believes has caused her downfall. The Seduction Theory suggests the self-reproaches that follow at a more mature age can be regarded as one's tendency to assume that nothing happens in life if one does not give way to that in a way. Guilt presents itself as the inevitable emotion when both memory and reproach are suppressed.

The trauma of Eve/Evelyn put on stage by the playwright through the additional device of the mirror in the scene heightens the sense of fragmentariness of the protagonist. The mismatch between the utterances of Evelyn and Eve as her fantasmic self with respect to her attempt of covering the broken mirror brings to mind the mirror stage Lacan describes in **The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function** as follows:

The mirror stage is a drama whose internal thrust hastens forward from insufficiency to anticipation- and which contrives for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of fantasies that extend from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopedic...²⁴

In other words, the child's experience in the mirror stage points to a shift from the child's supposition of his complete image to the entry into the social world. Eve, as a sort of child-like Evelyn, might be thought as personating Evelyn who has not undergone the process described by Lacan successfully. Namely, she exhibits some behaviours similar to those a child exhibits before going through the mirror stage. She acts uncontrollably and recklessly whereas Evelyn endeavours to do or to say what is socially not frowned upon.

Eve as a representative figure of Evelyn's failure of experiencing the mirror stage appropriately sheds light on the contradiction between her inner world and the social world she tries to fit in. She is incapable of putting a balance between the two to which Lacan refers using German terms *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt*: "I am led, therefore, to regard the function of the mirror-stage as a particular case of the function of the imago, which is to establish a relation between the organism and its reality- or, as they say, between the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt*."²⁴

²² Judith Herman, **Trauma and Recovery**, New York, Basic Books, 1992, p.105.

²³ Christine Froula, "The Daughter's Seduction: Sexual Violence and Literary History," **Journal of Women in Culture and Society**, Vol. 11, No: 4, 1986, p. 633.

²⁴ Jacques Lacan, **Écrits, A Selection**, translated from the French by Alan Sheridan, New York, W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1977, p. 4.

Lacan's Innenwelt alludes to the inner world of the child in the mirror stage that is contrasted with Umwelt which represents the physical environment or the surroundings. When Innenwelt does not interact with Umwelt properly in the mirror stage, the child is likely to get stuck in the initial phase that renders it almost improbable to cope with going on life as a social being. In **Beside Herself**, Evelyn stands out with her being unable to have balanced the interaction between the two parts in her early childhood years. Notwithstanding her efforts to be a social individual with her position in the community house together with the daily tasks she performs both as a mother and a daughter, she cannot silence the Eve inside her, or her Innenwelt. She encounters difficulties in her struggle to conform to the symbolic order. Eve constantly makes her presence known to Evelyn whose perception of reality is shaped by a distorted sense of what is real. Her attempts of adjusting her Umwelt, basically the social life she leads to be called a respectable woman, to her Innenwelt end up turning up the volume of the voice of Eve. The conflict between Evelyn's traumatic self and social self projected onto the stage with the device of the broken mirror in Scene Two manifests itself again during one of the discussions at community house. While listening to the story of Dawn who is a patient at St Dymphna's, the voice of her Innenwelt is as follows:

Roy	Adoption is irreversible and she didn't help matters much by physically attacking her Probation Officer. Doesn't like men. Apparently she was sexually messed about with as a child.
Eve	You started this. Don't just look out the window.
Nicola	<i>(deep breath)</i> Actually, I do think it's important-
Greg	To be fair, I think it was more that the Probation Officer had rather a profusion of beard and was quite impossible to lip read, although, it is suspected that the father of the child could have been her own father.
Eve	Let's go. Come on. Who wants to hear all this?
Nicola	I was just about-
Roy	<i>(to Greg)</i> Have you got Dave's application there?
Greg	<i>(surprised)</i> Yes.
Roy	Well, do you think we could move on to it. He has been waiting rather a long while and I was hoping we'd cover him first.

*Nicola takes out a cigarette and lights it.*²⁵

²⁵ Sarah Daniels' *op.cit.*, p.128.

Evelyn voluntarily participates in this debate which gets the substructure ready for a critical approach towards the problem of child sexual abuse. However, the Eve inside her precludes her from elaborating on the issue. Apart from Evelyn, the participants include Greg (team leader belonging to the working class), Roy (the psychiatrist) and Nicola (Roy's assistant and Lil's daughter whom she has not seen for a long time). What is of paramount importance to stress about Nicola is that she is, like Evelyn, a victim of sexual abuse by her step-father, Tony. For this reason, Nicola's references or contributions to the discussion of sexual abuse coupled with those of Eve as the alter-ego of Evelyn give a much clearer account of their similar backgrounds formed by a mutual story of abuse. Their connection as abused daughters is fully confirmed by Evelyn's confession to Nicola in Scene Nine which will be further explored.

The reluctance of Eve to listen to Dawn's traumatic story along with the rising distress of Nicola lighting a cigarette as their observable reactions to the discussion of abuse in childhood suggest the similar positions they inhabit in their upbringing. Gabriele Griffin's remarks concerning the gravity of Evelyn's experience at St Dymphna and the emotional link she has with victims of abuse like Nicola must be remembered:

Evelyn's long-term suppression of her sexual abuse at the hands of her father is brought to crisis through her involvement with the Community Group House. There she encounters other victims of abuse such as Dave who was put into psychiatric care because he is a homosexual, and Dawn who was sexually abused as a child. Listening to their case histories forces Evelyn to make sense of her own life and confront her elderly father. The play contains multiple narratives of abuse which deny the notion that abuse is contained within specific frameworks. Evelyn's middle-class experience of incestuous abuse is mirrored by the story of the lower-middle-class character Lil, a care worker, and her daughter Nicola. *Beside Herself* thus focuses on how adult women come to terms with incestuous abuse, of themselves, of their daughters, of other women.²⁶

²⁶ Gabriele Griffin, "Violence, abuse, and gender relations in the plays of Sarah Daniels," **The Cambridge Companion To Modern British Women Playwrights**, ed. by Elaine Aston and Janelle Reinelt, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 201.

It is important to stress that Eve's behaviours which correspond with this ghastly apparition's need to preclude the abuse memories from coming to the fore in public can be read through Dori Laub's emphasis upon one's omnipotence as a trauma listener. Laub outlines that

The listener can no longer ignore the question of facing death; of facing time and its passage; of the meaning and purpose of living; of the limits of one's omnipotence; of losing the ones that are close to us; the great question of our ultimate aloneness; our otherness from any other; our responsibility to and for our destiny; the question of loving and its limits; of parents and children; and so on.²⁷

It would be fit to contend that what Evelyn experiences during the meeting seem to go parallel with Laub's description of the trauma listener who has been traumatized before. Eve constantly does her best to deflect Evelyn's attention from the painful recollections which can be identified as some certain listening defenses. These listening defenses Eve demonstrates are listed in Dori Laub's account as follows:

- A sense of total paralysis, brought about by the threat of flooding- by the fear of merger with the atrocities being recounted.
- A sense of outrage and anger, unwittingly directed at the victim- the narrator.
- A sense of total withdrawal and numbness.
- A flood of awe and fear; we endow the survivor with a kind of sanctity, both to pay our tribute to him and to keep him at a distance, to avoid the intimacy entailed in knowing.²⁸

Evelyn's sense of abused self become manifest through the way Eve defends her within the play. Trauma's being contagious and her omnipotent listening's triggering Evelyn to feel obliged to face her own trauma also come to mind when Eve's defenses are considered.

²⁷ Dori Laub *op.cit.*, p.72.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 72.3.

When the meeting in which child abuse is discussed progresses, it becomes evident that the figure of Eve in **Beside Herself** serves as a means of theatrical depiction of dissociation as well. Evelyn's abused childhood self not only speaks through what Eve utters but also through how Eve bodily reacts to what she hears during the meeting. In order to comprehend the illustration of dissociation, a set of certain other defenses of Eve while listening to the agenda of meeting must be taken into account which are as follows:

Eve	The bathroom. Think about re-decorating the bathroom.
Nicola	But, statistics show, don't they that a large proportion of female patients in mental institutions were sexually abused by a father figure?
Eve	It has got dirty, filthy.
Roy (<i>scoffs</i>)	I can't imagine where you got that so-called statistic from.
	(<i>Then severely.</i>) And it's not very helpful to use the term "mental institution" in this day and age.
Eve	Pink. Paint it pink?
Greg	I think it's misleading and potentially dangerous to suggest that abused girls end up as women on psychiatric wards.
Nicola	But I weren't saying-
Roy	"Weren't" you now.
Nicola	No, it's a small per cent admitted to hospital, it would have to be. There isn't room for a quarter of the female population.
Roy	In all my years of experience I could count on one hand the number of patients who've admitted that to me. And they were naughty precocious girls who certainly had no doubts about their attractiveness to men.
Eve	Count on one hand. Dirty white, blue grey...blue grey...blue grey.. ²⁹

Here, Eve's actions function as attempts of invalidating the victim-blaming discourse to which she listens because the discourse causes her to remember what she suffered from. Anika Stafford in **Feminist Abuse Survivor Narratives in *Angel* and Sarah Daniels's *Beside Herself*** addresses the issue of theatrical representation of dissociation with direct references to the above given part of Scene 2 and states that

²⁹ Sarah Daniels' **op.cit.**, p.131.

For the duration of the scene, Evelyn, with Eve's prompting, escapes this discourse by listing colors she could repaint her bathroom. Through this task, Evelyn dissociates from the moment, relying on old patterns that enabled her to survive abuse as a child- disconnection from her body and preoccupation with "covering up" the situation. Evelyn is not yet ready to vocally reject the victim-blaming discourse and separates herself from it. Significantly, Daniels does not pathologize Eve's presence or actions in *Beside Herself*. Instead, the theatrics of depicting disembodiment through interactions with another character validate dissociation, an understandable response to victim-blaming discourse that can trigger survivors' memories of abuse.³⁰

Eve's presence and all its reactions in the given scene, then, demonstrate that not only the mind but also the body rejects any kind of engagement in the traumatic cycle which is not pathologized but theatricalized as an indispensable element of making repressed trauma of Evelyn knowable to audiences/readers. The traumatic experience of sexual abuse is recreated on the stage and the theatrical stage offers a markedly different means of depicting the impact of trauma upon the mind and body of the traumatized individual. Furthermore, it must be stated that Eve's actions during the meeting could indeed be deemed as a reflection of what neuroscientist and trauma researcher Van der Kolk underlines in the foreword to the book **Trauma and the Body**. He argues that,

the current discoveries in the neurosciences about the automatic activation of hormonal secretions, emotional states, and physical reactions in response to sensory input have once again confronted psychology with a reality that was first emphatically articulated by Freud: that most human actions and motivations are based on processes that are not under conscious control. The implications of these discoveries are particularly relevant for understanding and treating traumatized individuals. Realizing that they are prone to activate automatic trauma-related hormonal secretions and physical action patterns clarifies why they would tend to respond to certain triggers with irrational...responses that are irrelevant and even harmful in the context of present demands.³¹

³⁰ Anika Stafford, "Feminist Abuse Survivor Narratives in *Angel* and Sarah Daniels's *Beside Herself*," **The Literary Angel: Essays on Influences and Traditions Reflected in the Joss Wheden Series**, the USA, McFarland Company, 2010, p.88.

³¹ Van der Kolk, Bessel, Foreword by Bessel A. van der Kolk, M.D., **Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy**, ed.by Pat Ogden, Kekuni Minton and Clare Pain, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2006, p. XX.

The attitude of the double figure towards the situation of the other abuse victims at St. Dymphna's reveals the conflict between Evelyn's Innenwelt and Umwelt as has been noted. The revelatory nature of her referred attitude is also made explicit in Scene Five where the homosexual Dave, a patient at St. Dymphna's, is found dead lying on the ground. Eve's reaction on seeing the dead body of Dave must be examined as Eve says:

Eve	<i>(turns to look at Dave)</i> He's dead. He's dead!
Evelyn	I'm afraid the mirror got broken and we're still waiting for a replacement.
Eve	Stop being so polite, that man in that chair there has died.
Gaynor	Not a very welcoming omen.
Richard	<i>(tightly)</i> Dear? <i>(Then pleasantly to Evelyn.)</i> It's not that we're...
Gaynor	<i>(ruefully)</i> Not for the first seven years at least.
Evelyn	Can I get you a cup of coffee?
Eve	Try and say excuse me but I think something's wrong and I can't cope.
Evelyn	<i>(unnerved)</i> Please come through to the kitchen. The kettle's boiled and you can see what it looks like. <i>(Turns to go into the kitchen.)</i>
Eve	Don't just pretend it's all right. ³²

In contrast to its suggesting a stepping back to Evelyn in the discussion of Dawn's abused baby, the voice of her alter ego acts like a driving force to push Evelyn to take action this time. The major significance of this scene is that Evelyn and Eve as the same person become allies in coping with trauma since we see Evelyn accepting Eve's existence in order to make her story hearable, knowable and understandable to others. Anika Stafford similarly emphasizes the relevancy of the scene to the issue of becoming allies in fighting against silencing voices of abuse survivors and notes that

Reinforcing this message is Daniel's choice to posit a moment of "madness" as a pivotal turning point toward Evelyn moving from abusive dynamics to social alliances that enable her to see herself as an active agent in her life. Evelyn discovers a resident died in the house where she works. While Evelyn remains detached from the situation, Eve attempts to engage Evelyn. Evelyn directly acknowledges Eve for the first time and, in doing so, defies the learned behaviour of remaining distant from how devastating events impact her life.³³

In the ensuing scene, titled “Exodus”, Evelyn feels ready to disclose her abuse to Nicola whose similar abuse story pushes Evelyn to listen to what Eve has been telling her throughout the play. The unspeakable put on stage by Daniels with the help of Eve’s apparition becomes totally speakable when Evelyn makes the confession to Nicola in Scene 9/Genesis part. Considering that the scene is entitled “Genesis” by Daniels as this disclosure of Evelyn’s secret to Nicola signifies a new beginning in her life, it might also imply a new beginning for all oppressed women as Anika Stafford similarly maintains that

“Genesis” asserts the possibility of a beginning after exodus. Allegorically, this change in biblical chronology shifts associations with the loss of Eden away from being something for which Eve (Evelyn) is at fault, away from victim-blaming behaviour, and into a position from which there can be a new beginning. Nicola *Adams*’s name has a similar suggestion that the shadow character Eve is in need of an ally to complete the work of creation of self (as opposed to the biblical Adam, who blamed his counterpart- the biblical Eve). As a result of Nicola’s support, Eve urges Evelyn to change the helplessness she is enacting in her life, suggesting that Eve can now support Evelyn’s recovery, not merely encourage coping mechanisms like learned patterns of disassociation. Evelyn’s relationship with Eve has shifted from one of re-enacting abusive messages to acting out against abuse.³⁴

The lens from which Evelyn examines the world change and she gets ready to familiarize herself with a brand new view of her identity. The step that she takes with her confession to Nicola as her ally which is followed by a confrontation with the father could be esteemed as her attempt of putting the broken pieces of the mirror together. She is seen as attaining the integrity of the self by bidding a farewell to her double, Eve, at the end of the play. She stops blaming herself for what has happened and follows the path to her recovery mainly with the help of finding allies in Eve and Nicola. It must be noted that Evelyn’s story of abuse is unfolded in the conversation between her and Nicola as follows:

³² Sarah Daniels, *op.cit.*, p. 162.

³³ Anika Stafford, *op.cit.*, p. 91.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Evelyn There's something I want to tell you. Back there I felt an overwhelming urge to scream it in Roy Freeman's face. But something stopped me.

Nicola (pause) I'm listening.

Evelyn Now, I just want to go to sleep and not think about it.

Eve Just say it.

Evelyn It's about my father.

Eve It's about me.

Evelyn (blurts out) You see the first time it happened I thought it was my mistake. The bathroom. He came into the bathroom, which wasn't unusual in itself. He asked me for a cuddle, that wasn't unusual either but there was something in the way he touched me that made me feel uncomfortable. Even so, if it had never happened again I would have thought it was my mistake.

Nicola But it wasn't.

Evelyn No, you don't understand, he's such a well thought of man. Important, respected.

Eve What about me?

Nicola I believe you.³⁵

The importance of this conversation is that Evelyn feels empowered to start a new life for herself. The power of abuse victims' solidarity manifests itself as a key factor of their survival. There exists a mutual support between them and it points to recovery from trauma. As Judith Herman emphasizes that

Recovery, therefore, is based upon the empowerment of the survivor and the creation of new connections. Recovery can take place only within the context of relationships; it cannot occur in isolation.³⁶

In the aftermath of her confession to Nicola, the representation of Evelyn as a more strong-willed female character in terms of her attitude towards her father while confronting him for the abuse case demonstrates the eventual state in which the victimized women find themselves, that is, the state of awakening.

³⁵ Sarah Daniels, *op.cit.*, p. 177.

³⁶ Herman, *op.cit.*, p.137

Nicola is portrayed as already an awakened victim in her determination to defy her abuser from the beginning while Evelyn does her best to suppress her feelings throughout her life until her reckoning George in Scene 10 where her final words must be highlighted:

Evelyn There was a child who was abused by her Father for many years. It hurt. She was in pain and humiliated and eventually robbed of herself. No, Father, I don't want revenge. What could I possibly do to you that would undo what you've done to me? I've lived with it and I don't want any longer. You can live with it. (*Eve turns and looks at Evelyn and slips away.*) And I won't forgive you because what you've done is unforgivable.³⁷

Evelyn's purgation of the sense of guilt with the intention of making her father sympathize with her coupled with her repudiation of the need for revenge leave the door open for the commentators to assume that she might take on the role of the perpetrator. She deeply desires her father to be overwhelmed by that sense of guilt this time thereby turning it into a pangs of remorse for him. Therefore, maybe unintentionally, Evelyn's resoluteness subverts the roles and makes George feel compelled to look at the world from the window of a victim whose frames are constructed with mental and emotional torture of long hard years.

In other respects, how Eve as the double of Evelyn acts just after the significant conversation between the father and daughter must be taken into account since it resonates with the anti-patriarchal, non-religious side of the playwright as well. There is a sense of cleansing or baptizing. It is seen that "Eve holds out a large bath towel towards Evelyn. Evelyn takes it and slowly starts to wipe her hands and face and neck, carefully, taking pleasure in it. She repeats the action with Eve."³⁸

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

The reason of the pleasure Evelyn/Eve derives from wiping her hands, face or neck could lie behind her overtly shifting off the responsibility taken over as a dutiful daughter and repressed victim in line with the patriarchy and Bible that support male ordination. It can be said that a sigh of relief of Evelyn is heard from far away that also functions like a catharsis , particularly for female spectators whose frustration results from the ceaseless, ruthless male abuse. As Christina Wald states:

It stages a way of female self-empowerment which the other plays do not grant their protagonists. The fact that the play does not end with the reconciliation between Evelyn and Eve but with Eve's elimination suggests that Evelyn has fully overcome her trauma.³⁹

In Scene 11, Evelyn comes back to St. Dymphna's a week later and holds her first conversation with Nicola's mother, Lil. The conversation is also significant in that Evelyn indirectly accentuates her intention of facing the reality with the mention of taking the picture back she put to cover the broken mirror:

Evelyn *alone, comes in. Lil sees her in the mirror.*

Lil *(turns)* I thought you'd ...Shirley said.

Evelyn I've come to take the picture back to the library.

Lil It's here. *(She gets it.)* Are you all right?

Evelyn *(taking the picture)* Thanks. No, but I will be.

Lil I wanted...

Evelyn Are you...

Lil Go on.

Evelyn Are you still frightened of flying?

Lil No. I never was. What I'm frightened of is crashing; sinking with the wreckage.

Evelyn So was I.⁴⁰

³⁹ Christina Wald, *op.cit.*, p. 127

⁴⁰ Sarah Daniels, *op.cit.*, p. 187.

Evelyn's words without Eve's accompaniment proves that she is free from her traumatic self by abandoning the position compelling her to view the social order from a fragmented angle. Evelyn's disunion signifies an initiation of a new position which is governed by a complete view of reality and healing of her fragmented self. Furthermore, the level of the estimated identification of the female spectators with Evelyn in Scene 10 and 11 could be increasing in Scene 12 where Lil and Nicola salute them as two women facing each other. It makes sense to lay weight on these two women's encounter too in that it could be a tacit message of Daniels who clings to the idea that women need each other's support rather than that of men in their battle against male dominance. Lil can be said to have denied the abuse of her daughter under the negative influence of Tony, but her position at the very end of the whole play serves as a representative of the emotional attachment of two victimized females.

In Scene 12 titled as "World Without", Nicola meets her mother as a sign of the prospective solidarity between them:

Outside Lil's front door. Nicola hesitates before ringing the bell. She steps back as near to the balcony as she can, in case she decides to run. Lil opens the door; a book in her hand, her finger marking the page.

Tony Who the hell is it?

Lil looks behind her, then drops the book on the floor.

Lil It's for me.

*Steps over the threshold shutting the door behind her. The two women stand facing each other.*⁴¹

The overall impression the final scene makes on the audience is that Daniels's theatre offers hopes for a future when the male perpetrators are not capable of reaping benefits from their abusive acts and they are beside themselves in the end.

⁴¹ **Ibid.**, p. 188.

For George and Tony, the concept of being beside oneself is mirrored, this time, by their stories of being kind of violated as a consequence of disempowering reunion of formerly disempowered women. Elaine Aston's mention of male critics taking a stand against the theatre of Daniels strikes attention as it gives clues about the state of being beside oneself as she says:

It comes as no surprise, therefore, to find the male critic replying to Daniels's theatre of sexual politics with his own linguistic registers of backlash abuse. The gender bias of the British theatre academy means that an approach to reviewing which proportionately represents society's gender-breakdown is unlikely to happen in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, I, as part of the "minority" 52% am pleased and empowered by the capacity of Daniels's woman-centered theatre to leave the enraged male critic "beside himself."⁴²

Daniel's labelling of the scene as "World Without" may be related to her intention of emphasizing the significance of the world without abusive acts of patriarchal perpetrators.

All in all, **Beside Herself** argues that trauma can find a different means of expression with Daniels' different theatrical representation which actually separates itself from the one taking strength from its masculine nature. The representation of the traumatic situation of the sexual abuse victim produces a narrative in which anti-logocentric nature of the memory is successfully studied. Eve as the personification of Evelyn's devastated inner self can be conceptualized as Evelyn herself before going through Lacan's mirror stage. When looked at from this perspective, the use of mirror device accompanies the device of doubling to serve the purpose of resurfacing the protagonist's fragmented sense of reality throughout the play. It must be noted, especially in relation to the ending, the play calls into question the function of social institutions that promote the interests of men who repudiate the status of women as well.

⁴² Elaine Aston, "Daniels in the Lion's Den: Sarah Daniels and the British Backlash", *op.cit.*, p.403.

It can be regarded as an indirect critique of the ways in which the social institutions operate by attributing some certain values to men. The devices Daniels makes use of in the play to represent Evelyn's trauma could also be considered as making it much easier to understand the wrongdoings of the male-governed system. Eve is like the inner voice of all the oppressed women and the broken mirror through which Evelyn sees herself reflects the profile of all the abuse victims. Similarly, elimination of Eve in the end is the harbinger of a system in which broken pieces are put together to attain a complete view of one's own self.



CHAPTER II

“MY DAD DID THINGS TO ME. I NEVER TOLD YOU THAT. MY MUM SHUT ME IN THE CUPBOARD.”¹: CARYL CHURCHILL’S **THE SKRIKER**

Caryl Churchill, who was born in 1938, is widely known for her priceless contributions to British Stage with her comedies, a series of experimental one-act dramas, works for the radio and television in the twentieth century. Her most famous works include **Vinegar Tom**, **Top Girls** and **Cloud Nine** which are believed to have been written in line with her fascination with tackling social, political and gender concerns of her times. Elaine Aston and Elin Diamond in their “Introduction” to **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill** state that “Given the feminist and leftist climate of the 1970s it is not then surprising to find sexual politics surfacing in several of Churchill’s major plays from the 1970s through to the early 1980s, including *Vinegar Tom*, *Cloud Nine*, *Top Girls* and *Fen*.”²

Engaged in heightening audiences/readers’ awareness of the problem of gender oppression, rising capitalism, corruption of the human soul and patriarchy, Churchill takes up a position resulting in her being labelled as an anti-capitalist and socialist-feminist playwright. Her vision of how society should be founded is, therefore, not the same as that of the others who hold the view that people have no other choice but bow to their fates governed by external forces. She stands out as a rebel doing her best to make her voice heard in a society where inequality, violence against women and degradation hold sway. As Elaine Aston in her book **Feminist Views on the English Stage Women Playwrights, 1990-2000** similarly notes as regards Churchill’s theatre, “Her stage plays from the 1970s and 1980s are centrally concerned with theatricalising a socialist and feminist critique of the injustices and inequalities produced by the late-twentieth century western capitalism and patriarchy.”³

As for the plays Churchill wrote in the 1990s, it must be stressed that her theatrical invention reaches to a point where she challenges the expectations of the audience with **The Skriker**, **This is a Chair** and **Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?** by offering them new spheres. With different characterization and language style observable in her plays produced in the late-twentieth century, the playwright sets herself the task of delving more and more into the matters causing terror within the society. Elaine Aston and Elin Diamond make a point of emphasizing the essence of her theatre in the 1990s claiming that

Given the sustained erosion of a credible, counter-political strategy, Churchill has moved towards what might best be described as strategies of dis-identification with life under intensifying regimes of transnational capitalism. In plays such as *The Skriker*, *This is a Chair*, *Far Away or Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?* she insists on re-viewings of the “frightening”, terrifying and damaging consequences of our contemporary world, hurtling towards economic and ecological warfare and a constant state of global terror.⁴

Amongst the plays listed, **The Skriker** written in 1994 can be studied as the most peculiar one in terms of both its content and form. The playwright incorporates her interest in the supernatural, extraordinary or dreamy into the work and alludes to it as a kind of fairy play. Mythological figures from English and Scottish folklore make their presence known through their communication with humans in the play. Whereas all the figures mentioned interact with people by means of some movements, it is only the Skriker that is capable of speaking like a human being. By drawing two teenage mothers, Josie and Lily, into its underworld, the Skriker turns into a vehicle for involuntary remembrance of the traumatic events. At this point, it must be noted that the present chapter aims to investigate the theatrical strategies Churchill utilizes to represent and restage the repressed trauma of Josie and Lily throughout the play.

¹ Caryl Churchill, **The Skriker**, London, Nick Hern Books, 1994, p. 47.

² Elaine Aston, Elin Diamond, **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 4.

³ Elaine Aston, **Feminist Views on the English Stage Women Playwrights, 1990-2000**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 18.

⁴ Elaine Aston, Elin Diamond, **op.cit.**, p. 6.

The play opens with a combination of the underworld, the Skriker and Johnny Squarefoot which pushes one to question what lies behind the depicted world of this creature. The presence of a mythological figure like Johnny Squarefoot, particularly arouses curiosity on the part of audiences/readers to discern the implicit messages being conveyed from the outset. Furthermore, the title of the play, indeed, “The Skriker” captures attention since it does not seem to be an intelligible one at first glance. Amelia Howe Kritzer sheds light on the issue pointing out that

The play’s title character, the Skriker, derives from Irish and northern English myth, in which the Skriker is a banshee spirit who wails loudly to announce an imminent death. As created by Churchill, this character also presents broader mythical overtones connected with the Greek myths of Persephone and the Furies, as well as the West African trickster figure Anansi. Other characters from British folklore who appear in the play include Johnny Squarefoot, the Kelpie, Yallery-brown, Rawheadandbloodybones, Nellie Longarms, and Jenny Greenteeth- all of which have been employed to frighten small children. These folkloric figures, with their distinctive appearance and forms of communication, emphasize the disturbing threats inhabiting the familiar, everyday world, while the broader mythic resonances of these figures suggest universal and irreversible damage in the natural world.⁵

The Skriker, then, can be said to be there to stand for the darkest realms of human mind shaped under the effect of varying experiences from a gloomy background. Under the guise of numerous different figures throughout the play, it is certainly evocative of a traumatized mental state solely perceptible to the ones trapped in a similar psychological dilemma. Its manifestation of itself as a woman, a child or even a chair could be regarded as an emphasis upon the role change plays in the lives of everyone trying to keep up with rapidly developing capitalist world. The Skriker, in its devastated situation as introduced by Churchill at the opening of the play “The SKRIKER, a shapeshifter and a death portent, ancient and damaged”⁶ is, perhaps, a mirror-like figure for the mindset of all the traumatized individuals.

⁵ Amelia Howe Kritzer, “Damaged Myth in Caryl Churchill’s The Skriker”, **Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tale and Legends: Essays on recent plays**, ed. by Verna A. Foster, Jefferson, NC, McFarland & Company, 2012, p. 112.

⁶ Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 1.

When the play begins, this haunting figure, the Skriker, baffles audience/reader with a long opening speech that is indefinite, unstable and fragmented. Eva Gil Cuder in the article **More Than Words: Drama and Spectrality for the Articulation of Trauma** draws attention to the Skriker's language and points out that

Its broken and indecipherable syntax, its incoherence and the use of a kind of linguistic pattern based on sounds and repetitions that render the lines almost incomprehensible represent the language of the repressed, associated to the realm of the semiotic.⁷

Despite the incomprehensibility of the language of the Skriker, its characteristic features make it a poetic one. The rhythm, the music inherent in it becomes explicit as this spectre- like being begins to speak: "Heard her boast beast a roast beef eater, daughter could spin span spick and spun the lowest form of wheat straw into gold..."⁸. It sounds like totally nonsensical, however, it deconstructs the established norms of the language with the dominance of the music that adds a special flavour to it. It is fairly important to state that it evokes pre-language, basically the language of an infant in addition to its representing language of the repressed. Therefore, the juxtaposition of these two aspects of the idiosyncratic speech of the Skriker points to the realm of the semiotic from the outset. From the point of view of Churchill as a contemporary playwright, it could also address to the instrumentality of this baby-talk side of the Skriker as a theatrical device in her trauma studies as Cuder maintains "Her play offers different attempts to access the victim's traumatized psyche, one of them being the Skriker's language."⁹

⁷ Eva Gil Cuder, "More Than Words: Drama and Spectrality for the Articulation of Trauma," **Journal of English Studies**, Vol. 10, 2012, p. 70.

⁸ Caryl Churchill, **op.cit.**, p. 1.

⁹ Eva Gil Cuder, **op.cit.**, p. 70.

Churchill's implied intention of examining how trauma reenacts on the part of Josie and Lily whom the Skriker lures into the underworld through the poetic language can be read through Julia Kristeva's perspectives with regards to associating this language with the realm of the semiotics. Kristeva elaborates upon the contemporary literature's exploration of the archaic phases of the language in an interview titled as **Pre-Oedipal Language**:

We all know that poetic language is musical and that the music can often dominate the meaning. If you take Mallarmé, for example, you often understand the music, but not the meaning. This dominance of music led me to recognise a resurgence of pre-language, of the music of infant echolalias in poetic language.¹⁰

Based on what Kristeva proposes, it is right to assert that the characteristics of the lengthy speech made by the Skriker bear a striking resemblance to those that one can observe in the language of an infant as stated. Furthermore, Churchill's preference of opening the play with the baby-talk of this phantasmagoric figure could have to do with ineffability of the language in the expression of trauma. That is to say, the incapability of articulating trauma manifests itself in the language of the Skriker. This ghastly apparition could be considered as a kind of a spokesperson carrying out the duty of putting into words the wrath of Josie and Lily. Whereas what the Skriker says seems to make no sense at all, it actually functions as an embodiment of antilogocentrism in articulating trauma as Mladen Ovadija in **Dramaturgy of Sound in the Avant-garde and Postdramatic Theatre** briefly mentions "[The Skriker's] subliminal language retaliates against logocentrism, consumerism, and the belief in scientific progress."¹¹ The Skriker's language does not follow a logical pattern thereby standing for the repressed psyche of a traumatized individual.

¹⁰ "Julia Kristeva on Pre-Oedipal Language", <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNkLlxzZTys>, (Online), 6.3.2021

¹¹ Mladen Ovadija, **Dramaturgy of Sound in the Avant-garde and Postdramatic Theatre**, Montreal, McGill Queen's University Press, 2013, p. 188.

The incapability of articulating trauma, as stated, can be said to be manifesting itself in the language of the phantasmagoric apparition which represents what Josie and Lily suffer from in the play. It would be right to contend that such a language style is an efficient theatrical stratagem of delving into the issues of victimization, abuse or revenge at stake when the final segment of the Skriker's long speech is also taken into account as it follows:

Revengeance is gold mine, sweet. Fe fi fo fumbledown cottage pie crust my heart and hope to die. My mother she killed me and put me in pies for sale away and home and awayday. Peck out her eyes have it. I'll give you three wishy washy. An open grave must be fed up you go like dust in the sunlight of heart. Google gobble says the turkey turnkey key to my heart, gobbledegook de gook is after you. Ready or not here we come quick or dead of night night sleep tightarse.¹²

Irrespective of its incomprehensible nature in its entirety, the presence of a number of crucial key expressions like "revengeance", "My mother she killed me" and "peck out her eyes" in the fragmented speech of the Skriker corroborates the assumption that the speech may be suggestive of painful lives of women characterized by repression in terms of class, gender and sex. Moreover, the Skriker's incoherent monologue as emblematic of the distortion in cognitive mechanism of a trauma survivor brings to mind the notion of speech being inadequate to articulate the intensity of inner trauma. Cathy Caruth refers to this futile attempt of precisely accentuating the experience of trauma through speech with her perspective below:

The danger of speech, of integration into the narration of memory, may lie not in what it cannot understand, but in that it understands too much. Speech seems to offer only [...] the attempt to move away from the experience of shock by reintegrating it into a stable understanding of it.¹³

¹² Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

¹³ Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 154.

At this point, pertaining to the issue of the Skriker's language being a means of representing unspeakability of trauma in the play, the interaction of the ghastly figure with the women that it stalks should be considered. To illustrate, when the Skriker haunts Lily for the first time, it speaks again with a language evocative of the one it uses at the beginning of the play. It also posits itself as a story teller while interacting with her and starts narrating a story:

SKRIKER *tells LILY's story.*

SKRIKER So Lily in the pink with a finnyanny border was talking good as gold speaking pound coins round coins pouring roaring more and more, singing thinging counting saying the alphabetter than nothing telling storied more stories boring sore throat saw no end to it...¹⁴

Elizabet Kovaceva in **Abjection in Selected Plays by Sarah Kane, Caryl Churchill, and Tim Crouch** identifies the Skriker's storytelling "a redundant function in the play."¹⁵ The author maintains that "the Skriker is obsessed with being loved, with getting attention, and with having control over events and history, but realizes its language is broken and not appreciated."¹⁶ Since the broken language of the ghastly apparition is characterized by a pre-linguistic musicality again, it must be stated that Kovaceva's stress upon the Skriker's deep need for excessive attention serves as a reminder of Kristeva's stress upon the correlation between infantile language and narcissism which is explained by the theorist as follows:

In Freudian terms, infantile language can mean two things. First, it refers to what we call the pre-Oedipal phase. An important phase since it involves the whole issue of narcissism: the instability of the frontiers of the ego and depressive and psychotic possibilities. And it is also a period when the child is dependent on its mother and carries traces of this dependency. So, if poetic language displays pre-linguistic musicality, it's because it also bears witness to our fragile narcissism and to the mother-child relationship.¹⁷

The Skriker's language as a theatrical device that is comparable to that of an infant with its relevance to what Kristeva contends can be seen in the ghastly figure's haunting Josie and Lily under the guise of a small child:

JOSIE She's horrible. There's something wrong with her.
***JOSIE** takes hold of **SKRIKER** to look at her.*
LILY Leave her alone.
SKRIKER Leave me alone, I'll tell my mum.
JOSIE She's not your mum. You haven't got a mum.
SKRIKER Mum! Mum!
LILY Josie, stop it. It's all right, pet, she's just/teasing.
JOSIE Get out you little scrounger. /Leave Lily alone.
SKRIKER Mum, don't let her/ hit me.
LILY Josie.
JOSIE I know you, you bastard. How you like toads? You like dirt in your mouth? Get away from us. You come in the house I'll put you in the fire, then we'll see what you look like.¹⁸

Considering Josie's indignation at the Skriker's acting and talking like a small child in the given scene above, it can be said that Josie feels like seeing the image of her own baby she murdered as a reminiscent of her subdued shock. The voice of the Skriker sounds like the repressed voice of a victimized child ready to encounter her victimizer, basically, Josie. Therefore, the Skriker's desperate need of affection in the guise of a baby functions as a reminiscent of Kristeva's association of the infantile language with dependency upon the mother. Relevantly, according to appraisal of Ann Wilson in **Failure and the Limits of Representation in the Skriker**, when the Skriker speaks in the underworld, it echoes with "absolute absence which haunts language but which language cannot render."¹⁹

¹⁴ Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

¹⁵ Elizabet Kovaceva, **Abjection in Selected Plays by Sarah Kane, Caryl Churchill, and Tim Crouch**, Master's thesis, Univerzita Karlova, Praha, 2017, p.41.
<https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/163777/?lang=en>

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁷ Julia Kristeva, *op.cit.*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNkLlxzZTys>,

¹⁸ Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 24-5.

¹⁹ Ann Wilson, "Failure and the Limits of Representation in the Skriker," ed. by Sheila Rabillard, **Essays on Caryl Churchill: Contemporary Representations**, Winnipeg, Blizzard Publishing, 1998, p. 186.

What language cannot render as maintained by Wilson for cases like Josie's can be interpreted through the psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk's studies upon the inefficiency of verbal language to narrate traumatic memory as well. Given that Josie's trauma of killing her baby is reenacted in encountering with the Skriker disguising itself as a child and attempting to formulate the trauma by means of unfathomable language, it can be stated that this comes to the fore as "entirely organized on an implicit or perceptual level, without an accompanying narrative about what happened."²⁰ in van der Kolk's account. Van der Kolk holds the view "that trauma interferes with declarative memory but does not inhibit implicit, or nondeclarative, memory, the memory system that controls conditioned emotional responses, skills and habits, and sensorimotor sensations related to experience."²¹ Different from narrative memory, traumatic memory is "highly state-dependent and cannot be evoked at will."²² Thus, what Josie experiences during the encounter with the spectre-like being may be thought as an accentuation of traumatic memory in nonnarrative form. In accordance with van der Kolk's theory, in Josie's case, her trauma gets in the way of the formation of narrative memory. This being the case, the language used in the symbolic world does not pave the way for precise verbalization of what the traumatized individual has gone through. Anne Goarzin in **Articulating Trauma** makes direct allusion to Kolk's above-mentioned premise that verbal language lacks the full potential to articulate trauma by noting that

Van der Kolk's view is that people who undergo trauma experience "speechless terror... the experience cannot be organized on a linguistic level and thus becomes not only inaccessible but also irrepresentable." Because by nature, trauma is registered and not experienced, it resurfaces in many different ways²³

²⁰ Bessel A. van der Kolk and Fislér, R. "Dissociation and the fragmentary nature of traumatic memories: overview and exploratory study," **Journal of Traumatic Stress**, Vol. 8, No:4, 1995, p. 512.

²¹ Bessel A. van der Kolk "The Body Keeps the Score: Memory and the Evolving Psychobiology of Posttraumatic Stress" **Harvard Review of Psychiatry**, Vol. 1, No:5, 1994, p. 259.

²² Bessel A. van der Kolk and Fisher, R, **op.cit.**, p.520.

²³ Anne Goarzin, "Articulating Trauma," **OpenEdition Journals** , Vol.36, No: 1, 2011, p.12.

The notion of trauma's nonrepresentability through language manifests itself as a crucial point of reference for the critics adopting a similar critical attitude towards this subject. More precisely, it can be pointed out that the attention devoted to the inherent dissociative nature of trauma has its impact upon the contemporary trauma studies. The approach that sees trauma as non-representable by speech is also adopted by psychoanalyst Dori Laub and literary critic Shoshana Felman. Like Caruth and van der Kolk, they both think that the capacity of verbal language to represent a traumatic experience is highly limited. The way they define trauma makes it clear that the expression of psychological wounds through literature necessitates a non-conventional mode of representation which is free from the danger of speech. The fact that Caruth, Felman and Laub arrive at a consensus about the nonrepresentability of traumatic events is highlighted by Vikki Visvis who asserts that

From another perspective, Dori Laub, a psychoanalyst who works with Holocaust survivors, and literary critics, such as Shoshana Felman and Cathy Caruth, consistently draw attention to the limitations of language and storytelling. Trauma is defined by these critics as an overwhelming occurrence that is so complete, literal, and pure it demands a vocabulary and syntax incommensurable with what went before it.²⁴

It could be maintained that the limitations of language and storytelling emphasized by these theorists become manifest when the Skriker speaks and tells a story as stated with reference to Lily's story. The incomprehensible, incommensurable nature of the words the ghastly apparition uses endorses the view that the attempt to describe traumatic experience ends up as a failure. This being said, the Skriker's fragmented language throughout the play shows the extent to which rational means like verbal language in the Symbolic world prove to be devoid of precision in the expression of traumatic memories.

²⁴ Vikki Visvis, "Traumatic Representation: The Power and Limitations of Storytelling as "Talking Cure" in Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* and *The English Patient*," **ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature**, Vol. 40, No: 4, Oct. 2009, p. 89.

The world in which the Skriker articulates its need of being loved also symbolizes the chasm between the symbolic and the real on the side of Josie and Lily in that they suffer from PTSD. The world in which they interact with the Skriker embraces the real in their imagination whereas Josie's situation in the mental hospital with Lily as the homeless pregnant woman embraces the symbolic real dominated by the rules of a patriarchal system. Eva Gil Cuder reads this instance and states:

"The unexpected intrusions of the Skriker are symbolic for the dissociative state of the two protagonists after the traumatic event (how they are unable to discern between real existence and the reenactment of traumatic memory)."²⁵

Josie's language that she employs while talking to Lily in such moments about her newly-born child with her sentence "Shall I tell you what? If you want your own one back? You put the changeling on a shovel and put it in the fire, that's what they used to do. So we'd use the cooker and put it over the gas."²⁶ should also be taken into consideration. She aspires to preclude Lily from raising her daughter with affection as expected of a mother. In other words, a sort of a reenactment of her trauma on seeing the baby propels Josie to speak in a way that seems to be merely directed towards annihilation of all positive hopes. A great deal of emphasis must also be put on the fact that the depiction of Lily as a mother by the playwright enables readers to visualize her as a more innocent, affectionate and lovable one compared to Josie. Nonetheless, this could be regarded as a professional trick done by Churchill in that Josie, with her words functioning like the words taken from a cautionary tale, is likely to warn Lily against an imminent danger on account of her oblivion. Highly conscious of the presence of all the obstacles standing in the way of a proper mother-child relationship, Josie addresses the problem of neither the government's nor the social system's being aware of a desperate need for a transformation of the ways through which women are treated in Churchill's mindset.

²⁵ Eva Gil Cuder, *op.cit.*, p. 70-1.

²⁶ Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 38-9.

The language of the Skriker as the language of the repressed involving unintelligible, illegible sounds, words and repetitions, therefore, makes it necessary to dwell upon Churchill's unsurpassed ability to utilize the language while addressing contemporary issues too. The semiological and rhythmic language that she makes use of serves as a kind of sign system which enables one to associate what she says with what she wants to criticize. Namely, the playwright's using theatre as a sign-system through the language of her characters could be thought of her essential means of criticizing the plight of women, capitalism, domination of men and the havoc all these wreak on the lives of all females. Jean E. Howard in **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill** is revelatory about the playwright's concern with the language suggesting that

In this play, speech repeatedly goes off the tracks, becomes mutant. At one level, recalling James Joyce's puns and neologisms, the speech of the three main characters constantly veers between nonsense and new sense, its fractures allowing new ideas to form and dissolve.²⁷

The words in the speeches of Churchill's character in **The Skriker** can be actually thought of as the register of estrangement, othering, harassment, hatred and pain, traumatization on the part of a mother, a daughter or sometimes victimized women in general as the Skriker says "You people are killing me, do you know that? I am sick, I am a sick woman. Keep your secrets, I'll find out some other way, I don't need to know these things, there are plenty of other things to know."²⁸ Akin to the damaged language of the Skriker, the modern world is damaged, motherhood is damaged and women remain estranged from one another and get indulged in their own world pointing towards a hopeless and bleak future.

²⁷ Jean E. Howard, "On owning and owing: Caryl Churchill and the nightmare of capital," **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 48.

²⁸ Caryl Churchill, **op.cit.**, p. 15.

The symbolic obscurity of a dead child singing in the play after the Skriker's encounter with these women could additionally point to Churchill's critique of other ongoing contemporary problems through the Skriker's language. It functions in a way which enables one to think that it is the voice of their lost childhood. The dead child sings:

My mother she killed me and put me in pies
My father he ate me and said I was nice
My brothers and sisters they picked my bones
And they buried me under the marley stones²⁹

The special importance of the song is actually related to the fact that it bears a striking resemblance to the Skriker's final words in its opening speech and the one found in "**The Juniper Tree**", a German fairy tale whose lyrics are as follows:

My mother she killed me
My father he ate me
My sister, little Marlinchen,
Gathered together all my bones,
Tied them in a silken handkerchief,
Laid them beneath the juniper-tree,
Kywitt, kywitt, what a beautiful bird I am³⁰

The parallelism between these two songs intensifies the validity of the assumption that one of the most prevalent themes of **The Skriker** could also be child abuse since **The Juniper Tree** is centralized around a similar issue.

²⁹ Caryl Churchill, **op.cit.**, p. 19.

³⁰ Brothers Grimm, **The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales**, New York, Pantheon Books, 1994, p. 229.

Maria Tatar in **Off with Their Heads!: Fairy Tales and the Culture of Childhood** elaborates upon the primary concerns of **The Juniper Tree** as a fairy tale pointing out that

“The Juniper Tree” begins with a stirring tableau of death in childbirth, moves to a distressing depiction of child abuse culminating in murder by decapitation, and ends with what is probably the most savage scene of revenge staged in any fairy tale. So infamous are the principal events in this particular tale that even the usually sober Aarne/ Thompson index of tale types refers to this story as not only “The Juniper Tree” but also as “My Mother Slew Me; My Father Ate Me.”³¹

Applied to **The Skriker**, the dead child’s song could, thus, be conceived as an evocation of the theme of abuse or violence perpetrated upon children. By intentionally placing it into the play, Churchill may either be working to make readers realize that they hear the voice of Josie and Lily in their childhood years or that of the killed child by Josie. This rebellious voice may, indeed, be there so as to criticize the disrupting effects of the patriarchal system indoctrinating women and men to act in certain ways. When the song is solely thought to be the representation of the death of Josie’s child by her, it could again be said to be functioning as a critique of a male- dominated society. Because Josie’s committing such a crime, as briefly stated before, could be identified as the battle of a mother against a society founded upon male-orientation. Dr Suranjana Bhadra in the article **Beyond Feminism: Damaged Motherhood in Caryl Churchill’s The Skriker** shares a similar perspective upon the same point stating that “ Such a heinous, abnormal act may have been prompted by the unconscious instinctive drives of a mother only to prevent her child from enduring the terrific and nightmarish future awaiting her in the contemporary world.”³²

³¹ Maria Tatar, **Off with Their Heads!: Fairy Tales and the Culture of Childhood**, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1992, p. 212.

³² Dr Suranjana Bhadra, “Beyond Feminism: Damaged Motherhood in Caryl Churchill’s The Skriker,” **International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention**, Volume 3, No:10, October 2014, p. 18.

Katherine Perrault in **Beyond the Patriarchy: Feminism and the Chaos of Creativity** underlines that “The two female protagonists in *The Skriker* could thus be perceived semiotically as cultural representations of women damaged by years of patriarchal containment.”³³ The absence of husbands accompanied by the absence of fathers in the play could, indeed, also be regarded as the underlying reason why this semiotic representation comes to the surface and be examined in accordance with Lacanian perspective for Graham Wolfe who notes that

In Lacan’s terms, this is a realm in which the Name-of-the-Father is literally lacking-the fathers of both Josie’s and Lily’s children are missing, not even referred to (named). And from the beginning, Josie’s own remarks on the complete lack of consequences for her crime (“Licence to kill, seems to me” [15]) cast Symbolic Law as absent or ineffectual.³⁴

Churchill’s elimination of males from the play with the integration of two traumatized women, then, creates an atmosphere where it seems proper to think that these women have been intentionally chosen to transmit some certain messages to audiences/readers. In Wolfe’s analysis, one of the most important messages of the play which is directed towards late capitalism’s effects on the humankind can be better understood when Josie’s experience in this realm devoid of Symbolic Law is considered. Wolfe argues that “Churchill’s Underworld feeds on human beings not by stifling them or repressing the life-substance in them, but by making them Enjoy, pushing food and drink upon them to excess, compelling them to consume and sing and dance.”³⁵ The atmosphere, thus, resembles our contemporary world in which people are tempted to indulge in their sense of enjoyment. In other words, the presence of a feast in the underworld that tricks Josie might be the equivalent of the feast offered to us by contemporary capitalism.

³³ Katherine Perrault, “Beyond the Patriarchy: Feminism and the Chaos of Creativity,” **Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism**, Vol.17, No:1, 2002, p. 49.

³⁴ Graham Wolfe, “Shapeshifting in Caryl Churchill’s *The Skriker*,” **Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts**, Vol. 22, No: 2, 2011, p. 247.

³⁵ Graham Wolfe **op.cit.**, p. 247.

When the absence of patriarchal representatives is taken into account with Josie's descent into the underworld, "The damage and death correlative to "hegemonic constraint" thus finds its speculative inversion in the undead life correlative to a damaged (lacking) Symbolic order, fuelled by the excessive jouissance."³⁶ To add, Jean E. Howard argues that "The Skriker is a metaphor of devastations of late capitalism, because it can penetrate any space, compress time and space and create desire that makes one abandon infants and homes and friends."³⁷ This argument, basically, the Skriker's serving as a metaphor for capitalism could be understood better in relation to its language and the ability to shape-shift too. The language of the ghastly figure changes depending on where and to whom it talks together with its appearance. Disguised as an old lady, a man or a baby, it manipulates Josie and Lily into the underworld and their engagement with fantastic realms and figures there symbolizes that of the people of the contemporary world with the capitalist condition. As Wolfe speculates, "The play's dynamic enables a consideration of the effects of late capitalism through the complexities of symbolic representation and its limits."³⁸ On top of that, Candice Amich in **Bringing the Global Home: The Commitment of Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*** reveals another aspect of theatrical strategy of broken language of the Skriker fused with constant disguising by maintaining that

Caryl Churchill's play *The Skriker* explores the ravages and intoxications of globalization. Through the shape-shifting figure of the Skriker, who commands space and time in a manner that recalls the fluidity of multinational capital, Churchill examines the relationship between time-space compression and the fragmented subjectivities of two women, Josie and Lily. As the Skriker invades their bodies, instantaneously transporting them through space and time, the simultaneously pleasurable and terrifying breakdown of interiority that accompanies temporal and spatial dislocation in our era of late capitalism is simulated onstage.³⁹

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 248

³⁷ Jean E. Howard, "On owning and owing: Caryl Churchill and the nightmare of capital," **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 49.

³⁸ Graham Wolfe *op.cit.*, p. 247.

³⁹ Candice Amich, "Bringing the Global Home: The Commitment of Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*," **Modern Drama**, Vol. 50, No:3, 2007, p. 394.

Amich's perspective with its stress upon the Skriker's invasion of Josie and Lily's bodies can be said to be calling into question the play's affinity to the issue of bodily reaction as a means of traumatic representation as well. In other words, the shape-shifting of the Skriker as another theatrical device with the effects it produces upon the women it haunts become serviceable in portraying the fragmented lives of the individuals within the play. To demonstrate, when the Skriker haunts Lily for the first time under the guise of an old woman on the street, Lily's body serves as a theatrical marker which changes into a money-making machine as follows:

SKRIKER

What's the wires coming out of your head for?
 Collecting his brain in a box, mind you don't lose it.
 You've got a dead pig on your back.
She falls down in front of LILY. LILY helps her up.
 Can you help a poor old lady, lost my bus pass, price of
 a cup of tea, you've got a kind face darling, give you
 the white heather another time.
LILY gives her money and starts to go away but
SKRIKER holds her.
The MAN puts the cloth and bucket down in a new
place.
 Do I smell? It's my coat and my cunt. Give us a hug.
 Nobody gives us a hug. Give us a kiss. Won't you give
 us a hug and a kiss.
LILY suddenly hugs and kisses her.
 There's a love. Off you go, Lily.
SKRIKER goes.
The MAN is satisfied with the position of cloth and
bucket and goes off without them.

LILY

 How do you know my name?- What? what's
 happening? my teeth. I'm sick. Help me. What is it? It's
 money. Is it? Out of my mouth?
Pound coins come out of her mouth when she speaks.
*She stops talking and examines the money.*⁴⁰

Here, it is seen that the female body turning into a money-making machine can be a theatrical representation of traumatization originating from capitalism and monetary issues. To add, her failure of speaking while producing coins implies that the language she uses in daily life is simultaneously disrupted.

⁴⁰ Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 11.

Lily's encounter with the Skriker that metamorphoses into the guise of the old woman and the following state of Lily as being unable to speak while producing money show the extent to which the scene helps to relate the discussion of traumatization not only to language but also to the body. That is to say, the body of the traumatized individual does react in some certain ways in the reenactment of the traumatic memory of an event in the past. It must be noted that the traumatic events and reactions given like in Lily's case are characterized by a kind of lack of mental and bodily integrity to which Judith Herman in **Trauma and Recovery** alludes as follows:

Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life. Unlike commonplace misfortunes, traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death. They confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror, and evoke the responses of catastrophe. According to the Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, the common denominator of psychological trauma is a feeling of "intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation."⁴¹

It would be relevant to point out here that what Lily and also Josie are shown to be suffering from in the play matches with the above-given description by the trauma theorist Herman. The language in which the characters speak and bodily reactions they give to the encounters with the Skriker spring from their repressed traumas and the encounters infiltrating into their daily lives are accompanied by certain changes in their cognitive and physical states as Herman also states:

Traumatic events produce profound and lasting changes in physiological arousal, emotion, cognition, and memory. Moreover, traumatic events may sever these normally integrated functions from one another. The traumatized person may experience intense emotion but without clear memory of the event, or may remember everything in detail but without emotion. She may find herself in a constant state of vigilance and irritability without knowing why. Traumatic symptoms have a tendency to become disconnected from their source and to take on a life of their own.⁴²

Another instance of the involuntary bodily reaction and irritability Herman depicts can also be observed through the ways in which Josie acts when she thinks her baby is approaching her in the underworld. Harbours an overwhelming sense of fear of encountering the murdered baby, she asks Lily to hide her and says that

JOSIE	Don't let me feel it. It's coming for me. Hide me. This is what. When I killed her. What I was frightened. Trying to stop when I. It's here.
LILY	No please I'll-
JOSIE	Save me. Can you? There's no one to save.
LILY	I wish-
JOSIE	No. ⁴³

It is seen that she feels herself in a dangerous situation and asks for help to relieve herself of the burden. The return of the repressed underlies her primary apprehension and her body and also mind are blurred since integration of a past memory to the present is terrifying for her in such a moment. To investigate trauma, human body and mind, author Jennifer L. Griffiths draws attention to similar points with references to trauma experts' studies which is applicable to the cases of Josie and Lily in **The Skriker** to a serious extent:

According to trauma experts such as Judith Herman, Dori Laub and Bessel van der Kolk, trauma involves a delay in response. The emotional and physical responses not experienced initially are raised when the survivor perceives a potential threat in a new situation, causing the survivor to relive on a physiological level the terror of the original experience. The embodied memory is experienced without a direct link to the story of the original experience. In this way, the experience of memory has been fractured. Traumatic memory exists in two distinct forms: the relentlessly recurring image, stereotyped and static, and the unconscious bodily response to conditions that bear psychic resemblance to the original experience. Recovery requires a reintegration of fractured memory forms.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Judith Herman, **Trauma and Recovery**, New York, Basic Books, 1992, p.33.

⁴² **Ibid.**, p. 33-4.

⁴³ Caryl Churchill, **op.cit.**, p. 40.

⁴⁴ Jennifer L. Griffiths, **Traumatic Possessions: The Body and Memory in African American Women's Writing and Performance**, the USA, University of Virginia Press, 2009, p.47-8.

In **The Skriker**, we continually witness episodes in which the spectre-like being makes its presence known to Josie and Lily in the underworld and this does remind us of the concept of the latency period of traumatization too. The infiltration of the Skriker's underworld into the lives of these two women symbolizes the abrupt reappearance of unassimilated traumatic memory with the external stimuli to which Freud in **Beyond the Pleasure Principle** alludes by maintaining that it "is a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli"⁴⁵ It can be said that the descent to the underworld as the external stimulus breaks the barrier and has access into the inner psyche that lacks in sufficient defense. Freud adds that "'We describe as 'traumatic' any excitations from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield ... with a breach in an otherwise efficacious barrier against stimuli'"⁴⁶ It should also be noted that when Josie and Lily find themselves in the underworld, their suppressed shock turns out to be visible to audiences/readers, however it is still noticed that traumatic memory lacks the narrative to be integrated into the psyche. To illustrate, when Josie visits the underworld, the Skriker's first words act as a reminder of incommensurable nature of traumatic memory as the ghastly apparition says "They chopped her to pieces, they chipped her to pasties. She's a hag higgledpig hog. She's a my my miser myselfish and chips."⁴⁷ Here, it becomes manifest that the protagonists' descent into the underworld cannot be understood as it occurs and there are not any fitting words to express what they experience in verbal language. It is insufficiently comprehended when it takes place as representative of the unspeakable thereby bringing to mind what Cathy Caruth points out in her reassessment of Freudian theory to study trauma concept. Caruth designates trauma as a "theory of the peculiar incomprehensibility of human survival."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Sigmund Freud, **Beyond the Pleasure Principle**, London, Norton, 1959 [1920], p.35.

⁴⁶ **Ibid.**, p. 33

⁴⁷ Caryl Churchill, **op.cit.**, p. 29-30.

⁴⁸ Cathy Caruth, **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History**, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, 1996, p.58.

When the Skriker intervenes in the lives of Josie and Lily, it evokes Eve's haunting Eveline in **Beside Herself** in that Eve represents the imaginary akin to the Skriker. Daniels' device of the doubling that bears the name of a Christian mythological figure "Eve" does not fit anywhere in the real world of the symbolic with its utterances like Churchill's Skriker bearing the name of a mythological figure from different cultures. Elizabet Kovaceva underlines the fact that "If the Skriker's speech reflects the Kristevan semiotic, then the character itself can be described as a mythical personification of the abject. It does not belong anywhere in the present world, the real world of the symbolic."⁴⁹ Considering that Kristevan notion of the abject represents what is excluded by the symbolic, confronting with the abject takes place in the underworld where traumatic memories of Josie and Lily coexist. At this point, it must be stated that in **Powers of Horror**, Kristeva identifies the abject as the enactment of abominable effects of the superego. The superego represents the Symbolic, the paternal. As the etymology of the word "abject" also clarifies, it stands for what is cast off by the Symbolic. For Kristeva, the sense of repugnance the abject represents which is felt by an individual becomes clear when the individual sees a corpse, some body waste or even the skin that forms on the surface of milk in daily life. On such occasions, the individual is incapable of separating subject from object or self from other. The object symbolizes maternal drives and the superego represses the maternal drives, changes them into what is called as the abject that results in a disruption in meaning as Kristeva puts it:

Loathing an item of food, a piece of filth, waste or dung. The spasms and vomiting that protect me. The repugnance, the retching that thrusts me to the side and turns me away from defilement, sewage and muck. The shame of compromise, of being in the middle of treachery. The fascinated start that leads me toward and separates me from them.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Elizabet Kovaceva **op.cit.**, p. 43.

⁵⁰ Julia Kristeva, **Powers of Horror**, trans. by Leon Roudiez, New York, Columbia UP, 1982, p. 2 .

More concretely, it can be noted that Kristeva affiliates the abject with the sudden intrusion of the real into our lives. The abject signifies the moment when we separated ourselves from the mother and when we came to notice the distinction to be made between me and (m)other. The feeling of disgust felt on seeing a corpse, a decay causes a kind of resurgence of the banished maternal object. This being said, it culminates in a reconstruction of primal repression and it is a reference to “what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules.”⁵¹ Thus, according to Kristeva, being confronted with the abject feels like going back to the preliminary phase of one’s development of identity during which the differences between self/other or subject/object are not fully recognized. In **The Skriker**, the experience of seeing the ghastly apparition under many different guises leads to a breakdown in meaning, a confusion in the identification of the self/ other for Josie and Lily. No matter how hard they endeavour to thrust the Skriker away from where they are, both of them visit the underworld. On the part of Josie, the trauma of motherhood stemming from the act of killing her baby becomes more explicit when she is persuaded to enter into the underworld against her will. When she descends there, her suppressed feelings come to the fore thereby hindering her from differentiating what is real from what is illusory as As Eva Gil Cuder accentuates:

Josie’s re-experiencing of the traumatic event when she descends to this realm is an example of how this anti-naturalistic convention (the coexistence of real life and the underworld in Josie’s mind) works as a strategy that makes visible the repressed state of shock affecting the characters.⁵²

When the Skriker and its underworld is thought to be evoking Kristeva’s abject or semiotics in broader terms, it is, indeed, important to underline that this domain is a staged representation, a theatrical strategy. This realm seems to accentuate the distinction to be made between the symbolic and the imaginary.

⁵¹ **Ibid.**, p. 4.

⁵² Eva Gil Cuder, **op.cit.**, p. 69.

Josie and Lily's entrance into the symbolic world reflects their background in contemporary England and their entrance into the imaginary realm reflects the reenactment of the traumatic memories of what they experienced in the past. As regards the confrontation with the abject in the underworld, it must also be stated that Josie and Lily enter there by eating food. Whereas Josie eats the food offered by fairies, Lily tastes food served by humans coming from the distant past. When Josie succumbs to the temptation and tastes the food, she is unable to differentiate between cake and figs which symbolizes her incapability of distinguishing the real from the imaginary. Time flies away in the underworld and Josie indulges in the imaginary real as Kovaceva stresses:

In a purely non-verbal set of exchanges, Josie by eating underworld food becomes part of it, reenacting a well-known fairy-tale as well as biblical and mythological Greek trope. Again, this corresponds to being confronted with the abject, whereby one loses a sense of time and place.⁵³

It is worth emphasizing that Josie's not being able to separate the real from the imaginary and her loss of sense of time, place in the underworld evoke Dionysus. Dionysus, the god of ecstatic emotions in the ancient Greek religion, is believed to have been a representative of the inability to conceive the difference between appearance and reality. This is because Dionysus is a symbol of drunkenness, indulgence in emotions that go hand in hand with intoxication. When Josie visits the underworld, she finds herself in a similar state which causes her to enter into an ecstatic unity, an unconceivable identification with the Skriker. Friedrich Nietzsche in **The Birth of Tragedy** elaborates upon the essence of Dionysiac noting that

These Dionysiac stirrings, which, as they grow in intensity, cause subjectivity to vanish to the point of complete self-forgetting, awaken either under the influence of narcotic drink, of which all human beings and peoples who are close to the origin of things speak in their hymns, or at the approach of spring when the whole of nature is pervaded by lust for life.⁵⁴

The trick that the fairies does to people from the distant past in the underworld by tempting them to eat food evokes Eve's temptation by the serpent to eat the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge. It is known that Eve convinces Adam to eat the fruit too and both of them get evicted from the Garden of Eden which symbolizes a perfect sphere for humankind. They reap the consequences of their resolution to transgress the borders set by God. Likewise, when Josie and Lily eat the food, they lose all their contact with the symbolic world in which they struggle to survive and find themselves in a dilemma. Their decision of descent into the underworld with the temptation leads to their confrontation with the abject and a reenactment of their repressed traumas. Like Persephone's eating some pomegranate seeds, Josie eats food and tastes drink offered by the fairies. Her turning a blind eye to the recurrent warnings culminates in her feeling obliged to spend more time there. For this reason, parallel to the title given to Persephone who is named as the lost girl in Greek mythology, it is not wrong to identify Josie as another lost girl who gets stuck in the crack opened up by the subtle distinction between the real world and the underworld disowned by reality. Geraldine Cousin in her book **Women in Dramatic Place and Time: Contemporary Female Characters On Stage** states that

In the Underworld, Josie finds a magic feast that has been prepared for her, and, though a lost girl, who is in fairyland because she ate an apple in an enchanted orchard, warns Josie that if she eats or drinks anything she will never get back home, Josie ignores her advice and, as a result, becomes, like the lost girl, a prisoner in fairyland.⁵⁵

It may also be stated that Josie and Lily resemble Alice in Carroll's **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland** in that Alice undergoes similar experiences and the language used changes with the descent to the underworld.

⁵³ Elizabet Kovaceva **op.cit.**, p. 42.

⁵⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, **The Birth of Tragedy And Other Writings**, ed. by Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 17.

⁵⁵ Geraldine Cousin, **Women in Dramatic Place and Time: Contemporary Female Characters on Stage**, London and New York, Routledge, 1996, p. 184-5.

It should also be stated that aside from being overwhelmed by a sense of getting lost in the underworld, after eating the food there, the image of her baby haunting Josie functions as a suggestive of Kristeva's notion of chora too. The chora refers to "the stage between 0-6 months of age when you are dominated by a chaotic mix of perceptions that results in being unable to distinguish your own self from the world around you."⁵⁶ Already faced with the abject repulsed by the symbolic in the underworld, Josie's state causes her trauma to reenact and makes her feel like going back to the maternal stage where one totally submerges in his/her existence in the semiotic. To demonstrate, Sian Adiseshiah reads *The Skriker* as an instance of the Kristevan chora in relation to the utopic elements within the underworld and states:

These artistic forms appeal to the senses, an appeal that resides in the non-rational, and thus serves to offer an alternative idiom within which to communicate. This alternative idiom can be understood in Marcuse's terms as a glimpse of uninhibited desire that implicates a post-capitalist world in a way more rational modes of communication find difficult to achieve. The fairy underworld can be likened to Julia Kristeva's concept of the chora "a nonexpressive totality formed by the drives and their stases in a motility that is as full of movement as it is regulated."⁵⁷

The emphasis upon the resemblance between this fairy underworld and Kristeva's sense of chora could also be considered as a reference evocative of Churchill's critique of capitalist world. Having been governed by desires rather than logic, Josie eats the food that is detrimental to her and finds herself in an utopian space. Her actions in the underworld can be likened to those of people living under the reign of capitalism in the contemporary world. Additionally, "The Skriker's staging of mostly female characters, and the fairy underworld's evocation of Julia Kristeva's concept of the chora lends the play to feminist readings."⁵⁸

⁵⁶Dino Felluga, "Modules on Kristeva: On Psychosexual Development," <https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/theory/psychoanalysis/kristevadevelop.html>, (Online)

⁵⁷ Sian Adiseshiah, *Churchill's Socialism: Political Resistance in the Plays of Caryl Churchill*, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009, p. 85

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

In the aftermath of the Skriker's talking Josie into drinking some wine to quench her thirst, the references to Jung and Freud in the musical language of this creature make it possible to think about the relationship between the underworld in the play and Freud's notion of the unconscious as well:

SKRIKER

Haven't I wrapped myself up rapt rapture ruptured
myself in your dreams, scoffed your chocolate screams,
your Jung men and Freud eggs, your flying and fleeing?
It was golden olden robes you could rip tide me up in
but now it's a tatty bitty scarf scoff scuffle round my
nickneck. Give a dog a bone.⁵⁹

In Freud's account, the content of the unconscious is made up of unacceptable feelings or thoughts that are outside of the conscious. Therefore, they are below the surface but they remain there as a register of one's pain, anxiety or fear whose main sources are experiences in life. Based on this perspective, the Skriker, with the language of the repressed, wages a war against the power of such feelings and represents Josie's unconscious. It reminds Josie of what she suffered from in the past thereby dragging her out of the symbolic. As Ann Wilson points out as regards the quoted lines of the Skriker above:

As this brief and playfully associative speech suggests, the Skriker scoffs at Freudian and Jungian explanations of the unconscious and in the taunting, refuses to be contained by them. The associative language of the Skriker, a death portent and so a figure of absence, marks the insistent return of the repressed which haunts all language.⁶⁰

It can be said that the mechanisms of the mind of Josie hidden below her conscious operate under the effect of the resurgence of trauma in the underworld.

⁵⁹ Caryl Churchill, *op.cit.*, p. 32.

⁶⁰ Ann Wilson, *op.cit.*, p. 181.

Josie's unconscious which is like a reservoir of unpleasant memories in Freudian terms is fully on alert during the hauntings. All the actions she takes in the underworld are unconsciously motivated. However, Jung marks a break with Freud in his definition of the unconscious in that it symbolizes unity with the mother on the part of the child for him. In other words, when the child has the conscious mind, it means he/she is separated from the mother to develop an identity. Looked at from this angle, the underworld as the equivalent of the unconscious in the play could be mirroring the mind of Josie's dead baby. This being said, when Josie descends there, she has to face the unconscious of the baby she killed after ten days of giving birth to her. The issue of the separation from the mother in relation to the notion of the unconscious also evokes Jung's mother archetype. Claudia Barnett in **Reveance is gold mine, sweet: Alchemy and Archetypes in Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*** quotes Jung's description of the archetype:

"The qualities associated with it are maternal solicitude and sympathy; the magic authority of the female; the wisdom and spiritual exaltation that transcend reason; any helpful instinct or impulse; all that is benign, all that cherishes and sustains, that fosters growth and fertility. The place of magic transformation and rebirth, together with the underworld and its inhabitants, are presided over by the mother. On the negative side the mother archetype may connote anything secret, hidden, dark; the abyss, the world of the dead, anything that devours, seduces, and poisons, that is terrifying and inescapable like fate."⁶¹

The Jungian archetype with its stress upon the presence of inhabitants of the underworld brings to mind the spirits, the mythological figures accompanying the Skriker and symbolizes Josie's maternal trauma. The expression of this trauma transcends reason and connotes the world of the dead as stated in the quoted description, basically, the world of the dead child of Josie.

⁶¹ Claudia Barnett, "Reveance is gold mine, sweet: Alchemy and Archetypes in Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*," **Essays in Theatre**, Vol.19, No: 1, 2000, p. 48.

The concept of the underworld in relation to that of the unconscious in the play could be viewed as a trajectory of the unconscious of the society as a whole as well. Under the reign of capitalism, globalization that results in single-motherhood, people in general, particularly, women get stuck in loneliness, poverty without systems of support. In line with Freudian account, the society's unconscious could be likened to a box rife with repercussions of the social, cultural or political system indoctrinating them to act in certain ways. For this reason, Churchill's placement of the Skriker, the fairy-tale figures in a festive-like atmosphere of the underworld suggests a damage rather than bliss. As Elaine Aston puts forward, "More specifically, Skriker's tale telling spins together a number of pieces which point not to the conventional "happy" ending but always to disaster."⁶² Moreover, the instant when the Skriker accentuates the realities of the contemporary world with a sudden question is significant to note as it asks "Have you noticed the large number of meteorological phenomena lately?" and then lists "Eartquakes. Volcanoes. Drought. Apocalyptic meteorological phenomena. The increase of sickness."⁶³

In conclusion, the Skriker in Churchill's play becomes a valuable tool in the articulation of traumatic memory. This specter-like character as a different theatrical device represents the distortion in the cognition mechanism of trauma victims. Churchill's literary strategy of putting a ghostly presence on stage serves as a means of entrance into traumatized characters' inner realities and the stage turns into an apt site for the expression of unspeakable trauma through the Skriker's language, underworld and traumatized characters' experiences in the underworld. It can also be said that the Skriker as a haunting figure with mythological features not only symbolizes resurgence of repressed trauma but also the playwright's harsh criticism of abuse, patriarchy and capitalism in the entirety of the play.

⁶² Elaine Aston, **op.cit.**, p. 32.

⁶³ Caryl Churchill, **op.cit.**, p. 43.

CHAPTER III

“LISTEN. I AM HERE TO REMEMBER. I NEED TO... REMEMBER.
I HAVE THIS GRIEF AND I DON'T KNOW WHY.”¹: SARAH
KANE'S **CRAVE**

Sarah Kane, who was born in 1971, is known to have emerged as one of the most influential British playwrights upon the landscape of British theatre in the 1990s. Her first full-length play **Blasted** that she wrote in 1995 is notorious for being made up of elements such as sex, brutality and devastation. Yet, the stage techniques Kane used have paved the way for the birth of the spawning new trend “in-yer-face” and helped infamy she has gained at the outset to turn into fame. Until her voluntary death that marked the end of her career in 1999, she had written a number of other important plays titled as **Phaedra's Love**, **Cleansed**, **Crave** and **4.48 Psychosis**.

When the last two plays Kane wrote **Crave** (1998) and **4:48 Psychosis** (1999) are considered, it must be highlighted that the playwright adopted another writing strategy which is what German theatre researcher Hans- Thies Lehmann later named as postdramatic theatre. For Lehmann, in postdramatic theatre, there is a sense of incongruence and a nascent aesthetics opening doors to a new path as Lehmann explains it in his book **Postdramatic Theatre** as follows:

In postdramatic theatre, breath, rhythm, and the present actuality of the body's visceral presence take precedence over the logos. An opening and dispersal of the logos develop in such a way that it is no longer necessarily the case that a meaning is communicated from A (stage) to B (spectator) but instead a specifically theatrical, “magical” transmission and connection happen by means of language.²

Lehmann's description of how postdramatic theatre operates fits in what Kane did, particularly with **Crave** which will be examined in this chapter of the dissertation with respect to the play's incorporating above-mentioned dramatic techniques serviceable in representing trauma on stage.

The playwright's use of a poetic and elusive language in **Crave** with abrupt pauses and overlapping dialogues of no name characters create a void to be filled with the intervention of readers/spectators. The word play of Kane reaches to a point where many layers of meaning come to the fore and every single line manifests itself as a representation of an unfinished action and of a different realm as Lauren De Vos and Saunders in **Sarah Kane in Context** similarly argue "Voice on stage destabilises formal structures and creates a world that is radically immanent, where no form guides one to know how to be stable and secure."³ It must be added that the poetic, fluid and disruptive language that prevails all throughout the play posits itself as a kind of symbolic language of traumatized psyche. In broader terms, the most fundamental aspects of Kane's postdramatic theatre can be enumerated as its not being a text-centred one, its departure from progressive, linear narration with a poetic language which is accompanied by non-identifiable plot and lack of causal relationships in its design. As **Crave** imbibes all these features, it is cited to be one of the best productions of postdramatic theatre.

Turning her head away from external reality and focusing more on interiority in **Crave**, Kane engages with psychological space in which traumatized psyche struggles to accentuate its suffering. Notwithstanding the elimination of represented violence, the playwright produces the effect of emotional attachment on the part of readers/spectators by means of the aforementioned stylistic shift. Namely, the particular mode of writing that she employs with no identifiable characters, no stage directions, no physical setting and no coherent language facilitate witnessing the effect of trauma in the victim's mind. Related to this point, the main purpose of the present chapter will be to examine how this mode of writing helps to represent the shock of sexual abuse trauma with its impact on the affected psyche on stage.

¹ Sarah Kane, **Complete Plays**, London, Methuen Publishing Ltd., 2001, p. 173.

² Hans-Thies Lehmann, **Postdramatic Theatre**, trans. by Karen-Jüers-Munby, London and New York, Routledge, p. 145.

³ Lauren De Vos and Graham Saunders, **Sarah Kane in Context**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2010, p. 108.

The play starts with an outcry of four unrecognizable voices whose overlapping lines arouse a sense of yearning for unspecified things or values. The voices are solely named as A, B, C and M whose initial utterances can be said to be closely intertwined with their inner lives. C's opening remark to an unknown addressee "You're dead to me"⁴ is interrupted by B's reading something written in a will which is followed by A's question "What do you want?"⁵ and this cycle goes on with M's appearance on stage while telling someone about her pregnancy. This indeterminacy and heightened ambivalence render it possible to speculate upon the four speaking implicit identities from different perspectives. Considering the play's concern with a move inwards or subjectivity, it makes sense to regard these characters as four clashing aspects of a traumatized individual. When the presence of these no-name characters is thought to be redolent of separate identities, what Sarah J. Ablett in **Dramatic Disgust: Aesthetic Theory and Practice from Sophocles to Sarah Kane** must be noted. The author asserts that,

From my reading of the play, A is a middle-aged or older man who struggles with his unrequited love for a child. B is a younger man who suffers from depression, substance abuse, and addiction. C is a younger woman who experienced sexual abuse in childhood and because of this finds it hard to cope with relationships and life in general. M is a middle-aged woman who agonizes over becoming older and feeling unloved.⁶

It is seen that the author's description enables one to view the four voices as two male and two female characters. To add, her mention of character A as a sufferer of unrequited love for a child calls into question the existence of the object of his attention from among other characters within the play which will also be explored in connection with the purpose of this chapter.

⁴ Sarah Kane, **op.cit.**, p. 155.

⁵ **Ibid.**, p. 155.

⁶ Sarah J. Ablett, **Dramatic Disgust: Aesthetic Theory and Practice from Sophocles to Sarah Kane**, Bielefeld, transcript, 2020, p. 155.

The idea that **Crave** is a “move away from the physicality of earlier plays towards explicitly interior, psychological spaces.”⁷ is reinforced by means of one another clue given by the playwright from the beginning. Despite the fact that Kane chooses to give no names to her characters, her usage of the name “David” attracts attention as an evocative of the biblical character “David” whose name is associated with pain and suffering in prophetic literature. The part in which there is a reference to David is seen following character A’s repudiation of being a rapist:

A I’m not a rapist.
M David?
A beat
B Yeah.
A I’m a paedophile.
M Do you remember me?
A beat
B Yeah.⁸

David, one of the most recognized kings of Israel, is believed to have had a healing effect on the inner wounds of the traumatic personas of his time with the help of his songs and poems. Furthermore, King Saul’s challenge against David can be studied as the story of a trauma survivor on the part of him since Valerie Rance in the article **Biblical Personalities and Trauma: Towards A Theology of Wellbeing** clarifies certain points with respect to the hardships in David’s life:

David suffered personal tragedy in his life. King Saul forced his first wife to marry another man during David’s exile (1 Sam. 25: 43-44). He lost his infant son with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12: 15-18). His son Amnon raped his daughter Tamar, which led to his son Absalom killing Amnon for his despicable deed. (2 Sam. 13). Absalom later led a rebellion against his father and soldiers killed him in the fight. (2 Sam. 18). With all of these traumatic events, one would think that David would be a psychological mess. Yet, David seemed to overcome each one with resilience and well-being.⁹

⁷ Clare Wallace, **Suspect Cultures**, Prague, Litteria Pragensia, 2006, p. 222-23.

⁸ Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 156.

⁹ Valerie Rance, “Biblical Personalities and Trauma: Towards A Theology of Wellbeing”, **ResearchGate**, June 2015, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278727688> , 24.04.2021.

Bearing a resemblance to the presentation of female figures from the Bible by Sarah Daniels in the prelude of **Beside Herself** with her intention of examining the issue of trauma, the usage of the name of a male biblical figure in the beginning part of **Crave** by Kane would make one dwell upon the play's preoccupation with the same issue. It is also remarkable that intersecting lines of characters M and B are separated with A's confession of being a paedophile, which brings to mind the allusion to A as an abuser. Clare Wallace names what all these voices utter from the outset as "an instance of staging trauma"¹⁰ as they come together on stage like ghostly apparitions while articulating a great deal of emotions varying from feelings of loneliness to sexual desires. The four voices with no fixed identities create an ambivalent world that points to their retreat into psychological realm of their minds.

In line with the idea that the play deals with the conflicting aspects of a traumatic experience, one feels an urge to go a lot deeper into the fundamental reasons of the suffering experienced by the four characters. In other words, their yearning for love or attachment makes it necessary to think about their interpersonal relationships although non-existence of traditional sense of dialogue with a progressive linear narrative poses itself as a type of drawback as Karoline Gritzner stresses in her argument about the play:

In *Crave* the connections between the speakers is less clear, though there are indications that A (male) and C (female) have been in an unbalanced, possibly abusive relationship. A seems to be obsessed with C, she wants him to leave but he keeps following her (which he articulates in a torrent of uncontrollable, love-sick language: and whimper when I'm next to you and whimper when I'm not and dribble on your breast and smother you in the night and get cold when you take the blanket and hot when you don't, 169)¹¹

¹⁰ Clare Wallace, **op. cit.**, p. 185.

¹¹ Karoline Gritzner, **Adorno and Modern Theatre: The Drama of the Damaged Self in Bond, Rudkin, Barker and Kane**, UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, p. 155.

The possible abusive relationship between characters A and C, when studied in relation with the stylistic shift of Kane in **Crave**, seems quite suitable to the representation of sexual abuse trauma and its impacts on the abused individual. To start with character A who may be defined as an old abuser male, it is right to emphasize that his explicit declaration of his tendency to sexually abuse a child with his sentence “I’m a paedophile”¹² requires paying utmost attention to sort out his role in the play. His uttering such a sentence brings to mind the fact that character C who is defined as a child or a young woman may be the object of his perversion. More importantly, based upon Kane’s own account, A is many things and that can be deemed as a clue of his being the father of C too. Hence, the likelihood of an incestuous relationship whose nature is akin to that of a perpetrator and victim comes to the fore. The aforementioned assertion of the author Sarah J. Ablett as regards the representation of the letters substituting character names seems to have already been originally endorsed by Sarah Kane. The playwright clearly indicates it in an interview as follows:

To me A was always an older man, M was always an older woman, B was always a younger man and C was always a young woman... A, B, C, and M do have specific meanings which I am prepared to tell you... A is many things which is the author, the Abuser... M was simply the Mother, B was Boy and C was Child. But I didn’t want to write these things down, because then I thought they’ll get fixed in those things forever and nothing would ever change.¹³

Following his confession of being a paedophile, A welcomes readers/ audience as the first character to tell a story. As has been briefly stated, the narration of past events is an integral component of the form of the play. These events appear suddenly and seem to make no sense at first glance. However, they convey a certain message and function as guidelines to collect more data about the past lives of the characters.

¹² Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 156.

¹³ Dan Rebellato, Interview with Sarah Kane, “Brief Encounter Platform”, Royal Holloway College, London, 3 November 1998, p. 16.

The story narrated by A with its focus upon sexual abuse of a black girl can be serviceable in having a better insight into the nature of the relationship between him and C. Character C takes on the role of a listener of the story and reacts to it rather negatively:

- A In a lay-by on the motorway going out of the city, or maybe in, depending on which way you look, a small dark girl sits in the passenger seat of a parked car. Her elderly grandfather undoes his trousers and it pops out of his pants, big and purple.
- C I feel nothing, nothing.
I feel nothing.
- A And when she cries, her father in the back seat says I'm sorry, she's not normally like this.
And though she cannot remember she cannot forget.
- C And has been hurtling away from that moment ever since.¹⁴

It is plausible to assert that C's abrupt flashback of the appalling past event narrated by A who makes a mention of the part of the black girl's grandfather in the abusive act can be said to be addressing to a family life rife with rape and obsessive love. That family is, perhaps, her own one. As Karoline Gritzner puts it, "There is a strong suggestion that C is suffering from an unresolved past experience, which is highlighted by her response to A's account of an incident of child abuse."¹⁵ C's final statement "And has been hurtling away from that moment ever since"¹⁶ could be regarded as a reference to the possibility of C's victimization of sexual abuse too. Moreover, based on C's another important sentence, "And though she cannot remember she cannot forget"¹⁷, it can be said there is some harm done to her mind's health. She is paralysed by the state of remembering and not remembering, which means that she is trapped in a reiterative cycle.

¹⁴ Sarah Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 157-58.

¹⁵ Karoline Gritzner, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

¹⁶ Sarah Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 157-58.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 157-58.

At this point, in accordance with the argument that the signs of trauma could merely be comprehended when they have been traced back to the experience of sexual assault in prepuberty stage of a child, the premise of Freud that underscores the insurmountably complex nature of the traumatic memory must be remembered as well. That is, the victim's dilemma between remembering and forgetting the event observable in the case of character C, for Freud, is linked to the view that the traumatic memory is inherently illusive. More clearly, it can be said that the delayed revival of the memory after the victim's entrance into sexual maturity would seem to be fit to be defined as anti-logocentrism of the traumatic memory. The anti-logocentric, unrepresentable nature of trauma with its effect upon the victim's mind is represented by Kane through an incoherent language of character C. Her crisis of unstable memory intensely evokes that of Eve as the alter- ego of Eveline in **Beside Herself** and of Josie or Lily in **The Skriker** when they enter the Skriker's underworld. This being said, this part echoes the different theatrical representations of traumatized mind. Whereas the interruption of an unassimilated traumatic experience is studied by means of the device of doubling by Daniels and the ghastly apparition, the Skriker, by Churchill, the same one is depicted with a broken language of unidentified characters at an unknown spot by Kane in **Crave**. The absence of identity markers, a clear setting or linear language elucidate the unrepresentability of trauma in the victim's psyche.

To add, character A's taking on the role of the abuser ruining the psychological and sexual development process of his daughter who is C in the play does seem to have a lot to do with Freud's "Theory of Seduction." When the notion of trauma of sexual abuse comes to the fore, particularly in the examination of the nature of a relationship between a victim of the abuse and perpetrator fostering that trauma in question, it can be said that C's symptoms might have all emerged as a belated response to the sexual assault of her father in her childhood. That being said, what constitutes her trauma could be explained by her bond to character A.

That C's being adversely affected by A's narration of the past event assuredly casts a disturbing shadow on their relationship and it is reinforced through a lengthy list of wishes made by A in his monologue. When his confession of being a paedophile as quoted before is taken into account together with the language he adopts to enumerate his desires towards an unknown lover, it may be logical to hold that the addressee is C. A section of his long monologue which is followed by C's feelings is as follows:

- A It's beautiful learning to know you and well worth the effort and speak German to you badly and Hebrew to you worse and make love with you at three in the morning and somehow somehow somehow communicate some of the/overwhelming undying overpowering unconditional all-encompassing heart-enriching mind-expanding on-going never-ending love I have for you.
- C (Under her breath until A stops speaking.) this has to stop this has to stop this has to stop this has to stop this has to stop this has to stop (Then at normal volume) this has to stop this has to stop this has to stop
- A Don't they understand? I've got important things to do.
- C It's getting worse.¹⁸

On hearing a series of strong adjectives by A, C is acting as if she was at a loss with words and immediately wants him to put an end to the speech, which justifies the idea that A might be talking about her daughter's childhood experiences as Jolene Armstrong maintains:

It is unclear whom A addresses. The proximity of lines suggests, but due to the established conventions of the dialogue does not necessitate, that he may be speaking to C. Indications that they might be connected can be found at the end of A's longest monologue, where C's line overlaps with the end of his speech: "This has to stop this has to stop this has to stop this has to stop."¹⁹

It is important to note that the incomplete lines function to create an atmosphere in which the characters are incapable of processing their traumatisations.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 170-71.

¹⁹ Jolene Armstrong, *Cruel Britannia: Sarah Kane's Postmodern Traumatrics*, Switzerland, PeterLang, 2015, p. 148.

The fragmented language conveys the sorrow of the traumatized psyche and assures that the existence of trauma is undeniable. C's inability to be tolerant towards the depiction of love directed towards an unnamed Other shows the extent to which she is in a psychological distress and "prepossessed by her memory of sexual abuse which she never manages to articulate in plain language, but relentlessly addresses through allusions."²⁰ Her futile endeavour to accentuate the psychological pain of trauma brings to mind what Dori Laub states in Felman's and his own book **Testimony** with the emphasis that "Trauma is thus an event that has no beginning, no ending, no before, no during and no after. This absence of categories that define it lends it a quality of otherness."²¹ Therefore, it can be noted that character C in **Crave** is impeded by this very fact of trauma's surpassing the human capacity for self-articulation. As a result of C's feeling unable to assimilate her trauma and impotent to accentuate it, as Jolene Armstrong in **Cruel Britannia: Sarah Kane's Postmodern Traumatics** maintains, "*Crave* thus seeks to examine how the failure of language in the face of traumatic experience occurs precisely when the experience of trauma oscillates between knowing and not knowing."²²

In the given poignant speech made by A, there also seems to be one adjective "unconditional" which may be slightly more important than the others while describing the kind of attachment he has towards C. The special nature of the adjective is linked to the fact that it could be regarded as one of the other major hints signifying the relationship between A and C who thrust themselves to the forefront as the abused and the abuser. When his unconditional love for the addressee is reconsidered with a couple of sentences that follow the monologue, "I dream about you. I can't get you out of my system. Only love can save me and love has destroyed me."²³ it can be said that he uncontrollably harbours such emotions towards the daughter or he mistakes lust for love.

²⁰ Sarah J. Ablett, **op.cit.**, p. 156.

²¹ Dori Laub, **Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History**, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, London, Routledge, 1992, p. 69.

²² Jolene Armstrong, **op.cit.**, p. 167.

²³ Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 174.

Craig Buck and Susan Forward in their book **Betrayal of Innocence: Incest and Its Devastation** puts an emphasis upon the inner world of abusive fathers like that of character A by stating:

Fathers who sexually abuse their daughters generally have no compassion for their victim and do not recognize that any consequences exist for their behaviour. Many offenders may be horrified at their own behaviour, but not enough to stop the abuse. Many incestuous fathers have a deep and constant need for unconditional love and attention. In some cases, they see incest, like rape, as an act of power and control.²⁴

Based upon the mention of many offenders' being horrified at their abusive acts, one of A's sentences in the play "Guilt lingers like the smell of death and nothing can free me from this cloud of blood."²⁵ can be read as a proof of his remorse. On top of that, it must be noted that a more revelatory conversation takes place between A and C just before A's declaration of his guilt.

- C I tried to explain that I don't want to sleep with someone who won't appreciate how hard it was for me the following morning, but he'd passed out by the time I finished my sentence. Still sleeping with Daddy.
- A The games we play. I am not what I am, I am what I do.
- C This is true.²⁶

What underlies the assertion "I am not what I am, I am what I do." made by A can be considered like a self-acknowledgement of his role as an abusive father in that what he does is both mental and physical torture. At this point, it is fairly important to stress that C's sentence "She is currently having some kind of nervous breakdown and wishes she'd been born black, male and more attractive."²⁷ makes one think about her retreat into the psychological realm of her mind. Considering the treatment meted out to her by A, she might be suffering from split personality and referring to herself as "she."

²⁴ Craig Buck and Susan Forward, **Betrayal of Innocence: Incest and Its Devastation**, New York, Penguin, 1978, p. 178.

²⁵ Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 185.

²⁶ **Ibid.**, p. 182.

²⁷ **Ibid.**, p. 182.

One another crucial interpretation of C's third-person narration could be directed towards regarding this as a sign of C's attempt of imagining an emphatic listener in order for her trauma narrative to heal. In the absence of someone who character C believes will help her to externalize her traumatization, the character's calling herself as "she" may fill the void and relieve her. Chris N. van der Merwe in **Narrating our Healing: Perspectives on Working through Trauma** draws attention to the important role of an emphatic listener from whose absence character C in **Crave** seems to be suffering. The author maintains that,

When we come together to narrate our traumatic experiences, we invite others not only to listen to what we have to say, but to journey with us as we "re-find" ourselves and re-find the language that has been lost. So the journey of narrating, of being in dialogue concerning our experiences, is a very important one, because we need an audience- a person, or people, who will listen with compassion, with a desire to understand what has happened to us. The listener may be the person who caused the trauma, or someone who was present when the trauma happened, or who was not present but knows about the trauma. In the telling of the trauma, even at a stage where it cannot be articulated completely, the process provides the victims with footholds, so that in the words and gestures of those who are listening, they derive encouragement to re-find not just themselves, but also the language to talk about what has happened to them.²⁸

When the above-given assertion is considered in line with C's case, it can be restated that the character explicitly endeavours to externalize the previously unspoken by imagining a substitute emphatic listener. C creates a chance of sharing her individual stress and it may function as a kind of therapy method. Making sure that there is an addressable other enables the traumatic memory to be translated into narrative memory. When a trauma narrative becomes listenable, it can be said that it is better worked through and the person who listens becomes a significant part of the process. As Judith Herman alike highlights, "No one can face trauma alone."²⁹

²⁸ Chris N van der Merwe & Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, **Narrating Our Healing: Perspectives on Working Through Trauma**, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, p.27.

²⁹ Judith Herman, **Trauma and Recovery**, New York, Basic Books, 1992, p.153.

In addition to the issue of character C's third person narration for the externalization of her trauma by creating an emphatic listener, the lines in the play "I watched my father beat my mother with a walking stick"³⁰ should be remembered since it relates to a discussion of the first person narration of C and her witnessing trauma. Character C's confession of being subjected to the scene in which her mother is beaten by her father makes one also consider that **Crave** turns into a literary medium for representations of trauma. In the following lines, it is seen that she narrates a short story which can be read as a flashback of her own childhood memory. Given that the character might be in the clutches of a psychic trauma, it is acceptable to associate the story with her own family life and see it as a symptom of her trauma:

A small girl became increasingly paralysed by her parents' frequently violent rows. Sometimes she would spend hours standing completely still in the toilet, simply because that was where she happened to be when the fight began. Finally, in moments of calm, she would take bottles of milk from the fridge or doorstep and leave them in places where she may later become trapped. Her parents were unable to understand why they found bottles of sour milk in every room in the house.³¹

When C's above-given first person trauma narration is differently interpreted, it should also be noted that the ways in which and the language with which she puts an effort to articulate her trauma evoke Judith Herman's stress upon the dialectics of trauma which is as follows:

The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma. People who have survived atrocities often tell their stories in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner which undermines their credibility and thereby serves the twin imperatives of truth-telling secrecy. When the truth is finally recognized, survivors can begin their recovery. But far too often secrecy prevails, and the story of the traumatic event surfaces not as a verbal narrative but as a symptom.³²

³⁰ Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 185.

³¹ **Ibid.**, p. 185.

³² Herman, **op.cit.**, p.1.

C is certainly haunted by other traumatic flashbacks which she cannot even identify herself since she memorizes them in fragments: “A field. A basement. A bed. A car.”³³ It becomes manifest that C is obviously inept at expressing her ambivalent past using a proper language which may be an indication of a verbal disorder. It is evident that Kane makes use of language so as to render its inadequacy to communicate the effect of violence on the psyche of the individuals together with the impotency of the individuals to communicate their suffering to themselves. It can be stated that in **Crave**, the conversations in which the voices of four characters mingle are also of paramount significance to the exploration of the psychological realm of their minds. When the four voices speak, language breaks down and this broken language suggests that they are not able to articulate their traumatisation. To illustrate, the following dialogue may both serve as a means of verification of the fact that C is mentally disrupted and there exists a specific victim-perpetrator relationship between them.

- A** I am the beast at the end of the rope.
- C** Silence or violence.
- B** The choice is yours.
- C** Don't fill my stomach if you can't fill my heart.
- B** You will fill my head as only someone who is absent can.
- M** Impaired judgement, sexual dysfunction, anxiety, headaches, nervousness, sleeplessness, restlessness, nausea, diarrhoea, itching, shaking, sweating, twitching.
- C** That's what I'm suffering from now.³⁴

The final lines where M enumerates a number of grave problems such as impaired judgement, sexual dysfunction, anxiety and some others along with C's response “That's what I'm suffering from now.” put the psychological state of C before the eyes of the reader or audience more explicitly.

³³ Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 174.

³⁴ **Ibid.**, p. 187.

It must be stressed that what follows the above-quoted conversation of four voices is one of the most remarkable dialogues between M and C with respect to the possibility of M's being the mother of C:

- C What have they done to me? What have they done to me? What have they done to me? What have they done to me? What have they done to me? What have they done to me? What have they done to me? What have they done to me?
- M Grow up and stop blaming mother.³⁵

In response to C's question of what might have been the reason of her downfall, M's taking on the role of a mother reproaching her daughter makes it necessary to dwell upon the conjecture that M might have witnessed her abuse but preferred to remain silent. Therefore, it is also true to contend that C may have been let down by her mother who could be M in the play. The expression of her anger with the question "What have they done to me?" posits itself as signifying more than one person to be held accountable for her trauma. The failure of the mother to come to her rescue when she has desperately needed her on account of her sexual abuse comes to mind. As Janice Haaken points out in the book **New Versions of Victims** "For many survivors, the absent mother, her failure to protect her daughter from abuse, emerges as a dominant motif. Guilt over the daughter's struggle to separate from the mother is a palpable dilemma."³⁶ Moreover, with the help of the quoted lines, it is seen that C is within the confines of her trauma. It is understood that the effect of her traumatisation has disrupted her sense of self to such a degree that it becomes almost impossible for her to get over it. Her disrupted psyche is also explored with the linguistic impact her reiterated question makes on spectators/readers. It is right to contend that the playwright proves her ability to employ the language of a traumatized psyche as a kind of theatrical device to represent trauma on stage in such moments.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³⁶ Janice Haaken, "Heretical Texts: The Courage to Heal and the Incest Survivor Movement," **New Versions of Victims**, ed. by Sharon Lamb, London, New York University Press, 1999, p. 26.

Sarah J. Ablett in **Dramatic Disgust: Aesthetic Theory and Practice from Sophocles to Sarah Kane** likewise makes references to the same issue with further examples from the play and detailedly explains that,

The mother's inability to attend to the child's needs is later reinforced when C states: "No one to help me not my fucking mother neither" The difficult relation between mother and a child is another major topic addressed in *Crave*, where early on C declares: "I told my mother, You're dead to me." The verbal interactions between C and M, however, point to a shared/collective/inherited memory regarding their relationship with men: "We pass these messages." After A tells the story of a grandfather sexually abusing his granddaughter which triggers strong aversive reactions in C, M's answer, "Haven't we been here before", not only demonstrates indifference regarding the victim and C's affective reaction but also displays a kind of recognition which hints at the likelihood of her having experienced similar forms of abuse. The nonchalant tone of her response furthermore indicates that, in contrast to C, who repeatedly actively rejects and confronts A's narration, M appears to take instances of abuse more or less for granted or as "normal" facts of life. Her ardent desire to be loved at all costs and despite all circumstances can also be read as an indication for her having stayed on in an abusive relationship- another leitmotif of Kane's plays.³⁷

When M is taken as the mother of C, what the audience or reader is faced with is a de-idealized mother figure, indeed. Patriarchal oppression mingled with a destructive, lost or de-idealized mother can be said to be maximizing C's distress and dragging her into isolation as she puts it "I hate the smell of my own family."⁴⁴ However, the presence of a subtle meaning probably alluding to her need of preserving a tie with her mother draws attention. Character C calls M as "she" in one of the dialogues with the intermingled voices and M's response is important:

C When she left-
B The spine of my life is broken.
A Why is light given to one in misery
C Bring her back.
A And life to the bitter in soul
B If you were here-
M I am here.
A Like a deep summer shadow.

³⁷ Sarah J. Ablett, *op.cit.*, p. 157.

C I love her I miss her
B I'm through
M Move on.
C Why did I not die at birth
M Come forth from the womb³⁸

M's utterance "I am here" substantiates the fact that all the voices including C call her. The absence of M should be interpreted as a spiritual void rather than a physical one for the daughter. The dialogue shows that whereas C's long-repressed feelings about the mother's indifference to her salvation have brought about an estrangement, there exists an undeniable inner attempt at bringing the mother figure back to her life. M's either unwillingness or fear of her husband stopping her from interfering with the situation could be the reason why C sees her mother as a dead figure as C says at the beginning of the play "Someone has died who is not dead"³⁹, and later in the play blames A saying "You killed my mother."⁴⁰

In the examination of the emotive relationship amongst A, C and M who could be seen as the trio of the father, daughter and mother, B's role must also be taken into account. In the given dialogue, B strikes one with his yearning for M "If you were here-" as an indication of a kind of attachment. It is important to remember B also stands out as the character whose name is uttered as David by M for the first time in the play and by C for the second time while narrating her first abuse story when she was six:

The navy denim dress I wore at six, the elastic red and blue belt tight round my waist, nylon socks, the hard crust of scabs on my knees, the metal barred climbing frame between my legs, David-⁴¹

³⁸ Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 192.

³⁹ **Ibid.**, p. 155.

⁴⁰ **Ibid.**, p. 185.

⁴¹ **Ibid.**, p. 176.

B's being called by his name by the two assumedly female figures makes one to contemplate upon the possibility that B could be the brother. When B is thought as the brother of C and son of M, another different aspect of the relationship dynamics presents itself which renders it probable to say that M as the conceivable (m)other figure may have known about the abuse of her daughter by B too. Hence, it directly raises the question of whether this could be another triggering factor in the deterioration of their family bonds. Additionally, C's another futile attempt of processing her past trauma is striking in that she is solely capable of repressing the memory of the sexual abuse scene when she recounts it this way. No matter how much she endeavours to act as if the event did not occur in the past, she feels obliged to face the indelible mark such an experience has left on her traumatized psyche. For this reason, it is true to assert that C is overwhelmed by the reenactment of traumatic memory that intrudes in the present. This, indeed, relates to the psychological phenomenon called as "repetitive compulsion" in which the patient holds that he/she is bound to be resubjected to pain as a result of belatedness of traumatic experience. It must be stressed that one of the most representative lines of C for this situation are read just after A's lengthy monologue as she says "Listen. I am here to remember. I need to..... remember. I have this grief and I don't know why."⁴² Furthermore, there appears instances of hesitations or oscillations between remembering and forgetting the memory. C utters sentences making sure that she has disruptive and repetitive memories. On several occasions, she forms other representative statements "My mind's a blank."⁴³ or "I keep coming back."⁴⁴ Akin to the case of Eveline in **Beside Herself** or of Josie and Lily in **The Skriker**, C's condition beyond repair is not communicated to spectators/readers with ease. The blurry point between the symbolic order and the imaginary at which C seems to try to put her dissociative state into words is accompanied by the lack of a fixed setting and linear language within the play.

⁴² Sarah Kane, **op. cit.**, p. 173.

⁴³ **Ibid.**, p. 168.

⁴⁴ **Ibid.**, p. 177.

Within the scope of this work that involves dealing with the interrelationships between victims and perpetrators, it is essential to state that a kind of collective victimhood finds an expression through language of the traumatized characters towards the end. The mind in pain could be specified as the problem of all four unnamed figures. In this regard, character A who is studied as the abuser of C might also be described as an old victim of a perpetration in his past life. Namely, not only character C but also other three figures strive toward a more accurate articulation of the harm done to their minds. The increased likelihood of their being victims of some certain traumas is more identifiable. To demonstrate, overlapping lines of the characters as the voices of their inner conflicts must be read:

A	At the end of the day it comes back to this
B	Gaining time
A	It comes back to me
M	But losing light
A	It comes back to this
C	Fat and shiny and dead dead serene
M	I can't save you ⁴⁵

The dialogue in question initiates a portrayal of the disruption in the memories and interior states of all of them. A's reiteration of "coming back to this" could serve as a proof of the psychological distress that keeps occurring. However, Sarah J. Ablett names the language of these characters as "abject language" and states that,

All characters yearn for love and communion and appear to be unable to communicatively cross the distance to the desired (or hated) other. The stories in *Crave* are stories of identity and crisis (sexual abuse, addiction, etc.) and thus ultimately stories *abjection*. Since states of abjection defy clear referential and coherent articulation in language, Kane lets her characters report on these experiences in a language that is determined by its poetic function. In Kristeva's terms we can describe the language in *Crave* as functioning predominantly semiotically.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 197-9.

⁴⁶ Sarah J. Ablett, *op.cit.*, p. 155.

Based on the premise stated above, reading **Crave** with Kristeva entails making the inference that the characters get carried away by a loss of meaning when they struggle to verbalize their traumatization in the symbolical order which is transferred to the text as the language of abjection. It is an elusive, incomprehensible language that represents the difficulty of accentuating the suffering in the language of the symbolic. In other words, the only means of putting it into words is to go back to the language used in the realm of the semiotic where an infant's pre-symbolic communication imparts certain messages. As Rina Arya in **Abjection and Representation: An Exploration of Abjection in the Visual Arts, Film and Literature** likewise maintains that,

In the case of an adult's use of the semiotic, we see the limitation of words; precisely that in certain experiences and emotional states, words and symbolic communication are inadequate. The range of semiotic expression naturally lends itself to art, which is often geared towards capturing non-prosaic states of being.⁴⁷

It can be pointed out that in **Crave** we see the extent to which the characters are hindered by the above-stated hardship of the limitation of words to address their problems of love and abuse. What they endeavour to express merely becomes comprehensible on a non-semantic level and connotes the semiotic which Kristeva in **Revolution in Poetic Language** designates as “[i]ndifferent to language, enigmatic and feminine, this space underlying the written is rhythmic, unfettered, irreducible to its intelligible verbal translation.” Therefore, it makes sense to agree with the assumption as follows :

All characters struggle with language, especially when it comes to their efforts to recount their experiences of abjection. Since these experiences defy clear representation in coherent narratives, they are predominantly disclosed through semiotic modes of communication.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Rina Arya, **Abjection and Representation: An Exploration of Abjection in the Visual Arts, Film and Literature**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 162.

⁴⁸ Sarah J. Ablett, **op.cit.**, p. 155.

One could also maintain that **Crave** demonstrates the extent to which abjection in literature operates in the articulation of morally transgressive issues like sexual child abuse. The relationship between the characters A and C can be said to be communicated semiotically and it evokes what Kristeva says of abjection and literature:

By suggesting that literature is [abjection's] privileged signifier, I wish to point out that, far from being a minor, marginal activity in our culture, as a general consensus seems to have it, this kind of literature, or even literature as such, represents the ultimate coding of our crises, of our most intimate and most serious apocalypses. Hence its nocturnal power.⁴⁹

When the positions the characters A and C embody pertaining to the discussion of abuse, it can be noted that they display abjection through their mental distress. Their utterances signal the sense of horror they harbour and appear as forms that cannot be a part of a linear narrative. Their linguistic communication pushes one back to the realm of the semiotic where it becomes possible to be liberated from the oppression of the symbolic world. What is said about the characters A and C is certainly valid for the characters B and M in that their aforementioned relationship dynamics plays a role in the representation of human crises through abject language as well. Looked from this angle, **Crave**, therefore, turns into a play which endorses the view that theatre is an apt site to negotiate the unspeakable and abject as Carina Bartleet emphasizes,

Theatre's visceral and live nature allows the unspeakable to be articulated and the inhuman to be embodied. Theatre opens up the potential for the ritualized encounter with the powers of horror a presentation of scenes of disgust. Its power of simulation as aural, visual and visceral offers the scene of disgust as a political, didactic or even emotional message.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Julia Kristeva, **Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection**, Leon S. Roudiez [trans.], New York, Columbia University Press, 1982, p. 208.

⁵⁰ Carina Bartleet, "The Scene of Disgust: Realism and its Malcontents The Audience and the Abject," **Theatres of Thought: Theatre, Performance and Philosophy**, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, p. 28.

In *Crave*, aside from the linguistically non-codifiable psychological pain, there is a sense that unfathomable physical pain accompanies it as well. This physical pain could be emanating from their ongoing psychological suffering too as Jolene Armstrong addresses,

In *Crave*, physical pain is regularly connected to psychological processes. That is not to say that all pain is psychologically determined, but that the connection between mind and body, between the initial event of trauma and the mind's ability to make that event cognitively known, is necessary. In fact there is a suggestion throughout this play that non-specific or inexplicable physical pain often accompanies unnameable psychological distress.⁵¹

What Armstrong underlines in the above-given part is primarily applicable to the character C's case as victim of sexual abuse whose psychic trauma becomes manifest by means of bodily reactions and pain. The following exchange of the characters in which C articulates the pain she feels on her body can be argued to be depicting the relation between the mind and the body in the study of trauma:

C My bowels curl at his touch.
A Poor, poor love.
C I feel nothing, nothing. I feel nothing.
B I came back.
C If she'd left-
A I'm going to die.
M This abuse has gone on long enough.
C Maggots everywhere.
B There's no one like you.
C Whenever I look really close at something, it swarms with larvae.
A Black folding in.
C I open my mouth and I too am full of them, crawling down my throat.
B Something happened.
A So aghast.
C I try to pull it out but it gets longer and longer, there's no end to it. I swallow it and pretend it isn't there.⁵²

⁵¹ Jolene Armstrong, *op.cit.*, p.171.

⁵² Sarah Kane, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

The relevancy of the quoted exchange to the validity of the proposition that psychic trauma is accompanied by bodily pain becomes detectable through a number of important utterances inside in it. To demonstrate, C's initial remark "My bowel curls at his touch" implies that she feels disgusted by any physical advances and mentally reverts to the day when she was abused. Hence, her body simultaneously conveys the message that she must reject intimacy of any sort as a reaction to the reenactment of her trauma. More remarkably, C's allusion to see maggots everywhere and to the act of filling her mouth with them indicates that the maggots serve as a kind of metaphor for the issue of body and trauma as Sarah J. Ablett likewise explains,

The already appalling image of swarming maggots is intensified by the idea that something infectious enters the character's body through the mouth and crawls down her throat. Not only does this image demonstrate a horrendous violation of the body's physical integrity but also a silencing of the sufferer's ability to speak or scream out against this infringement, with the onomatopoeic charge of the word "maggots."⁵³

It must also be stressed that at the end of the given exchange, the character C makes a mention of her acting as if there are no maggots after swallowing them, which may mean as follows:

This subtle alteration or "perversion" of grammar not only creates a feeling of unease in recipients, but, if read or listened to carefully, also reveals pieces of the character's experience of sexual violence which explains the link between the abuse she suffered, her attempts to keep silent about it, her inability to "forget", and her prevailing difficulty to tolerate physical contact with others.⁵⁴

It is seen that the maggot as a metaphor of bodily pain ostensibly stands for the damage that has originally been done to the victim's psyche.

⁵³ Sarah J. Ablett, *op.cit.*, p. 158.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

Finally, it is worth sparing a thought for the ways in which the characters articulate their victimization through words at the end of the play. As Jolene Armstrong elucidates,

Finally, *M*, *B* and *A* speak the following words: “Keep coming back”, “Again and again”, “The eternal return”. All of these instances support the theory that the play is an obsessive or ritualistic repetition of a traumatic memory that has yet to be articulated let alone integrated into everyday experience. In *Crave*, Kane portrays the individual’s quest to integrate a traumatic and disorderly present more accurately as an experience of the confusion of trauma, memory and desire.⁵⁵

Taking into consideration all the aspects studied, it is right to assert that the four characters who are all supposed to have suffered from the effects of traumatising on their psyche are seen as seeking a new, real beginning in their lives at the very end of the play. Irrespective of the fact that they are victims or perpetrators, they posit themselves as individuals in pursuit of happiness. Blinded by their tainted past, they are looking for a way out where the light for their salvation glimpses them. Such an ending arouses sympathy for all of them and makes one assume that the playwright alludes to the collective plea of these disrupted figures again. It is significant to underline that this sense of hope to be found in the ending has its origin in the playwright’s mode of writing of this play. The structure of the play with Kane’s omission of stage directions, gender markers or setting makes it possible to regard it as an open-ended one in terms of interpretation. Multiple possibilities of interpretation also challenge the boundaries of representation in the theatre. With Kane’s mode of writing, the theatrical space turns into a medium in communicating the trauma of the voices in the play. Kane’s presentation of traumatized individuals with the play’s experiential quality enables spectators/readers to feel like witnessing the performance of the traumatic symptoms on stage.

⁵⁵ Jolene Armstrong, *op.cit.*, p. 175-6.

CONCLUSION

An array of historical, social, political and economic events that occurred during the twentieth century are known to have culminated in emergence of new conventions in the field of literature. The stage of this period's witnessing the two wars and the economic depression can be said to have strengthened the power granted to literature to a serious extent. The revival of interest in being able to depict devastating pains of this century has, particularly, led contemporary playwrights to look for diverse techniques of representation of trauma. Holding the view that literature, more specifically, theatre renders possible to capture the effects of traumatic memories lingering in the minds of traumatized individuals, playwrights turned to varying methods of communication on stage. This contemporary inclination towards the reconstruction of the victim's repressed psyche through theatre has made it much easier for readers/audiences to derive from it a novel approach as well. By having access to memories lurking behind diverse traumatic experiences of people from all walks of life, readers/audiences of the period in question have grasped the chance of making sense of the incomprehensible communicated through lenses of characters.

The notion that trauma eludes direct verbal representation has been strongly supported by a set of influential playwrights of the 1990s whose different methods for representing trauma served as proof of the testimonial power of theatre. Amongst these referred playwrights, Sarah Daniels, Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane rise to prominence with their integration of a mode of representation of trauma into plays that allows illumination of complexities of characters' internal conflicts. What they all have attempted to emphasize is that psychological wounds of sexual abuse trauma victims may be more perceivable when the potential to symbolize their sufferings through theatrical means fights against unspeakable aspects of trauma.

Conceptualizing trauma as inherently elusive, unintelligible and hard to articulate, these playwrights can be said to have explored this contentious issue from multiple perspectives. To illustrate, Daniels in **Beside Herself** provides a means of making the silence of the repressed psyche of the play's protagonist audible to readers/audiences by employing the theatrical device of doubling. The protagonist Evelyn is accompanied by her double character Eve that comes to the fore as the inner voice of her shattered psyche throughout the play. Moreover, the playwright employs nonverbal modes of communication like a broken mirror image or Landscape with the Fall of Icarus painting that represent Evelyn's being caught up in a sense of despair from different angles. Notwithstanding the inadequacy of verbal language in engaging with traumatic memories of Evelyn, the idea of the split self represented in the play by the alter ego figure, Eve, appears as an effective method of studying the fragmented inner self of the main character. Churchill as another female playwright describing the traumatic states of her two female protagonists in **The Skriker** clings to the idea that the unintelligible nature of their trauma can be assimilated into the play by means of a ghostly figure, the Skriker. The Skriker lives in an underworld that stands for the traumatic flashbacks of the two protagonists, Josie and Lily, and speaks a language that is musical, fragmented and incoherent which evokes that of an infant. Drawn into the underworld by this apparition, Josie and Lily are forced to encounter the real in Lacanian sense and they reexperience the events causing their mental collapse. More importantly, the playwright enables the audience/reader to have access to the characters' shattered psyche with the help of the presence of the ghostly figure whose language resembles the language of the repressed and whose underworld works as a reminder of the characters' unconscious. Likewise, Kane in **Crave** formulates the trauma of her characters through a number of literary strategies such as identifying no definite plot, using non-linear language and giving no physical setting. The playwright's experiential theatre functions as an alternative means of voicing the issue of sexual abuse in childhood that is believed to have been a common underlying reason of female trauma in line with Freud's Seduction Theory.

The ineffability of straightforward verbal representation of trauma whose effects are compensated through varying literary devices by the three British female playwrights as stated within this dissertation entails taking into account literary approaches to trauma theory as well. This being said, aside from being a direct reference to the subject of language's being insufficient in the articulation of trauma, the three selected plays incorporate traumatic experiences of characters that can be simultaneously explored with influential postulations of Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva and Cathy Caruth. Each one of these listed theorists subscribes to an understanding of trauma as a predominantly complex term but generates valid assumptions as regards what makes an event a traumatic one. Their contemplation upon the origin and aftereffects of trauma may be adapted to literature and it contributes to literature's capability of giving a voice to people's traumatizations.

Undertaking this important task of specifying characteristics of trauma, Freud and the referred specialists force one to reevaluate alternative ways of overcoming the unspeakability of trauma that is regarded as precluding its being transferred into narrative. It must be noted that theories of Lacan, Kristeva and Caruth can all be tied to the work of Freud in that his portrayal of the connection between sexual assault in childhood and trauma has posited itself as the verifiable first observation with respect to the field. Maintaining the idea that victims of sexual abuse in childhood do not view it as traumatic since they have not reached psychological maturity during the time of its occurrence, Freud is known to have based the tenets of his early theory of trauma upon the effects following the realization of the essence of the traumatic experience. Reinterpreting Freud's references to the issue of sexual abuse and its traumatic memory, Lacan, Kristeva and Caruth can be claimed to have taken the issue through their own reformulations and adaptations that originally build up on those of Freud to a large extent.

Given the abovementioned applicability of theories to the selected plays in this dissertation, it is significant to stress that each play offers divergent alternatives of associating theoretical postulations with psychic processes of the characters. For instance, in **Beside Herself**, Evelyn's ongoing interaction with her psychic double gradually reveals some key aspects of her life like her being a sexual abuse victim by her own father that propels one to view her case in Freudian account. More clearly stated, her own confession of the child abuse she experienced to another abuse victim Nicola towards the end of the play proves the extent to which her situation can be examined in line with "Seduction Theory" and also with trauma, testimony and witnessing issue through the lenses of the theorist Dori Laub. Haunted and followed by Eve symbolizing the suppressed memories of childhood abuse, Evelyn feels incapable of summoning up the courage to defy her inner voice until a certain phase and displays attitudes that match with those of a victimized individual. Her father's taking on the role of a perpetrator discourages Evelyn from anticipating any emotional attachment to him thereby bringing to mind the abuse stories Freud listened while observing variable cases of his patients.

Having listened to stories of abuse narrated by adult women, Freud is known to have come up with ideas as regards the origin of trauma and to have asserted that what underlies behind adulthood trauma of childhood abuse victims is the traumatic memories of what was done to them. For Freud, in the aftermath of reaching cognitive maturity and being able to define themselves as child abuse victims, victimized women suffer from multiple psychological disruptions and blame themselves for their fragmented perception of the world. Overwhelmed by her repressed memories of childhood abuse, Evelyn similarly finds herself struggling hard to conform to the social order and feels obliged to endure her own self-reproaches that typically exemplify the consequences of her being unable to overcome her traumatic self in Freudian perspective.

The device of mirror as a nonverbal component for representation of trauma of Eve/Evelyn in **Beside Herself** also makes it possible to adopt a critical approach that goes hand in hand with that of Jacques Lacan in terms of his theoretical overtones established in his elaboration upon the mirror stage. More precisely, the lack of harmony between the statements of Evelyn and Eve, particularly with Eve's child-like reactions to the circumstances signals a psychic fragmentariness. The fragmentariness in question manifests itself with Evelyn's trial of covering the broken mirror within the play, which potentiates the relevancy of the spectral means of Daniels in the articulation of trauma to Lacanian sense of the contradiction between the imaginary and the symbolic. The position of Eve with her sense of the self reminisces about Evelyn's failure in shifting to the symbolic order because of her going through the mirror stage improperly. In Lacanian account, when a child is faced with his/her appearance in the mirror for the first time, the child makes the initial step for self- recognition and construction of his/her identity within the social order. When this first realization of the awaiting separation from the mother in order to pursue another identity within the symbolic fails, the child encounters serious problems in his/her upbringing. In this case, considering Evelyn's need of covering the mirror, it would fit to assert that the protagonist desires to defamiliarize herself from her psychic double- Eve since she reminds her of the child-like self that can be said to have got stuck in the mirror stage. Pam Morris in **Literature and Feminism: An Introduction** expresses the idea of constructing a self in the social order as a part of this phase as follows:

What is achieved in the mirror identification is an imaginary perception of a self, opening up the pathway towards an eventual social identity. But the cost of this is high; a radical split has occurred between the ideal imaginary identity and the actual self which perceived that projected mirror ideal. Thus for Lacan subjective identity from its first intimations is constructed on a mirage, what he terms an Ego-Ideal.¹

¹ Pam Morris, **Literature and Feminism: An Introduction**, Oxford, U.K., Blackwell Publishers, 1993, p. 103.

Morris's reference to the process of building up a social identity with her emphasis upon the emergence of a split between the imagined identity and the actual identity directly evokes Evelyn's encounters with her split- self Eve. They always seem to be at odds with one another in that Evelyn puts a lot of effort into remaining enclosed in the symbolic order whereas Eve stands there by representing the imagined reality and forcing Evelyn to come to terms with her constriction in the mirror phase. It is important to note that Evelyn is impeded by the verbal language's inadequacy to articulate her trauma in the symbolic order which brings to mind that her trauma can only be put into words in the semiotic realm described by Julia Kristeva. The rule-bound and logocentric structure of the language people use in daily life does not serve the purpose of verbalizing Evelyn's traumatic memories associated with her sexual abuse in childhood. Therefore, it can be said that what Eve utters as the abused self of Evelyn throughout the play functions semiotically. It should also be highlighted that Evelyn's trauma not only becomes manifest through the language she speaks, but also through her bodily reactions to what happens in the accompaniment of her father and of others at St. Dymphna throughout the play. Her body speaks the trauma from which she suffers and this operates like a theatrical description of dissociation as explicated primarily through postulations of the theorists Bessel Van der Kolk, Judith Herman and Cathy Caruth in this dissertation.

As for Churchill's **The Skriker** with its inclusion of a variety of ghostly appearances or mythical figures amongst which the Skriker itself stands out as the only speaking one, it must be restressed that the play calls into question critical issues like the relationship between language and trauma from the very beginning. The phantasmagoric figure's opening the play with a poetic language posing difficulties of comprehension to audiences/readers creates a need of illustration of this theatrical device employed by the playwright through theoretical ideas. The unfathomable words the Skriker uses in its speech with its resemblance to that of an infant symbolizes the language of the repressed which is aligned with what is termed as the semiotic.

More precisely, the linguistic disintegration of this ghostly appearance follows a pattern moulded by no fixity, no unity or coherence in terms of the articulation of ideas thereby bringing to mind the preverbal semiotic phase. The language of the Skriker's evocation of the preverbal semiotic phase, thus, anticipates an understanding of Julia Kristeva's conception of the linkage between language and the construction of identity as well. As detailed before, Kristevan notion of the semiotic signifies the stage during which a child has no access to the symbolic with his/her unity with the maternal body. However, when the child enters into the realm of the symbolic that represents the paternal, the dynamics of mother-child relationship changes and its foundational effects upon the language the child starts to use become more observable.

Basing her claims upon Kristeva's **Revolution in Poetic Language** which directly concerns itself with detailing the differences between the semiotic and the symbolic, Pam Morris also alludes to these two modalities' being in coordination with the language and points out that

What Kristeva calls the *symbolic* modality is the aspect of language that the child directs towards the object world of other people and things. As such, its disposition is towards fixed and unitary definition in order to provide the basis of shared meaning which enables interpersonal communication to take place. However, the *symbolic* disposition is also driven by an urge to master and control, through the act of defining, what is other and therefore potentially threatening to the self. On the other hand, the origins of the *semiotic* modality lie in the non-gendered libidinal drives of the pre-Oedipal phase so that its disposition is towards meaning as a continuum, with identification rather than separation from what is other.²

Morris's expression of the contrast the semiotic apparently poses to the symbolic in Kristevan account can be viewed as a key concept of the theorist in her articulation of the revolutionary power of the semiotic. In other words, it would be appropriate to restate that the semiotic with its rhythm and musical quality attacks the symbolic that can be conceptualized as the language of the repressive system or patriarchy itself.

² *Ibid.*, p. 144-45.

Adapted to **The Skriker** in which the rules of linear language are deconstructed through the ghastly apparition, it must be highlighted that the musical, incomprehensible language of the Skriker throughout the play may be thought as a representative of Kristeva's the semiotic to a serious extent. The Skriker speaks this language in the underworld to communicate with the protagonists of the play Josie and Lily who are subjected to reenactments of their traumas there. The Skriker's employing such a language akin to that of an infant in the preverbal stage in its haunting Josie and Lily also certainly points to a lack, an absence as the essence of trauma on the part of them.

Josie and Lily's descent into the underworld which causes them to recall their past traumas also calls into question the theoretical applicability of the notion of abject by Kristeva to the play. Depicted as the operation of loathsome effects of the superego and as a representative of the paternal by Kristeva in **Powers of Horror**, the abject is associated with what is eliminated by the symbolic. In other words, it can be regarded as an abrupt coming back of the real into one's life which occurs on seeing a corpse, a bodily waste and creates a sense of disgust. In Kristevan account, the arousal of disgust posits itself as a kind of reaction to what is seen since it pushes one back to the repressed and banished maternal drives thereby symbolizing the semiotic. It functions as a reminder of the separation from the (m)other which results in a disruption in meaning. In **The Skriker**, the protagonists' encounters with the apparition whose language points to a fragmentation and deconstruction in form trigger them to involuntarily face what has been stored as suppressed memories within their psyche. To demonstrate, the Skriker's haunting Josie under the guise of a baby reminds her of her own baby that she murdered and brings to the fore what has been cast off from memory and it may count as a sort of confrontation with the abject.

It must be underlined that Josie's descent to the underworld which causes her to go back to the origins of her trauma renders it possible to view her case from Kristeva's lenses in relation to the concept of the semiotic chora as well. In **The Revolution of Poetic Language**, Kristeva delves into the most archaic origins of language and specifies the chora as a kind of unnameable realm during the pre-verbal phase which represents poetic dimensions of the language. As a baby is believed to be incapable of separating his/her identity from that of mother during this phase, the baby in the stage of chora symbolizes a confusion in identifying a sense of self. Likewise, when Josie visits the underworld, she is challenged by an overwhelming sense of uncertainty in terms of her ability to distinguish the real world from that of the Skriker where this apparition's poetic language and tricks merge. At this point, within this dissertation, what language cannot render in Josie's situation is studied with references to the theories of Van der Kolk, Shoshana Felman, Dori Laub, Judith Herman and Cathy Caruth who all agree upon the notion that traumatic memories can not be narrated through the verbal language. Likewise, for Lily's situation which functions like a theatrical depiction of trauma, Herman's ideas regarding trauma and body are utilized and attention is drawn to the fact that **The Skriker** is a play in which one witnesses how trauma survivor's bodily reactions are connected to their traumas.

In the context of theatrical representation of trauma and contributory aspects of adaptability of literary approaches to the issue, Sarah Kane's **Crave** can be counted as an essentially appropriate play in terms of its accentuating the pains of a traumatized psyche through its innovative stylistic form. Incorporating no-name characters, fragmented language and unspecified setting and time, the play inaugurates the symbolization of psychic traumatic processes on stage as one of its major concerns. The playwright's strategies can be considered as elements of a kind of theatrical revisitation of effects of trauma upon its victims in that regard.

Notwithstanding the play's opening without any identifiable characters or a plot, Kane's clues as effective instruments to study elusive nature of trauma serve as a guideline for readers/spectators. Amongst overlapping incomprehensible dialogues of characters named as A, B, C and M, the very first and only mention of a male name David who evokes the biblical character, Israelite king David, also known as a trauma survivor implies an identification with pain and trauma. More strikingly, the reference to David is followed by character A's acknowledgment of being a paedophile and accompanied by character C's addressing an indescribable anguish and suffering which necessitates working through the play in relation to its preoccupation with gaining access to traumatic memory.

Character A's narration of an abuse story of a black girl by her family members and the reaction of character C's to what she has heard by using an unfathomable language rife with allusions to memory problems and traumatic symptoms raises the question of **Crave's** relevance to the study of internal conflicts originating from the psychological breakdown of traumatized characters. To add, in one of her interviews as cited before within this dissertation, Kane is known to be giving clues about her characters by labelling A as a possible abuser and C as the abused one. That being the case, like especially in **Beside Herself**, Freud's account of what lies behind trauma of sexual abuse victims through his "Theory of Seduction" becomes a valuable and applicable theoretical instrument to the presentation of distorted psychic mechanisms of trauma victims.

Apart from the psychological pain of character C originating from her betrayal or abuse by her father, the traumatization of other characters identified through letters of M and B can also be claimed to be an integral part of the play's portrayal of repressed psyche. In their overlapping dialogues, these characters with no proper names express their sorrow about their cravings which points to their retreat into the psychological realm of their minds.

That is to say, their fragmented utterances serve as indicatives of the fact that what comes out of their mouths symbolizes the disruption of their psyche. It must also be restated that non-narrative strategies Kane employs while accentuating traumatic experiences of her characters enables audiences/readers to adopt a more reactive attitude. The playwright's stylistic distinctiveness functions as a sort of substitute filling the gap created as a result of verbal language's inadequacy in having access to traumatic memories. In this way, trauma is transmitted onto the stage by means of Kane's theatrical effects. Here, it is significant to remember that the language's impotency to articulate the characters' traumas in **Crave** render it possible to bring explanations to their states by means of descriptions of trauma by Dori Laub, Judith Herman, Cathy Caruth and Julia Kristeva. This is particularly studied in line with the trauma of child sexual abuse in the case of the character C whose utterances function semiotically in Kristevan perspective. The relationship between the characters A and C as the abuser and abused one is also studied in accordance with abjection in literature which puts a stress upon the play's handling the unspeakable aspects of trauma. Additionally, like in **Beside Herself** and **The Skriker**, a great deal of emphasis is put upon the idea that both verbal and bodily reactions should be considered in theatrical representation of trauma through exemplary instances from the play.

To finalize, the question of theatrical representability of trauma, especially after the 1990s, can be said to have gained a new dimension on contemporary British stage with the help of influential playwrights such as Sarah Daniels, Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane. As this dissertation aims to elaborate detailedly, these female playwrights regard theatre as an effective tool of studying, particularly, sexual abuse trauma by taking into consideration the ineffability of verbal language and compensating the weakness of language in articulating this situation through their own strategies.

Attempting to gain access to traumatized psyche of their characters, Daniels, Churchill and Kane integrate numerous theatrical elements ranging from ghastly apparitions, mythological figures to characters with no fixed identities in order to overcome the problem of trauma being silenced by words. They basically set themselves the task of making the silence of traumatized individuals with repressed memories audible by means of methods that challenge the claims as regards unrepresentability of trauma. Viewed through the lenses of these playwrights, theatre becomes an apt arena for speaking the unspeakable and comprehending the incomprehensible nature of trauma.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ablett, Sarah J.: **Dramatic Disgust: Aesthetic Theory and Practice from Sophocles to Sarah Kane**, Bielefeld, transcript, 2020.
- Adiseshiah, Sian: **Churchill's Socialism: Political Resistance in the Plays of Caryl Churchill**, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
- Amich, Candice: "Bringing the Global Home: The Commitment of Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*," **Modern Drama**, Vol. 50, No:3, 2007, pp. 394-513.
- Angelica, Jade C.: **A Moral Emergency: Breaking the Cycle of Child Sexual Abuse**, Kansas City, Sheed & Ward, 1993.
- Armstrong, Jolene: **Cruel Britannia: Sarah Kane's Postmodern Traumatics**, Switzerland, PeterLang, 2015.
- Artaud, Antonin: **Theatre and Its Double**, New York, Grove Press, 1958.
- Arya, Rina: **Abjection and Representation: An Exploration of Abjection in the Visual Arts, Film and Literature**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

- Aston, Elaine: "Daniels in the Lion's Den: Sarah Daniels and the British Backlash," **Theatre Journal**, Vol. 47, No: 3, 1995, pp. 393-403.
- Aston, Elaine: **Feminist Views on the English Stage Women Playwrights, 1990-2000**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Aston, Elaine & Elin Diamond: **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Balaev, Michelle: **Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Barnett, Claudia: "Reveangance is gold mine, sweet: Alchemy and Archetypes in Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*," **Essays in Theatre**, Vol.19, No: 1 2000, pp. 45-57.
- Bartleet, Carina: "The Scene of Disgust: Realism and its Malcontents The Audience and the Abject," **Theatres of Thought: Theatre, Performance and Philosophy**, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, pp. 13-31.

- Bhadra, Suranjana: "Beyond Feminism: Damaged Motherhood in Caryl Churchill's *The Skriker*," **International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention**, Vol. 3, No:10, 2014, pp. 16-23.
- Brandell, Jerrold R. & S. Ringel **Trauma: Contemporary Directions in Theory, Practice and Research**, USA, Sage Publications, 2012.
- Breese, Elizabeth Butler: "Claiming Trauma through Social Performance: The Case of Waiting for Godot," **Narrating Trauma: On the Impact of Collective Suffering**, ed. by Ron Eyerman, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Elizabeth Butler Breese, London, Paradigm Publishers, 2011, pp. 213-237.
- Buck Craig & Susan Forward: **Betrayal of Innocence: Incest and Its Devastation**, New York, Penguin, 1978.
- Buse, Peter: **Drama+Theory**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2001.
- Caruth, Cathy: **Trauma: Explorations in Memory**, Baltimore and London, The John Hopkins University Press, 1995.

- Caruth, Cathy: "Trauma, Time and Address," **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Drama**, ed. by Colin Davis and Hanna Meretoja, London and New York, Routledge, 2020, pp. 79-89
- Caruth, Cathy: **Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, History**, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University, 1996.
- Churchill, Caryl: **The Skriker**, London, Nick Hern Books, 1994.
- Cousin, Geraldine: **Women in Dramatic Place and Time: Contemporary Female Characters on Stage**, London and New York, Routledge, 1996.
- Crosthwaite, Paul: **Trauma, Postmodernism and the Aftermath of World War II**, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Crouthamel, Jason & Peter Leese: **Traumatic Memories of the Second World War and After**, Denmark and USA, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Cuder, Eva Gil: "More Than Words: Drama and Spectrality for the Articulation of Trauma," **Journal of English Studies**, Vol. 10, 2012, pp. 65-80.

- Daniels, Sarah: **Daniels Plays 2: Cut Girls; Beside Herself; Head-rot Holiday; Madness of Esme and Shaz**, London, Methuen Drama, 1997.
- Duggan, Patrick **Trauma-Tragedy: Symptoms of Contemporary Performance**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012.
- Duggan, Patrick “Trauma and Drama/Theatre/Performance,” **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Drama**, ed. by Colin Davis and Hanna Meretoja, London and New York, Routledge, 2020, pp. 328-339
- Felluga, Dino: “Modules on Kristeva: On Psychosexual Development,” 06.03.2021, (Online)
<https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/theory/psychoanalysis/kristevadevelop.html>.
- Felman, Shoshana & Laub: **Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History**, London, Routledge, 1992.
- Fisler, Rita & A. van der Kolk “Dissociation and the Fragmentary Nature of Traumatic Memories: Overview and Exploratory Study,” **Journal of Traumatic Stress**, Vol. 8, No:4, 1995, pp. 505-525.

- Freud, Sigmund: **The Aetiology of Hysteria** **The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud**, ed and translated by J. Strachey, London, Hogarth Press, 1962. (Original work published in 1896)
- Freud, Sigmund: **Beyond the Pleasure Principle**, Standard edition, vol. 18, pp. 1-65, reprinted in Penguin Library, vol. 11, Harmondsworth, Penguin, [1920a] 1984.
- Freud, Sigmund: **Beyond the Pleasure Principle**, London, Norton, 1959 [1920].
- Freud, Sigmund & J. Strachey(ed.): **Beyond the pleasure principle: the standart edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud**, London, The Hogarth Press: The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1955.
- Froula, Christine: "The Daughter's Seduction: Sexual Violence and Literary History," **Journal of Women in Culture and Society**, Vol. 11, No: 4, 1986, pp. 621-643.
- Gilbert, M. Sandra & Susan Gubar: **The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth- Century Literary Imagination**, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2000.

- Griffin, Gabriele: "Violence, abuse, and gender relations in the plays of Sarah Daniels," **The Cambridge Companion To Modern British Women Playwrights**, ed. by Elaine Aston and Janelle Reinelt, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 194-211.
- Griffiths, Jennifer L.: **Traumatic Possessions: The Body and Memory in African American Women's Writing and Performance**, the USA, University of Virginia Press, 2009.
- Grimm, Brothers: **The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales**, New York, Pantheon Books, 1994.
- Gritzner, Karoline: **Adorno and Modern Theatre: The Drama of the Damaged Self in Bond, Rudkin, Barker and Kane**, UK, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Goarzin, Anne: "Articulating Trauma," **OpenEdition Journals**, Vol.36, No: 1, 2011, pp. 11-22.
- Goldberg, A.: "Trauma, Narrative, and Two Forms of Death," **Literature and Medicine**, Vol. 25, No: 1, 2006, pp. 122-141.

- Haaken, Janice: "Heretical Texts: The Courage to Heal and the Incest Survivor Movement," **New Versions of Victims**, ed. by Sharon Lamb, London, New York University Press, 1999, pp. 13-41.
- Habib, M.A.R.: **A History of Literary Criticism: From Plato to the Present**, UK, Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Herman, Judith: **Trauma and Recovery**, New York, Basic Books, 1992.
- Herring, George C.: "The Cold War and Vietnam" **OAH Magazine of History**, Vol. 18, No:5, 2004, pp.18-21
- Hopgood, Jeromy: **The Projection Designer's Toolkit**, New York, Routledge, 2022.
- Howard, Jean E: "On owning and owing: Caryl Churchill and the nightmare of capital," **The Cambridge Companion To Caryl Churchill**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 36-51.
- Huberman, Georges-Didi: **Invention of Hysteria**, London, The MIT Press, 2003.

- Huyssen, Andreas: **Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Kane, Sarah **Complete Plays**, London, Methuen Publishing Ltd., 2001.
- Kellerman, Natan P. F.: **Holocaust Trauma: Psychological Effects and Treatment**, New York, iUniverse, 2009.
- Kolk, Bessel Van der: **The Body Keeps The Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma**, New York, Penguin Group, 2014.
- Kolk, Bessel Van der: "The Body Keeps the Score: Memory and the Evolving Psychobiology of Posttraumatic Stress" *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, Vol.1, No:5, 1994, pp. 253-265.
- Kolk, Bessel Van der: Foreword by Bessel A. Van der Kolk, M.D., **Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy**, ed. by Pat Ogden, Kekuni Minton and Clare Pain, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2006.

- Kolk & McFarlane & Weisaeth **Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body and Society**, New York, The Guilford Press, 1996.
- Kovaceva, Elizabet: **Abjection in Selected Plays by Sarah Kane, Caryl Churchill, and Tim Crouch**, Master's thesis, Univerzita Karlova, Praha, 2017, <https://is.cuni.cz/webapps/zzp/detail/163777/?lang=en>.
- Kristeva, Julia: "On Pre-Oedipal Language," 06.03.2021, (Online), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNkLlxzZTys>.
- Kristeva, Julia: **Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection**, Leon S. Roudiez (trans.by), New York, Columbia University Press, 1982.
- Kritzer, Amelia Howe: "Damaged Myth in Caryl Churchill's The Skriker", **Dramatic Revisions of Myths, Fairy Tale and Legends: Essays on recent plays**, ed. by Verna A. Foster, Jefferson, NC, McFarland & Company, 2012, pp. 112-123.

- Lacan, Jacques: ***Ecrits, A Selection***, translated from the French by Alan Sheridan, New York, W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1977.
- LaPlanche, J & J. B. Pontalis: ***The Language of Psychoanalysis***, New York, Norton, 1973.
- Lehmann, Hans-Thies: ***Postdramatic Theatre***, trans. by Karen-Jürs-Munby, London and New York, Routledge, 2006.
- Luckhurst, Roger: ***The Trauma Question***, New York, Routledge 2008.
- Madikizela & van der Merve: ***Narrating Our Healing: Perspectives on Working Through Trauma***, UK, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007.
- Morris, Pam: ***Literature and Feminism: An Introduction***, Oxford, U.K., Blackwell Publishers, 1993.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich: ***The Birth of Tragedy And Other Writings***, ed. by Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Ovadija, Mladen: ***Dramaturgy of Sound in the Avant-garde and Postdramatic Theatre***, Montreal, McGill Queen's University Press, 2013.

- Page, Herbert W.: **Injuries of the Spine and Spinal Cord and Nervous Shock**, London, J. and A. Churchill, 1883.
- Paryz, Marzena Sokolowska : “The Exploitation of Trauma: (Mis-) Representations of Rape Victims in the War Film,” **Languages of Trauma: History, Memory and Media**, ed. by Peter Leese, Julia Barbara Köhne and Jason Crouthamel, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2021, pp. 265-293.
- Pederson, Joshua: “Speak, Trauma: Toward a Revised Understanding of Literary Trauma Theory,” **NARRATIVE**, Vol. 22, No:3, 2014, pp. 333-353.
- Perrault, Katherine: “Beyond the Patriarchy: Feminism and the Chaos of Creativity,” **Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism**, Vol.17, No:1, 2002, pp. 45-68.
- Rance, Valerie: “Biblical Personalities and Trauma: Towards A Theology of Wellbeing”, **ResearchGate**, June 2015,(Online),
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/278727688>, 24.04.2021.

- Rebellato, Dan: "Interview with Sarah Kane", **Brief Encounter Platform**, Royal Holloway College, London 1998.
- Rothberg, Michael: **Multidirectional Memory**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Saunders, Graham & De Vos: **Sarah Kane in Context**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2010.
- Schönfelder, Christa: **Wounds and Words: Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction**, Bielefeld, transcript Verlag, 2013.
- Sierz, Aleks: **In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama Today**, London, Faber and faber, 2001.
- Stafford, Anika: "Feminist Abuse Survivor Narratives in *Angel* and Sarah Daniels's *Beside Herself*," **The Literary Angel: Essays on Influences and Traditions Reflected in the Joss Wheden Series**, the USA, McFarland Company, 2010, pp. 85-98.
- Stephenson, Heidi and Langridge: **Rage and Reason Women Playwrights on Playwriting**, London, Methuen, 1997.

- Sütterlin, Nicole A.: "History of Trauma Theory," ed. by Colin Davis, Hanna Meretoja, **The Routledge Companion to Literature and Trauma**, New York, Routledge, 2020, pp. 11-22.
- Tait, Peta: **Forms of Emotion: Human to Nonhuman in Drama, Theatre and Contemporary Performance**, New York, Routledge, 2022.
- Tatar, Maria: **Off with Their Heads!: Fairy Tales and the Culture of Childhood**, Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Visvis, Vikki: "Traumatic Representation: The Power and Limitations of Storytelling as "Talking Cure" in Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion* and *The English Patient*," **ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature**, Vol. 40, No: 4, Oct. 2009, pp. 89-108.
- Wald, Christina: **Hysteria, Trauma and Melancholia Performative Maladies in Contemporary Anglophone Drama**, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Wallace, Clare: **Suspect Cultures**, Prague, Litteria Pragensia, 2006.

- Wandor, Michelene: **Look Back in Gender: Sexuality and the Family in Post-War British Drama**, New York, Routledge Revivals, 2015.
- Wilson, Ann: "Failure and the Limits of Representation in the Skriker," ed. by Sheila Rabillard , **Essays on Churchill: Contemporary Representations**, Winnipeg, Blizzard Publishing, 1998, pp.174-188.
- Wilson, John. P.: "The Historical Evolution of PTSD Diagnostic Criteria: From Freud to DSM- IV," **Journal of Traumatic Stress**, Vol. 7, No: 4, 1994, pp. 681-698.
- Wolfe, Graham: "Shapeshifting in Caryl Churchill's The Skriker," **Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts**, Vol. 22, No: 2, 2011, pp. 234-256.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

İlköğretim ve lise eğitimini İstanbul’da tamamlayan Muhammed Metin Çameli 2006 yılında girdiği Beykent Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı (Tam Burslu) bölümünden 2010 yılında üniversite üçüncüsü ve fakülte birincisi olarak mezun oldu. 2011 yılında İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü’ne bağlı İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bilim Dalı’nda yüksek lisans eğitimine başladı. 2014 yılında “**The Use of Novel in Creating the Independent Reader: A Study on Personal Construct Theory and Reader-Response Approach**” başlıklı tezi ile yüksek lisans eğitimini tamamladı. Muhammed Metin Çameli 2011 yılından beri Öğretim Görevlisi olarak çalışmaktadır.